

**Community Monitoring Committee
Minutes of January 26, 2012
5:30 p.m.
Lakeview Inns, Bayers Lake**

PENDING APPROVAL

ATTENDANCE

Present:

Jack Mitchell	Chair
Tom Robertson	Director
Mike Becignuel	Director
Councillor Reg Rankin	Director
Councillor Steve Adams	Director
Councillor Peter Lund	Director
Mary Lyn Saturley	Director
Ken Meech	Executive Director

Also Attending:

Steve Warburton	Warburton Communications
Gordon Helm	HRM Staff
Ken Reashor	HRM Staff

Regrets:

Bob Angus	Vice Chair
Councillor Russell Walker	Director
Murray Power	Director
Lindsay Gates	Director

1) Approval of Agenda

The chair convened the meeting and the agenda was approved with the addition of an item by Councillor Adams: Invitation to Mark Williston.

2) Approval of Minutes of October 19, 2011

It was MOVED and SECONDED (Robertson/Lund):

that the minutes of October 19, 2011 be approved.

MOTION carried.

3) Report of the Chair

Ken Reashor and Gord Helm, the HRM staff who are responsible for the management of the Otter Lake landfill, were in attendance at this meeting.

The chair provided background on the odor problems experienced during December and January. The odor was created by the closing of Cell 5 and the construction of Cell 6. The work was late starting, which resulted in fall and winter conditions being encountered. The number of complaints from the immediate area was in the range of 40-50. This represents the largest number of complaints received in the past 10 years. As a result of the complaints, Councillor Rankin communicated his concerns to HRM council and staff, and noted that CMC will be asked to investigate the situation.

A letter from CMC was prepared and directed to HRM for response regarding the events that resulted in the project delay, and construction consequently being undertaken in the fall and winter. The response had just been received today and was shared with the CMC membership.

The committee then moved to discuss the background of the odor problem with an overview of the HRM communication and a Q&A between the members and HRM staff. It was noted, however, that there was insufficient time for CMC members to digest the HRM response, so it was decided that the matter should be discussed with CMC membership at a later date before providing a reaction.

Councillor Rankin, as the council representative of the area, spoke strongly about the need to determine the cause of the problem and the requirement for the public in the immediate area to be given an explanation and assurance that this circumstance will be mitigated for the future. Councillor Rankin and others reported that there were serious concerns in the community, particularly the potential damage this incident may have on property values.

The issue was tabled for later discussion by the committee.

4) Update on Geothermal Proposal

The geothermal project for the landfill under the leadership of Tom Robertson was again discussed with HRM staff. Mr. Robertson believed that HRM was missing an opportunity and suggested that the issue be reviewed. Gord Helm committed to discuss the matter with the energy consultant and to arrange a meeting with Mr. Robertson and other CMC members to review the potential to move forward with the project.

5) Report from Gordon Helm

a) Integration of Education Program

The committee received a verbal report from Gord Helm on the integration of the education program. The report seemed to indicate that the issue was unresolved even though CMC had communicated its position back in October with the decision to put its program on hold pending a report from Solid Waste on a suggested solution. CMC members were less than pleased with the response. The chair and Steve Warburton provided a short video on a recent presentation and noted that schools were asking to book the presentation. It is expected that a response will be received shortly and this issue resolved.

6) Proposed Budget Submission to HRM

The executive director shared the proposed budget submission for the next fiscal year which has been sent to HRM for their budget purposes. The budget is estimated to be \$65,000.00.

7) Continuation of Discussion on Odor Problem

At this point the HRM reps left the meeting while the CMC members stayed behind to further discuss the odor issue and the committee's next steps. After considerable discussion, it was agreed that the executive director would consult with John Merrick to review the response from HRM staff on the odor issue and the mandate and authority of CMC under the agreement. The members believe it is time to clarify the role of CMC, in particular, the independence of the body, as the committee appears to be confronting control issues with HRM staff on the level of independence. This has been magnified by the recent response from HRM staff as well as the interference of staff in the delivery of our education program on the landfill and related facilities at Otter Lake.

8) Invitation to Mark Williston

Councillor Adams gave a brief overview of his item, suggesting that Mark Williston be invited to a future meeting to share experiences. He has been working in China in a community of 33,000,000. It was agreed to have Councillor Adams invite Mr. Williston to a future session.

9) Adjournment

The meeting concluded on the note that CMC should be reconvened within a month to discuss a strategy and determine next steps in addressing the current issues.