

# Town of Berwick

## *Budget Meeting*

### Minutes of the Meeting

May 14, 2007

#### **Attendance**

In attendance

Mayor	John Prall	Chair
Deputy Mayor	Beth Easson	
Councillors	Richard Horsburgh	
	Mike Trinacty	
	Don Clarke	
	Gary Whittier	
	Anna Ashford-Morton	
Staff	Mr. Mike MacLean	
	Mr. Craig Bugess	
	Mr. Don Regan	
	Mr. Gary Gould	
Recording Secretary	Chantal Pineo-Atwood	
Media	Sarah Keddy	Kings County Register

#### **1. CALL TO ORDER**

The Meeting was called to order at 5:05pm

Mr. Ashley remarked that staff would like to have the budget passed at June Council, having recommendation from May Committee of the Whole.

## **2. SEWER BUDGET**

Councillor Trinacty asked if the Town has increased the assessment on Cobi Foods as there is more activity taking place at the site.

Mr. MacLean noted that staff can take steps in this regard, next year.

Mr. MacLean indicated that we have gone with last year's rate.

Mayor Prall asked if Council saw a reason why they should not accept this.

Council was in agreement to this rate.

## **3. CAPITAL BUDGET**

Mr. MacLean and Mr. Ashley reviewed the Capital Budget documentation. Discussion ensued about long term capital plans, gas tax monies and storm water projects. Mr. Ashley indicated that Council needs to prepare themselves for debt repayment such as the new fire hall.

Councillor Morton and Councillor Clarke asked if there was a need for a new dump truck and a new ½ ton truck. Mr. Gould indicated that there was a definite need for these two vehicles to get the work done. Discussion ensued about the issue of buying a new vehicle versus having an older vehicle and having to pay repair bills.

Mr. MacLean noted that if Council takes money from the capital budget, it will need to increase the transfer to capital reserve to preserve overall capital spending.

## **4. OPERATING BUDGET AND NEW SPENDING**

Mr. MacLean reviewed the New Spending 07/08 documentation and indicated a shortfall of \$74,900.00, under the assumption of last year's rate. He noted that the green initiatives will put a cent on the tax rate and economic development spending will cost about 1.5 cents. We could possibly stay at \$1.52 with no new spending.

Much discussion ensued about trying to remain at \$1.52 and ways to go about this such as limiting some public works programs, making the firehall into a four-bay building instead of six, the elimination of a dump truck, etc.

Council asked to review the new spending documents line by line.

Councillor Trinacty and Mayor Prall expressed that we need to remain keen and put some money on economic development or we will lose the momentum.

It was suggested that we could use money from potential town owned land sales and tweek the capital budget to keep the rate at \$1.55, with some room to work with the commercial rate.

Mr. MacLean indicated that he could look at how staff and Council could rejuggle some money from reserve to help balance the budget.

Mayor Prall suggested that we increase the commercial rate minimally and try to stay as close as Council can to the \$1.55 residential rate.

It was relayed that perhaps it may be beneficial, to town residents, to place a pie chart in the next tax bill showing the Provincial money that is spent from tax dollars that the municipal unit does not even see.

## **5. ADJOURNMENT**

The Budget Meeting was adjourned at 7:34pm.

*See archived tape for further information and specifics.*