

**MINUTES OF THE BUDGET MEETING OF COUNCIL
HELD IN COUNCIL CHAMBERS
ON MONDAY, APRIL 15, 2019 AT 6:30 PM**

PRESENT: MAYOR JOANNE SAVAGE
COUNCILLOR YVON DUHAIME
COUNCILLOR CHRISTOPHER FISHER
COUNCILLOR ROLAND LARABIE
COUNCILLOR LÉO MALETTE
COUNCILLOR DAN ROVEDA
COUNCILLOR JEREMY SÉGUIN
COUNCILLOR DENIS SÉNÉCAL
COUNCILLOR LISE SÉNÉCAL

ABSENT:

A) DECLARATION OF PECUNIARY INTEREST / DÉCLARATION D'INTÉRÊTS PÉCUNIAIRES

There were no pecuniary interests declared.

B) ADOPTION OF AGENDA / CONFIRMATION DE L'ORDRE DU JOUR

B-1 A resolution was passed to approve the Agenda.

No. 2019/118 Moved by: Councillor Duhaime
Seconded by: Councillor Seguin

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Agenda for the SPECIAL BUDGET meeting of Council held on April 15, 2019 be adopted as presented / amended.

CARRIED

C) BUDGET DELIBERATIONS CONTINUED

The Mayor opened the meeting highlighting that numerous supporting documents were distributed throughout the previous budget meetings. She further stated although there is no deadline for setting budgets, it would be optimal to set a budget as soon as possible and that this meeting is an opportunity for Councillors to ask questions and voice their requests before the finalization of the budget.

The CAO summarized previous budgetary discussions and made reference to the various documents which have been presented, in particular, the one concerning "Strategic Decision for Council". Incorporating previously agreed upon requests and adjustments into consideration, the proposed levy increase would be 5.74%. The CAO reminded council that capital projects and taxation are connected to budgets, it is important to finalize budgets so that projects can be tendered, and tax bills sent out.

The Mayor opened a round table discussion:

- Councillor Malette agreed with the proposed levy increase noting that delaying increases will only result in higher increases in the future,
- Councillor Seguin cited his approval of the 5.74% levy increase and requested additions which include (1) Boat launch in River Valley, (2) Sidewalks in Verner and (2) Youth Action Committee. This would bring the proposed tax levy up to 5.9% increase.
- Councillor L. Senecal inquired about the policing/emergency dispatching as of June 2019 and how will non-police emergencies be handled (i.e. roads washouts). The Director of Corporate Services advised that the fire dispatch (24hrs/day) will continue to provide the same service which they have done in the past. Councillor L. Senecal sought clarification regarding the replacement of an arena chiller which was budgeted at \$175,000, the Director of Community Services indicated that the item tender falls within the budgeted amount which also includes engineer costs.
- Councillor Fisher supported the proposed tax levy of 5.74% stating that we need major investment in aging infrastructure;
- Councillor Roveda supported the proposed 5.74% increase, indicating that we need to be financially prepared for the future citing upcoming cuts and changes in the Health Unit structure;

- Councillor L. Senecal sought clarification regarding the provincial funding (\$3.8 million) pertaining to the construction/maintenance cost of the new OPP building in Cache Bay. The CAO confirmed that province will be covering 48% of the provincial costs for the building and that additional funds will be recovered through the lease recapture agreement.
- Councillor Duhaime, inquired about the \$725,000 grant received under the Modernization Funding, the Treasurer provided details about the one-time funding
- The Treasurer clarified that the bulk of the costs for Public Works capital projects are funded through OCIF funding which would not impact the tax levy.
- The CAO cautioned that decreasing the amount of capital investment will erode operations and the proposed 5.74% only puts \$721,000 back into reserve fund of the current \$900,000
- Councillor Larabie, inquired what the proposed 5.74% tax increase represents for an average home in West Nipissing; a home valued at \$197,000 represents a \$63.00 increase. He agrees with the proposed 5.74% tax increase.
- Councillor D. Sénécal inquired if OCIF funding for the old Hwy 17 rehabilitation - \$261,000 which is funded by OCIF, if the funding could be diverted/shared to other project to which the CAO responded that the capital works budget has been reduced from \$310,000 to \$250,000 and old Hwy 17 has been on the books pre 2015, staff have indicated that Old Hwy 17 should be a priority, the Verner Public Work yard repairs is secondary
- The Lavigne Fire Hall is still being evaluated as to what work can be undertaken
- The Mayor questioned the Public Works Capital project for infrastructure which is budgeted at \$2.781 million for 2019, the Treasurer indicated that we had one-time top-up funding in 2018 to assist with various projects.
- Discussion ensued about the Fire Station Budget capital for 9 buildings
- The Mayor sought clarification regarding a number of matters, including gravel investment on roads versus traffic volumes; patching budgets, sidewalk repairs, street lights, snow blower, fire dispatching and public works fleet:
- Councillor L. Sénécal requested a list of planned/scheduled road rehabilitation and repairs for 2019
- Councillor Roveda cited that the future project of widening Coursol Road for sidewalk purposes should move forward a.s.a.p. for residents' safety and security reasons and staff could seek funding
- The CAO sought direction regarding the appetite to look at the proposed 5.9% with Councillor Séguin's proposed additions to the budget
- Councillor Séguin cautioned that going forward with a pay as you go budgeting model
- Councillor L. Sénécal listed various budgeting items that have been verbally approved noting items such as Food Bank rental support, Filles d'Isabelle rental support, WN Search & Rescue insurance payment, CANO and IPM, etc.
- Councillors Duhaime and D. Sénécal both suggested that some of \$900,000 reserve funds could be used to carry out various necessary projects thus reducing the proposed tax increase
- The CAO clarified that the intent of a reserve is to have funds available in the event of unforeseen expenditures.
- The Mayor sought consensus on taking \$100,000 out of reserve for the one-time IPM project to reduce the tax increase down to 5.11%; 3 councillors supported this initiative – this suggestion was not supported.
- Councillor Séguin sought assurances concerning the Verner Sidewalk and the Youth Action Committee funding
- Councillor Larabie asked that the River Valley boat launch be included in the municipality's insurance;
- Councillors Roveda and Fisher re-stated the need to look at remuneration for members of boards/committees;
- The Mayor made enquiries about library reserves and bylaw enforcement
- Councillor Duhaime requested the Public Works 5 Year Plan

The proposed increase of 5.74% will be brought forward at the next regular for a vote. It was requested to have updated budgetary reports for the next meeting.

D) **ADJOURNMENT / AJOURNEMENT**

It was agreed that the meeting be adjourned to Monday, April 15th at which time general discussions on an acceptable increase can continue.

D-1 A resolution was passed to adopt By-law **2019/34** to confirm the proceedings of Council at its Special Budget meeting.

No. 2019/119 Moved by: Councillor Duhaime
Seconded by: Councillor Séguin

BE IT RESOLVED THAT By-law No. **2019/34** being a By-law of the Municipality of West Nipissing to confirm the proceedings of Council at its meeting held on the 15th day of April 2019, shall come into force and take effect on the date it is passed.

CARRIED

D-2 A resolution was passed to adjourn the meeting.

No. 2019/120 Moved by: Councillor Malette
Seconded by: Councillor Duhaime

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the SPECIAL BUDGET meeting of Council held on April 15th, 2019 be adjourned.

CARRIED



JOANNE SAVAGE
MAYOR



JANICE DUPUIS
DEPUTY CLERK