Municipality of Shelburne

Naturally Yours

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SPECIAL SESSION OF THE 52nd COUNCIL
OF THE
MUNICIPALITY OF THE DISTRICT OF SHELBURNE
March 30, 2022

The Special Session of the 52nd Council of the Municipality of the District of Shelburne was held on Wednesday, March 30, 2022, commencing at 6:00 pm.

THOSE IN ATTENDANCE:
Warden Penny Smith
Deputy Warden Dale Richardson
Councillor Heidi Wagner
Councillor Ron Coole
Councillor Sherry Thorburn Irvine
Councillor Doris Townsend
Councillor Anthony Gosbee
Trudy Payne, CAO

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:
Warren MacLeod, Director of Economic Development
Erin Hartley, Director of Corporate Services (via Teams)
Adam Dedrick, Director of Recreation and Parks (via Teams)
Michelle Williams, Director of Finance (via Teams)

1. **CALL TO ORDER:**

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm by Warden Smith.

It was noted that item 2 (b) has been deferred to the next Council meeting.

2. **ADMINISTRATION:**
   a. 2022-23 Budget - Trudy Payne, CAO
   b. Accessible Pathway Design for Welkum Park RFP Award - Adam Dedrick, Director of Recreation and Parks - ***DEFERRED***

2(a) Trudy Payne, CAO, presented Council with the 2022-23 Budget staff report, noting that the following are the strategic priorities for the fiscal year 2022-2023 as determined by Council:

1. Infrastructure/Facilities
2. Planning
3. Recreation & Community Development
4. Economic Development
5. Administration
6. Finance

Ms. Payne reviewed the highlights from each of these categories, as outlined in her staff report, and provided details for the capital budget including the new municipal building.

She noted that the budget being presented to Council maintains the tax rates, maintains the interest rate at 10% - a rate that was reduced last two fiscals from 14% to aid residents and businesses during the pandemic, investment in programs such as Grants to Community Groups; low-income property tax exemption; community litter clean up, Emergency Assistance Fund, volunteer recognition and makes additional investments in economic development and in infrastructure improvements.

MOTION: 2022-23 OPERATING BUDGET

Being duly moved and seconded, be it resolved that, the Council of the Municipality of the District of Shelburne approve its 2022-2023 operating budget reflecting revenues and expenditures of $7,991,397.

- **MOTION CARRIED**

MOTION: 2022-23 TAX RATES

Being duly moved and seconded, be it resolved that, the Council of the Municipality of the District of Shelburne approve a 2022-2023 residential tax rate of $1.26 per $100 of assessment, resource tax rate of $1.26 per $100 of assessment, and commercial tax rate of $1.82 per $100 of assessment.

- **MOTION CARRIED**

MOTION: 2022-23 CAPITAL BUDGET AND FIVE-YEAR PLAN

Being duly moved and seconded, be it resolved that, the Council of the Municipality of the District of Shelburne approve its 2022-2023 capital budget reflecting expenditures of $5,670,615 and the proposed five- year plan.

- **MOTION CARRIED**

MOTION: 2022-23 INTEREST RATE

Being duly moved and seconded, be it resolved that, the Council of the Municipality of the District of Shelburne set the 2022 -2023 interest rate on all types of overdue accounts (tax, sewer, area rate, tipping, septage, and so forth) to be 10%.

- **MOTION CARRIED**

Warden Smith read aloud the Warden's Budget Address including operational and capital highlights as well as community initiatives, strategies and projects for the upcoming year.

Discussion was held regarding Roseway Hospital X-Ray machine, low-income exemption, assessment appeals, and deed transfer tax.

Warden Smith thanked her fellow Councillors and staff for their work on this budget.

10. ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:39 pm. The next Council meeting will be held on Wednesday, April 13, 2022, in the Shelburne Municipal Council Chambers.

April 21/22
Date

Penny Smith
Penny Smith, Warden

E Hartley
Erin Hartley, Director of Corporate Services

Municipality of Shelburne

WARDEN'S 2022-23 BUDGET ADDRESS

March 30, 2022

I am pleased to outline the continued plans and priorities that the 52nd Council of the Municipality of the District of Shelburne will undertake in the 2022-23 fiscal year. The COVID pandemic has been at the forefront throughout this Council's term and as we look forward to spring and a new fiscal year, it is our hope that the pandemic will be behind all of us as we continue to move forward.

The following six priorities, with highlights for each, will enable the Municipality to provide strategic investments in the following areas through its operating and capital budgets:

1. Infrastructure/Facilities
2. Planning
3. Recreation and Community Development
4. Economic Development
5. Administration
6. Finance

INFRASTRUCTURE/FACILITIES

Completion of New Building – It has been quite a journey and Council is pleased to advise that the new building is progressing and it is anticipated to be completed in November of this year. We look forward to moving into the building with our Federal tenants and continuing to serve our residents at this new location. At this time, the Province continues to remain a tenant at the current location. Keeping the Provincial offices local is paramount; they provide essential services to our residents, employment opportunities and they keep our communities safe.

The new building will meet Rick Hansen accessibility standards, be more energy efficient and include electric vehicle (EV) charging stations and solar panels, as we continue to promote and support accessible and green initiatives.

The amount approved for the new municipal building is $7.3 million, with $4 million being borrowed and the remaining to come from the Municipality's reserves.

Options for Current Building - Staff have been investigating the possibility of alternative uses for the current building. The first step is the completion of a Facility Assessment Report, which will be carried out in the near future. We will continue to work with our Provincial partners to help ensure their services remain in the area.

Sludge Remediation at Sewage Treatment Plant – The Municipality has recently awarded a contract to GFL Environmental for sludge remediation at a cost of approximately $200,000. This will ensure the continued effectiveness and efficiency of the Sewage Treatment Plant.

Improvements to the West Green Harbour Ballfield – The Recreation Department continues to work with a local community group to ensure the use of this facility by residents and tourists alike.

Final Phase of Accessibility Upgrades to Welkum Park – Council is very pleased to be completing the final phase of accessibility upgrades to Welkum Park, a full year ahead of schedule. The park will include an accessible pathway to enable access to all amenities and features of the park. We look forward to celebrating this milestone and becoming one step closer to an inclusive and accessible community for everyone.

Investing in Trails – Trails are an important infrastructure and economic driver in the community. Council will continue to support and financially invest in the great work being done by the Shelburne County Woodlands Multi-Use Trail Association as well as investing in our own trails, including the preparation of the Jordan River Trail conversion and bridge upgrades.

PLANNING

Governance and Boundary Review – Municipalities are mandated by the Province to carry out a Governance and Boundary Review every eight years. This review is to determine the size of Council and the polling district boundaries. The process will involve public consultation. The review must be completed by December, 2022.

Mandatory/Regional Planning – Upon receiving funding from the Province, eight municipal units in the Tri-County have been working together to establish a Regional Planning entity that would be responsible to offer sustainable and consistent planning services across the region. Part of its mandate will be to ensure that planning documents adhere to the mandatory planning standards set forth by the Province.

Finalizing and Implementing the Eastern Shelburne County Accessibility Plan – The Eastern Shelburne County Accessibility Plan is now completed and will be presented to all three Councils in the near future. This plan will help guide the Municipality as we all strive to reach the goal of an accessible and inclusive Nova Scotia by 2030, as per the Accessibility Act.

RECREATION AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Updating the Recreation Strategic Plan – March 2023 - The Recreation Department will be updating its Recreation Strategic Plan. The Department will provide opportunities for the community to participate.

Supporting Community Groups – Our community groups are a vital component in providing a quality of life to our residents that is second to none. The Municipality is pleased to continue to provide financial and other support to these organizations through the continued Grants to Organization Program and the Emergency Assistance Fund. The budget also reflects CPI at 4.8% for the volunteer fire departments. Last year, it was 2%.

Low Income Property Tax Exemption – Council maintains $50,000 in this year's budget. In 2020-2021 this program assisted over 150 of our residents.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Develop a Housing and Business Development Strategy – It is anticipated that the Provincial Housing Strategy will be completed this fall. The Municipality will begin developing its own housing and business development strategy to help identify its current assets to potentially expand business development opportunities and help address the housing needs in our area.

Conducting Marine Research – Staff will continue to work with the local Nova Scotia Community College and others to identify potential fishing and marine initiatives that will promote and grow the industry.

ADMINISTRATION

Asset Management Training and Implementation – In partnership with the AIM (Atlantic Infrastructure Management) Network the Municipality has completed an asset management plan, which outlines the actions to be taken by the Municipality to ensure its infrastructure and other assets are maintained at an acceptable standard to ensure consistent service delivery to our residents. Examples include the sewage treatment plant, the current and new municipal buildings and trails and parks. Our plan indicates that the Municipality should invest a minimum of $425,000 annually to maintain and ensure the expectant lifespan of our assets.

Investing in Electronic Records Management – An Electronic Records Management is a cost effective way to manage the Municipality's thousands of files. It will help in getting information or data quickly and reliably.

It is also another green initiative of the Municipality - less paper equals being greener.

FINANCE

Financial Model to Aid in Future Planning – Developing a financial model will enable Council and staff in their strategic planning to test various scenarios and calculate the costs for potential new projects, enabling us to determine where to allocate financial resources to help meet the needs of our residents.

OTHER AREAS OF INTEREST

Cellular Service – High quality internet and cellular services are the infrastructure backbone of a progressive and successful community. With excellent internet now available to our residents and businesses, some have cancelled their landlines and are relying solely on their cellular devices to communicate. We understand from a financial and convenience perspective why many would choose to do this; however, this poses a huge safety concern in that they may be unable to reach the people or services they need during an emergency or crisis.

The Municipality will continue to advocate to the Province for the need to improve this vital piece of infrastructure.

Health Care – The Municipality continues to invest in health care through funding a part-time Community Navigator position and financially contributing to initiatives such as scholarships, locum funding and recruitment/retention.

Additionally, Council maintains its commitment of $53,000 towards the purchase of a new digital x-ray machine for Roseway Hospital.

Renewable Energy – The Municipality supports the goal of the Province of Nova Scotia to provide 80% of its energy through renewable energy sources by 2030. Some of the ways Council is working towards helping to achieve this goal is by installing EV charging stations and solar panels at the new municipal building, supporting and partnering with Sou'West Nova Transit Association in their endeavour to seek funding to install additional EV charging stations to be used by their vehicle fleet at the new building (funding approval pending), the recent purchase of a hybrid vehicle for Inspection Services and the implementation of a

records management system. All of these initiatives get us one step closer to reaching the Province's goal.

The Municipality recognizes the benefits of renewable energy and will continue to support ways to reduce our carbon footprint.

Municipal Relations and Partnerships - Council continues to reach out and participate in discussions and potential projects with our neighbouring municipalities. These include regional planning, education sessions on municipal modernization, the fisheries, health care and housing, to name a few. The Municipality is committed to providing services to our residents as efficiently and effectively as possible.

This Council is also committed to working with various partners and stakeholders such as businesses, community groups, provincial and federal governments, the Nova Scotia Federation of Municipalities, the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, other agencies, and our residents. We can accomplish so much more by working together.

2022-2023 Budget

The Municipality's 2022-23 operating budget is set at $7,991,397. Its capital budget is set at $5,670,615.

Council will maintain the current residential and resource tax rate of $1.26 per $100 of assessment and current commercial tax rate of $1.82 per $100 of assessment. One cent of residential and resource generates $41,618; one cent commercial generates $3,428.

Council will continue to fund reserves contributing $100,000 to the capital reserves and $79,384 to operating reserves.

Council will maintain the interest rate charged on tax bills at 10% (pre COVID was 14%).

At the end of fiscal 2021-2022, the Municipality's total reserves is anticipated to be approximately $6,875,681. Of that amount:

- $57,757 is earmarked for capital for fire departments
- $37,452 for a special purpose reserve for the Lockeport Fire Truck
- $53,000 for the digital x-ray machine

These reserves are estimates only as our final audited statements will not be completed for the 2021-22 fiscal year until July, 2022.

With this budget, it is Council's goal to continue to maintain and improve services our residents and businesses have come to expect, while strategically investing in our community within our fiscal resources.

Council's five-year Capital Plan involves future investments in infrastructure and various projects. To accomplish this plan, it will involve an investment of an estimated $9,892,218 ($5,114,253) represents completing the new municipal building), representing a combination of operating and capital reserves, borrowing, gas tax funds and grants and funds from other agencies. Although Council can only approve an annual operating and capital budget, it must forecast upcoming maintenance, operations, refurbishing, replacement, or decommissioning costs to make informed decisions and to financially plan to meet the needs for not only today but for the future.

Although Council has maintained the same tax rate for nine years, costs continue to rise. Council will consider all potential sources of revenue to continue to maintain and improve service delivery to our residents.

As I conclude my remarks, I must always recognize the work being done by Municipal staff. They too have endured another COVID year and the challenges that it has brought forth. They have worked tirelessly from home and from the

office to keep the Municipal operations running seamlessly. On behalf of Council, please know how much you are appreciated. We thank you for everything you do.

To my fellow Councillors, a lot has happened over the past year. In our second year as the 52nd Council, I believe we have all learned a great deal about Council's mandate, about expectations, about each other. I look forward to celebrating many achievements together in the coming year.

And to the residents of the Municipality, your Council will continue to serve you to the best of our ability. I hope you will join us in looking forward to the next fiscal year with optimism and a progressive spirit as we celebrate the Municipality of the District of Shelburne being a great place to live, work and thrive.

Warden Penny Smith