

# Minutes

## Budget and Finance Committee

February 20, 2025

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### Call to Order

The Budget and Finance Committee met at the County Administration Building on the above date. The Deputy Clerk called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. with Councillors Eccles, Milne, Dickert, Carleton, Keaveney, Greig, Mackey and Warden Matrosovs in attendance. Councillor Nielsen sent regrets.

Staff Present: Randy Scherzer, Kim Wingrove, Rob Hatten, Amanda Brooks, Garrett Reed, Markus Hawco, Rayburn Murray, Tara Warder, Brandon McTaggart, Sue Murray, and Mary Lou Spicer.

### Election of Chair and Vice Chair

Following receipt of two nominations for Chair of the Committee, the Clerk confirmed that both members wished to have their name stand for Chair of the Committee. Following an election, Councillor Milne was declared Chair for 2025. He assumed the Chair and conducted the election for Vice Chair. Councillor Eccles was acclaimed Vice Chair for 2025.

BFC01-25

Moved by: Councillor Mackey

Seconded by: Councillor Greig

**That Councillor Eccles be nominated Chair of the Budget and Finance Committee for 2025.**

Carried

BFC02-25

Moved by: Councillor Carleton

Seconded by: Councillor Keaveney

**That Councillor Milne be nominated Chair of the Budget and Finance Committee for 2025.**

Carried

BFC03-25

Moved by: Councillor Mackey

Seconded by: Councillor Dickert

**That Councillor Eccles be elected Vice Chair of the Budget and Finance Committee for 2025.**

Carried

## **Declaration of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

## **Delegations**

None.

## **Items For Direction or Discussion**

### **FR-CW-02-25 Ontario Regulation 284/09 2025 Budget**

Amanda Brooks, Asset Management Coordinator, presented the report with respect to non-cash items such as expenses related to capital asset amortization, post-employment benefits, and solid waste landfill closure and post-closure costs being excluded from the annual budget. The Committee inquired about retirement benefits and the County's obligations. In response, staff highlighted eligibility criteria for retirements and noted that 37 people in 2025 are receiving retirement benefits.

BFC04-25

Moved by: Councillor Eccles

Seconded by: Councillor Keaveney

**That report FR-BFC-02-25 regarding Ontario Regulation 284/09 – 2025 Budget be received for information.**

Carried

### **FR-CW-03-25 2025 Budget and Finance Committee Proposed Work Plan**

Mary Lou Spicer, Director of Finance/County Treasurer, presented the 2025 Budget and Finance Committee proposed work plan. She noted that staff will endeavour to bring all reports to the Budget and Finance Committee, however there will be times where reports need to go to Committee of the Whole due to timing. She further provided an overview of upcoming agenda items and their associated timelines.

The Committee inquired whether the November meeting would allow for sufficient time to review the 2026 budget and further noted the fulsome discussions to occur throughout the year to support decision making. Staff noted that additional meetings can be scheduled as needed and that they will monitor timelines.

BFC05-25

Moved by: Councillor Mackey

Seconded by: Councillor Carleton

**That report FR-BFC-03-25 regarding the 2025 Budget and Finance Committee Proposed Workplan be received for information.**

Carried

## Audit

Mary Lou Spicer, Director of Finance/County Treasurer, indicated that the audit is scheduled to begin on April 7, 2025, for a duration of three weeks. At this time, staff do not know if processes will be different compared to previous years, as the appointed auditor, MNP LLP, recently acquired BDO. She summarized the audit preparation process, including gathering the required supporting documentation, walkthrough of staff processes, and responses to possible recommendations.

The Committee further discussed trust funds within long-term care facilities and requested additional information for understanding. Staff highlighted the complexities involved in managing these funds.

## 10 Year Capital Process Overview

Mary Lou Spicer, Director of Finance/County Treasurer, sought input from the Committee regarding the 10 Year Capital processes. Kim Wingrove emphasized the commitment to maintaining service quality and acknowledging that unforeseen events may necessitate adjustments to project timelines. She indicated that staff are looking to maintain levels of service while maximizing investments and looking for consistent principles to best plan and present budgets for Council/Committee.

Committee members indicated that it can be difficult to focus beyond a 5 year timeline, however agreed that a clearer understanding of the decision-making process would support more informed discussions and spending justifications.

## Other Business

### Questica/Open Book Demo

Sue Murray, Deputy Treasurer, presented a demonstration of the Questica/OpenBook platform, highlighting its visual capabilities and approach to presenting financial information through pictures, maps, graphs, and more. She previewed the search function options throughout the capital projects and operating budget summaries. Staff indicated the software information is still in draft form and 2025 budget data is being

implemented. She noted that Committee members would receive an invite to review the software and welcomed their feedback.

## **2024 Meeting Structure Review and Feedback**

Mary Lou Spicer, Director of Finance/County Treasurer, addressed the Committee regarding the potential need for extended meeting durations beyond the scheduled two hours in preparation for 2026 budget. The Committee discussed the possibility of additional dates and agreed to reassess meeting length requirements in September.

She introduced Garrett Reed in the new Manager of Accounting position. The Committee inquired about staff changes within the finance department, specifically regarding investment management. Mary Lou Spicer provided an update on how investments are currently being handled.

## **Next Meeting Date**

Budget and Finance Committee - April 30, 2025 at 2:00 pm

## **Adjournment**

On motion of Councillors Mackey and Eccles, the Budget and Finance Committee adjourned at 11:18 p.m. to the call of the Chair.