

### Fair Trade and Local Preferences (2008.09.29)

Berta Gaulke,

Thank you for your email of Tuesday September 16, 2008. It noted the unanimously passed 2005 motion by HRM Council for a study, and the current lack of a corresponding policy.

If efforts over the past three years to start a comprehensive policy change have been unsuccessful, perhaps an alternative approach in the future could be:

- seek to have a mandate from the senior level of decision makers (Council and CAO)
- identify, understand, and where possible address potential conflicts that may exist between potential policy goals and current direction to HRM staff (ie. The basis for their procurement decision making)
- seek to first apply a new policy in some specific sectors - something more than "coffee first" or similar to that, but not everything at one time.
- review results - especially in terms of incremental cost / incremental benefit, and
- make recommendations in the future for changes in scope of the policy application.

When deciding how to spend my own money, I do choose to make some local preferences, even if there is a perceived "premium price" for doing so. Making similar choices with other people's money, such as in the role of an HRM Councillor, must be done with an open, transparent, democratic mandate for doing so. As Councillor, I would work to have such a mandate in place to cover the application of a "coffee first" or other equivalent policies.

My election website [www.ExCELLS.ca](http://www.ExCELLS.ca) notes my seasonal activities at the Halifax Farmers Market as a local grower, producer, vendor of organic grapes and fruit as jams and jellies. In this case, I have a small vested interest in giving a preference for such local products.

Since receiving your email, I have looked at some information on the "Fair Trade Town" marketing approaches that supports the Transfair Canada staff activities. It reminds me of other supply chain initiatives that consumers can choose to use, such as that used for lumber. I like these free choice options for consumers and believe they have the potential to make real and sustained changes in this world for the better. One can also investigate if "Fair trade" results in marginal land being used in unsustainable ways to capture "premium pricing" but I suspect information about that already exists, and that on balance the results are "good" and acceptable. As Councillor, I would support such initiatives.

- Cameron Ells

## **Cameron Ells for Councillor - Downtown Halifax**

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Dear Candidate;

We are a coalition of non-profit organizations who advocate ethical purchasing practices by government. Such practices reflect the values of our community and also provide support for the local economy. HRM Council has been studying the issue of ethical/sustainable procurement since 2002. On September 13, 2005, a motion was passed unanimously “that staff develop a comprehensive, sustainable, ethical policy and to prepare and present a draft policy to Council within a one year time frame” however, more than three years later, HRM has yet to adopt an ethical procurement policy. Please send your answers to the following questions to [bertagaulke@ns.sympatico.ca](mailto:bertagaulke@ns.sympatico.ca) as soon as possible. All responses, including any elaboration on your position will be made available to the public.

1) Many municipalities, including the cities of Vancouver, Ottawa and Calgary, have adopted ethical purchasing policies for municipal procurement in which they commit to buying products produced in compliance with the International Labour Organization (ILO) standards, including "no sweat" and Fair Trade Certified products, with preference given to sustainably produced and local products where possible. Do you support the development of such a policy for HRM?

2) In April 2007, Wolfville, Nova Scotia became the first Fair Trade Town to be recognized by TransFair Canada, and there are currently a number of communities across the country working towards Fair Trade Town status. The Fair Trade Towns movement began in 1999 in the UK, and has spread across Europe and to Australia and North America. The Fair Trade Towns campaign in Canada is unique in including the goal of promoting other ethical and sustainable initiatives, including support for local producers. One requirement of becoming a Fair Trade Town is support from the municipal council or other governing authority. Would you support an initiative to have HRM become a Fair Trade Town?

Thank you for your participation.

TransFair Canada  
Just Us! Development and Education Society  
Nova Scotia Business Alliance for Local Living Economies  
Ecology Action Centre Food Action Committee  
Oxfam Canada