



METROPOLITAN HALIFAX
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
*Strong Business. Strong Community.
Since 1750.*

Policy Activity Report

METROPOLITAN HALIFAX CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

March 31, 1999

Policy Committees

Economic Dev.: **Next Meeting: April 15** **Guest Speaker: Stephen Dempsey, GHP**

Info Gathering - The Committee continues its work in talking informally to the economic development groups around town to informally get a handle on what their particular areas of focus are. The objective is to pool this information to get a better picture of our community's economic development strengths.

Government Affairs: **Next Meeting: April 22** **Guest Speaker: None**

Municipal - With the balanced HRM budget this group will now be able to look at more long-term issues including: the multi-year financial strategy, the benchmarking study being done by HRM and the municipal tax structure.

Provincial - The committee will be reviewing the "Government By Design" Report and associated updates, and will be initiating some investigation of self-regulating authorities with taxing power.

Federal - The group has followed up with Minister Martin post-budget to restate our concern over the level of spending and the failure to aggressively address our national debt.

Tax Reform - This group will be getting started again over the next few months to look at how taxation at each government level impacts business and will be developing recommendations for change.

Oil & Gas: **Next Meeting: April 13** **Guest Speaker: None**

Distribution - The Committee met with Maritimes NRG to review their application and has invited Sempra to supply a similar briefing. Our information requests have been submitted to Sempra and Maritimes NRG. The committee will review the responses and will develop further action items as the distribution hearings progress.

Development - The committee is working with the Greater Halifax Partnership to identify areas where we can work together to promote industry spinoff and growth.

Education - The group is linked into the provincial education committee and will monitor progress on this critical issue.

Transportation: **Next Meeting: April 1** **Guest Speaker: None**

Port & Rail - Maersk bid and continued growth in port traffic and available port services are the ongoing focus.

Air Services - The Chamber is monitoring final negotiations for the transfer of Halifax International Airport. Alan Taylor from HRM briefed the Committee on the planning and consultation process for the HRM Go Plan. He outlined the known traffic and road issues and invited feedback on the plan from the committee.

Road -



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Education & Advocacy Committees

- Burnside:** **Next meeting: April 28** **Guest Speaker: None**
- Burnside Watch - The Committee is pleased with the renewed commitment to the Watch from the HR Police. A Chair for the Watch Society is needed as Paul Andrus is stepping down.
- Burnside Club - The Club events continue to be well-attended and are great for identifying business opportunities in the Park.
- HRM - Concerns still remain on how the HRM sale of land account is being used and on the maintenance of certain roads in and around Burnside.
- International Bus.:** **Next Meeting: April 20** **Guest Speaker: None**
- Ibus Day - International Business Day is targeted for May 18. Two workshops have been confirmed and the breakfast event is a key kickoff.
- Trade Mission - A group has been put together to work with the province to explore a Chamber trade mission to Boston in the fall.
- Retail:** **Next Meeting: April 9** **Guest Speaker: Event - "Don't Take a Fake"**
- Membership - The Committee is actively supporting Chamber sales staff in bringing new retail members into the Chamber.
- Education - The education events continue to be a great success. The "Dealing with Difficult People" seminar drew over 70 people and the next event is set for April 9th.
- Sales - It is important to "get the message out" that retail is booming in Atlantic Canada.
- Small Business:** **Next Meeting: April 6** **Guest speaker: None**
- Oil & Gas - Gerry Nolan has volunteered as Liaison with the Oil & Gas Committee. The objective is to identify business opportunities for small business and all Chamber members.
- Road - Robert Gaede is working to bring the Small Business Committee's concerns to the table at the Transportation Committee. He is looking for feedback on HRM's Go-Plan.
- Task Forces**
- OH&S Task Force:** **Next meeting: TBA** **Guest Speaker: None**
- Implementation - The group met to discuss any new developments in the area and will continue to monitor implementation of regulations, including air quality regulations, over the next few months.
- WCB Task Force:** **Next meeting: TBA** **Guest Speaker: None**
- Bill 90 - The Task Force has communicated the Chamber's position on Bill 90 to all three political parties. They will be monitoring developments in the House and will be prepared to respond.
- WCB Review - The Task Force is putting together its first draft of a review of the Workers' compensation system and key areas for improvement.