

WEST HANTS MUNICIPALITY

Committee of the Whole – Budget Meeting Agenda - ~~AMENDED~~

April 20, 2022, 5:30 p.m.

Sanford Council Chambers 76 Morison Dr, Windsor, NS

(also held via virtual via Zoom and Facebook livestreamed)

Agenda is subject to changes up to and including during the meeting



-
1. Call to Order
 2. Attendance
 3. Approval of the Agenda, including additions or deletions
 4. Declaration(s) of Conflict of Interest
 5. Announcements
 6. 5:30-6:00 ~~Summary of Previous Days~~ RCMP
 7. 6:00-7:00 ~~RCMP~~ Fire Protection
 8. 7:00-8:00 ~~Fire Protection~~ Department of Public Works
 9. 8:00-8:20 Break
 10. 8:20-9:00 Water Utilities
 11. 9:05-9:15 ~~Discussion of Council~~ Summary of Previous Day
 12. 9:15-10:00 ~~Motions & Resolutions (Removed)~~ Discussion & Direction from Council
 13. Public Participation Period
 14. Next Meeting Date / Adjournment
 - a. ~~Council Meeting April 26, 2022~~ TBD

WEST HANTS MUNICIPALITY
Committee of the Whole Budget Meeting Draft Minutes
April 20, 2022, 5:30 p.m.



1. **Call to Order** – Mayor Zebian called the meeting to order at 5:30pm

2. **Attendance** – All in attendance

Council

Abraham Zebian, Mayor

Rupert Jannasch, Councillor, Dist. 1

Mark McLean, Councillor, Dist. 3

Debbie Francis, Councillor, Dist. 5

Ed Sherman, Councillor, Dist. 7

Laurie Murley, Councillor, Dist. 10

Paul Morton, Deputy Mayor, Dist. 8

Scott McLean, Councillor, Dist. 2

Jeff Hartt, Councillor, Dist. 4

Bob Morton, Councillor, Dist. 6

John A. Smith, Councillor, Dist. 9

Jim Ivey, Councillor, Dist. 11

Staff & Guests:

Mark Phillips, CAO

Todd Richard, Dir. Public Works

Madelyn LeMay, Dir. Planning &
Development

Shelleena Thornton, Mun. Operations
Supervisor

Summerville Fire Chief Chris Spencer

Brooklyn Fire Chief Ryan Richard

Mitchell Carr, Financial Analyst, RCMP

Megan Element, Planning & Strategic, RCMP

Carlee Rochon, Dir. Financial Services

Kathy Kehoe, Dir. Community Development

Diana Gibson, Mgr. Accounting & Financial
Reporting

Carmen Dewar-Miller, Admin Assistant,
Financial Services

Windsor Fire Chief Jamie Juteau

Hantsport Fire Chief Peter Johnston

Sgt. Robert Frizzell, RCMP, West Hants Detachment

3. **Approval of the Agenda, including additions or deletions**

Agenda was amended as follows due to a power outage which cut the previous evening's (2022-04-19) meeting short:

- Item #6 (Summary of Previous Days) is being moved to item #11
- Item #7 (RCMP) is being moved to item #6
- Item #8 (Fire Protection) is being moved to item #7
- Item #11 (Discussion of Council) was revised to Discussion & Direction from Council and moved to item #12
- Item #12 (Motions & Resolutions) was removed from the agenda
- Item 14 (Next Meeting Date / Adjournment) was changed from (a) Council Meeting April 26, 2022, to (a) TBD

**MOVED BY COUNCILLORS FRANCIS AND MURLEY THAT THE AGENDA BE APPROVED AS AMENDED.
MOTION CARRIED.**

4. Declaration(s) of Conflict of Interest – None

5. Announcements

- Mayor Zebian acknowledged that West Hants Regional Municipality recognizes that we are in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral territory of the Mi'kmaq people and that this land is governed by the treaties of Peace and Friendship signed in 1726. West Hants Regional Municipality also recognizes that we are all treaty people and have responsibilities to each other and this land.

6. RCMP (5:00)

Sargent Rob Frizzell presented the West Hants RCMP Financial Estimates with support from Mitchell Carr and Megan Element. The estimates cover 2022/23 fiscal year projections and note where costs are allocated; Human Resourcing (members on paper, members working – 22 in total for coming year); Accommodation Operating and Maintenance (the building that houses the detachment); Equipment (criminal operations, informatics, police vehicles); Divisional Administration and Other Costs (including guards, admin, overtime, vehicle fuel, etc.). An accompanying pie chart displayed the allocation of costs by percentage.

Discussion Points:

- The number of days a constable spends in court is low (one day every three months).
- Regarding staff, the number 22 represents full-time, in-uniform police officers, counting management officers. Support staff on site is a different number.
- CAO Phillips highlighted the benefit of the agreement and how well the credits work. In the last two years we've been down to 18.5 and 19.5. The number 22 is a bit of a sweet spot, not a lot of overtime, nice balance.
- With regard to fleet replacement, it is 160,000 kms or five years.
- For 2022-23, the dollar amount is an expected \$5,414, 637. This takes in computer upgrades and collective bargaining.
- \$5.4 million would be the total cost, \$4.9 million is the amount of funding requested from Municipality (90/10 split).
- Municipal budget number is higher than 4.9 as it also includes the provincial service agreement payment and one Municipal staff person. The Department of Justice has advised that we will see a 3% decrease in the provincial service agreement. The budget number will be adjusted down accordingly.

7. Fire Protection (28:45)

Director Rochon presented the Fire Services Operating and Capital budgets with support from Chiefs Juteau, Spencer, Johnston and Richard, and Supervisor Thornton. The first slide highlighted variances

between 2021-22 and 2022-23 budgets for each of the seven stations. Each station was then presented for discussion.

Windsor Fire Department (WFD)

There are apparatus and insurance increases. Seeing an increase in insurance across the board. Equipment and services have decreased due to fewer bunker suits required this year. Communication has increased due to a line-item reclassification.

Discussion Points

- Regarding insurance, fire departments have more flexibility. As insurance comes up for renewal, we can work with our insurance broker to source cost-effective providers.

Southwest Hants (SW Hants)

The expected fundraising will be adjusted down, per their Society's submission. Equipment and services have decreased. The Maintenance Apparatus Superintendent line item has increased due to cost of living and benefits adjustments as well as change in allocation between SW Hants, Windsor and Hantsport Fire.

Discussion Points

- The decrease in fundraising number from \$6,000 to \$3,000 was revisited. Impact will be reflected in the Operating budget, Director Rochon will review later in meeting as part of that presentation.

Walton

The set contribution amount of \$38,85 is unchanged from 2021-22.

Discussion Points

- Mayor Zebian asked Chief Juteau about the membership complement at Windsor and SW Hants stations.
- Chief Juteau advised that WFD is under on members right now, 38 active members and 4 cadets in the youth group. They are doing well with having members available to when responding to calls.
- Chief Johnston advised that there are about 10 active members active in SW Hants. There are issues with daytime calls (during workday), WFD is on auto-aid.
- WFD is working to improve attendance and move members to inactive if not participating.

Summerville

Personal protection is seeing an increase (new helmets). General maintenance has increased. Removed from snow removal line. Anything under snow removal is applicable under the Municipal tender agreement. Major repairs have increased (truck bay roof, man door).

Discussion Points

- The Municipal Expense line reflects expenses handled in house. If expenses in the Municipal cost, there is Municipal expense as part of the budget. For Summerville, this includes snowplowing, insurance, honorariums.
- Not consistent across all departments. There are certain costs that are different for each one. Depends on the agreement or the building.
- Insurance and honorariums are consistent across departments.

- Summerville has 28 active, two junior and six veteran members. Two members under review for poor attendance. They have no issues answering calls.

Brooklyn Station 1 (BFD1)

Fire Suppression and Rescue has increased to accommodate a turbo draft conductor. There is also an Equipment increase due to the requirement for additional bunker gear and thermal camera. Communications Operations has decreased – new radios requested through Capital budget. Training Grounds Equipment and Exercises has increased. Building Maintenance has increased.

Discussion Points

- There are currently 45 active members at Station 1, 30 active members at Station 2, a total of six juniors for both stations. There are 10 members under review for not meeting 20% minimum. They get a great turnout with the assistance of auto-aid.
- Member Recognition used to fall under “Other” with banquets and service awards, now broken out as its own line item, consistent for all departments.

Brooklyn Station 2 (BFD2)

Apparatus has increased due to increase in insurance and fuel. Also an increase to Equipment due to more bunker gear and a small thermal camera. The fire station costs have decreased due to the decrease in snow removal costs.

Hantsport (HFD)

HFD is a shared department with Kings County (Kings funds 29.5%). There is a set agreement related to some of the debt servicing. Operating has changed by 4.9%, not including debt servicing. Equipment and Services have increased due to additional phones, gear cleaning and equipment testing. Training has increased with COVID restrictions being lifted. Maintenance Superintendent has increased. Debt Servicing has increased (new Quint apparatus, SCBA equipment).

Discussion Points

- HFD has 30 active members and five operational veterans. They have no trouble responding to calls and are supported through auto-aid.
- Current insurance covers apparatus, building and any associated liability.
- We do not have the actual departmental costs for the last fiscal year. Director Rochon can run a report to get the numbers for each station.
- We do have a fleet schedule that will be presented by Supervisor Thornton next.
- The 19 ½ year-old vehicle being sold no longer meets the needs of our region. Per the study, after 20 years it starts to drop in rating which works against us. This vehicle is going to a station that has experienced significant equipment loss due to a fire.
- NFPA is a benchmark North American standard. After the apparatus reaches a certain age of maturity, you no longer receive credit for it under the Underwriters’ Act. Increased liability considerations. Municipality should strive to keep equipment up to date. Utilization and call volumes play in.

- Fire Departments are funded like any other Municipal dept. They submit a budget for review by the Fire Chiefs, Supervisor Thornton, CAO Phillips and Director Rochon. There is different funding (Municipal Costs vs Contribution Costs).
- Call volume does not factor in (directly) when deciding how to portion funding.
- Supervisor Thornton provided a breakdown of calls for the period from Jan- Mar/22 – BFD 1 and 2 responded to 106 calls, HFD - 57, SW Hants – 11, Summerville - 18, Walton – 8, WFD – 58.
- It was requested that this information be sent to councilors.
- Can any of the costs related to responding to motor vehicle accident (MVA) calls be billed back through insurance?
- Per Chief Juteau, WFD has tried in the past to bill insurance companies for costs related to motor vehicle accidents, with no success.
- Not part of Fire Departments’ mandate to be involved with traffic control related to MVAs, this should fall to Provincial Dept. of Transportation (TIR), and/or a contracted traffic safety company. There is a liability associated with the traffic control piece, should not fall to fire departments.
- It was suggested that Council explore reaching out to TIR, local MLA and Nova Scotia Federation of Municipalities (NSFM) for discussion of who should provide traffic control assistance when an MVA occurs?

Internal Municipal Fire Services

Dispatch, planning, training grounds, service awards and requirements for providing WCB and EAP all fall under this section. The 5.9% increase is mainly due to fire and rescue training.

Discussion Points

- The line item titled “Proposed Additions 2022/23” relates to principal and interest for the proposed capital that would be considered Municipal under the Capital budget (not associated with Hantsport).

Apparatus Schedule

Supervisor Thornton reviewed this schedule with support from the fire chiefs.

Discussion Points

- “Consolidated up to 2039”, refers to having a realistic requirements / replacement schedule in place for the next 20 years. Consensus, auto-aid, knowing what works in each area - all factor in.
- CAO Philips highlighted the level of cooperation between the Fire Chiefs and Supervisor Thornton. He commended all for their work surrounding auto-aid, apparatus and equipment unification, operational procedures and budget uniformity.
- Overall cost for Fire Services, including all debts, would be \$2.8 million.

Fire Capital (1:18:00)

Director Rochon opened this section with a pie chart representing the five-year Fire Services Capital. She then reviewed the current year capital spend and associated funding sources.

Discussion Points

- The existing roof on the Brooklyn Fire Department and Civic Centre has failed numerous times and has several leaks. An independent company, IRC, came and inspected the roof. They are recommending full roof replacement or a new roof over the existing roof (more economical). A fair bit has been spent through Operations to repair the roof. The roof is too tight in areas, pulling itself apart.
- The roof had a 10-year warranty that expired a couple of years ago. That type of roof is expected to last 15 – 20 years.
- Director Richard believes that the contractor was Lindsay's.
- Costs as follows; Option 1 (roof replacement) – \$477,150; Option 2 (not full replacement) - \$324,462. These are Class D projected estimates, would be tendered and come back to Council in a recommendation report.
- There is HST on those expenses that would need to be accounted for.
- Roof is EDPM, flat with rubber and rocks covering it.
- Per Supervisor Thornton, with regard to equipment and gear such as SCBA, we are working towards consistency across departments. Meeting with chiefs and CAO to break down everything for review and consolidation. It's a new process but unfolding quickly.
- After budget, Fires Services will be looking at collective, bulk purchasing. We did take advantage in the previous year when purchasing air bags.
- The Canadian Building Funding would not apply to equipment or tools. Only applicable to new stations, new infrastructure, new apparatus as part of an expansion.
- If there was debt servicing attributed in a previous fiscal period, the debt servicing would be put in a carryover reserve and reduce the amount of borrowing once the item is complete / received.
- The BFD 1 and 2 radios will better meet the needs of the BFD (as related to heat and water). The radios purchased last year were low-end, had a weak signal and not water or spark resistant. They were experiencing communications failure. Two radios were lost at a recent fire. They require a much more robust radio.
- The battery will work in new radios, better mic, can change that channel with channel display. Better operationally and as related to safety.
- No warrantee on radios purchased last year but they will be able to use them for backup, safety, traffic control.
- Two thermal imaging cameras have gone out of service due to "ghosting" – image does not display properly. Normally operate with four. Replacing 10+ year-old cameras.

8. Department of Public Works (1:42:30)

Director Rochon presented Public Works with support from Director Richard. The Department of Public Works includes Roads and Streets, Municipal Facilities, Waste (Landfill, Waste Diversion, Waste

Collection), and Sewer Utilities. Water Utilities are also managed by Public Works but are considered a separate entity from the Municipal budget and will be discussed separately.

Roads & Streets Administration

Director Rochon reviewed Revenue (General Rate) and General Expenses.

Discussion Points

- 32.1 full-time employees including water utility. Down 1.9 since consolidation. No anticipated additions. The .1 is a 10% allocation within our budget. With consolidations, we share a fleet and facilities position between Hantsport and Windsor Fire Departments and the 10% is some custodial and maintenance work they do at King Street.

Roads & Streets by Area Rate

Director Rochon advised that West Hants roads have decreased with the change in the administrative costs and the relocation of the Clover Lane Betterment Charge to General Administration. The Hantsport roads have proposed increases due to street maintenance. Windsor roads have decreased due to change in administrative costs. Due to the allocation of time spent, salaries have been adjusted.

Discussion Points

- Regarding snow and ice control, there are no plans to pull back from the winter service exchange with NS Dept. of Public Works – it is a win-win. The issue with Swinamer Drive in Three Mile Plains has been corrected.
- The only contracted snow removal services we are currently doing is at Brooklyn Station 1, as it is distance prohibitive for in-house removal.
- Doing all of the snow removal in-house is a cost savings for us. When we are doing snow removal, our charges are being allocated there. When snow stops, our staff are available elsewhere in the department.
- There is fleet replacement in the five-year capital budget.
- The line item for sidewalks in Hantsport was combined into snow removal budget.
- From year-to-year, salary and benefits are based on allocation of time. Allocating staff through all departments, real time projections with some previous experience taken into consideration. Allows Director Richard to be fair over all departments.
- Regarding the Administration Fee, we looked at any areas charged an admin fee, looked at where those were coming from, from tax rates not applicable.
- Within area rates, the Public Works cost distribution for West Hants has increased by 46% and Hantsport and Windsor are closer to eight or nine percent. This is dependent on the allocations as reviewed by Directors Rochon and Richard. Look at all these common costs and services (compound, equipment, fuel, materials such as gravel, cleaning supplies for facilities, etc.). Reallocations more accurate, based on usage and lane kilometers within each of the three areas.
- Regarding the breakdown of lane kilometers, Hantsport has 23% of the roads, Windsor has 60%, West Hants has 17%. A combination of mileage and time spent figures into allocations. Snow removal is tough to predict. Predict historically.

- The West Hants total cost is in that 225K range and Hantsport is at 215K. Mileage (distance travelled from the depot), and wear and tear are some of the factors that weigh in, based on estimates.
- The Winter service exchange was an even switch, kilometer for kilometer. Director Richard can circulate corresponding report.
- We put out a standard offer every year (mainly parking lots and Summerville Fire Hall) and hire two contractors. Some standing offers with local contractors on an “as needed” basis if heavier than normal winter.
- The new loaders will be quicker, more effective and efficient.
- There might be time to include the Sports Complex plowing if we could meet that service standard for Parks and Grounds. Plowing a parking lot is different than plowing a street (events, weekends, timing).
- Director Richard does not have a breakdown of roads maintained by West Hants and roads maintained by the province for our region. He can get this if required.
- We have contractors on stand-by for occasions where Public Works may get behind (snow removal, water main breaks, need for additional equipment / operators). Only required once last year. Available when needed at a predetermined price.
- For total snow and ice control numbers, reference p. 113. Add snow and ice control with snow equipment maintenance.
- No safety or work refusal issues arising from snow removal requirements. Credit where credit is due. PW staff worked very long hours but were nowhere close to running out of hours (from a safety standards perspective).

Waste Collection and Disposal (2:16:24)

Director Rochon reviewed Expenses. This is an area-rated cost.

Discussion Points

- There is a contract clause allowing for additional fuel surcharge if fuel goes above a certain price.
- The 20% increase for landfill tipping fees is projected based on past years (weight crossing the scales).
- The leachate we take is for a reduced tipping fee, still increased weight going across the scales.
- No concerns or issues with volume of leachate being accepted at Municipal lagoons.
- We are reviewing the leachate agreement as to benefits for the region. Do we increase our permit allowance. We continue to be diligent about capacity.
- Overtime on waste collection comes from the administrative portion. Nights or weekend work for staff allocated to waste.

Landfill (2:24:25)

Director Rochon reviewed revenue and expenses for the landfill. The Landfill is solely funded through a capital reserve, no impact on the general rate.

Discussion Points

- The \$20,000 site maintenance cost relates to the recommended removal of softwood trees on the capped portion of the old landfill. This not an annual expenditure – it is carryover from last year, as the professional arborist contracted for the removal was unavailable at that time. There is also a component for monitoring the gas levels while tree removal is happening.
- Transfer of funds from the reserve is based on what is spent.
- Concern expressed as to what will happen when the funds in the reserve run out (approx. 2 ½ years).
- We would look at the age of the asset and where things stand with retirement. Need to look at the cost for future years. Looking at previous years' budgets, roughly \$40,000-\$50,000 per year. Based on the original liability created for this account.
- The \$35,000 for water sampling is a yearly expenditure. We are required to do annual, expansive sampling at the site. A report is sent to NS Environment every year this abandoned landfill exists.
- The life of the landfill is out of our hands. Up to the NS Department of Environment. We can investigate to project when NS Environment would allow us to reduce or cease sampling.

Waste Diversion (2:36:34)

Director Rochon reviewed Revenue and Expenses for Waste Diversion. Funds received from Region 6 help offset the salary costs and lower impact on the general rate.

Discussion Points

- Waste Station funding was passed however no applications are being projected.

At 8:09 pm, there was a 20-minute break. The meeting resumed at 8:31 pm.

Municipal Facilities (2:41:25)

Director Rochon reviewed Revenue and Expenses for Municipal Facilities. Municipal offices are a general rated item.

Discussion Points

- Both buildings are showing an increase in maintenance costs.
- 76 Morison was pro-rated (lower) last year as there was an anticipated move to 100 King. With that decision deferred, 76 Morison is now budgeted for 100% of the year.
- Cleaning that used to be done in-house is now contracted out. Costs allocated under building maintenance.
- Some building maintenance being deferred (76 Morison generator) pending recommendation for one Municipal complex.
- 30% reduction in light and power due to 20 Main Street's removal from the budget.

- The insurance has more than doubled. This is based on actuals (not pro-rating 76 Morison), and a 19.5% increase in rates.
- Cleaning services were contracted out to maintain the service level, COVID concerns, more people in one building. One person could not manage. With contracted services, we split them over many areas including courthouse. As COVID concerns wane, services are being reduced.
- Safe Startup funds can only be used for cleaning services if they are directly related to COVID. Some specialized cleaning such as in the ducts might be eligible. Regular cleaning services may or may not be included.
- The reduction in leases for cell tower and Scotian Web are based on the agreements in place and last year's actuals.
- Within Public Works, mileage expenses and duty pay are treated the same as salary allocations.
- 100 King Street was built in 1968. 76 Morison was built in 1989.
- There is a big difference in operating 100 King to 76 Morison. 100 King contains a large server room, power, heating, other systems, along with a 24-7 fire operation.

Library (2:55:00)

Director Rochon reviewed Expenses for the Libraries, which are a general-rated item.

Courthouse (2:55:56)

Director Rochon reviewed Revenue and Expenses for the Courthouse. The courthouse is funded by the Department of Justice through a leasing agreement, paid monthly. No impact on the general rate.

Discussion Points

- The courthouse was built between 1948 and 1950.
- We do have an H-Vac contract to do preventative maintenance.
- We share capital upgrades with the province, 50/50.
- The CAO has had initial conversations with the province regarding them purchasing the courthouse. It is an outstanding item. The province does not have any intention of moving. We need to see how we might negotiate something moving forward.
- There are three or four rooves on top of each other. All indications are that the roof is sound, no expenditures necessary.

Food Bank Hantsport (3:01:42)

Director Rochon reviewed costs associated with this building.

Discussion Points

- Some costs will be reduced if/when the land is transferred to Municipal ownership. Based on the agreement right now we would pay property taxes.
- We own the building and collect a minimal rent from the Hantsport Food Bank.

West Hants Sewer Utility (3:04:18)

Director Rochon reviewed Revenue and Expenses for the West Hants Sewer Utility. A rate study is budgeted for this year (Advertising and Rate Costs are impacted).

Discussion Points

- Our budgeted depreciation, which in this year is based on the asset account and estimated at \$340,000, will be going into the depreciation account. This amount is reduced by the projected \$52, 522 deficit.
- The rate study is in the administration section (Professional Services and Advertising)
- Based on the combined sewer study cost from back in 2018, we are looking at an estimated \$14,000 between each sewer utility.
- Salary down 10%, employer share benefits up 25%, based on allocations of time and increase in mandatory benefit costs.
- Overtime has been broken out in the detail. Actuals may have been over budget, last year, do play into the cost.
- Vac truck rental falls under sewage collection systems, under pipe maintenance. \$20,000 (does vary, probably about half, maybe a little bit more). Some budgeted for preventative maintenance, some is reactive. An estimate – depends on breaks or blockages.
- The sewer treatment fee for TMP is not a new charge but has been broken out on a separate line this year. Expense for West Hants Sewer, revenue for Windsor Sewer.

Windsor Sewer Utility

Director Rochon reviewed Revenue and Expenses for Windsor Sewer Utility. Deficits are impacting this utility. A rate study has been budgeted. No contribution to reserves this year.

Discussion Points

- We have one related MFC debenture coming up for maturity / potential refinancing this year. There will be other, ongoing debts going forward.
- Windsor Sewer has been operating at a loss for the last two years.
- At a later date, Council could discuss using reserves to pay off early. The agreement is set up in such a way that there would be no benefit to early payout.

General Public Works Discussion Points (3:21:10)

- Road costs calculations have been based on a combination of items and equipment. Lane kilometers is one of the baselines, plus all of the other common services that need to be allocated across the board. A starting figure plus fixed costs.
- West Hants has 17% of the roads but pays almost 50% more in Public Works cost distribution. Based on the age and condition of the roads. Costs are allocated where work is happening. The distance travelled to do the work plays in. Extra preventative maintenance costs.
- Budgeted expenses for the two sewer utilities reflect where the history of the work has been done. Extensive amount of work on the West Hants sewer system, lift stations, replacements. Mileage and gas gets tagged to West Hants.
- Last year's actuals were used to project insurance this year.

- Budget to budget comparison, this year to last year, is based on previous practice (the last two years of presenting budgets). Our year is still in the process of closing when staff are completing budgets.
- With actuals, there could be things that cause fluctuations (additional grant monies, unbudgeted one-of costs).
- Director Rochon can't speak to previous councils. With former West Hants, actuals were provided, with the caveat that they were not final actuals and usually dated for very early in the year.
- Per Director Richard, the former Town of Windsor did have actuals but did not for the entire year, in time for budgets. The new region is missing the historical information that would give some trending actuals. With more years under our belts, we will have that historical information.

9. **Water Utilities**

No impact to general rate. Council-approved budgets are required per NSUARB.

West Hants Water Utility (3:35:50)

Director Rochon reviewed Revenue and Expenses for the West Hants Water Utility. A rate study has been budgeted under Administration.

Discussion Points

- Part of the rate study is under Admin, but not 100%. Other Professional Services such as engineering services are also required.
- The previous year was the implementation of the asset management program. The current year just shows the annual portion.
- The Admin Fee is made up of a percentage from Administration, Financial Services, Municipal Facilities and IT. All have an allocation attributed to the water utility.
- The depreciation amount gets contributed to the reserve less any deficit or plus any surplus.
- Both West Hants and Windsor Water Utilities pay an annual fee to the NSUARB. This year there are also fees associated with a rate study.
- The depreciation formula is based on the NSUARB handbook and standards they put forward. Different percentage for each of the different categories of asset.

Windsor Water Utility (3:46:30)

Director Rochon reviewed Revenue and Expenses for the Windsor Water Utility. Also a rate study budgeted – no rate change since April 1, 2017.

General Water Utility Discussion Points

- The rate study must be done and presented to Council for approval and go-ahead prior to a hearing being scheduled. We must also meet advertising and communications requirements. (The last rate study was presented to Council in November and the first hearing was held in March.)

10. Summary of Previous Day (3:50:01)

Director Rochon provided a summary of the last few days of budget meetings. Capital, Reserve and Operating (Department) budgets have been covered. There is some capacity within the Planning department if there is a need to support future development. Fleet information has been provided as requested. We can look at areas with specific questions. There is a need to discuss deed transfer tax and the risk associated. Current budgeted monthly amounts for the new region are considerably higher than historical, combined monthly amounts (District of West Hants and Town of Windsor). These amounts impact the Operating budget. Important for Council to ponder and address.

11. Discussion & Direction from Council (3:54:11)

- There is no cost to West Hants residents if Windsor’s commercial rate is reduced by five cents
- Actuals were requested. There is value in having actuals, references monthly reports to date. The monthly summary is very valuable. The monthly summary that Council received, the allocation within the expense side of things has shifted (in 8 of 11 categories).
- Council needs a higher level of confidence as to where the last two budgets have come in. Staff can provide the actuals vs budget for the past two years. We can go section by section and provide the accuracy.
- Every department comes in with expenses higher than they were last year. We pare it down. Goal is to maintain or improve service levels. Staff are confident in our recommendations to Council. we need to give Council that confidence. This is Council’s budget based on staff recommendations.

12. Next Meeting Date / Adjournment

The next budget meeting will be held Thursday, April 28 at 6pm.

**MOVED BY DEPUTY MAYOR MORTON AND COUNCILLOR FRANCIS THAT THE MEETING BE ADJOURNED.
MOTION CARRIED.**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:59pm.

X

Mayor Abraham Zebian

X

Deanna Snair, Municipal Clerk