

TOWNSHIP OF ADMASTON/BROMLEY
FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE
MINUTES

Monday, January 15, 2024

At 5:00 p.m.

Present – Michael Donohue, Angela Field, Keith Gourley and Brian Hamilton.
Kevin LeGris attended virtually.

Staff present – CAO/Clerk Charkavi, Treasurer-Deputy CAO/Clerk Coughlin.

Also present was Audio/Video System Specialist Nate Maclsaac.

1. Michael Donohue called the meeting to order at 5:06 pm.
2. Declaration of Pecuniary Interest – None.
3. Approval of Agenda – January 15, 2024

Resolution No. 01/01/24

Moved by Brian Hamilton

Seconded by Keith Gourley

BE IT RESOLVED that the Committee approve the agenda for the January 15, 2024, Finance and Administration Committee meeting.

“Carried”

4. First Review of 2024 Draft Budget

Resolution No. 02/01/24

Moved by Keith Gourley

Seconded by Brian Hamilton

BE IT RESOLVED that the Finance & Administration Committee receive the First Review of the 2024 Draft Budget.

“Carried”

Staff and Committee reviewed the Budget document circulated. Ms. Coughlin noted that this budget has been very difficult to prepare and noted that at this time there is a 24% levy increase. She also noted that staff have already made significant cuts to the budget to bring it down to 24% and listed those items already cut. She further noted that if nothing changed and this budget was passed that it would equate to approximately \$384 property tax increase for a home assessed at \$206,000 or \$32 per month. She also noted that the growth has already been incorporated into the 2024 budget.

Staff began the review of the revenues. Most notable was the decrease in government grants, particularly the provincial OCIF funding which is down \$86,000 and the federal grants are down a total of \$6700. Other revenue streams such as reserves are also down as the township has limited funds in reserves.

Staff reviewed the expenditures beginning with the election which sees council prepare for the 2026 election by setting money aside. Next is the Administration Expenses. Staff explained what makes up this total specifically the wages, there is a component in there for a part-time person to assist with the growing needs of the office.

Council had questions on By-Law Enforcement and property standards, as well as what was involved with the Agricultural Veterinary Unit.

There was a discussion on Economic Development and the Strategic Planning Exercise planned for 2024.

Council also discussed the amount of funding available for council conferences and conventions.

Finally the review ended with Building and Sewage. Council had an opportunity to question the revenues. It was suggested that dog licencing increase to \$2500.

For the expenditures reviewed, the staff cell phone allotment was budgeted for \$40 per month per employee that is required to have a cell phone, that was reduced back to the original amount of \$20 per month per employee. Next item pertained to fuel and it was suggested that new quotes/tenders be received. Staff responded that this was already being discussed for next year, but could push it up for 2024. There were no changes suggested for Building and Sewage.

Grants/Donations to organizations were reviewed. The Whitewater SnoGoers had requested a grant and an in-kind donation. Committee reviewed and decided that this is not exactly what the grants/donations is for, but settled on providing funding of \$250 to the Whitewater SnoGoers and for staff to see if there was any way to assist them with an in-kind gesture. Committee also requested that staff create a Grants/Donations Policy to make it clear who can apply and for what.

Committee ended the deliberations with Building and Sewage. After the recess the next item to be reviewed will be the Fire Department.

7. Recess

Resolution No. 03/01/24

Moved by: Angela Field

Seconded by: Keith Gourley

BE IT RESOLVED that the January 15, 2024 Township of Admaston/Bromley Finance and Administration Committee meeting be recessed at 8:09 p.m. and will resume on January 19 at 11:30 am.

“Carried”

8. January 19, 2024

Resolution No. 04/01/24

Moved by: Keith Gourley

Seconded by: Brian Hamilton

BE IT RESOLVED that the January 15, 2024 Township of Admaston/Bromley Finance and Administration Committee resume on January 19 at 11:30 am.

“Carried”

All members of the Committee were present, Kevin LeGris attended virtually.

Staff members present were CAO/Clerk Charkavi, Treasurer-Deputy CAO/Clerk Coughlin, Public Works Superintendent (Acting) Visinski and Fire Chief McHale.

Ms. Coughlin began the meeting by reviewing the changes noted from January 15, 2024.

The Fire Department’s budget was discussed. Chief McHale highlighted the increases to the budget. He noted that there was a request to increase standby pay on weekends, there were radios that needed to be replaced, training has increased due to the needs and requirements.

Ms. Coughlin noted that the reserve amount for the vehicles is unchanged from 2023. The Cancer Care Program through recommendations from the Ministry of Labour were discussed, these have not been added to any regulations so difficult to budget for.

Chief McHale noted that Bunker Gear and Helmets now have an expiry date so this adds to municipal budgets.

Ms. Coughlin reviewed the Public Works Department’s budget.

Mayor Donohue wondered what was the main cause driving the increase to the Public Works budget, Mr. Visinski replied the cost of materials. Mr. Visinski also reviewed the culvert replacement program.

Ms. Coughlin reviewed the Capital Budget for 2024. Items included Streetscan, a new 1 tonne truck and the replacement of the sand dome at the Bromley garage. She also reviewed the payment schedule for the capital plan for 2024.

Committee reviewed the Fire Department and the Public Works budgets more indepth.

The Fire Department items that were questioned were the safety equipment and wondering why it was so high? Chief McHale responded that staff are working towards implanting recommendations from the Ministry of Labour for cancer prevention. Treasurer-Deputy CAO/Clerk Coughlin noted that these are only recommendations and not yet legislation.

Other questions surrounded the replacement of helmets and bunker gear. Chief McHale responded that the helmets and bunker gear now have warranties on them and cannot be used once expired. The budget includes items that need to be replaced. Mayor Donohue wondered if these should be ordered on intervals rather than such a large order in one year. Deputy Mayor Hamilton suggested a reserve for these costs.

Staff reviewed in further detail the Public Works budget.

Mayor Donohue noted that this budget configuration is much more transparent.

There were discussions on costs of insurance and what is driving up the costs for this budget. Driving up this budget are the cost of materials and maintenance.

Discussion was had on capital maintenance program, this was funded by reserves in the past but Treasurer stated this should have been funded by taxation, now reserves are low and all costs will have to be funded by an increase to property taxes. The reserves were being used as a revenue stream for projects.

The culvert maintenance program was discussed, staff will scale it back. Committee wanted to ensure that all risks were being dealt with concerning culverts, staff replied that the worst ones will be dealt with.

The Sand Shed in the north (Bromley) end was discussed, it has been failing for many years and is now at a point of disrepair and must be replaced.

Nate MacIsaac left the meeting at 1:42 pm.

Committee had a few more questions for Chief McHale concerning costs associated with training and equipment.

Committee had a few more questions for Public Works concerning the use of calcium and how the budget is now depicting costs.

Committee reviewed the Waste Management budget.

Committee reviewed the Library budget.

Resolution No. 05/01/24

Moved by: Keith Gourley

Seconded by: Brian Hamilton

BE IT RESOLVED that the January 19, 2024 Township of Admaston/Bromley Finance and Administration Committee continued from January 15, 2024, be recessed at 2:49 p.m and will resume on January 26, 2024 at 10:00 am.

“Carried”

Resolution No. 06/01/24

Moved by: Brian Hamilton

Seconded by: Keith Gourley

BE IT RESOLVED that the January 19, 2024 Township of Admaston/Bromley Finance and Administration Committee resume on January 26 at 10:00 am.

“Carried”

All members of the Committee were present, Mayor Donohue arrived at 10:30 a.m.

Staff members present were CAO/Clerk Charkavi, Treasurer-Deputy CAO/Clerk Coughlin, Public Works Superintendent (Acting) Visinski and Fire Chief McHale.

Committee reviewed the Admaston/Bromley Public Library Boad Budget. Board members present were Lynn Agnew (Board Treasurer) and Susan Patterson-O’Neil (Board Chair) attended in person while Jane Wouda attended virtually, arriving at 10:11 a.m.

Board members discussed the budget and what was driving up the costs, which was mainly wages as the library is trying to operate with no one working alone.

Board members explained the purchase of a new photocopier, noting that they believed they had a surplus when in fact they did not. They will have to figure out how to pay for this item.

Committee and board members discussed grants and how users are tracked.

CEO Wouda noted that the school treats them very well, providing free rent and cleaning and use after school and on weekends.

Committee thank the Board members and the CEO for attending.

Treasurer-Deputy CAO/Clerk Coughlin reviewed the cuts that were suggested and recommended by staff:

- Cut the part-time employee for Administration
- Defer the new photocopier
- Reduce staff conventions
- Defer some of the courses for the Fire Department
- Defer some of the safety equipment (Cancer Care Program) for the Fire Department
- Defer the 1-tonne truck for Public Works
- Max library request at 20% over 2023

Committee questioned what the training for fire was. Chief McHale noted for the electric vehicles. Since the presentation of the budget the course is now going to be offered in Bonnechere Valley which will reduce the costs associated so this can be cut.

Chief McHale noted that the conference cost can also be cut as he will not be attending this year.

Committee was satisfied with maintaining same principle as last year concerning library, budget increase will be increase to library levy over 2023.

For Public Works, Mayor wanted to confirm that the same level of service will be provided. Staff replied yes, only that the capital maintenance program will be reduced this year.

Committee discussed township equipment and vehicles. Ms. Coughlin noted that the budget will demonstrate the costs associated and help understand what is costing us what and that it should be replaced. The vehicle that needs replacing is the V34 a 2018 which is a $\frac{3}{4}$ tonne, it should be replaced with a 1 tonne. V34 should have been replaced in 2023 but staff held it off until the 2024 budget. It was explained why a 1 tonne is a better vehicle for the required use.

Committee reviewed the capital budget. Councillor LeGris wondered why the Township was paying for Streetscan again when it had already been completed. Staff and the Mayor replied that this scan of streets should be done every 5 years. The last time it was done was in 2018. Ms. Coughlin noted that this scan will also include the gravel roads, not their condition but where they are in the Township.

Committee discussed the replacement of the sand dome. Committee was not aware that the sand dome was in such bad repair. Public Works Superintendent Visinski noted that the roof is falling in parts and that the shingles can no longer be replaced and that the opening at the top can no longer be utilized to drop sand into the dome.

Committee discussed other ways of earning revenue such as Development Charges, increasing Waste costs at the landfill.

Committee discussed the donations and grants to organizations. The donation request to the Whitewater SnoDrifters was not approved, however the inkind donation of a used culvert was approved. All other donations/grants submitted were approved and most were kept at status quo.

Committee discussed cuts to the Fire Department budget. The increase in standby was not denied but reduced, courses, conferences and safety equipment were also reduced.

Committee finished its review of the 2024 budget.

Resolution No. 07/01/24

Moved by: Keith Gourley

Seconded by: Brian Hamilton

BE IT RESOLVED that the Finance & Administration Committee recommend to Council to adopt the 2024 Budget as reviewed at its final budget meeting on January 26, 2024 at a Special Council Meeting scheduled for February 20, 2024.
"Carried"

Resolution No. 08/01/24

Moved by: Angeal Field

Seconded by: Kevin LeGris

BE IT RESOLVED that the January 26, 2024 Township of Admaston/Bromley Finance and Administration Committee meeting be adjourned 3:01 pm.
"Carried"