



**MUNICIPALITY OF THE DISTRICT OF WEST HANTS  
Committee of the Whole Minutes  
April 17, 2018, 5:00 p.m.  
Sanford Council Chambers**

Present:	P. Morton	Deputy Warden
	A. Zebian	Warden
	R. Jannasch	Councillor District 1
	K. Monroe	Councillor District 2
	D. Keith	Councillor District 3
	T. Leopold	Councillor District 4
	D. Francis	Councillor District 5
	R. Hussey	Councillor District 6
	J. Daniels	Councillor District 7 (left 6:15)
	M. Laycock	Chief Administrative Officer/Director of Finance
	C. Lowe	Accountant
	R. Brown	Municipal Clerk
	J. Woodman	Administrative Assistant

Regrets: R. Zwicker Councillor District 10

There were 2 members of the public in attendance.

1. Call to Order  
Chair Morton called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.
2. Announcements  
Chair Morton reviewed the standard fire evacuation procedure.
3. Approval of Agenda, including additions or deletions  
**MOVED and SECONDED that the agenda be approved, noting the following additions and changes:**  
**Motion Carried.**
  - **Move 4(b) to 4(c) and 4(c) to 4(d)**
  - **Add 4 (b) Fire budget Update – Councillor Daniels**
  - **Add 5 (a) Correspondence Town of Windsor April 17, 2018****Motion Carried.**

4. Budget Update
  - a. 2018-19 Draft Budget Overview Updated  
CAO Laycock reported he updated the changes to the budget as directed at the previous budget meetings. He determined that the Municipality would need \$56,593 of changes throughout the budget, and advised he made additional changes to keep a flat tax rate. He explained part of the change was to reduce the general tax rate to the 2017/18 level as a reduction of \$243,651 which is inclusive of the Hantsport area rate. He noted there was a discrepancy in the numbers he had for calculating the Hantsport area rate which changed the original total.

CAO Laycock reported that he reduced the revenue from the water sales with the rationale that in the capital budget there is a request to relocate the water hauling station to Falmouth due to safety concerns.

CAO Laycock advised because of the changes on the revenue side there was a need for a matching decrease in the expense side. He advised under the general budget presented in April the Economic Development Officer was under the Planning Department, but he

transferred it under the CAO as he determined it was a better fit. He reported that he removed the Community Services Officer, communication tower, Happy Community Funding as per direction of Committee of the Whole. He noted under Transportation there was a reduction of cost due to the road maintenance fee that is paid to the Province.

CAO Laycock indicated the most significant change for the Hantsport Area Rate was in the capital budget for a sidewalk plow, but it was not put in the original budget. He felt it was a reasonable rationale to put the cost in the area rate, as it would only be used in Hantsport. He noted that there is a reduction to the proposed transfer to the infrastructure reserve of \$1,300 and it netted out to be the same for Hantsport.

CAO Laycock offered if the Deed Transfer Tax were set at 1.25%, he would need to be directed to find \$87,188 of savings based on the current budget; as this would be short in revenue. He felt if a 1.25% rate was directed, he would suggest cutting the Economic Development Officer as it is the most straight forward, adding he would be hard pressed to find other cuts.

He advised that he updated the revenue summary and noted there was a slight increase in the overall costs, but he was able to keep the tax rate the same.

He reported under the Capital Budget he added \$22,500 to Hantsport Sewer Treatment which is slated to come from Gas Tax and is to be cost shared with the Municipality of Kings. He confirmed there was no changes to the Reserve Budget.

Councillor Leopold asked for an update on Connect to Innovate application. CAO Laycock responded he had no information at this time and noted that staff have already anticipated what the first years cost would be in the capital budget and the contribution from that. He clarified it would have an affect from an operational point of view, and that the Economic Development Officer would benefit it. Councillor Monroe asked if the Economic Development Officer's salary is based on a cost share. CAO Laycock indicated the position would be through the Municipality only.

b. Fire Budget Update – Councillor Daniels

Councillor Daniels asked that Council revisit the fire budget particularly for Brooklyn Fire Department Station 1. She advised after comparison with other fire departments, the fuel for this department seemed excessively high.

Councillor Daniels also expressed concern for the ask under the Public Events budget line, she stated last year the Department was granted \$6800 for a milestone banquet. She questioned why the department is asking for the exact same amount this year and suggested this doesn't keep in line with other fire departments. She felt this is not unified and expressed concern about future budget lines. She asked that the fuel budget be decreased to \$7,000. She reminded by policy the CAO has ability to expend funds if the Department has an issue. She also suggested that the Public Events ask be reduced to \$3,500.

**MOVED and SECONDED that a recommendation be made to Council that Council reduce the Brooklyn Fire Station 1 fuel bill from \$12,000 to \$7,000.**

Councillor Hussey questioned why the fundraising and donations are listed at zero in the budget for Brooklyn Fire Department. He indicated the Department has purchased exercise equipment recently that is not budgeted and asked where the money has come from. CAO Laycock clarified the fundraising is handled by the auxiliary which is not part of the Department's budget.

Councillor Monroe suggested that Council should discuss how to manage fire services throughout the Municipality and obtain a level of control over the level of service and protection for the taxpayer's money.

Councillor Francis suggested she was not comfortable cutting funds at this point from the budget, she reminded that Council had time to review and felt these issues should have

been addressed when the chiefs were present to answer questions directly. She offered she would like to see a meeting with all the chiefs to discuss options on where to cut some costs.

Warden Zebian agreed he would feel more secure with more control over the budget to find efficiencies in all fire departments. He offered that the fire departments provide excellent service to the communities, but he would like to ensure that efficiency is happening in all areas. CAO Laycock cautioned Council is limited under the MGA of what a policy of Council can ask from their municipal fire services, he reminded fire departments are independent with their own rules and by-laws. He indicated that staff is working through issues with the policy and confirmed there is a Fire Policy meeting scheduled for May 3<sup>rd</sup>, he hopes to bring it to Committee of the Whole soon for discussion.

Councillor Leopold reminded there is several factors that would influence fuel costs, such as number of calls, age of fleet, she felt it was more complicated than to just look at the amount of fuel, and she didn't personally see it being off the charts. She offered that Brooklyn Fire Department have a higher number of calls which would use more fuel.

Councillor Monroe clarified that she was not trying to control or cut budgets, she just wanted to see a greater level of confidence moving forward. She suggested that the Municipality should handle the bills and felt this would give another set of eyes that would validate the rationale for the costs. She felt this could be a great pilot project for fire services. CAO Laycock explained that if a request and an agreement was made the Municipality could be handle the bills; however, the Municipality cannot demand it.

Councillor Keith indicated that he has discussed issues with the Chief at the Brooklyn Fire Department, particularly that the Board of Directors should be responsible for the tax payer's money. He reiterated that the Municipality should be meeting with the Board and reminded they are not fire fighters just citizens.

Councillor Daniels clarified she is not singling out one specific station about the fuel consumption and reminded Council that the CAO has the authority to expend if necessary. CAO Laycock cautioned this approach as the Municipality run's a balanced budget. Councillor Daniels suggested she is just seeking accountability and indicated that perhaps a reserve should be sent up for fire services in case an issue arises, she added that she just want to ensure there is accountability with the spending.

Councillor Monroe stated that she felt pressured to approve the fire services budget. She asked if approval is received from the departments to start managing the budget could it begin this year. CAO Laycock indicated that anything is possible with the cooperation from the fire services, adding Council could look at cost savings during the year. He cautioned that normally fire departments like to know their budget in order to execute plans during the year.

Councillor Jannasch stated while reviewing the fire services budget this year he found them to be in general easier to understand and were more consistent. He asked the CAO if this year showed more accountability and transparency or if it was at the same level as previous years. CAO Laycock felt it showed an improvement as he assimilated all the line items in the budget, so the accounts correlate with the budget. Councillor Jannasch cautioned putting a significant administrative burden on the Municipality.

Councillor Leopold indicated that she would not be supporting the motion as it is making a significant change to the budget without consultation to the chief. She suggested that she did see the potential to make more efforts in reducing costs in the future and looked forward to changes from the Fire Advisory Committee meetings.

Councillor Hussey felt he hoped everyone could work together and he suggested that Council should review all the fire departments books to see where the funding is going.

**Motion Defeated.**

Councillors Leopold, Keith, Francis, and Monroe voted nay.

**MOVED and SECONDED that a recommendation be made that Council reduce the Brooklyn Fire Departments Public Events budget from \$6800 to \$3500.**

**Motion Carried.**

Councillors Leopold and Francis voted nay.

c. 2018-19 Budget – Recommendation Report

**MOVED and SECONDED that a recommendation be made to Council that Council approve the 2018-19 Operating budget as presented outlining total general rate budgeted expenses and transfers of \$ 15,924,384, and total area rate budgeted expenses and transfers for the community for the community of Hantsport of \$699,816.**

**Motion Carried.**

**MOVED and SECONDED that a recommendation be made to Council that Council approve the 2018-19 Capital Budget as presented.**

**Motion Carried.**

**MOVED and SECONDED that a recommendation be made to Council that Council approve the 2018-19 Reserves Budget as presented.**

**Motion Carried.**

**MOVED and SECONDED that a recommendation be made to Council that Council approve 2018-19 Three Mile Plains Water Utility budget as presented.**

**Motion Carried.**

**MOVED and SECONDED that a recommendation be made to Council that Council approve 2018-19 Falmouth Water Utility budget as presented.**

**Motion Carried.**

**MOVED and SECONDED that a recommendation be made to Council that Council approve 2018-19 Hantsport Water Utility budget as presented.**

**Motion Carried.**

d. Fees Policy Amendment – Recommendation Report

**MOVED and SECONDED that a recommendation be made to Council that Council amend Fees Policy COFN-005.03 to reflect the amendments as shown in the attachment to the Fees Policy Amendment Recommendation Report presented to the Committee of the Whole on April 17, 2018.**

**Motion Carried.**

5. Correspondence

a. Town of Windsor

Warden Zebian reported that he received correspondence from the Town of Windsor asking if the Municipality would consider cost sharing the Exhibition Arena rental expense on an equitable basis of the additional \$4,000 a month for the period between October 2018 and April 2019. He indicated if not, then consideration would be given that the cost could be passed onto the users of the arena in higher user fees.

**MOVED and SECONDED that a recommendation be made to Council that the Warden be directed to act as a liaison between the Town of Windsor and the Windsor Agricultural Society regarding rental fee of the Exhibition Arena.**

**Motion Carried.**

**MOVED and SECONDED that the correspondence from the Town of Windsor be received and placed on file.**

**Motion Carried.**

6. In Camera

a. MGA 22 (2)(f) – Litigation or potential litigation

**MOVED and SECONDED to move in-camera. at 6:19 p.m.**

**Motion Carried.**

The meeting moved in-camera at 6:19 p.m.

The meeting reconvened at 6:41 p.m.

7. Date of Next Meeting – April 24, 2018

The next regular meeting of the Committee of the Whole will be April 24, 2018.

8. Adjournment

**MOVED and SECONDED that the meeting adjourn.**

**Motion Carried.**

Meeting adjourned at 6:44 p.m.

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Paul Morton, Chair

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Rhonda Brown, Municipal Clerk