

Minutes - Special Finance and Administration Committee Meeting



MEETING DATE: February 14, 2007, 6:00 pm
LOCATION: The Blue Mountains Council Chamber
PREPARED BY: Stephen Keast, Clerk

A. Call to Order

- Chair Gamble called the special meeting to order to continue the initial review of the 2007 municipal budget with all members of Council in attendance, save Deputy Mayor McKinlay, absent due to a previous commitment.
- Approval of Agenda
Moved by: Ellen Anderson Seconded by: John McKean
THAT the Agenda of February 14, 2007 be approved as circulated, including any items added to the Agenda, Carried.
- Declaration of Pecuniary Interest
No member declared a pecuniary interest with regard to any matter on the Agenda.
- Previous Minutes – None

B. Deputations / Presentations

2007 Recreation Budget Review (including Parks and Trails, BVCC and Community Halls, Craigleith Depot, Harbour and Cemetery) - Robert Cummings, Acting Director of Finance, Teresa Oakley, Manager of Revenue, Shawn Everitt, Director of Recreation, Terry Green, Manager of Parks and Trails, Ryan Gibbons, Harbour Supervisor, Reg Russwurm, Director of Engineering and Public Works, John Caswell, Manager of Environment Services, Peter Tollefsen, Director of Planning, and Town Chief Administrative Officer, Paul Graham.

Shawn then reviewed the proposed 2007 Parks and Trails Budget, noting a 40.55% increase is proposed due to increased facility inventory and additional staff as required.

Deputy Mayor McKinlay then attended the meeting.

Terry then noted it was proposed seasonal labourers would perform landscape maintenance at Town facilities rather than Town Staff.

Terry noted approximately 150 acres of parkland was being maintained, Shawn adding 87 kilometres of trails were assumed and maintained.

Councillor Kennedy then noted the Thornbury BIA pays for flower watering and questioned if the Clarksburg commercial area pays for their Town watering, Town CAO Paul Graham replying they did not.

Deputy Mayor McKinlay then questioned if volunteer assistance in Clarksburg offset some work requirements, Terry replying yes.

Mayor Anderson then suggested BIA and Clarksburg representatives discuss the matter for Council's consideration.

Chair Gamble then questioned the increase in salaries, Rob noting a greater allocation of Recreation Administration was being allocated to Parks and Trails, Bob requesting a breakdown of the allocation.

Councillor Martin then suggested the Recreation Committee consider the staffing and lawn watering issues for recommendation to Council, Terry noting 127 hanging baskets and 14 bridge planters were being watered in Thornbury, 10 in Clarksburg in 2006.

Rob then reviewed the proposed capital budget, noting many projects are to be funded from reserves or development charges.

Chair Gamble then questioned if a growth-related building was funded from reserves, Rob noting it is shown as unfinanced at the moment, Shawn noting it was based on a previously considered transfer of an existing building.

Chair Gamble then questioned the purchase of two new trucks, Terry noting it was proposed to operate with 10 employees this year with one truck to be put on light duty for one more year's use.

Shawn then reviewed the proposed BVCC and Community Halls Budget.

Shawn then clarified the BVCC shows an annual subsidy line of \$50,000.00, noting a BVAA subsidy of \$37,000.00 in 2006, with the facility actually busier than the rental revenues would indicate.

Shawn then reviewed the 2006 investment in energy efficiency at the Arena, noting significant energy cost savings have been realized.

Regarding window replacement at the Craigleith Community Centre, Shawn noted new windows would improve security and reduce energy costs, Deputy Mayor McKinlay noting support for small Hall maintenance to improve their access to and use by the public.

Regarding a proposed septic installation for the Ravenna Hall, Shawn noted it was intended primarily to keep the facility open. Chair Gamble noted a new septic system was proposed for the Ravenna works yard which might allow the Hall to connect, Deputy Mayor McKinlay noting the works yard system was tied to a proposed expansion, adding the Ravenna community has completed various upgrades over the past few years, some with Town assistance.

Duncan then proposed a five year plan for the Hall including kitchen and water upgrades and a parking area and new washrooms including an outdoor public facility, adding use would greatly increase with such modifications.

Paul then suggested Reg and Shawn consider the works yard expansion together with the septic installation and water supply.

Shawn then noted the Ravenna community has done an excellent job of visioning for the Hall's future.

Regarding Heathcote Hall, Shawn noted discussion is ongoing regarding demolition and possible future uses of the site, as well as discussion with the landowner as to waiving reversionary rights.

Duncan questioned if the Quaker meeting house portion of the building could be retained, Shawn noting any future building use would have to retain the existing footprint as per GSCA requirements, an outdoor pavilion permitted anywhere on the property.

Shawn further noted Grey County owns additional adjacent lands subject to a right-of-way.

Regarding a proposed 2008 upper area arena lounge and mezzanine, Chair Gamble questioned how future use could be gauged, Shawn noting it would represent an additional small room for rent, the large hall being intimidating for smaller groups.

Rob clarified any Recreation capital projects proposed in the Budget would require Staff Reports and recommendations for Committee for approval by Council prior to proceeding.

Shawn then reviewed the proposed 2007 Harbour Budget, noting an increase of 3.7% is driven by additional seasonal staff and administration wage allocation.

Shawn clarified the proposed 2007 pavilion project is based on donations and will not proceed this year.

Shawn then reviewed the proposed 2007 Cemetery Budget.

As a matter deferred from the February 13 special meeting, Rob then reviewed the proposed 2007 Water Treatment and Distribution Budget.

Rob noted the water billing would move from fixed rate in 2006 to consumption-based rates in 2007 and reviewed two budget scenarios, the first showing a 35% per equivalent increase for 2007 which is estimated to cover operating costs only, to be followed by lower annual increases which would allow revenues to be put in reserves.

The second scenario showed a 25% increase with higher annual increases to follow and requiring transfer from reserves, the Budget based on the first scenario.

Duncan noted the equivalent unit rate does not reflect particulars of water consumption which would vary with actual water use.

Councillor Kennedy then questioned proposed rates, John Caswell noting a flat rate would apply to the service with consumption reflecting the additional rate. Paul then noted a tiered consumption rate is being considered to encourage water consumption, the sewer rate to be a percentage of the water rate.

Reg then noted the fixed costs of operating a water system were high with operating costs lesser.

John Caswell then reviewed the proposed 2007 Capital Budget.

Councillor McGee then questioned if the Thornbury Water Treatment Plant membrane filter project could be deferred with the purchase of more water from Collingwood, Paul noting the Collingwood supply is only a fraction of Town needs.

John Caswell then noted the Thornbury plant is virtually at capacity during periods of turbidity.

Duncan then questioned if development charges would apply to the water plant upgrades, John Caswell noting that will be calculated.

Councillor McGee then questioned if there is a huge expense directly related to the Clean Water Act, John replying it would be difficult to calculate, adding flushing stations and increased inspections are now required.

John the reviewed the proposed 2007 Sewage Treatment and Collection Budget operating budget and proposed increases of 26.7% for the Thornbury sewage system and 17.5% for Craigeith, with the operating budget based on an expected 7% increase in sewer revenues.

Councillor McGee then questioned payment of property taxes on plants, John to investigate.

The Committee then concurred to review the sewage capital budget at a later date.

C. Staff Reports

2007 Draft Budget Binder

D. Correspondence

None

E. New and Unfinished Business

None

F. Next Meeting Date

Special Meeting February 15, 2007
Regular Meeting February 20, 2007

G. Adjournment

Moved by: John McKean Seconded by: Ellen Anderson

THAT this special meeting do now adjourn, Carried.