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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, July 21, 2021**

**9:00am**

**In Person Meeting with some Webex participants**

**Attendees**

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**Members Present: Derrick Jamieson, Martha Armstrong, Gail Smith and Pat Power**

**Alternate Members Present: Wendy Elliott and Sandra Snow**

**Guests: Mike Livingstone, Manager Financial Reporting, Municipality of Kings and Darren Chaisson, MNP (to present Audited Statements for the year ending March 31, 2021) – both via Webex**

**Regrets: Craig Gerrard**

**Staff: Andrew Wort, Andrew Garrett, Ken Redden, Doug Armstrong (via Webex), John Ross and Brenda Davidson**

**Agenda Item No. 1 – Welcome and Call to Order**

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Chair Armstrong welcomed everyone calling the meeting to order at 9:01am.

**Agenda Item No. 2 – Approval of the Agenda**

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**ON MOTION OF DERRICK JAMIESON AND SECONDED BY WENDY ELLIOTT THAT THE VALLEY REGION SOLID WASTE-RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY APPROVE THE AGENDA, WITH AGENDA ITEM NO. 6.1 TO TAKE PLACE DIRECTLY FOLLOWING AGENDA ITEM 3.1.**

**MOTION CARRIED.**

**Agenda Item No. 3 – Approval of the Minutes**

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**Agenda Item No. 3.1 – Approval of the Draft Minutes from Regular Authority Meeting June 16, 2021**

**ON MOTION OF GAIL SMITH AND SECONDED BY DERRICK JAMIESON THAT THE VALLEY REGION SOLID WASTE-RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING HELD JUNE 16, 2021, AS CIRCULATED.**

**MOTION CARRIED.**

**Agenda Item No. 6.1 – Status of Financial Audit for the year ending March 31, 2021**

Chair Armstrong welcomed Darren Chaisson, CPA, CA Audit Engagement Partner with MNP indicating that Mr. Chaisson has joined the meeting today to present the Authority's Draft Consolidated Financial Statements for the year ending March 31, 2021. A copy of the Draft Statements, as circulated, are attached to these minutes. Mr. Chaisson thanked the Authority for the opportunity to present the Statements providing a "high level" review touching on the key financial points within the statements. Mr. Chaisson noted that the Authority's Audit Committee met just yesterday to review the Statements with only a few minor adjustments resulting. While there are some minor matters outstanding, it is not anticipated that those matters will have any material impact. Mr. Chaisson reviewed the statements focusing on the surplus position that the Authority is in and the surplus payable to the partners as a result of the surplus position. The surplus includes not only the surplus funds from 2020-2021 financial activity, but also the surplus retained by motion by the Authority from 2018-2019 activity. Mr. Chaisson further noted that the Auditor's Report is unqualified indicating a clean audit report.

As there were no questions raised, Chair Armstrong thanked Mr. Chaisson for taking the time to provide the informative presentation to the Authority and Mr. Chaisson left the meeting at this time.

**ON MOTION OF SANDRA SNOW AND SECONDED BY GAIL SMITH THAT THE VALLEY REGION SOLID WASTE-RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY ACCEPTS THE AUDIT COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION TO APPROVE THE CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDING MARCH 31, 2021.**

**MOTION CARRIED.**

#### **Agenda Item No. 4 – Business Arising from the Minutes**

##### **Agenda Item No. 4.1 – Sustainable Development Goals Act: Discussion and Consultation Opportunity**

Communications Manager Garrett reminded the Authority that he had circulated the Sustainable Development Goals Act: Discussion Paper, as prepared and released by the NS Department of Environment and Climate Change, during the last meeting. Responding to the discussion paper offers the Authority a valuable opportunity to provide a response from a solid waste perspective. With that in mind, based on discussion with provincial counterparts, Mr. Garrett has prepared a Feedback from the Valley Region Solid Waste-Resource Management Authority document, as circulated and attached to these minutes for the Authority's consideration. Mr. Garrett noted that it is fully anticipated that similar responses will be submitted from other waste management regions across the Province. The deadline for the submission of the response is next week and Mr. Garrett indicated that he is seeking the Authority's approval to submit the Feedback response.

A short discussion arose regarding the impending provincial election and the potential impact of the election results. It was indicated that the Regional Chairs have met with Minister Keith Irving who was clearly indicating his support to move Extended Producer Responsibility Regulations forward with Sandra Snow indicating that she too is hearing support for moving the Regulations forward as a high level priority. It was further noted that New Brunswick has already brought draft Extended Producer Responsibility Regulations forward with a very aggressive proposed 18-month implementation timeline. Mr. Garrett noted that it is possible that Nova Scotia may attempt to, if not meet, shorten the New Brunswick implementation timeline and further that Minister Irving has indicated that the Retail Council is indicating a preferred route of a harmonized system with New Brunswick.

It is fully expected that this matter will continue to move forward when the new provincial government is in place.

**ON MOTION OF WENDY ELLIOTT AND SECONDED BY GAIL SMITH THAT THE VALLEY REGION SOLID WASTE-RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY APPROVES THE IMMEDIATE SUBMISSION OF THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS ACT: DISCUSSION PAPER FEEDBACK FROM THE VALLEY REGION SOLID WASTE-RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY RESPONSE DOCUMENT, AS CIRCULATED AND ATTACHED TO THESE MINUTES, TO THE NOVA SCOTIA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE.**

**MOTION CARRIED.**

#### **Agenda Item No. 5 – General Manager’s Report**

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##### **Agenda Item No. 5.1 – Consideration of Authority Strategic Planning Session**

General Manager Wort indicated that the Authority’s participation in a strategic planning session would be valuable to determine organizational future direction in terms of facilities, diversion and policy. As an example of an item to be discussed, further consideration regarding the cost recovery for the processing of the various waste streams would be a key item as, for example, the current tipping fees for recyclable materials do not cover the total cost for managing the materials. The strategic planning session would be a wonderful opportunity for the Authority to develop a plan based on set strategic goals and to work with the Parties to the Intermunicipal Services Agreement to build consensus and achieve those goals. General Manager Wort added that while it would be ideal to undertake the session prior to the development of the budget for the upcoming fiscal year, that timeline may be too aggressive; however, he did want to secure a consensus from the Authority as to whether or not staff should move forward with the preliminary planning for the session.

After a short discussion it was the unanimous consensus that General Manager Wort move forward with the preliminary planning for the Authority’s participation in a strategic planning session.

General Manager Wort then addressed the following items:

- **Surplus Funds** – General Manager Wort noted that while the Authority is once again in the position of a significant surplus at year end the contribution to the surplus from actual operations is only about \$80,000 of the total with the remainder primarily related to Chester landfill operations and Municipality of Annapolis County matters. With the significant consolidated surplus as reported earlier during the meeting, Mr. Wort would like to suggest that the Authority consider using some of those funds for reserves. For example, there is strong merit for the consideration of a landfill cell construction reserve which has the potential of smoothing financial requirements into the future depending upon the success of Sustane Technologies. It would be of great value to stabilize funding requirements into the future, eliminating sudden reductions or spikes in funding requirements. If the Authority were to move forward with this suggestion, amendments to the current Intermunicipal Services Agreement and contract with Chester for landfill disposal services would be required and further staff would work with the Municipality of the County of Kings to determine the best way to move forward.

- Tonnages – Mr. Wort then presented slides on current tonnages being managed through the Authority’s operations, as attached to these minutes, explaining the variances being experienced including an increase in residual waste and the number of small vehicles visiting the management centre sites. With regard to residual waste increases, Mr. Wort noted that after some investigation, the most cost-efficient manner to dispose of the stock piles of mixed wood and gyproc was to send the material to landfill. In the past the wood product had been sent to Brooklyn Energy for disposal; however, Brooklyn Energy is no longer able to accept the material due to contamination by treated/painted wood. There is, as anticipated, an increase being seen when compared to last year in residual waste disposal due to the return of waste-resource materials from Municipality of Annapolis County. General Manager Wort noted that he had hoped to have updated financial information from Chester, but unfortunately that information is not yet available as they are transitioning a new Accountant.
- Safety Issue – staff continue to consider how best to address the safety issue associated with the current compaction equipment at the East Management Centre. Strong consideration is being given to transitioning to alternate compaction equipment which, if determined to be the best step forward, would be in the range of 1 million dollars to re-fit both the East and West Management Centres and there would be a requirement to work with the current collection contractor to ensure that they have the required equipment. It was noted that if the management centres are redesigned to manage compaction with alternate equipment, the three key benefits of addressing the safety issues, reducing labour requirements and improving efficiency on the tipping floor would result. Mr. Wort noted that he and Interim Operations Manager Redden will be visiting the Otter Lake facility tomorrow to view the compaction equipment in use at that site, as it is similar to what is now under consideration.
- Operations Manager Recruit – the recruitment process for the new Operations Manager continues to move forward successfully.
- Municipality of Annapolis County – General Manager Wort noted that he and Communications Manager Garrett met with Municipality of Annapolis County, CAO, David Dick and Janice Young, Executive Assistant and Project Coordinator to the CAO, earlier this week and the meeting went very, very well. Both Mr. Dick and Ms. Young indicated that the transition to the Authority’s provision of receiving services has gone very well with no concerns being raised. It was noted that there may be a few matters to further investigate in the future, including potential revision to the current collection schedule to reduce the volume of material being managed at the West Management Centre every other Tuesday. It was further noted that there was indication that Annapolis County is interested in re-integrating fully into the Authority with it being noted that the Parties would be responsible for approval. It was indicated that it may be of value, if full integration does not move forward in the very near future, that perhaps, as a minimum, a 5-year contract for services be considered along with perhaps the Authority offering the re-establishment of some education and enforcement services. In response to the question, it was noted that the Authority is not providing any green cart replacement services at this time. On a final note General Manager Wort reminded the Authority that under the current arrangement with the Municipality of Annapolis County they are not entitled to any portion of the Authority’s surplus funds and further that the additional tonnages managed through the Authority’s system do help to reduce overall costs.

- Annual Financial Audit – General Manager Wort noted that while he was very pleased to have the Audited Financial Statements available for the Authority’s review today, the process has been a challenge for all involved, which was fully anticipated with new staff and new auditors managing the process. All in all it is felt that the audit has moved forward as smoothly as possible. Staff will meet with the Auditor to further discuss the matter and will address resource challenges with the Auditor. This will also allow the Auditor the opportunity to raise any suggestions they may have to streamline the process next year to ensure that the Authority is able to meet the June 30<sup>th</sup> deadline for the completion of statements in keeping with the Intermunicipal Services Agreement.
- Sick Leave – Mr. Wort noted that the sick leave policy of 20 days each calendar year is posing some challenges. Unfortunately, while the 20 days are granted, the intent is to allow each employee to build a sick leave bank to the total of 130 days to allow available sick leave to bridge pay if a major medical condition preventing the employee to work were to occur. The 130 days will also provide bridge funding to long-term disability coverage. Some employees appear to feel that if we grant 20 days per year, they are going to take 20 days per year which is not sustainable and results in significant pressure on operations. With that in mind, consideration is now being given to developing a new strategy for the management of sick leave benefits.
- Scale House Software – It was noted that staff are moving forward with the replacement of the current scale house software in keeping with the current capital budget. Andrea Gibson-Garrett has been tasked with preparing the foundation work for the project.
- Vacation – General Manager Wort reported that, while not yet finalized, he does anticipate taking vacation leave for most of the month of September.

In response to the question, it was noted that the collection services now being provided in cottage country may be one factor impacting the increase in the residual waste being received with General Manager Wort indicating that staff will further investigate.

In response to the question, General Manager Wort noted that he intends to discuss the potential for the establishment of reserve accounts with Chester during an upcoming meeting.

In response to the question, General Manager Wort noted that Chester did have some concerns about accepting the wood product being shipped for disposal; however, the current contract allows the Authority to move forward in that way. Unfortunately, the fees charged by Chester are based on the 2<sup>nd</sup> generation landfill disposal fees rather than for 1<sup>st</sup> generation construction and demolition disposal fees, with no lower price being offered if materials were separated. Further, if Chester were to process the materials through the construction and demolition debris site, there would be no financial benefit to the Authority. This is an item requiring additional discussion with Chester representatives. Mr. Wort also noted that staff are actively investigating alternative re-use or disposal options for both wood and gyproc materials. On a final note, General Manager Wort noted that consideration could be given to arrange for the Authority to visit the Chester site in the fall allowing the opportunity for the Authority to also visit Sustane operations.

**ON MOTION OF WENDY ELLIOTT AND SECONDED BY GAIL SMITH THAT THE VALLEY REGION SOLID WASTE-RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY ACCEPT THE GENERAL MANAGER’S REPORT.**

**MOTION CARRIED.**

**Agenda Item No. 6 – Finance Director Report**

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**Agenda Item No. 6.2 – Temporary Borrowing Resolution 2021-22 Capital Program**

Finance Director Armstrong referred to the Report to Authority – Temporary Borrowing Resolution – Capital Projects 2021-22, dated July 8, 2021, and the associated Temporary Borrowing Resolution in the amount of \$950,750.00, both as circulated and attached to these minutes. Mr. Armstrong explained that the resolution is to cover the financing requirements for borrowings associated with the capital projects as approved for the current fiscal year.

**ON MOTION OF WENDY ELLIOTT AND SECONDED BY DERRICK JAMIESON THAT THE VALLEY REGION SOLID WASTE-RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY APPROVES THE TEMPORARY BORROWING RESOLUTION IN THE AMOUNT OF \$950,750.00 TO FINANCE THE 2021/22 CAPITAL PROJECTS THAT ARE BEING FUNDED THROUGH BORROWING;  
AND FURTHER,  
AUTHORIZES THE CHAIR AND GENERAL MANAGER TO EXECUTE THE TEMPORARY BORROWING RESOLUTION ON BEHALF OF THE AUTHORITY;  
AND FURTHER,  
THAT THE AFOREMENTIONED EXECUTED RESOLUTIONS BE SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS FOR MINISTERIAL APPROVAL.**

**MOTION CARRIED.**

**Agenda Item No. 6.3 – Variance Report for Period Ending June 30/21**

Finance Director Armstrong referred to the Revenue and Expense – Variance Report for the period of April 1 – June 30, 2021, as circulated and attached to these minutes, noting that all activity appears to be as anticipated at this time providing a quick overview of the key variances noted.

**ON MOTION OF SANDRA SNOW AND SECONDED BY WENDY ELLIOTT THAT THE VALLEY REGION SOLID WASTE-RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY ACCEPT THE REVENUE AND EXPENSE VARIANCE REPORT FOR THE PERIOD OF APRIL 1-JUNE 30, 2021.**

**MOTION CARRIED.**

**Agenda Item No. 7 – Communications Manager/Regional Coordinator and Communications Reports**

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Communications Manager Garrett referred to the Report to Authority – Regional Coordinator Report, dated July 12, 2021, as circulated and attached to these minutes highlighting the following key items:

- Meeting with Minister Irving – as discussed earlier during the meeting
- Datacall Presentation – Mr. Garrett referred to the 2019/20 Datacall presentation, as circulated and attached to these minutes noting that the Valley Region performed very well, particularly with the costs and diversion rates from the curbside collection program. It was noted that an invitation to Don MacQueen, Province of NS, could be extended if the Authority would like to have a full presentation regarding the datacall results with interest in doing so being indicated.

- Dairy Stewardship – as per the Report with it being noted that the Dairy Stewardship Program is a great example of very successful fully industry-funded stewardship program.
- Education Update, July 2021 - as circulated and attached to these minutes with it being noted that with the relaxation of Covid-19 restrictions, staff are now visiting more businesses, camps etc.
- Enforcement Report to Authority, June 2021 – as circulated and attached to these minutes. It was noted that staff are experiencing an increase in the number of complaints related to illegal burning and that a public relations campaign is now under development and will be released to raise awareness. It was further noted that a winch has been purchased and will be installed on one of the Authority’s pick-up trucks to allow for the easier collection of heavy illegally-dumped items.
- Social Media Report, June 2021 – as circulated and attached to these minutes – it was noted that in response to recent incidents, staff will be working with Chester to design a campaign for proper lithium battery disposal to reduce this potential fire hazard. Mr. Garrett also noted that the Authority’s new website will launch on August 16, 2021 encouraging everyone to take the time to visit the website.

A discussion arose regarding the fire hazard associated with lithium batteries where it was noted that for disposal, the batteries should be encased in individual plastic baggies or each of the battery terminals should be covered to ensure that they cannot connect with another object creating the energy to start a fire. The Call2Recycle program does accept these batteries, however, they have stopped allowing new drop off locations to encourage the provincial government to move from a voluntary disposal program to an industry-paid stewardship program. General Manager Wort noted that pharmacies have taken the same approach with regard to sharps where a mandatory funded program is being suggested.

On a final note, it was indicated that it is anticipated that once the initial extended producer responsibility regulations are put in place, other associated programs will follow.

**ON MOTION OF GAIL SMITH AND SECONDED BY SANDRA SNOW THAT THE VALLEY REGION SOLID WASTE-RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY RECEIVE THE COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER REPORTS.**

**MOTION CARRIED.**

**Agenda Item No. 8 – Interim Operations Manager Report**

Interim Operations Manager Redden referred to the Interim Operations Manager Report to the Authority, dated July 21 2021, as circulated and attached to these minutes touching on the key matters including:

- Request for Proposals – Wheel Loader – closed July 8, 2021 with Mr. Redden seeking an Authority representative to serve on the evaluation panel.
- Household Hazardous Waste Management – new contract with Terrapure Environmental for a 5-year period now finalized
- Forklift – the anticipated delivery of the forklift has been delayed to late August
- Wood and Shingle Grinding Operations – as per report, staff will now move forward with making repairs to the construction and demolition debris area at the West Management Centre
- Consumer’s Exemption Permit for the use of dyed diesel – while down to the last minute, the Authority’s permit for the use of dyed diesel has been renewed for a 3-year period. Mr. Redden added that late in the evening on July 15 or early July 16<sup>th</sup>, the theft of diesel fuel occurred at the

East Management Centre. Unfortunately, the video camera work in that area is not yet complete and the contractor has indicated that all work is scheduled to be completed July 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup>. This incident once again reinforces the value that the video camera system will offer.

- Sale of Surplus Cottage Country Bins – the cottage bins originally located around cottage country areas have been declared as surplus and will be offered for public sale soon. Staff will determine a price for each bin and the public will be invited to view and purchase.
- Staffing Complement – unfortunately 2 equipment operator/utility workers recently resigned. We have an accepted offer to replace one of the individuals and interviews are now being held to replace the other.
- Green carts – as per report with Mr. Redden noting that the carts are to be sent for recycling and they will need to be cut in two and then quartered.
- Compaction Equipment – as discussed earlier
- Grounds Maintenance – Mr. Redden noted that staff are receiving several compliments regarding the aesthetic appearance of the Management Centre sites. While funds and staff resources have been dedicated to the project the payback in public perception is invaluable.

In response to the question, it was noted that there was not any damage to the actual fuel tank as a result of the theft but the fuel pump was removed which has now been replaced with better mechanisms in place to secure it.

In response to the question, it was noted that there are approximately 3,000 green carts to be disposed of due to the extent of damage and it was suggested that rather than sending all for recycling perhaps some with lesser damage could be cleaned and held for resale for other purposes with staff indicating that they will further consider options.

**ON MOTION OF DERRICK JAMIESON AND SECONDED BY PAT POWER THAT THE VALLEY REGION SOLID WASTE-RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY ACCEPT THE INTERIM OPERATIONS MANAGER REPORT.**

**MOTION CARRIED.**

Chair Armstrong then noted that Mr. Redden had indicated he was looking for an Authority representative to serve on the evaluation panel for the wheel loader request for proposals. Sandra Snow volunteered to fill the role with a follow-up meeting scheduled to take place on Friday, July 23 at 11:00am in the board room.

**Agenda Item No. 9 – New Business**

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

**Agenda Item No. 10 – Correspondence**

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

**Agenda Item No. 11 – In Camera Session in Keeping with Section 22(2)(e) – Contract Negotiations of the Municipal Government Act**

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**ON MOTION OF SANDRA SNOW AND SECONDED BY DERRICK JAMIESON THAT THE VALLEY REGION SOLID WASTE-RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY MOVE TO AN IN CAMERA SESSION IN KEEPING WITH SECTION 22(2)(E) OF THE MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT ACT.**

**MOTION CARRIED.**

The July regular monthly meeting of the Valley Region Solid Waste-Resource Management Authority was called back to order at 11:03am.

**ON MOTION OF SANDRA SNOW AND SECONDED BY GAIL SMITH THAT THE VALLEY REGION SOLID WASTE-RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY AUTHORIZE ITS GENERAL MANAGER TO EXECUTE THE 20 YEAR LESS A DAY LEASE AGREEMENT WITH SCOTIA RECYCLING;  
AND FURTHER,  
TO AMEND THE CURRENT RECYCLABLE PROCESSING AGREEMENT WITH SCOTIA RECYCLING CONSISTENT WITH THE TERMS OF THE NEW LEASE;  
AND FURTHER,  
TO EXECUTE A SURRENDER OF LEASE TO CANCEL THE EXISTING LEASE AGREEMENT WITH SCOTIA RECYCLING.**

**MOTION CARRIED.**

**Agenda Item No. 12 – Next Meeting**

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**Agenda Item No. 12.1 – August Meeting – August 18, 2021**

The Valley Region Solid Waste-Resource Management Authority will not meet in August unless urgent business requires a meeting to be called.

**Agenda Item No. 12. 2 – September 15, 2021**

The next regular monthly meeting of the Valley Region Solid Waste-Resource Management Authority will be held September 15, 2021 in keeping with the normal meeting schedule.

It is hoped that with the relaxation of the provincially-regulated Covid-19 protocols that all future meetings can be held in-person.

**Agenda Item No. 13 – Adjournment**

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**ON MOTION OF WENDY ELLIOTT AND SECONDED BY DERRICK JAMIESON THE JULY REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING OF THE VALLEY REGION SOLID WASTE-RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY ADJOURNED AT 11:07AM.**

**MOTION CARRIED.**

Respectfully Submitted,

Brenda Davidson  
Office Manager  
Valley Waste-Resource Management