

Minutes - Special Finance and Administration Committee Meeting



MEETING DATE: February 15, 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.
- Approval of Agenda
Moved by: John McKean Seconded by: Michael Martin
THAT the Agenda of February 15, 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 (Emergency Management including Fire & Police, Conservation Authorities, Building & By-law and Administration) - Robert Cummings, Acting Director of Finance, Kris Kinsman, Financial Analyst, David Finbow, Director of Building & By-law/CBO, Ron Doherty, Fire Chief, Rob Collins, Deputy Fire Chief, AJ Lake, Fire Prevention Officer, Steve Conn, CEMC, Rob Armstrong, Manager of Development Planning & IS, Peter Tollefsen, Director of Planning, John Caswell, Manager of Environment Services, Chief Administrative Officer, Paul Graham.

Chief Ron Doherty then reviewed the proposed Fire, Rescue and Emergency Services 2007 Budget.

Ron then reviewed the operating budget, noting the Budget proposes the hiring of two new full time firefighters in 2007.

Ron then summarized the proposed 2007 Budget by topic.

Deputy Mayor McKinlay then questioned if the two firefighters proposed are as recommended by the Fire Master Plan, Ron noting the Plan is now complete and actually recommended 8 full time firefighters, a phasing plan over four years now being proposed.

Duncan then questioned use of the firefighters, Ron noting the majority of calls are on the day shift.

CAO Paul Graham then noted that approving the Budget to set aside funding for consideration of certain matters does not necessarily approve the Fire Master Plan, Chair Gamble questioning if the funds for the two firefighters might be set aside in a reserve.

Paul noted the Fire Master Plan would need to be approved prior to any hiring, Duncan agreeing the planning for the position is more important and would precede the decision on hiring.

Chair Gamble then noted Council will await the Fire Master Plan.

Duncan then questioned if four part time positions would be better than two full time firefighters, Ron noting part time firefighters could be hired away by full time positions offered by other Departments.

Deputy Chief Rob Collins then noted there are other functions for the firefighters within the Department beyond firefighting, which a part time position would not address.

Ron then reviewed the capital budget.

Regarding a proposed addition to the Teed Fire Hall, Duncan questioned if the building would be sized for the full projection of full time firefighters, Ron replying yes.

Duncan then questioned if County EMS Staff could utilize excess space in the meantime, Ron replying yes.

Councillor McGee then questioned intra-service communications, Ron replying police will not permit fire services to utilize police bands.

CEMC Coordinator Steve Conn then noted Grey County EMS were considering a hand-held radio system.

Chair Gamble then questioned if the Collingwood share of the marine rescue unit was now reduced to 27.5%, Ron replying not to his knowledge, Rob Collins

noting that original figure was in consideration of JEPP funding, which was not approved.

Duncan then questioned if Grey County would charge for the use of OptiCom devices on traffic lights, Ron replying no.

Fire Staff then retired from the meeting.

Next, Rob Cummings reviewed the proposed 2007 Policing Budget, with a proposed net increase of 0.8%.

Rob noted the policing contract was to be re-negotiated in 2007 for 2008, with a reserve of approximately \$250,000 set aside from previous surpluses.

Councillor Martin then questioned the current complement of officers, Chair Gamble noting 14.5.

Duncan then questioned the Town's cost share for the Collingwood station, Rob replying \$23,500.00.

Rob then reviewed the only policing capital item, a proposed Thornbury sub-station.

Duncan then questioned the process that led to the proposed station and consideration of the eastern portion of the Town, Paul noting this proposal reflected a request from the OPP for an increased presence in the Thornbury area.

Rob then noted the proposal is unfinanced at present and would not affect the mill rate.

Duncan then questioned status of the Town assisting Collingwood in the expansion of the existing Collingwood facility, Mayor Anderson noting there have been no discussion and consideration is nothing more than rumour.

Paul noted consideration of the sub-station is more of acknowledgement of the situation at an initial stage.

Rob then reviewed the proposed Conservation Authority levies, GSCA being \$207,000 and NVCA being \$27,300, the actual GS budget not yet approved.

Rob then reviewed Health and Social Services funding to Meaford and Collingwood hospitals at the same funding levels as 2006.

David Finbow then reviewed the proposed 2007 Building Inspection Budget, noting an operating increase of 0% with an increased expenditure of 21.5%.

David noted a projection of 425 permits being issued in 2007.

David then reviewed the proposed 2007 By-law and Animal Control Budget.

Councillor Kennedy questioned an alarm system registration, David noting re-registration would be required every three years.

Duncan questioned the rationale for the program, David noting it was intended to encourage owners to maintain alarm systems and lessen false alarms.

Councillor McKean questioned use of a decibel meter, David noting it would be used in gathering evidence of noise violations as well as testing minimum sound transmission levels in multi unit structures under the Building Code.

David then reviewed the proposed 2007 Animal Control Budget.

Duncan then questioned if Staff were engaged in dog-catching, David replying yes.

Rob then reviewed the proposed 2007 Council Budget, noting a net decrease of 4.2% reflecting election costs in 2006.

Rob then reviewed the proposed 2007 Corporate Administration Budget.

Rob then reviewed Administration Capital projects.

Regarding the proposed Town Office expansion project, Paul noted some of the cost is assigned to sewer and water billings.

Mayor Anderson then noted a recently requested Staff Report would identify options for Council to consider in the Town Office project.

Paul then reviewed the proposed 2007 CAO/Clerk's Office Budget, noting an increase of approximately \$62,000.

Rob then reviewed the proposed 2007 Financial Services Budget, noting an increase of approximately \$70,000.

Rob Armstrong then reviewed the proposed 2007 IT Services Budget, noting the majority operating expenses are for service agreements.

Rob noted a full time IS Technician is proposed for 2008.

Rob noted the existing services agreement for 3.5 hours per day, Mayor Anderson noted based on the current contract cost, a full time position might be better value.

Duncan questioned if the contract position would provide additional services versus a full time employee, Rob replying a technician could manage the Town system and any out sourcing would be project specific.

Regarding Council connectivity planning, Mayor Anderson requested the program move forward as soon as possible, Rob noting it would move forward shortly.

John Caswell then reviewed the proposed 2007 Sewage Treatment and Collection Capital Budget.

Councillor McGee questioned design of the Thornbury STP expansion in 2007 with a delayed construction date of 2010, John Caswell noting issuance of a Certificate of Approval following design would allow development approvals for servicing reservation.

Paul noted if the design did not proceed, development would be frozen within a year, Councillor McGee stating if the design was delayed until 2008 development could be put off for a year.

Deputy Mayor McKinlay then noted delay in the plant design might demonstrate bad faith in the development community, Chair Gamble noting Lora Bay and Camperdown developers currently face a development limit without increased servicing capacity.

Paul noted the design cost would be paid from development charges.

Paul noted the proposal would keep things moving and provide the service just in time.

Rob then proposed to address outstanding matters on Monday night as well as 2007 Grants and Donations.

C. Staff Reports

2007 Draft Budget Binder

D. Correspondence

None

E. New and Unfinished Business

None

F. Next Meeting Date

Regular Meeting February 20, 2007

G. Adjournment

Moved by: R. J. Gamble Seconded by: Cameron Kennedy

THAT this special meeting do now adjourn, Carried.