



**TOWN OF SAINT ANDREWS
SPECIAL MEETING OF COUNCIL
W.C. O'NEILL ARENA DINING ROOM**

Electronic Meeting

Wednesday, September 30, 2020, at 6:00 PM

MINUTES

RECORD OF ATTENDANCE

A Special Meeting of the Town of Saint Andrews Council was held on Wednesday, September 30, 2020, at 6:00 p.m. with the following members present Mayor Doug Naish, Deputy Mayor Brad Henderson, Councillors Kate Akagi, and Guy Groulx. Also, present: Chris Spear, CAO/Treasurer, Paul Nopper Clerk – Senior Administrator, Terry Acton, Asset/Operations Manager, Emily Noddin, Assistant Treasurer.

Late: Councillor Kurt Gumushel 6:07 p.m.

Absent – Councillor Andrew Harrison, Edie Bishop

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion: 345 - 09/20

It was moved by Councillor Groulx, seconded by Councillor Akagi, and carried that the Agenda be approved as presented.

Carried 4 - 0

PRESENTATIONS

NONE

DISCLOSURE OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

NONE

INTRODUCTION, CONSIDERATION, AND PASSING OF BY-LAW AND MOTIONS

FA200704

Council Workshop 2021 Budget Discussions

Chris Spear, CAO/Treasurer provided an overview of the previous Operation Budget meeting held on September 14, 2020. Staff led Council through the Capital and Utility Budget review.

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- *Town staff is up to date with computer systems.*
- *With the new Council, some members may not have good technology to participate. Council may want to consider a policy for purchasing laptops for Council or a potential buyback program. We have had difficulty in the past with economic laptops and thus thought of additional funds to provide better technology options.*

Council discussed options for how to review the budget including a line by line approach, setting a baseline cap of funding, and looking at the budget from a top-down approach or bottom-up approach. Council asked staff to give key points of interest for each Capital and Utility Budget to start.

- *\$5,000 for upgrades to Town Hall with the removal of a hallway section to create more space in the facility and COVID-19 spacing.*

- \$19,000 for the Downtown Water Street Pilot Project for picket fence style design. The layout would follow like 2020 fencing. Staff reviewed options with rope and planters but safety a factor of people stepping over the rope barriers into traffic. A picket fence is the safest option provided by staff.
- Installation of a small washroom at Indian Point near the trail and parking lot. Currently using porta-potties and rental each year.
- The boat ramp at the Yacht Club needs full replacement and repaving. Should last 30 years once complete.
- Resurfacing roads identified less than what we can do but need to get done in the asset management process.
- Elizabeth Street End Pocket Park commencing fall 2020 with funds from Dunn Foundation. Next year will be the addition of fencing, tables, chairs, etc. Could be cut if necessary. The washroom is not included in the 2021 budget.

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- Disconnecting arena from the sanitary system for water runoff. 2/3 project completed in 2020, 1/3 to be completed in 2021.
- Prince of Wales Project discussed at the last budget meeting to expand the road to include a walking path or sidewalk. If widening, then do stormwater, water mains, and sewer at the same time.
- Public works need to replace a commercial mower that is 11 years old. Two other items include a canopy for the mowers and shipping containers for storage.

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- Arena replacement of sidewalk. The sidewalk is very dangerous now with lots of ice and water damage. Originally brought forward in 2019.
- Oil tank rehab was mostly completed in 2020 but need 3 further testing wells, this was requested and enforced by the Department of Environment. This has to be completed.
- Installing some insulation in the roof of the arena above the ice rink.
- Two designs for new arena signs have been discussed. Current sign in rough shape and replacement cost at \$22,000.
- Upgrade of lock systems throughout the area to master keys. This is the last phase of the project.
- One of the 3 compressor units can be decommissioned. Was used when the hockey school was in place during summers. The system will be re-piped to divert ammonia. The project is \$7,000 but not a necessity to be decommissioned in 2021.
- \$5,500 for stairs leading to the upper walkway of the electrical room. This is a necessity based on direction from the Building Inspector.
- A few more doors need to be replaced, \$2,000.
- New windows in the Dining Room of the arena. Move to energy-efficient systems. Potential to differ the project until the energy audits are completed. Grants are available to help with energy efficiencies.
- Need to install a hydronic heat pump system for the CHCO side of the facility for \$8,000 as there are limited heating capabilities.

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- New headsets to go with the new Trunk Mobile Radio system. This will allow for better communication and handling of radios on the scene.
- Replacement of lounge furniture. Due to CoVID-19, we want to remove all fabric-based furniture and replace it with plastic or faux leather.
- Replacement of a generator on a fire truck used to operate the Jaws of Life and other extrication equipment for vehicle accidents.
- The parking lot of the fire hall is in bad shape and needs a full replacement. The weight of the trucks is causing splitting and has been identified for 2 years. This will be tendered with all other street resurfacing to get the best price.
- Backflow preventer needs to be installed and follow the Town's By-Laws on this.

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- The courthouse and jail are supposed to be painted this year but difficulty getting prices. Approximately \$35,000 to complete and hoping for a New Brunswick Built Heritage Grant to cover 50% of the costs.
- The library needs a bilingual sign, and this is a requirement by the Province of New Brunswick. The sign will be placed on the front lawn and based on price may be double-sided. The sign will have a heritage feel.
- The storage shed needs to be replaced behind the museum and library as it cannot be repaired. Staff will build based on a kit to be purchased.
- The Greenhouse at the Youth Centre needs to be replaced. Will be built with a kit.
- The fencing around the Youth Centre is in rough shape and rotted. This needs to be replaced with a picket fence style.
- Youth Centre has requested the replacement of 4 chairs and a new tv for \$2,500.

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- Councillor Gumushel asked about a surveillance camera system for the Town and how we can work with the RCMP and what effect would it have on Town insurance rates.
- CAO Spear identified that there could be issues with privacy rights. Currently, the system used is more of a home security system at the Wharf, Town Hall, Youth Centre, etc. To get high pixel security cameras, cost a minimum of \$7,000 apiece. We could look at expanding our current system
- Councillor Gumushel wondered about a one system CCTV style that is operated by a security company. Seen similar systems in other communities.
- CAO Spear noted staff will work on a report on surveillance cameras.
- Trails and sidewalk repairs to Brandy Cove Road of \$630,000, only completed if we get a grant. Council approved grant applications towards Brandy Cove Road for the Coastal Link Trail, Indian Point, and the Wellness Centre.
- Wharf renovations and staff are working with the Federal Government and Engineers on the new design. The project will start late fall 2021 and through the winter of 2022. The project could be split between two budgets. \$1,500,000 over two years provided by the Town for a \$5,000,000 project.
- Market Square rehabilitation currently should not be having traffic on the wooden boardwalk.
- Councillor Groulx highlighted that Market Square still had a gate listed for access and asked are we still looking to implement the gate?
- Mayor Naish indicated that this is still an issue to discuss as it helped control the flow of traffic on the Wharf in 2020.
- Town Clerk Nopper noted to Council that discussion to occur at the budget on the gate and no further motions were provided on the gate topic.
- Mayor Naish asked about a \$390,000 project for Market Square that was stood down in 2019 and how it factors into the Wharf project moving forward.
- CAO Spear noted that we did not receive a grant for the project, so it was differed. Project to extend Market Square and tie into the new Wharf system. Currently, under the direction of Council, staff are working on a new design.
- Councillor Groulx wanted it noted that the bricks in Market Square are slippery and not safe. There have been injuries from people slipping on the stone pavers and they need to be replaced.
- CAO Spear noted that staff has worked on pricing for replacement but all of Water Street needs work in the next 5 years and could differ replacement until the Wharf Project for Market Square is completed and the Water Street Project to commence.
- Councillor Groulx wanted to be noted for the minutes that if the Council chooses to differ the replacement of the bricks that the Town can be liable for the injuries and that this project needs to be addressed.
- Deputy Mayor Henderson asked when the bricks were originally selected, was the correct material chosen?
- CAO Spear said it was approved back in the day when they installed the brick.
- Councillor Groulx requested a health and safety report be created to review the bricks.

- CAO Spear said staff will provide a report to Council on the suitability of bricks for walking as they are all along Water Street. If it is identified as a hazard, we will have to close off Market Square and remedy.
- Wellness Centre's new equipment was not included in the original cost. Equipment was going to be brought from the old facility, but with a new facility, it makes sense to put new furniture and not circa 1970's furniture.
- Council was asked if they wanted to put funding together to purchase equipment for a Fitness Centre. We received no RFPs to operate. Staff working to see if we can build partnerships with organizations to operate the facility.
- Age-Friendly Community asked for \$10,000 for capital investments into the community for 2021. This year the funds were used to purchase new benches for the Van Horne Trail.
- Mayor Naish noted that we need to continue upgrading our community to Age-Friendly to keep our designation as an Age-Friendly Community.

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- CAO Spear indicated to Council that with a 1 cent increase in tax, \$800,000 for revenue to be used on capital expenses and \$129,000 in gas tax funds as promised. The Town acquires a lot of funds from partners and government agencies equalling \$4,200,000. \$1,600,00 will be new debt based on the Wharf project and a reserve fund transfer of \$500,000. \$470,000 of that reserve fund transfer was a carryover from 2020 due to differed projects from COVID-19.
- Mayor Naish asked if projects would continue if they did not receive funding from outside sources.
- CAO Spear indicated that projects would not continue unless they had financial support from other revenue sources.
- Councillor Groulx asked if the Wharf project could be split between two budgets. This would help reduce the long-term debt impact. Reduce the project in 2021 to \$750,000 and 2022 to \$750,000.
- Councillor Groulx commented that over the next five years there seems to be a front load of capital projects. There was an ask for staff to review the budget to create resource leveling and spread out the projects.
- CAO Spear pointed out that some years have bigger capital investments based on asks and replacements like fire trucks and plow trucks. Need to space out replacements so we are not hit with large capital expenditures in one year.
- Mayor Naish noted that there could be regional partnerships on some capital expenditures like a ladder truck. St. Stephen is interested in purchasing and perhaps a partnership can be established.
- Councillor Groulx and Deputy Mayor Henderson noted that there is municipal reform coming and unknown how that will look and effect budgets.

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- Bottom of page 26, Council reviewed the long-term debt analysis. All capital projects are brought into this analysis. In 2019, long-term principle debt was 5.81% and falls in 2020 to 4.8%. In 2022 it increased to 5.1% and in 2023 to 5.3% of the total Town budget. Payments come out at the end of the year and thus projected for the following year to be on the budget. Budgets in 2023 – 2025 require less debt as the Town will have paid off projects and debt. The total capital and tax rate are favourable. 10% is a normal debt load for communities.
- An analytical review of the reserve funds was provided to Council from a request from the September 14 budget meeting for Council review.
- Councillor Groulx noted that assessment values continue to increase yearly and the mill rate. Over the last 3 years, assessments have gone up 15% and the mill rate 5%. Residents have seen a 20% increase in taxation for over 3 years. No indication that there will be a reduction in assessments in 2021. The Town needs to consider keeping the mill rate stable for 2021 and capping the tax rate of 3%.
- Deputy Mayor Henderson said we have been playing catch up on capital projects and maintenance on the systems. 3.5% growth and upped the mill rate over the years have gone beyond the original projections.

- Mayor Naish noted previous years of economic decline, i.e. when the Algonquin was under renovations, and that the Town has seen growth and development over the last 5 years. Need to create a balance for the community.
- CAO Spear spoke to the growth rate in 2018 at 3.8% and a 3% increase. Spear noted that not all properties in Town will be assessed a 5% increase and that further research needs to be completed to evaluate the Town. The Town Plat seems to be escalating in % assessment increases.
- Mayor Naish said in 2017/2018 we had a \$6.6 million increase in assessment due to the Anchors Landing building with 36 new resident properties.
- Council asked staff to provide a case study report highlighting potential increases in assessment across the Town for review in the discussion on the mill rate.
- Councillor Groulx noted that we must assess the mill rate and assessment rate together and not in silos.
- Deputy Mayor Henderson asked when the Town expects to get the assessment rate from the Province.
- CAO Spear noted that we should be getting the rate mid-October. Additionally, it was noted that the mill rate is important, but Council needs to continue to invest in recapitalization, staffing, etc. or this could lead to issues in the future. Council's original plan was to play catch up on projects.
- Deputy Mayor Henderson if no partners are found for projects, we should differ.
- Councillor Groulx noted that the average increase in taxation has been 3.53% over the last number of years.
- Council directed staff to work with a 3% increase including assessment and mill rate. Additionally, Council asked that future years budgets be designed with a 3% increase. The mill rate should increase by 1 cent per year.
- Deputy Mayor Henderson asked for a report from staff to indicate projects that should be green-lit to the budget, yellow-lit for discussion by Council, and red-lit to differ to next Council.
- Councillor Groulx noted that looking at the debt analysis for the Utility Fund in 2024 and 2025, debt services is at 55%, 5% above the Provincial level allowed. Council and staff need to look at this and bring back a revised budget.

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- Under the Utility Budget, we have kept a 2% inflation cost.
- Revenue is \$950,000 to a little over \$1,000,000.
- The next version of the budget will reflect the Fire water costs for protection at \$75,000.
- Administration costs are staying the same for 2021.
- Costs incurred in 2019 and this year plus upgrading to the facility. No big increases in operational costs.
- Water bills will be sent out in the next couple of weeks. Will provide an update on the budget for the next meeting.

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- 2021 steel reservoir up for reconditioning. Needs to be painted on the outside and inside for \$300,000. Usually, this project occurs every 15 years.
- Deputy Mayor Henderson asked when the project would take place to help get organized for the repainting of the mural.
- CAO Spear indicated that this would be a spring 2021 project.
- Staff and Kingsbrae Garden will coordinate the project to ensure the reservoir is structurally painted and then the mural put on at the same time.
- Commercial meters need to be replaced. 10 of 60 have been replaced in town. Meters can be \$5,000 apiece depending on the size of pipe ranging from 4" to 6". These replacements would be for larger users including schools, the Lodge, etc. \$50,000 will do significant ones that need to be changed and we will plan for additional changeovers. Any property owner with a 5/8 meter, is the responsibility of the property owner to replace, this is more for residential properties.
- Deputy Mayor Henderson noted that we need to get these meters in place to help with water conservation measures. With a drought this year, we were lucky to

maintain our water levels from the Chamcook watershed. Flat rate use of water is unsustainable under our environment plan.

- *CAO Spear noted staff will review the costing for replacing all meters. Some may need to be re-piped and may need to hire plumbers. Estimate \$125 per meter for 5/8" pipes and 900+ to replace. Potentially looking \$200,000 plus for replacements.*
- *Deputy Mayor Henderson inquired about other communities and their water rates and who was on a flat rate.*
- *CAO Spear Saint John is still on a flat rate for smaller users and individuals. St. Stephen is metered; Blacks Harbour and St. George are flat rates. Depends on the community. It is fairer to be on a metered program.*
- *UV lights for the water treatment plant need to be ordered.*
- *Replacement of the screens for backwash in the lagoons for \$10,000.*
- *We can take the electric motor out of the budget.*
- *\$100,000 to replace the current liner for the reservoir which will last another 30 to 40 years.*
- *Purchase of aerator blower unit for the lagoon.*
- *CAO Spear if we differ the Prince of Wales water mains and sanitary mains, will start to back up projects for 2022. Staff will revise in a new version of the budget.*
- *Deputy Mayor Henderson noted Councillor Groulx's comments regarding the long-term debt for 2024 and 2025 and the need to review this. It was asked to staff if the Utility system is in trouble?*
- *CAO Spear noted that we are not in trouble, as we have been replacing based on asset management. Issues with water main deferrals are if we have a mid-winter break, can have higher costs to replace. Hoping for increased infrastructure money from the Federal Governments to help offset costs.*

Summary Notes for the Budget:

Shifting of Budgets

- *Wharf project \$750,000 in 2021 and \$750,000 in 2022*

Follow-up Reports

- *CAO Spear noted staff will work on a report on surveillance cameras.*
- *Councillor Groulx requested a health and safety report be created to review the bricks.*
- *Council asked staff to provide a case study report highlighting potential increases in assessment across the Town for review in the discussion on the mill rate.*
- *Provide a report on costing for water meter replacements in town.*

Projects mandated to be completed:

- *Oil tank rehab was mostly completed in 2020 but need 3 further testing wells, this was requested and enforced by the Department of Environment. This has to be completed.*
- *\$5,500 for stairs leading to the upper walkway of the electrical room. This is a necessity based on direction from the Building Inspector.*
- *Backflow preventer needs to be installed and follow the Town's By-Laws on this.*
- *The library needs a bilingual sign, and this is a requirement by the Province of New Brunswick. The sign will be placed on the front lawn and based on price may be double-sided.*

Projects identified that could have differed:

- *Prince of Wales Project discussed at the last budget meeting to expand the road to include a walking path or sidewalk. If widening, then do stormwater, water mains, and sewer at the same time.*
- *Two designs for new arena signs have been discussed. Current sign in rough shape and replacement cost at \$22,000.*
- *One of the 3 compressor units can be decommissioned. Was used when the hockey school was in place during summers. The system will be re-piped to divert ammonia. The project is \$7,000 but not a necessity to be decommissioned in 2021.*

- *Trails and sidewalk repairs to Brandy Cove Road of \$630,000, only completed if we get a grant.*
- *Remove the electric motor from the Utility Capital Fund.*

QUESTION PERIOD

COUNCILLORS' AND DEPUTY MAYOR'S COMMENTS

Councillor Akagi – it is Orange Shirt Day on September 30th of each year. Orange Shirt Day is to remember and support those indigenous peoples that were subject to residential schools. We must educate and notify people of the significance and harm of residential schools and how they affected indigenous peoples. As well, on October 4th is Sisters in Spirit. This day remembers those missing and murdered indigenous women and children. This day is represented with a red dress as this is for the memory of those that have been lost to us.

MAYOR'S COMMENTS

CLOSED SESSION

Motion: 346 - 09/20

Move to Closed Session
At 8:05 p.m. it was moved by Councillor Groulx, seconded by Councillor Gumushel that Council move into Closed Session per the Local Governance Act, Section 68 (j) labour and employment matters, including the negotiation of collective agreements.

Carried 5 - 0

Motion: 347 - 09/20

Return to Open Session
At 8:17 p.m. it was moved by Councillor Akagi, seconded by Councillor Gumushel that Council return to Open Session.

Carried 5 - 0

ADJOURNMENT

Motion: 348 - 09/20

At 8:18 p.m., it was move by Councillor Akagi, seconded Councillor Groulx that the meeting be adjourned.

Carried 5 - 0



Doug Naish, Mayor



Paul Nopper, Clerk – Senior Administrator

