



**TOWN OF SAINT ANDREWS
SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING
MINUTES**

**November 7, 2023, 6:30 p.m.
W.C. O'Neill Arena Complex Council Chambers**

A. RECORDING OF ATTENDANCE

A Special Meeting of the Town of Saint Andrews Council was held on Tuesday, November 7, 2023, at 6:30 p.m. with the following members present:

Mayor Brad Henderson, Deputy Mayor Kate Akagi, Councillors Mark Bennett, Marc Blanchard, Kurt Gumushel, Annette Harland, Lee Heenan, Jamie Hirtle, Steve Neil, and Darrell Weare.

Chris Spear, CAO/Treasurer, Paul Nopper, Clerk - Senior Administrator, and Andrew Lord, Assistant Treasurer.

B. LAND RECOGNITION OF THE PESKOTOMUHKATI NATION

C. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion: 382 - 11/23

Moved by Councillor Heenan

Seconded by Councillor Harland

That the Agenda for the 231107 Special Council Meeting be approved as presented.

9 – 0

Carried

D. DISCLOSURE OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

E. PRESENTATIONS

F. INTRODUCTION, CONSIDERATION AND PASSING OF BY-LAWS AND MOTIONS

1. Discussion on the Town of Saint Andrews 2024 Budget Draft 3 - FA231121

CAO Spear presented the updated draft 2024 Town of Saint Andrews Budget. It was noted to Council that the Budget discussion will start with updates to the Capital Budget.

Major Changes to Capital Budget

- *There was an oil tank that was removed at the Arena during COVID. There is additional rehabilitation that is needed by the Province and anticipate some ongoing costs. It is estimated at a budget cost of \$25,000.00.*
- *7 tourist signs need to be replaced in town. They are outdated and do not direct the public to proper locations. Funding can be taken from the Tourism Accommodation Levy to cover the cost. Estimated cost of replacement is \$25,000.00.*
- *The Town wants to invest in video surveillance to help with policing in the community. the budget is \$15,000.00.*
- *Under housing, there is the \$225,000.00 noted for the second payment of Compass Housing. It was noted that Council has had*

several requests for funding to support development in Town. Council discussed additional funding for housing projects and balancing funding of other capital projects including the Wharf. Borrowing for housing is not an option but borrowing for infrastructure projects to support housing is an option for consideration. Council further discussed the Housing Accelerator Fund and the studies on housing recently completed by the Southwest New Brunswick Service Commission. According to the studies, the Town needs approximately 175 new units to meet the demand. Council discussed the remaining funds from the Town Housing Initiative and whether that could be carried over into the 2024 year. Council supported an additional \$125,000.00 in funding for housing to be put in the budget for 2024. It was noted that Staff should bring a policy or By-Law forward regarding Development Incentives. Council discussed moving the funds to a reserve earmarked for housing projects. Total funding in the 2024 budget for housing will be \$350,000.00.

Major Changes Eliminated and Deferred

- Staff recommend deferring the following projects:
- Town Hall railing replacement at \$12,000.00
- Repairs to the Chandler Road street end of \$18,000.00.
- Defer the Thomas Avenue stormwater upgrades until 2025 for further study and revisit in 2025. The project could be upwards of \$200,000.00 and needs further analysis. We may need to look at a holding system for the slow release of stormwater.
- Switching generators between the Water Treatment Plant and the Arena can be deferred. Staff have concerns over operating the Water Treatment Plant when transferring the generators. If there was a power issue and we did not have a generator working at the Water Treatment Plant, we could be running into issues. More time is needed for review.

Price Adjustments

- Seal coat paving on Alexandra Crescent and one block of Queen Street. Based on price increases we have changed the budget from \$150,000.00 to \$175,000.00.
- In the previous draft budget, we were requesting \$40,000.00 to purchase a used truck for Public Works. With our mechanic on staff, we can refurbish the body of another truck we have in the fleet for \$10,000.00 to pass inspection. This will meet the current needs of the Public Works crew.

Utility Capital

It was noted that most quotes we have seen come in for Utility projects are coming in at over 100% of previous quotes from only a few years ago.

- Champlain Avenue was looking at a line replacement for less than 10 homes at a cost of \$646,000.00. This line runs along the back side of the Algonquin and Kingsbrae properties for reference. Due to the high cost of replacement and the limited homes on this stretch of road, it is recommended to decommission the line and have wells installed for the properties. We need another year to review the options and discuss with the Department of Environment, and the property owners on the next steps. for 2024 we are looking at a budget of \$60,000.00.
- The Water Treatment Plant needs to replace two strainers. We originally thought the cost to replace both strainers would be

approximately \$400,000.00. After going through an RFP process with CBCL Ltd. we were able to find replacement strainers for \$300,000.00. We are seeking \$175,000.00 to replace one strainer in 2024.

Staff Priority Options A

The following items were prioritized by staff as A, B, and C items for Council. Ratings were based on safety and the importance of the upkeep of services. the following items are rated A.

- Alexandra Crescent and Queen Street seal coat as discussed.
- W.C. O'Neill Arena Complex wiring changes for the Council Chambers at \$15,000.00. Updates have to be made based on the Fire Marshal's feedback. Note if we make this change, this is the permanent Council Chambers and not a gym.
- W.C. O'Neill Arena Complex phase 1 plumbing upgrades. We are still using the 1965 plumbing and having issues with some of the piping. \$10,000.00 upgrade. We anticipate up to 3 phases of this project.
- Bayside Community Hall repairs to the paved parking lot for \$52,000.00.
- Centennial Park wooden accessible ramp needs to be replaced. Should be completed in the spring. Staff are looking at alternatives to a wood structure that could potentially last longer with less maintenance. Estimated at \$15,000.00 to replace.
- Fire Department Ladder Truck which is already purchased and in production for \$1,550,000.00 and should arrive late 2024 or early 2025.
- The Market Wharf and Market Square project is currently going through public consultation. It is estimated the Town cost of the project for phase one will be \$2,000,000.00.
- The landscaped rock wall at the corner of Bayview Drive and Mowat Drive needs to be replaced. It is estimated at \$11,500.00. The project will remove the wall and relandscape the slope and install the new wall farther back from the sidewalk. Council debated the rock wall and replacing it with a sod and soil wall. It was noted that this is an entry point to Town and that the replacement cost would not be too different from the cost of the soil and sod project. Council agreed to keep the rock wall in the budget.
- Compass Housing has already been discussed at \$225,000.00.
- The Wharf Wave Break needs to be readjusted, have buckles replaced, and some maintenance at \$8,500.00.

Council agreed to all of staff's recommendations for priority A items.

Staff Priority Options B

- Upgrades to the tourism wayfinding signage for \$25,000.00. Note that funds will come from the Tourism Accommodation Levy Fund and not from the taxpayers.
- The switch of generators for the Water Treatment Plant and W.C. O'Neill Arena as discussed will be deferred to 2025. Council consensus to this plan.
- Courthouse painting and siding repairs are in the budget for \$100,000.00 with \$65,000.00 coming from grants. Part of the issue is that this a heritage property and needs restoration expertise on

the project to help with the tendering process. Council debated the risk of delaying the project as they are uncertain of the future use. Staff noted that investment is still needed in the building to prevent further deterioration of the asset. Council noted that a selling feature to prospective users is that the building has been maintained. Council consensus to continue with the Courthouse project.

- *Dock Road upgrades for \$15,000.00. It was indicated that the beach area at the end is known as Cunningham Beach and many people in the community have used it over the years including divers. Council debated the merits of making the upgrades to an unassumed public road not owned by the Town. It was noted to be used as a boat launch, diving site, and a beach area for residents. The road needs ditching work and armour stone to help divert some water runoff. Staff noted that a permit would need to be obtained from the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure before work could be completed, similar to work done on the end of Bar Road. Council discussed the Dock Road repairs further with a discussion of using the Canada Community Build Fund to offset the costs and to put the funds into a reserve earmarked for this project. Council noted that further discussion is needed on how to sign the area for public awareness and how to indicate its use by visitors to Chamcook. Council noted concern that other requests on public unassumed roads will come before Council for repairs. It was noted that each project would need to be reviewed to see about the viability of the projects being requested. Staff noted the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure has limited projects outlined in their next 5 years asset management plans for roads in Chamcook. Council asked how was the budget of \$15,000.00 identified. CAO Spear said he met with a contractor on site and said that the \$15,000.00 should be sufficient to complete upgrades and some new armour stones. Council provided consensus to keep the Dock Road project in the budget.*
- *There have been requests to increase the parking at the Anglican Church. It is estimated that there could be 10 additional spaces put in along Montague Street but several trees would need to be removed. The cost of the project is estimated at \$35,000.00 and we are speaking to the Church about helping to fund the project. Parking is needed in the community and this provides an option to add some close to the downtown. Council noted parking was a good investment but funds should come from the Tourism Accommodation Levy Fund for this project. Council consensus.*
- *The Van Horne Trail will have construction from Cemetery Road to Bar Road. This is a recreational asset that we have borrowed \$300,000.00 for. The total funding for the trail project is \$1,500,000.00. We are in the final spending of this funding. Projects were deferred to the spring of 2024 to try to get better tendering opportunities. Council discussed the funding and that they have already approved the projects for 2024.*
- *Age-Friendly Committee is provided \$10,000.00 each year and with the designation as a community, we have to invest in this area.*
- *We are looking to install new moorings in the mooring field off the Wharf. They will be self-supporting as we have a waitlist for users of moorings every year. We have budgeted \$7,500.00 to add additional spaces.*
- *Washrooms at Indian Point will be funded out of the Tourism Accommodation Levy funding. The cost of the structure is going to be higher as we were not able to partner with NBCC and their program blocks to build it. We are getting quotes but estimate a cost*

of \$150,000.00. Council noted that there will be an increase in janitorial costs and that staff should look at building a four-season washroom with all the amenities located around the trail now.

Staff Priority Option C

- The Ross Museum needs work on the side walkway towards the library and museum parking lot. With the 200th anniversary next year, we would like to dress up this area and make improvements, primarily for staff. Council debated the work necessary and reduced the budget to \$2,000.00.
- The Ross Museum needs work done on the roof flashing. It is more of a level B versus C option. The flashing is falling from the bricks on the library side. This work should be done to protect the integrity of the building. We have no formal quotes yet but have a good guess at the cost. In addition, there are shutters that need to be worked on as they are in poor shape. Budget of \$15,000.00. Council supported.
- Ross Museum's new LED gallery lighting upgrades for planned displays as part of the 200th anniversary. Budgeted \$5,000.00, however, there are opportunities for cost savings as we can do much of the work internally. Council noted that the funds should be drawn from the Tourism Accommodation Levy Fund.
- Prince of Wales Street widening project for an active transportation lane is estimated for 5 blocks of expansion and upgrades to infrastructure are estimated at \$1,100,000.00. We have a \$400,000.00 grant but will cost the taxpayers \$600,000.00. This will be a struggle with the trees on in this area that will have to be removed. Council debated the road widening from a safety, cost, environmental environments, and functionality standpoint. It was noted by staff that the asset management plan notes to have this project done within the next 5 years as the road is not in good shape. Council noted the issues of removal of the trees on this street due to the beauty, charm, and public opinion. Council debated creating a one-way seasonal loop around the Town versus cutting the trees down. It was noted that there would be other items to address with the one-way street, especially with select streets like Argyle Court and limiting access. Council noted that we will review this again in the new year and would like a more detailed staff report on the road application, trees to be removed, or one-way loop options. Council noted to leave it in the budget for now.

Utility Capital Vital Option A

- We need to replace both strainers at the Water Treatment Plant. As noted earlier the goal is to replace one this year and one next year. We have received quotes for replacement at \$175,000.00 per unit. Council consensus.
- Continuation of water meter replacement at \$10,000.00 for residential properties. This should be concluded in the spring for the switch to metered water.
- Commercial water meters are budgeted to replace for businesses. Currently under our By-Law, commercial businesses are responsible to replace the meters at their costs. However, there is no incentive of them to replace an old meter, the incentive is on the Town to replace them as we will recoup the costs through the meter program. Older meters may not be accurate for readings and the Town losing out of water that should be metered. Note that the cost for commercial meters is higher than residential. It is recommended to approve the \$25,000.00 to allow staff to change out the old commercial meters. Council consensus.

- *Purchase of a new water pump for the Water Treatment Facility. It can take up to 8 months to get a pump once it has been ordered and we need to have one in inventory in the event one of the pumps fails. Replacement pump cost \$22,000.00.*
- *Replacement of the UV Computer Boards for the Waste Treatment Facility at \$8,000.00.*
- *Waste Treatment Facility grinder Flyte Pump which allows to grind solids into smaller particles like a garbage disposal does. \$8,000.00 budgeted item.*

Utility Capital Option B

- *Champlain Avenue deferral of water main replacement for one year to look at water well options for property owners. Budgeted \$60,000.00 for testing.*
- *Water Treatment Plant addition of 2 new security cameras for \$5,500.00. Good to have as this facility is stationed outside of Town and we had an issue with a catalytic converter stolen from the Water Department truck.*
- *Waste Treatment Plant storage shed for water pumps. Currently the pumps are outside to the elements and would be good to provide them some protection to ensure long-term use and reduce potential maintenance costs. Budgeted at \$5,000.00.*

CAO Spear noted to Council that with significant costs to replace infrastructure, we will have to review the cost of water rates and the ability for self-funding to continue. In 2023, to replace a water line on Harriet Street for one block has doubled in price in a year. We need to review this over our 10-year plan. Council asked if this will be discussed in the new year. CAO Spear noted yes and should be built into the 2025 budget plans. Council noted the challenges with sustainable water rates and the discussion to come forward. Staff noted that there would be other larger projects on the horizon including a new water tower.

Council supported the extension of the meeting beyond 2.5 hours.

Major Changes to Operations Updates

- *CAO Spear noted from the previous budget iteration, that there were some changes in the Operations side of the budget to be noted. We have increased the Administrative Service for Audited Services by \$5,500.00. We have to do an actuary study on employee benefits every three years and we are at that time frame by law to complete. This was missed in the previous budget provided.*
- *Energy Audit was brought forward to Council a few months back and we were awarded \$200,000.00 from FCM in funding. As part of it, the province is putting in \$20,000.00 and our part is \$30,000.00. It has now been added to the budget.*
- *To note Policing Services have gone down. Might see a 3% increase in Quarter 1 for Bayside and Chamcook under the PPSA contract but will stabilize for the remaining Quarters.*
- *Environmental Development for waste pickup is going up. Pickup costs have increased but have built a buffer into this budget.*
- *Ross Memorial Library position has been taken under the Province now so that is out of our budget and saving almost \$26,000.00.*
- *Ross Memorial Library, with the new position, is increasing programming and materials. They have asked for an increase from \$4,100.00 to \$17,500.00. We think as staff this is a little high but with the addition of some new computers and licencing this can use up*

the budget quickly. Council asked for a report that would outline what programs and what they are looking to purchase. It was noted a lot of the program funding goes towards licencing and children's literacy programs. Council consensus at \$17,500.00.

New Requests Administrative Services

- *IT software upgrade for the accounting system. We will have to replace our server in a few years. This would be an ongoing licencing fee for a cloud-based system with the company we currently use for \$5,000.00. We would like it as staff and gives us some better options for service but could live without it. Council asked if it saved staff time. CAO Spear noted not sure but it would allow for remote work and access outside of the office. It would give more flexibility to staff if working on weekends or nights at home versus having to come into the office. It also provides for real-time backing up of software. Council supported the software upgrade.*
- *Higher professional development funding as we underestimated the new costs of the Council for training, attending of conferences, etc. This has been increased by \$5,000.00.*
- *We are looking to create a new Executive Assistant position to help offset Senior Staff for some of the work we are doing. It would give us flexibility of staffing coverage as well for \$45,000.00. Council asked if there was space at Town Hall for the new staff member. CAO Spear noted there is an open office that the position can fill. Council consensus on the new staff position.*

New Requests Economic Development

- *CAO Spear noted that Council has been presented with three requests for funding over and above the Community Grant Funding that is usually provided by Council. Katy's Cove Inc. has requested \$15,000.00, Charlotte County Archives \$8,000.00 for summer student support, and Sunbury Shores of \$8,000.00 for ongoing programming.*
- *Council noted concerns for Katy's Cove on the lease and tax dollars towards infrastructure that is not owned by the Town and on private property. It was noted that the \$15,000.00 was for ongoing costs of operation. Council also asked for a copy of their strategic operations and capital plan for the next 5 years if they wish for continued support of funding. Council consensus for \$15,000.00 for Katy's Cove Inc.*
- *Council discussed the Charlotte County Archives' request for funding. It was noted that Council has invested significant repairs to the Gaol, continued payment of heat and power, and felt that, through the presentations from the Archives, this funding has been underappreciated. Council understands the importance of an organization helping to tell our story and the need for them to continue to grow. It was noted that this is a Charlotte County-wide program and not just a Saint Andrews program. Staff reminded Council the request was to help fund tours at the Charlotte County Courthouse. Council noted that the Archives was to reach out to other communities for funding to support the ongoing operations. Council debated the funding topic with suggestions that the Archives apply to the MLA funding for the region next year to help fill a gap and that Council would support a letter to that nature. Council asked who provides oversight to the tour staff at the Courthouse and Gaol. CAO Spear noted the Archives does. Council asked if it would be advantageous to look at our Town Staff overseeing these staff members. CAO Spear noted this would not be a good idea for Town Staff to oversee another organization's staff. Council supported a \$4,000.00 grant.*

- Council briefly discussed the Sunbury Shore request and approved the \$5,000.00 request.
- CAO Spear noted that the Community Assistance Grants will receive fewer requests as Katy's Cove Inc., Sunbury Shores, and the Archives all ask for funding each year. This could mean the Assistance Grants can be reduced if Council desires. Council has a consensus to reduce from \$18,000.00 to \$15,000.00.
- Council asked about the Welcome Centre and if there should be funding allocated in the budget. It was noted there was no ask brought forward. The Chamber of Commerce will no longer be doing the Welcome Centre but Explore St. Andrews is looking to operate it. They receive around \$300,000.00 a year from the TALB fund. If it is important they can figure out how to run it out of the budget versus the Town supplying funding. The Town helped to fund the Welcome Centre last year as a one-time support.

New Items in 2024

- Ross Museum was noted to have wages increased to be able to host the Christmas Open House for the 200th Anniversary celebrations. Council provided consensus.
- The Recreation Department is asking for \$46,000.00 to increase programming including paid summer camps that would be revenue-neutral or potentially revenue-generating. A copy of the outlined programs and projects requested have been provided to Council. Council noted they have seen an outdoor movie system and was part of the funding. CAO Spear provided clarification that the movie system was in a capital purchase stream, not an operational stream. Council consensus.
- The Youth Centre currently has a 3/4 position that we would like to move to full-time. This position has been working with both the Recreation Department and the Youth Centre. It would guarantee full-time hours and benefits for the staff member. It is a bit of an increase but worthwhile. Council consensus.
- Council asked about where the funding was located for the new digital sign for the arena. It was noted at a cost of \$60,000.00. Council noted the importance of emergency communication and providing additional communications for the public to be aware of what is going on. Not everyone is on social media and segments of the population are looking for signs to be informed. Council was supportive of the sign. CAO Spear noted for Council to look at page 4 of the budget document for this information.
- Silent generator for \$4,000.00 and can be used for community events including Truth and Reconciliation. Council consensus.
- Plate compactor for Public Works to be able to use for roads and other projects.
- Dog park signs and benches were committed to by Council. Funding was raised for the fencing and now just adding to the park. Council asked if the memorial bench program could be put in place for this park. Staff agreed. Bench costs about \$2,500.00 for good quality but we know people are willing to pay.
- There is an item for a Grid Rack for the fire department.
- We have a commercial skate sharpener listed for \$7,000.00 for the arena which will become revenue neutral and eventually make revenue.

- We have \$20,000.00 in the budget for video cameras for the downtown. This is part of a partnership with the Business Improvement Association.
- The Exercise Park needs a couple of rubber safety mats due to the height of some of the pieces of equipment.
- The outdoor movie system was discussed by Council. Council thought to defer this item and ask the Manager of Recreation to work on getting the movie theatre more active in the summers at the arena.
- Alarm and fire protection system for \$5,000.00. Council consensus.

Staff asked Council to what level of the mill rate they are comfortable with moving forward. Council debated the mill rate for Bayside, Chamcook, and Saint Andrews. Council came to a consensus to look at an adjustment of the mill rate by 2 to 2.5 cents per \$100.00 assessment reduction for Saint Andrews and an increase for Bayside and Chamcook. Council noted that they would like to look at a plan to get to mill rate parity over the next several years and lay out a plan for the next Council to accomplish it.

- G. **NEW BUSINESS**
- H. **QUESTION PERIOD**
- I. **COUNCILLORS' AND DEPUTY MAYOR'S COMMENTS**
- J. **MAYOR'S COMMENTS**
- K. **CLOSED SESSION**

Motion: 383 - 11/23

Moved by Councillor Heenan

Seconded by Councillor Bennett

At 10:14 p.m. that Council enters Closed Session as per the Local Governance Act, Section 68(1)(c) information that can cause financial loss or gain to a person or the local government or could jeopardize negotiations leading to an agreement or contract.

9 – 0

Carried

Motion: 384 - 11/23

Moved by Councillor Hirtle

Seconded by Councillor Harland

At 10:26 p.m. that Council returns to Open Session.

9 – 0

Carried

- L. **ADJOURNMENT**

Motion: 385 - 11/23

Moved by Deputy Mayor Akagi

Seconded by Councillor Hirtle

At 10:27 p.m. that the meeting be adjourned.

9 – 0

Carried


Brad Henderson, Mayor


Paul Nopper, Clerk – Senior
Administrator

