

Minutes - Special Meeting of Council – Budget



MEETING DATE: December 21, 2011
LOCATION: Town Hall, Council Chamber
PREPARED BY: Corrina Giles, Town Clerk

A. Call to Order

- Mayor Anderson called the meeting to order with all members in attendance

Also in attendance was CAO Troy Speck, Manager of Human Resources Tracey McKenna, Director of Recreation Shawn Everitt, Director of Finance and IT Robert Cummings, Director of Planning and Building David Finbow, Communications and Economic Development Coordinator Lisa Kidd, Capital Accountant Darcy Chapman, Deputy Fire Chief AJ Lake, Financial Analyst Debbie Brown, Administrative Assistant Serena Wilgress, Fire Chief Ron Doherty, Chief Librarian Carol Cooley, Manager of Roads and Drainage Jim McCannell

- Approval of Agenda:

Moved by: John McKean Seconded by: D.R. McKinlay

THAT the Agenda of December 21, 2011 be adopted as circulated, including any revisions to be made, Carried.

No member declared a pecuniary interest with any matter as listed on the Agenda.

B. 2012 Budget

1. Opening Remarks

Director of Finance and IT Services Rob Cummings spoke regarding the core services identified through service delivery.

Rob then noted currently the budget stands at a Town rate increase of 6.1%, with an overall blended rate with the County of a 3.4% increase.

Rob then reviewed the minor changes made to-date in the budget discussions, including slight changes to capital projects.

Capital Accountant Darcy Chapman reviewed the summary of the 2012 budget changes since the circulation of the draft budget on October 25, 2011.

Moved by: D.R. McKinlay Seconded by: John McKean

THAT Council accept the Summary of 2012 Draft Capital Budget Changes Post October 25, 2011 Distribution.

In speaking to the Motion, Councillor Gamble noted he would like to know the cost of the new Town Hall and how it was financed, Rob replying that he will provide this information to Council.

Council then voted on the Motion, Carried.

Moved by: D.R. McKinlay

Seconded by: Joe Halos

THAT Council supports the enhancement of the Environmental Farm Plan, in the total amount of \$5000, in the final draft 2012 budget for consideration by Council, which amount shall include any surplus from the 2011 Environmental Farm Plan budget

In speaking to the Motion, Councillor McKean noted the Beaver River Watershed group should be involved with the Environmental Farm Plan because of their involvement with the stream bed.

Council then voted on the Motion, Carried.

6. Tar & Chip Road Resurfacing

Manager of Roads and Drainage Jim McCannell spoke noting currently the Town has 77 km of tar and chip roads, with 7 km being resurfaced annually, on an 11 year program. Jim noted that tar and chip roads require resurfacing every 7 years, and noted the resurfacing program should be increased to 11 kms per year on a year program.

Jim confirmed that the program is not expanding, that it is just maintaining the current tar and chip roads. Jim noted that if the roads are not resurfaced when required, that the roads crack and break up and the road base becomes undermined.

Councillor Halos questioned if any other procedures are available and referenced spot repair basis, Jim replying this has been done to prolong the road, but noted eventually the road becomes completely patched and noted the Town is falling behind in tar and chip resurfacing.

Councillor McKean then spoke noting if the Town fails to resurface its roads, that the road may become a safety issue and confirmed that full construction is much more expensive than resurfacing when required. John then noted the Town does not want to return existing tar and chip roads to gravel roads.

Moved by: John McKean

Seconded by: Gail Ardiel

THAT Council supports the enhancement of the Tar & Chip Road Resurfacing, in the final draft 2012 budget, for consideration by Council, Carried.

7. Sidewalk Replacement

Manager of Roads and Drainage Jim McCannell spoke noting currently there are 25 kms of sidewalks in The Blue Mountains and that 800 metres of sidewalk should be replaced per year as sidewalks have a 25 year life.

Moved by: John McKean

Seconded by: Joe Halos

THAT Council supports the enhancement of the Sidewalk Replacement, in the final draft 2012 budget, for consideration by Council, Carried.

8. Maintenance Gravel

Manager of Roads and Drainage Jim McCannell spoke noting 75mm of gravel should be placed on gravel roads every three years, and noted a new program will be implemented in 2012 to place gravel in the spring.

Councillor Martin then joined the meeting.

14. Manager, Planning Services (wages/benefits)
15. Manager, Planning Services (wages/benefits, 3 additional months)

Director of Planning and Building Services David Finbow spoke noting the enhancement for a Manager of Planning Services is being deferred to 2013 for further discussion with the 2013 Budget.

Moved by: Michael Martin Seconded by: Joe Halos

THAT the enhancement of a Manager, Planning Services (wages/benefits) and Manager, Planning Services (wages/benefits, 3 additional months) be deferred for discussion with the 2013 budget, Carried.

16. Summer Student, Building & By-law

Director of Planning and Building Services David Finbow spoke noting this position is being deferred for further discussion in the 2013 budget.

Moved by: D.R. McKinlay Seconded by: John McKean

THAT the enhancement of a Summer Student, Building & By-Law be deferred for discussion with the 2013 budget, Carried.

17. Summer Student, Planning Services

Director of Planning and Building Services David Finbow spoke noted Staff are currently reviewing the capacity internally and are looking at the Town's needs. David requested that Council consider this as an enhancement to the budget at this time and noted Staff will look for a source of funding in late spring.

Moved by: D.R. McKinlay Seconded by: Michael Martin

THAT Council supports the enhancement of a Summer Student, Planning Services, in the final draft 2012 budget, for consideration by Council

In speaking to the Motion, Councillor Gamble spoke noting hiring a summer student takes Staff away from their position to train the student. Deputy Mayor McKinlay spoke noting he is optimistic that a university or college student focused on their education will not require much training.

Council then voted on the Motion, Carried.

18. Security Alarm Coordinator/By-Law Assistant

Director of Planning and Building David Finbow spoke noting administrative support is being reviewed in the Planning and Building Department and believes there is capacity available and are suggesting deferral of the Security Alarm Coordinator/By-Law Assistant position to 2013.

Moved by: Joe Halos Seconded by: John McKean

THAT the enhancement of a Security Alarm Coordinator/By-Law Assistant be deferred for discussion with the 2013 budget, Carried.

20. Municipal Law Enforcement Officer, Short Term Accommodation

Director of Planning and Building Services David Finbow spoke recounting the short term accommodation proceedings in 2011.

Councillor Halos questioned if this enhancement is for one position, David replying that the number includes some capital, salary and benefits, equipment, vehicle and noted the full impact would be \$94,240 in 2012, 2013 and 2014 would have an impact of \$73,000 to \$75,000 for salary and benefits plus some operating costs.

Mayor Anderson questioned if a contract person has been considered, David replying this has been considered, but noted a full-time position is recommended. David noted Staff are waiting on the outcome of the current application to appeal which is before the courts at this time.

Deputy Mayor McKinlay questioned if recruitment would commence immediately to assist with preparation of the licencing by-law, David replying yes that recruitment would commence immediately in advance of the registry or licencing regime and confirmed short term accommodation files are being created now.

Councillor Gamble then questioned if a by-law to licence is subject to appeal, David replying yes to the courts, not to the OMB. The cost to implement a licencing regime will include legal advice, licencing tribunal, and confirmed he will bring a report back to Council. Bob noted the process needs to be in place before the MLEO Officer is hired.

Bob then questioned if there is expertise in the current staffing to reassign someone to be responsible for short term accommodation on an as-required basis, David replying Council needs to determine what services it wishes to enforce, further noting all short term accommodation units need to be addressed, not just the problematic units. David then noted that capacity with the current staffing levels could be achieved if other services are identified as no longer a priority of Council.

Joe then spoke noting this is a crucial issue for the community and questioned if the MLEO position could be terminated if the Town does not proceed with licencing and enforcement of short term accommodation units, David replying yes, if the position is not required it would be terminated.

Moved by: Joe Halos Seconded by: Michael Martin

THAT Council supports the enhancement of a Municipal Law Enforcement Officer, Short Term Accommodation with a budget impact of \$94,240, in the final draft 2012 budget, for consideration by Council

In speaking to the Motion, Councillor McKean noted short term accommodation is a serious issue for those neighbouring residents affected, but noted the general taxpayer is paying for this enhancement. John then questioned if the fees to licence short term accommodation will pay for this enhancement and questioned if short term accommodation can become self-sustaining, David replying an option is to allow the Town to establish a registry that would generate revenue immediately so that licencing can be on a cost-recovery basis. David then noted in two to three years that short term accommodation should be fully funded through the registry and licencing.

Mayor Anderson then spoke noting this is an important position and is a good investment for the community.

Councillor Halos spoke noting he agrees the Town should proceed.

Council then voted on the Motion, Carried.

Deputy Mayor McKinlay spoke noting he agrees with Councillor McKean and questioned if a cost recovery system can be established to reclaim all costs associated with short term accommodation rather than adding it as a 1% increase on taxation. David then spoke noting various reports have identified the number of short term accommodation premises and noted if the Town can recover costs through licencing, there should be a time when the Town will break even.

David noted that 150 licenses per annum of \$1000/year would amount to \$150,000 per year. David noted that security alarm enforcement is a break even process and confirmed a debt retirement program can be established.

Moved by: D.R. McKinlay Seconded by: John McKean

THAT Council direct Staff to provide a report on the feasibility of a short term accommodation program that is primarily a user pay program

In speaking to the Motion, Councillor Ardiel spoke noting Wasaga Beach is implementing such a program and that Staff should be in discussions with Wasaga Beach. Gail then questioned if Bed and Breakfast premises are charged a fee, David replying that there is currently no licencing for Bed and Breakfast premises, and confirmed he will follow up with Wasaga Beach.

Council then voted on the Motion, Carried.

C. Lunch Break – 12:30 p.m. to 1:30 p.m

Moved by: D.R. McKinlay Seconded by: Joe Halos

THAT Council adjourn for lunch until 1:35, Carried.

Moved by: John McKean Seconded by: Gail Ardiel

THAT Council is back in session at 1:35 p.m, Carried.

D. Closed Session (if required)

Closed Session not required.

Recommended (Move, second)

THAT with regard to subsection 239 of the *Municipal Act, 2001*, this Council do now move into closed session in order to address matters pertaining to personal matters about an identifiable individual, including Town or local board employees; and

WITH regard to personnel matters.

Council moved into closed session at pm.

Council moved into public session at pm.

E. Council Direction to Staff

Rob then spoke noting that the budget is currently at a 3.9% increase, being a blended rate of 7.8% and noted this is an additional \$117 per year on a home assessed at \$300,000, and assuming the County increase is 3%.

Bob then spoke noting Council needs to also be aware of the overall average increase in assessment of 5% and the costs associated with this increase to the average taxpayer.

9. Source Separated Organic Waste Collection

Rob spoke noting this enhancement of \$29,600 is an operational cost.

Mayor Anderson then spoke confirming Council voted in support of the full user pay collection system enhancement earlier this day. Capital Accountant Darcy Chapman then spoke noting residents will be given an opportunity to reduce waste by separating as much as possible.

Darcy then referenced the organic pilot program recently tested in The Blue Mountains and noted the majority of users were satisfied with the program and noted a partnership with local apple producers may be an opportunity for the Town to earn revenue.

Moved by: Joe Halos Seconded by: D.R. McKinlay

THAT Council supports the enhancement of the Source Separated Organic Waste Collection in the final draft 2012 budget, for consideration by Council

In speaking to the Motion, Councillor Halos spoke noting the source separated organic waste collection and the full user pay collection system together makes sense.

Council then voted on the Motion, Carried.

Rob then spoke noting the draft budget currently stands at a 8.06% increase, being 4.04% increase when blending the rate with the County's increase.

Ellen then spoke questioning how Council would like to proceed and noted if Council had put money into reserves in the past, that this Council would not be in the position it is in now with the current position of the landfill and its requirement for \$8 million in improvements.

Moved by: D.R. McKinlay Seconded by: Joe Halos

THAT the 2012 budget proposal arrived at by Council be moved forward to the statutory public meeting and by-law preparation process.

In speaking to the Motion, Councillor Halos spoke noting Council still must make final decisions on some of the budget matters. Duncan spoke in response noting the draft budget as it is now is what should be taken forward to the public.

Rob then spoke noting the Public Information Session is tentatively scheduled for January 23, with the Public Meeting being held at the Council Meeting that evening. Rob noted if there are no changes made to the 2012 budget, that the by-law will be presented at the following Council meeting for adoption.

Councillor McKean then spoke noting when the economy is down that the population expects a certain level of service. John noted the Town is collecting sufficient tax dollars from its taxpayers, but the greatest imbalance The Blue Mountains has is the amount of money paid to the County.

Councillor Ardiel then questioned if the Report from the County as to the services provided to The Blue Mountains has been reviewed, Rob replying that the Report has been reviewed on a preliminary level, further noting the Report includes 50 pages of capital assets in Grey County. Mayor Anderson spoke noting what is missing is the further deeper review that will identify costs for social housing and ambulance, etc. that will take much more time to complete. John spoke in response concurring that the task will be a difficult one, but noted it is a worthwhile exercise as the allocation is incorrect.

Deputy Mayor McKinlay then spoke noting he has concern that high level reviews could be misleading and questioned if he, as Warden for the County, could bring a report to The Blue Mountains to address where the County's money is spent. Duncan noted that the County Road system benefits The Blue Mountains as it brings tourism and commerce to the Town. John spoke noting Grey County's Roads Needs Study identified more roads in The Blue Mountains in deficiency than any other municipality in the County. Duncan noted that future decisions will deal with this inequity.

Councillor Halos spoke noting he appreciates the opinions and points of view of both Deputy Mayor McKinlay and Councillor McKean.

Councillor Ardiel spoke noting in 2002/2003 The Blue Mountains had these discussions with the County and concurred with Councillor McKean that these discussions will not go away.

John then spoke noting Council needs to take a serious look at the Town's contribution to the County. Ellen noted she recognizes there is an appetite for discussion with the County and confirmed she and Duncan will meet with the County Treasurers to get a good understanding at the County of the cost of replacement of what the County provides to The Blue Mountains.

Duncan then spoke noting it would be a benefit to have a governance professional speak to Council of The Blue Mountains.

Mayor Anderson then requested a recorded vote

Councillor Ardiel	Yay
Councillor Gamble	Nay
Councillor Halos	Nay
Councillor Martin	Nay
Councillor McKean	Yay
Deputy Mayor McKinlay	Yay
Mayor Anderson	Yay

The Motion Carried.

Mayor Anderson then thanked Council and Staff for their time in preparing the draft budget and for attending the meetings.

F. Adjournment

Moved by: Joe Halos Seconded by: John McKean

THAT this meeting does now adjourn at 2:11 p.m, Carried.

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Ellen Anderson, Mayor

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Corrina Giles, Town Clerk