



P.O. Box 1749  
Halifax, Nova Scotia  
B3J 3A5 Canada

**Item No. 15.2.2**  
**Halifax Regional Council**  
**March 22, 2022**

**TO:** Mayor Savage and Members of Halifax Regional Council

**SUBMITTED BY:** -Original Signed-

Councillor Paul Russell, Chair, Audit & Finance Standing Committee

**DATE:** March 14, 2022

**SUBJECT:** **\$15 Minimum Wage and Living Wage for HRM Employees**

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**ORIGIN**

March 9, 2022 meeting of the Audit and Finance Standing Committee, Item 13.1:

MOVED by Councillor Cleary, seconded by Councillor Morse

THAT the Audit & Finance Standing Committee recommend that Halifax Regional Council direct the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) to provide a staff report outlining the financial impact of:

1. Ensuring a minimum wage of \$15 per hour for all employees of Halifax Regional Municipality, Halifax Public Libraries, as well as employees of the Multi-District Facilities, regardless of employment status (i.e., covering part-time, casual, seasonal, etc.) to be implemented no later than April 1, 2023. This report should be completed in time to inform the 2023-24 budget process; and
2. Ensuring a living wage for all employees of Halifax Regional Municipality, Halifax Public Libraries, as well as employees of the Multi-District Facilities, regardless of employment status (i.e., covering part-time, casual, seasonal, etc.) to be implemented no later than April 1, 2024. This report should be completed in time to inform the 2024-25 budget process.

MOTION AS AMENDED PUT AND PASSED.

**LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY**

*Halifax Regional Municipality Charter*, S.N.S. 2008, c. 39:

Section 79A (1) Subject to subsections (2) to (4), the Municipality may only spend money for municipal purposes if (a) the expenditure is included in the Municipality's operating budget or capital budget or is otherwise authorized by the Municipality;

Administrative Order No. 1, *Procedures of the Council Administrative Order*, Schedule 2, Audit & Finance Standing Committee Terms of Reference:

**RECOMMENDATION ON PAGE 2**

Section 8. The Audit and Finance Standing Committee shall review and make recommendations on proposals coming to the Council outside of the annual budget or tender process including:

- (a) new programs or services not yet approved or funded;
- ...
- (e) new or increased capital projects not within the approved budget

### **RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that Halifax Regional Council direct the Chief Administrative Officer to provide a staff report outlining the financial impact of:

1. Ensuring a minimum wage of \$15 per hour for all employees of Halifax Regional Municipality, Halifax Public Libraries, as well as employees of the Multi-District Facilities, regardless of employment status (i.e., covering part-time, casual, seasonal, etc.) to be implemented no later than April 1, 2023. This report should be completed in time to inform the 2023-24 budget process; and
2. Ensuring a living wage for all employees of Halifax Regional Municipality, Halifax Public Libraries, as well as employees of the Multi-District Facilities, regardless of employment status (i.e., covering part-time, casual, seasonal, etc.) to be implemented no later than April 1, 2024. This report should be completed in time to inform the 2024-25 budget process.

### **BACKGROUND**

A Request for Audit & Finance Standing Committee's consideration form submitted by Councillor Cleary, dated March 9, 2022, pertaining to a request for a staff report to explore the implementation of a \$15 minimum wage for Halifax Regional Municipality employees was before the Audit and Finance Standing Committee for consideration at its March 9, 2022 meeting.

For further information, please refer to the attached Request for Audit & Finance Standing Committee's consideration form dated March 9, 2022.

### **DISCUSSION**

The Audit and Finance Standing Committee considered the request and made two amendments to the motion. The text of the original motion read as:

“THAT the Audit & Finance Standing Committee direct the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) to provide a staff report outlining the financial impact of ensuring a minimum wage of \$15 per hour for all employees of Halifax Regional Municipality, Halifax Public Libraries, as well as employees of the Multi-District Facilities, regardless of employment status (i.e., covering part-time, casual, seasonal, etc.) to be implemented no later than April 1, 2023. This report should be completed in time to inform the 2023-24 budget process.”

The amendments put and passed by the Standing Committee were to direct that the report be requested by Halifax Regional Council to broaden the scope of the analysis, and to request an additional report on the implications on implementing a living wage for all employees of the Halifax Regional Municipality by no later than April 1, 2024.

The text of the approved amended motion read as:

“THAT the Audit & Finance Standing Committee recommend that Halifax Regional Council direct the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) to provide a staff report outlining the financial impact of:

1. Ensuring a minimum wage of \$15 per hour for all employees of Halifax Regional Municipality, Halifax Public Libraries, as well as employees of the Multi-District Facilities, regardless of employment status (i.e., covering part-time, casual, seasonal, etc.) to be implemented no later than April 1, 2023. This report should be completed in time to inform the 2023-24 budget process; and
2. Ensuring a living wage for all employees of Halifax Regional Municipality, Halifax Public Libraries, as well as employees of the Multi-District Facilities, regardless of employment status (i.e., covering part-time, casual, seasonal, etc.) to be implemented no later than April 1, 2024. This report should be completed in time to inform the 2024-25 budget process.”

For further information, please refer to the March 9, 2022 Audit & Finance Standing Committee draft meeting minutes<sup>1</sup> and meeting video.<sup>2</sup>

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

Financial implications will be determined within subsequent staff reports should Halifax Regional Council approve the recommendations within this recommendation report.

### **RISK CONSIDERATION**

There are no significant risks associated with the recommendations in this report.

### **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

The agenda, reports, and minutes of the Audit and Finance Standing Committee are posted on Halifax.ca.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

No environmental implications were identified.

### **ALTERNATIVES**

Regional Council could choose not to approve the recommendation.

### **ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment 1 – Request for Audit and Finance Standing Committee’s consideration form dated March 9, 2022, submitted by Councillor Cleary

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<sup>1</sup> [March 3/2022 Audit and Finance Standing Committee Draft Minutes | Halifax.ca](#)

<sup>2</sup> [March 9, 2022 Joint Audit Committee and Audit & Finance Standing Committee - YouTube](#)

A copy of this report can be obtained online at [halifax.ca](http://halifax.ca) or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 902.490.4210.

Report Prepared by: Annie Sherry, Legislative Assistant, Office of the Municipal Clerk. 902.943.8741.

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**Attachment 1**  
**Item No.13.1**

March 9, 2022  
Audit & Finance Standing Committee

<b>Request for Audit &amp; Finance Standing Committee Consideration</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Agenda Item</b> (Submitted to Municipal Clerk's Office by Noon at least 5 working days prior to the meeting)	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Added Item</b> (Submitted to Municipal Clerk's Office by Noon at least one working day prior to meeting)	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Request from the Floor</b>
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>		
<b>Subject: \$15 minimum wage for HRM employees</b>		
<b>Motion for Audit &amp; Finance Standing Committee to Consider:</b>		
<p>That the Audit &amp; Finance Standing Committee direct the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) to provide a staff report outlining the financial impact of ensuring a minimum wage of \$15 per hour for all employees of Halifax Regional Municipality, Halifax Public Libraries, as well as employees of the Multi-district Facilities, regardless of employment status (i.e., covering part-time, casual, seasonal, etc.) to be implemented no later than April 1, 2023. This report should be completed in time to inform the 2023-24 budget process.</p>		
<b>Reason:</b>		
<p>The Province of Nova Scotia announced that it will not be increasing the minimum wage to \$15/hr until April 2024, which is far too long for Halifax to wait to pay its people appropriately. Halifax Regional Council should consider options to speed up fair wages with its own employees.</p>		
<b>Outcome Sought:</b>		
<p>A report that provides the details Council needs to consider an increase in wages to at least \$15/hr for the budget process that will build the 2023-24 HRM Budget.</p>		
<i>Councillor Shawn Cleary</i>	<i>District 9 – Halifax West Armdale</i>	