

CMC Virtual Meeting Minutes  
6:30 p.m. Thursday, December 05, 2024  
Held on the Zoom platform

CMC Members Present: Reg Rankin, Councillor Janet Steele, Tom Robertson, Andrew Giles, John Cascadden, Peter Lund, Tekena Warikubu, Hailey MacKinnon

Others Present: Shannon Betts, Kirk Symonds, Steve Copp, Justin Hawco, Scott Morash, Jason Timms, Betsy Chambers

1.0 John Cascadden requested that two items be added to the agenda: cart-based garbage pickup and methane monitoring reports. Reg Rankin, the Chair, requested that the proposed 2025-2026 budget also be added to the agenda. A motion to add all three items was moved by John Cascadden and seconded by Andrew Giles. Motion carried. The budget item was added following agenda item 4.0.

2.0 A motion to adopt the minutes for July 04, 2024 was moved by Mr. Cascadden, and seconded by Janet Steele. Motion carried.

3.0 The Chair introduced newly elected District 12 Councillor Janet Steele and Tekena Warikubu, an HRM Council appointee, to the meeting.

4.0 Steve Copp agreed that Mirror Nova Scotia could accommodate a tour of the Otter Lake Landfill on a Saturday but coordination should be through the HRM Director of Solid Waste Shannon Betts.

4. 1 Mr. Cascadden drew the meeting's attention to a public survey under way by HRM on a possible cart-based garbage pickup that would involve curbside automated emptying of carts, similar to those used for organic waste, into a truck. The Director of Solid Waste said there were monitoring advantages to the proposed system that could include cameras and new technology. She said clear bags would be used exclusively for garbage cart waste thereby affording easier scrutiny of the contents and quicker contact with the cart owners of improperly disposed of waste. CMC's Communications Consultant was asked by the Chair to post messages in support of the survey, due to end Dec. 20, on CMC's website and Facebook account. Councillor Steele noted that HRM staff and HRM councillors have been aggressively promoting the survey.

4.2 Mr. Cascadden asked CMC to request HRM to provide the committee with the annual summary report on Otter Lake Landfill's methane emissions, due to be submitted to the federal government as a new requirement. The Chair directed CMC's Environmental Consultant to take up the matter with Steve Copp and HRM.

4.3 The Chair noted the proposed budget was unchanged from the last fiscal year's budget. Mr. Cascadden moved and Mr. Giles seconded a motion to discuss the proposed budget. Peter Lund was concerned there had been no report to show what has been spent to date in the current budget. The Chair explained that an interim report had not been presented because the municipal and provincial elections had meant fewer CMC meetings could be scheduled, but he assured the membership that the CMC was under budget in all categories. The reduced number of meetings and the absence of a full-time liaison assistant had reduced anticipated expenses. In response to a question from Mr. Giles the Chair reassured him that it has been permissible in the past to move budget amounts between expenditure categories, provided HRM received notice and offered no objection. The Director of Solid Waste said she was amenable to continuing that practice. The proposed budget was approved.

5.0 CMC's Environmental Consultant Scott Morash provided an overview of the performance audit process. He said he thought the amount of organic waste going into HRM garbage seemed to be slowly declining but shaving off the last 1.5% to reach the 10% goal, set by the Department of Environment and Climate Change for total compostable material by weight in the landfill, would be difficult. He told the committee that HRM's education efforts aimed at improving garbage sorting by municipal residents was very good and very thorough. For the benefit of CMC's new members, the Chair reviewed the importance to the CMC of the front-end processor and waste stabilization facility, now discontinued by HRM and Mirror Nova Scotia, without CMC's consent even though its operations were integral to the original contract between the Halifax Waste Resource Society and HRM that created the CMC. The Chair noted that CMC's fight to keep the equipment in operation had been lost. Mr. Cascadden pointed out that the goal for compostable material was set at 10% because it matched the reduction in compostable waste that the front-end processor and waste stabilization facility had achieved when in operation. Mr. Lund raised the problem of condominium waste, which tends to be very poorly sorted. HRM's Director of Solid Waste acknowledged the problem and said HRM had been paying a lot of attention to resolving the issue through educational efforts.

6.0 Mr. Cascadden requested that public participation be inserted after the approval of the minutes as a standing item on future agendas. The Chair said the proposal could have unintended consequences and thought public input at a meeting should only be entertained at the start of an agenda if there was a contentious issue to be discussed and members of the public were in attendance. The CMC Administrator indicated that while the circulated staff report outlined the pros and cons of the issue, no recommendation was made because the proposal was deemed to have a neutral effect

on communications. Mr. Giles said a standing agenda item was unnecessary when meetings are already advertised as open to the public and anyone in attendance was sure to be welcomed, he said. Despite CMC meetings being public, he noted public attendance was a rarity. Mr. Cascadden said it should be a standing item to conform proactively to the CMC mandate of engaging with the public. John Cascadden moved a motion, seconded by Mr. Lund, to make public participation a standing item, following the adoption of the minutes, on future CMC agendas. A voice vote was inconclusive so the Chair instituted a recorded vote: Reg Rankin: no; Andrew Giles: no; Peter Lund: yes; John Cascadden: yes; Hailey MacKinnon: yes; Tom Robertson: no; Tekena Warikubu: yes; Janet Steele: no. The vote was tied 4:4 and the motion was deferred for three months.

8.0 A motion to adjourn was made by Andrew Giles. Carried. The meeting adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

