

## Special Meeting - Committee of the Whole Budget Discussions January 27, 2023

Grey County Council met at the call of the Warden on the above date at 10:00 AM at the County Administration Building. The Warden called Council to order and Warden Milne assumed the Chair.

The Clerk called the Roll with all members present. Councillors Keaveney, Nielsen, Bordignon, and Hutchinson participated virtually.

Kim Wingrove, Chief Administrative Officer; Tara Warder, Clerk; and Sarah Goldrup, Deputy Clerk/Legislative Coordinator were also in attendance.

The following staff members were in attendance or participating virtually:

Randy Scherzer, Deputy CAO; Anne Marie Shaw, Director of Community Services; Evan Davis, IT Infrastructure and Security Manager; Jennifer Cornell, Director of Long-Term Care; Jennifer Moreau, Director of Human Resources; Kevin McNab, Director of Paramedic Services; Mary Lou Spicer, Director of Finance; Michael Letourneau, Director of Legal Services; Pat Hoy, Director of Transportation; Robert Hatten, Manager of Communications; Savanna Myers, Director of Economic Development, Tourism and Culture; Scott Taylor, Director of Planning.

### Declaration of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

### Delegations

There were no delegations.

### Items for Direction and Discussion

#### 2023 Budget Overview and Department Presentations

CAO Kim Wingrove introduced the proposed 2023 budget and spoke to the budget process, considerations for changing community needs, legislation, and economic factors, the long-term implications of budget decisions on strategic initiatives and work plans, and future strategic planning efforts to inform the 2024 capital and operating budgets.

Mary Lou Spicer presented the draft 2023 budget and reviewed the budget development process, the gross operating and capital expenditures of \$225.1 million, the proposed net levy increase for 2023 of 1.49% or \$1,000,000, and factors impacting the proposed 2023 budget, such as bargaining, inflation, asset management, in-year approvals, and Bill 23, More Homes Built Faster Act, 2022. Further, the director reviewed the key 2023 proposed budget investments, net levy requirements, and noted that the average County tax increase for a single detached dwelling is \$15.92.

Following, senior staff spoke to their department's reductions, pressures, and risks considered in developing the proposed budget and changes following Council's direction at the January 12, 2023, meeting.

Tara Warder introduced the Council budget and staff responded to questions regarding the proposed cost of living adjustment. It was noted that an approved formula is used to calculate Council's Cost of Living Adjustment. Kim Wingrove noted concern that Council compensation was not keeping pace with marketplace rates.

Randy Scherzer and Linda Swanston presented the budget for Climate Change and spoke to questions about the Greener Homes in Grey initiatives and supporting staff positions.

Tara Warder reviewed the Clerks budget and discussed 2023 initiatives, such as transitioning to a new electronic agenda management software.

Jennifer Moreau reported the Human Resources budget and responded to questions regarding the upcoming non-union compensation review.

Evan Davis presented the IT budget and answered questions about cyber insurance, communications tower upgrades, cyber security training, and municipal partnership opportunities.

Rob Hatten shared the Communications budget, discussed the County's Made in Grey publication, and confirmed that a future report would be prepared for Council regarding the metrics associated with County communications efforts.

Amanda Kokas discussed the Provincial Offences Court budget and the backlog caused by the lack of available justices.

Anne Marie Shaw reviewed the budgets for County Properties and responded to questions about the Morrison Building.

Mary Lou Spicer explained budgets related to Taxation and Grants and the utilization of tax write-offs.

Scott Taylor described the Planning related budget initiatives and spoke about future archaeology plans.

Savanna Myers shared the Economic Development, Tourism, and Culture budgets and responded to questions about Sydenham Campus and Grey Roots.

Kim Wingrove confirmed additional information would be shared with Council regarding Community Transit ridership and usage.

The meeting recessed and reconvened at 1:19 PM.

Anne Marie Shaw presented the Human Services budgets and described provincial funding consideration in response to questions from Council.

Kevin McNab reported the Paramedic Services budget and responded to questions regarding the SOS program.

Pat Hoy discussed the Transportation Services budget and noted considerations for electric vehicles in municipal fleets.

The meeting recessed and reconvened at 3:10 PM.

During the presentations, the Committee highlighted several items for further deliberation, including reducing County Council's cost of living adjustment from 5.9% to 1.49%, funding for the CP Rail Trail parking lot surfacing, funding for training, education, travel, subscriptions, and staff development, and support to the Saugeen Valley Children's Safety Village. Further, Mary Lou Spicer discussed 2022 transfers to reserve funds and confirmed a future report would be brought to the Committee regarding the use of levy funds, development charges collections, and projected growth.

There was a suggestion that Council's cost of living adjustment (COLA) increase be reduced from 5.9% to a 1.49% increase which is consistent with the proposed budgetary increase. By unanimous consent, Council agreed to this change.

Concern was expressed regarding reductions made to training and education budgets, especially where staff are required to maintain designations and certifications. It was suggested that the savings realized from Council decreasing its COLA be reallocated back to staff training and development budgets where it had been previously removed prior to budget deliberations.

*Main Motion*

Moved by: Councillor Eccles

Seconded by: Councillor Paterson

**That the 2023 proposed budget be adopted as presented by proposing a levy increase of 1.49%; and**

**That a By-law be brought forward to adopt the Estimates of Revenues and Expenditures for the Year 2023 requiring a total to be raised from taxation in 2023 of \$67,939,100.**

*Amendment #1*

CW28-23

Moved by: Councillor Greig

Seconded by: Councillor Eccles

**That the 2023 proposed budget be amended to remove the \$63,300 from reserve funds allocated for CP Rail Trail Parking Lot Surfacing.**

Lost

*Amendment #2*

CW29-23      Moved by: Councillor Dobreen      Seconded by: Councillor Matrosovs

**That the 2023 proposed budget be amended to allocate funds from the reduction of County Council's cost of living adjustment from 5.9% to 1.49% for training, education, travel, subscriptions, and staff development to an upset limit of \$16,000.**

Carried

*Main Motion – As Amended*

CW30-23      Moved by: Councillor Eccles      Seconded by: Councillor Paterson

**That the 2023 proposed budget be adopted as amended by proposing a levy increase of 1.48%; and**

**That a By-law be brought forward to adopt the Estimates of Revenues and Expenditures for the Year 2023 requiring a total to be raised from taxation in 2023 of \$67,932,700, an increase of \$993,600.**

Carried

*Germain Motion*

CW31-23      Moved by: Councillor Greig      Seconded by: Councillor Dobreen

**That the Council of the County of Grey provide annual funding of \$16,000 to the Saugeen Valley Children's Safety Village for the remainder of the current term of Council.**

Carried

## Closed Meeting Matters

There were no closed meeting matters.

## Other Business

There was no other business.

## Adjournment

On motion of Councillors Eccles and McQueen, Committee of the Whole adjourned at 4:59 PM to the call of the Chair.

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Brian Milne, Warden

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Tara Warder, Clerk