



WEST HANTS REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY
Special Budget Committee of the Whole Minutes
May 27, 2020 5:30 p.m.
Virtual Meeting – via Zoom

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
Peter Johnston, Chief Hantsport Fire Dept.
Jason Cochrane, Chief Brooklyn Fire Dept.

Carlee Rochon, Dir. Financial Services
Rhonda Brown, Municipal Clerk
Madelyn LeMay, Dir. Planning &
Development
Chris Spencer, Chief Summerville Fire
Dept.
Jamie Juteau, Chief Windsor Fire Dept.
Cory Bushell, S/Sgt Windsor District
Commander RCMP

Members of the public watched the meeting using Facebook Live.

3. Announcements

Residents were reminded to stay safe and keep flattening the curve of the COVID-19 pandemic.

4. Approval of Agenda, including additions or deletions

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

5. Summary of Previous Days

Director Rochon summarized the portion of the Operational Budget presented at the May 25th Special Committee Whole. CAO Phillips informed there were two new items that would affect the budget. The first was a \$600,000 increase in RCMP costs (anticipated salary costs from Public Safety Canada and requirements under the new policing agreement). The second item was rural internet, as Develop Nova Scotia had called for a second round of rural internet project applications. Two additional meetings were scheduled to discuss these issues in more detail before finalizing the budget.

6. Department of Public Works

Director Rochon reviewed the budget of the Public Work Department which was broken into sub-departments.

Discussion Points:

- There are two contracts for waste collection services of Windsor and West Hants with different negotiated tipping rates.
- Costs for the closed Municipal Landfill will end once the environmental impact period is complete.
- The Courthouse Budget Summary presented was missing \$24,000 of expenses due to the transfer of information into the budget document, however this would be matched by a corresponding increase in revenue as all operational cost for the courthouse are paid by Province.

7. Break – Break was held 6:31 pm to 6:47 pm.

Chiefs Jamie Juteau, Peter Johnson, Jason Cochrane, and Staff Sergeant Bushell joined the meeting at 6:35 pm.

8. Protective Services Budget

Director Rochon reviewed the Protective Services budget starting with the RCMP expenses. Staff Sergeant Bushell informed as of March 31 all RCMP services were consolidated in one location and the former Town office was fully decommissioned on April 18, 2020. The current annual performance plan priorities are road safety, crime reduction and enhancing relations with the African Nova Scotia community. He reviewed the staffing complement of the Windsor detachment and services provided, adding the budget costs associated with outfitting officers, vehicles, and training.

Discussion Points:

- Some overtime and cost for redeployment of members for operational management are not included in the budget.

RCMP District Commander Bushell left the meeting at 7:01 pm

Director Rochon presented a summary sheet of Fire and Protective services budget. The summary did not include Mt. Uniacke Fire as the fire districts had changed, and notice had been given they were no longer required.

Discussion Points:

- Insurance for all fire departments is in the process of being consolidated under the Municipality for cost saving, once a list of all fire assets is determined a quote for personal liability, apparatus and buildings will be requested.
- Municipality is looking to help with the provision of T4 for fire honorariums in accordance with Canada Revenue Agency rules.
- Annual financial statements from fire departments are required as part of their registration process.
- It is difficult to bill insurance companies for major fires as proof of destruction of assets is required including municipal assets such as a sidewalk or tree. Some costs associated with a forest fire under Department of Natural Resources can be claimed.
- Brooklyn Civic Centre billed 1/3 of the building operating cost based on an agreement which is being reviewed.

Chiefs Jamie Juteau, Peter Johnson, Jason Cochrane, and Chris Spencer left the meeting at 7:37 pm.

9. Discussion & Direction

Director Rochon provided answers to some of the questions asked at the May 25th Special Budget Committee of the Whole:

- The By-law Truck is a 2015 and has 59,000 kilometers, life can be extended as it is in good shape.
- The administration fee charged for services to associations is based on the level of service provided by the Municipality, this fee could lower if service levels were decreased such as remittance and reporting frequency.

Director Rochon asked for comments for direction from Councillors for changes to the budget.

Discussion Points:

- The incomplete power project of the Windsor Township Business Association (formerly WBES) in the 2019-2020 budget is not carried over in this year's budget but may be looked at in the future as part of Municipality's budget. The funds not used would have been added back to the operating reserve.
- More discussion is needed regarding the RCMP contract and budget before direction and decisions could be made.
- The Municipality should investigate the cost of fully operating the Brooklyn Civic Centre which would allow the volunteers to raise money for the fire service itself

rather than on the building. Director Rochon stated this could be looked at as part of the agreement.

- The former West Hants had committed \$3 Million of Gas Tax for rural internet which would need to be re-committed by the current Council.
- The increasing cost for the RCMP will be on going, so options for the future will be needed so reserves are not always used.
- CAO Phillips informed that the reserves, while being used strategically this year, are healthy and intended to support the historic tax models for both Windsor and West Hants Communities to avoid rate shock.

MOVED by Councillor Francis and Deputy Mayor Morton to receive the Budget Overview Presentation.

Motion Carried.

MOVED by Councillors Francis and Sherman to receive the 2020-2011 Municipal Fire Services Summary.

Motion Carried.

10. Adjournment

The next Special Budget Committee of the Whole meetings would be June 1, 2020 and June 3, 2020 at 5:30 pm.

MOVED by Councillors Ivey and Morton that the meeting adjourn.

Motion Carried.

The meeting ended at 8:28 pm.

Abraham Zebian, Mayor

Rhonda Brown, Municipal Clerk