

## Meeting Notes

### Round Table on Environment and Sustainable Prosperity

March 26, 2008

NS Environment and Labour, 7B, 5151 Terminal Road

10am – 2pm

Meeting Title	RTESP	Time Started	10:10 am
		Time Ended	1.55 pm
Date	March 26, 2008	Place	5151 Terminal Rd

#### **PERSONS ATTENDING**

<b>1</b>	Ray Côté	<b>2</b>	Martin Janowitz
<b>3</b>	Mark Butler	<b>4</b>	Dr. Edith Callaghan
<b>5</b>	Gordon Dickie	<b>6</b>	Robert Grant
<b>7</b>	Leanne Hachey	<b>8</b>	Stephen Hawboldt
<b>9</b>	Tamara Lorincz	<b>10</b>	Peter Lund
<b>11</b>	William Simpkins	<b>12</b>	Stephen Talbot
<b>13</b>	Paul Taylor	<b>14</b>	Nancy Vanstone
<b>15</b>	Dwight Whynot	<b>16</b>	

**Guest:** Minister Mark Parent

**Regrets:** Peggy Crawford, Meinhard Doelle, Ann Janega, Judy McMullen, Laurence Nason

**Did not Attend:** Michael Cox

#### **MEETING NOTES**

##### **1.0 Opening Remarks/Introduction of Members**

Chairman Côté welcomed Members of the Round Table. Members then were asked to introduce themselves. Mr Côté then asked for review and approval of the Agenda. Approved.

The Round Table was asked to approve the meeting notes of February 4, 2008. It was suggested that member's affiliation should be included along with their names in the meeting notes. After considerable discussion no decision was made on this issue.

It was suggested and agreed the meeting notes should include the name of the note taker.

Members agreed that Chairman Côté would draft an official letter from the Round Table to the Minister that would be attached to the EGSPA Annual Report. The idea has been accepted by the Deputy and Minister of

Environment and Labour. Chairman Côté will draft a short document that will also be sent to the Minister identifying further issues and topics for consideration in the future due to the short turn around time for the EGSPA Report.

A member proposed re-phrasing of the sentence in section 3.0 of the notes, Deputy Minister's Forum. The sentence is "The Round Table expressed concerns that all goals focused on environmental outcomes and not economic impact or outcomes." The suggested edit was to begin the sentence with "Some members of the Round Table expressed....." The members agreed to the amendment.

The Chair asked for approval of the meeting notes with the proposed changes.

Moved: Edith Callaghan

Seconded: Steven Hawboldt

## **2.0 Business Arising from the Meeting Notes**

Chairman Côté reviewed the "actions" arising from the meeting notes of February 4, 2008.

Terms of Reference. Additional principles and attendance of the Minister of Environment and Labour to at least one meeting each year. There were no comments on the proposed amendments to the Terms of Reference and it was agreed that the item will be tabled until a future meeting.

Ecological Footprint - It was agreed that this issue would be addressed at a future meeting.

Definitions - It was agreed that definitions will continue to be developed and the item will be addressed at a future meeting.

## **3.0 Presentation of Environmental Goals and Sustainable Prosperity Act and Annual Report**

Chris Bryant, (Economic Development) Marah Haywood (Environment and Labour) and Judy White (Economic Development) joined the meeting. Chris Bryant circulated a handout and a slide presentation on EGSPA and its annual report (presentation attached).

Chris advised the Round Table that Cabinet approval is not required to release the EGSPA annual report. On April 10, 2008 the Report will be sent to Cabinet and will be tabled at the House on April 24, 2008.

Discussion ensued on the draft report which included the following comments.

- Economic and environmental goals should both be stressed throughout the report.
- Members discussed the possibility of a potential Round Table role in assessing the appropriateness of various available measures of sustainable economic performance in the context of ongoing EGSPA progress evaluation. While GDP per capita is most commonly used, it was agreed that other measures, for example the Genuine Progress Indicators (GPI) should be considered as well.
- Mr. Bryant suggested that the Round Table may be interested in learning more about the provincial Social Prosperity Framework as it proceeds with its work.
- A number of members asked about resources available to achieve the EGSPA targets. They questioned whether sufficient budget was committed to EGSPA targets.
- Others asked whether any cost-effectiveness evaluation had been done on the goals.
- Members encouraged EGSPA staff to look at the successes in other jurisdictions.
- One member questioned the use of the phrase “buy nothing” and suggested that “purchasing decisions” may be more appropriate terminology.
- Others said we must realize and recognize the costs associated with the goals and the changes that will need to happen. However, we must also consider the cost of doing nothing.
- Members agreed that it should be stressed that there is not a dichotomy between energy efficiency and business performance. It was suggested that businesses who have successfully demonstrated the benefits of maintaining the environment-economic balance should be invited to talk to the Round Table.
- There was strong agreement on the need for ongoing public education on EGSPA and environmental sustainability to help the public understand; support and take action. It was also agreed that groups including the Round Table and Deputy Ministers Green Forum could benefit from improved awareness on the issues related to environmental sustainability. Question: Will Nova Scotia government work with industry to educate the public?
- Perhaps the report should include a section about the roles of “all” the other key players in EGSPA and their respective roles. This is not solely a government initiative.
- It was agreed by Round Table members that investment should be used wherever possible versus costs in the context of the economic aspects of EGSPA.
- There is a need to include economic benchmarks along with the EGSPA goals.

- A number of members suggested that we need to prioritize the goals and take a more strategic approach to using our limited resources towards achieving the goals. Question: “ What are our priorities and where should we spend our limited resources.” (The Round Table was reminded that government, in law, has committed to achieving all the goals in the timeframes indicated. There is no option.)
- There is a need to educate the Round Table about what businesses face in Nova Scotia and why they make the decisions they make.

#### **4.0 Lunch (Minister Mark Parent and Deputy Ministers Nancy Vanstone and Paul Taylor joined the meeting)**

The EGSPA general discussion continued.

Question: “ What can the Round Table expect from its input and advice to government?” Answer: “Government established the Round Table, in law, to seek advice and it will use the Round Table for that role.”

There is a need to establish a common language around EGSPA and sustainability.

There is a need to complete cost-benefit analysis of the various goals and actions to achieve the goals; and a need for government to be accountable for sharing that information.

A number of members reiterated that there is a lack of strategic focus on the targets; how they should be prioritized; and how resources should be committed to achieving the goals. There is a need for strategic assessment of the goals and processes used to achieve the goals. There is also a need to focus on the outcomes with the question “What is the future we want to achieve?”

#### **Other Issues:**

A member suggested that “announcements” be added as permanent item to the agenda.

The members further requested that education and training of the Round Table be a future agenda item.

Members suggested that speakers from The Natural Step (TNS) and GPI Atlantic (Ron Colman) could be invited to give presentations to the Round Table. Edith to follow up on other speakers.

Power of Green conference upcoming in October 2008.

**5.0 Next Meeting**

June 18, 2008

10:00 am – 2:00 pm

Maritime Museum of the Atlantic, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Meeting Room

Secretariat: Holly Cameron  
Bruce Findlay  
Michael Langman