



Town of Borden-Carleton

Special Council Meeting

March 19, 2024 – 20 Dickie Road

7:00pm

PRESENT: Mayor Randy Ahearn, Deputy Mayor Larry Allen, Councillor Barb Wood, Councillor Nicole Bernard-Arsenault, and Councillor Ashley Steele.

REGRETS: Councillor Laurel Palmer-Thompson and Councillor Eric Stewart

ALSO PRESENT: CAO, Jim Wentzell; MLA Matt Macfarlane (8:00) pm

1. CALL TO ORDER:

The Mayor called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm. Mayor Ahearn asked the CAO to present the draft budgets and supporting information for the upcoming fiscal year of 2024/25 for the Town, Gateway Arena and Utilities.

2. PRESENTATION DRAFT BUDGETS FOR 2024/25:

CAO Jim Wentzell explained that the purpose of the meeting was for Council to review the Town, Gateway Arena and Utilities operating budgets for 2024/25 before the presentation of the final draft budgets and approval on Tuesday March 26 2024. The CAO encouraged Council feedback on the proposed budgeted figures and will answer any questions that Council may have on the draft budget projections.

As background to the budget presentation, the CAO indicated the budget format has changed with the budgets following the format of the Audited financial statements. The town's accountant Henry Le has created mapping of the Town's accounts in various spreadsheets to enable the creation of budgets and financial statements that mirror all the schedules in the Audited statements.

This enabled staff to use more accurate projections to use in developing the budgets and now enables the creation of meaningful financial statements on a quarterly basis. Circulated to Council were a summary sheet on the Town & Arena along with a high-level breakdown for each major category. In addition, were information on the operation of both the Sewer and Water Utilities.

The CAO stated that the draft budgets for the Town did not reflect any increase in the Town's tax rates for 2024/25. (1 cent =6,880). There are proposed increases in Recreation Rates over the next three years including Arena ice rental rates.

In addition, the Utility rates haven't changed since 2011 (13 years ago) and as the utilities have been incurring deficits over the past number of years, the Utility budgets include rate increases of 25% for 2024/25 and 5% for each of the next two subsequent years.

Staff salary increases of approximately 3% have been incorporated in the Town’s budgets as well as reflecting an increase in minimum wage that will increase from \$15.00/hr. to \$16.00/hr.

Policing and Fire Service, Recreation and Town, Administration, Governance and Planning are the top 3 uses of tax revenue in the Town.

- Police Protection – RCMP, Fire Protection and local EMO organization has an operating cost of \$285,750;
- Recreation for the Town (including the Arena) comes in at \$445,534;
- Town Administration and Planning Services costs the Town \$267,191; and
- Street Maintenance – 11 of the Town’s 42 streets are maintained by the Town, including snow removal at a cost of \$158,376.

Throughout the discussion, the CAO answered questions on the proposed budgets as put to him by members of Town Council.

3. SPECIAL GUEST MLA MATT MCFARLANE (8:00) pm

Council welcomed our new MLA for Borden-Kinkora Matt Macfarlane to the meeting. The purpose of meeting with Mr. Macfarlane was to provide information to him and to discuss with him issues of importance to the Town of Borden-Carleton.

A document outlining sixteen (16) subject areas were given to Mr. Macfarlane and Council reviewed the document with him and a discussion on each item was held. Members of Council answered various questions on the various topics.

Mr. Macfarlane appreciated the opportunity to meet with Council and to discuss the topics of importance to the Town. He agreed to follow up on them with the CAO. He left the meeting at 9:00pm

4. IN CAMERA

Council went in camera at 9:00pm to receive updates from the CAO on various development proposals that will come before Council in the near future.

Council returned to open session at 9:35pm

4. ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 9:35pm

Mayor Randy Ahearn

CAO Jim Wentzell