

HALIFAX

P.O. Box 1749
Halifax, Nova Scotia
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Item No. 12.1.1
Executive Standing Committee
January 24, 2022

TO: Mayor Savage and Members of Executive Standing Committee

SUBMITTED BY:  (Original Signed)
Jacques Dubé, Chief Administrative Officer

DATE: November 29, 2021

SUBJECT: Amendment to AO1 to Include Land Acknowledgements

ORIGIN

October 25, 2021 Executive Standing Committee (item 12.3.1):

MOVED by Councillor Mason, seconded by Councillor Blackburn

THAT the Executive Standing Committee request a staff report regarding amending Administrative Order One to include a land acknowledgement on the agenda of HRM councils and committees.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

The *Halifax Regional Municipality Charter*, S.N.S. 2008, c. 39, subsections 34(3) and 35(1)(d) provide:

- 20 (1) The Council may make policies
(b) regulating its own proceedings and preserving order at meetings of the Council;

Administrative Order Number 1, the *Procedure of the Council Administration Order*, Schedule 6, Terms of Reference Executive Standing Committee, section 8:

8. The Executive Standing Committee shall act as a review committee for matters related to the general self-governance and administration of the Council as directed by the Council.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Executive Standing Committee recommend that Halifax Regional Council adopt the amendments to Administrative Order One, the *Procedure of the Council Administrative Order*, as set out in Attachment 2 of this report.

BACKGROUND

Land acknowledgment is formal statement that recognizes and respects the Mi'kmaw Nation as the traditional stewards of this land and the enduring relationship that exist between the Mi'kmaw and their traditional territory. Land acknowledgments are increasing being used in Canada by governments, schools, post-secondary institutions, non-government organizations, and other civil institutions as a practice of reconciliation aimed at recognizing the traditional territory of the original people of the area.

The land acknowledgments that we hear today are based on the old tradition or protocols carried out by Indigenous communities in Canada. The traditional protocol was intended as way for guests to the territory to show their respect for and pay homage to the Indigenous community with whom they are visiting and engaging. Today, making a respectful Land Acknowledgement remains a way to express one's gratitude and respect to Indigenous peoples for being stewards of the land we live and work on, and is an important step in reconciliation.

Halifax Regional Municipality is found in the traditional territory of the Mi'kmaw Nation. This territory is called Mi'kma'ki and includes Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, parts of Newfoundland and the Gaspé region in Quebec.

On December 8, 2015 following the report and recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and subsequent responses from various groups, including the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, Halifax Regional Council passed a [Statement of Reconciliation](#)¹ to support the municipality's work with Mi'kma and Urban Indigenous communities.

On June 21, 2021 the Halifax Regional Municipality officially formalized a land acknowledgment statement. This [statement](#) was developed in collaboration between the Indigenous Advisor, Legal Services, and Corporate Communications.

DISCUSSION

It is important that the following objectives be achieved when adopting a land acknowledgment statement for inclusion within the Procedures of the Council Administrative Order (AO 1).

The objectives of land acknowledgments are the following:

- Genuine reflections and raise awareness on the importance of Mi'kmaw people, culture, heritage, and territorial lands. A land acknowledgment should never be done as a meeting/event requirement; it should relate to our shared journey towards reconciliation.
- Land acknowledgments should relate your personal experience and the meeting itself to ensure that an Indigenous lens and perspective is embedded in the procedures and discussions of the meetings.
- Acknowledge non-Indigenous people presence on the territory of Mi'kma'ki as settlers to the territory and their role as a part of colonial history.
- Recognize the history of colonialism and harm done by settlers to Indigenous communities and the effects that has had on the recognition of Indigenous rights, traditions, and knowledge.

The recommended amendments will add a land acknowledgment statement item to the Order of Business for Halifax Regional Council, the Community Councils, and the Committees of Council. The item will be placed immediately after the Call to Order and before the special community announcements. The Statement will be in the following form:

¹ [December 8, 2015 Regional Council \(item 14.4.2\)](#)

The Halifax Regional Municipality is located in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and traditional lands of the Mi'kmaq people. The municipality acknowledges the Peace & Friendship Treaties signed in this Territory and recognizes that we are all Treaty People.

Staff have consulted with the Province on the recommended wording, and they are supportive of it. If Council adopts the recommended amendment, Indigenous Services staff will develop a land acknowledgement guidance document for HRM staff.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications at this time.

RISK CONSIDERATION

No risk considerations were identified.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

No community engagement was required at this time.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

No environment implications were identified.

ALTERNATIVES

Halifax Regional Council could decide not to amend Administrative Order One to include a land acknowledgement statement.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 Showing Proposed Changes
Attachment 2 Amending Administrative Order

A copy of this report can be obtained online at halifax.ca or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 902.490.4210.

Report Prepared by: Cheryl Copage-Gehue, Indigenous Community Engagement Advisor, Office of Diversity & Inclusion/ANSIO, CAO's Office, 902.229.4601

ATTACHMENT 1

(Showing proposed Changes)

ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER ONE THE PROCEDURE OF THE COUNCIL ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER

Order of Business

36. The Order of Business shall be:

- (a) Call to Order;
- (aa) Land acknowledgment statement;
- (b) Special community announcements and acknowledgments;
- (c) approval of the listed order of business and approval of any additions thereto or deletions therefrom;
- (d) Consent Agenda;
- (e) business arising out of the Minutes unless dealt with elsewhere;
- (f) call for declaration of conflict of interests;
- (g) motions of reconsideration;
- (h) motions of rescission;
- (i) consideration of deferred business;
- (j) notices of tabled matters that are subject to be deemed to be withdrawn pursuant to subsection 54(6);
- (k) public hearings when required will be held at 6 p.m.;
- (l) correspondence, petitions and delegations or presentations;
- (m) information items brought forward;
- (n) reports and recommendations from:
 - (i) staff
 - (ii) Standing Committees of the Council;
 - (iii) Community Councils;
 - (iv) Committees of the Council other than Standing Committees;

- (o) motions;
- (p) added items;
- (q) notices of motion; and
- (r) adjournment.

37. (1) The Order of Business established in section 36 shall apply unless otherwise determined by a vote of two-thirds (2/3^{rds}) of the Members present and voting.

(2) The vote pursuant to subsection (1) shall be decided without debate.

Order of Business at Special Meeting of the Council

38. (1) The Order of Business at a Special Meeting of the Council shall be:

- (a) additions to or deletions from the Order of Business;
- (b) approval of the Order of Business;
- (c) consideration of the particular business for which the Special meeting was called in the order designated by the Presiding Officer; and
- (d) adjournment.

(2) If there are a number of items for consideration at a Special meeting, the Order of Business for a regular meeting of the Council shall be followed so far as is possible.

Land acknowledgment statement

38A. The Land Acknowledgement Statement may be in the following form:

The Halifax Regional Municipality is located in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and traditional lands of the Mi'kmaq people. The Municipality acknowledges the Peace & Friendship Treaties signed in this Territory and recognizes that we are all Treaty People.

Special Community Announcement and Acknowledgments

39. (1) A Member may speak once for no longer than one (1) minute to Special Announcements and Acknowledgments related to business of the Municipality at the time so specified in the Council agenda.

(2) Special Community Announcements and Acknowledgments shall not be recorded but the Minutes shall reflect that Community Announcement and Acknowledgments were given.

ATTACHMENT 2
(Amending Administrative Order)

ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER ONE
THE PROCEDURE OF THE COUNCIL ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER

BE IT ENACTED by the Council of the Halifax Regional Municipality that Administrative Order Number One, the *Procedures of the Council Administrative Order*, is amended as follows:

1. Clause 36 (aa) is added after clause 36(a) and before clause 36(b), as follows:

(aa) Land acknowledgment statement;
2. Section 38A is added after section 38 and before section 39, as follows:

Land acknowledgment statement

38A. The Land Acknowledgement Statement may be in the following form:

The Halifax Regional Municipality is located in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and traditional lands of the Mi'kmaq people. The Municipality acknowledges the Peace & Friendship Treaties signed in this Territory and recognizes that we are all Treaty People.

Done and passed this day of , 202 .

Mayor

Municipal Clerk