



**MUNICIPALITY OF THE DISTRICT OF WEST HANTS
Special Committee of the Whole Minutes
April 2, 2019, 4:00 p.m.
Sanford Council Chambers**

Present:	P. Morton	Deputy Warden (Arrived 4:10 p.m.)
	A. Zebian	Warden
	R. Jannasch	Councillor District 1
	K. Monroe	Councillor District 2
	D. Keith	Councillor District 3
	D. Francis	Councillor District 5
	J. Daniels	Councillor District 7
	R. Zwicker	Councillor District 10 (Arrived 4:33 p.m.)
	M. Laycock	Chief Administrative Officer
	C. Rochon	Director of Finance
	R. Brown	Municipal Clerk
A. Henhoeffler	REMO/Fire Services Coordinator	
J. Woodman	Administrative Assistant	
Regrets:	T. Leopold	Councillor District 4
	R. Hussey	Councillor District 6
Guests:	J. Cochrane	Brooklyn Fire Department
	A. Crowell	Brooklyn Fire Department
	C. Spencer	Summerville Fire Department
	P. Johnston	Hantsport Fire Department
	P. Maynard	Hantsport Fire Department
	T. Swinamer	Mount Uniacke Fire Department
	A. Wile	South West Hants Fire Society
	C. Bushell	RCMP
	K. Oppong	RCMP

There were no members of the public in attendance.

1. Call to Order
Warden Zebian called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.
2. Announcements
Warden Zebian announced the meeting was being broadcasted on Facebook Live and reviewed the standard fire evacuation procedure.
3. Approval of Agenda, including additions or deletions
MOVED and SECONDED that the agenda be approved as circulated.

Motion Carried.

Deputy Warden Morton arrived and assumed the Chair.

4. Introduction and Overview

Director Rochon provided a summary of the budget in a PowerPoint presentation. She reviewed the proposed residential and commercial tax rate.

Councillor Jannash inquired why there is a significant increase in the residential assessment. Director Rochon offered that Property Valuation Services Corporation (PVSC) sends the Municipality its yearly assessment and that the average residential home owner will see approximately a 3% increase, however overall the tax base has increased by \$44 million.

Councillor Daniels inquired why there is no increase in Hantsport. Director Rochon noted the area rate has decreased which makes up the difference.

5. RCMP – Overview of Police Services in West Hants

Staff Sergeant Cory Bushell & Cpl. Kwabby Oppong were presented the Windsor District RCMP Report for 2019/2020 budget and provided an overview of the RCMP organizational chart. He noted the Provincial priorities are road safety, crime reduction, and cyber-crime; he was seeking direction from Council to see what initiatives residents are concerned with.

Staff Sergeant Bushell indicated the forecast is estimated at \$2,383,246 which represents an expected 1.0% increase over 2018/2019 actuals which equates to \$148,817 per regular member (x 15 members) under the PPSA, plus Shared Services costs at \$151,984. He stated that the cost per regular member covers: all expenses related to operations and maintenance (O&M) of their buildings, salary of support staff, purchase and O&M of police vehicles, weapons, investigational tools, kits and clothing, mandatory training, travel, and support from a host of operational special units. He informed the Shared Services costs of \$151,984 covers all operations and personnel at the Operations Communications Centre (OCC) with 55 employees. He reported the OCC processes on average 630 calls for services per day and conducted 2,085,604 status updates.

Councillor Monroe asked if there are any opportunities for streamlining with the consolidation process. Staff Sergeant Bushell suggested the intention is to have another public service position created but offered that would be up to the Province to decide. He noted that Windsor has the least number of staff in the Province for public servants, and their role is to look after administrative duties at a lower salary.

Councillor Jannasch asked how the RCMP determine where staff spends time outside of emergency calls for different areas. Staff Sergeant Bushell responded that members are expected to self-identify hot spots and a higher need for RCMP presence. He encouraged Council if they see a gap in coverage to please report any concerns to the RCMP.

Councillor Monroe inquired if the RCMP would like to continue with two sites once consolidation occurs. Staff Sergeant Bushell offered this matter has been referred to the

Co-ordinating Committee for discussion to learn their expectations for consolidation. He confirmed that they have provided a survey to their members to determine what they feel is the best way to move forward.

Staff Sergeant Bushell suggested that they want to streamline for efficiency but still create a healthy environment for members. He confirmed that survey results revealed that members want to ensure that the office(s) are accessible for everyone, particularly those with limited mobility issues. He expressed the importance of creating a happy workplace for the members, and that they are open to any feedback or concerns from Council.

Councillor Zwicker suggested that efficiencies really need to be evaluated. Cpl. Oppong stated that efficiencies especially with different locations are important to ensure coverage is fair. He confirmed that statistics take members to where those calls are and encouraged communications to show them where the issues are occurring.

6. Overview of Municipal Fire Services

Angela Henhoeffler, Regional Emergency Management Organization (REMO) and Fire Coordinator, presented the overview of the Municipal Fire Services Budget. She informed that 15 hours a week was spent on fire, while the remaining 20 hours was for REMO. She highlighted the following from the Municipal Fire Budget:

- \$7700 put in for each department to have an I-pad
- \$33,000 for dispatch for all departments
- \$3,500 pagers and radios
- \$500 subscriptions or publications
- \$2,000 interdepartmental training exercises, which will increase efficiencies.
- \$3,000 for service awards
- Long term debt payment for 12 VHF radios -\$22,000 more so that all departments have them.

Councillor Monroe inquired why the insurance doubled. CAO Laycock confirmed the rate increased due to the requirements of the Fire and Emergency Services Policy for liability coverage.

A. Henhoeffler presented statistics of the Fire Services calls for 2018. Councillor Daniels declared a conflict of interest and removed herself from the discussion.

A. Henhoeffler noted that she reviewed the number of calls and that overall, they were consistent with what the fire departments shared. She suggested that some calls could have been in more than one category so she determined what category they should be in.

Councillor Jannasch questioned if there is potential for efficiencies regarding the amount of equipment that is required by the departments. A. Henhoeffler noted that she will investigate standardizing the equipment but offered as Fire Services Coordinator she would

be looking at bulk purchasing. Councillor Jannasch inquired about purchasing big-ticket items such as trucks. A. Henhoeffler confirmed that would be looked at as well. CAO Laycock reported that the departments have already looked at this as a direct result of the Fire Coordinators involvement in the process.

Councillor Zwicker asked if the fire departments are properly staffed moving forward. A. Henhoeffler suggested that an external review would be required as she does not have the fire services background to comment.

Councillor Monroe asked if the fire departments are thinking beyond this year, and she felt it did not make sense to spend money like the Windsor Fire Department is currently doing. A. Henhoeffler suggested she has not been involved with the Windsor Fire Department but offered this has been discussed and was referred to the Co-ordinating Committee.

Councillor Francis asked whether there is a need for aerial trucks. A. Henhoeffler suggested this should be reviewed by the the consultant and offered for the time being mutual aid is available, if necessary, to provide this service.

Chair Morton asked for clarification on the levels of service the fire departments provided. A. Henhoeffler indicated that there are two aspects fire and medical adding it is important to recognize the responsibility is with the Province for medical. She noted the Fire and Emergency Services Policy was created based on serviced or unserved area calls and states that fire departments respond to all level 4 medical calls.

Councillor Keith cautioned there is going to be a situation where two aerial trucks are required and questioned what the result could be with only one truck. He understood that Council wants to save money however questioned at what cost and referred to the recent fire in Windsor.

Warden Zebian inquired what the amortization period was for the loan for the VHF radios. Director Rochon confirmed the amortization period was 10 years.

MOVED and SECONDED that the Fire Services-2018 presentation be received and placed on file.

Motion Carried.

7. Walton Fire Department

Chief Patterson presented the budget for the Walton Fire Department. The Chief advised that insurance continues to be a significant cost for them. He confirmed the Department had two new members join and equipment is required, adding that he would like to replace the old imaging camera . He offered that all medical responders are required to have Trunk Mobile radios which are expensive to buy and maintain. The Chief confirmed that training fire school Level 1 is always a priority, and two members graduated from the Level 1 course. The Chief confirmed that the fire station is not planning any major renovations this year and noted that they installed a new generator last year which has made a substantial difference.

The Chief indicated that the Department has incurred a couple minor flooding issues due to high tides. He advised that the Department is investigating a cold-water automatic pumping system to alleviate the issues. The Chief suggested the Department is running out of storage space for equipment and they are considering purchasing a storage container. The Chief advised the Department has set aside \$8,000 to have an inhouse member appreciation night, with a sit-down meal and gifts for the members. The Chief confirmed there will be no major investments for capital this year.

Councillor Zwicker offered that he was happy the Department is hosting an appreciation night and that it was well deserved. He asked if the Department was contacted by the company that is storing explosives in the area. The Chief advised he was in contact with the manager of the company who assured him there was no risk of a catastrophic reaction.

Councillor Hussey asked how old the imaging camera was. The Chief confirmed the Department purchased the camera 15 years ago and it was second-hand then.

Councillor Monroe inquired about the flooding issues and questioned whether grant money was available to assist. The Chief suggested that there is a berm at the site, and they are working with an irrigation company who have offered three solutions to the issue in order to be self-sustained even in the winter. He stated that he was not aware of any funding that could assist with this matter.

Councillor Jannasch inquired if East Hants provided funding for training. The Chief confirmed East Hants does provide funding and some in-house training to limit members having to attend courses at the fire school which is more costly, however he noted that ice rescue is not on the mandatory training list.

Councillor Jannasch asked the Chief to comment on the benefits for ice rescue. The Chief suggested the training is phenomenal and that 14 members had taken the course as it is a significant asset in saving lives.

Chair Morton asked for clarification on the Department's insurance. The Chief indicated that there are three levels of insurance that are all covered under an umbrella through East Hants.

8. Summerville Fire Department

Chief Spencer noted there was changes to the budget and forecast and offered it was a challenge switching to the fiscal year versus calendar year. The Chief suggested they attempted to reduce the overall budget for the upcoming year. Warden Zebian asked for clarification on the \$7,000 listed in the other category. The Chief confirmed this is a forecast for a multi-year project fund for a sizeable project, this year it is for a ventilation system in the truck bays.

Councillor Jannasch asked for additional information on the long-term debt for the new tanker. The Chief explained the Department currently receives \$50,000 to pay down existing debt on a tanker truck from Council who took over the loan on the 2016 pumper. Director Rochon confirmed that the Department is making payments on this loan. The Chief suggested this would be the last year they would be asking for capital dollars for that loan, and noted it is a 10-year loan that will be paid off in 8 ½ years.

Councillor Francis asked for additional information on the \$7,000 for the generator last year. The Chief confirmed this was an emergency repair that was required in order to operate the comfort center. He explained it was purchased in late 2017 but was not delivered until May 2018.

Councillor Francis asked for clarification on the well drilling project. The Chief advised the cold-water pressure tank exploded and they had to replace the existing infrastructure.

Councillor Monroe asked about the ventilation system. The Chief offered that there is an alternative air handling unit that is mounted to the ceiling that would help reduce costs.

Councillor Jannasch asked for the Chief to comment on the Department's membership. The Chief confirmed that the Department lost six members due to adhering to administrative practices and offered that some members on paper but are not active. He confirmed there are 28 active members with a variety of skills and training and suggested that they are always seeking new members.

Councillor Zwicker inquired about the copier lease. The Chief offered that the copier is critical for their day to day operations and that they had one on loan, but it is at the end of its life cycle.

Chair Morton asked what the total number of calls was for the year, and how many of those were medical. The Chief reported that the Department responded to 87 calls for service, and approximately 60% were medical. Chair Morton asked for clarification on the ask last year for the truck bay. The Chief confirmed the Department did not receive this funding and that he just wanted to report that this is still a future requirement.

Councillor Zwicker inquired how often the hall is rented. The Chief confirmed that the hall is not used often by the general public, it was used for fundraising, training and for a comfort center.

Chair Morton asked for more detail on the water rescues. The Chief offered that water rescue is required more often as people do not recognize the dangers of being caught by the tide, adding that the Department responded to three calls last year. He indicated that they have a good launch location in Walton.

9. Mount Uniacke Fire Department

Chief Swinamer presented the budget for the Mount Uniacke Fire Department. The Chief reported the membership stands at 37. He noted that all calls are broken out by month and call type; with 210 calls for service, of which 10% were from West Hants. He suggested there was no change in apparatus, and the intention is to replace truck 308 in four years, adding when it was purchased it was not set up for their environment; but confirmed they will correct this with the next purchase. He offered that they will also upgrade the utility vehicle. He confirmed that the Department must shuttle all water as there are no hydrants.

The Chief suggested future items that need to be discussed are fire boundaries, and a need for a long-term agreement. He suggested that the proposed developments within Forest Lakes will result in tactical and equipment changes and that planning needs to start immediately. He offered that the Department is focused on preparing medical kits for the Medical First Responders, noting the faster that they can respond with a defibrillator the better.

MOVED and SECONDED that the report from the Mount Uniacke Fire Department be received and placed on file.

Motion Carried.

Director Rochon asked Chief Swinamer to comment on how a growth center increase would affect services. The Chief noted that development has been happening faster than anticipated and he suggested that they will require a substation in that area, and that the developer will provide the parcel of land. He offered that he does not envision that it would affect the West Hants budget.

10. South West Hants Fire Department

Alicia Wile presented for the South West Hants Fire Society. She reported that there are no significant changes from last year, but noted they have a janitor that comes in weekly to clean. She confirmed the Society has applied for two grants for the replacement of doors and one window which would occur if the grants are approved.

Chief Johnston presented the budget for the South West Hants Fire Department and reported there are no significant changes other than an increase in fuel costs and honorariums. The Chief reported that there are 12 active members. Councillor Zwicker inquired if the Department is still sustainable. The Chief offered that it is difficult for members to respond in the daytime throughout the week, but it has improved since they have auto aid from Brooklyn and Windsor Fire Departments.

11. Hantsport Fire Department

Chief Johnston and Deputy Chief Maynard presented the budget for the Hantsport Fire Department.

Director Rochon commented that the budget includes \$2,000 per year for auditor services.

Councillor Zwicker inquired if there was any accidents or incidents at the hall this year due to unsafe conditions. The Chief confirmed there has not been any issues reported. Warden Zebian asked if members were concerned about the hall's safety. The Chief confirmed that members are concerned about the work environment. CAO Laycock agreed there are safety concerns for the Department that need to be addressed. Councillor Zwicker expressed concern that members are getting sick from the fumes and unsafe conditions and that Council needs to take a careful approach to resolve the issues.

CAO Laycock reported that the Department lost the comfort center area because they had to store gear in the hall due to safety concerns. He confirmed that A. Henhoeffler is investigating the matter of a comfort centre. A. Henhoeffler offered that she was awarded an NSCC graduate student to work with her and this issue would be a priority.

Chair Morton asked what level of medical service the Department provides. Deputy Chief Maynard advised the Department is a Level 6 responder which means they basically respond to all calls and he did not see that changing in the near future.

Director Rochon noted that it has been identified that there are health and safety concerns with the building, and that last year's budget included funds for minor repairs. She asked for clarification on what these funds were used for. The Chief advised that this covered the cost of new doors for the hall, a key fob system and a new security camera.

Councillor Zwicker inquired what the call volume was for Kings County. The Chief confirmed it was 30%. Director Rochon confirmed there will be a meeting for Kings County residents to have a vote which will go before their Council for consideration. CAO Laycock offered that as per the service agreement the meeting is an annual requirement in accordance with Kings County policy.

12. Brooklyn Fire Department

Chief Cochrane and Arthur Crowell presented the budget for the Brooklyn Fire Department. The Chief confirmed there are currently 65 senior members, 16 juniors and a total of 85 volunteer members. The Chief offered the pumper is 32 years old and is now becoming unreliable and does not have safety features.

Councillor Monroe asked for clarification on costs to the Municipality. Director Rochon confirmed the cost of plowing has gone out through municipal tender, and that the Municipality bills out the cost of power to the Department and civic center until the agreement is signed. CAO Laycock suggested for the snow plowing that it would be beneficial to move it under the municipal umbrella.

Councillor Monroe asked for more information regarding the amount budgeted for legal fees. CAO Laycock stated that it was an internal matter for the Brooklyn Fire Department, and it could not be discussed.

Councillor Monroe asked why the honorariums have increased but the number of members have decreased. The Chief advised that the Department has 65 senior members and that they cap for the maximum number of members.

Warden Zebian expressed concern about the increasing fuel cost for both stations, and suggested it seemed significantly higher than the other stations in West Hants. The Chief suggested that it would need to be investigated to determine why there was such an increase but offered that the Department does respond to multiple calls and run more vehicles. Councillor Zwicker questioned if members were given gas cards. The Chief confirmed that members were not given gas cards.

Chair Morton asked if a price was received for a blanket insurance policy for all the fire departments. CAO Laycock noted that he was not able to get the quote in time for renewals but suggested that this is something that will be investigated for next year. He confirmed the penalty to withdrawal was not cost effective for this year.

Chair Morton questioned if the medical service level is mandated. The Chief explained the Department responds to Level 4 calls and that there were 154 medical calls between the two Departments. CAO Laycock confirmed there is a mandate that Departments be a Level 4 responder.

Director Rochon asked the Chief to comment on the capital request for radios and the geothermal camera. The Chief advised that the request was made after they took on Station 2 and expressed the importance of members having the radios for safety reasons. Chair Morton asked if the radios could be leased instead of purchased. CAO Laycock offered this could be investigated but cautioned leasing is often more expensive than purchasing. A. Henhoeffter suggested that radios could be considered when discussing bulk purchasing.

Chief Cochrane reviewed the budget line items for Station 2.

Warden Zebian inquired how the deficit would be funded if the department does not do fundraising. The Chief offered the deficit would be covered by a shortage at the other station from the wage paid to a staff member.

Councillor Monroe inquired how many members Station 2 currently had. The Chief confirmed Station 2 has 23 senior members. Councillor Monroe expressed concern that the two stations seemed to be acting as one. Director Rochon clarified that any expense that is building related would be a municipal cost. Councillor Monroe asked if the Department had paid cash for the janitorial position. The Chief confirmed that no cash was paid out by the Department. Chair Morton called a Point of Order on the question.

Chair Morton suggested that a substation should be run at a reduced amount. Director Rochon advised in the prior year the cost was similar to the Hantsport Fire Department and South West Hants as they split time between the two based on a percentage. The Chief

offered it is costly to have a trained member that can also drive for approximately 40 hours per week.

Councillor Keith expressed that it is important to start approaching the insurance companies about the volunteers doing all the work and not being compensated for their time and supplies they are providing. A. Henhoeffler confirmed this was addressed and that several insurance companies chose to show support by providing funds to the fire schools for training for vehicle related accidents.

MOVED and SECONDED that the presentation from the Brooklyn Fire Department be received and placed on file.

Motion Carried.

13. Discussion and overview of the next day
Director Rochon explained that A. Henhoeffler, the CAO and herself had met with the fire departments on matters. CAO Laycock added that the Fire Services RFP could consider the capital purchases which is subject to the Co-ordinating Committee's approval. He suggested that staff would be seeking specific direction on the budget at the next meeting.
14. Adjournment
MOVED and SECONDED that the meeting adjourn.
Motion Carried.

Meeting adjourned at 8:22 p.m.

Paul Morton, Chair

Rhonda Brown, Municipal Clerk