

Audit Committee Meeting
Monday May 14th, 2018
9:30am
Council Chambers

Council: Warden Betty Ann MacQuarrie
Deputy Warden Alfred Poirier
Councillor Laurie Cranton
Councillor John MacLennan

Regrets: Councillor Jim Mustard
Councillor John Dowling

Staff: Keith MacDonald, CAO
Tanya Tibbo, Director of Finance
Garett Beaton, Director Public Works
Donna MacDonald, Director Recreation/Tourism
Ellen Murphy, Administrative Assistant

Warden MacQuarrie called the meeting to order at 9:41am

BUDGET PROCESS TO DATE – There has been two meetings to date that focused on community grant applications and the operational budget. Capital requirements are not the key area of focus for this audit committee meeting. Tanya will run through some items line by line with council for a better understanding of the expenditures of the municipal budget. Capital list has to be prioritized by council. The hope is to have the budget approved by May, but it may have to be pushed back to June. Next year there will be more community involvement with public meetings to gain feedback from residents.

OUTSTANDING BUDGET REQUESTS –

- Pitu'paq will not be funded in this year's fiscal budget.
- CEPI will receive \$2500 in funding.
- Perhaps a tour Conseil des Arts Cheticamp could be arranged to review the impact of the municipal contribution.
- Board governance for volunteer organizations will take place on May 11 and \$7000 will be set aside in the budget for this initiative.
- A contingency of \$20,000 for community grants that come about through this fiscal year is recommended. Grants to arenas is recommended to be approved and the process be reviewed by next fiscal.
- Erras Housing project is asking for \$20000 per year for the next five years to leverage other funding to move the project forward. More information is required at this time before a decision will be made. Council will meet with Conrad Taves, Housing Coordinator as well as Stanley Beaton of Erras Housing to gather more information
- Cheticamp Boardwalk request for funding on the engineering costs will not be funded at this time.
- Strait Area Ground Search and Rescue requested \$5000 but a recommendation will be to contribute \$2500 at this time.

- Cape Mabou Pasture will be having an annual general meeting on Monday April 30 and a new board will be elected so this will be looked at during the next budget meeting.
- Raising the Villages is asking \$6500 so the recommendation is to contribute that amount. Meeting expenses will be taken from district discretionary funds through development of a policy on such.
- Internet/Cell will be discussed during capital budget.
- Accessibility funding is available through the federal government with a minimum of \$350,000 up to \$1,000,000 available with 35% as in kind from organizations. Deadline for applications is May 24. This could be used in various communities throughout the county. The accessibility committee will meet to discuss and submit an application. There is also a training session coming up through the provincial government developed by the Rick Hanson Association on all aspects of accessibility. It will be a week long course with an exam for certification.
- Port Hood Library is asking for funding to help with operational cost so the recommendation is to grant \$3500 and perhaps looking at locating into another space in the community.
- Veterans of Port Hawkesbury are requesting \$4700 in total from all municipal units so it is recommended that \$1200 be granted.
- Inverness Beach Accessibility has been recommended to be approved in the amount \$10,000 from District 3 Community Development & \$10,000 from regional development funds.
- Coady Tompkins Library is requesting a \$3000 increase to assist with operations budget.
- All of these grants will be approved in the municipal budget when it is passed.

Lunch at 12:34pm

Resumed meeting at 12:58pm

OVERVIEW OF DETAILED BUDGET – Revenue is up about \$200,000 because of residential and commercial assessments that have increased. Education, housing and corrections come right off the top of the revenue. Other sources of revenue include business assessments, grants in lieu, area rates, deed transfer tax, wind turbine tax, grant in lieu taxes, services provided, sale of services, active living and other revenue from our own sources. Total revenue for 2018/19 fiscal is \$11,098,804 compared to the actual budget of \$11,722,234 for 2017/18. Councillor Mustard asked if there could be a comparison of other municipal units across the province for deed transfer rates. Expenditures include general government services, administration, financial management, taxation, valuation allowances, buildings, protective services, water supply and hydrants, EMO, other protective services, transportation services, roads and streets, street lighting, air transport, environmental health services, regional planning, tourism, recreation & cultural services, recreation programs, libraries, special events and literacy programs, extraordinary or special which is a grand total of \$11,087,419.

The operating surplus is \$11,385 and then the debenture long term principal installment is (\$180,000) for a total deficit of (\$168,600). This is a **DRAFT** budget.

Staff is not recommending any increase to the tax rate for this fiscal year.

Councillor Cranton asked if our bylaws could be registered so they can be enforced by RCMP.

CAPITAL REVIEW AND PRIORATIZATION- Asset management is very important. An analysis of our water and wastewater treatment plants needs to be done and an application for funding through Provincial Capital Assistance is being submitted today.

There are funds set aside for: connectivity for internet/wireless communication, renovations to the municipal building as well as community services building, the municipal public works building in Strathlorne ventilation system, a gate and fencing, the production line in the recycling facility, transfer station in Kenloch and other areas of the premises, a new administration building at the airport in Margaree, Port Hood Wharf decommissioning and repairs for the Port Hood Island Wharf, new vehicles including garbage and recycling collection, various wastewater treatment facilities needing replacement and/or upgrading, new equipment such as a propane skidsteer in the recycling facility, a dump trailer for garbage collection, a trailer for the camera system, a vacuum trailer and running gear for an excavator.

Inverness water source is still being worked on until another supply can be found, portable generators are being priced with the intent to purchase two at present, extension of water lines as well as replacement of lines in Inverness are needed.

Water meter installation throughout the County is needed, maintenance and replacement of valves in the community of Inverness is required.

Three crosswalks in Inverness and one in Mabou have been approved.

A road to the ballfield in Inverness behind the school is being discussed.

Council was asked to prioritize this list of capital items as presented and return to staff as soon as possible.

There will another meeting to finalize the budget and another day to have a launch of the 2018/19 budget.

Consensus was to adjourn at 3:07pm