

TOWNSHIP OF ADMASTON/BROMLEY  
FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE

MINUTES

**Thursday, November 21, 2024**

**At 5:05 p.m.**

Present – Mayor Michael Donohue, Brian Hamilton, Angela Field, Keith Gourley and Kevin Legris

Staff present – CAO/Clerk Charkavi, Treasurer-Deputy CAO/Clerk Coughlin, and Finance Clerk Fraser

Guest – None.

1. Mayor Michael Donohue called the meeting to order at 5:05 p.m.
2. Declaration of Pecuniary Interest – None.
3. Approval of Agenda – November 21, 2024

**Resolution No. 09/11/24**

Moved by Brian Hamilton

Seconded by Keith Gourley

BE IT RESOLVED that the Committee approve the agenda for the November 21, 2024 Finance and Administration Committee meeting.

“Carried”

4. Minutes
  - October 3, 2024

**Resolution No. 10/11/24**

Moved by Kevin LeGris

Seconded by Angela Field

BE IT RESOLVED that the Finance & Administration Committee approve the following Committee minutes:

- November 7, 2024

“Carried”

5. Draft Reserve Policy

Treasurer-Deputy CAO/Clerk Coughlin review the report she had included with the revised reserve policy. The target limits of several of the reserves had been adjusted as per the last meeting and changes were highlighted in yellow.

The limits had been adjusted to two times the annual municipal levy as proposed and she reinforced that the contributions would increase incrementally each year, recognizing that some years this might not be viable.

Treasurer-Deputy CAO/Clerk Coughlin confirmed that any year end surplus would go toward that working department.

Mayor Donohue had a recommendation for a clause # 4 of the reserve policy and that was

“In the development of the budget and consistent with annual reporting, Council may consider adjustment to the levy requirements for reserves based on performance from the previous year”

**Resolution No. 11/11/24**

Moved by Keith Gourley

Seconded by Brian Hamilton

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Committee approve the Reserve and Restricted Reserve

Policy, as presented at the November 21, 2024 meeting;

AND BE IT RESOLVED THAT Committee recommend to Council to adopt the Reserve and Restricted Reserve Policy as presented and amended at the November 21, 2024 Committee meeting

“Carried”

6. 2025 Draft Budget

i. 2025 Budget Report

Treasurer-Deputy CAO/Clerk Coughlin reviewed her report and explained before the onset of compiling the budget for 2025, the township received notification of several items that would have a direct impact on the municipal levy for the upcoming year.

Like 2024, the township received notification from Ontario Community Infrastructure Fund (OCIF) that the municipalities 2025 grant allocation was reduced again by another 15% or \$73,848.00 (similar to 2024). This equates to 2.16% tax levy implication.

In July 2024, the O.P.P. notified all municipalities serviced by the O.P.P. that they had ratified new collective agreements with their uniform and civilian workforce. The agreements took effect January 1, 2023 through to December 31, 2026. The letter identified year-over-year increase. In total, the O.P.P. service will cost ratepayers an additional \$84,845.00 in 2025 calendar year which is the equivalent of 2.49% tax levy increase.

On April 1, 2024, the Community Safety and Policing Act, 2019 (CSPA) came into force, replacing the previous Police Service Act. This resulted in the existing Police Service Board being disbanded and the creation of a new board called the “Renfrew and Area OPP Detachment Board,”. The new board provided staff with their estimated budgetary requirements for 2025. Although staff / council continue to work with the board and the board members to come to a mutually agreeable cost sharing method, all indications are that the 2025 budget for the new board will

be split evenly between all seven (7) municipalities. The net impact of the creation of this new board results in an additional \$12,077.71 over 2024 budget or 0.35% tax levy increase.

In November 2024, the Finance & Administration committee recommended to council to adopt a 2.81% COLA adjustment. This resulted in a net increase to wages and benefits of approximately \$53,300 or 1.56% tax levy increase.

As the township transitions to the new Blue Box model July 1, 2025, staff anticipate a 50% reduction in grant funding typically received from Stewardship Ontario. That reduction has been reflected in the budget and results in \$29,168 or 0.85% tax levy increase.

Lastly, the construction of a new Sand / Salt Shed at the Cobden garage. The project was to be financed by a combination of grant contributions through the Canada Community Building Fund and by debenture. The debenture was finalized in 2024 with payments commencing in 2025. This new debenture payment results in an additional \$18,807.00 to be raised through taxation to cover those debenture payments or 0.55% tax levy increase.

Before taking into account any new contributions to reserves, any new operating expenses or capital requirements identified for the 2025 year, the starting point 2025 tax levy increase is 7.96%.

ii. 2025 Consolidated Budget

The 2025 draft budget is a consolidation of all budgetary requests submitted by department heads.

Included in the 2025 budget are new contributions to reserves to help meet the

township future needs for asset replacement costs. The Asset Management Planning for Municipal Infrastructure Regulation O.Reg. 588/17 requires municipalities identify lifecycle activities based on the options they have considered. In addition, the financial component of the strategy must include estimated costs of the identified lifecycle activities, a provision for consulting services has been included in the 2025 budget to meet this reporting deadline.

Treasurer-Deputy CAO/Clerk Coughlin started to review the revenue section of the proposed 2025 budget.

Mayor Donohue questioned the Fire Revenue pertaining to the Fire Calls and there being a significant increase over the 2024 revenue. Treasurer-Deputy CAO/Clerk Coughlin explained there were substantial legacy revenues that were being collected in 2024, but the revenue for 2025 would be more static once those legacy revenues were collected.

Deputy Mayor Hamilton recognized the \$73,000 reduction in OCIF funding and asked for confirmation that that was reflective and part of the tax levy impact (7.96%) discussed in Treasurer-Deputy CAO/Clerk Coughlin's report.

Treasurer-Deputy CAO/Clerk Coughlin started to review a few sections of the expenditure section of the proposed 2025 budget. She went into detail with a few of the sections indicating why there were increases, decreases or reallocations. She highlighted the areas that were previously discussed in the report.

Councillor Gourley mentioned the increase in the Council section of the proposed budget, which Treasurer-Deputy CAO/Clerk Coughlin explained to be for proposed conventions and meetings and capital costs, which the capital costs would be discussed later on in the presentation.

Treasurer-Deputy CAO/Clerk Coughlin asked if prior to beginning the Fire and Public Works presentation of the expenditures if it was a good time to recess, so discussions were going to resume for the presentation the following meeting.

7. Next meeting - November 22, 2024 12:00 – 3:00 pm (Budget)

8. Adjournment

#### **Resolution No. 12/11/24**

Moved by Keith Gourley

Seconded by Brian Hamilton

BE IT RESOLVED that the November 21, 2024, Township of Admaston/Bromley Finance & Administration Committee meeting be recessed at 6:59 p.m.

“Carried”

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Chair

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CAO/Clerk

TOWNSHIP OF ADMASTON/BROMLEY  
FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE

MINUTES

**Friday, November 22, 2024**

**At 12:00 p.m.**

Present – Mayor Michael Donohue, Brian Hamilton, Angela Field, Keith Gourley and Kevin Legris

Staff present – CAO/Clerk Charkavi, Treasurer-Deputy CAO/Clerk Coughlin, Public Works Superintendent Visinski, Fire Chief McHale and Finance Clerk Fraser

*Angela Field arrived late at 1:03pm*

Guest – None.

Mayor Michael Donohue called the recessed meeting to order at 12:15 p.m.

6. 2025 Draft Budget

ii. 2025 Consolidated Budget

Treasurer-Deputy CAO/Clerk Coughlin resumed discussions of the expenditure portion of the proposed 2025 budget. She would start with the Fire Department expenditures with the department head, Fire Chief McHale. After reviewing expenditures, Mayor Donohue opened the floor for clarification as this was only the presentation.

Regarding fire department expenditures, Mayor Donohue requested.

- the dispatch and call taking/alert numbers be closer to actuals for the deliberation.
- Another clarification he wanted was regarding the fire small tools expense, he wanted a better explanation of what was considered a small tool and safety equipment.
- He requested an up to date running total of the volunteer firefighters' actuals for the deliberations to have a better understanding of the wage's expenditure.
- He asked if there was a way to divide the certification and training over two budgets, CAO/Clerk Charkavi expressed her concern with this as there is a provincial requirement to have all firefighters trained to a Level II by July 2026 and she was worried about proctor availability if we left it until next budget year.

Treasurer-Deputy CAO/Clerk Coughlin continued with the Public Works Department expenditure portion of the proposed 2025 budget with the department head, Public Works Superintendent Visinski. After reviewing expenditures, Mayor Donohue opened the floor for clarification as this was only the presentation.

- Treasurer-Deputy CAO/Clerk Coughlin explained that there was not much difference in wages and benefits.
- Capital maintenance taken from capital budget to operating budget, crack sealing considered preventative maintenance which is still under the capital budget.
- Sand and salt are an increase in unit price not volume.
- Dust Control is an increase in unit price not volume (not more application)

Treasurer-Deputy CAO/Clerk Coughlin continued with the Roads Overhead expenditure portion of the proposed 2025 budget with the department head, Public Works Superintendent Visinski. After reviewing expenditures, Mayor Donohue opened the floor for clarification as this was only the presentation.

- Roads wages – supervision captured in each of the categories but does make up the bulk of wages.
- Bromley garage – need to revisit furnace fuel.
- Stone Rd – furnace fuel renamed to propane.

Treasurer-Deputy CAO/Clerk Coughlin continued with the Roads Overhead expenditure, moving onto the vehicle portion of the proposed 2025 budget with the department head, Public Works Superintendent Visinski. After reviewing expenditures, Mayor Donohue opened the floor for clarification as this was only the presentation.

- Some of the repairs and maintenance is as follows:
  - V23 Excavator – bucket
  - V28 Tandem Plow – Tires
  - V31 Grader – Bushings and bearings
  - V37 Backhoe – Cutting Edge
  - V38 Tandem Plow – Tires
  - V39 Sierra – Tires
- Remediation – AMP & StreetScan
- Reduction in Materials and increase in contracted services - the contracted services are required to be report to FIR so the spraying for wild parsnip is considered a contracted service.

Treasurer-Deputy CAO/Clerk Coughlin continued with the Waste Management expenditure of the proposed 2025 budget with the department head, Public Works Superintendent Visinski. After reviewing expenditures, Mayor Donohue opened the floor for clarification as this was only the presentation. There was some discussion on grinding of materials and the ability to compact agricultural plastic.

Treasurer-Deputy CAO/Clerk Coughlin continued with the Recreation Expenses expenditure of the proposed 2025 budget. Treasurer-Deputy CAO/Clerk Coughlin was asked to include the Recreation grant into the proposed budget as it will have an impact on the levy despite being awarded yet.

### iii. 2024 vs 2025 Budget Comparison

This was included as information for the committee to review prior to the budget deliberation in December.

### iv. 2025 Capital

Treasurer-Deputy CAO/Clerk Coughlin reviewed the draft capital budget for 2025. She went into detail as to each expenditure and what was being asked for.

#### Administration Section Requests

- Included provision of \$5,000 for Barr Line Community Center upgrades.
  - Items include Wi-Fi and general cleanup of the building.
- Budget includes \$5,200 for township office improvements.
  - Replacement of municipal signs and cleaning of council chambers
- Request for council chamber renovations includes new chairs.
- Identified levels of service need to be extended to include financial plans.
  - Current spending on asset replacement for roads, buildings, vehicles, and equipment evaluated.
  - Strategies to bridge funding deficits must be incorporated into the plan.
- Estimate to hire a consultant for completion is \$30,000 in the 2023 budget.
- Remaining funds from the asset management coordinator position estimated at \$20,000.
  - Council adopted recommendation to allocate remaining funds to reserves for the street strategic plan.
- Provision for zoning bylaw amendment exercise is \$15,000.
  - Project has been postponed due to county resource limitations.
  - Hopeful for assistance in 2025.

#### Fire Section Provisions

- \$10,000 allocated for replacement of three bunker gear sets.
- Fire hall roof repairs identified due to leakage during storms.
  - Band-aid fix applied, but precautionary budget for repairs included.
- Fire hall expansion scope reduced to \$75,000 for 2025. Amend capital program for Fire Hall Expansion. The new structure requires an engineer study and there are multiple decisions that still need to be made. Recommendation is to take \$75,000 out of reserves to put towards the study

- and obtaining quotes, then when ready to proceed replace the \$75,000 with the debenture at that time.

#### Public Works Section

- Replacement of a door planned for 2024, with another for 2025.
- Cobden garage furnace deemed in need of replacement.
- V29 tractor included for replacement this year; V36 pushed to 2025 budget.
- Stone Road Sand Salt shed included in budget, financed by debt and Canada Community Building fund.
- Road reconstruction includes Homes Road, Colton Road (approx. 2km), and Egan Line.

#### Funding for Capital Programs

- Taxation dollars now contributing to road repair funding.
  - Historical reliance on grants only for road programs.
  - Significant increase in funding compared to past years.

#### Preventative Maintenance Program

- New section added for preventative maintenance.
  - Tied to the exercise with Street Scan.
  - Maintained \$50,000 provision for preventative maintenance.

#### Culvert Replacement Program

- Increased provision for culvert replacement this year.
  - Difficulties in previous year due to high costs of culverts.
  - Limited funds for significant replacement tasks.

#### Street Scan Reports

- Street Scan program methodology integrated into asset management plan.
  - Produces 10-year forecasts for maintenance and rehabilitation.
- Current funding levels insufficient to maintain desired PCI.
  - Annual spending needed between \$1.4 million to \$2.1 million to maintain a PCI of 70.
  - Potential need to adjust PCI goal due to financial constraints.

#### Equipment Discussion

- Truck and tractor replacement considerations discussed.
  - Truck replacement deemed less urgent.
  - Tractor showing age and requiring mechanical repairs.
- Decision needed on which equipment to prioritize for replacement.
  - Both vehicles present costly repair risks if not replaced.

Past practice was moving some expenditures to operating rather than capital.

The preliminary tax levy increase for the 2025 calendar year is 26.02%. Staff stress this is a starting point and by no means an indication of the final tax levy increase that will be adopted by council.

Next week, Council will then hold a series of meetings to deliberate the budget and provide staff direction on the municipal tax levy to be brought to Council in late January for adoption. During the budget deliberations, staff will present Committee with several recommendations for consideration that may reduce the municipal tax levy increase.

There were a few points that the mayor wanted clarified prior to the deliberations. He asked that Treasurer-Deputy CAO/Clerk Coughlin to amend her working papers prior to their meeting on December 5 to allow for consideration and deliberation.

#### **Resolution No. 13/11/24**

Moved by Keith Gourley

Seconded by Brian Hamilton

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Committee receive the 2025 Draft Budget Report as information.

AND BE IT RESOLVED THAT Committee receive the Draft 2025 Consolidated Budget as information.

AND BE IT RESOLVED THAT Committee receive the Draft 2024 versus 2025 Budget Comparison.

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT Committee receive the Draft 2025 Capital Budget as information.

“Carried.”

7. Next meeting - December 5, 2024, 5:00 pm (Budget)

8. Adjournment

**Resolution No. 14/11/24**

Moved by Keith Gourley

Seconded by Brian Hamilton

BE IT RESOLVED that the November 21, 2024, Township of Admaston/Bromley Finance & Administration Committee meeting be recessed at 3:33 p.m. on November 22, 2024, and reconvene on December 5, 2024.

“Carried.”

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Chair

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CAO/Clerk

TOWNSHIP OF ADMASTON/BROMLEY  
FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE

MINUTES

**Thursday, December 5, 2024**

**At 5:00 p.m.**

Present – Mayor Michael Donohue, Brian Hamilton, Angela Field, Keith Gourley and Kevin Legris

Staff present – CAO/Clerk Charkavi, Treasurer-Deputy CAO/Clerk Coughlin, Public Works Superintendent Visinski, Fire Chief McHale and Finance Clerk Fraser

Guest – None.

Mayor Michael Donohue called the recessed meeting to order at 5:14 p.m.

6. 2025 Draft Budget

v. 2025 Donation Requests

**Resolution No. 01/12/24**

Moved by Angela Field

Seconded by Kevin Legris

BE IT RESOLVED that the Finance & Administration Committee receive the Draft 2025 Council Donation Requests.

“Carried.”

vi. 10 year - Debt Repayment Forecast

**Resolution No. 02/12/24**

Moved by Keith Gourley

Seconded by Brian Hamilton

BE IT RESOLVED that the Finance & Administration Committee receive the 10 – Year Debt Repayment Forecast as information

“Carried.”

vii. Discretionary & Obligatory Reserves

i. 2024 Estimated Reserve Balances

ii. 2025 Estimated Reserve Balances

**Resolution No. 03/12/24**

Moved by Brian Hamilton

Seconded by Keith Gourley

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Committee receive the 2024 and 2025 Estimated Reserve Balances.

“Carried.”

7. Draft Budget Deliberations

Committee began to deliberate the budget and provide staff direction on the municipal tax levy to be brought to Council in late January for adoption. During the next few meetings, staff will present Committee with several recommendations for consideration that may reduce the municipal tax levy increase.

Treasurer-Deputy CAO/Clerk Coughlin started the deliberations by providing the committee with an update of the changes made from v1 to v2 of the draft budget.

Treasurer-Deputy CAO/Clerk Coughlin was asked to provide the total revenue difference from 2024 to 2025. Treasurer-Deputy CAO/Clerk Coughlin stated the total revenue difference with taxation and reserve transfers excluded to assess shortfall.



Capturing all expenses and removing transfers from reserves is a resulting shortfall compared to last year. This represents the difference in revenue from last year to this year, the variance shown on version 1 of the draft budget is the taxation difference, which is a revenue difference this year from last year excluding transfers and debt.

Mayor Donohue had some concerns with the draft budget, a 26% increase in taxes is deemed unacceptable for the community. It represents about a 50% increase over two years. He suggested finding changes to the budget to alleviate the burden.

The Committee began going through line for line of the revenues to see if they could increase any lines to decrease the levy. With regards to supplementals, it was noted substantial surplus for general municipal from supplementals, budgeted vs actuals. The delta between supplementals and write-offs was revenue to general municipal. There was a suggestion to increase supplemental budget for 2025 from 2024 and there were no objections noted.

There were no other significant comments on other revenue categories.

After the committee reviewed the revenues, they proceeded to move onto the expense section of the draft budget. The committee worked through draft budget line by line focusing specifically on the items that impacted the levy.

The Committee got to a point where a recess was recommended. Next meeting the committee would tackle Fire and Roads expenses.

8. Next meeting - December 6, 2024, 11:30 a.m. (Budget)

9. Adjournment

#### **Resolution No. 04/12/24**

Moved by Kevin Legris

Seconded by Angela Field

BE IT RESOLVED that the December 5, 2024, Township of Admaston/Bromley Finance & Administration Committee meeting that began on November 21, 2024 be recessed at 7:30 p.m. and reconvene on December 6, 2024.

“Carried.”

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Chair

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CAO/Clerk

TOWNSHIP OF ADMASTON/BROMLEY  
FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE

MINUTES

**Friday, December 6, 2024**

**At 11:36 a.m.**

Present – Mayor Michael Donohue, Brian Hamilton, Angela Field, Keith Gourley and Kevin Legris

Staff present – CAO/Clerk Charkavi, Treasurer-Deputy CAO/Clerk Coughlin, Public Works Superintendent Visinski, Fire Chief McHale and Finance Clerk Fraser

Guest – None.

Mayor Michael Donohue called the recessed meeting to order at 11:36 a.m with appreciation for participation.

**7. Draft Budget Deliberations**

Committee continued to deliberate the budget and provide staff direction on the municipal tax levy to be brought to Council in late January for adoption. During the next few meetings, staff will present Committee with several recommendations for consideration that may reduce the municipal tax levy increase.

The committee started off it's discussion with Economic Strategy, and CAO/Clerk Charkavi reminded the group of the importance of maintaining some budget for strategic plan initiatives.

The committee proceeded to filter through the draft budget line by line. Each department discussion ensured.

The committee suggested that monthly building and sewage reports were important for growth while review the expenses for building and sewage.

While reviewing the expenses for the Fire Department, the committee discussed the firefighter certification. Fire Chief McHale anticipates certification training as a one-time cost. Every firefighter in Ontario will need to be certified, cost to certify 14 firefighters is included in the budget. Certification funding costs were suggested to be split over two years. Potential collaboration with Bonnechere Valley could reduce costs, there was a proposal to take some from levy and some from reserves for training, returning to reserves next year. Proposal to pay half of the cost from levy this year and half from reserves, allows for flexibility in the timing of the training. Training schedule will be conducted during regular training nights, estimated 185 hours required for the course.

Suggestion to return small tools budget to \$13,200 for 2025. \$13,000 budgeted last year for firefighting tools. Not all funds were spent; some remain available.

Committee member Hamilton supports adding \$7,500 for a new thermal imaging camera. Current expenditures total approximately \$15,500. Many small tools have already been purchased. Importance of having necessary equipment. Suggestion to maintain \$13,200 budget for small tools. Current allocation ending up at 52,000.

Suggestion to reduce the 2025 gravel budget, however, Public Works Supervisor Visinski anticipates an increase in material costs. Discussion on whether to keep current allocation or reduce. Current pricing is uncertain; maintain similar contracts however there will be a yearly increase. There was a discussion on community affordability and service needs, and a need to find savings to balance community needs. A discussion on shared services occurred. Openness to explore what can be done as a township. Suggestion to increase gravel contract gradually in 2026 due to the importance of maintaining back roads. A discussion on possible surface treatment options followed.

There were discussion on concerns and recommendations for the capital budget. Discussion on inventory management and potential risks. Suggestion to allocate money

to reserves for inventory assurance. Emphasis on the importance of having enough sand inventory. New sand dome expected to house more material and prevent shortages. Sand will be procured for the entire winter in one year, this is a change from the previous practice of additional purchases in February. Anticipated savings in the first year due to new procurement method. Expect to have enough supply for 2025, so there was a suggestion to reduce the 2025 sand budget which was a consensus among committee members on the reduction.

Treasurer Deputy CAO/Clerk Coughlin gave some insight into the capital budget. There was an inquiry about the capital budget for roads in 2024, the initial budget was \$1.83 million; current spending is \$432,000. Treasurer/Deputy CAO/Clerk Coughlin explained that were anticipated substantial savings in projects like McMahon Road and Mount St. Patrick. She gave clarification on the capture of savings in the capital line, there is an expectation of savings from completed projects and she gave a confirmation of savings from the Lynch Room culvert project.

There were some budget corrections that were identified. There had been an error indicated in the budget presentation that had been corrected for the Bromley Garage, the original budget was \$1,183,000. Treasurer Deputy CAO/Clerk Coughlin explained \$500,000 had been reallocated from Bromley Garage, current balance in GL for Bromley Garage is \$683,000 and it reflects the reallocation for capital expenses.

Discussion on vehicle replacements. Capital Expenditures were discussed, new equipment procurement outlined. New category for preventive maintenance introduced, driven by street scan program. Allocated \$50,000 for maintenance projects, including crack sealing and overlays. Street scan program analysis informs new reconstruction and maintenance projects. No longer referred to as "street scan," but results are used for future planning.

Treasurer Deputy CAO/Clerk Coughlin gave a tax levy update as deliberations are to continue but at this point it had reduced by 6.23%, which meant the current tax levy increase is 19.82% as at this date.

The Committee got to a point where a recess was recommended. Next meeting the committee would tackle Waste Management expenses.

8. Next meeting - December 12, 2024, 5:00 p.m. (Budget)

9. Adjournment

#### **Resolution No. 05/12/24**

Moved by Keith Gourley

Seconded by Brian Hamilton

BE IT RESOLVED that the December 6, 2024, Township of Admaston/Bromley Finance & Administration Committee meeting that began on November 21, 2024 be recessed at 3:26 p.m. and reconvene on December 12, 2024.

“Carried.”

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Chair

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CAO/Clerk

TOWNSHIP OF ADMASTON/BROMLEY  
FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE

MINUTES

**Thursday, December 12, 2024**

**At 5:00 p.m.**

Present – Mayor Michael Donohue, Brian Hamilton, Angela Field, Keith Gourley and Kevin Legris

Staff present – CAO/Clerk Charkavi, Treasurer-Deputy CAO/Clerk Coughlin, Public Works Superintendent Visinski and Finance Clerk Fraser

Guest – None.

Mayor Michael Donohue called the recessed meeting to order at 5:06 p.m.

**7. Draft Budget Deliberations**

Treasurer-Deputy CAO/Clerk Coughlin opened the meeting with an update from the last recessed meeting, review and minor adjustments made to PIL revenue section, she also reviewed the growth in the municipality and that information was added resulting in \$54,000 which is a 1.59% decrease from the tax levy. At this point the tax levy increase was reduced from 19.82% to 18.17%.

Budget deliberations started off with Committee discussing waste management. There was some discussion regarding the Transfer Station hours; Committee member Hamilton inquired as to the peak and busy times at the transfer stations and what is optimal for the recommendation. There was a suggestion to potentially close one to the transfer stations for bigger savings; this would impact maintenance, snow removal, equipment costs. Some committee members were not in support of expanding landfill hours this year, budget constraints and current economic climate were cited as reasons behind the opposition, there were concerns from about disagreements from the residents over the diminishment of services.

Waste Management budget recommendations were that things would remain status quo, no expansion or reduction of services, current funding to be maintained.

Waste Management changes for the 2026 budget would be the township is moving to bag tag system; implementation timeline is unclear at this point. Uncertainty about uptake and potential revenue, other municipalities' experiences vary. Uncertainty around 2025 recycling grant budget, grant expectation reduced more than contracted services costs, historically, grant didn't cover 100% of recycling costs, Municipality still responsible for costs until July 1st, 2025.

Agricultural Plastics grinding was discussed an investigation of agricultural plastics options planned for 2025. Not included in current budget, possibility of grinding or compacting being explored. Grinding budget of \$35,000 proposed for deferral to 2026,

however, there were concerns about stockpiling capacity without grinding. A grinding proposal was provided to the committee based on surrounding municipalities, grinding seen as a need to prolong landfill life,

Treasurer-Deputy CAO/Clerk Coughlin offered a clarification on budget allocation in waste management wages, public works attendance hours split between three locations, however, the Landfill attendance captured under waste management wages and benefits.

Treasurer-Deputy CAO/Clerk Coughlin informed the committee that the Capital budget still needs to be reviewed, but with the discussions thus far current budget increase stands at 17.62% before capital considerations.

The committee had a discussion on replacing a pickup truck, as \$85,000 had been budgeted for a new truck. There was a debate between half ton and three-quarter-ton options, as a three-quarters ton currently priced similarly to half ton.

The committee also had a discussion around tractor replacement. The current tractor is from around 2014 with about 5,000 hours, it is experiencing front-end issues.

The replacement cost is estimated at \$175,000 for both truck and tractor. The committee talked about future vehicle replacement considerations for 2026.

Committee expressed concerns about deferring replacements, there is a risk of multiple vehicles breaking down simultaneously. It was discussed as a potential loss of residual value on aging equipment. There was a debate on prioritizing truck vs. tractor replacement. Some council members suggest replacing one this year, one next year and others argue for replacing both to avoid future issues

Discussion continued amongst committee members where consideration was given in deferring expenses over two years. There was concern about not spending enough and impacting next year's budget. It was mentioned that a loan of \$50,000 matures in 2025, providing some financial latitude. It was consensus of the committee to leave proposed items in the budget

Committee had some discussion around the preventative maintenance and culvert replacement programs potentially misallocated as capital. These programs have substantial internal wage components. The culvert replacement program is relatively new, introduced in late 2023/2024 and the preventative maintenance program has evolved as it now focuses on single surface treatments as per street scan recommendations. Previous preventative maintenance activities (crack sealing, shouldering) moved to operating budget

Committee continued their discussion surrounding the culvert replacement program. Public Works Supervisor Visinski stated that \$65,000 likely to be spent on in-house materials and \$10,000 had been allocated for contracted services, there was 1,000 hours of staff time allocated. This discussion entered into a debate about Capital vs Maintenance amongst committee members. Committee inquired as to whether the culvert replacement should be under maintenance rather than capital.

After a lengthy discussion of capital, the Treasurer/Deputy Clerk/CAO Coughlin notes that \$250,000 less spending than projected is not from taxation. Surplus mainly from unspent OSEF and CBCBF money, these funds can offset future projects but are not general surplus. She expressed the difficulty in providing accurate surplus estimate due to pending adjustments and expenditures. Final surplus figures will not be available until April or May 2025

Obligatory Reserves are maintained in a restricted account but belong to the municipality. Anticipated opening balance for 2025 was expected to be lower based on 2024 projections. Substantial unspent monies from obligatory reserves may affect this projection. Surplus in obligatory reserves could potentially cover road construction taxation. This could lead to significant tax reduction in 2025

8. Next meeting – December 19, 5:00 p.m. (Budget)

9. Adjournment

#### **Resolution No. 06/12/24**

Moved by Angela Field

Seconded by Kevin LeGris

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Finance & Administration Committee meeting that began on November 21, 2024, and continued on November 22, December 5, December 6 and December 12, 2024, recess at 8:18 p.m.;

AND BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Finance & Administration Committee reconvene on December 19, 2024 at 5:00 pm to continue its review of the Draft 2025 Budget.

“Carried.”

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Chair

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CAO/Clerk

TOWNSHIP OF ADMASTON/BROMLEY  
FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE

MINUTES

**Thursday, December 19, 2024**

**At 5:00 p.m**

Present – Mayor Michael Donohue, Brian Hamilton, Angela Field, Keith Gourley and Kevin Legris

Staff present – CAO/Clerk Charkavi, Treasurer-Deputy CAO/Clerk Coughlin, Public Works Superintendent Visinski and Finance Clerk Fraser

Guest – None.

Committee member Keith Gourley called the recessed meeting to order at 5:04 p.m.

**7. Draft Budget Deliberations**

Treasurer-Deputy CAO/Clerk Coughlin opened the meeting with a brief overview of the changes and alterations she made as staff was given direction to review capital and operating expenditures for potential savings or surpluses. Treasurer-Deputy CAO/Clerk Coughlin focused on capital expenditures funded by grants (OSIF, CCBF). During her capital expenditures review, the township received exceptional pricing received for 2024. Lynch Road culvert replacement project costs reduced from \$140,000 to approximately \$51,000 and the remaining funds from CCBF to carry forward into 2025. Current tax levy increase is at 10.54%, the updated figures are provided in version 5 of the documents, with changes highlighted based on previous meeting discussions. On the day of the meeting, the Township received notice from the OPP to receive over \$67,000 in savings, so updated working papers reflect a new tax increase of 8.55%.

There were some items the committee had made note of to come back to discuss if the tax rate was below 10%. Those discussion items were gravel maintenance contract control and transfer to Weather Control Contingency Reserve, grinding budget remains intact; initial reduction was less than anticipated and the library budget request.

There was a consensus of committee to leave the winter control at \$20,000 for potential future review. There was a consensus of committee to bring the gravel maintenance contract back to the to the initial budget request. The library budget increase for 2025 should align with the municipality's tax levy increase, however there was some debate on this from committee.

Budget cuts have been made in the fire department and roads department, aim is to reach a 10% reduction without cutting essential services.

There was some discussion on the Fire Department standby budget, some committee members favor a slight increase rather than keeping it static. Suggestion that the increase reflects a consistent rate rather than being tied to COLA.

Committee member Hamilton expressed concern over a substantial reduction in reserves from 2023 to 2025. He also highlighted the withdrawals from reserves in the 2025 budget and he questioned future financial sustainability and obligations, particularly regarding fire hall commitments.

Mayor Donohue's responded to the concerns and stated that the initial forecast for reserves represents an increase. He also stated that the reserve policy did not exist in 2024, only for 2025 and beyond. He attributed the increase in reserves to substantial savings in capital expenditures and mentioned specific projects: Lynch Road, Mount St. Patrick, and McMahon. He did confirmed that projections for 2025 show a decrease in discretionary reserves.

Councillor Hamilton inquired about the recognition of surplus and Mayor Donohue confirmed that the operating surplus for 2024 has not been forecasted and emphasized the need for year-end reconciliations and pending expenses.

Mayor Donohue expressed concern about the appropriateness of the levy increase in light of surplus. He did emphasize the importance of recognizing surplus in reserve policy. He made a suggestion for a preamble clause to recognize substantial surplus additions to reserves.

Some budget considerations for 2025, staff wanted to highlight the uncertainty around surplus predictions for 2025. There is the potential for significant expenses in January and February and fuel costs and unexpected events like snow could impact budgets. Surpluses are unpredictable and not guaranteed for future budgeting, previous surpluses were unexpected and may not recur. Emphasis on the need for a stable budget without drastic cuts.

Surplus management strategies that were suggested by committee were a suggestion to use surplus to manage tax levy rather than relying solely on reserves. There was a preference for gradual surplus management to avoid drastic levy increases in future years. There was a discussion on utilizing surplus for debt reduction as a preferred strategy.

#### **Resolution No. 07/12/24**

Moved by Keith Gourley

Seconded by Brian Hamilton

BE IT RESOLVED that the Finance & Administration Committee recommend to Council to adopt the 2025 Budget at the January 19<sup>th</sup>, 2025 Council meeting.



## Recorded vote:

- Councillor Gourley: For
- Councillor Hamilton: For
- Councillor LeGris: For
- Councillor Field: For
- Mayor Donohue: Against

Motion carries 4 to 1.

“Carried.”

8. Next meeting – January 16th, 6:00 p.m. (Budget)

9. Adjournment

**Resolution No. 08/12/24**

Moved by Angela Field

Seconded by Kevin LeGris

BE IT RESOLVED that the December 19, 2024, Township of Admaston/Bromley Finance & Administration Committee meeting that began on November 21 and continued on November 22, December 5, December 6 and December 12, 2024, be adjourned at 6:49 p.m.

“Carried.”

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Chair

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CAO/Clerk