



**REGION OF WINDSOR AND WEST HANTS MUNICIPALITY  
CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE**

Meeting Minutes

Monday, February 25, 2019 – 6:00 –7:40p.m.

West Hants Chambers, 76 Morison Drive, Windsor, NS



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**ATTENDANCE**

**Co-ordinating Committee Members**

Kevin Latimer	Co-ordinator, Chair
Laurie Murley	Deputy Mayor, Town of Windsor
Abraham Zebian	Warden, Municipality of the District of West Hants
Paul Morton	Deputy Warden, Municipality of the District of West Hants

**Staff/Alternate Committee Members**

Martin Laycock	CAO, Municipality of West Hants
Louis Coutinho	CAO, Town of Windsor
John Bregante	Councillor/Alternate Co-ordinating Committee Member, Town of Windsor
Jennifer Daniels	Councillor/Alternate Co-ordinating Committee Member, Municipality of the District of West Hants
Julie Woodman	Administrative Assistant, Municipality of the District of West Hants
Nick Barr	Manager, Legislative & Policy Services, Department of Municipal Affairs
Ron Dauphinee	Department of Municipal Affairs

**Regrets** Anna Allen, Mayor Town of Windsor

**Gallery**

Colin Chisholm Reporter, Valley Journal Advertiser

1. **CALL TO ORDER** – Co-ordinator Latimer called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm. He announced the meeting was on Facebook Live.
2. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA** – Additions and/or Deletions

**MOVED/SECONDED THAT THE AGENDA BE APPROVED AS AMENDED. MOTION CARRIED**

3. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES** – February 4<sup>th</sup>, 2019

**MOVED/SECONDED THAT THE FEBRUARY 4, 2019 MEETING MINUTES BE APPROVED AS CIRCULATED. MOTION CARRIED**

4. **DELEGATIONS / PRESENTATIONS (if any)**
  - (a) **Governance Review / Council Size – Staff Report**
    - i. **Stantec Report**
    - ii. **Professor Jamie Baxter Report**

Co-ordinator Latimer advised that this committee is going to have to make several important decisions of what the new municipality will look like and how it will function. He noted the size of the new council and the configuration of the polling districts is one of the more important decisions. He confirmed tonight the committee will take the first steps towards determining the look and feel of the new municipal council which will be elected in March 2020. He reported there has been two studies and two reports completed that were circulated in the package. He advised that one report was prepared by John Heseltine of Stantec Consulting that included the results of public consultation that had taken place over the last several weeks. He indicated that Mr. Heseltine is here this evening to present based on those consultations and his report. He advised the other report was prepared by Professor Jamie Baxter from Dalhousie University, he offered that Professor Baxter was not able to attend this evening's meeting.

Mr. Heseltine gave a brief presentation. He explained that the governance review was conducted in two phases which is consistent with the approach recommended by the Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board (UARB). The UARB will hear the application from the Co-ordinator concerning council size and boundaries. He noted they have finished the first phase that sought to assess the desired council size and the second phase will look at potential boundaries to elect the council. He explained the focus is on the consultation process which has been broken into two components; a series of public meetings in communities around the region including Avondale, Brooklyn, Vaughn, Town of Windsor, and Falmouth. He suggested that the attendance at some of the meetings was small and noted for all the sessions they counted 86 residents with some appearing at multiples sessions. He offered this would be considered a moderately successful group of meetings to have reasonable discussions on the subject matter.

He confirmed the second component of the consultation process was a questionnaire survey that was primarily implemented online and he considered it very successful with 609 responses. He noted at the public meetings there was concern from rural residents regarding the access to internet and equitable ability to respond to the online survey. He offered in a response to this a decision was made to circulate hard copy questionnaires to certain rural districts which resulted in another 139 responses, in which 135 were completed, as there were incomplete responses.

Of the 744 responses Mr. Heseltine confirmed the most popular response was 10 with 12 as second choice and 11 the third choice, he noted this accounted for 61.5% of respondents. He suggested there were differences between the urban, suburban, and rural respondents, and indicated that respondents from the Town of Windsor favoured a smaller sized council. He reported the follow up question in the survey was to ask why residents made their choice which broke down between a desire for efficient decision making, and over or under representation of rural areas.

Warden Zebian asked Mr. Heseltine if it would be unusual for the committee to recommend something different. Mr. Heseltine suggested it wouldn't be out of the question but offered from his experience the survey work is normally used as a guide and offered personally he was not considering a third size.

Councillor Bregante asked how many responses were received from the shore, as internet is not ideal in that area, and he expressed concern that there may be a lot of residents that didn't have the opportunity to respond. Mr. Heseltine indicated this was an area of concern that lead to the distribution of hard copies and confirmed the responses online were from that particular area and offered that it was not under represented.

Deputy Mayor Murley asked Mr. Heseltine what she can expect to see over the next 5-10 years with that size council. Mr. Heseltine suggested the tendency is to start out with a larger size council in recognition of representation when a new municipality is formed and then usually there is reduction in the longer term.

Deputy Mayor Murley asked whether the reason for a large size Council has to do with identity issues as a significant component of that decision. Mr. Heseltine felt there may be nervousness in the transition in these situations, and he suggested that a level of comfort increases over time and it is reduced by the Municipality. Deputy Mayor Murley asked if it would take a few years to get that level of comfort as discussed. Mr. Heseltine indicated that a lot of emphasis is put on consultation in this process adding that effective consultation is to take those concerns into account.

Co-ordinator Latimer asked if Mr. Heseltine is asking that the committee decide on the size at this meeting. Mr. Heseltine offered the concentration of support is close enough for a significant portion of residents who responded to the survey and the input from the consultation sessions to recommend 9 or 11 districts. He indicated that he is not expressing any preference for one or the other and suggested the boundary review process could raise some issues that would require discussion on council size. He noted that they are supposed to have some council sizes in order to establish the district framework to put before the public for their consideration.

Co-ordinator Latimer ~~indicated~~~~reported~~ the CAO's in the staff reported outlined the alternatives as follows: ~~;~~ adopt the approach recommended in the Stantec study; ~~;~~ choose council size (9, 11 or otherwise) and direct the consultant to prepare scenarios for that particular council size (~~in which case and the Committee should provide rationale for deviating from the Stantec recommendation~~); ~~a-~~A further alternative was to choose another combination of council sizes and direct the consultant to prepare scenarios for those council sizes (~~in which case and the Committee should provide rationale for deviating from the Stantec recommendation~~) ~~should it choose to do so~~. Mr. Heseltine agreed with the ~~alternatives recommendations~~ and offered he has given his opinion and is seeking direction from the committee.

Warden Zebian suggested he would support the recommendation for 9 or 11 council size and offered that there has been a lot of changes which have been supported quite well by the residents of Windsor and West Hants. He referred to Professor Baxter's report regarding buy-in for the process and believed this recommendation would do that. He expressed that he was disappointed that Professor Baxter's report didn't include actual data only theoretical arguments.

Co-ordinator Latimer asked CAO Coutino in Professor Baxter's absence to speak briefly on the report. CAO Coutino reported that the Co-ordinator had engaged Professor Baxter to provide background information and analysis on two key questions on the design and size of the new regional government and the appropriate geographic boundaries. He noted that the research was quite in-depth and Professor Baxter reviewed all the previous studies that had been completed on amalgamation and the Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board decisions. He noted that he looked at the style of council and regional interest and how to establish boundaries and the effective political representation and diversity of council.

Co-ordinator Latimer suggested this was an excellent report that provided information to assist the Committee in making decisions. He felt that the Committee should invite Professor Baxter to a meeting to add any further comments or respond to any questions the Committee might have.

**MOVED and SECONDED that the Co-ordinating Committee accept the recommendation of the February 21, 2019 Stantec Report and move forward with the assessment for the scenarios for nine and eleven districts in Phase 2 of the Governance study.  
Motion Carried.**

Mr. Heseltine reported in the second phase, boundary scenarios will be created for the two district options that have been agreed upon which will be presented to the public in a similar fashion to the first phase. He confirmed early in the project they completed the required base mapping and noted that meetings have been scheduled starting on March 5<sup>th</sup> and finishing on March 14<sup>th</sup>. He noted there will be another online survey that will involve the presentation of the proposed district boundaries scenarios that will allow members of the public to express their preference and provide their comments. He explained there is a plan to post the maps of the districts in various accessible locations in the communities. He advised that a report will be provided on district boundaries similar to the council size report and the process will be completed by April 1<sup>st</sup>.

Councillor Morton expressed concern that the survey wouldn't be mailed out to residents. CAO Laycock responded based on the results of having 5100 surveys delivered and getting 130 back ~~indicates~~identifies it is not an effective approach and suggested there is internet access available in communities and added that councillors have iPads to aid residents. He suggested that 25 locations have been identified where maps will be provided to direct residents to pick up a survey. He offered it is an effort to balance time and efficiencies to get the results, he confirmed that staff will get the information out as efficiently as they can. It was confirmed once the scenarios are available, they will be made public on the Stronger Region website.

Councillor Morton asked if surveys will be placed in the designated areas with the maps. CAO Laycock suggested an issue with this is getting the surveys back and that someone may fill out more than one survey. He felt this would be better controlled if residents came to the municipal office. He noted that staff are doing their best with the limited resources available and felt this was a reasonable way forward in this process. Warden Zebian encouraged all councillors to go out and try to obtain responses from residents. CAO Coutinho added the posters will include where to do the survey's, phone numbers, and access to the Stronger Region website.

## 5. BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

### (a) Project Workplan & Schedule – Update

Co-ordinator Latimer reported at the last meeting he circulated a draft of the work plan and project schedule. He confirmed he didn't bring an updated draft at this point as his expectation is to have a final workplan and schedule for the committee to review and consider at the March meeting. He noted the working group which includes representatives from the Department of Municipal Affairs continues to meet on a weekly basis to consider what needs to be in the workplan and develop a realistic schedule and implementation of the workplan over the next 6-12 months. He noted moving forward with the governance piece will be a key focus over the next 6-8 weeks. He stated that responses have been received from the RFP's adding the CAO's will speak to the responses and that the contracts will need to be awarded so the work can commence.

### (b) RFP's / Studies – Update

CAO Laycock reported the HR Analysis and Interim HR Support Services RFP closed and six responses were received ~~and he~~and he He advised that staff and a member of DMA are reviewing, and he hopes a recommendation will be made to the committee in March. He noted the Communications Services RFP closes on February 28<sup>th</sup> and the Asset Management closes on March 7<sup>th</sup>. He confirmed staff will be coming forward to the committee with recommendations on awarding those contracts. He suggested there are other RFP's that staff will be working on and will bring forward for consideration, namely; Fire ~~RFP~~RFP and Pension RFP's.

Co-ordinator Latimer advised there was an RFP out for an executive search to find a CAO for the new municipality. He noted as of last Thursday they received four submissions and he asked CAO Coutinho and Shannon Bennett to help review and evaluate. He advised that a recommendation would be brought to the committee at the next meeting in March.

**(c) Communications Interim Support – Update**

CAO Coutinho reported a company – PR Hive - was hired to assist during the transition phase. ~~He~~ he noted that ~~in the audience is Robi~~ yn Maclsaac ~~of PR Hive was in the audience – and is -who has been working with the~~ Communications Co-ordinator and are currently working with the Communications Co-ordinator on a newsletter to be mailed out to every household to provide an update on the process.

**(d) Project Administrator – Update**

CAO Coutinho reported that 14 submissions were received for this position and they are still in the process of interviews. He confirmed an update will be provided at the March meeting.

**(e) Co-ordinators Report**

Co-ordinator Latimer advised that an update was provided in the package circulated this evening.

**6. NEW BUSINESS**

**(a) Happy Community Funding Request**

CAO Laycock explained this is a recommendation report to the Co-ordinating Committee to support the Happy Community Project which is looking to leverage \$10,000 to receive \$50,000 from the Department of Community Culture and Heritage. He added that Barry Braun had approached him in November, and he assisted him in developing a project proposal to help bridge the gap between the rural and urban areas of Windsor and West Hants through a grass roots approach. He confirmed a motion did not pass at West Hants Council but was brought forth by Warden Zebian this evening to leverage funding through the Province.

Warden Zebian suggested this is a great group of people who have come together who have brought out all the volunteers and create the functions that are going on in our communities. He offered that West Hants Council felt it was more of a discussion for both units and that it should come to the Co-ordinating Committee.

**MOVED and SECONDED that the Co-ordinating Committee support the Happy Community Project proposal as attached to the February 25, 2019 Co-ordinating Committee report and commit funds for the project of up to \$10,000, subject to approval of Provincial funding.**

Deputy Mayor Murley stated that their CAO made a recommendation for this to go through their budget process. CAO Coutinho confirmed this and explained that their Council supported the idea and agreed that it was a good initiative in the community, however at the time they were not certain which funding came first. He suggested normally this would be discussed during budget deliberations, however it was time sensitive as funding was available for the 2018/19 fiscal year. He confirmed that their Council is supportive of cost sharing based on a per capita basis. Deputy Mayor Murley added that she was left with the impression that Council would likely support it based on a formula which resulted in approximately \$2,000. She asked if this Committee approves the motion if that funding would become a nil point. CAO Coutinho advised that Council hadn't voted on it but discussed whether it was feasible, and he suggested even though it was not budgeted he could find \$2,000 in the budget capacity. He suggested if the motion is not approved at this committee the project will not move forward.

**Motion Carried.**

**(c) Budget Update**

CAO Laycock reported an update has been provided in the package. He confirmed that staff will have a better idea of any adjustments that can be made once the RFP's have been awarded.

**7. BILL 55, SECTION 12 ITEMS – (None at this time)**

**8. ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA**

**9. CORRESPONDENCE**

**(a)February 20, 2019 – Councillor Jennifer Daniels**

Warden Zebian reported that West Hants created a new committee of Council which was tasked with dealing with rural issues. He noted that Councillor Daniels is heading this committee on behalf of West Hants. Councillor Daniels expressed concern how the committee could efficiently have correspondence and information go directly to the transition team because it is a Council committee. She suggested this would need to be resolved. She offered that she wanted to see the community engaged effectively and meaningfully and asked if the issues should be identified through the workplan or whether the committee should bring it to the Co-ordinating Committee. CAO Laycock confirmed this is a committee of West Hants Council and any position would have to go through them for support and then a formal communication would come to the Co-ordinating Committee.

**10. IN CAMERA SESSION**

**MOVED AND SECONDED TO MOVE IN CAMERA AS PER SECTION MGA section 2 (e) (g).  
MOTION Carried.**

**MOVED in camera at 7:17 pm.**

**MOVED SECONDED TO COME OUT OF CAMERA AT 7:35 pm.**

**NEXT CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE MEETING DATE(S) & ADJOURNMENT** The next meeting is scheduled for March 18, 2019 at 6:00 pm.

**MOVED/SECONDED THAT AT 7:40 PM, THE MEETING BE ADJOURNED. MOTION  
CARRIED**

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Chair

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Municipal Clerk