

Meeting Notes

Round Table on Environment and Sustainable Prosperity

February 4, 2008

11am – 2pm Garrison Room, Halifax Citadel

Meeting Title	RTESP	Time Started	11:15 am
		Time Ended	2:15 pm
Date	February 4, 2008	Place	Garrison Room

PERSONS ATTENDING

1	Ray Côté	2	Martin Janowitz
3	Nancy Vanstone	4	Paul Taylor
5	Robert Grant	6	Dr. Edith Callaghan
7	Peter Lund	8	Anne Janega
9	Leanne Hachey	10	Peggy Crawford
11	Stephen Talbot	12	William Simpkins
13	Mark Butler	14	Judy McMullen
15	Laurence Nason	16	Stephen Hawboldt
17	Gordon Dickie	18	

Regrets: Michael Cox, Meinhard Doelle, Tamara Lorincz, Dwight Whynot

MEETING NOTES

1.0 Opening Remarks/Introduction of Members

Members of the Round Table and Deputy Ministers Nancy Vanstone and Paul Taylor were welcomed by Chair, Ray Côté. It was announced that Martin Janowitz has been appointed as Vice-Chair by Minister Parent and the Secretariat will be composed of Mike Langman, Bruce Findlay and Holly Cameron.

2.0 Members Orientation & Terms of Reference

Expense forms, Terms of Reference, and copies of the agenda were made available to members.

The draft Terms of Reference were reviewed clause by clause.

- Background. No comments or editorial changes
- Purpose. No editorial changes
- Guiding Principles.
 - There was a general agreement that consensus would be sought on issues of discussion. Members emphasized the importance of group decisions. There was general agreement that members will provide input through their experience and expertise (“intellectual capital”) as individuals.

- The principles should include transparency and accountability.
Action: The Secretariat would search for appropriate wording and prepare proposed amendments to include in Guiding Principles to ensure that the Round Table focuses in an open and engaging fashion.
- Members agreed that there will not be any alternate members.
- The Round Table should “walk the talk” and track its own ecological footprint and look for ways to reduce it. Measures could include travel, food, utensils, paper as a start.
Action: It was agreed that an “ecological footprint” tracking mechanism will be developed to track the Round Table and its impact on the environment. Staff will work with Round Table members to develop a reporting template for future meetings.
- Definitions of “sustainable” “social prosperity”, “natural capital” and other key words used in the Terms of Reference should be developed.
Action: The Secretariat will attempt to provide some definitions for key terms that are used in Round Table documents such as ‘prosperity’ and ‘natural capital’. How should prosperity be measured?
- Minutes: It was agreed that the record of the meetings would be described in general terms without attribution. The notes would include records of decisions and recommendations. There was some discussion about FOIPOP and public access to Round Table minutes.
- It was agreed that if the Round Table wants to move issues forward to the Minister, it can do so through the Chair and/or more formally through the annual reporting mechanism. While the Round Table was established to respond to the Minister, the Round Table, due in large part to the breadth and depth of the experience of its members is also in a position to put forward unsolicited recommendations to the Minister. It is understood that the Minister can accept or reject such recommendations.
- Resources for the Round Table. The Round Table is supported by three staff and has access to additional resources/staff upon request to the Minister. Work groups may be needed for some issues, and it was agreed that outside assistance and expertise would be sought for these resources as required.

- The Round Table hoped that the Minister would attend at least one meeting of the Round Table each year.
Action: The Terms of Reference should indicate that the Minister would meet with the Round Table at least once per year. (Ray Côté feels that it would be valuable if the Minister of Economic Development could also attend at least once a year.)
- The Round Table would like to be kept informed via the Deputy Ministers of items being considered by the DM's Council on Sustainable Prosperity to ensure that efforts are not duplicated.

3.0 Deputy Minister's Forum

- Presentation by Deputy Ministers Vanstone and Taylor re Opportunities for Sustainable Prosperity, the Environmental Goals and Sustainable Prosperity Act (EGSPA), the Deputy Ministers Forum and links to the Round Table.
- Q: Is this a unique forum for Nova Scotia re sustainable prosperity/green forum or do other provinces have them? A: It is a unique forum.

Q: Is the Deputy Minister of Education a member of the Green Forum? Tourism? Health? A: While they are not part of the Forum, there are opportunities to bring in the appropriate DM's when required to discuss issues.
- Q: What is the purpose of Nancy Vanstone and Paul Taylor being part of the Roundtable? A: Link to Ministers and act as resources.
- Q: How does government measure the impact of environmental goals? Are there economic indicators to measure the cost of the 21 goals of EGSPA? Some members of the Round Table expressed concerns that all goals focused on environmental outcomes and not economic impact or outcomes. For example, the Climate Change paper was heavily weighted towards environment goals and it needed more balance with economic impacts or goals. Perhaps an economic cost should be included with the proposed environmental goal. There needs to be clear focus and measure of the real benefit of these goals. Are there going to be benchmark measures (interim measures) for the environmental goals under EGSPA? A: Costing of the goals of the Act have been around for a while under other regulations. Now collectively under one Act.

- There was great interest in the topic of indicators of sustainable economic performance beyond that traditionally used, namely GNP. Genuine Progress Index was one such index mentioned. There is a need to show progress with real numbers on an annual basis. Several members also expressed interest in having the province develop a set of goals for economic performance consistent with the objective and the environmental goals.
- It is recommended that the first report on the EGSPA attempt to identify baselines where possible so that other Ministers, the Legislature and the public appreciate what is being accomplished and how far the province has to go to reach the goals.
- The presentation by the Deputies, Nancy Vanstone and Paul Taylor, was particularly helpful in understanding where Nova Scotia wants to go in the future.
- There was interest in getting more information about the Better Regulations initiative in government. There is also an interest in learning more about Conserve Nova Scotia and its function.
- Idea of timetable of probability of regulations under the *Environmental Goals and Sustainable Prosperity Act*? May not be a need. Regulatory making legislation under other regulations
- Round Table members questioned their interaction with the various government mechanisms working on environmental and sustainable prosperity initiatives.

4.0 Topics for Future Meetings

Suggested topics included:

- the “Green Filter”
- the sustainable prosperity “Decision Matrix”
- climate change plan
- demand side management plan
- coastal management strategy
- green procurement policy
- fleshing out the two long term EGSPA goals
- “social responsibility” and Nova Scotian’s consumption of resources (importation of products from polluting countries rather than producing product locally in a more environmentally friendly manner.)
- investigate various means and approaches to measuring prosperity
- investigate the concept of “energy efficiency” versus energy consumption

- the need for regulations specific to EGSPA
- climate change adaptation
- nuclear energy as an energy option on Nova Scotia
- role of Conserve Nova Scotia

5.0 2008 Meeting Schedule

It was agreed that the RT will meet roughly every two months for ½ day for the initial year of operation. The next proposed meeting will be during the last week of March. (Specific date to be confirmed.).

6.0 Other Business

Meeting notes will be circulated within two weeks and will include complete contact information for all members.

Mr Côté reminded members to submit short biographies to Holly Cameron for the website on the Round Table.

Members were asked to submit expense claims before the end of the month.

Climate Change Conference at the Westin on March 4 & 5, 2008.

Secretariat: Holly Cameron
Bruce Findlay
Michael Langman