



WEST HANTS REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY
Planning & Heritage Advisory Committee (PAC/HAC) Minutes
December 12, 2024, 6:00pm
Sanford Council Chambers, Zoom / YouTube Live

PRESENT: Tim Carr, Chair, Hantsport Representative
Kayla Leary-Pinch, Councillor (District 7)
Jim Ivey, Councillor (District 11)
Paul Beazley, Windsor Representative
Guido Furlani, Windsor Representative
Jane Davis, Hantsport Representative
KJ Conyers-Steede, WHRM Representative
Mark Kehoe, WHRM Representative

STAFF: Kari Fougere, Acting Director of Planning and Development
Alex Dunphy, Senior Planner
Will Hong, Planner
Vanessa Lake, Planning Assistant

GUESTS: Jason Haughn, Department of Municipal Affairs (DMA)

PUBLIC: There were two (2) members of the public present.

REGRETS: Abraham Zebian, Mayor
Michel Bourgeois, WHRM Representative

1.0 Call to Order and Attendance

The Chair called the meeting to order at 6:02pm. Vanessa Lake took attendance. Regrets had been received from Mayor Zebian and Michel Bourgeois. All other members were present.

2.0 Announcements

West Hants Regional Municipality acknowledges that we are in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq People and that this land is governed by the treaties of Peace and Friendship signed in 1726. West Hants Regional Municipality recognizes that we are all treaty people and have responsibilities to this land and each other. West Hants Regional Municipality also recognizes African Nova Scotians are a distinct people whose history, legacies, and contributions have enriched that part of Mi'kma'ki known as Nova Scotia for over 400 years.

Chair Carr congratulated the volunteers of the Christmas Angels and Festoon Hantsport on their successful events. He noted that this is his second run as Chair for this Committee. He is not an expert on procedure, his goal is to foster meaningful dialogue. He wished everyone a Merry Christmas and asked everyone to give if they can.

Mark Kehoe announced that the Upper Vaughan Hall will be hosting a free supper from 4-7pm on Saturday, December 14, 2024. They will be lighting their memory Christmas tree at 6:00pm. Everyone is welcome to attend.

3.0 Approval of Agenda and Additions

Moved by Councillor Leary-Pinch and seconded by Guido Furlani that the agenda be approved as circulated. Motion carried unanimously.

4.0 Declaration of Conflict of Interest

No conflicts were declared.

5.0 Approval of Minutes (November 14, 2024)

Moved by Jane Davis and seconded by KJ Conyers-Steede that the minutes be approved as circulated. Motion carried unanimously.

6.0 New Business

6.1 Planning and Heritage Advisory Committees Presentation (Jason Haughn)

Kari Fougere introduced Jason Haughn. Jason is a Municipal Advisor from the Department of Municipal Affairs (DMA) who covers the central region. Jason gave a presentation to the PAC/HAC about the history and role of committees of council and official meeting procedure. His presentation is included with the minutes. The PAC follows the same framework as Council but allows for a less formal approach. Advisory Committees make recommendations rather than decisions, and discussion is the most important part of their meetings. The Municipal Government Act (MGA) gives Council the ability to create a PAC. The MGA sets the initial parameters, and Council can refine it to suit their needs.

The Committee briefly discussed the Plan Review. The last Plan Review was conducted in 2008. Staff are currently working with consultants on combining the current set of documents, and Alex added that the hope is for it to be a “living document” with ongoing discussions.

Jason gave a brief overview of parliamentary procedure. The purpose of these procedures is to promote balance; the right of the individual to contribute and the right of the group to make decisions. The point is to get things done, and the rules should not be followed so strictly it prevents any progress. He explained the role of motions as “the engine that drives the meeting.” A motion is a proposal to take an action and should be the focus of discussion. Time is the most valuable resource to both Council and committees and should be used wisely. A motion should be clear, concise, and consistent. Committee members need to understand what they are considering, and staff need clear direction that can be acted on. Jason confirmed that the Chair is allowed to vote on motions.

The Committee thanked Jason for his presentation. He left the meeting at 7:36pm.

6.2 Fort Edward View Plane (Jane Davis)

Jane provided an information report about the history, importance, and protection of the Fort Edward view plane. The view plane is a part of the site’s historic integrity. Her report was circulated with the agenda package and is available on the Municipal website. Fort Edward is a National Historic Site and the oldest blockhouse still standing in North America. It is an important piece of history, culture, and heritage for the area, and tourism at the site supports the local

economy. Jane provided a timeline of the topic beginning with the West Hants Historical Society's (WHHS) presentation to council in January 2022 which started the conversation of protecting the view plane. She gave excerpts from documents from other official organizations.

The Committee thanked Jane for her hard work. The Committee agreed with the importance and historic significance of the view plane and wanted to see it protected. They asked how to best move forward. Kari recommended putting a motion on the floor.

Guido offered the motion to suggest to Council to use Jane's presentation and report as a starting point to establish historical importances in the planning of Windsor. KJ offered an alternative, and Guido withdrew his motion in favour of KJ's wording.

Moved by KJ Conyers-Steede and seconded by Jane Davis be it resolved that the municipality explores the protection of the historic view planes surrounding the Fort Edward National Historic Site, preserving its cultural, historical, and scenic integrity. This protection ensures that future development integrates and respects the site's heritage value, enhances sustainable tourism, and maintains the connection between our community and its rich history.

Chair Carr called for a break at 8:11pm. The meeting resumed at 8:24pm.

Guido wanted to see Jane's work acknowledged in the motion. Kari explained that it will be a part of her staff report going to Council. KJ re-stated his motion for the Committee to consider.

Jane suggested the friendly amendment to add "PAC/HAC recommends" at the beginning of KJ's motion. The Committee agreed with this change.

The Committee discussed further amendments to the motion. They felt "explore" was too vague and wanted to give clear direction. They suggested the creation of a new MPS policy. The Committee reiterated that they want to recognize Jane's work and it be included in the motion. The original motion was workshopped to meet the Committee's intent.

Moved by Councillor Ivey and seconded by Councillor Leary-Pinch that the motion be amended to read: whereas PAC/HAC wishes to acknowledge the work of the report from Jane Davis submitted to PAC/HAC on December 12, 2024, be it resolved that PAC/HAC recommends that Council directs staff to create a new MPS policy to protect the historic view planes surrounding the Fort Edward National Historic Site, preserving its cultural, historical, and scenic integrity. This protection ensures that future development integrates and respects the site's heritage value,

enhances sustainable tourism, and maintains the connection between our community and its rich history. Motion carried unanimously.

The Committee then voted on the amended motion.

Moved by KJ Conyers-Steede and seconded by Jane Davis that, whereas PAC/HAC wishes to acknowledge the work of the report from Jane Davis submitted to PAC/HAC on December 12, 2024, be it resolved that PAC/HAC recommends that Council directs staff to create a new MPS policy to protect the historic view planes surrounding the Fort Edward National Historic Site, preserving its cultural, historical, and scenic integrity. This protection ensures that future development integrates and respects the site's heritage value, enhances sustainable tourism, and maintains the connection between our community and its rich history. Motion carried unanimously.

7.0 Business Arising from the Public Information Meetings (None)

There were no Public Information Meetings held since the last PAC/HAC meeting.

8.0 Business Arising from the Minutes (File Updates)

The file updates were circulated with the agenda package and are available on the Municipal website.

Mark asked about item 8.3, the Bear Lake Wind Farm project. He said that the recommendation that was presented to Council was not the recommendation PAC/HAC made. He felt it did not accurately reflect PAC/HAC's decision. Kari explained that PAC/HAC's recommendation and discussion were included in her staff report and her presentation to Council. The motion put forward in the report was from staff, based on their expert opinion. PAC/HAC's recommendation was not changed and was still an option. Council may consider either the staff recommendation or the PAC/HAC recommendation. Staff explained the process in more detail and noted that it was unlikely for this item to return to PAC/HAC for discussion at this point.

One (1) member of the public left the meeting at 9:05pm.

9.0 Building and Development Activity Report (November 2024)

The report was circulated with the agenda package and is available on the Municipal website. There were no questions or comments.

10.0 Notices from Adjacent Municipal Units (None)

No notices were received.

11.0 Public Participation

The public is encouraged to contact staff directly or attend the meeting if they have any questions or comments. There was one (1) member of the public present at this time.

Shirley Pineo from Mantua, WHHS President and past WH Councillor, gave comments. She thanked Jane for her presentation. She feels protecting Fort Edward's view plane is important and doesn't want the area to lose its heritage. She feels Windsor "was the beginning of Canada," where European immigrants landed first and dispersed from. She referred to Parks Canada as a silent partner, who would invest more if the WHHS's Pesaquid Cultural Heritage Centre were to be built or if the community advocated for it. Those interested should convey their passion by speaking at Council. About the Plan Review, she emphasized the need for public consultation. She was on the West Hants Council during the 2008 review and recommended redlining the changes so the public can see the differences. The protection of the downtown character is another thing that could be considered. There are locations where larger developments can be placed that won't disrupt the historic downtown.

12.0 Next Meeting Date / Adjournment

The next scheduled meeting of the PAC/HAC is January 9, 2025. A notice will be sent out if there are any changes. With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:21pm. Be kind to one another, and Happy Holidays!

Committees of Council

Committees: Why?

Committees are essentially a group within a group that studies topics and makes recommendations.

- The appointment of Select Committees first recorded in 1571

The main concern was, and remains, **time-management** within a large decision-making body.

In that era, a secondary concern was freedom of debate in a Stuart controlled House – *Committee of the Whole House on Bills*



Delegation of Power and Responsibilities

The power to establish committees is given to councils via Section 23 of the *Municipal Government Act (MGA)*:

“council may make policies providing for committees and conferring powers and duties on them, except the power to expend funds.” 23(1)(c)

- Generally, committees make recommendations and not decisions. But that is not always the case. The MGA gives some delegated powers to specific committees on specific items.
- So, you need to be careful.
- *Advice:* Assume your committee makes recommendations to council unless you find something specific somewhere that says otherwise!

Types of Committees

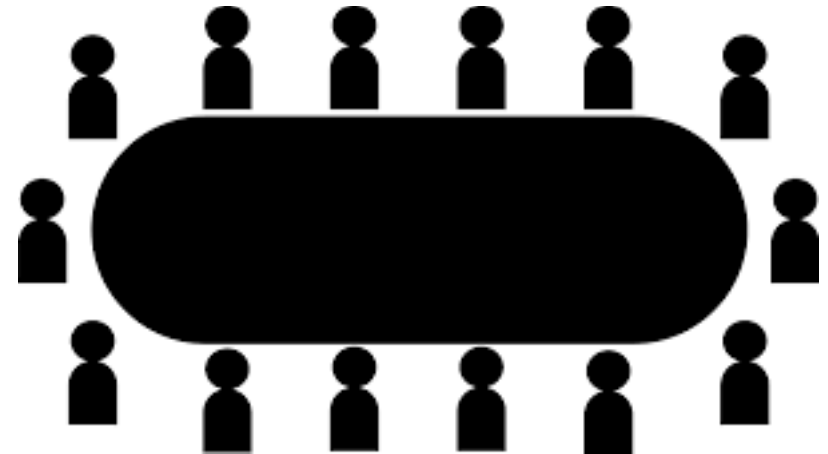
The MGA references establishing 3 types of Committees:

1. Standing
2. Special
3. Advisory

There are also joint committees as well as councillor representation on external committees.

BE AWARE that the MGA, as well as other provincial legislation, may speak to specific committees.

i.e. Audit, Police, Accessibility, etc.



Named Committees

Some of the Committees which are named in the MGA or in other pieces of legislation include those mentioned opposite.

While some are requirements, many are not.

It is the responsibility of the Council itself to ensure the municipality is meeting any and all legislated requirements.



** As of Feb. 2023*

Current Committees

By looking at other jurisdictions you can get a sense of what issues are currently being tackled by committees.

The word cloud opposite represents just a quick survey of some active municipal committees in Nova Scotia.

This is not an exhaustive list and is focused on what Towns are currently doing.



* As of Feb. 2023

Committee Rules

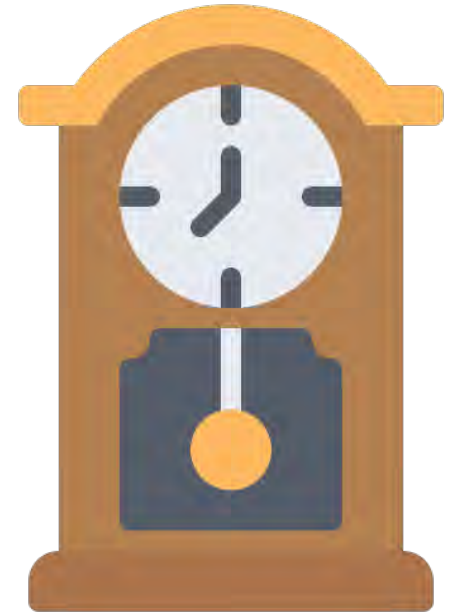
Committees are “creatures of council” and operate within the same framework as meetings of full council.

- Operate in accordance with the procedures provided by the MGA and Council’s procedural policies.
- Committee meetings fall under the exact same provisions (S. 22) that require council to meet in public.
- *Nova Scotia Municipal Conflict of Interest Act* applies to committee meetings.
- Prohibition to directing employees of the Municipality applies to committees where a Chief Administrative Officer has been appointed.



Time Management

- Time is the most valuable resource you have as a council.
- If you investigate every issue in detail at full council, meetings will last for days.
- Committees perform the bulk of the work in many organizations, not just local government.
- “Most well-run meetings spend considerable time on committee reports and recommendations.” AIP Standard Code



Leverage the Opportunities

- Greater freedom of discussion is possible
- More time available to reasearch subject
- Less formal procedure is used
- Better use can be made of experts and the public
- While still public, delicate and sensitive issues may be considered outside of the spotlight of full council



Strategic Work

Committee Structure is up to you, the committees you choose can be an effective tool for Council to realize its strategic vision

- What do you want out of your committees?
- How do you want to utilize committees regardless of the topic or issue?
- How will your committees add value?



Planning Advisory Committees

The provincial perspective (MGA)

Authority

The MGA, Sections 200, 201, 202, 203, Give the ability for Council to Establish a PAC

Sets the initial parameters for composition, purpose, duties, terms, remuneration, open meetings, etc.

Some aspects of how PACs operate are addressed in MGA, but many are delegated to municipal council to further define and refine in their adopted policy

Purpose

“The purpose of a planning advisory committee or a joint planning advisory committee is to advise respecting the preparation or amendment of planning documents and respecting planning matters generally.” MGA s. 200(4)

Objective

PACs act as an essential bridge between municipal councils, planning staff, and the public. They help ensure that planning decisions are informed, transparent, and reflective of community needs.

WHRM PAC

1. PURPOSE

1.1. To establish an advisory committee in accordance with Sections 200 and 202 of the Municipal Government Act.

The Planning Advisory/Heritage Advisory Committee will advise the Council of the Municipality on planning and heritage matters requiring a decision of Council affecting the Municipality, including the preparation and amendment of planning documents.

PARLIAMETARY PROCEDURE & MEETING PROCEDURE



BALANCE

To balance the right of the organization to conduct business with the right of the individual member to be heard, considered, oppose, support, and to contribute

MOTIONS

Motions are the engine that drive your meetings



MOTIONS

A motion is a proposal that the organization:

1. Take an action
2. Take a position

Motions are formulated as “**I move that...**” and then the statement is put to the group

CLEAR, CONCISE, CONSISTENT

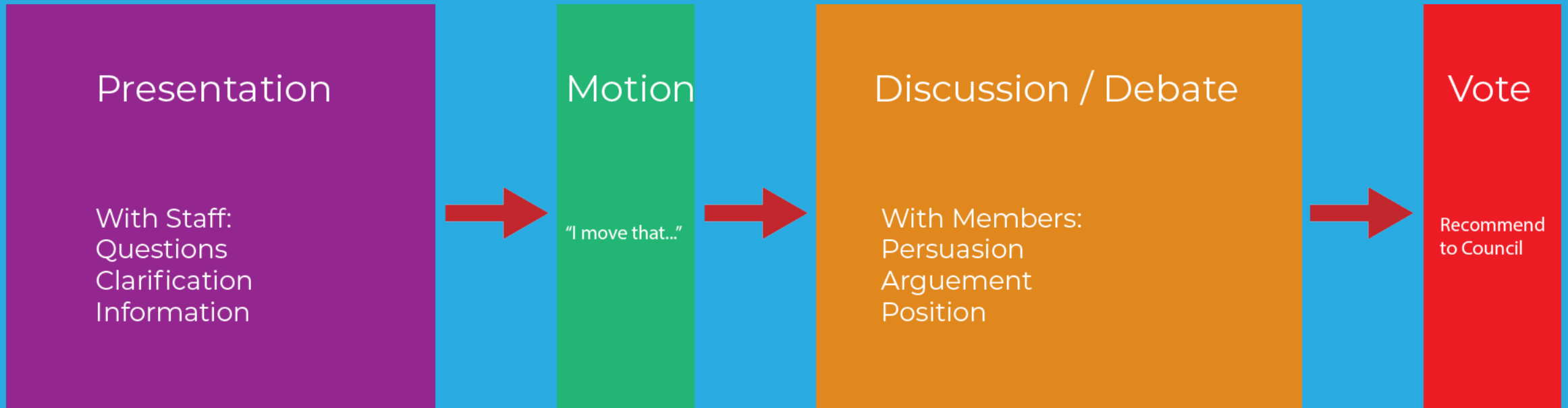
Motions work best when well thought-out and understood by all

Motions risk confusion and frustration when they are not

1. Members need to understand what they are debating and considering
2. Staff need clear and understandable direction that can be acted on

MOTIONS

Timing is everything



6 Steps to Action

1. A member makes a motion (after being recognized by the Chair)
2. Another member seconds the motion (recognition not required)
3. Chair states the question (Assembly takes possession of the question)
4. Members debate the question (stick to the merits)
5. Chair puts the question (articulates the question and takes the vote)
6. Chair announces the result and effect (Pass/Fail & what does that mean)



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