


HALIFAX

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Item No. 14.1.12
Halifax Regional Council
October 2, 2018

TO: Mayor Savage and Members of Halifax Regional Council

SUBMITTED BY:

Original Signed by 

Jacques Dubé, Chief Administrative Officer

DATE: September 19, 2018

SUBJECT: Update Council Chamber Technology Upgrade and the Temporary Relocation of Regional Council Meetings

ORIGIN

On April 19, 2018 Chief Administrative Officer, (CAO) awarded NRFP 17-085, Council Chamber Meeting Management Solution, to Backman Vidcom Ltd.

As part of the project implementation for the technology upgrade there is a need to temporarily re-locate Regional Council meetings for the installation of technology in the Council Chamber.

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

Halifax Regional Municipality Charter Section 20(1)(a) "The Council may make policies ... respecting the date, hour and place of the meetings of the Council and the notice to be given for them".

Administrative Order 1 Section 25 "Until otherwise decided by the Council, the Council shall meet at the Council Chamber located at 1841 Argyle Street."

Sections 34-36 of Administrative Order 2016-005-ADM, the Procurement Administrative Order with respect to the Award of Contracts.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Halifax Regional Council approve:

1. The temporary off-site location of the Halifax Marriott Harbourfront, 1919 Upper Water Street, Halifax, for the October 30, November 13, November 27 and December 4 Regional Council meetings;
2. December 11, 2018 as a contingency date at the the Halifax Marriott Harbourfront, 1919 Upper Water Street, Halifax; and
3. That any special Regional Council meetings that may be required between October 17 and December 7, 2018 take place in Halifax Hall 1841 Argyle Street, Halifax.

BACKGROUND/DISCUSSION

The Municipal Clerk's Office and Information Communications Technology (ICT) will be commencing the installation phase of the Council Chamber Technology Upgrade (CCTU) project. This project is to replace all end of life technology (implemented 2008) in the Council Chamber and the broadcast room, along with technical infrastructure which includes all wiring and cabling. Through a RFP process, Backman Vidcom Ltd. has been selected as the successful proponent and will be installing an Arbor Media meeting management system in the Council Chamber. On April 19, 2018 the CAO awarded NRFP 17-085.

The technology will enhance the viewers experience, with HD cameras, new displays, the inclusion of a graphics package which will display names of speakers, motions, and vote results. Accessibility will be enhanced through the installation of a hearing hotspot solution. Value added pieces to the system will lend to greater flexibility for meeting management and support.

Temporary Relocation of Regional Council Meetings

At present preparatory work is underway, and staff anticipate that the technology installation will commence mid October 2018. Regional Council will be required to meet offsite during the installation, validation, testing and training which is scheduled to conclude early December 2018. Four Regional Council meetings will be held offsite to accommodate the work.

The following meetings will be required to be convened offsite:

October 30, 2018
November 13, 2018
November 27, 2018
December 4, 2018

During installation, it is proposed that Regional Council meeting at the Halifax Marriott Harbourfront in the Acadia Ballroom, for In Camera portions a secure boardroom has been reserved. Staff have been working with the venue to ensure a smooth transition of Regional Council meetings. The Municipal Clerk's office will have staff on hand to help with wayfinding, respond to customer service enquiries, and assist with crowd control. The December 11, 2018 date is also reserved as a contingency date in the event it is required.

An extensive and exhaustive search was conducted throughout the Municipality for venues that could hold Regional Council. In accordance with procurement rules, venues with its own AV company on retainer were preferred. For this reason, Halifax Hall could not be considered as an RFP would have to be completed to retain an AV company to produce the meeting which would not fit within the project timelines; in addition, there may be insufficient space to accommodate overflow, in the event of a large public hearing. In selection of a venue staff were mindful of a site close to City Hall, to ensure that if residents are misdirected, they could be redirected quickly and for members of Council to have access to their offices, staff and parking.

If any special meetings are required between October 17 and December 7, 2018 staff is proposing these meetings would take place in Halifax Hall 1841 Argyle Street, Halifax. During these meetings existing technology in Halifax Hall would be utilized, and there would be some technical limitations for example no speakers' queue or streaming services. If a special meeting is required staff will investigate options to use social media, such as Facebook or Twitter to make the meeting available online.

Halifax and West Community Council and the Standing Committees

Halifax and West Community Council and the standing committees will be able to meet at City Hall via Halifax Hall and at the Harbour East Marine Drive Community Council Chamber in Dartmouth. Both locations have updated audio visual equipment in place and can meet the needs of most committees of Council. The Municipal Clerk's Office will work with the Chairs of these bodies to determine where these

committees will convene and ensure that staff and the public are informed. Although there are limitations to the rooms, no speakers' queue or streaming services, staff are investigating options to use social media, such as Facebook or Twitter to make the meeting available online.

Next Steps

A sole source award to engage with the venue, and AV services has been prepared and is awaiting approval by the Chief Administrative Officer. The project team is currently working with Corporate Communications to execute a communications plan which will inform the public of the service disruption and the alternative arrangements made to host Regional Council meetings. Should Regional Council approve the move, the project team will work with Marriot and Freeman's staff to ensure that the appropriate arrangements for Regional Council are in place. Pre-install work with Backman Vidcom Ltd. has begun, in anticipation of the installation phase beginning mid-October.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

All agreements have been prepared and pending this decision of Regional Council, will be executed in accordance with respect to the Administrative Order 2016-005-ADM, the Procurement Administrative Order. The appropriate funds from the project budget have been set aside for the temporary move of Regional Council meetings and the associated costs.

RISK CONSIDERATION

Staff will take measures to ensure that the project is completed within the anticipated timeline. Should there be a delay Regional Council will be informed and alternative location plans will be communicated to Regional Council, the public and staff.

Should Regional Council not approve the recommendation, the project may be delayed for a considerable amount of time. The technology in the Council Chamber is at end of life, and a delay may compromise the production and function of Regional Council meetings.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

In creating the requirements of NRFP-17-085 the CCTU project team engaged with the public to understand what enhancements could help augment the Regional Council viewing experience. A survey was posted to the [shapeyourcityhalifax](http://shapeyourcityhalifax.com) website. Survey results received were either incorporated into the RFP or taken into consideration when evaluating submissions.

Work is being completed with Corporate Communications to ensure that the service disruption and alternative venue is communicated effectively. The communications plan will communicate, prior to and throughout the project, details of the alternative location, means of accessing sessions (live and recorded), as well as key information regarding the project. A range of communications tools – incorporating media relations, marketing and internal communications will be used, including PSAs, Halifax.ca, print (use of a variety of local papers), digital advertising, and social media. Appropriate funds from the project budget have been set aside to ensure that the necessary communications tactics are deployed.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

Not Applicable.

ALTERNATIVES

Regional Council could choose to not approve the temporary move, which could delay the implementation of the CCTU. As the technology in the Council Chamber is end of life, and requires replacing this alternative is not recommended by staff.

ATTACHMENTS

None.

A copy of this report can be obtained online at <http://www.halifax.ca/council/agendasc/cagenda.php> then choose the appropriate meeting date, or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 902.490.4210, or Fax 902.490.4208.

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