

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – 2009 BUDGET

Council Chambers, Paris
Thursday, February 12, 2009
7:00 p.m.

Present: Mayor Eddy, Councillors Wheat, Schmitt, Simons, Haggart, Powell, Atfield, Chambers, Coleman and Gatward.

Regrets: Councillor Hodge.

Staff: Glassford, Compeau, Johnston, Underwood, Bell, Longeway, Kozak-Selby, Mifflin, Gubbels, Staley, Hobin and Carman

Mayor Eddy in the Chair.

Moved by – Councillor Coleman
Seconded by – Councillor Gatward

That Council now move into Committee of the Whole on the 2009 Budget.

. Carried

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Moved by – Councillor Coleman
Seconded by – Councillor Atfield

That the agenda and addendum for the February 12, 2009 meeting of the Committee of the Whole – 2009 Budget meeting be approved as circulated.

. Carried

DELEGATIONS

Dan Temprile, General Manager of Public Health, Safety and Social Services, City of Brantford, made a presentation on the increasing pressures on Social Services in 2009, including increases in intake calls, caseload and people looking for work. The 2009 budget implications, based on the January statistics, indicate that the municipal portion of program costs will be over budget by \$234,000 (County share \$11,800). He reviewed the current case management resources, noting a need for an additional 5.5 staff to handle the increased caseload demands. Based on January statistics, the additional costs for staffing and programming are estimated to be \$1,028,906 for 2009. Mr. Temprile recommended that a small contingency be built into this figure for a total budget increase of \$1,100,000, the County of Brant's share being \$55,000.

Mr. Temprile advised that Brantford City Council has recommended that the additional 2009 funding required be taken from a \$400,000 reserve that was previously created from surplus municipal Social Services funding. The Province will also be advocated to change the cost-sharing formula with municipalities to reduce the municipal share of costs. It was suggested that an appointment be made with the Minister of Community and Social Services at the upcoming ROMA/OGRA Conference to request the change in cost-sharing.

MINUTES

Moved by – Councillor Coleman
Seconded by – Councillor Chambers

That the minutes of the January 15 and 22, 2009 meetings of the Committee of the Whole on the 2009 Budget be approved as circulated.

. Carried

2009 BUDGET

Don Glassford, Treasurer and Director of Corporate Services, reviewed additional information on the 2009 budget, including the following:

- impact of frozen residential tax rate during the four-year phase-in of current reassessment, assuming 1% growth
- debt financing for tax supported projects and debt financing costs
- information on salary increases and the freezing of staff positions
- example of impact of tax levy based on median assessment in the County of Brant as compared to the City of Brantford
- breakdown of the budget by departments

The current information indicates a total levy requirement of \$34,791,685, resulting in a municipal tax rate increase of 7.43%, which when combined with the education rate of 2.92%, results in a total tax rate increase of 6.44%. Mr. Glassford reviewed alternatives provided by staff to reduce the budget as requested by the Committee of the Whole on January 22.

Mr. Glassford provided information on the change in accounting practices next year, noting that the County's total assets are \$235 million and the accumulated amortization is \$116 million. On an annual basis, \$6 million is to be expensed for amortization, which is comparable to what will be transferred to the capital levy in 2009.

The following information was provided in response to questions:

- if additional Federal/Provincial infrastructure funding becomes available, it will allow the County to get more work done without affecting the 2009 capital levy – the capital budget was developed without utilizing debt financing so that the County can maintain flexibility should funding opportunities become available, it being recognized that the County will also be required to contribute a portion of the costs
- the 13.05% increase shown for Development Services is related to excess building fees being transferred to a reserve as required by legislation – the County's Planning fees account for only 35-40% recovery of the costs to provide planning services, and are average when compared to other municipalities in the area - it was suggested that the Department should strive for a 50% recovery rate - the overall 2009 Development Services budget represents a 2% decrease in levy
- \$323,000 is required to reduce the tax rate by 1%
- a report will be provided to Council on the need to go to the market for debentures later this year
- the Property Reserve is for the revenue from properties the municipality sells, not including industrial properties – the current balance is approximately \$500,000

- the Investing in Ontario funding of \$3.2 million is to be used to cover a major portion of the Grand River Bridge rehabilitation, with the balance of the costs coming from the capital levy and other sources – this project was originally to be debt financed
- the tax rate increase of 7.43% includes a 4% increase in the capital levy transfer, and is also affected by a reduction in the Provincial OMPF funding, reductions in growth from 2008, reductions in reassessment revenue, and increased tax write-offs for 2009
- the cost for the Trails Master Plan is included in the 2008 Capital Budget
- revenue of \$400,000 has been included in the 2009 budget as dividends from Brant County Power – this revenue has been allocated in part to the Operating Budget and in part to reduce the requirement for the Capital Levy
- the Director of Community Services outlined the various responsibilities of the former Aquatics Co-ordinator (currently Recreation Co-ordinator) that are not related to the operation of the community pool

Councillor Chambers suggested that the additional \$3.2 million infrastructure funding should theoretically reduce the amount of capital required, and it may be possible to freeze the capital levy transfer at the 2008 level for one year and review the capital levy strategy during 2009. Councillor Atfield expressed his disagreement with removing any funds from the proposed capital transfer for 2009.

Moved by – Councillor Gatward
Seconded by – Councillor Simons

That the following reductions in the Corporate Financing budget be approved:

- freeze capital transfer at 2008 level at \$5,606,385 – savings of \$1,005,647
- reallocate the funding for the Newport Road property purchase from 2007 surplus to the Property Reserve – savings of \$225,000

. Carried

Moved by – Councillors Chambers
Seconded by – Councillor Schmitt

That the following reductions in the 2009 Public Works Operating budget be approved:

- Elimination of Christmas tree pickup \$ 4,000
- Elimination of leaf collection 40,000
- Elimination of Household Hazardous Waste Day 35,000
- Close Paris transfer station 15,000

. Defeated

Moved by – Councillor Chambers
Seconded by – Councillor Coleman

That the following reductions in the 2009 Community Services Operating budget be approved:

- Ice rental rates to school - \$0 to \$20 per hour – savings of \$500
- Ice rental rates – Youth and Prime Time – 2.4% to 3.1% increase - savings of \$15,000

. Defeated

Moved by – Councillor Coleman
 Seconded by – Councillor Wheat

That the operation of the Oakland and Onondaga Customer Service Offices be reduced to one day each per week, and that their continuing operation be reviewed at the end of 2010.

. No Vote – Amendment Follows

Moved by – Councillor Gatward
 Seconded by – Councillor Coleman

That the resolution to reduce the operation of the Oakland and Onondaga Customer Service Offices be amended to include a clause that the operation of the St. George Customer Service Office be reduced to three days per week.

	<u>Recorded Vote</u>	
	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
Councillor Gatward	1	
Mayor Eddy		1
Councillor Wheat		1
Councillor Schmitt		1
Councillor Simons		1
Councillor Haggart		1
Councillor Powell		1
Councillor Atfield		1
Councillor Chambers		1
Councillor Hodge		absent
Councillor Coleman	<u>1</u>	
. Defeated	<u>2</u>	<u>8</u>

Mayor Eddy then called for a vote on the original motion as follows:

“That the operation of the Oakland and Onondaga Customer Service Offices be reduced to one day each per week, and that their continuing operation be reviewed at the end of 2010.”

	<u>Recorded Vote</u>	
	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
Councillor Wheat	1	
Councillor Schmitt	1	
Councillor Simons	1	
Councillor Haggart		1
Councillor Powell	1	
Councillor Atfield		1
Councillor Chambers		1
Councillor Hodge		absent
Councillor Coleman	1	
Councillor Gatward		1
Mayor Eddy		1
. Defeated – Tie Vote	<u>5</u>	<u>5</u>

Moved by – Councillor Coleman
Seconded by – Councillor Gatward

That the Onondaga Customer Service Office remain open two days per week in 2009, resulting in an increase in costs to the 2009 budget of \$29,300.00.

. Carried

Moved by – Councillor Haggart
Seconded by – Councillor Simons

That the across-the-board economic adjustment of 3% for non-union employees be implemented on April 1, 2009 rather than January 1, 2009 at a cost savings of \$62,500.

. Carried

In response to a question, it was noted that the economic adjustment will also affect the Council remuneration.

Moved by – Councillor Atfield
Seconded by – Councillor Wheat

That the 2009 grants of \$2,500.00 each be reinstated for the Burford Agricultural Society and the Paris Agricultural Society.

. Carried

Moved by – Councillor Chambers
Seconded by – Councillor Schmitt

That a reduction in the Community Services 2009 operating budget to change the operation of the Paris Splashpad to be the same as the Burford Splashpad be approved at a cost savings of \$12,770.

. Carried

Moved by – Councillor Chambers
Seconded by – Councillor Simons

That the following reduction in the Corporate Services 2009 operating budget be approved:

- Legal – increase late dog license fee from \$10 to \$20 - \$5,000 revenue

. Carried

Moved by – Councillor Chambers
Seconded by – Councillor Simons

That the following reduction in the Corporate Services 2009 operating budget be approved:

- Legal – reduce crossing guard costs to reflect 2008 actual costs - \$15,000 savings

. Carried

Moved by – Councillor Chambers
 Seconded by – Councillor Simons

That the following reduction in the Mayor and Council 2009 operating budget be approved:

- Delete donation to the Christmas Party - \$2,500 savings

. Defeated

Moved by – Councillor Chambers
 Seconded by – Councillor Simons

That the following reduction in the Mayor and Council 2009 operating budget be approved:

- Delete employee food vouchers at Christmas - \$9,500 savings

. Carried

Moved by – Councillor Powell
 Seconded by – Councillor Schmitt

That the \$62,500 contribution to the Brant Community Healthcare System for the MRI Fund be approved, it being understood that an updated financial statement indicating the need for funds be required prior to the 2010 and 2011 instalments being made.

. Carried

Mr. Glassford advised that as a result of the changes approved at this meeting, the municipal tax rate increase is 3.41%, resulting in an increase in municipal property taxes of \$67.60 on a house valued at \$211,000 and reassessed to \$227,500 in 2009.

Moved by – Councillor Coleman
 Seconded by – Councillor Wheat

That the 2009 Operating and Capital Budgets be approved, requiring a general levy of \$33,490,568.

	<u>Recorded Vote</u>	
	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
Councillor Gatward	1	
Mayor Eddy	1	
Councillor Wheat		1
Councillor Schmitt	1	
Councillor Simons	1	
Councillor Haggart	1	
Councillor Powell	1	
Councillor Atfield		1
Councillor Chambers	1	
Councillor Hodge		absent
Councillor Coleman	1	
. Carried	<u>8</u>	<u>2</u>

Mr. Glassford advised that the approval of this budget will not change the actual capital budget, but will require that some of the projects are debt financed. If additional funding is received from senior levels of government, the need for debt financing can be reduced.

Mayor Eddy thanked Mr. Glassford and Treasury staff for all of their work on the 2009 budget.

Moved by – Councillor Coleman
Seconded by – Councillor Schmitt

That the following correspondence regarding the 2009 budget be received:

- Mario Marques, 25 Baptist Church Road
- Cindy Carson, Brant Community Healthcare System re: MRI Fund
- Petition re: proposed closure of the Oakland Customer Service Office.

. Carried

Moved by – Councillor Coleman
Seconded by – Councillor Schmitt

That the Committee of the Whole – 2009 Budget now resume in Open Session of Council.

. Carried

Moved by – Councillor Coleman
Seconded by – Councillor Chambers

That the 2009 budget be presented to the March 3, 2009 meeting of Brant County Council for consideration.

. Carried

The meeting adjourned at 10:20 p.m.

Secretary