



**WEST HANTS REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY**  
**Special Budget Committee of the Whole Agenda **AMENDED****  
**May 25, 2020 5:30-8:30 p.m.**  
**Virtual Zoom Presentation**

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Announcements
4. Approval of Agenda, including additions or deletions
5. 5:30-5:45 Introduction and **Overview of 2020-2021 Budget - UPDATED**  
Mark Phillips & Carlee Rochon
6. 5:45-6:45 General Revenues and Expenses
  - a. Reserve Budget Overview
7. 6:45-7:15 General Government Services
  - a. Office of the CAO
  - b. Department of Financial Services
8. 7:15-7:45 Department of Planning and Development
9. 7:45-8:30 Department of Community Development
10. Adjournment



**WEST HANTS REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY**  
Special Budget Committee of the Whole Minutes  
May 25, 2020 5:30 p.m.  
Virtual Meeting – via Zoom

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**1. Call to Order**

Mayor Zebian called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm.

**2. Call of Roll**

Council Present:

Abraham Zebian, Mayor  
Rupert Jannasch, Councillor, District 1  
Scott McLean, Councillor, District 2  
Mark McLean, Councillor, District 3  
Jeff Hartt, Councillor, District 4  
Debbie Francis, District 5

Paul Morton, Deputy Mayor, District 8  
Bob Morton, Councillor, District 6  
Ed Sherman, Councillor, District 7  
Richard Murphy, Councillor, District 9  
Laurie Murley, Councillor, District 10  
Jim Ivey, Councillor, District 11

Staff and Guests Present:

Mark Phillips, Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)  
Todd Richard, Dir. Public Works  
Kathy Kehoe, Dir. Community  
Development  
Shelleena Thornton, Administrative  
Supervisor

Carlee Rochon, Dir. Financial Services  
Rhonda Brown, Municipal Clerk  
Madelyn LeMay, Dir. Planning &  
Development

Members of the public watched the meeting using Facebook Live.

**3. Announcements**

Residents were reminded to keep social distancing and keep safe during the COVID-19 pandemic.

**4. Approval of Agenda, including additions or deletions**

**MOVED by Councillors Ivey and Murphy that the agenda be approved.  
Motion Carried.**

**5. Introduction and Overview of 2020-2021 Budget**

CAO Phillips informed the 2020-2021 Budget was a combination of the former municipal units with a focus of maintaining service continuity and adhering to the Guiding Principals of the Consolidation, but the budget did contain costs which were beyond the

Municipality's control such as RCMP and education costs. He stated that the use of the Reserves should be used strategically to reduce any rate shock and maintain the tax rate. The tax structure was a combination of a general rate and area rates.

## **6. General Revenues and Expenses**

### **a. Reserve Budget Overview**

Director Rochon reviewed the Reserve Budget. New reserves will be set up for the Regional Municipality and the reserves brought over from the former units would be used for projects in that former unit, until gone. Some reserves were set up to meet policy or Utility and Review Board requirements, while others had restricted uses and reporting requirements.

#### Discussion Points:

- The Brooklyn Rink is not a Municipally owned facility, therefore does not have a reserve; however, funding from the Gas Tax Reserve or Operational Reserve has previously been used.
- Reserves are currently healthy, and Council will direct by policy how aggressive to replenish reserves.
- The large Operating Reserves use is for the sports complex and the mandated RCMP and education cost increases. This includes the balance of the Town of Windsor portion of the Sports Complex which reduces the debt servicing charges in the Operational Budget.
- The Sports Complex Reserve includes what has been fundraised and the first \$200,000 from the Town of Windsor.

## **7. General Government Services**

Director Rochon presented the 2020-21 Budget Overview.

The Director gave a detailed overview of revenues and expenses found in the budget package.

#### Discussion Points:

- The structure of the tax rates of a general rate and area rates was used to help residents understand, Council will need to determine what is general rated or area rated as they move to a more blended rate over the next few years.
- Revenue from Equalization is based on agreement with the Province for equalized payments previously given to the Towns of Hantsport and Windsor for a specific period, the payments for Hantsport is almost done.
- The HST Rebate is based on all HST paid two years prior and is rebated as a grant.

- The budget is conservative. If any surplus, it would be transferred back to reserves.
- RCMP costs increased due to changing to a Municipal Police Service Agreement from the Provincial Police Service Agreement, this was required as we are new municipality and it changed the funding arrangement as mandated by Public Safety Canada. Many municipalities will be in a similar position in 2031 when their PPSA ends. Other service options can be explored for cost savings and service levels but time will be needed to do proper assessments and notices.
- The 10% increase in education is based on a calculation of uniform assessment values and population, not just student numbers. Possible savings due to COVID-19 has not been communicated.

**a. Office of the CAO**

Director Rochon review the budget for the Office of the CAO adding the following information:

- Regional Emergency Management Organization (REMO) was previously funded by both former units. The cost Protective Services Coordinator salary is not included in this budget as they will be hired in 2021 with intent to split the cost between the REMO and Fire budgets.
- REMO Budget would also include COVID-19 expenses.

**b. Department of Financial Services**

Director Rochon reviewed the Financial Services budget.

Discussion Points:

- The budget only includes the maintenance of the current security camera systems, which may be redistributed. The only capital items for cameras is a server upgrade.

**8. Department of Planning and Development**

Director Rochon reviewed the responsibilities and budget of the Planning and Development Department which impacts the growth of the area and supports many Committees of Council. She added the Planning and Development Department had already been working as a consolidated unit a year.

**9. Department of Community Development**

Director Rochon reviewed the responsibilities and budget of the Community Development which connects the Municipality with all members of the community in various capacities. She added the following:

- WBES is a reference to what is now the Windsor Township Business Association.

Discussion Points:

- The \$58,872 for the WBES Area Rate expenses, includes a portion for Coach House that is collected under the area rate but not remitted to Windsor Township; only \$41,200 is remitted.
- Revenue and expense cost projections for the Sports Complex were completed and presented to the former West Hants Council.
- Grant applications have been received and will be coming before Council later.
- Grants and tax exemptions could help support community halls being impacted by COVID-19.
- The historic Brooklyn Cemetery is a non-active cemetery, with minimum maintenance due to the property features, costs last year was under \$500.00.
- Valley Regional Enterprise had a slow start but have been active with the manufacturing community and recently to help with COVID-19. A 1-year notice is required to withdraw. They are set up to be independent from Council, but a presentation can be made to Council.

**10. Adjournment**

The Public Works budget and Protective Services budget would be presented at the next operational budget meeting on Wednesday May 27<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 pm.

**MOVED by Councillors Jannasch and Murphy that the meeting adjourn.  
Motion Carried.**

*The meeting ended at 8:15 pm.*

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Abraham Zebian, Mayor

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Rhonda Brown, Municipal Clerk