

EASTERN REGIONAL SERVICES BOARD

Minutes of Meeting #14

March 27, 2013

7:00 p.m.

Ramada St. John's

102 Kenmount Road

In Attendance:

Harold Mallowney, Southern Shore
Vice-Chairperson/Acting Chairperson
Dave Aker, Mount Pearl
Ches Ash, Trinity Conception North
Danny Breen, St. John's
Wally Collins, St. John's
Colin Corcoran, Southwest Avalon
Joy Dobbie, TBS & Isthmus East
Frank Galgay, St. John's
Derrick Green, Bay Roberts
Sandy Hickman, St. John's
Sterling Willis, Paradise
Ed Grant, newly appointed Chairperson

Regrets:

Bill Bailey, Clarenville & Isthmus
Walter Butt, Small Metro
Gerry Colbert, St. John's
Shannie Duff, St. John's
Woodrow French, Conception Bay South
Debbie Hanlon, St. John's
Tom Hann, St. John's
Sheilagh O'Leary, St. John's
Bruce Tilley, St. John's

Guests:

Ken Kelly, Chief Administrative Officer, Eastern Waste Management
Lynn Tucker, Manager Corporate Services, Eastern Waste Management
Kevin Power, Manager, Waste Operations, Eastern Waste Management
Frank Huxter, Director, Waste Management Division, Municipal Affairs
Sarah Morgan, Bonavista Peninsula Waste Management

1. Call to Order

Mr. Harold Mallowney, Vice-Chairperson and Acting Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

2. Introduction of Newly Appointed Board Member, Mr. Colin Corcoran, Southwest Avalon; and, Newly Appointed Chairperson, Mr. Ed Grant

Mr. Mallowney welcomed Mr. Colin Corcoran, Mayor for the Town of Riverhead, as the newly appointed representative for the Southwest Avalon sub-region. Mr. Mallowney noted that Mr. Corcoran has experience both in taxation and governance and should be an asset to the Board.

Mr. Mallowney welcomed Mr. Ed Grant, newly appointed Chairperson as per the letter received from the Minister today and circulated this evening (Appendix A). Mr. Grant's appointment as Chairperson is effective immediately.

Mr. Mallowney also informed members that Mr. Walter Butt is still in hospital and has been since early February. Mr. Butt is now allowed visitors. As well, Ms. Shannie Duff was recently hospitalized for surgery but is now recuperating at home.

Mr. Mallowney noted that both Mr. Butt and Ms. Duff are signatories on the Board's bank account and their absence due to illness has created an issue regarding getting cheques signed in a timely manner. Mr. Mallowney stated that the Board should add another signatory to its bank account so that the business of the Board may continue. As Mr. Grant is now Chairperson, it makes sense that he be appointed the new signatory.

It was moved and seconded (D Breen/S Willis) that Mr. Ed Grant, Chairperson, will be added as a signatory along with existing signatories, Mr. Harold Mallowney, Ms. Shannie Duff, and Mr. Walter Butt to sign cheques for Eastern Regional Service Board operating as Eastern Waste Management.

MOTION 2013-014: Carried

3. Adoption of Agenda

It was moved and seconded (D Aker/D Green) to adopt the agenda as tabled.

MOTION 2013-015: Carried

4. Review of Minutes – February 26, 2013

It was moved and seconded (F Galgay/S Willis) that the minutes of the February 26, 2013 meeting are adopted as tabled.

MOTION 2013-016: Carried

5. Committee Reports

a. Finance & Audit Committee (D Breen, Chairperson)

- i. Human Resources Policy and Procedures Manual** - Mr. Breen outlined that the Board has been working to develop formal job descriptions and pay scales for all positions of the Board. During the process the consultant, AEM Human Resources Consulting (AEM), has recommended that the organization formalize its human resources (HR) practices and other related policies in an HR policies and procedures manual. The committee asked AEM to prepare a proposal for the development of a standard manual and the development of a

comprehensive manual. The standard manual will cover the employment entitlements whereas the comprehensive manual will cover other issues such as code of conduct, conflict of interest, expectations of the employer i.e. use of internet, theft, harassment, conditions of the office, security, etc. The proposed cost for a standard manual is \$4,640.00 plus HST and the comprehensive manual is \$7,840.00 plus HST. This was discussed at length at committee and it is the recommendation of the Finance & Audit Committee that the Board develop a comprehensive HR policies and procedures manual as proposed by the consultant.

It was moved and seconded (D Breen/D Aker) that ERSB engage AEM Human Resources Consulting to develop a comprehensive human resources policies and procedures manual as per Proposal B of the February 2013 proposal document at the cost of \$7,840.00 plus HST.

MOTION 2013-017: Carried

- ii. **Handheld GPS Unit** – Mr. Breen noted that a tender was issued for the purchase of a handheld GPS unit for the collection of field data in conjunction with the development of the mapping/GIS system for the Board. We have also developed automatic vehicle location (AVL) capability which is installed on all contracted and internal vehicles. We received one response from Cansel Wade. The tendered price was \$16,106.50 for 10 cm accuracy. The committee debated the merits of this accuracy and requested quotes for a lesser level of accuracy. Based on input from staff, the committee supported the purchase of a handheld GPS unit with sub-meter accuracy for an estimated cost of \$11,576.50 plus HST.

It was moved and seconded (D Breen/S Hickman) that ERSB purchase a GPS unit from Cansel Wade with sub-meter accuracy at the cost of \$11,576.50 plus HST.

MOTION 2013-018: Carried

- iii. **Collection of Fees from the Province for its AES Income Support Benefits Recipients** – Mr. Breen noted that this issue is relevant to local service districts (LSDs) and unincorporated areas only. He continued that staff has brought this issue forward to committee as it deals with the ability of the Board to collect the fees for service provided to Advanced Education & Skills Income Support Benefits recipients. The province will not share information with the board that it shares with municipalities and local service districts. The province does pay for services delivered to these property owners/tenants. The result is that the board has no ability to know who are legitimate AES recipients and who are not. In addition, some LSDs have been invoicing the province for these fees and then remitting them to the board. This has not happened in all cases and again we have no mechanism to act as a check or balance. This issue has been raised with the province and goes back one and half years. He continued that a meeting has been set up with Mr. Huxter and others in the department for tomorrow morning to further discuss this issue and try to develop a resolution.

Mr. Ash asked how the inability to collect these fees affects the board's budget.

Mr. Kelly responded that this issue has not affected the board's budget to date as up to this point there have been sub-regional groups in place who were responsible for the collection of the fees. However, there is no ability to take collection action against any AES income support benefits recipient. These fees remain uncollectable despite the province acknowledging that it does pay for these services for their clients. The real issue is the lack of ability of the AES department to share information. In addition, income support recipients may be eligible for only a portion of the year for benefits and would therefore be responsible for a portion of the fees themselves. Another issue identified by staff is that there are persons who will self-identify as AES clients but who are not – again, staff has no way to know if they are actually a client or not. There are no checks and balances. As an example, the Trinity Bay South sub-region has approximately 1,600 accounts with an outstanding amount of approximately \$25,000.00 owing for AES clients.

Mr. Ash stated that he is in support of what staff is doing regarding this issue as it is very important. The board needs to collect these fees in order to keep costs down overall.

Mr. Green asked what percentage is delinquent in Trinity Bay South to have accrued debt of \$25,000.00 for AES clients.

Mr. Kelly responded that the delinquency rate is about 10% over 2 ½ to 3 years that we have been collecting in the area. The issue is that there are no checks and balances in place to verify those who are actually in receipt of income support benefits.

Mr. Breen asked if we could request some sort of grant from AES to cover these fees as a way to expedite the resolution of this matter.

Mr. Kelly stated that is one suggestion; however, how will staff know whose account to credit so that collection action is not taken against those customers. In addition, the grant will not identify by name those who are income support recipients for only a small percentage of the year with a portion of fees remaining to be collected. In addition, he has been told that this will be a nightmare for AES to figure out – they will have to identify the client and determine what's owed and that will take a lot of time.

Mr. Dobbie noted that AES now requires bi-weekly reporting from towns and LSDs for their income support benefits recipients – she cannot see a 'blanket' solution to this issue as the AES clients come off and on the account list regularly.

Mr. Grant asked if this is a problem for the other boards across the province.

Mr. Huxter responded that other waste management boards have not identified this as an issue yet but he expects they will as they become more involved in operations. EWM has identified this issue as it has been operational for several years now.

Mr. Breen noted that the board should not have to bear the costs of determining what's owed to resolve this matter.

Mr. Grant stated he cannot see this being an issue as the department could use the postal code to determine the number of recipients in a community or area.

Mr. Green noted that the real issue here is the *Privacy Act*.

Mr. Aker suggested that the Board invite an official from the Department of Advanced Education and Skills to address the issue and to assist in developing a resolution.

Mr. Huxter noted that Mr. Cluney Mercer (Assistant Deputy Minister, Municipal Affairs) has met with officials at AES and have been informed that the department has internal issues that must be resolved before our issue can be addressed.

Mr. Aker stated that he would like to have a better understanding of this issue and thought it would be best to ask AES personnel directly.

b. Strategy & Policy Committee - (C Ash, Chairperson)

- i. **Proceed with Development of Harbour Grace Waste Recovery Facility** – Mr. Ash noted that the board has been working with communities in the Conception Bay North area to develop a waste recovery facility (WRF). The former site of the Harbour Grace incinerator was identified as a suitable site for the WRF. This site has an existing road, good highway access, level surface area and development as a WRF would be a good re-use opportunity for a derelict site. The site has issues with ownership – the site is jointly owned by the Town of Harbour Grace and an entity that is now dissolved – the Conception Bay North Incinerator Association. The association was made up of eight (8) stakeholder communities. We have met with the communities and asked that each Council consider allowing the ERSB to develop the site as a WRF. To date six (6) of the eight (8) communities have agreed to the development of a WRF, one has refused and one has not responded. We are trying to meet with both of these communities. The committee feels that the support of six of eight stakeholder communities and the Town of Harbour Grace, which is duly noted on title for this parcel of land, is sufficient for the board to proceed with the development of the site. If the Conception Bay North Incinerator Association was still an organized entity a motion to allow utilization of the site for these purposes would have been adopted. Development will include proceeding with engineering, getting a Certificate of Approval to Operate from the province and tendering the construction of the site.

It was moved and seconded (C Ash/D Green) that ERSB proceed as required with the development of the former Harbour Grace incinerator site for use as a waste recovery facility.

MOTION 2013-019: Carried

Mr. Grant asked why a community would say no to the development of the site for a WRF.

Mr. Kelly responded that the town has indicated that they believe the development of a WRF at Harbour Grace will increase illegal dumping; however, the issue is that the town is cutting out bulk collection for its residents once the WRF is operational. Any increase in illegal dumping would be a result of the town's decision and not because a WRF is available. In addition, they have stated that they feel the WRF should accept waste from commercial operators; however, a WRF is the same as the Residential Drop Off at the Regional Facility located at Robin Hood Bay (RHB). No commercial traffic is allowed as any waste disposed off then has to be loaded into a trailer and hauled to RHB at the board's expense.

Mr. Grant noted that the town should review its policy.

- ii. **Eastern Regional Service Board – Increasing Awareness** – Mr. Ash stated that as discussed at last month's board meeting, the committee invited Ms. Nancy O'Connor of NATIONAL (formerly MT&L), our Agency of Record for marketing and communications to meet with the committee to discuss issues of perception and strategies/opportunities that the board could use to address these issues. The minutes of the meeting are in tonight's meeting package and it was a very open dialogue (Appendix B). In summary, the board has got to do two things: (1) board members have to decide how far they wish to go in terms of increasing awareness and perception as it will involve work on behalf of individual members – contributing to meetings across the region, presence at MNL conference for ERSB, contributing to media stories, and engaging other community leaders; and, (2) board has to commit resources to this issue so that it can be maintained – website, Twitter, communications planning, etc. One very valid point made by NATIONAL was that if we "create the beast; we have to feed the beast".

NATIONAL was asked to bring back a proposal for a communications plan that will allow the board to understand what NATIONAL feels is appropriate to increase awareness/perception of ERSB; what it will require of each individual board member; and, what the resource commitment would be to achieve the desired outcome. This proposal will be ready for the next Strategy & Policy committee meeting at which time we will consider whether it is ready to bring forward to the board for discussion and consideration.

c. **Governance Committee - (H. Mallowney, Chairperson)**

- i. **Statutory Declaration of Compliance** – Mr. Mallowney noted that the Governance Committee discussed the suggestion that a statutory declaration of compliance be read at each board meeting stating that we are in compliance with all our statutory requirements. While there is no requirement for a statement to be endorsed at regular intervals it is inherently a component of the board's responsibility to comply with all the legislation that governs its activities including employment legislation, tax remittances, approvals to operate waste infrastructure, insurance requirements, etc. Adopting a statement of

compliance implies that the board has done due diligence to determine if it is or isn't in compliance. This may be difficult for the board at times as we may be awaiting information from third parties, deadlines, etc. Nevertheless, the board needs to be assured that the necessary statutory measures are being taken and it should be regularly updated as to the status of the board in this regard. The Governance Committee has been tasked with ensuring the board's compliance and has started a process for systematic review of the responsibilities of the board. The committee will continue to work on this and will report back to the board.

- ii. **Appointment of New Member and Chairperson** – Mr. Mullooney noted that this issue was addressed earlier in the meeting.

6. Other Business

- a. **Municipal Election 2013: Plan for Continuance of Work of the Board** – Mr. Mullooney noted that this issue was discussed at the last Governance Committee meeting. A municipal election is scheduled for September 24, 2013 and that could impact the continuance of work for the board. There are members who have indicated that they will not be seeking re-election; therefore, new members will have to be appointed to replace those. In addition, members who seek re-election may not be re-elected and again new member(s) will have to be appointed. It may take the Minister some time to make the new appointments.

Mr. Kelly stated that the board has a statutory obligation to announce the tipping fees for the Regional Facility by October 31st. This is very important as all communities in the eastern region need that information to complete their budgets for 2014. He wondered how comfortable/prepared new board members will be in addressing the budget and setting the tipping fees before the October 31st deadline. He continued that those members who do not stand for election will continue on the board until someone else is appointed; however, these members could resign at any time and/or not show up for meetings which impacts quorum and, again, the board's ability to continue its business. In light of this, Mr. Kelly proposed that the budget discussions and setting of the tipping fees be moved back to August for this year.

Mr. Breen noted that there is no way the budget for the Regional Facility would be ready by the end of August.

Mr. Grant stated that this board is no different than any other provincial board that experiences membership changeover. He stated that he understood members were finished once an election was called as members have to be elected officials.

Mr. Kelly noted that the *Regional Services Board Act* contains the following regarding members' appointments:

- *Section 8(3) Notwithstanding subsections (1) and (2), a member shall continue to be a member until he or she is reappointed or replaced.*

Mr. Huxter confirmed that the new legislation, *Regional Service Boards Act, 2012* was changed to address this issue. Members remain on the board until replaced or re-appointed by the Minister.

Mr. Ash stated that this is problematic for those members who represent a sub-region or group of communities. Once re-elected to their respective Council, they then have to be re-elected by a group of councils as the representative for the sub-region. Then they await appointment to this board. This takes time.

Mr. Galgay noted that he will not be seeking re-election and will not continue on the board past September 30, 2013.

Mr. Kelly noted that Mr. Galgay has informed the board he will be resigning at that time. Despite the legislation, there is no obligation to stay on once the writ is dropped. The issue will be new members and those who may not show up for quorum.

Mr. Aker stated that if he is not re-elected, he will continue to attend meetings until another member has been appointed to his position on the board. He suggested that the board ask members if they intend to do the same – he stated that he does not see this as being an issue.

Mr. Breen asked how many members are needed for quorum.

Mr. Kelly replied that eleven (11) members are required for quorum.

Mr. Corcoran asked if there is any provision to remove those members who miss three (3) or more consecutive members.

Mr. Mallowney replied that this board cannot do that as the City of St. John's has ten (10) positions on the board and ten (10) councillors. They have no one else to replace anyone removed from the board.

Mr. Kelly noted that the attendance clause is included in the *ERSB Rules and Regulations Governing the Procedures of Meetings*; however, this was discussed at committee recently and it was recommended this clause be removed as it is unenforceable.

Mr. Collins asked if any meetings had been cancelled due to lack of quorum.

Mr. Kelly stated that no meetings have been cancelled to date due to lack of quorum; however, it has been very tight at times.

Mr. Ash noted that this board is newly established and continues to experience growing pains. There seems to be a group of core members who regularly attend meetings. For those who do not attend meetings, what's the contribution? Basically, we have non-contributing members – how do we address that?

Mr. Galgay noted that the City of St. John's has one-half the seats on the board and have several members that regularly attend meetings.

Mr. Grant stated that his understanding from the early history of this organization is that the City of St. John's was very concerned about how the board was evolving and wanted good representation. He stated he feels the board has evolved quite nicely. However, it seems silly to continue to have ten (10) members from St. John's on the board who are expected to regularly attend board meetings. He stated that it may be time to discuss reducing representation for the City of St. John's with some arrangement to maintain the balance on the board.

Mr. Breen stated that the City of St. John's has made adjustments to its numbers in that it had ten (10) of twenty (20) members on the former committee and now has ten (10) of twenty-one (21) on the board. The City of St. John's has no interest in reducing its representation on this board.

Mr. Ash noted that his concerns are around the board's ability to ensure quorum – he travels a fair distance and certainly does not want to be wasting his time in travelling to the city for meetings that cannot proceed due to lack of quorum.

- b. **MNL Convention & ERSB Representation** – Mr. Breen noted that discussion had taken place regarding this board having representation at the upcoming MNL Convention – where are we with that?

Mr. Kelly replied that the board hopes to be there to make a presentation to MNL's membership and several topics have been submitted for consideration. In addition, the board has requested space for a booth at MNL's trade show. Mr. Kelly continued that the MNL Convention will be the first thing in the communications plan being worked on by NATIONAL. He asked how many board members will be there to represent ERSB as members will be needed in the booth, etc.

- c. **Meeting with Minister and Appointment as Chairperson of ERSB** - Mr. Grant noted that he recently met with the Minister and Deputy Minister to discuss his appointment as Chairperson of this board. They discussed a number of issues regarding ERSB including his appointment as an independent chair rather than the appointment of a councillor. However, the single biggest topic discussed was the need for public relations for the board. The Minister expressed a desire to change the perception of the board and to bring communities on side with the work of the board. The Minister requested that he be active

in advocating on behalf of the board. He feels that his experience in municipal politics will be valuable in bringing communities onboard.

7. Next Meeting

The next regular meeting of the Eastern Regional Service Board will take place on Wednesday, April 24, 2013 at 7:00 p.m. at the Ramada St. John's.

Mr. Grant noted that would not be available for that meeting as he will be out of the province until April 27th.

8. Adjournment

**It was moved (D Aker) to adjourn the meeting at 8:00 p.m.
MOTION 2013-020: Carried**

*Prepared by: Lynn Tucker
March 28, 2013*

APPENDIX 'A'



Government of Newfoundland and Labrador
Municipal Affairs
Office of the Minister

COR/2013/01995

MAR 27 2013

Mr. Ed Grant
2 Gilham Crescent
Mount Pearl, NL
A1N 3C7

Dear Mr. Grant:

In accordance with Section 5 of the *Regional Service Board Act, 2012*, I am pleased to appoint you as Chair of the Eastern Regional Service Board. This appointment is effective immediately.

The Eastern Regional Service Board is considered a Level I entity established under Regulation 101/11 of the Act and provides for a remuneration rate of \$195 per day and \$95 per half day.

Thank you for your commitment to the Board and to the Provincial Waste Management Strategy.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kevin O'Brien".

KEVIN O'BRIEN
Minister

/jl

cc: Mr. Ken Kelly, Chief Administrative Officer
Mr. Frank Huxter, Director (A) of Waste Management

P.O. Box 8700, St. John's, NL, Canada A1B 4J6 t 709.729.3048 f 709.729.0943

APPENDIX 'B'

FROM STRATEGY & POLICY COMMITTEE
Minutes of Meeting #9 - March 14, 2013

Perception and Awareness Issues and Potential Solutions – presentation and brainstorming session with Ms. Nancy O’Connor of NATIONAL Public Relations, our Agency of Record

Mr. Ash stated that as reported at the last Board meeting, Ms. O’Connor of NATIONAL Public Relations, our Agency of Record, has been invited to today’s meeting to present and brainstorm regarding changing the perception and awareness issues of ERSB. Mr. Ash asked Mr. Kelly to do the formal introductions.

Mr. Kelly introduced Ms. Nancy O’Connor, Senior Consultant with NATIONAL Public Relations, formerly MT&L, who is our Agency of Record. Ms. O’Connor has been involved with Eastern Waste Management for several years now and is very familiar with our issues. In addition, Ms. O’Connor is accompanied by her colleague, Mr. Brett Thornhill, Director, who will be assisting her with our file. Ms. O’Connor will begin with a presentation and then follow that with a brainstorming session.

Ms. O’Connor began by providing background information about her qualifications including more than 13 years in the communications field. Mr. Thornhill stated that his expertise includes 15 years experience in marketing, advertising and branding.

Ms. O’Connor’s Presentation:

Eastern Waste Management: Brand Opportunities & Discussion

Who is NATIONAL

- NATIONAL discovers every opportunity when solving clients’ problems and helping them tell their stories
- We combine the power of public relations and digital engagement with the creativity of brand marketing

Ongoing Projects

- Events and campaigns – *HHW events; media events; etc.*
- Branded info kits/collateral – *i.e. information kits (recycling packages) that went out December 2012; branded signage at WRFs and on trucks; business plan branding, etc.*
- Website – *the website needs a lot of work*
- Media Relations

Communications Collateral

- Branded Signage – *signage at facilities; on trucks; etc.*
- Business Plan Branding & Layout
- Household Recycling Kit Campaign – Dec 2012

Generating Brand Awareness

- Opportunity to generate greater brand awareness and get your message out to communities and residents
- This requires a commitment to a brand communications strategy and plan

Ms. O'Connor stated that generating brand awareness is the focus of today's discussion and for true brand awareness, a commitment and plan is needed.

- What do all great brands have in common?
 - They have a brand narrative, a story.

Reinforced messaging is critical for success.

Mr. Thornhill noted that the visual identification of a logo is NOT your brand – it represents your brand. How a brand is portrayed is very important. The public has to know what EWM cares about. Basically, EWM needs to “live its brand”.

Ms. O'Connor continued that the ongoing story and consistent messaging is important to develop a brand. She noted that the website should be a focus for EWM this year. She stated that she is recommending that EWM re-vamp its website and fully leverage its new Twitter presence this year.

Ms. O'Connor continued her presentation:

Generating Brand Awareness

- The narrative, story reinforces the brand story.
- Achieved through:
 - Media relations/interviews
 - Face-to-face communications (it's not just for the spokesperson)
 - Social media (for those with a presence)

Recommendations for 2013

- Ramp up Eastern Waste Management's digital presence:
 - Re-vamp the website
 - Fully leverage new Twitter presence
- Continued and consistent branding of signage and collateral
- Proactive media relations plan
- Communications toolkit for board members
- Cost and resource time commitment

Discussion took place regarding the website with members agreeing that it requires a lot of work.

Mr. Thornhill stated that the website should not be looked at as a digital brochure as it could be used effectively to develop relationships with clients. It should have interactive parts with fresh content so that the public is engaged and want to come back to the website. To describe websites, he likes the expression “If you're building the beast, feed the beast!”

In addition, Mr. Thornhill noted that maintaining a website requires commitment and needs to be a priority item – it can be the main communications tool for EWM.

Mr. Ash noted that before we had access and control of our website, much of the material it contained became outdated and that led to negative perceptions.

Ms. O'Connor agreed and noted:

- Materials on the website needs to be better organized and kept up to date.
- Public can be directed to the website for communications/information.
- EWM now has new Twitter presence – that needs to be fed. With only 140 characters to get a message out, that can be challenging.
- Use Twitter to direct public to the website.
- Need to identify stock and flow material. Pre-planning is required.
- How to address negative feedback on Twitter.
- Do work beforehand – have responses prepared.

Mr. Galgay stated that he feels it's vitally important to be cognizant and cautious regarding any messaging to offset the negativity that's out there. Guidelines would have to be established regarding any information/responses as they impact brand perception.

Mr. Thornhill stated that a Content Management Strategy is needed. Social media is here to stay and EWM needs to determine if it will be a part of it or not. Twitter is now a primary source of information for many.

Mr. Kelly noted that Twitter is strictly one component of a communications plan. ERSB/EWM has to determine its communications priorities for this year so that staff has direction. In addition, board members need to become engaged.

Ms. O'Connor and Mr. Thornhill both acknowledged that they will explore all channels regarding what's best for ERSB/EWM.

Ms. O'Connor stated that she feels continued and consistent branding of signage/collateral is important as well as a proactive media relations plan; a communications toolkit for board members; and, a cost and resource time commitment.

Mr. Thornhill noted that four times the value is applied to 'earned media' or free media i.e. talk shows, communication papers, etc. as they are seen as third-party endorsements.

Mr. O'Connor stated the toolkit for board members would contain information they require so that they will be comfortable and equipped whether discussing issues with the public and/or the media.

Discussion ensued with the following points:

- ERSB/EWM is a municipal service provider. Twitter could open us up to lots of complaints. A plan is needed to respond to those complaints.
- Where's the process that will drive the public to the website?

- First priority should be to address the negative image of EWM.
- Outside the metro region, EWM has a very negative image.
- The kits circulated in December 2012 were excellent; however, there was no lead-in to those being circulated. Therefore, many home owners didn't even open the packages but threw them directly in the garbage.
- Do our customers use Twitter?
- How do we raise awareness?
- Most of what we are currently doing is dealing with negativity which is reactive. We need to be much more proactive. We need to better use 'earned media'.
- It seems that regular and consistent messaging is important...
- ERSB/EWM needs to establish a vibrant informative website that brands us and is functional. This is very important.
- We haven't been proactive with 'earned media'.
- We have lots of good stories and we need to get those messages out there.
- Don't interpret our concerns as criticism of what has been done to date.
- ERSB/EWM needs greater brand awareness as the perception is that we're the source of added expense.
- We are not recognized as a service provider. The public does not know who we are.
- Not all our customers use digital media. Any communications plan would have to include a plan to reach those who do not use computers, website, Twitter, etc.
- We need to be creating opportunities for communication and not sitting back waiting for someone to visit the website, etc.

Ms. O'Connor thanked members for their feedback. She noted that the largest group of Twitter users is females aged 45-54 years. In addition, Ms. O'Connor noted that Newfoundlanders and Labradoreans are high users of Twitter compared to the rest of Canada. She continued that ERSB/EWM needs to become more active at trade shows and conventions with booths, etc.

Mr. Kelly stated that board members need to become more engaged in communications.

Mr. Power suggested that 'earned media' could be used to get out our message regarding the upcoming HHW collection events.

Mr. Galgay suggested that directions and/or techniques on how to use 'earned media' would be valuable for board members. He stated that he feels the website should be a priority for this year. As well, he asked if the ERSB monthly meetings shouldn't be advertised as this would assist in raising awareness.

Mr. Ash thanked Ms. O'Connor and Mr. Thornhill for their presentation, discussion and ongoing work.

Mr. Kelly noted that communications to the local service district committees in the Eastern region can be quite difficult. This is something that will have to be considered in any communications plan. He continued that NATIONAL Public Relations will take today's information/suggestions/comments and put together a proposal to be brought back to this committee or to the board for consideration.

Ms. O'Connor thanked board members for their input and stated that they will consider all points made today in developing a communications plan for ERSB/EWM. She looks forward to continuing to work with the board.