

Resolution 32A

BONUS ZONING (PASSED)

⇒ Halifax Regional Municipality

WHEREAS attracting an increased number of people is necessary to sustain vibrant, dynamic and growing communities; and

WHEREAS HRM is committed to pursuing land use and development principles that emphasize densification and re-development in areas already served by existing infrastructure; and

WHEREAS creating affordable and attractive buildings within existing developments will attract people and establish healthy, mixed-use communities; and

WHEREAS the principle of bonus zoning rewards developers for constructing sites that meet the above-stated goals; and

WHEREAS every municipality in Nova Scotia and the HRM regional centre already has the ability to undertake bonus zoning;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities write to SNSMR in support of HRM's request that bonus zoning be permitted within its boundaries in order to put it on an equal legislative footing with all other Nova Scotia municipalities and to eliminate the inequities within HRM itself.

BACKGROUND:

Strengthening the Regional Centre is a key priority for FIRM: In the summer of 2010, Regional Council unanimously approved Capital Ideas, an approach to growing our urban core that focuses on partnership, infrastructure, investment, and densification of the core to support the economy of Nova Scotia. It endorses principles around land use and development that emphasize redevelopment in areas that are already served by hard and soft infrastructure (streets, pipes, water and power connections, transit, parks, recreation facilities, etc).

By improving the livability of the urban core we can attract a critical mass of people, which will create prosperity. In order to bring more people onto the peninsula, HRM needs to build upon the principles of the HRMbyDesign downtown planning strategy: In particular, having the ability to grant bonus zoning throughout the Regional Centre is imperative to addressing issues of affordability and beautification that we need to attract people. Bonus zoning is the ability to grant extra density to developers in return for an improvement or stipulation of some sort to their site - for example, a set number of units reserved for affordable housing, or green space reserved for resident/public use. These

kinds of mixed use developments are what are required to build the kind of integrated communities that attract people and businesses. Halifax Regional Council requested the legislative power to undertake bonus zoning in a motion dated June 23, 2009.

Bonus zoning is enabled in every other municipality in Nova Scotia, and in downtown Halifax (the area covered by HRMbyDesign legislation). However the rest of the municipality does not have the ability to grant bonus zoning. This creates an unequal situation for IIRM communities outside the Regional Centre. HRM has requested that the Provincial government remedy this situation by extending bonus zoning to all of HRM. The support of UNSM in profiling this request would be helpful.

UNSM

Resolution 33A

BURSARY PROGRAM

⇒ County of Colchester

WHEREAS the Association of Municipal Administrators, Nova Scotia (AMANS) in partnership with the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities (UNSM) and Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations (SNSMR) agreed to explore and develop strategies that can be used effectively to identify, attract, and recruit the next generation of local government officials; and

WHEREAS the above partnership resulted in the preparation of the comprehensive report which was released in 2006 titled "Reality Check: Do You Know Where Your People Are? Attracting the Next Generation of Municipal Government Managers in Nova Scotia"; and

WHEREAS the report states that "municipalities across Nova Scotia will be facing an impending labour shortage, and that there are simply not enough young people to replace the retiring Baby Boomers"; and

WHEREAS one way to bridge this gap will be for municipalities to implement succession plans and to train their current employees to become managers; and

WHEREAS the report also states that "career development opportunities serve to attract competent and motivated people to an organization, lead to higher levels of engagement and to increased retention rates"; and

WHEREAS municipalities that are able to offer training opportunities to new and existing employees will be in a better position to weather this labour shortage; and

WHEREAS financial pressures of professional development and mandatory training are onerous for some municipalities; and

WHEREAS the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities has established a bursary program for women municipal employees that has been successful in supporting the training and development of women;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities' Board work with the AMA and SNSMR in the development of a model, including a funding mechanism and decision making structure, for an inclusive bursary program open to all municipal employees.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: *The Committee does not recommend this resolution.*

EXPLANATION: *While training and development is important to all municipal employees, the research gathered from UNSM's Women in Local Government Report identified fewer training opportunities for women municipal staff, particularly at the clerical level. The Women in Local Government Bursary Program, supported by the UNSM, AMANS, SNSMR and several municipalities, has done a very good job in providing training opportunities for women municipal staff who may not have otherwise pursued advanced training. A bursary program established for both men and women would essentially eliminate the Women in Local Government Bursary Program due to limited funding.*

“C” RESOLUTIONS

Resolution 1C

LONG-TERM FINANCIAL SOLUTION FOR FERRY SERVICES—DIGBY-SAINT JOHN & YARMOUTH-PORTLAND FERRIES

⇒ County of Annapolis

WHEREAS ferry services in Nova Scotia are key Marine Highway Connectors that are vital to transportation, tourism and fisheries sectors in our province; and

WHEREAS maintaining Atlantic Ferry Services is essential to sustaining and developing key economic generators in communities throughout our province; and

WHEREAS the Digby-Saint John Ferry Service and the Yarmouth-Portland Ferry Service are critical for the stability and growth of tourism in the province and economic stability in Southwest Nova Scotia; and

WHEREAS the \$600 million dollar annual seafood industry in Southwest Nova Scotia relies on the Digby ferry to export at least 60% of the seafood landed in the area to national and international markets; and

WHEREAS the Government of Canada has invested in a 3-year extension of funding for the Digby-Saint John ferry to March 31, 2014; and

WHEREAS a long-term funding commitment is needed for the Digby-Saint John ferry service and the Yarmouth-Portland ferry service;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities write the Province in support of the Bay of Fundy Transportation Partnership and the Nova Scotia International Ferry Partnership's lobbying efforts to secure a long-term financial solution for the Digby-Saint John ferry service and the Yarmouth-Portland ferry service.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: *The Committee recommends this resolution.*

“C” RESOLUTIONS

Resolution 2C

HUMAN SEWAGE SLUDGE FERTILIZER (BIOSOLIDS)

⇒ Town of Canso

WHEREAS human sewage sludge (Biosolids) fertilizers are presently used by some farmers in Nova Scotia under Provincial Government approval; and

WHEREAS bio-solids from human sewage are known to include many contaminants in the sludge that may be harmful to public health; and

WHEREAS a full study of the uses of Biosolids fertilizers has not been clearly investigated by either the Province of Nova Scotia or the Government of Canada;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities urge the Province of Nova Scotia to ban the application of human sewage sludge (Biosolids) fertilizers to Nova Scotia farmland until such time as a complete study on the possible harmful effects on human health and user farm lands may be completed by the Government of Nova Scotia to the satisfaction of the citizens of the province; and

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities petition the Federation of Canadian Municipalities to write the Federal Government requesting a ban on treated human sewage sludge (Biosolids) fertilizers on farms across Canada.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: *The Committee does not recommend this resolution.*

EXPLANATION: *A resolution requesting a provincial ban on biosolids was rejected by the UNSM membership in 2010. The province’s regulations on Class A biosolids are the most stringent in Canada. No additional scientific information has been brought forward in the past year that would suggest that the application of Class A biosolids is unsafe.*

“C” RESOLUTIONS

Resolution 3C

STATUTORY HOLIDAY

⇒ District of Digby

WHEREAS there are only five (5) statutory holidays listed in the Nova Scotia Labour Standards Code;

WHEREAS Nova Scotia has the least number of statutory holidays in Canada;

WHEREAS there is competition to entice our workforce to leave Nova Scotia for other parts of the country and the world;

WHEREAS many of our capable workforce would prefer to remain in this Province if they could afford to do so;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities request that the Province of Nova Scotia make the appropriate legislative amendments to add another statutory holiday under the Labour Standards Code.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: *The Committee recommends this resolution.*

“C” RESOLUTIONS

Resolution 4C

STRICTER REGULATIONS FOR PRIVATE CONSTRUCTION AND DEMOLITION (C&D) SITES ON STOCKPILING OF MATERIALS

⇒ County of Pictou

WHEREAS there are 22 Construction and Demolition (C & D) Sites in the province of Nova Scotia; and

WHEREAS since 1995, the province of Nova Scotia has allowed private C & D sites to operate; and

WHEREAS private C & D sites are only subject to guidelines, rather than the strict operating permits and regulations that municipally-owned C & D sites must abide by; and

WHEREAS private C & D sites are not subject to the same inspection frequency that municipal site are subjected to; and

WHEREAS the guidelines do not specifically address the issue of stockpiling of materials on the site;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities request the Minister of Environment to impose regulations on private C & D sites across the province that prohibits the stockpiling of materials and provide for adequate inspection of the private sites.

Background:

In August 2010, a fire broke out at a private C & D site, for which a permit was issued by the Department of Environment in 2007. The site had a stockpile of debris estimated to be in excess of 7 stories high. Between August 5 and August 16, 2010, local volunteer fire departments were called to the scene of the ongoing fire every day. Eleven fire departments were involved, and in this time period 2 million gallons of water was pumped onto the massive pile.

The fire is speculated to have been caused by spontaneous combustion, demonstrating the risk of the stockpiling practices. Residents have provided pictures of banned materials that are contained or stockpiled on the site since the fire; however, the Department of Environment has stated that the activities have not been viewed during their inspections. The materials are buried and out of sight.

The Municipally owned site is inspected on an annual basis; however, the private C & D sites are inspected once every three years.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: *The Committee recommends this resolution.*

“D” RESOLUTIONS

Resolution 1D

ACCESS TO PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES’ EXPERTISE

⇒ County of Kings

WHEREAS the quality of policy decisions made by municipal councils is directly proportional to the information that is provided as background to the decision-making process; and

WHEREAS the Province of Nova Scotia, as well as individual municipal councils and the general public, have a strategic interest in ensuring that all municipalities are provided with the highest quality of background information on which to make decisions; and

WHEREAS the different departments and agencies of the provincial government often have the expertise, resources and information that can assist municipal councils in the decision-making process; and

WHEREAS, for reasons which are sometimes unknown, government employees are often hesitant and/or unwilling to positively respond to requests from municipal staff and/or council members, for professional advice, opinion and/or observations; the effect of such if provided, could be to the benefit the municipal government decision-making process; and

WHEREAS it is considered desirable that provincial government employees at all levels of the bureaucracy, when a request is made by a municipality, that they (provincial government employees) be encouraged to respond positively and provide information – including opinions and observations – that the individual employee believes may assist in the municipal decision-making process; and

WHEREAS it is important that such actions by provincial employees be undertaken without fear of negative repercussion in any way;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities take immediate action to establish a working committee, which will include municipal and provincial government representation, for the stated purpose of identifying and seeking to overcome present day barriers that hinder provincial government employees from providing requested background information, observations and opinions which can help municipal staff and councils in making informed decisions on matters that fall within municipal jurisdiction.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: *The Committee does not recommend this resolution.*

EXPLANATION: *The Committee indicated that provincial staff, including SNSMR's municipal advisors, is quick to respond to any questions originating from municipalities. Provincial staff is expected to respond in a manner that reflects provincial policy and not personal opinion. Mechanisms already exist through the UNSM where information can be obtained from the Province on behalf of municipalities.*

“D” RESOLUTIONS

Resolution 2D

PROVISION OF INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIAL ON THE SUBJECT OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN NOVA SCOTIA

⇒ County of Kings

WHEREAS municipal Councillors across the Province may be called upon from time to time to visit a classroom to enlighten students on the nature of municipal government; and

WHEREAS it is prudent to provide our young people with knowledge on this subject as it is required to become more aware of, and more engaged in, civic affairs throughout their lives; and

WHEREAS there are few opportunities within the curriculum of our public school system to raise student consciousness about the importance of local government; and

WHEREAS public engagement remains one of the most important challenges facing all governments at all levels; and

WHEREAS many Councillors in Nova Scotia can make practical use of instructional material presented to our students with consistency in form and content across the Province; and

WHEREAS the effectiveness of such instructional material may be enhanced by tailoring one version for elementary students and another version for high school students;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities produce and distribute to all municipalities short educational presentations on the subject of Local Government in Nova Scotia.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: *The Committee recommends this resolution.*

“D” RESOLUTIONS

Resolution 3D

REQUEST TO DEVELOP A RESOLUTION TRACKING AND REPORTING PROCESS

⇒ County of Annapolis

WHEREAS the membership of the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities reviews and approves Resolutions at the Annual General Meeting with the expectation that every effort will be undertaken to ensure that the intent of each Resolution is fulfilled and acted upon in a timely manner; and

WHEREAS the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities currently does not have a reporting process to clearly communicate progress on each Resolution approved by the membership; and

WHEREAS the membership would benefit from a standardized reporting process for Resolutions;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities be required to act in a timely manner and to the fullest extent possible on each Resolution approved by the membership; and

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that the UNSM develop a Resolution tracking and reporting process with progress on each Resolution communicated to the membership at Annual General Meetings.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: *The Committee recommends this resolution.*

“D” RESOLUTIONS

Resolution 4D

UNSM STRUCTURE

⇒ District of Lunenburg

WHEREAS the object of the UNSM is to represent the interests of local governments in the Province, and to act as the advocate for member units on all such matters as are properly within the jurisdiction of the government of the Province; and

WHEREAS the objects also aim to further municipal interests by encouraging cooperation between municipal units; and

WHEREAS about ten years ago the UNSM determined that one way of achieving its objective was to form three separate and distinct caucuses, representing its regional, rural and town members; and

WHEREAS it appears that after almost ten years, the objective of speaking with a unified voice and promoting what is best in local government and service is sometimes lost within this structure; and members do not feel as though they have been part of the debate and decision making process on policy issues that originate from a caucus; and

WHEREAS a review of our structure is always in order, and there are those who feel that the present caucus structure is not working as effectively as it should in providing a unified voice for local government; and

WHEREAS we must always convince our own membership of the merits of any particular policy, otherwise we will never have any hope of convincing the Province of Nova Scotia of its merits; and

WHEREAS the UNSM for over ninety years of its one hundred and five year history did deliberate together as one body and reached consensus through policy discussion and debate, which produced some excellent results for the Province of Nova Scotia;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the UNSM conduct a complete review of the present caucus structure.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: *The Committee recommends this resolution.*