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The Municipality of Kings and the Towns of Annapolis Royal, Berwick, Kentville, Middleton and Wolfville

Valley Region Solid Waste-Resource Management Authority

Wednesday, April 15, 2020

9:00am

By Conference Call

These minutes have been posted on our Website in keeping with the Directive from Minister Chuck Porter. The minutes are in draft form and subject to amendment upon final approval by the Valley Region Solid Waste-Resource Management Authority.

Attendees

Members Present: Jeff Cantwell, Eric Bolland, Barry Corbin, Martha Armstrong, Gail Smith and John Kinsella

Alternates Present: none

Guests: Mike Livingstone, Manager Financial Reporting, Municipality of Kings and Sandi Millett-Campbell, CAO -Town of Annapolis Royal

Regrets: None

Staff: Andrew Wort, Jeff Martin, Andrew Garrett, Geoff McCain and Brenda Davidson

Agenda Item No. 1 – Welcome and Call to Order

Chair Kinsella welcomed everyone calling the meeting to order at 9:03am. It was noted that this meeting is being held by conference call in recognition of the seriousness of the current conditions around mitigating the potential spread of Covid-19. All meeting participants were asked to identify themselves when speaking.

Agenda Item No. 2 – Approval of the Agenda

ON MOTION OF BARRY CORBIN AND SECONDED BY GAIL SMITH THAT THE VALLEY REGION SOLID WASTE-RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY APPROVE THE AGENDA, AS CIRCULATED.

MOTION CARRIED.

Agenda Item No. 3 – Approval of the Minutes:

Agenda Item No. 3.1 - Approval of Draft Minutes from Regular Authority Meeting held March 18, 2020

ON MOTION OF ERIC BOLLAND AND SECONDED BY MARTHA ARMSTRONG THAT THE VALLEY REGION SOLID WASTE-RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING HELD MARCH 18, 2020, AS CIRCULATED.

MOTION CARRIED.

Agenda Item No. 4 – Business Arising from the Minutes

There was no business arising from the minutes brought before the Authority at this time.

Agenda Item No. 5 – General Manager Report

Agenda Item No. 5.1 – Update: Party Approval of Draft 2020-2021 Operating and Capital Budget

A round table was held with regard to the status of budget approval within each of the Parties as follows:

- **Town of Wolfville** – operating and capital budget have been approved.
- **Town of Annapolis Royal** – budget has been recommended for approval and will be dealt with during the Council session to be held next Monday
- **Town of Berwick** – operating and capital budget have been approved.
- **Town of Kentville** – operating and capital budget have been discussed and approval is anticipated during the upcoming Council session.
- **Town of Middleton** – budget has been discussed and it is anticipated that the operating and capital budget will be approved during a Council session this coming Monday
- **Municipality of Kings** – the operating and capital budgets were both approved during a Council session held April 9, 2020

General Manager Wort noted that he has received notification from the Municipality of Kings that their Solicitor does have some concerns regarding moving forward with the approval of the Bylaw and associated Directives. The matter will be discussed by the County's Solicitor and the Authority's Solicitor later today with General Manager Wort indicating that he will keep all informed as the matter continues to evolve. It was further noted that a confirmation of whether or not Parties who have approved the Bylaw will have to redo to process if any amendments to the Bylaw are required to satisfy legal concerns.

In response to the question, it was noted that it is being indicated at this time that the spring clean-up service has been postponed. General Manager Wort explained that he is considering how best to proceed in the future, but that with the employees at the management centre sites split into two groups, there is not enough man-power on site to meet the influx of materials that would result if the clean-up service were to proceed. It was further noted that the contracted service provider supports the postponement as they too would have staffing challenges if the service were to proceed at this time. It was stressed that all measures are being taken to ensure essential services continue while limiting access to the management centre sites.

Agenda Item No. 5.2 – Update: Activities around response to Covid-19 Pandemic

General Manager Wort referred to the Report to Authority: Update: Covid-19 Pandemic and Solid Waste Operations, dated April 9, 2020, as circulated and attached to these minutes, providing the Authority with

a full overview of the measures that have been put in place in response to the Covid-19 Pandemic. Mr. Wort noted that in addition to the measures noted in the report, staff are considering how best to accommodate the number of requests that are being received to establish commercial charge accounts at the Management Centre sites. It was stressed that measures have been put in place to restrict access to the Management Centre sites to protect employees, while at the same time it is critical to ensure that urgent disposal needs are being addressed. In response to the question a round table was held with regard to any concerns that are being heard at the Party level with the biggest challenge being noted being the postponement of the spring clean-up service. It was noted the Town of Berwick has also withdrawn the normal brush and leaf clean-up. Another challenge is the established clothing donation bins in and around communities with Communications Manager Garrett noting that it mostly the Diabetes Association bins creating problems as most bins put in place by other organizations continue to be managed by those organizations. Staff are addressing any received complaints regarding the bins.

It was further noted that a letter has been received from the Department of Environment regarding their approval of any variances from normal disposal practices with Communications Manager Garrett to provide an update during his report.

Agenda Item No. 5.3 – Update: Notification to Municipality of the District of Chester regarding surplus from 2019-2020 operations

General Manager Wort noted he is drafting a letter to the Municipality of the District of Chester adding that he just this morning received their current budget information which he will review as soon as possible.

Agenda Item No. 6 – Staff Reports

Agenda Item No. 6.1 – Manager of Finance

Agenda Item No. 6.1.1 – Unaudited Revenue and Expense Statement for the Period ending March 31, 2020

Finance Manager McCain noted that the Unaudited Revenue and Expense Statement for March is unavailable at this time. Mr. McCain further noted that after analysis, revenues at the East Management Centre are down about 6% and the West Management Centre revenues are down about 18.5% when compared to the same time period last year.

A discussion arose regarding overall cashflow requirements with Finance Manager McCain reminding the Board that in keeping with the new Intermunicipal Services Agreement that the Authority invoices the Parties quarterly with the 1st invoice for the new fiscal year to be released in May. General Manager Wort noted that he is cognizant of cash flow issues for not only the Authority but also its Parties. After a short discussion it was the consensus that Mike Livingstone will provide support to Authority staff in developing a cash flow model on which to base Party invoicing.

Agenda Item No. 6.2 – Operations Manager

Operations Manager Martin noted the past weeks have been extremely challenging as plans were developed and implemented in response to the Covid-19 pandemic. The management centre team members are, for the most part, handling the situation very well. Mr. Martin noted that he is on site every day providing support as needed. It was further noted that the West Management Centre has proven to be more of a challenge than what was originally anticipated with a significant surge in curbside collected

materials being managed through the site. It is anticipated that the volume of material will level to anticipated levels over the coming weeks. Operations Manager Martin also noted that the seasonal bins in cottage country are being serviced on the weekend with very few complaints being received.

Chair Kinsella asked Operations Manager Martin to express appreciation on behalf of the Board for the work that is being done.

In response to the question, it was noted that all efforts are being made to ensure other services such as responding to green cart requests are being addressed as possible on a priority basis. The Authority was reminded that the staff person who normally delivered this service has left the Authority and assumed another position. It was also noted that that person also performed the hotline function in conjunction with another team member who is currently off work for medical reasons. To address this deficiency, the task is being shared by a number of administration office team members who have whole heartedly accepted the challenge.

Mr. Martin further noted that the transition to the new collection service and the new transportation services have gone very well.

General Manager Wort added that we have another staff member returning to work next week from a maternity leave and that person will be quickly brought up to speed and put into active service.

Agenda Item No. 6.3 – Office Manager

Agenda Item No. 6.3.1 – External Audit Report: Occupational Health and Safety System

Office Manager Davidson was pleased to refer to the WCB Certified Certificate and associated Health and Safety Audit, both as circulated and attached to these minutes. It was noted that while the Authority's occupational health and safety system scored very well under the Audit criteria, as shown in the Report, there is work to do and the Management Team will be developing a plan to address any noted deficiencies.

Agenda Item No. 6.4 – Communications Manager/Regional Coordinator

Communications Manager Garrett noted that he will start with the Region Chairs matter relating to landfill disposal variance requests. A letter has been received from the Honourable Gordon Wilson, Minister of Environment, stating that variances will only be considered based on specific information being provided to ensure all possible options are being explored to maintain waste diversion. While the Authority has not yet been affected as Scotia Recycling continues to fully operate, that situation could change very quickly if, for example, they were to suffer an identified Covid-19 case with close contact tracing requiring a number of their team members to go into isolation. It was further noted that when Colchester closed their recycling processing facility and asked residents to hold their recyclables there was a very quick public response raising a number of concerns with taking that approach.

A letter in response to the Minister's letter is being drafted with the Regional Chairs Committee indicating that they would like to see the letter finalized and released in the next day or two.

In follow-up to the earlier discussion regarding donation bins, it was noted that where necessary, staff will determine when a site should be cleaned up using the Authority's forces with invoices for costs to be prepared and released to those deemed responsible to recover costs.

Mr. Garrett then referred to the implementation of the new 4-day per week collection schedule in the middle of the pandemic and that generally the new service is going very well. As indicated earlier staff have stepped up to address the needs related to servicing inquiries through the hot line, e-mail and social media. Overall feedback regarding the postponement of the spring clean-up service has been positive with an indication of understanding. The volume of calls is slowing gradually with most calls now relating to opening new commercial accounts, and whether or not there is flexibility in the volume of materials placed at the curb for collection.

Mr. Garrett also noted that there have been some issues with the Recycle Coach App as users are required to reinstall the App to have access to their new collection schedules with staff helping residents as possible.

Mr. Garrett continued with his report, noting that the Authority has been granted 1 full time summer student with 100% salary recovery through the Clean Foundation and Divert NS program. Applications have been arriving and are under review. It is hoped that the student will start in about 1 month however, the funding bodies are fully aware that due to the circumstances at this time, adaptations may be required. It is the intent to have this student perform audits to confirm waste-resource materials being received through the different sectors to include materials generated from within Party municipalities.

In response to the question regarding other student funding programs that are currently available, it was noted that it is not anticipated at this time to draw on that opportunity.

Also in response to the question it was noted that project with the 2 schools who were the winners of the contest, Aldershot and Dwight Ross will likely be suspended for now with more information to be provided when it becomes available.

Agenda Item No. 6.4 1 – Communications and Enforcement Activity Reports

There were no communications and enforcement activity reports to bring before the Authority at this time.

Agenda Item No. 6.4.2 – Update: Party Approval of Valley Region Solid Waste-Resource Management Bylaw

This item was discussed earlier during the meeting.

Agenda Item No. 7 – New Business

There was no new business to bring before the Authority at this time.

Agenda Item No. 8 – Correspondence

Agenda Item No. 8.1 – March 30, 2020 Letter to Chair Kinsella from the Honourable Gordon Wilson

The Authority acknowledged the receipt of the letter, as circulated and attached to these minutes.

Agenda Item No. 9 – In-Camera Session in keeping with Section 22(2)(e) of the Municipal Government Act.

ON MOTION OF MARTHA ARMSTRONG AND SECONDED BY ERIC BOLLAND THAT THE VALLEY REGION SOLID WASTE-RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY MOVE TO AN IN-CAMERA SESSION IN KEEPING WITH SECTION 22(2)(c) OF THE MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT ACT.

MOTION CARRIED.

The April regular monthly meeting of the Valley Region Solid Waste-Resource Management Authority resumed at 10:15am.

Agenda Item No. 10 – Next Meeting – May 20, 2020

The next Regular Monthly Meeting of the Valley Region Solid Waste-Resource Management Authority will be held on Wednesday, May 20, 2020, beginning at 9:00am, in keeping with the normal meeting schedule. Depending upon the circumstances at the time, if the meeting proceeds it may again be held via conference call.

Agenda Item No. 12 – Adjournment

ON MOTION OF BARRY CORBIN THE APRIL 15, 2020 REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING OF THE VALLEY REGION SOLID WASTE-RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY ADJOURNED AT 10:16AM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Brenda Davidson
Office Manager
Valley Waste-Resource Management