

TOWN OF ANNAPOLIS ROYAL
1 COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
SPECIAL MEETING
MINUTES
April 26, 2010
1:30 p.m.

A special meeting of the Committee of the Whole was held on Monday, April 26, 2010 in Council Chambers at Town Hall. In attendance were Chair Mayor Phil Roberts, Deputy Mayor Doug Shaffner, Councillors Kathie Fearon, Sherman Hudson, Holger Mueller-Sparenberg and Pat Power, CAO Amery Boyer, Director of Finance Melony Robinson and Executive Assistant Jackie Longmire as recording secretary. Several members of the public were also in attendance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

April 26, 2010

Motion #2

It was moved by Councillor Power, seconded by Councillor Fearon, that the agenda dated April 26, 2010 be approved as presented. Motion carried.

BUSINESS ARISING

Item	Decision / Action	Responsibility	Target Date
1. Town Operating Budget	<p>Council has reviewed the budget several times and many changes have been made as a result of Council's suggestions. The Director of Finance said that the current budget allows for \$145,000.00 to be moved to capital reserves. The portion for capital reserves could be reduced to allow for other expenses in the budget.</p> <p>Val Peterson questioned the engineering and legal expenses in the general administration budget. Other municipal units appear to have engineering and legal expenses worked into each capital project with</p>		

	<p>general administration legal fees totalling \$1,000.00 - \$5,000.00. The general fees in the Annapolis Royal budget are approximately \$25,000.00 each for engineering and legal. Mayor Roberts agreed that the expenses seemed high and contributed to the poor rating received from the AIMS report. It is possible that legal and engineering could go to tender for better rates. The \$25,000.00 that appears in the budget for legal and engineering is based on historical trends.</p> <p>It was noted that the Town is currently identifying what land it owns and there are legal fees associated with the process. The Town will sell several parcels of Town-owned land and the offsetting revenue from the sale should appear in the budget in the opinion of one person in attendance.</p>		
2. Capital budget	The tender for the new sprinkler system at King's Theatre has been awarded; the system will be installed this year. All other items within the capital budget will continue to be reviewed.		
3. Water utility budget	A copy of the water utility budget was provided but not discussed.		

Budget Items carried forward from previous COW and Council meetings

Item	Decision / Action	Responsibility	Target Date
1. Concern – re: Board of Trade Membership	A letter was received from Caroline Bosley regarding the Town not renewing its membership in the Board of Trade. Mayor Roberts said that the Town had the VIC phone transferred to the Town Hall for the off-season and has covered the \$600.00 expense. It was suggested that the Town request an honorary membership considering the phone expense. It was noted that the Town would continue with the BOT membership in future years.	CAO	

2. Recreation – Facility Maintenance budget	The Annapolis Royal soccer field is in terrible condition and the drainage is poor. Recreation Director Grant Potter requested an additional \$3,000.00 in the facility maintenance budget to do upgrades to the field. There has always been a need for regular maintenance on the field but it has never been budgeted for; the work that has been done on the field over the past few years has been done by the Soccer Association and volunteers. The Soccer Association and the volunteers will continue to coordinate the effort to get the work done with equipment from local farmers and businesses.	CAO	
3. Historic Gardens	An amount of \$7,500.00 has been added to the budget for the Historic Gardens annual operating grant. An application for a non-profit organization property tax reduction has also been received.		
4. Tree Care – Angelika Waldow	An amount of \$2,409.00 has been approved for the Dutch Trig vaccinations; there is an additional \$8,500.00 in the budget for tree care that has not been approved. Angelika Waldow has brought in a grant of \$15,000.00 through the Green Streets program and the tree care expense will be increased to match the revenue that is being received through the grant. This amount does not include tree removals but does include the planting of new trees.		
5. Holding Pond	The Town has been exploring the possibility of establishing a holding pond for the Fire Department. An engineer's report is required for the actual cost. This item was reviewed and approved by the previous Council.		
6. New Police car	There is currently \$17,500.00 in the vehicle and equipment reserve. A request to have \$10,000.00 moved to the reserve funds has been made through the police budget. The reserve funds covers equipment and vehicles for all departments. It may be possible to reduce the amount to \$5,000.00.		
7. Funding request from ARDMA (\$50,000.00)	Council has been considering this request for some time and concerns were expressed over how the funds were to be spent, the number of marketing/tourism groups in the area and plans that have already been developed. Council also mentioned the 300 th committee which is a		

	<p>group of volunteers who have been marketing the Town through the 300th anniversary events. Paul Stackhouse said that there were two opportunities for Council to see what ARDMA has planned for marketing the Town and what the group has already accomplished; Councillor Mueller-Sparenberg was the only member of Council who attended either event. It was noted that ARDMA members are also volunteers. An error in previous Council minutes that said the majority of the funds requested would be to pay a marketing consultant has since been corrected. \$5,000.00 of the requested funds would go towards implementing a marketing plan. The group has been criticized for not implementing the recommendations of plans but Mr. Stackhouse said the group needs professional support. Mr. Stackhouse said that Council is giving the impression that tourism and marketing are not important to the Town. He said that it is not the responsibility of ADEDA to market Annapolis Royal and Destination South West Nova is going through a re-organization process. He said the groups can still work in partnership but Annapolis Royal must shape its own destiny. Mr. Stackhouse predicted that without tourism or marketing that there would be no Town within 10 years' time. Mayor Roberts said that it is not correct that Council has no interest in tourism; Council must ensure that the funds available for tourism/marketing are spent in the most effective way. He said that there has been no correlation between the amount of money spent and the number of visitors over the past few years. The response to that statement has been that the funds were not spent wisely. Mayor Roberts said that the Town would need to hire a professional to ensure that the funds were spent wisely but there is no money in the budget to hire a professional marketer. Several members of the public who were in attendance agreed that the Town should support the marketing initiatives of ARDMA.</p> <p>The ARDMA budget was drafted by taking the previous marketing budget and reducing it by approximately 10%. Several references have been made to the marketing success of Upper Clements Park; it was noted that the marketing budget for Upper Clements Park would</p>		
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	<p>be in excess of \$150,000.00. The Town must change its “product” to attract tourists. If the product is not right, no amount of advertising will work. It was suggested that Council trust that ARDMA has the concept to have an impact on marketing and tourism in the Town.</p> <p>The operating grant that is approved for Historic Gardens each year was discussed. It was noted that Council is quick to support the Gardens which is a business that relies on tourism. If the funds granted to the Gardens were used to market and promote, the Gardens would not be in need of operating funds. The Gardens has implemented new and innovative events and programs but there is no promotion of the events. There are many visitors who come to the area especially for the Gardens but there are others who don’t even know where Annapolis Royal is.</p> <p>The jewel-like nature of Annapolis Royal must be promoted. Parks Canada could be doing different things to promote unique events. All groups, business and organizations have to work towards a more viable community.</p> <p>Mayor Roberts suggested that ARDMA prepare a revised proposal and budget to present at the Committee of the Whole meeting on May 5, 2010.</p>		
8. Police Department basement renovations	<p>The Annapolis Royal Police Department has a force of 4 members which is .5 of a member more than is required. The Department receives \$100,000.00 in annual funding from the Department of Justice through the Boots to the Streets Program. The Department has certain requirements where space is concerned and feels that the present space does not meet the requirements. The Foodbank has found a new location and will begin moving on May 21, 2010. A revised quote from Larry Fairn has been received with a total estimate of \$20,003.77 for renovations. Two other quotes have been requested but not received to date. The Department was offered the existing office of the CAO but it was deemed to be an unacceptable space.</p>		

	There is office space at the Court House and that option will also be explored. Council will continue to consider the renovation proposal.		
9. Public Works building stabilization	<p>The Public Works building has been deemed unsafe through a recent fire and building inspection; there have been issues with asbestos and the main support beams of the building. The Engineer has suggested that the building be stabilized immediately with tie-rods. The Superintendent of Public Works has said that this is an unnecessary expense if the Town is planning to erect a new building in the near future. An estimate for a new public works building is \$194,000.00 with plumbing and electrical not included. The cost of a temporary work trailer has not been explored or considered. It has been previously suggested that the proposed public works building go to tender with no commitment to build. This process would provide a better estimate for the actual costs.</p> <p>It was suggested that the Town consider merging public works responsibilities like snow-plowing with the County. CAO Boyer said that the Town currently has 11 municipal agreements for shared services and there are talks of further partnering. The sewage treatment plant and water treatment facility are state-of-the-art and would have to be properly maintained.</p> <p>Mayor Roberts said that all options are being considered and that residents are happy with the services received through Public Works. Council will continue to consider funding for the new Public Works building.</p>		
10. New Kubota (sidewalk plow) for the Public Works Department	The Superintendent had presented a request for funding for a new sidewalk plow. Several suggestions such as property owners being responsible for plowing snow in front of their property, merging with the County and sub-contracting services were put forth to eliminate the need for the additional plow. The Public Works Department will be asked to explore sub-contracting costs for snow plowing.		
11. Security Cameras	An estimate has been requested from Maritect for the replacement of one security camera. A response has not been received to date.		

12. 300 th Anniversary – Expense and revenue figures	CAO Boyer provided an expense/revenue report for the last two fiscal years. The Town has contributed only \$677.00 to the 300 th Committee. Staff time is calculated as in-kind contributions.		
13. Green Streets – expense and revenue figures	A copy of the budget was provided.		
14. Interpretive panels	The funding for the interpretive panels for the French Basin Trail was received in 2009. The panels are being designed and paid for in 2010.		
15. ARVFD – New Fire Truck Capital Payment	The Town will pay \$20,000.00 per year for the new Fire Truck. This amount covers semi-annual interest and principle payments. The old fire truck will be sold and the proceeds will be applied directly towards to the principal amount owing.		
16. Website Updates	Troy Woodland has provided a list of suggested updates to the Town website with an estimated cost of \$2,850.00. This amount is currently not in the budget. It was noted that the site may be difficult to navigate and it could be made more user friendly. Council will continue to consider this expense.		

GENERAL DISCUSSION

It was mentioned that the draft budget dated March 12, 2010 provided different scenarios for tax increases and the latest draft shows only two options. The proposed increases of 5, 10 or 15 cents have been abandoned. The business community indicated that they could handle a 10 cent increase if the extra revenue was put into marketing efforts. There was a discussion over the high assessment in Annapolis Royal and what businesses are currently paying for taxes. Properties in Annapolis Royal are the highest assessed in Nova Scotia and the only way to change the assessed value of a property is to go through the appeal process.

The Director of Finance was asked to draft a budget with commercial rates of \$3.20 and \$3.25 and a reduction in the amount for capital reserves.

NEXT MEETING

May 5, 2010 at 9:00 a.m.

ADJOURNMENT

It was moved by Deputy Mayor Shaffner that the Committee of the Whole meeting be adjourned.

<i>1Action:</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Signature</i>
Reviewed by Mayor Roberts		
Changes made by Administrative Assistant Jackie Longmire		
Approved for website by CAO		
Sent to webmaster		