

Minutes

Budget and Finance Committee

July 23, 2025

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 10:00 a.m. with all member present, except Councillor Scott Greig.

Present: Councillor Brian Milne, Councillor Kevin Eccles, Councillor Dane Nielsen, Councillor Sue Carleton, Councillor Scott Mackey, Councillor Shirley Keaveney and Warden Andrea Matrosovs.

Absent: Councillor Greig

Declaration of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

Delegations

There were none.

Items For Direction or Discussion

Capital Presentations - Community Services and Economic Development, Tourism and Culture

Community Services

Anne Marie Shaw, Director of Community Services, reviewed the housing department's assets including housing properties, machinery and equipment. She noted that the County has over 500 units in Owen Sound recently adding a hotel and transitional housing. The total value of all assets for the department amounted to approximately \$236 million not including transitional and short-term housing in 2023.

She noted that the department uses a variety of evaluation tools including the building condition assessments (BCAs) to help determine a ten-year capital plan along with staff

input and consultations. The BCAs are used to determine the cost of replacement now and in future dollars.

The department also conducts visual inspections throughout the year to ensure the buildings are kept properly. The inspections are done by County staff that are on site as well as consultants. Project cost estimation is determined once the scope is timed for inclusion in the ten-year capital forecast for a one-to-two, three-to-five or six-to-ten year window.

The department uses estimations to conduct repair work, but a final evaluation is made to determine if items need fixing on a different timeline. For example, if windows are in good condition but are due for replacement, a final evaluation is done to determine if the fix can be pushed off to later in the timeline.

She noted that the department receives funding through the levy and it will have an average annual increase of 7.91% over the next ten years as well as provincial and federal funding sources and reserves. Federal funds will pay for 30% of capital projects until 2026. She noted that the department will be able to maintain a healthy reserve through to 2034.

The department uses a capital tracker spreadsheet that helps to see what is going in and out of the department. This is an internal staff tool that includes in-year projections which will eventually be replaced by Questica.

The department continuously looks at energy efficient options and noted that the department has seen a reduction in cost with the installation of LED lighting in buildings. Major capital projects upcoming for the department include elevator replacements, kitchen rebuilds, window replacements and in-suite radiator installs.

Director Shaw shared that the operating budget provides funding to cover the cost of turnovers. She noted that annual inspections are conducted for all buildings and that if there is a specific issue from a tenant, a maintenance request form can be filled out to see if it's something maintenance staff can deal with or if an external contractor needs to be hired.

Councillor Greig joined the meeting at 10:15 a.m.

The Committee discussed the evaluation process on the heat pump installs in terms of seeing cost savings. Staff noted that tenants at Victoria Village are responsible for paying heating bills and the County pays for vacant units. The idea to install the heat pumps was to lower heating bills for tenants, but at this point it's too early to give a number on cost savings. Staff noted that the utility cost for vacant units will give a good idea of the cost savings.

The Committee asked if there is federal or provincial funding for operational budget increases. Director Shaw noted that federal funding is one time funding and nothing else has been announced. Provincial funding has increased slightly. Staff noted that in 2001 a number of services were transferred from the province to the county level. Grey County has a substantial waitlist of around 2300 people, 70% of which are from Grey County. Staff also noted that the County is mandated to keep the buildings we have.

Planning and Economic Development

Savanna Myers, Director of Economic Development and Culture, reviewed the departments assets which include Grey Roots which is 20,000 square feet across 20 acres, Moreston Village which includes 13 buildings, Sydenham Campus which is 45,000 square feet across ten acres, as well as two vehicles.

Director Myers noted that the vehicles are used by summer students to travel to different events across the County as well as staff travel. The use of the vehicles significantly reduces staff mileage allowing staff to use a County vehicle to travel to meet with a client. The vehicles are inspected and maintained by County mechanics and are owned by the County. She noted that the vehicles were due for replacement years ago, but they are working well and are not at end of life yet.

She shared that strategic direction from the EDTC Master Plan and building condition assessments are used to identify projects over a ten-year span. Funding sources for the department include proceeds from sales, grants, reserves and sponsorships as well as the department levy. She noted that fully funded projects include Thomas Wheildon Theatre within Grey Roots and the Makerspace equipment at the Sydenham campus.

Director Myers noted that project planning is prioritized based on condition assessments; some projects get pushed back annually based on condition and some projects are moved forward as needed such as the Sydenham Campus exterior door replacement and schoolhouse roof replacement in Moreston Village.

She noted that the department's capital budget is focused on maintaining two large facilities. Staff try to maintain a modest levy but noted that this is posing to be difficult due to pricing increases. With the introduction of the new Facilities and Operations manager position, better planning for repairs and replacements can be done.

Over the next ten years, the budget will be determined based on monitoring year-end projections and adjustments to the reserve continuity plan.

The Committee asked for more information on the weighting of the capital contributions for Grey Roots and noted the significantly higher percentages for Grey Roots against the department as a whole.

Mary Lou Spicer, Director of Finance, noted that the operating levy in 2025 was approximately \$1,717,000 and the capital is just over \$100,000 totaling just over \$1.8 million which results in 5.6% percent of the levy. Staff noted that increases to Grey Roots is not going up by the same percentage as the department as a whole.

The Committee sought clarification on if the reserve contributions that were set aside for the vehicles are being redirected elsewhere. Director Myers noted that funds have not been redirected as the savings are set aside for the purchase of a future vehicle. She noted that costing has not been done on a future vehicle but noted the possibility of purchasing an electric vehicle.

FR-BFC-15-25 Capital Project Status Update Report as of April 30, 2025

The Committee discussed the potential for Councillors to have access to Questica to view reports. Staff noted that until reports are updated, Councillors wouldn't be looking at real time actuals.

BFC11-25

Moved by: Councillor Keaveney

Seconded by: Councillor Carleton

That report FR-BFC-15-25 regarding the 2025 Capital Project Status Update Report as of April 30, 2025 be received for information.

Carried

FR-BFC-14-25 Corporate Financial Update to April 30, 2025

Councillor Eccles left the meeting at 11:34 a.m.

BFC12-25

Moved by: Councillor Mackey

Seconded by: Councillor Dickert

That report FR-BFC-14-25 regarding Corporate Financial Update as of April 30, 2025 be received for information

Carried

FR-BFC-13-25 Health Care Funding Requests

Moved by: Councillor Nielsen

Seconded by: Councillor Mackey

That report FR-BFC-13-25 Health Care Funding Requests – 2026 Budget be received; and

That staff be directed to maintain the budgeted \$209,500 transfer to the Health Care Initiatives Reserve for the 2026 budget and 2027 projected budget.

BFC13-25

Moved by: Councillor Greig

Seconded by: Councillor Carleton

That the motion be amended to reflect a \$200,000.00 transfer to the Health Care Initiatives Reserve in the 2026 draft budget.

Carried

BFC14-25

Moved by: Councillor Nielsen

Seconded by: Councillor Mackey

That Report FR-BFC-13-25 Health Care Funding Requests - 2026 Budget be received; and

That staff be directed to maintain the budgeted \$200,000 transfer to the Health Care Initiatives Reserve for the 2026 budget and 2027 projected budget.

Carried

Correspondence

There was none.

Other Business

The Committee asked for clarification on the purpose of the next Budget and Finance Committee meeting. Staff noted that a presentation on the Long-Term Care department capital, a report on budget timelines, cost of living adjustments, collective agreements and full-time employee requests would be discussed.

Next Meeting Date

Wednesday, September 24, 2025 at 10:00 a.m.

Adjournment

On motion of Councillors Carleton and Nielsen, the Budget and Finance Committee adjourned at 11:53 a.m. to the call of the Chair.