



Minutes

Special Meeting - Committee of the Whole Budget Discussions January 29, 2021

Grey County Council met on the above date at 9:30 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 except for Councillor Gamble.

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

The following staff members were in attendance:

Kevin Wepler, Director of Corporate Services; Jennifer Cornell, Director of Long Term Care; Barbara Fedy, Director of Social Services; Anne Marie Shaw, Director of Housing; Pat Hoy, Director of Transportation Services; Savanna Myers, Director of Economic Development, Tourism and Culture; Randy Scherzer, Director of Planning and Development; Kevin McNab, Director of Paramedic Services; Michael Letourneau, Director of Legal Services-County Solicitor; Sandra Shipley, Human Resources Manager; 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

2021 Budget Overview and Department Presentations

Kevin Wepler provided an overview of the proposed 2021 budget.

Key 2021 proposed investments were highlighted. He outlined the increases proposed in each of the functions: Corporate Services, Social Services, Planning and Community Development and Transportation and Public Safety. Main drivers of the budget increase include contributions to the new affordable housing fund and the asset management plan. The proposed budget seeks a net levy increase of 3.11%.

Questions were addressed regarding health care funding, asset management plan funding, average assessment across the County and assessment increases.

Councillor Robinson declared an interest at this time, as she has held a Grey Roots membership in the past.

Mr. Wepler then introduced the Corporate Services function. It was noted that this function includes a net requirement increase of \$331,400 over 2020. Each respective budget was then outlined, including the Council budget, Administration, Worker's Compensation and Weekly Indemnity, Information Services, Assessment, County Property, Taxation and Grants, Provincial Offences, and the Grey Bruce Health Unit.

Questions were addressed regarding the possibility of Councillors continuing to use iPads along with the laptops during electronic meetings, County memberships and the fire communications project.

The Committee recessed briefly, then reconvened.

Councillor Robinson noted that she spoke with the Integrity Commissioner and her earlier declared conflict no longer applies.

Randy Scherzer and Savanna Myers then presented the Planning and Community Development budget function. This combined function includes a net requirement of \$4,465,500, an increase of \$75,300 over 2020. Detailed budgets were highlighted, including Planning, Agriculture, Trails, Forestry, Economic Development, Tourism and Grey Roots.

Questions were addressed regarding the status of the maintenance and renovation projects at Grey Roots, targets for revenues in the Planning Department, plans for future exhibits at Grey Roots, the status of the Church building at Moreston Village and the newcomer program.

Committee recessed then reconvened.

The Social Services function was then overviewed. Social Services includes Ontario Works and Children's Services, Housing and Long-term Care and requires \$19,138,500 for 2021 reflecting an increase of \$1,352,200 over 2020. Barb Fedy, Anne Marie Shaw and Jennifer Cornell outlined their department's respective budgets and factors that contributed to the proposed 2021 Social Services budget.

Anne Marie addressed the Affordable Housing function which has been identified as a priority by County Council. She identified the waitlist numbers, current affordable housing initiatives and options for creating affordable housing. She highlighted the affordable housing development fund which Council has endorsed setting aside 1% of the budget annually to be dedicated specifically to Affordable Housing.

Questions were addressed regarding strategies for attraction and retention in long-term care staffing, safe restart funding, and the Getting Ahead program.

The Committee recessed briefly, then reconvened.

Kevin McNab and Pay Hoy then spoke to the Transportation and Public Safety functions which have a net requirement of \$28,474,700, being an increase of \$1,384,500 over 2020. Planned projects for 2021 were then highlighted.

Questions were addressed regarding construction on a Patrol D facility and work at the intersection near the new Meaford school.

Kevin Wepler then provided an overview of the status of the reserve accounts.

Discussion occurred on reserves and utilizing money from reserve to put towards the Affordable Housing fund and the merits and disadvantages of taking money from reserves.

Councillor Potter returned to the meeting.

CW35-21 Moved by: Councillor Mackey Seconded by: Councillor Burley

That staff be directed to further amend the budget and bring forward a budget that proposes a 2% levy increase.

Lost

CW36-21 Moved by: Councillor Clumpus Seconded by: Councillor Mackey

That the proposed 1% funding to be dedicated to the Affordable Housing fund come from the one-time funding reserve for 2021.

Carried

Councillor Desai requested a recorded vote.

In favour: S. Mackey 3, D. Burley 6, S. Carleton 5, P. McQueen 5, S. Paterson 3, S. Hicks 3, B. Clumpus 6, S. Keaveney 5, I. Boddy 8, B. O'Leary 8, J. Woodbury 3, B. Milne 3, A. Soever 7, R. Potter 6, C. Robinson 6, T. Hutchinson 5.

Opposed: A. Desai 5

The motion was Carried 82-5.

CW37-21 Moved by: Councillor Robinson Seconded by: Councillor Paterson

That the 2021 proposed budget be adopted as amended, by proposing a levy increase of 2.11% with the 1% funding to be dedicated to the Affordable Housing fund coming from the one-time funding reserve for 2021; and

That a By-law be brought forward to adopt the Estimates of Revenues and Expenditures for the Year 2021 requiring a total to be raised from taxation in 2021 of \$62,342,800.

Councillor Soever requested a recorded vote.

In favour: S. Mackey 3, D. Burley 6, S. Carleton 5, P. McQueen 5, S. Paterson 3, S. Hicks 3, B. Clumpus 6, S. Keaveney 5, I. Boddy 8, B. O'Leary 8, J. Woodbury 3, B. Milne 3, A. Soever 7, R. Potter 6, C. Robinson 6, T. Hutchinson 5.

Opposed: A. Desai 5.

The motion Carried 82-5.

Other Business

There was none.

Adjournment

On motion of Councillors Clumpus and Burley, Committee of the Whole adjourned at 3:21 PM to the call of the Chair.

Selwyn Hicks, Warden

Heather Morrison, Clerk