

Minutes of a meeting of the Committee of the Whole of the Municipality of Middlesex Centre held this date at the Municipal Office, Coldstream at 4:00 p.m.

### **ATTENDANCE**

#### **PRESENT**

Al Edmondson  
Albert Bannister  
Ken Filson  
John Brennan  
Clare Bloomfield  
Brian Ritchie  
Frank Berze

#### **ALSO PRESENT**

Cathy Saunders	Chief Administrative Officer/Clerk
Maureen Looby	Manager, Public Works & Engineering
Greg Watterton	Acting Manager, Recreation and Facility Services/Treasurer
John Elston	Supervisor of Emergency Services/Fire Chief
Marc Bancroft	Senior Planner

Al Edmondson presided.

### **DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY INTEREST**

None were disclosed by any of the members.

### **MINUTES**

1. CW#2009/011  
Moved by Ken Filson  
Seconded by Frank Berze

THAT the minutes of the regular meeting of Committee of the Whole held on January 14, 2009 be approved.

-Carried-

### **REVIEW OF THE DRAFT 2009 BUDGET**

Committee reviewed the draft 2009 Capital and Operating Budget.

The Treasurer provided an overview of the draft Budget. He indicated that he has included a comparison between the budget of 2007, 2008 and the proposed 2009 budget in the budget package. He also reviewed the Capital Budget Project Status for 2008 year end. He noted that the year end numbers are subject to audit. He noted that it is difficult to compare the 2008 operating and capital budgets to the draft 2009 budget as the new accounting practices of PSAB have changed the method of tracking and the categories to which they are to be applied. He indicated that items that would have previously been placed in the Capital Budget are now required to be placed in the Operating Budget.

With respect to the draft 2009 Budget, the Treasurer indicated that the Budget as presented proposes a 0 percent levy increase. He noted that in order to achieve this, a number of projects are being proposed to be funded from reserves. He indicated that a summary of the reserve fund activity has been provided. He indicated that a 0 percent levy increase would result in the 2009 municipal tax rate decreasing 6.86 percent, a \$70.23 decrease on a \$200,000 assessment. The Treasurer indicated that the Province has indicated a levy increase of 3.84 percent in the school board levy, however due to the reassessment, the residential rate had decreased 4.55 percent or \$24.00 on a \$200,000 assessment.

The Treasurer noted that Middlesex Centre experienced assessment growth of 2.5 percent in 2008, which at 2008 tax rates, translates to \$268,310. He also indicated that all properties in Ontario have been reassessed with the new values being phased in over four years. He indicated that based on 2008 rates, the 2009 phased-in reassessment translates into \$342,695 in additional revenue for the Municipality. He indicated that the reassessment has resulted in an average increase in assessment of approximately 5.0 percent to residential properties.

The following matters were discussed by Committee:

- Further clarification with respect to PSAB matters was discussed with the Treasurer noting that any item over \$5,000 for a single item, or \$25,000 for pooled items are considered capital items that would be depreciated. Studies which previously would have been placed in the Capital Budget are now noted in the operating budget as PSAB does not consider studies to be tangible assets.
- Clarification regarding the revenue in water was discussed. The Treasurer noted that the budget is based on estimates of flow and that as 2008 was a wet summer the water consumption was less than expected.
- With respect to projected revenues some members of Committee questioned whether the projections were too high while others questioned if they were too low. The Treasurer indicated that MPAC is at times two years behind in providing supplemental assessment for new housing and therefore it is difficult to predict the revenue generated.
- Staff was asked to provide further clarification on wage increases. The Treasurer indicated that the number includes the 3 percent cost of living increased approved by Council, merit increases for staff members that were eligible and approved for such increases, the wages of the volunteer firefighters which is difficult to predict as it is dependent on the number of calls; and the community centres caretakers previously not part of the wage component. Therefore the total is higher than 3 percent over 2008.
- Clarification with respect to Police Services Board budget was provided, with the Treasurer noting that Middlesex Centre is the administrative body for the Police Services Board.
- Staff responded to an inquiry regarding the municipal gravel pits and whether money has been placed in the budget to close two of the gravel pits. The Manager of Public Works and Engineering indicated that there is still some resource available in the pits for municipal use and therefore no monies have been placed in the budget to close the pits.
- Albert Bannister indicated concern that road projects are based on the recommendations of the Roads Needs Study and should instead be based on practicalities. The Manager of Public Works and Engineering indicated that the PWE staff support the recommendations of the Road Needs Study.
- Albert Bannister suggested that a large tractor being proposed by the budget is not required. The Manager of Public Works and Engineering indicated that based on the recommendations of the equipment operators who undertake the road side cutting a larger tractor is required for safety purposes.
- Staff was directed to investigate the parking area of the Coldstream Community Centre and Municipal Office to determine if expanded parking facilities are available.
- Ken Filson asked for clarification regarding the work to be undertaken to Wonderland Road between Nine Mile Road and Ten Mile Road. The Manager of Public Works and Engineering indicated that the 2009 budget is for engineering work to determine how best to address the safety issues of

the road and that actual work to the road would be proposed in the 2010 budget.

- Staff was asked to do further study for next year's budget to determine the long term needs for equipment replacement. The Treasurer indicated that when the new accounting practices are in place there will be more detailed information with respect to depreciation and replacement costs that will assist with providing more useful information for the long term budgeting needs for equipment replacement.
- Staff was asked to provide further information on the current Reserves with respect to those that are discretionary and non-discretionary.
- Staff was also asked to further review the Reserves and provide a recommendation on combining the Reserves to provide more flexibility with respect to their usage.

After further discussion the majority of the Committee agreed that staff should provide a revised Budget for Council consideration on February 18, 2009 that would result in a 0 tax dollar increase for municipal purposes on a residential property with an increased assessment of 5 percent.

In order to achieve this, the Committee recommended that the balance of \$70,805.02 remaining in the Roads and Bridges Reserve Fund be transferred to the Roads Capital Reserve Fund and that \$71,424.98 be transferred from the Tax Rate Stabilization Reserve Fund to the Buildings and Facilities Reserve Fund. These transfers along with \$187,000 obtained from growth be placed in the reserves to obtain the total of \$329,230 total reserve fund contribution as recommended by the BMA Capital Financial Plan Study.

CW2009/012

Moved by Ken Filson

Seconded by Frank Berze

THAT staff be directed to bring forward to the February 18, 2009 Council meeting the 2009 Budget for consideration of approval based on a 0 tax dollar increase for municipal purposes on a residential property with an increased assessment of 5 percent and that the balance of \$70,805.02 remaining in the Roads and Bridges Reserve Fund be transferred to the Roads Capital Reserve Fund and that \$71,424.98 be transferred from the Tax Rate Stabilization Reserve Fund to the Buildings and Facilities Reserve Fund. These transfers along with \$187,000 obtained from growth be placed in the reserves to obtain the total of \$329,230 total reserve fund contribution as recommended by the BMA Capital Financial Plan Study.

-Carried-

### **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, this meeting of the Committee of the Whole adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

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CHAIR

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CLERK