

# Protocol for Media Inquiries

## Media inquiries through Public Affairs

- Apart from matters related to fire, police and water services, all media inquiries related to the administration of the Halifax Regional Municipality are to be directed to Public Affairs (PA).
- PA assesses inquiries and determines the appropriate response.
  - Depending on the nature and specifics of the inquiry, information and/ or an interview may be provided by a PA spokesperson.
  - In some cases, a subject matter expert may be identified as a spokesperson.
    - Where appropriate, PA staff may determine that the designated spokesperson of a committee/ board/ commission (i.e. Chair) is best suited to address the media inquiry.
    - In the case of the *Commemoration of Edward Cornwallis and Recognition of Commemoration of Indigenous History Special Advisory Committee*, PA will contact the Municipal Clerk advising of the media inquiry.
    - The Municipal Clerk will then contact the designated spokesperson for the Special Advisory Committee (one of the two Co-Chairs\*) confirming willingness to speak to media.
      - If the Municipal Clerk communicates via email with the Co-Chair acting as designated spokesperson, it is recommended that the other Co-Chair be CCed.
    - The Municipal Clerk will advise PA of what the Co-Chair has confirmed (that he/ she has accepted or declined the request for a media interview).
      - If accepted, the Co-Chair will contact the reporter/ journalist directly to arrange a time to be interviewed.
      - If declined, the Co-Chair is not required to take any further action.
    - PA will also follow up with the reporter/ journalist to confirm whether the Co-Chair has declined the interview request or has accepted the request (in which case, the reporter/ journalist will hear directly from the Co-Chair). **NOTE:** PA will not provide media with contact details for the Co-Chairs.

**\*Designated Spokesperson:** It is important that only one individual speaks on behalf of a committee at any given time. Typically, the role of spokesperson for a committee is assumed by the Chair. In the case of a committee with Co-Chairs, it is recommended that the responsibility of spokesperson alternate monthly between the two individuals. A schedule should be established at the outset of each year, confirming the specific months assigned to each Co-Chair.

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## Media inquiries direct to Chair/ Co-Chair

- Media may contact a Chair or Co-Chair of a committee/ board/ commission to request information/ an interview
- Chair or Co-Chair may opt to provide interview if they deem it appropriate and are comfortable speaking to the matter. **NOTE:** Only the Co-Chair with current responsibility as spokesperson should speak on behalf of the committee.
- If the matter is not within the purview of the committee and falls under the accountability of municipal administration, the Chair or Co-Chair should advise the media to contact Public Affairs (PA):
  - PA Media Line: 902.490.7400
  - Email: [mediarelations@halifax.ca](mailto:mediarelations@halifax.ca)
- The Chair or Co-Chair is asked to advise PA if they are contacted by media and/ or opt to provide an interview.