

# Minutes

## Committee of the Whole

December 13, 2024

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### Call to Order

Grey County Council met on the above date at the County Administration Building. Warden Matrosovs assumed the Chair and called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

### O Canada

The Warden invited members of Council 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 McKay, Carleton, Pringle, Nielsen, McQueen, Kentner, Hutchinson, Bordignon, Milne and Dobreen participated electronically.

Kim Wingrove, Chief Administrative Officer and Tara Warder, Clerk were also in attendance.

The following staff members were also participating:

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

### Declaration of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

# Items For Direction and Discussion

## 2025 Budget Overview and Department Presentations

CAO Kim Wingrove addressed Committee of the Whole and introduced the draft 2025 corporate budget. Mary Lou Spicer addressed the Committee on items included in the budget and the total 2025 operating and capital budget net levy requirements. Additional funding to be raised from taxation is \$78,266,500, which is a 3.2% increase over 2024.

A high level overview for 2026 was provided, however provincial funding and new growth are unknowns and make it difficult to predict in advance.

The impact for 2025 on a property owner with a house assessed at \$289,000 is an increase of \$37.42.

Mary Lou Spicer addressed the committee on the Council budget and the Corporate Services budget. New projects for various departments were noted.

Questions were addressed regarding the estimated cost for additional committee member appointments, and the number of conferences that councillors are able to attend. It was noted that it is anticipated councillors are returning to attending two conferences per year as noted under the policy.

Mary Lou Spicer further addressed the proposed capital projects as part of Corporate Services.

The Climate Change budget was overviewed. 2025 is the first year it is presented separately from the Administration departments. Capital requirements were outlined and questions addressed.

WSIB, Weekly indemnity, Information Services, and the assessment budget from the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation were highlighted as well as court security cost proposals and the Provincial Offences budget. It was noted that the upper tier pays MPAC fees. In 2025, the fees are \$1,984,200 to be paid by Grey County.

Questions were addressed regarding processes around software licensing, cyber security, and WSIB and weekly indemnity.

The County property budget was then addressed, including Morrison House, the Administration Building and associated proposed capital expenditures.

Taxation and grants and write offs were noted as well. The Grey Bruce Health Unit's budget was overviewed, with a levy requirement of \$1,785,700.

Mary Lou Spicer then introduced the Planning and Community Development budget, which has a requirement of \$5,242,500, an increase of \$372,880 over 2024.

Scott Taylor spoke to the Planning budget that is seeing a requirement of \$1,213,000 (operating and capital) with an increase of \$104,680 over 2024. The main capital project for 2025 is the growth management update for a total of \$60,000.

The Agricultural budget includes costs associated with enforcing the County's forest management by-law, grant contributions to agricultural organizations and grant payments for nuisance beaver and coyotes. This budget is seeing an increase of \$9,700, primarily due to an anticipated increase in beaver and coyote grants.

The Forestry and Trails Budget is seeing an increase of \$62,600. The Buckthorn invasive species management project is proposed to continue and be partially funded by levy, as well as through reserves. Questions were addressed regarding the last time planning fees were updated which was noted as being in February 2024. Further questions on the bounty for coyotes and beavers and the upcoming report on this topic for January 2025 were addressed. Inquiry was made as to whether there is work being done on combatting Hogweed. Staff noted there are still efforts being made to address it where it comes up, however there is no targeted program currently.

The Committee recessed at 11:32 a.m. and resumed at 11:45 a.m.

Savanna Myers then addressed the Committee of the Whole on the Economic Development, Tourism and Culture Budgets. This department requires a total of \$3,491,900, which is an increase of \$195,900 over 2024. Budgets for the Economic Development and Tourism General Operating, Local Immigration Partnership, Sydenham Campus, Business Enterprise Centre and Grey Roots operating were highlighted.

Kim Wingrove then spoke to the Grey Transit Route. She noted that there have been two new program announcements related to transit. Staff are working on applications for the two funding streams on a proposal with input from Bruce, Dufferin and Wellington Counties as well as some of the non-profit providers. The project is based on information gathering and analysis on how to best leverage the existing transit investments made by various entities and the opportunities to bring those investments together. There is \$178,000 before Council today in the budget in one time funding. There is \$78,000 required to get Grey County through to March 31, 2025 and \$100,000 for Grey County's contribution to see these projects through if grant funding is approved.

Savanna Myers then addressed the EDTC capital budget. Questions were addressed regarding the ways that Grey County works with RTO7. It was noted that the Tourism vehicle's condition is assessed each year and reserve money is allocated as appropriate.

The importance of allocating reserve money to fund future builds at Moreston Village was noted. Staff noted that their recommendation is to first have the LEAN project completed as it relates to Moreston Village and then comparing those results against the overall plan, which will inform a future business case.

Mary Lou Spicer provided an overview of the Human Services budget.

Anne Marie Shaw spoke to the Social Services budget, consisting of Ontario Works and Early Learning and Child Care (ELCC), following by the Housing budget.

She spoke to the new funding approach in ELCC which will see a fee cap of \$22 per day in child care for parents. Licensed home child care was highlighted, as well as the

Indigenous - led operating budget of \$72,000. Capital requirements for these functions were highlighted as well.

Questions were addressed regarding how to ensure best value is received for the County Services initiatives, the dental program and how it is integrated with the Health Unit's program.

Anne Marie Shaw then spoke to Housing's operating budget. There are increases required for salaries and benefits, increases in building maintenance, insurance premiums, and utility costs. She spoke to the new reserve being established to assist with deductibles where incidents arise.

Questions were addressed regarding funding for people experiencing homelessness in our communities and the rate increase for tenants. The length of the wait list has increased to over 2,000. Last year it was about 1,500. The wait time has increased to 4-6 years in recent times.

Capital for the Housing budget was then addressed.

Jennifer Cornell then introduced the Long-Term Care budget, noting the resident centred care approach taken by Grey County.

Markus Hawco then spoke to the level of care base funding, resident co-payment and the case mix index. Drivers to the budget were noted, including salaries and benefits, and the staffing increase supplement.

Mary Lou Spicer then spoke to the budget for the redevelopment of Rockwood Terrace.

Committee of the Whole recessed at 1:00 p.m. and reconvened at 1:46 p.m.

Kevin McNab then spoke to the Paramedic Services budget. A question was addressed regarding downloading of health care from the province, and what is done with Grey County ambulances when they've reached their useful life. It was noted that other organizations are sometimes able to utilize the vehicles for other purposes.

Kevin McNab then addressed the capital budget and highlighted the work being completed for the Durham base, and service enhancements and improvements found in the budget related to equipment.

Mary Lou Spicer provided an introduction of the Transportation Services budget.

Pat Hoy provided information on Supervision, Overhead and Administrative budgets.

Shaun Anthony provided information on the budgets for ordinary maintenance, winter maintenance, facilities, depots and domes and machinery and equipment.

Trevor Ireton then addressed the Committee on the Major Road and Bridge Construction budget. Transfers to reserves for the purpose of structure and culvert rehabilitation were noted. Trevor Ireton then highlighted the 2025 projects proposed in the budget.

Questions were addressed regarding the move towards electric vehicles.

Due to technical difficulties Councillor Bordignon left the meeting.

CW134-24

Moved by: Councillor Eccles

Seconded by: Councillor Keaveney

**That the Committee of the Whole does now go into closed session pursuant to Section 239 (2) of the Municipal Act, 2001, as amended, to discuss staffing within the 2025 draft budget:**

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

Carried

The Committee proceeded into closed session at 2:35 p.m. and returned to open session at 3:45 p.m. The Warden confirmed that only the items noted in the resolution to move into closed session were discussed.

CW135-24

Moved by: Councillor Greig

Seconded by: Councillor Eccles

**That the funding of \$5,000 for the forest festival be removed from the 2025 budget.**

Carried

CW136-24

Moved by: Councillor Boddy

Seconded by: Councillor Dickert

**That the 2025 proposed budget be adopted as amended by proposing a levy increase of 3.33% after growth; and**

**That a by-law be brought forward to adopt the Estimates of Revenues and Expenditures for the year 2025 requiring a total to be raised from taxation in 2025 of \$78,362,800.**

Carried

## **Other Business**

There was no other business.

## **Adjournment**

On motion of Councillors Eccles and Paterson, Committee of the Whole adjourned at 4:09 p.m. to the call of the Chair.

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Andrea Matrosovs, Warden

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Tara Warder, Clerk