



Municipal Budget 2015
Regular Meeting of Council
October 7, 2014

Process:

- Obtained direction from Council in late August 2014; further direction to be obtained in subsequent budget meetings
- Focus on operational costs and grant reductions while maintaining vision
- Incorporation of potential rates for service cost related increases
- Discussion and rationalization of priorities
- Alignment between Council and Administration
- Incorporate capital into the budget and update MYCIP
- Approval
- Development of Tax Rate Bylaw to support requirements

Analytics - Inputs or Assumptions:

- Updated shared cost allocations and projected supplier cost increases
- Maintenance related initiatives have been kept status quo
- Franchise Fees maintained as is per Council approval
- Tourism strategy and potential growth are continued commitments
- Continuation of frontage design implementation to encourage growth
- Budget to accommodate the internal sourcing of Community Services
- Community Enhancement budget maintained plus new flag addition
- Increase of 0.5 FTE for Economic Development Tourism Coordinator (contract position), increase in PW Clerk hours, decrease in Operator position, with full year decrease of 0.2 FTE for CAO
- Incorporated MSI Operating grant – final 30% reduction and Zero in 2016
- Included current debentures/loan payments and reductions due to final payments
- Continued cost recovery approach for utilities (\$TBD/yr)

Priorities for 2015: Growth, Infrastructure and Community Safety & Enhancement

Budget Considerations:

- Property sale did not close in 2014
- Reserves (equipment or otherwise) need further consideration
- Determination of priority, business model, and acceptable level of “soft services” (FCSS, recreation programs, Fire Department, Economic Development, Library)
- Growth continues as requirement to reduce future tax increases
- Business Case and plan for observatory to be determined
- Impact of annexation initiative
- Cost reduction initiatives will continue to be explored and implemented

Overall Proposed Budget Changes:

- Energy cost increase (Electricity and Natural Gas 5%) *TBC*
- New capital to be incorporated post final consideration
- COLA of 2.5%
- Implementation of increased pension contribution levels

Administration:

- Includes Taxes, Council, Election and Administration cost centers
- Continuation of Franchise Fees – same as 2014 (proceeds applied in general revenues however funds are used to progress Dark Sky Community initiative)
- Increase of 8 hours per week for PW Clerk (from 20 to 28 hrs/week) to manage increase administration
- Full year decrease of 0.2 FTE of CAO
- Salaries increase of 5.5% (2.5% COLA and 3% performance related if applicable)
- Compensation to Council increased per approved Policy
- FCM Conference enables 2 attendees of Council and 1 Admin and AUMA Conference for all Council and 1 Admin
- CAMA Conference and LGAA attendee of 1 Admin

Protection Services:

- Includes Fire, Disaster Services, Ambulance, and Bylaw Enforcement
- Continue outsourcing Fire Service management
- Maintain existing arrangement with Bylaw Enforcement and Enhanced Policing (RCMP) – reduce contract to \$30K/yr to align budget with actual usage over last 3 years
- EOC generator delayed to 2015 however may be cancelled as a result of emergency services review and or/shared use of municipal partner equipment
- MSI operating dollars applied here for 2015 as future underpinning flexible with Enhanced Policing

Public Works:

- Includes Roads and Storm Sewers
- Increased Salaries for PW Clerk and Safety, one operator position has been eliminated as a result of restructuring and addition to Safety & Environmental Compliance position
- Implementation of GIS late 2014 – annual maintenance of program costs incorporated
- One debenture paid off mid June 2015
- Capital not included pending discussion and funding
- Refer to Public Works Supervisor for *more information*

Utilities:

- Includes Water, Wastewater, and Waste
- Rate increases proposed for Truckfill and base (flat) fees for all service levels to align with “user pay” methodology (budget impact TBD amongst the three services)
- Water Commission rates unknown – assumed 5%
- Growth in water – projected 5% increase
- Wastewater Commission rates up \$0.04 TBC
- Reservoir expansion required; engineering (\$35K) – delayed from 2014 pending grant application (\$2.8M)
- Continued cost recovery approach for utility rates (\$TBD/yr) based on supplier increases

FCSS:

- Includes FCSS and Community Development
- First full budget since discontinuance of Crowsnest Community Services
- Programs are underpinned with 75% provincial and 25% Town funding
- Primary programs: Volunteer Appreciation, Winter Wonderland, Canada Day and Family Day Celebrations, and Seniors Appreciation

Recreation Programs:

- Primarily “user-pay” programs or partnering with other community groups to provide programs
- Focus on events with limited programs; which include: Town Wide Garage Sale
- Use of Library to manage programs (not including events and summer programs)
- Now included in this budget category is Community Enhancement; non-program related enhancements to town/community
 - Trail and observation deck
 - Flag and flag pole
 - Floral requirements (baskets, etc.); previous CiB
 - Donations budget moved from Admin to this area

Cemetery:

- Capital upgrade of \$10K postponed from 2014; upgrades will be budgeted for every 2 years rather than yearly
- Continue to work with Communities in Bloom for landscaping and fencing upgrades
- Need to incorporate marketing of plots to facilitate purchase options

Land and Planning:

- Update of Land Use Bylaw and Municipal Development Plan conducted in 2014 – filings and implications to be conducted in 2015
- Annexation application commenced in 2014
- Capital for streetlight conversion commenced in 2014, remaining 2/3rds of project for implementation in 2015
- Land procurement for Observatory will need to be pursued/finalized pending outcome of Business Case
- Town owned lands need to be divested in 2015 to further growth initiatives

Economic Development:

- Dark Sky designation applied for – pending approval
- Equinox focus increasing in support of brand and Tourism
- Contracted Services increase to enable event and tourism development support
- Continued commitment to Tourism through budget requirement
- Business Symposium discontinued due to changing focus and subregional support
- New capital of engineering and design of observatory (with consideration to the proposed commercial park) not included pending Business Case finalization and discussion of future and funding

Parks & Recreation:

- Includes Parks & Recreation and Arena
- Maintain weed spraying
- Reallocation of resources to align with actual work requirements
- Ice booking service contract with Community League continues
- New capital of an integrated park (child and fitness park) pending funding decision by province
- Includes increased resource support (summer student increase) to assist in meeting CiB assignment of responsibilities

Library:

- Town and Sturgeon pay a per capita contribution
- Town NLLS contribution – 5% increase projected (TBC) for 2015
- Town's incremental contribution proposed at \$35K based on Service Plan and co-branding and provision of programs
- Cost recovery for utilities, building insurance & maintenance has been waived as part of the Towns support and contribution to the Library's operation

Lilian Schick School:

- Joint Use agreement in negotiation – recommending the Town NOT facilitate the rental of the gym and kitchen of either school; only manage Town owned assets (i.e. Arena, etc.)
- No notice of other maintenance – other than standard – has been identified