

Minutes

Budget and Finance Committee

October 28, 2024

Call to Order

The Budget and Finance Committee met at the County Administration Building on the above date. The Chair called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m. with all members present, except Warden Milne.

Kim Wingrove, Randy Scherzer, Mary Lou Spicer, Sue Murray, Tara Warder, Scott Taylor, Anne Marie Shaw, Savanna Myers, Jennifer Cornell and Jennifer Moreau were also in attendance.

Declaration of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

Delegations

Items For Direction or Discussion

FR-BFC-33-24 Capital Project Status Update as of June 30, 2024

Sue Murray noted that the report is before the Committee for information and that feedback on the length and structure for future years is appreciated.

Questions and comments were addressed regarding procurement schedules, interest income the County is realizing from delayed or cancelled projects, and whether there is concern about lack of resources to achieve goals. Staff noted that there is evidence of price softening taking place and spoke to benefits of having a more centralized facilities operations position in place to assist with combining certain procurements together.

BFC21-24

Moved by: Councillor Greig

Seconded by: Councillor Nielsen

That report FR-BFC-33-24 regarding the 2024 Capital Project Status Update Report as of August 31, 2024 be received for information.

Carried

Verbal Update on 2025 Budget and 2026 Outlook

Mary Lou Spicer addressed the Committee on the above noted item. It was noted that with the implementation of Questica beginning in April, the budget development is taking longer than anticipated as there is a need to cross reference between systems. When the 2026 budget is developed, the additional steps will be eliminated.

Barring any adjustments, Grey County's 2025 budget is slightly under a 4% increase after growth. As of today, projected growth from MPAC is \$2,025,436.00 which is the largest it has ever been. The final roll will be returned by MPAC in December. It is difficult to project growth however, given the level of changes that can occur with write offs, class changes and omitted and supplementary assessments.

The transit grant comes to an end at the end of March. Nothing has been included for the continuation of transit.

New positions that have been supported by the Committee include the Green Development Standards position, the IT Business Analyst and the Facilities Coordinator position.

Discussion occurred on the provincial reassessment cycle, noting that there hasn't been reassessment since 2016 and a timeframe set for this to occur.

BFC22-24

Moved by: Councillor Nielsen

Seconded by: Councillor Mackey

That the verbal update regarding the 2025 Budget and 2026 Projected be received for information.

Carried

CAOR-BFC-24-24 Request to Hold Property Lease - Rural Ontario Medical Program, CAOR-BFC-24-24

Kim Wingrove addressed the above report. This is not intended to have a financial impact to the County. There is a doctor shortage and a housing shortage, especially housing that is more flexible in nature.

When medical residents train in a community and build relationships and have a positive experience, they are more likely to practice there when they graduate. The rate of those staying in the Owen Sound area following graduation is even higher than typical found in other regions.

There have been multiple instances of a learner willing to come to Brightshores but housing could not be arranged so that fell through. McMaster went forward themselves and leased a house so there would be somewhere for students to stay, however this is

out of scope for the program so the school has requested Grey County take over the lease. The stipends cover the cost of the lease which runs until the end of August 2026. The role of Grey would be to hold the lease and invoice the Rural Ontario Medical Program (ROMP) for the stipend money. An amendment needs to be executed that would have Grey as the tenant.

Questions were addressed regarding liability and if any additional insurance expenses can be recouped.

Support was expressed for assisting with such a circumstance as it affects all communities in the area. Further discussion occurred on whether purchasing a house in the future jointly with others makes sense to offer continued support. Staff indicated that ROMP has a long track record of placing students and there is disparity between the stipend and housing costs and that the housing some students require varies. There is a need to get a better understanding of what those needs are.

BFC23-24

Moved by: Councillor Greig

Seconded by: Councillor Nielsen

That report CAOR-BFC-24-24 Request to Hold Property Lease be received; and

That staff be directed to create a memorandum of agreement with the Rural Ontario Medical Program and the City of Owen Sound, detailing the responsibilities of each party for the provision of accommodation for medical residents at the property in Owen Sound; and

That staff be directed to prepare an amendment to the property lease for the property naming Grey County as the tenant for signature by the Warden and Clerk.

Carried

Correspondence

Forest Festival Request

Grey County staff have been part of the festival for a number of years. Grey County has contributed \$5,000.00 for a number of years, however funding was removed in 2024 during the budget process because the funding was more discretionary in nature. Staff can include the funds in the draft budget if that's Committee's wish.

Discussion occurred on the suggestion to have it discussed at the Council table during budget. Concern was expressed about events being supported by multiple arms of government where the taxpayer pays multiple times for an event.

BFC24-24

Moved by: Councillor Nielsen

Seconded by: Councillor Mackey

THAT the request from the Bruce Grey Forest Festival for \$5000.00 be included in the 2025 draft budget for consideration.

Carried

Correspondence from the Blue Mountain Ratepayers Association - Sources and Uses Report

The correspondence was presented to the Committee. Staff noted that requests have occurred in the past. The request from the Association is for a detailed sources and uses report. It is difficult to provide this information in a useful way from a single point in time perspective. It is a large commitment. The importance of looking forward and recognizing that this is a system and needs to be supported in this way were cited.

The CAO's Office will prepare a letter in response to the correspondence.

BFC25-24

Moved by: Councillor Greig

Seconded by: Councillor Nielsen

That the correspondence from the Blue Mountain Ratepayers' Association regarding a request for a sources and uses report be received for information.

Carried

Other Business

Finance Staffing Update

Mary Lou Spicer addressed the Committee, noting that the Manager of Revenue role is vacant and staff are looking at how to structure that position going forward. There was a contract opportunity available but it hasn't been filled to date. The staff shortages from vacancies as well as implementation of budget software have played a role in the budget progress.

RFP for Audit Services

Mary Lou Spicer noted that the RFP for auditor services has closed and there were two submissions received. They will be evaluated soon and a report recommending award will come forward to the next meeting.

Closed Meeting Matters

BFC26-24

Moved by: Councillor Nielsen

Seconded by: Councillor Greig

That the Budget and Finance Committee does now go into closed session pursuant to Section 239 (2) of the Municipal Act, 2001, as amended, to discuss organizational structure enhancements:

i. personal matters about an identifiable individual, including municipal or local board employees

Carried

The Committee proceeded into closed session at 2:35 pm. The Committee rose from closed session at 3:27 pm. The Chair noted that only those matters noted in the resolution to proceed in camera were discussed and that direction was provided to staff.

Next Meeting Date

The next meeting will be November 18th at 1:00 pm and an additional meeting will be scheduled for November 25th at 10:00 am.

Adjournment

On motion of Councillors Nielsen and Greig, the Budget and Finance Committee adjourned at 3:28 p.m. to the call of the Chair.