Minutes: Finance and Administration Committee



MEETING DATE: September 10, 2013

MEETING TIME: 1:00 p.m.

LOCATION: Town Hall Council Chambers PREPARED BY: Stephen Keast, Administrative

Assistant

A. Call to Order

Chair Halos called the meeting to order with designated members Mayor Anderson and Councillor Ardiel in attendance, Councillors Gamble and McKean absent due to previous commitments.

Also in attendance were Director of Finance & IT Services Robert Cummings, Budget Analyst Debbie Brown, Deputy Fire Chief A.J. Lake and Community Emergency Management Coordinator Steve Conn.

The Committee then dealt with the following Resolution:

Moved by: Ellen Anderson Seconded by: Gail Ardiel

THAT the Agenda of September 10, 2013 be approved as circulated, including any items added to the Agenda, Carried.

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

The Committee then dealt with the following Resolutions:

Moved by: Gail Ardiel Seconded by: Ellen Anderson

THAT the minutes of June 11, 2013, be approved as circulated, including any revisions to be made, Carried.

B. Deputations / Presentations

B.1 Lyn Ronald, John Leckie, Al Fraser - Funding Operation Catsnip - Charitable Contributions

John then introduced the deputation, noting they were working with Dr. Tina Grey. John noted he wished to make it clear the group was not asking for financial assistance, but rather for the Town to issue tax receipts in the recent Dog Park model. John then noted it would represent a Public-Private Partnership.

Lyn Ronald then spoke, noting 44 cats have been through the program to date, being humanely trapped, spayed or neutered with basic shots and then released where they were found or on private property with permission.

Lyn then reported the program had received \$1,125 in donations and had raised \$2,291, the normal cost to the vet clinic being \$50 per cat. Lyn then noted the group would collect tax receipts from the Town and forward them to the donor with a covering letter.

Mayor Anderson then thanked the deputation for their presentation and noted it is a wonderful program, asking Rob if there would be any problems with the Town issuing receipts.

Rob then noted there should be no problems as the Town has already participated with the Dog Park, adding Council must first approve the program as a Town project to comply with Canada Revenue Agency requirements and be entered on the Town books as a separate project. Rob continued the Town could then accept donations on behalf of the program and charitable tax receipts would then be available.

Ellen then questioned if previous consideration of the matter by Council was not sufficient to proceed, Rob replying the program must be declared to be a Town project.

Ellen then questioned if there was any difference in the Dog Park being on Town land, Rob replying no, just a service the Town would approve.

Councillor Ardiel then noted the Dog Park was a loan then it was operational and questioned if this program would be ongoing, Lyn replying yes.

Gail then questioned if an ongoing program would be a problem, Rob replying it matters to some extent in that the Town should not collect more funds than would be required and annual reporting would be required, clarifying if approved it would represent a Town project with costs and expectations.

Gail then questioned if the program could be advertised on the Town website as a Town project, Rob replying yes, adding other charitable organizations could issue tax receipts.

Chair Halos then noted we have seen public and private organizations raise funds and the Town could help in this instance.

The Committee then dealt with the following Recommendation:

Moved by: Joe Halos Seconded By: Gail Ardiel

WHEREAS The Blue Mountains has supported in principle and by relevant by-law the "Operation Cat Snip" program;

AND WHEREAS private donations are being provided to fund this initiative;

AND WHEREAS The Blue Mountains has been asked to provide charitable donation receipts in the name of Operation Cat Snip, Council does hereby adopt the funding procedures as proposed, subject to any minor modifications that financial staff deem appropriate in order to assist this program and in order to provide assistance Council agrees to accept this initiative as a "Town Project", **unanimously Carried**.

C. Staff Reports as circulated

C.1 Monthly Financial Report – July 2013, FIT.13.48

Rob then reviewed the Report, noting Tax-Supported Services are trending as expected with some savings in salary gapping.

Regarding Water and Wastewater, Rob noted estimates on user rate billings are at 38% of budget due to lower than expected usage, with private leachate treatment revenue presently at 116% of budget.

Councillor Ardiel then questioned if there was any reason for the leachate increase, Rob replying projected revenues are typically conservative.

Chair Halos then questioned if there was any way to identify the proportion of leachate brought from outside Town versus private waste from the Town, Rob replying the Town portion would be very small, perhaps 5%.

Rob then reviewed the Flash Reports, noting development charges are starting to flow in but it must be remembered they must fund growth-related projects, adding July was a good month.

Rob then noted Landfill fees are over those collected in 2012.

Rob then noted Building fees are having a good year and this will help offset a previous loan from Taxation. Joe then questioned how does the \$242,000 Building debt show in the Budget, Rob replying a line is shown in Building called Proceeds from Debt.

Joe then questioned how the \$109,000 Building fees collected in July would show in the Budget, Rob replying 80% of the Building Budget is salaries and projections will likely not change but Building will likely not require a loan.

Rob then noted regarding the OPP, the Town is currently 1,794 hours under contract and if this trend continues we will be looking at a credit. Joe then questioned what is the driver for this, Rob replying vacation, office availability and the elimination of the Federally – Provincially funded officer, that position replaced in April.

Joe then noted it was a very impressive Report, particularly with Landfill and Building.

The Committee then dealt with the following Recommendation:

Moved by: Ellen Anderson Seconded By: Gail Ardiel

THAT Council receive Staff Report FIT.13.48 "Monthly Financial Report – July 2013" for information purposes, unanimously Carried.

C.2 Semi- Annual Financial Report – June 30, 2013, FIT.13.43

Rob then reviewed the Report, noting staff forecast a \$145,000 favourable variance for Tax-Supported, a \$200,000 unfavourable balance for Water and Wastewater and on target Building and Harbour.

Regarding Tax-Supported, Rob noted savings in salaries with 4,000 unstaffed hours, noting staff have been able to make do and overtime costs will be up, adding this is not a long term service delivery solution.

Regarding User Fee Water and Wastewater, Rob noted consumption billings were at 38% of Budget, perhaps with less visitors and a wet summer.

Regarding User Fee Building, permit fees are at 62% of Budget and year-end forecast is on target. Regarding User Fee Harbour, revenue is \$10,000 over Budget and expenses are trending as expected.

Regarding Capital expenditures, Rob noted they are at 39% of the 2013 approved Budget, with some projects dependent on developers.

Regarding Audit Recommendations, Rob reported a staff committee is reviewing grading deposit returns and Senior Management Team are reviewing a staff vacation policy.

Councillor Ardiel then questioned if Grey County has ever funded the Grey Sauble Conservation Authority as the Nottwasaga Conservation Authority is examining Simcoe County funding, Rob replying he did not believe but he will check.

Chair Halos then thanked Rob for the Report and good financial management of the Town.

The Committee then dealt with the following Recommendation:

Moved by: Gail Ardiel Seconded By: Ellen Anderson

THAT Council receive Staff Report FIT.13.43 "Semi Annual. Financial Report – June 30, 2013" for information purposes, unanimously Carried.

C.3 The Blue Mountains Fire Department Second Quarter Report April – June 2013

Steve then reviewed the Report, first noting the highlights for the Second Quarter. Steve noted the current crop of recruits had dropped from 13 to 9, due to changing career opportunities and relocation, not unexpected.

Steve then noted equipment testing for NFPA compliance has identified a 1978 pumper did not meet requirements and has been removed from service. Chair Halos questioned what specifically failed, Steve replying the pump, the vehicle to be replaced by a 1990 unit when a new vehicle is purchased in 2015.

Mayor Anderson then questioned how false alarm costs are recovered, Steve replying there is a staggered By-law now in place with billing occurring after the first offence. AJ clarified it is a four stage process, with a first offence being no charge and a warning letter issued, a second offence being billed \$300 with \$150 recoverable if the owner can show mitigation has occurred, a flat \$300 for a third offence and \$1,000 for a fourth offence.

Ellen then questioned the Town cost for a call-out, AJ replying close to \$3,000 for a call to the resort area which includes an automatic two Hall response.

Ellen then questioned if the By-law should be reviewed, or could a problematic area be identified and separated for billing. AJ replied there is no one building that is the problem and some owner/operators are very focused on reducing false alarms, adding increased fines may hinder progress.

Ellen then noted she appreciated the information.

Chair Halos then questioned if a lot of false alarms are the result of vandalism, AJ replying yes, adding Blue Mountain Resort in particular are attempting to address the issue with video surveillance to identify those responsible. Steve then noted in the case of a false alarm, one Hall call-out is cancelled as soon as it is known it is not a safety issue, adding there is a general decrease in false alarm calls.

Steve then noted there had been 222 fire inspections he past quarter, an increase with many bunkhouse inspections prior to the agricultural season, adding there had been zero bunkhouse orders issued.

Steve then reported Chief Fire Prevention Officer Duncan Rydall had recently been elected President of the Grey Bruce Fire Prevention Officers Association, Councillor Ardiel suggesting a letter of congratulations should be forwarded from Council, the Committee concurring.

Steve then reviewed Fire Training Statistics, noting the Department was now fortunate to have all Captains trained to Competent Supervisor Status in accordance with the Occupational Health and Safety Act. Gail then questioned if it was train the trainer type training, Steve replying yes.

Joe then then thanked Steve and AJ for the Report, Ellen then thanking the Department for their attendance at local events such as the Fall Fair, adding it is much appreciated.

The Committee then dealt with the following Recommendation:

Moved by: Ellen Anderson Seconded By: Gail Ardiel

THAT Council receive The Blue Mountains Fire Department Second Quarter Report April – June, 2013, for information purposes, unanimously Carried.

C.4 Support to Community of Lac-Megantic

Rob then spoke, noting he had previously been requested by Council to provide information on such donations in the past, reporting Thunder Bay flood, \$100, Goderich tornado, \$500, Slave Lake fire, \$100 and Grand River flood, \$250.

Mayor Anderson then suggested Council develop a protocol for emergency support and would support a donation in the amount of \$500 in this instance.

The Committee then dealt with the following Recommendation:

Moved by: Ellen Anderson Seconded By: Gail Ardiel

THAT the Town of The Blue Mountains provide a donation of \$500.00 from the Council Donation account be made to the Community of Lac-Megantic to assist in the cleanup from the recent rail disaster.

In speaking to the Motion, Rob noted Council has \$5,500 available in the Council Budget for discretionary donations. Councillor Ardiel then noted if all 440 municipalities in Ontario donated \$500 it would help efforts.

The Committee then voted on the Recommendation, unanimously Carried.

Chair Halos then concurred Council should be looking at a protocol and perhaps staff could research and report back, Rob replying staff would do so.

The Committee then dealt with the following Recommendation:

Moved by: Gail Ardiel Seconded By: Ellen Anderson

THAT the Town of The Blue Mountains requests the other 443 municipalities in Ontario consider a financial donation to the Community of Lac-Megantic, unanimously Carried.

C.5 Moreau Park Dog Park Update

Rob then reported John Corrigan requested the Committee be advised that \$12,955 has been raised and after re-payment, \$1,028 remains which may be used for additional signage and memorials.

Councillor Ardiel then noted John has one a wonderful job in organizing and promoting the Dog Park, Joe noting it is a good example of Public Private Partnerships working well and if the Town can assist in helping community projects proceed it is good news.

D. Correspondence

D.1 Georgian Triangle Hospice, Annual Dinner Partnership / Sponsorship

Councillor Ardiel then noted this is an annual event this is another annual event and questioned if they applied through the Grant and Donation Program, Rob replying he was not sure.

Gail then reported she did advise the group of the Grant and Donation application process and advised them to submit, adding some groups may not see specific advertising for the program, further adding that previously, groups who had applied in the past but not in a subsequent year were contacted directly by the Communication and Economic Development Coordinator.

Chair Halos then questioned if Rob could have information on whether the group had received earlier funding for the next Council meeting, Rob replying yes.

Joe then noted all groups who apply to the Grant and Donation program receive correspondence in reply.

Rob then noted for the 2014 Budget process, the Grant and Donation Program will be operated by Finance staff.

Joe then noted there was \$5,000 remaining in the Council discretionary donation Budget, Rob replying yes.

The Committee then dealt with the following Recommendation:

Moved by: Ellen Anderson Seconded By: Gail Ardiel

THAT Council receive the Georgian Triangle Hospice correspondence and advise the group the Town is receiving applications to the 2014 Grants and Donations Program and encourage the group to apply to the Program, unanimously Carried.

D.2 Georgian Trail Invoice

The Committee then dealt with the following Recommendation:

Moved by: Gail Ardiel Seconded By: Ellen Anderson

THAT the Town of The Blue Mountains provide payment of the July 31, 2013 Georgian Trail Invoice, being the 2013 Contribution to Georgian Trail Board of Management, in the amount of \$23,024.00, unanimously Carried.

D.3 Blue Mountain Ratepayers Association Correspondence

Chair Halos then reported that several months ago he and Councillor Gamble met with Association representatives and as noted in the follow-up correspondence it was determined that staff could meet with the group and provide some clarification on the noted issues.

The Committee then dealt with the following Recommendation:

Moved by: Joe Halos Seconded By: Gail Ardiel

WHEREAS the Blue Mountain Ratepayers Association (BMRA) have previously discussed with a sub-committee of Finance several relevant topics and subsequently has asked for clarification in certain areas, Council does hereby ask the Director of Finance to arrange a meeting with this group at a mutually agreeable time in which he and any staff he wishes to include will be present to reply to these questions and add clarification as needed and BMRA agrees to be respectful of staff time

In speaking to the Motion, Councillor Ardiel noted it was appropriate to meet with the group and then everyone would be on the same page.

Rob then questioned if anyone from the Committee wished to attend, Joe noting he and Bob could be there.

The Committee then voted on the Recommendation, unanimously Carried.

E. New and Unfinished Business

Mayor Anderson then reported she had recently met with Cathy Smart and was advised the Women of 12 Thornbury Labyrinth group will request the Town to consider receiving donations and issue charitable donation tax receipts on behalf of the group.

Chair Halos then noted he was aware of a previous request from the group for a nointerest loan, Ellen replying that charitable donation tax receipts were now being considered.

F. Adjournment

As there was nothing further before the Chair the Committee then dealt with the following Resolution:

Moved by: Gail Ardiel Seconded by: Ellen Anderson

THAT this meeting does now adjourn at 2:29 p.m. to meet again in the Council Chamber on October 8, 2013, at 1:00 pm, or at the call of the Chair, Carried.