

Budget Meeting Day Two
March 6, 2023

A meeting to discuss the 2023 Budget was held at Council Chambers in Baddeck on March 6, 2023, at 9:00am with Warden Morrison in the Chair.

Present Were:

District #3- Bruce Morrison, Warden

District #4- Barbara Longva

District #5- Fraser Patterson

District #6- Larry Dauphinee, Deputy Warden

District #7- Jackie Organ

Also present were:

Leanne MacEachen, CAO

Alix Redden, CFO

Allan Bragg, Manager of Accounting

Stephanie MacLeod, Recorder

Jennifer Dagsvik, Communications Coordinator

Absent:

District #1- Paul MacNeil

District #2- Perla MacLeod

District #8- Norman MacDonald

On Motion of Councillor Organ seconded by Councillor Patterson that the February 6, 2023, Budget Minutes be approved.

Motion Carried.

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Ms. Redden gave an overview of the baseline revenue and baseline expenses breakdown. She also went over tax revenue points of interest.

Ms. Redden went over baseline revenue breakdown.

Decision Areas

Village of Baddeck tax Billing/collections:

Village of Baddeck rate

- Was not included on our 2021 tax bills
- 2021 billing was done manually by Victoria County staff
- Was included on our 2022 tax bills
- Amounts are transferred to the Village based on collections
- Requires a lot of manual effort (not a simple report)

Commission Revenue

- 10% commission charges = \$27k if 100% collected

Council agreed to let the VOB collect their own area rate rather than having it on VC's tax bill.

Grant Offerings:

Capital, operational, development

- Approximate 2022/2023 asks = \$368,651
- 2022-2023 budget = \$250,000
- 2022-2023 spent = \$268,700 (missed one application and missed budgeting scholarships \$3,500)
- Won't know 2023-24 ask total until after March 31, 2023

Council agreed to leave it as \$250,000.

Trails

- 2022-2023 budget = \$100,000/expect to spend \$80,000
- Department feels \$100,000 is still appropriate (at least next 2 years + ongoing funding once an external organization)

Council agreed to leave the trail funding at \$100,000.

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Property Tax Relief:

Property tax relief – organizations

- 2022-23 budget = \$70,000 // 2022-23 spent = \$55,300
- Approximate 2022-23 asks = \$76,123
- Won't know 2023-24 ask total until after March 31, 2023

Council agreed to leave it at \$70,000.

Property tax relief – low-income exemption

- 2022-23 budget = \$25,000 // 2022-23 spent = \$18,600 (up 60% over previous year)
- Updated to \$300 maximum exemption; household taxable income \$35,000
- Previously \$225 maximum exemption; household taxable income \$25,000
- Could use better promotion.

Council agreed to leave it at \$25,000.

Fire Department Funding:

Funding to fire departments

- 2022-23 budget & spent = \$568,800
- 5% increase last year over prior year (additional \$27,080)
- Baseline 2023-24 budget includes no increase
 - 4% increase = \$22,752
 - 5% increase = \$28,440

Council agreed to a 5% increase.

Strategic Initiative Focus:

2023 – 2024 AREAS OF FOCUS FROM FEBRUARY 1 & 2 SESSION:

Responsible Infrastructure:

- Ingonish water/wastewater
- Municipal administration office
- Northern waste facility

Unified Connections:

- Cellular and broadband
- Trail development
- Communication and engagement

Sustainable Growth:

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- Year-Round opportunities
- Economic development
- Natural preservation

Strong Partnerships & Advocacy:

- Housing
- First Nations relations
- Climate Change

RESPONSIBLE INFRASTRUCTURE

- Ingonish water/wastewater
 - What if it exceeds \$17m?

Council still wants to go ahead with this project and requested to see what the cost would be to bring the line up to Castle Rock, it would add another 1km.

- Municipal administration office
 - Timeline on decision?

Council wants to wait until March of 2025 to make a decision on the municipal building. In the meantime, repairs to the plumbing and roof will be done. It was decided that \$200,000k will be added to this year's budget for repairs to the building.

- Northern waste facility
 - What if it exceeds \$3m?

Council agreed to move forward and wants to wait to make a decision when they know the full cost. The next step is to put out an RFP for the design of facility.

UNIFIED CONNECTIONS

- Cellular and broadband
 - Any financial contributions

Council decided not to contribute anything for broadband or cellular.

- Communication and engagement
 - IT/Communications Assistant role (website, livestreaming)?

CAO and Council discussed a salary range but compensation review tool will be used

- Residents' newsletter? \$5-7k/mailout

Council agreed to do a mailout twice a year for \$10k (5K per issue) to start off and see if residents are receptive to the mailout.

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- Transit
 - 2022-23 budget = \$100,000 / expect to spend \$75,000

Council agreed to the \$100,000k for transit.

SUSTAINABLE GROWTH

- Placemaking and community development
 - 2022-23 budget = \$100,000 / expect to spend \$100,000
 - Department feels \$70,000 is appropriate for 2023-24 (\$10k x 2 communities; \$5k x 10 communities)

Council agreed to these figures.

STRONG PARTNERSHIPS AND ADVOCACY

- Housing
 - 2022-23 budget = \$100,000 / expect to spend \$85,000

Council agreed to put \$100,000 into the budget for housing.
- Climate Change
 - Any financial contributions?

Council decided not to add any financial contributions at this time.

Areas Not Discussed – (still an area of focus)?:

- Physician recruitment
 - 2022-23 budget = \$20,000 / spent \$0

Council agreed not to add this to the budget.
- Senior Safety
 - Receive \$25k in grant funding; costs ~ \$40-50k
 - Status quo? More hours? More people?
 - Relationship to accessibility work?

Council agreed to keep it status quo for this year. No more will be assigned to the Senior Safety position.

Public Works Projects:

- Heavy Garbage
 - 2022-23 budget = \$60k / spent \$53k

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- Expect 2023-24 = ++\$60k

Council agreed to keep the heavy garbage pickup in the budget for \$70,000.

- Household hazardous waste
 - 2022-23 budget = \$50k / spent \$30k
 - Very poor turnout – could consider costing adding a permanent HHW building in Baddeck.

Council decided to take this out of the budget. Council requested for the Public Works Manager to come up with costing of an HHW area in the potential North Transfer Site build.

- Dingwall brush/shingle piles
 - Not enough space for both accepting fish offal and these piles
 - Removal costs >\$500k

Council agreed to add \$300k to the budget for this if the Department of Environment allows us to remove the waste over a couple of years.

- Shore Road Baddeck sidewalk
 - Email exchange between PW & concerned resident / cost unknown

Council requested an estimate on this and also approach the Village for a shared cost. Council said for now add \$50k to the Budget for this project right now.

Labour Relations (In Camera)

- Collective bargaining beginning March 15 and 16.