

## Special Meeting - Committee of the Whole Budget Discussions January 28, 2022

Grey County Council met on the above date at 10:00 AM through electronic means. The Clerk called Committee of the Whole to order and Warden Selwyn Hicks assumed the Chair.

The Roll was called by the Clerk with all members participating.

Kim Wingrove, Chief Administrative Officer; Heather Morrison, Clerk; and Tara Warder, Deputy Clerk/Legislative Coordinator, were also participating.

The following staff members were also participating:

Randy Scherzer, Deputy CAO; Mary Lou Spicer, Director of Finance; Jennifer Cornell, Director of Long Term Care; Barbara Fedy, Director of Social Services; Anne Marie Shaw, Director of Community Services; Pat Hoy, Director of Transportation Services; Savanna Myers, Director of Economic Development, Tourism and Culture; Kevin McNab, Director of Paramedic Services; Michael Letourneau, Director of Legal Services-County Solicitor; Jennifer Moreau, Director of Human Resources and Jody MacEachern, Senior Manager, Information Technology.

Other staff were present as required to speak to specific budget items.

### Declaration of Interest

There were no disclosures of interest.

### Items for Direction and Discussion

#### 2022 Budget Overview and Department Presentations

Mary Lou Spicer provided an overview of the proposed 2022 budget. After operating and capital revenues, reserves and capital financing are calculated, \$65.4 million needs to be raised through taxes to maintain and enhance existing services. With projected assessment growth of \$1,184,400 included in County revenue, the net levy increase for 2022 is 2.88%.

Key 2022 proposed investments were highlighted. For 2022, a 1% levy increase is approximately \$635,000.

Councillor McQueen then entered the meeting.

Ms. Spicer outlined the increases proposed in each of the functions: Corporate Services requiring an additional \$1,350,700; Human Services (formerly known as Social Services with the Paramedic Services function included) requiring an increase of \$638,600; a Planning and Community Development increase of \$457,300 and a Transportation Services increase of \$569,600.

Questions were addressed regarding the comparison of assessment growth for 2022 as compared to previous years, how many new full time employee (FTE) positions are in this budget, and impacts of external funding sources on the budget. It was noted that projected growth for 2022 is slightly less than in 2021. Net of grants or other funding, there are 11.1 proposed additional FTEs included in the budget. The unexpected loss of five temporary long-term bed licenses had a negative impact on the budget.

Ms. Spicer then introduced the Corporate Services function. It was noted that this function includes a net requirement increase of \$1,350,700 over 2021. Each respective budget was then outlined, including the Council budget, Administration, WSIB and Weekly Indemnity, Information Services, Assessment, County Property, Taxation and Grants, Provincial Offences, and the Grey Bruce Health Unit. The Centre Grey Hospital Campaign, Health Care Initiatives Funding and the Georgian College Marine Emergency Duties Training Centre were also highlighted.

Questions were addressed regarding the payment for MPAC's services while reassessments are on hold, the proposed new records clerk position and proposed paving work at the administration building.

Randy Scherzer and Savanna Myers then presented the Planning and Community Development budget function. This combined function includes a net requirement of \$4,922,800, an increase of \$457,300 over 2021. Detailed budgets were highlighted, including Planning, Agriculture, Trails and Forestry, Economic Development, Tourism and Culture. This portion of the budget formalizes the merger of Economic Development, Tourism and Grey Roots.

Councillor Soever entered the meeting at this time.

Questions were addressed regarding newcomer attraction and retention efforts in Grey County and expected transit ridership projections and planning fees.

An overview of the Human Services function was provided. Human Services includes Ontario Works and Children's Services, Housing, Long-term Care and Paramedic Services. It requires \$26,665,500 for 2022 reflecting an increase of \$638,600 over 2021.

Barb Fedy presented the Ontario Works and Children's Services budgets. Anne Marie Shaw presented the Housing Department budget. Factors that contributed to the budget were highlighted.

Councillor Robinson left the meeting during the presentation of the Social Services budget and then returned.

Council recessed at 12:48 PM and reconvened at 1:50 PM.

Jennifer Cornell and Kevin McNab outlined their department's respective budgets and factors that contributed to the proposed increases.

Councillor Hutchinson left the meeting during the presentation of the Paramedic Services budget.

Questions were addressed regarding the national child care plan.

Pay Hoy then spoke to the Transportation Services function which has a net requirement of \$21,555,400. This is an increase of \$569,600 over 2021. Planned projects for 2022 were then highlighted.

Questions were addressed regarding the possibility of purchasing less than a full-sized pickup truck in order to save on fuel. It was noted that staff are looking at this option. Further questions regarding use of salt, road transfers, reserves, and patrol D costs were addressed. Mr. Hoy spoke to the status of the Grey Road 19 and 21 intersection. It is moving forward and matters related to the water booster station, moving utilities and land acquisitions are ongoing. The roundabout at Grey Road 4 and Grey Road 3 is nearing the final design stage.

Mary Lou Spicer then provided an overview of the status of the reserve accounts.

Councillor Hutchinson returned at this time.

Discussion occurred on the importance of ensuring that assessment growth is being captured in a timely manner. It was noted that Finance staff will collaborate with the local treasurers to see if anything further can be done to support one another on this and ensure consistency and fairness.

CW27-22      Moved by: Councillor O'Leary      Seconded by: Councillor Desai

**That the 2022 proposed budget be adopted as presented by proposing a levy increase of 2.88%; and**

**That a By-law be brought forward to adopt the Estimates of Revenues and Expenditures for the Year 2022 requiring a total to be raised from taxation in 2022 of \$65,359,000.**

Carried

## Other Business

There was no other business.

## Adjournment

On motion of Councillors Milne and Gamble, Committee of the Whole adjourned at 3:07 PM to the call of the Chair.

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Selwyn Hicks, Warden

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Heather Morrison, Clerk