

INFORMATION ITEM

TO: His Worship the Mayor and Members of City Council
FROM: Constance R. Glube, City Manager
DATE: AUGUST 30, 1977
SUBJECT: Renumbering of City Hall

It has been requested that the City consider changing the present civic address of City Hall from 1819 to 1841 Argyle Street. The significance of the change would be to commemorate the year of incorporation of the City. Such change would fall within the established numbering system of the City.

Staff has conducted a review of the Nova Scotia Archives' records concerning the actual incorporation and wish to take this opportunity to publicly review the involvement of those individuals who participated in the various attempts to incorporate the City of Halifax.

During 1785, a petition was submitted to the Provincial Assembly requesting the incorporation of the town of Halifax.

During 1790, a petition was submitted to the Provincial Assembly requesting a Charter and By-Laws which were eventually published during 1814 for the town of Halifax.

On March 4, 1823, Mr. Thomas Williamson and 350 other respectable inhabitants of the town of Halifax presented a petition to the Provincial Assembly requesting the incorporation of Halifax.

During 1837, a meeting was held at the Exchange Coffee House to consider petitioning the Legislature for an act to incorporate the town of Halifax. Those in attendance were Messrs. Forrester, Bell, M. Tobin, Howe, Alexander McKenzie, Robert Lawson, George R. Young, and Joseph Jennings, all of whom addressed the meeting.

During 1839, Joseph Howe introduced a bill to incorporate the town of Halifax. The bill was deferred at that time for a three month period.

While reviewing the various news reports of early 1841, we note that considerable time had been spent in the Provincial Assembly during reading of the Incorporation Bill over the status of the Burial Grounds of St. Paul's and the Poor House. The concern was centered around whether or not the new city should be responsible for these facilities upon incorporation.

On March 29, 1841, His Excellency, the Right Honorable Lord Viscount Falkland, attended by the Honorable Lieutenant Colonel J.L. Starr, A. D.C., came down to the Legislative Council Chambers and being seated

on the throne, His Lordship was pleased to direct the Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod to summon the attendance of the House of Assembly. The Honorable Speaker soon after appeared, with the members of the Assembly, when His Excellency was pleased to give assent to 69 acts passed this session. His Excellency Lord Viscount Falkland returned again to the Council Chambers on April 13, 1841 to prorogue the Legislature; and during his speech he highlighted certain Bills which were given assent, one of which was an act incorporating the City of Halifax. The actual date of Incorporation being April 10, 1841. (150 YRS IN 1991)

The next order of business was to conduct the first elections of the City of Halifax. The following quote has been taken from the Halifax Morning Post, Saturday, May 1, 1841:

"We would advise gentlemen, who are qualified, and wish to escape the very onerous duties of Assessors, to come forward at once, and offer for City Councillors; otherwise they may possibly be elected for assessors, as punishment for their want of zeal and regard for the true interests of their native city."

The City was divided into six wards for the election, each to elect three Common Councillors. The Councillors were elected by the citizens of the City, which later changed to ratepayers. Once elected, the Councillors elected one Alderman for each ward from amongst themselves. The Aldermen and Common Councillors elected a Mayor from the elected Aldermen. Each year, six senior Common Councillors retired. The first Council of the City of Halifax consisted of the following:

Stephen Binney, Esq.
James Tremain, Esq.
Thomas Williamson, Esq.
Edward Kenny, Esq.
John Duffus, Esq.
William Starr, Esq.
Edward Starr, Esq.

Mayor
Alderman Ward 1
Alderman Ward 2
Alderman Ward 3
Alderman Ward 4
Alderman Ward 5
Alderman Ward 6

Edward Allesin, Esq.
William Anderson, Esq.
Alex Keith, Esq.
William Storey, Esq.
William Caldwell, Esq.
Andrew M. Uniacke, Esq.
Honorable J. Leander Starr
Honorable Hugh Bell
Andrew W. McKinlay, Esq.
Conrad West, Esq.
Nepean Clarke, Esq.
John Steele, Esq.

Common Councillor Ward 1
Common Councillor Ward 1
Common Councillor Ward 2
Common Councillor Ward 2
Common Councillor Ward 3
Common Councillor Ward 3
Common Councillor Ward 4
Common Councillor Ward 4
Common Councillor Ward 5
Common Councillor Ward 5
Common Councillor Ward 6
Common Councillor Ward 6

William A. Sawers, Esq.
James S. Clarke, Esq.
E. Young, Esq.
J.J. Sawyer, Esq.
Lawrence Hartshorne, Esq.

Elected Recorder
Elected City Clerk
Elected Assistant Clerk
Elected City Marshall
Elected City Treasurer
and Clerk of Licence.

When running for municipal office during this time period, it was customary to have election cards printed for the public. We have selected as an example the one prepared prior to the election of Stephen Binney who later was elected as the first Mayor of the City of Halifax.

"TO THE ELECTORS OF WARD NO. 3

GENTLEMEN,-- It was not my intention to address you on the present occasion, conceiving that Civic Honors should be conferred without personal solicitation; as, however, most of the Gentlemen, who were placed in nomination with myself at the recent public meeting, have issued cards, I might be considered wanting in respect, did I not thank you for the handsome manner in which you have brought me forward as suitable for the office of City Councillor. I place myself with confidence in your hands, and should I be elected, my interests are so completely identified with yours, and the general prosperity of this my native place, that any assurance of exertions for its welfare, is unnecessary, I am, Gentlemen, your very obedient servant. STEPHEN BINNEY."

The first meeting of the Common Councilmen for the City of Halifax, took place at the then Court House on Thursday, May 13, 1841, for the purpose of hearing evidence on irregularities of the Ward 6 election.

On June 17, 1841, Council established a schedule of fines to be imposed on tardy and absent members of the City Council based on quarter hour intervals of tardiness. The fine was fixed as follows:

One shilling 3 pence (1s.3d.) for one quarter of an hour late; 2s.6d. for one half hour; 3s.9d. for three quarters of an hour and 5s. for one hour. (Subject to any reasonable excuse to be considered by the City Council, or subject to leave of absence having been given by the Mayor).

As a result of the request, staff is now preparing documentation to change the civic address of City Hall to 1841 Argyle Street.

Constance R. Glube
CONSTANCE R. GLUBE,
CITY MANAGER

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Approved by: P. Calda *PC*

JRE/pam