

Minutes

Committee of the Whole

December 15, 2023

Call to Order

Grey County Council met on the above date at the County Administration Building. Warden Milne assumed the Chair and called the meeting to order at 10:01 a.m. with all members present.

O Canada

The members of Council were invited to stand for O Canada.

Land Acknowledgement

The Warden read the land acknowledgement.

Roll Call

The Clerk called the Roll with all members present. Councillors Paterson, Matrosovs, and Bordignon participated electronically.

Kim Wingrove, Chief Administrative Officer; Tara Warder, Clerk; and Sarah Goldrup, Deputy Clerk were also in attendance.

The following staff members were also participating:

Randy Scherzer, Deputy CAO; Anne Marie Shaw, Director of Community Services; Jennifer Cornell, Director of Long-Term Care; Kevin McNab, Director of Paramedic Services; Mary Lou Spicer, Director of Finance; Pat Hoy, Director of Transportation; Savanna Myers, Director of Economic Development, Tourism & Culture; Jennifer Moreau, Director of Human Resources; Scott Taylor, Director of Planning; Jody MacEachern, Director of Information Technology; and Robert Hatten, Manager of Communications.

Declaration of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

Closed Meeting Matters (If Required)

CW198-23

Moved by: Councillor Eccles

Seconded by: Councillor Nielsen

That Committee of the Whole does now go into closed session pursuant to Section 239 (2) of the Municipal Act, 2001, as amended, to discuss:

- i. Labour relations or employee negotiations.**
- ii. Personal matters about an identifiable individual, including municipal or local board employees.**
- iii. Information explicitly supplied in confidence to the municipality by Canada, a province or territory or a Crown agency of any of them**

Carried

Council proceeded into closed session at 10:05 a.m.

Council returned to open session at 11:04 a.m.

The Warden confirmed that only the items stated in the resolution to move into closed session were discussed.

Items For Direction and Discussion

2024 Budget Overview and Department Presentations

Budget Details

Mary Lou Spicer provided a recap of budget discussions thus far,. She noted that MPAC has since provided costing and it is approximately \$40,000 higher than what is noted in the draft budget. With the previously identified reductions, the proposed 2024 budget has a net levy impact of \$4,903,195 or a 7.03% increase after growth.

The meeting recessed and reconvened at 11:15 a.m.

Planning and Community Development

Scott Taylor presented to the Committee regarding the Planning and Community Development portion of the proposed 2024 budget. The Director provided an overview of the department and its functions. The Director highlighted added costs from new Planning Ecologist positions, legal expenses, equipment purchases, strategic plan implementation, the development of the new Archeological Master Plan, and anticipated revenue increases from development applications.

In response to questions from the Committee, Scott Taylor discussed the implications of recent legislation on planning appeals, the scope of the new Archeological Master Plan to identify landscape features and to consolidate archaeological work previously

conducted by developers across the County, work planning, and increased departmental wages.

Scott Taylor reviewed the agriculture budget and described grant payments for harvesting nuisance beavers and coyotes. Further, the Director reported on the Forestry and Trails budget and spoke about the buckthorn project, projected forest revenues, and capital works for the CP Rail Trail.

In response to questions, Scott Taylor explained using reserve funds, professional and consulting fees, costs for contracted snow removal of County-owned parking lots to facilitate access to the CP Rail Trail and County forests, and the use of the Durham parking lot and investigation of the potential future use for a portion of the site to be used as surplus lands to address affordable housing needs. Further, the Director noted that staff would explore funding contributions from the benefitting clubs.

The meeting recessed and reconvened at 1:00 p.m.

CW199-23

Moved by: Councillor Greig

Seconded by: Councillor McQueen

That the funding for the annual Forest Festival, beaver grants, and coyote grants be reduced by \$5,000 each in the 2024 budget.

Carried

Councillor Eccles requested a recorded vote.

In Favour: McQueen 6, Nielsen 5, Keaveney 5, Boddy 8, Greig 8, Bordignon 7, Eccles 6, Hutchinson 6

Opposed: Mackey 4, McKay 3, Carleton 6, Pringle 5, Paterson 4, Dickert 3, Kentner 6, Milne 4, Dobreen 3, Matrosovs 7

The motion was Carried (51-45).

CW200-23

Moved by: Councillor Greig

Seconded by: Councillor McKay

That the funding for contracted snow removal for the Markdale and Kolapore parking lots be set at \$20,000 in the 2024 budget.

Carried

Economic Development, Tourism and Culture

Savanna Myers presented to the Committee regarding the proposed 2024 budget for Economic Development, Tourism and Culture (EDTC). The Director spoke about the general operating budget, which had been prepared using priorities identified through the EDTC Master Plan. The Director reviewed the operational budgets for the Local Immigration Partnership, highlighting the program's federal funding provided in

collaboration with Bruce County, and the Sydenham Campus, noting entrepreneurial services offered and the skills training and innovative partnerships developed. The Director reported on the tenant revenues for Sydenham Campus, the opening of the maker's space in 2024, and hydro and maintenance costs. Further, the Director reviewed the operating budgets for the Business Enterprise Centre, raising the risk of unconfirmed provincial funding, and Grey Roots, with priorities for 20th-anniversary programming and repositioning as a regional tourism information hub. Further, the Director spoke about the EDTC capital expenses, anticipated cost mitigation measures, and the status of reserve funds.

Grey Transit

Mary Lou Spicer presented to the Committee regarding the proposed 2024 budget for Grey Transit. The Director discussed the provincial funding, the levy contribution, and the requirements of the agreement with DriveSafe. In response to questions from the Committee, Stephanie Stewart confirmed that no funding contributions are received from Dufferin County and that the weekend service between Dundalk, Shelburne and Orangeville has been suspended due to feasibility. She added that there is a stop in Shelburne, Monday to Friday. Staff shared that there was ongoing advocacy to the province regarding regional transit needs and the challenge of provincially capped transit fares. Stephanie Stewart spoke about discussions with colleagues at the Ministry of Transportation and Southwest Community Transit to explore alternative transit options and the need to investigate alternative and flexible transit solutions. Further, Stephanie Stewart described ridership demographics. Kim Wingrove raised that the MTO is developing a new strategy that is anticipated to provide for transit in rural and underserved areas. The Committee heard discussion about the program's impact to the levy and the benefits to those utilizing the service to access employment, education, or healthcare services.

The meeting recessed and reconvened at 2:57 p.m.

CW201-23

Moved by: Councillor Boddy

Seconded by: Councillor Carleton

That staff be directed to prepare a report in quarter one of 2024 that reviews options for Grey Transit fees and route rationalization.

Lost

CW202-23

Moved by: Councillor Eccles

Seconded by: Councillor Nielsen

That staff be directed to include a \$10 County-fare portion to Grey Transit Services in the 2024 budget.

Lost

Moved by: Councillor Greig
Seconded by: Councillor Mackey

That staff be directed to meet a reduction of \$438,000 from Grey Transit in the 2024 budget; and

That staff investigate other cost-savings or revenue-generating opportunities for Grey Transit including fare increases.

Amendment:

CW203-23

Moved by: Councillor Dobreen
Seconded by: Councillor Nielsen

That the question be divided to consider clauses one and two separately.

Carried

Amendment:

CW204-23

Moved by: Councillor Greig
Seconded by: Councillor Mackey

That staff be directed to meet a reduction of \$438,000 from Grey Transit in the 2024 budget.

Carried

Councillor Greig requested a recorded vote.

In Favour: Mackey 4, McKay 3, Pringle 5, McQueen 6, Paterson 4, Dickert 3, Kentner 6, Keaveney 5, Greig 8, Eccles 6, Bordignon 7

Opposed: Carleton 6, Nielsen 5, Boddy 8, Milne 4, Dobreen 3, Matrosovs 7,

Absent: Hutchinson 6

The motion was Carried (57-33).

Amendment:

CW205-23

Moved by: Councillor Carleton
Seconded by: Councillor Nielsen

That staff investigate other cost-savings or revenue-generating opportunities for Grey Transit including fare increases.

Carried

Corporate Services

Mary Lou Spicer presented the proposed 2024 budget for Corporate Services to the Committee. The Director reviewed compensation to County Council and reported on the administration budgets. Further, the Director spoke about considerations for operating and capital budgets, taxation and grants, Grey Bruce Health Unit, healthcare initiatives funding, and the Marine Emergencies Duties Training Centre at Georgian College.

In response to questions, staff discussed renovations in the Finance area, human resources information system software, and the development of citizen reporting and engagement software.

Moved by: Councillor Dobreen
Seconded by: Councillor Carleton

That the Warden's Banquet be removed from the 2024 budget.

Amendment:

CW206-23

Moved by: Councillor McQueen
Seconded by: Councillor McKay

That the motion be amended to add a clause that staff investigate additional opportunities to fund the Warden's Banquet by raised funds.

Carried

Amendment:

CW207-23

Moved by: Councillor Dobreen
Seconded by: Councillor Carleton

**That the Warden's Banquet be removed from the 2024 budget;
and**

**That staff investigate additional opportunities to fund the
Warden's Banquet by raised funds.**

Carried

Moved by: Councillor Greig
Seconded by: Councillor Carleton

**That the 2024 budget be amended to reduce conferences to one
per year, per Councillor; and**

That the budget for travel and meals be reduced by \$7,000; and

That the Warden's Forum and Inaugural be reduced by \$2,000.

Amendment:

CW208-23

Moved by: Councillor Eccles

Seconded by: Councillor Mackey

That the question be divided to consider the clauses separately.

Carried

Amendment:

CW209-23

Moved by: Councillor Greig

Seconded by: Councillor Carleton

That the 2024 budget be amended to reduce conferences to one per year, per Councillor.

Carried

Amendment:

CW210-23

Moved by: Councillor Greig

Seconded by: Councillor Carleton

That the budget for travel and meals be reduced by \$7,000.

Carried

Amendment:

CW211-23

Moved by: Councillor Greig

Seconded by: Councillor Carleton

That the Warden's Forum and Inaugural be reduced by \$2,000.

Carried

CW212-23

Moved by: Councillor Matrosovs

Seconded by: Councillor Dobreen

That the funding for the Council Day catering for SMT and Council be removed from the 2024 budget.

Lost

CW213-23

Moved by: Councillor Greig

Seconded by: Councillor Nielsen

That Committee of the Whole does now go into closed session pursuant to Section 239 (2) of the Municipal Act, 2001, as amended, to discuss:

- i. Personal matters about an identifiable individual, including municipal or local board employees.**

Carried

Council proceeded into closed session at 4:05 p.m.

Council returned to open session at 4:16 p.m.

The Warden confirmed that only the items stated in the resolution to move into closed session were discussed.

Reserves & Next Steps

Mary Lou Spicer presented to the Committee regarding reserves and described the differences between discretionary and obligatory funds and the change in statuses between 2022 and 2024.

The Director confirmed that should Council adopt the 2024 budget today, staff would prepare the ratifying by-law for consideration at the January 11, 2024, meeting of County Council and that the tax policies would be subsequently prepared.

CW214-23

Moved by: Councillor Mackey

Seconded by: Councillor Eccles

That the 2024 proposed budget be adopted as amended by proposing a levy increase of 6.3% after growth; and

That the 2024 proposed budget be amended to include an additional \$40,800 to MPAC's fees and \$67,200 in Canada Community Building Fund revenue; and

That a By-law be brought forward to adopt the Estimates of Revenues and Expenditures for the Year 2024 requiring a total to be raised from taxation in 2024 of \$73,920,220, an increase of \$5,987,520.

Carried

Other Business

There was no other business.

Adjournment

On motion of Councillors Eccles and Pringle, Committee of the Whole adjourned at 4:41 p.m. to the call of the Chair.

Brian Milne, Warden

Tara Warder, Clerk