

**Minutes of a Special Council Meeting, 2008 Preliminary Budget Review
held Friday, January 11th, 2008 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.,
Town Hall Council Chambers**

PRESENT:

Mayor Wayne Hurst
Deputy Mayor Robert Bailey
Councillor Rick Fryer
Councillor Robert (Bob) Pillon
Councillor John Sutton
Councillor Rosa White

ALSO PRESENT:

Frank Pizzuto, CAO
Kevin Atkinson, Water Superintendent
George Balango, Manager of Developmental Services
Carol Bendo, HR Specialist/Deputy Clerk
Paul Beneteau, Treasurer
Lory Bratt, Planning Coordinator
Dave Carpenter, Manager of IT Services
Tony DeThomasis, Roads Superintendent
Ron Dzombak, Manager of Recreation Services
Ivan Fregonese, Supervisor Budget Services
Corrie Gabriele, Public Works Office Manager
Dwayne Grondin, Public Works Inspector
Pamela Malott, Manager of Corp. & Legs. Services/Clerk
Randy Sinasac, Deputy Fire Chief
Lou Zarlenga, Public Works Manager

ABSENT WITH NOTICE

Councillor Paul Renaud
Steve Brown, Chief Building Official
Deputy Mayor Bailey joined meeting at 9:45

CALL TO ORDER: 9:10 a.m.

PRAYER:

The clerk said prayer.

DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY INTEREST

No disclosures made

PRESENTATIONS

CAO Pizzuto gave opening remarks using Power Point Presentation.

2008 Budget Overview – Significant Considerations

- 2008 Base Operating Budget
- 2008 Capital Budget Requests
- 2008 New Initiatives
- Fire Area Rating

Significant Challenges

- Customer Service, Increasing Demands
- Aging Infrastructure
- Aging Fleet
- Aging Facilities
- Aging Staff

- Technological Advances and Requirements
- Sluggish Economy and Limited New Assessment
- BMA Report
- Debt Load and Debt Capacity

Overview presented by Paul Beneteau, Treasurer and Ivan Fregonese, Budget Supervisor

Preliminary Operating Budgets (Presentations by Respective Department Heads)

Public Works Budget

Discussions, Clarification and Questions:

1. Clarification was given on the funding sources for Sanitary Sewers.
2. Clarification was given on Anderdon Area Fire Rating.
3. Council questioned the 'No Idling' policy in Public Works, is it being fully utilized? Response was that program needs to be expanded in 2008.
4. Alternate Weed Control- are we reducing pesticides and using alternatives? Response that we are using an IPM Integrated Pest Management System spraying only small weed affected areas. We have tried organic methods but found not effective.
5. The \$ 45,000 budgeted for Sidewalk Maintenance does this include Simcoe? Response was no, this is covered under the specific project.
6. Is weed spraying active in rural areas and can we be more proactive in 2008? Response that tender has been prepared and will go out soon. Expenses are split between rural and urban areas.
7. Line 131 Street Lighting, what does this entail? Response that this line is hydro consumption with nominal increase.
8. Windsor Transit budgeted line item of \$ 30,000 was not used in 2007. What happened to this amount? Response that it has been transferred to reserves to be used when needed and further discussed with County.
9. Traffic Control General Maintenance account no expense in 2007? Response that this amount is billed by County and we have not received billing.
10. Council requested Issue Paper(s) as to Salary Items for PWD.
11. Is Grass Cutting addressed in this budget? Response that Grass Cutting is addressed in Parks Budget.
12. Correction to line item 39 on page 24 to be made.

Environmental Budget

13. Tires in ditches and illegal dumping, what can be done to address? Response that this area is impossible to Police. In 2007 approximately 1200 tires were collected from ditches, which is significantly less than three years ago.
14. Reforestation line 107, are we purchasing larger stock trees from ERCA? Response that we are utilizing ERCA Program.
15. Illumination of intersections, what was done in 2007? Response that Mcleod & Third Concession; and three intersections on Cty Road 10 (Middle Sideroad) were done. Mayor Hurst suggested focus necessary on Simcoe in 2008.

16. Winter Control line, is this salt and calcium only? Response yes, labour and equipment costs are contained in other areas.
17. Are we utilizing 'off shifts' as allowed by new Union Contract. Response that we have not yet utilized but will be looking at this in 2008. Mayor Hurst confirmed we worked hard to achieve this in negotiations.
18. Is signalization being pursued at Simcoe and Fryer? Response that evaluation has determined this is not necessary and Crossing Guards may be increased. Mayor Hurst commented that a joint effort is necessary with School Board, as signalization will avoid future problems in this area.

Parks and Recreation Maintenance Budget

19. Grass Cutting, we bought equipment last year, why are we still paying contractor? Response that new equipment does not address smaller areas. Capital Budget does address need for new equipment to enable Town staff to perform work that is currently contracted.
20. Are we tendering grass cutting? Response that contract was on per cut basis and we pay according to cuts made. Report on Monday night agenda concerning options available.
21. Where is new sprinkler for Wigle Park Ball Diamonds covered? Response that this amount is covered in general maintenance for Wigle Park.
22. Is the Norris contract coming up soon? Response that a report is on Monday night agenda which presents options.
23. Have we pursued an afternoon shift for grass cutting? Response is that we will utilize in 2008.
24. Kingsbridge Park Maintenance is allocated \$ 1,500 yet we have no park? Response that we were supposed to take land in 2007 but due to economic downturn and slow sales, the Developer had crops in the land in 2007. This Park development should be pursued. Comments were made that sidewalk needs to be installed on Texas Road to accommodate this Park.

Wastewater Budget

25. What is Housekeeping Transfers for Sanitary Sewers? Response that we are allowed to allocate all reasonable costs related to labour, equipment, building maintenance and equipment. We operate from a 'pool' of resources for all Public Services, and this amount indicates the dollar amount identified as actual cost incurred to this area.

Water Budget

26. Clarification that all Water and Wastewater costs must be recovered thru rates.
27. Are Smart Meters being used? Response that Town is ahead of other Municipalities in this area. Town has been replacing 450 meters a year since 2001.
28. Council questioned the 'Lead Testing' results on the required 25 houses. Response that all tested lower than average across the Province. However, Province has mandated 60 additional homes be tested in 2008. This is time consuming and \$ 40,000 has been budgeted for this expense. Council questioned why Province is not providing funding this and a suggestion was made that Administration would prepare a resolution regarding same for Council consideration.

Moved by: R. White
Seconded By: J. Sutton

That Council recess for 5 minutes and then resume In-Camera to deal with two items of 'Land Acquisition/Disposition' and one item concerning 'Labour Relations/Personnel'.

Motion Carried

Recess

Moved by R. White
Seconded by: R. Pillon

That Council move In-Camera.

Motion Carried

Moved by: R. White
Seconded by: R. Fryer

That Council move out of In-Camera session and recess for lunch for twenty minutes.

Motion Carried

Moved by: Deputy Mayor Bailey
Seconded by: R. Fryer

That Council resume in regular session at 1:10 p.m.

Motion Carried

Recreation Budget

29. Clarification given that telephone charges were a result of area being used as a staff office.

30. Clarification given that Pavilion rental is \$ 75.00 per side.

31. Are we competing with the private sector in the operation of a Summer Camp? Response that Town filled a need in the community by operation of the camp. How does Amherstburg compare with other Summer Programs offered by Municipalities? Response that we compare with Lakeshore who had 45 kids in their program. Amherstburg does well comparatively.

32. Why is Canteen Operation in budget when we have tendered the operation of same? Response that the tender closes January 15th. However, we are uncertain at this time as to the future of the Canteen operation.

33. Building Maintenance items line 26/26, if these items were anticipated, would they be capital budget items and do we have a cushion for same in 2008? Response that the Capital Budget addresses critical areas in 2008.

Ranta Marina Budget

34. Clarification that Council has the opportunity to address the operation of the Marina again in 2008. Every year the debt will increase even when the operation of the Marina is with the Boater's Association. In 2008 the debt will increase by \$ 25,000.00. Council must make decisions about the funding of the Ranta Marina debt at some point in future.

35. Why were there benefit expenses in the 2007 year? Response that there was partial allocation of the salary of the Manager of Recreation Services.

IT/GIS Budget

36. Clarification that Council will be asked to consider on Monday salary issues as new initiatives. Improvement in the service levels in IT/GIS will give added value to the Municipality over time.
37. Is going WiFi feasible? Response that to go wireless the cost and resources are an issue.
38. The Website is only budgeted \$ 3,500.00? Response that additional costs associated with the website are to be addressed as 'new initiatives' in budget session on Monday.
39. Is Nick Renaud still employed as student? Response that Nick Renaud is a part-time student.
40. Clarification that GIS has had a part-time student since 2005.
41. Clarification that data development is a critical function currently performed by student and would take all of the time of the GIS Analyst if student not employed.
42. Could part-time IT and part-time GIS be combined into one position? Response that the skill set is completely different for these positions.
43. For cost savings could the persons be trained? Response that the time and cost involved for training would outweigh any benefit.

Development Services Budget

44. Weed Cutting on private property, is this recoverable? Response that all Weed Cutting performed on private property is recoverable. This service will be contracted in 2008.
45. Building Department Surplus, are we limited in what we can do with these funds? Response that these funds cannot be used in other areas. Bill 124 mandates that all Building Department operations be cost neutral and any surplus/deficit must accumulate in a separate account to be attributed to Building Department operation only.

Council Budget

46. Clarification of minimal increase over 2007 budget related to legal, salary and Council Reception costs.
47. Staff Christmas Party should rotate to other venues. This should be arranged early in 2008 and decoration of hall should be the responsibility of the hall operator.

Clerk's Department Budget

48. Clarification of minimal increase over 2007 budget.
49. Clarification of 2007 expenses related to retirement of Clerk, additional part-time staff necessary to accommodate changes in all clerical staff in the department in 2007.

Committees Budget

- 50. Car Show not held in 2007, should this be budgeted again in 2008? Response that Council will deal with grants to Municipal Events and Entertainment on Monday.
- 51. Clarification that Committee Meeting Expenses line item allocation of \$ 10,00.00 includes additional clerical support and small grant requests received throughout the year. Heritage and Urban Design required meeting expenses and Accessibility Committee training expenses would also come out of this account.
- 52. Correction, need to add line item numbers to tab 5 page 10

Treasury, Administration, and Global Expenses Budgets

- 53. Clarification that Insurance will be adjusted in final budget.
- 54. Clarification that temporary staff expense no longer required in 2008.

Crossing Guard Budget

- 55. Clarification concerning clothing expenses. Police will be responsible for these budget lines.
- 56. Questions as to Municipal responsibility for Crossing Guards. Response that School Board will not fund Crossing Guards.

Library Budget

- 57. Administration will do analysis on Building Maintenance Expenses, specifically the elevator expenses and the capacity of same.

Special Events Budget

- 58. Clarification on War of 1812 workgroup.
- 59. Councillor White supports Special Events Coordinator being involved in County Wide Tourism initiative.
- 60. Line item 62 rents for Gordon House, clarification that this is from Shores of Erie and Chamber. HMS Detroit was also invoiced.
- 61. Clarification that the initial budget for Special Events was \$ 20,000.00. Town applied for and received a RED grant for \$ 45,000. This was allocated \$ 25,000.00 for Special Events and \$ 20,000.00 for Economic Development. Budgeting \$ 33,000.00 for Special Events for 2008 and other amounts under new initiatives.
- 62. Advertising for Special Events in 2007 was budgeted \$ 1,500.00 but we spent \$ 5,000.00? Should we not be budgeting more in 2008? Response that additional was spent due to RED Grant. Additional advertising is listed as a 'new initiative' item to be discussed Monday.

Fire Budget

- 63. Clarification that line 9 increase in Volunteer wages is based on call volume.
- 64. Clarification that there is an increase in Insurance costs.
- 65. Clarification that there is an increase in Public Education line 32 due to more participation in the Rotary Safety Village.
- 66. Clarification that line 26 addresses new uniforms for 3 newer Volunteers.

67. Council requested a report showing call volumes by Station.

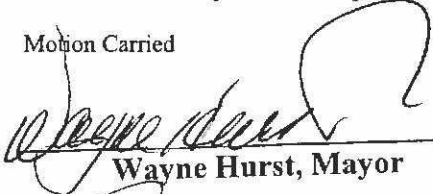
Mayor Hurst thanked all those in attendance and noted the exercise as being very productive and worthwhile.

ADJOURNMENT

Moved by: J. Sutton
Seconded by: R. White

That we rise and adjourn at 4:10 p.m.

Motion Carried



Wayne Hurst, Mayor



Pamela Malott, Clerk