



THE REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF PEEL

INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MINUTES

IRAC-2011-5

The Intergovernmental Relations Advisory Committee (IRAC) met on October 6, 2011, at 11:06 a.m. in the Council Chamber, 5th Floor, Regional Administrative Headquarters, 10 Peel Centre Drive, Suite A, Brampton.

Members Present: P. Foley; S. Hames; E. Kolb; G. Miles; E. Moore; R. Paterak*; P Saito; J. Sanderson*; R. Starr; A. Thompson; J. Tovey

Members Absent: Nil

Other Regional Councillors Present: B. Crombie; S. Fennell

Also Present: D. Szwarc, Chief Administrative Officer; N. Trim, Chief Financial Officer and Commissioner of Corporate Services; J. Smith, Commissioner of Health Services; J. Menard, Commissioner of Human Services; C. Reid, Regional Clerk. L. Rubin-Vaughan, Senior Advisor, Government Relations; C. Thomson, Committee Clerk

Chaired by Councillor A. Thompson

1. DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST - Nil

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

RECOMMENDATION IRAC-11-2011:

That the agenda for the October 6, 2011 Intergovernmental Relations Advisory Committee meeting, be approved.

3. DELEGATIONS/PRESENTATIONS - Nil

* See text for arrivals

♦ See text for departures

Councillor Paterak arrived at 11:08 a.m.
Councillor Sanderson arrived at 11:09 a.m.

4. REPORTS

a) Federal Government Engagement Strategy

Received

Lowell Rubin-Vaughan, Senior Advisor, Government Relations, advised that subsequent to Regional Council's referral of the recommendation from the Intergovernmental Relations Advisory Committee (IRAC) regarding a "Peel in Ottawa Day", staff met with the Regional Chair and the Chair of the IRAC and it was suggested that a modified approach to engaging our local Members of Parliament (MPs) and Members of Provincial Parliament (MPPs) be considered. It was proposed that a networking breakfast/briefing session with all 9 Peel-area MPs be scheduled to discuss previously endorsed public policy priorities, including housing; immigration; and infrastructure. Funding for such an event is available through the budget of the Regional Chair. One of the key objectives of the meeting will be to provide key to advance Regional priorities with the federal government. While the Committee would coordinate the session, all Regional Councillors are welcome and encouraged to participate. Lowell suggested November 7 or 8, 2011 as potential dates for the session, noting that the week of November 7th is a break week in the House of Commons.

Lowell Rubin-Vaughan noted that at the first meeting of the IRAC in 2012, staff will bring forward a Government Relations and Advocacy Strategy report outlining opportunities for the year to advance Peel's needs with other orders of government. As part of that report, staff will suggest potential timing for the execution of a Regional Chair led delegation to visit Ottawa. He noted that planning a trip to Ottawa following the adoption of the Regional Budget will assist the IRAC in solidifying their advocacy positions to the federal government.

Councillor Fennell stated that the Region of Peel is in an ideal position to take Peel's priority public policy issues through to the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) to gain the support of its 1900 member municipalities. She suggested that the IRAC focus on consolidating Peel's positions for endorsement by Regional Council and ensuring Peel's representatives at FCM have the information they need to advance the issues. She stated that FCM, as well as the Big City Mayors Caucus, are making great gains with the federal government, and that Region of Peel resolutions could help drive the national agenda.

Councillor Fennell stated that she does not support a Peel in Ottawa Day as, in her opinion, it is not the most productive way to advance Peel's positions however, hosting a meeting in the Region of Peel, in November, for Peel's federal representatives could be highly effective. She further suggested that the Region of Peel could consider hosting the 2014 FCM Annual Conference.

Councillor Thompson noted that the Region of Peel has been engaged with FCM and that it is important to convey Peel's messages from a grassroots perspective.

Councillor Crombie noted that it is important to know the audience that the Region wants to reach with its messaging, as well as, the key objectives and issues that are to be advanced. She suggested that it may be difficult to host a session for Peel's federal representatives in November as their calendars fill very quickly. She further stated that in her experience, advocacy days in Ottawa are very effective, however, a cost/benefit analysis should be completed prior to planning such an event.

Councillor Miles stated that the federal government has started to work with FCM more closely and to recognize it as the voice of municipalities and that it makes sense to work with them to advance Peel's positions. She noted the importance of ensuring Peel's representatives at FCM are equipped with the information they need to effectively advocate. She stated that, in her opinion, the Regional Chair and the three Mayors acting as Peel's spokespeople would have a lot more impact than Regional Councillors.

Councillor Saito stated that Regional Councillors have a responsibility to make their voices heard and that collectively and individually, they all have strong roles to play in advancing Peel's issues. She indicated that inviting federal and provincial representatives to attend IRAC meetings has resulted in meaningful discussions and that she would like to continue this approach of engaging our senior government representatives. She noted that the IRAC and its members have done an outstanding job at meetings with various Ministers and that additional support from the Mayors and Chair is always welcome.

Councillor Saito suggested that it is premature to make a decision on whether to proceed with planning a "Peel in Ottawa Day" and proposed that it be considered in 2012 as part of the broader Government Relations and Advocacy Opportunities report.

Regional Chair Kolb confirmed his commitment to work with all members of Council to advance Peel's advocacy efforts and suggested that the issues of emergency bandwidth, mental health, housing, infrastructure and immigration be considered top priorities.

Councillor Fennell stated that the Region of Peel is well positioned and well respected at the national table and she is committed to advancing issues for which there is a Council approved position. She noted that she has been invited to speak at pre-budget consultations which would be an excellent forum to emphasize Peel's positions. Councillor Fennell indicated that many issues faced in Peel are also being faced by municipalities across the country. If the Region of Peel puts forward a strong position on an issue, it will be supported by jurisdictions across the nation so it is important that Peel's representatives at the various national and provincial forums are provided with information that they can bring to the forefront.

Councillor Crombie stated that FCM has its own identity and is seen as being more popular with opposition parties than with the government in power and she suggested that in some cases, it may be right to align with them, but not in all cases. She stated that meetings with MPs in their offices are effective at gaining their attention and suggested inviting Cabinet Ministers to a round table discussion as guest speakers. She further stated that each Wednesday morning in Ottawa is reserved for caucus meetings for all parties and suggested that Peel could be invited to address each caucus and then host a reception afterwards.

Councillor Hames stated that it is the responsibility of all Peel's elected representatives to advance priority issues with the senior levels of government.

Councillor Tovey extended his appreciation to Councillor Fennell for the opportunity for better communication with FCM and suggested that a series of motions regarding the federal budget should be considered by Regional Council for advocacy by Councillor Fennell at the pre-budget consultations.

David Szwarc, Chief Administrative Officer noted that the challenge is not the messages being delivered but rather, the best way to deliver the messages.

Staff was requested to reinforce the previously endorsed public policy issues for distribution to the three Mayors and Peel's representatives at FCM, the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) and the Rural Ontario Municipal Association (ROMA).

The following recommendations were then placed.

RECOMMENDATION IRAC-12-2011:

That staff be authorized to plan a breakfast session in the Region of Peel for Peel-area Members of Parliament.

RECOMMENDATION IRAC-13-2011:

That staff report back to the IRAC in early 2012 with a proposed Government Relations and Advocacy Strategies report, outlining opportunities for the coming year, including a recommendation related to a Regional Chair led "Peel in Ottawa Day".

5. GOVERNMENT RELATIONS STATUS REPORT AND CURRENT ACTIVITIES (Oral)

Discussion led by Lowell Rubin-Vaughan, Senior Advisor, Government Relations, Office of Strategic Innovation and Policy

- a) **Federal News**
- b) **Provincial News**
- c) **Local News**

Received

A copy of the Government Relations Status Report and Current Activities presentation will be distributed to all Members of Regional Council.

Councillor Fennell noted the following events taking place in 2012 as potential advocacy opportunities: National Infrastructure Conference which includes federal Ministers with infrastructure portfolios, and; the Sustainable Communities Conference, hosted by FCM in February, which is open to everyone. She further stated that the Big City Mayors Caucus will be attending agricultural conferences to show their support for that sector and the important issues they are dealing with, to further demonstrate that municipalities are working together.

6. **COMMUNICATIONS - Nil**

7. **IN CAMERA MATTERS - Nil**

8. **OTHER BUSINESS - Nil**

9. **NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Intergovernmental Relations Advisory Committee is scheduled for Thursday, February 2, 2011, at 11:00 a.m., Regional Council, in the Council Chamber, 5th floor, Regional Administrative Headquarters, Suite A, 10 Peel Centre Drive, Brampton, Ontario.

Please forward regrets to Christine Thomson, Committee Clerk, (905) 791-7800, ext. 4582 or at christine.thomson@peelregion.ca.

4. **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 1:45 p.m.