



Town of Shelburne
Special Town Council Meeting Minutes
Shelburne Community Centre
Wednesday April 26th, 2023

Council Members Present

Mayor Harold Locke
Deputy Mayor Rick Davis
Councillor Elizabeth Acker
Councillor Sheldon Ringer
Councillor Ben Nickerson

Staff Present

Sherry Doane, CAO
Candy Venning, Executive Coordinator
Jane Crowell, Manager of Finance
Jennifer Perry, Finance Officer

Call to Order

Mayor Harold Locke called the Council meeting to order at 5:20pm.

The Town of Shelburne is located on the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq, (Mi'kma'ki), in the District of Kespukwitk, home to Acadia First Nation. We are all Treaty people.

We also acknowledge the histories, contributions, and legacies of the African Nova Scotian people and communities.

Approval of the Agenda

THAT Council approves the Agenda for April 26th, 2023, as presented.

Acker-Davis

CARRIED

Council Items

a) Introduction of Budget Process (CAO)

CAO welcomed Council and staff to the FY2023-24 (April 1st 2023- March 31st 2024) Budget Meeting, thanking all for their efforts. The CAO introduced the budget process to Council, announcing the budgets will apply for the Fiscal Year 2023-24 (April 1, 2023 through March 31, 2024). There were four budgets, with the first three in draft, looking for approval at the meeting and the latter being the General Operating Budget that was a preliminary draft open for discussion but not expected to be approved until public feedback had been gained. The first three were: the Capital Budget, the Marine Budget and the Water Budget.

Before handing it over to the Finance Manager, the CAO then reminded Council of the top priorities they set for FY2023-24 being:

- #1 Financial Capacity
- #2 Fire Services
- #3 Divest in Assets
- #4 Economic Generators
- #5 Consolidation/ Unification

b) Review of Draft Budgets FY 2023-24

i) Capital (5 year) Budget

The 5-Year Capital Budget totals \$4,028,000 over five years. The Town of Shelburne relies on the Canada Communities Building Fund (Gas Tax) for much of its funding for Capital Projects, with the remainder from Reserves, Operating funds, and External funding. The Province recently announced funding to Nova Scotia Municipalities from the SSGF (Sustainable Services Grant Fund) which is a one-time grant to support infrastructure investments in our community. The Town of Shelburne received \$305,015, which is allocated in this 5 Year Capital budget. There are eligibility rules and requirements which need to be met and approved by the Province before the projects are commenced. For the Town of Shelburne to continue meeting the Capital needs of the future, annual transfers to Capital reserves are necessary.

5 Year Capital Spending by Department:

- Public Works \$980,000-The breakdown for the next five years in spending is Road Rehab \$550,000, Sidewalk Rehab \$200,000, Culvert Rehab \$70,000, Equipment \$125,000, and Vehicles \$35,000.
- Wastewater \$749,000 – The breakdown for the next five years in spending is continuing to upgrade lift stations electrical/SCADA \$284,000, Upgrade Lift Station Pumps \$150,000, Wastewater Main Rehab \$105,000, Plant Equipment \$175,000, and Vehicles \$35,000.
- Other \$295,000 – Breakdown consists of Facility Upgrades \$270,000 (162 Mowatt St, Grovestine Complex & Community Ctr) and Planning Strategy & Asset Management \$25,000.
- Fire Protection \$700,000 – Fire Truck (46% Town, 46% MDS and 8% SVFD)
- Shelburne Marine Terminal (Port) \$200,000 – Berlin Wall Rehabilitation
- Water Utility \$1,104,000 – The breakdown for the next five years in spending is -
- Water Laterals (If accessible to water) \$25,000, Water Plant Lagoons \$150,000, Plant Equipment \$33,000, Annapolis Water Tower Painting \$800,000, and Meter/Bluetooth Readers \$81,000

M23-067 *THAT* Council approves the Fiscal 2023-24 5-Year Capital Budget as presented

Davis-Nickerson

CARRIED

ii) Marine Terminal Budget

FY 2023/24 Shelburne Marine Terminal has a budgeting Revenue of \$431,877, Expenses of \$428,629 with a Surplus of \$3,248 (includes \$55,000 transfer to Reserve).

M23-068 *THAT* Council approves the Fiscal 2023-24 Shelburne Marine terminal budget as presented

Acker-Nickerson

CARRIED

iii) Water Utility Budget

FY 2023-24 Water Utility has a budgeting Revenue of \$660,721, Expenses of \$654,691 with a Surplus of \$6,030. The Water Utility is governed by the Rules and Regulations approved by the Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board (UARB).

M23-069 *THAT* Council approves the Fiscal 2023-24 Water Utility Budget as presented.

Ringer-Davis

CARRIED

c) Review of Preliminary Draft Budget FY 2023-24

i. General Operating

The Town of Shelburne Preliminary General Operating Budget for 2023/24 is \$4,374,273. This is an increase of \$493,299 (approximately 9.4% increase). Assessment is up which means Tax Revenue has increased as well. On the other hand, Expenses have increased considerably as well due to the

continuing effects of COVID. The Finance Manager stated that she does not believe the full effects of COVID until next year when assessment and expenses will finally stabilize. Finance determined that the optimal Operating Reserve balance needs to be \$874,855 to remain positive (green rating) with the Province.

A few Revenue highlights were:

- Tax Revenue \$2,645,657 (62%)- Residential/Resource Assessment from PCSC is up approximately 12.43%, largely due to the recent Housing Market and Commercial Assessment up approximately 12.4% as well due to recent sales and renovations to Commercial properties.
- Residential/Resource Tax Rate for 2023/24 is shown as \$2.03/100 of assessment in this draft.
- Commercial Tax Rate for 2023/24 is shown as \$3.88/100 of assessment in this draft.
- Deed Transfer Revenue \$115,000 (3%) – We are budgeting \$115,000 for 23/24 as property sales have not slowed to the degree that was anticipated.
- Grants in Lieu-Federal & Provincial \$11,770 – (less than 1%) Grants received from Federal & Provincial properties in lieu of Taxes.
- Sale of Services-Fire Protection Revenue (MDS) \$87,999 (2%) – As per Fire Services Agreement with MDS based on number of calls and mileage for fire calls in the agreed areas of the Municipality of the District of Shelburne.
- Environmental Health Services Revenue \$628,525 (15%) – Budget shows Wastewater (Sewer) Charge is to remain the same at \$260.00/unit for revenue of \$335,303. Solid Waste expense comes from Shared Services out of MDS for collection and Region of Queens for disposal requiring a total revenue from Taxpayers of \$290,722 which would bring the Solid Waste charge up to \$291.60/unit from \$279.87/unit for last year, which is an increase of \$11.73 (4%).
- Wastewater (Sewer) Charge for 2023/24 is suggested at \$260.00/unit.
- Solid Waste Charge for 2023/24 is suggested at \$291.60/unit, up from \$279.87 per unit.
- Rentals \$89,730 (2%) – Down due to upstairs tenant at the Former GOC building leaving by the end of April 2023
- Return on Investment, Interest and Other Revenue \$177,838 (4%) – Bank Interest is up from budgeting \$5,000 to \$22,000 due to higher bank balances and higher interest rates
- Unconditional Transfers from Provincial Government \$373,745 (8.5%) – Consists of Capacity Grant at \$359,645 (frozen for 10 years), HST Offset \$12,500 and Provincial Fuel Tax Refund \$1,600.
- Conditional Transfers from Federal, Provincial and Other Local Governments \$12,500 (less than 1%) – Consists of Federal Job Grants and Covid Safe Restart Grant, Provincial EMO Civic Addressing and MDS Grants for Splash Park and VIC.
- Other Transfers \$213,209 (4.8%)- Suggesting Transfer from Operating Reserve of \$163,209 which includes \$22,000 Alternate Energy Initiative, \$3,662 balance of King St Ctr project, \$62,547 balance of Shelburne Arena Emergency funding and \$75,000 for 162 Mowatt St Reno/Upgrades. Transfer from General Special Capital Reserve of \$50,000 which includes \$35,000 New (Used) Public Works ½ Ton Truck and \$15,000 for 162 Mowatt St Garage Roof Rehab.

A few Expense highlights were:

- General Government Services \$894,873 (20%)- Includes Mayor, Council, Committee Expense, Legislative, Administration and Finance, Employer Benefits, Training, Town Hall Expense, Assessment Cost Recovery (PVSC), Grants to Organizations, Administration Expense (Legal, Audit, IT, Office Expense), Insurance, Accessibility Planning, and other Administration Expense.
- Protective Services \$1,097,973 (25%) – Includes Police Protection, Emergency Measures, By-Law Enforcement, Fire Protection, Fire and Building Inspection (Shared Services) and Debt Payments (Fire Trucks).
- Public Works \$532,330 (12%) – Includes Personnel Costs, General Equipment, Equipment Maintenance, Public Works Buildings, Roads & Streets, Sidewalks, Parks & Facilities and Debt

Payments.

- Wastewater \$318,269 (7%) – Includes Personnel Costs, Stormwater, Vehicle Expense, Lift Stations, Treatment Plant, Maintenance of Lines and Debt Payments (WWTF). The Wastewater budget now includes a position for Wastewater Assistant at 50% with the remaining 50% working as Water Assistant. With the loss of the current Water Plant Operator, it has become obvious that a Wastewater/Water Assistant is needed to de-risk two important infrastructures that the Town is responsible for. With the addition of this position which will offer assistance and continual training alongside plant Operators, it will also relieve the pressure on the Public Works Department which now covers both plants for vacations, sickness, and other absences. With two positions at each Plant continuing obtaining education and training and also supporting each other will provide succession training.
- Waste Collection \$277,914 (7%) – Solid Waste Collection and Disposal.
- Community & Economic Development \$91,600 (2%) – Includes MPAL, Planning & Inspection, Economic Development and Tourism & Events.
- Facilities Management \$287,565 (7%) – Includes 162 Mowatt St , Community Centre, Little Peoples Day Care, King St Ctr, Cox Shipyard Complex, 13 George Street, MacKay Memorial Library, Guild Hall, and Dock St Washrooms.
- Fiscal Services \$323,313 (7%) – Includes Debenture Principal payments \$166,844, Allowance for Uncollectable Taxes \$5,000 and Transfer to Capital Reserves \$151,469.
- Transfer to Capital Reserve consists of \$11,847 Future Debenture Balloon Payment instead of refinancing balance of Debenture, \$75,000 New Fire Trucks (annual amount), \$40,234 Sewer Reserve and \$24,388 Council Discretion.
- Reduction of Tax Revenue (Payments back to Province of NS) \$445,058 (10%) – Includes Education (Tri-County Schools), Library, Department of Justice, Corrections and Regional Housing.
- Taxation Exemptions \$60,633 (2%) – Includes Low Income Exemption, Non-Profit Tax Exemptions, Commercial District Development Improvement Program.

Council debated the merits and perils of a 2-cent tax decrease. Research was presented on comparison to nearby municipalities and the majority of Council asked Administration to reflect the 2-cent reduction as well as an unanimous request for Administration to not applying a salary increase to Council/Mayor stipend, allowing for the final draft be available starting 1 May online, with a hard copy at the Town office, giving time for Taxpayer to give them feedback before finalizing this budget at the next Council meeting.

M23-070 THAT Council request staff to release the Preliminary 2023/24 General Operating Budget with suggested changes, to the Public on May 1, 2023, to review and provide Council their feedback prior to the May 15, 2023 Council Meeting.

Nickerson-Davis

CARRIED

ii. Grants to Organizations

The total being recommended by the CP&V Committee is \$16,220 for the fiscal 2023-24 year that included:

- Shelburne Historical Society \$750
- Shelburne Long Boat Society \$500
- Osprey Art Centre (Ancient River Festival) \$500
- Fidelis House \$500
- Shelburne Garden Club \$200
- Guild Hall Summer Series \$600
- Shelburne Exhibition \$750
- Sou'West Nov Transit \$1,000
- George Street Shipyard Mill Society \$500

- Barrington Ground Search & Rescue (truck) \$3,600
- Black Loyalist Heritage Centre (Journey to Birchtown Event) \$550
- Pet Projects Society \$500
- Shelburne County Rescue Feral Cats/Kittens \$500
- Roseway Hospital Chronic Illness Fund \$500
- Shelburne Pumpkin Festival \$300
- Shelburne Lions Club \$1,470
- Shelburne Guild Hall Market \$500
- Shelburne County Basketball Association \$1,000
- Shelburne Curling Club \$500
- Shelburne County Archive & Genealogical Society \$500
- Shelburne County Special Olympics \$500
- Shelburne Sailing Academy \$500
- (reserve for mid-year requests) \$750

The Finance Manager also suggested to Council that the following “contractual” grants also be approved:

- Dock Street Days \$5,000
- Miracle on Dock Street \$2,000
- Shelburne Long Boat Society (building insurance) \$1,167
- Shelburne Regional High School (bursary) \$500
- Red Cross \$50
- Shelburne County Healthcare Recruitment \$889
- Roseway Hospital Charitable Foundation (Dr housing) \$1,875
- Shelburne County Arena (operating) \$19,890
- Shelburne County Arena (rest of emergency funding) \$62,546.68
- Kids Fair Play Fund \$3,500
- Shelburne County Seniors Safety Program \$6,227.36
- Barrington Ground Search & Rescue (operating) \$1,680

Total Grants to Organizations \$122,295.04 (with impact on Operating Budget of \$59,748.24).

M23-071 *THAT Council approves the Grants to Organization, as amended*

Acker-Ringer

CARRIED

i) Closing Remarks (Mayor Locke)

Thanked Staff and Council for the orderly process that has taken place for the past 3 months building up to this meeting. It has been a pleasure to hear honest discussion, done very diplomatically. Done in a manner that we like for it to happen, thank you all. Kudos to the Finance department for the clarity and proficiency of the documents.

Adjournment

THAT the Special Town Council Meeting of April 26th, 2023, be adjourned at 7:18pm.

Nickerson

CARRIED

Mayor

Executive Coordinator