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**ATTENDING**

Mayor Jeff Cantwell, Councillor Mercedes Brian, Councillor Wendy Donovan, Councillor Wendy Elliott, Councillor Jodi MacKay, Chief Administrative Officer Erin Beaudin, and Recording Secretary Dan Stovel

**ALSO ATTENDING**

Director Corporate Services Jen Boyd, Director Finance Mike MacLean, Director Public Works & Parks Kevin Kerr, Director Community Development Chrystal Fuller and interested members of the public

**ABSENT WITH REGRETS**

Deputy Mayor Carl Oldham and Councillor Oonagh Proudfoot

**LATE ARRIVALS**

Councillor Wendy Elliott

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chair called the meeting to order at 8:38 am

**1. AGENDA APPROVAL**

**11-01-17 IT WAS REGULARLY MOVED AND SECONDED THAT THE AGENDA BE APPROVED AS CIRCULATED**

**CARRIED**

**2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**12-01-17 IT WAS REGULARLY MOVED AND SECONDED THAT THE MINUTES OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING OF JANUARY 17, 2016 BE APPROVED AS CIRCULATED**

**CARRIED**

**3. STAFF REPORTS FOR DISCUSSION:**

**a. INFORMATION REPORT: 2017/18 OPERATING AND CAPITAL BUDGET DISCUSSION**

- Director Finance presented the first draft of the Town's 2017/18 Operating and Capital Budgets. This follows the formal process started by Committee of the Whole (COW) in November where preliminary budget information was reviewed, as well as a tentative Capital Investment Plan (CIP)
- As per the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) adopted last year for the budget process, January is Council's first look at draft estimates for the upcoming year based on the initiatives/projects/service levels expected to be addressed in the upcoming year
- Additionally, this year's process will involve connecting Council's Strategic Plan to a four-year Operations Plan which will be incorporated into a four-year financial budget and forecast (Draft V1 presented at the January 24<sup>th</sup> Special COW meeting only reflects fiscal 2017/18 budget
- The overall property tax increase of \$132,200 is better than last year, but less than the preceding couple of years:
  - 2017/18 tax revenue increase, assume no rate changes \$132,200
  - 2016/17 tax revenue increase, assuming no rate change \$64,900
  - 2015/16 tax revenue increase, assuming no rate changes \$243,000
  - 2014/15 tax revenue increase, assuming no rate changes \$165,000



- Goals of presenting the Draft 2017/18 Budget to Committee of the Whole at the January 24<sup>th</sup> Special Committee of the Whole (COW):
  - Overview of major revenue and expenditure changes from 2016/17 budget to 2017/18 draft budget
  - Review Summary of New and/or Service Level Changes
  - Discuss options to achieve balanced budget
- This is Council's second formal review of budget information. Two more COW meetings are scheduled for further budget review and discussions, therefore not all decisions need to be made during this first review. It will be important to get clear direction from Council on a number of decision points as they relate to expectations for 2016/17
- Unlike a year ago, Draft Budget V1 shows a relatively small shortfall. The 2017/18 shortfall sits at \$102,300 compared to a year ago, where the early 2016/17 budget was short \$330,000
- Options outlined to balance the budget – Tax Increases and/or Other Funding (possibly reserves) and/or Expenditure Cuts
- There is still time, two months, to make changes before budget approval

**9:13am Councillor Wendy Elliott joined the Committee of the Whole meeting**

- Possible Budget options presented by Director Finance that would require Council direction:
  - Is consensus still to limit tax increase to Cost of Living Allowance (COLA), i.e., no change to rates effectively keeping majority to no more than 1.4%
  - Strategic use of Operating Reserves may be key this year – guided by Reserve Policy
- Operating Budget - Options not yet included in the Draft 2017/18 budget:
  - Landmark East and Wolfville School - \$200,000 (one time funding request of \$100,000 from each organization) – separate reports will be presented to Council in February to guide Council in decision-making
  - Upward Pressure on Grants to Organizations Policy with regards to Strategic Partners category – additional information and/or separate reports will be presented to Council in March to guide Council decision-making:
    - Wolfville Historical Society
    - Devour
  - Recreation Study – joint initiative with other municipal units. A Recreation Master Plan is being considered/planned at the Regional level
  - Other costs – Municipal units in Kings County appear to have renewed momentum on common topics, could equate to new costs for regional initiatives
  - Any savings if Wolfville were to pull out of the Valley Regional Enterprise Network (REN) as per notice given a year ago – the current Draft version of the budget still indicates a contribution to the REN

**10:15am Chair called a 10-minute break to Special Committee of the Whole meeting**



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**10:32am Special Committee of the Whole meeting reconvened**

- Capital Budget Project Discussions:
  - Traffic Lights – move up earlier and to what year? This issue will be elaborated on further at the February COW meeting
  - Emerging water/sewer underground infrastructure issues (e.g., Sunset/Sylvan and Kent)
    - Can't all be done in one year, Sunset/Sylvan was identified late in the budget process last year and is scheduled for Year 1. Kent was moved up to Year 2 from Year 3 in the current draft CIP.
  - Need to annually grow Transfers to Capital Reserves
    - Current Capital Investment Plan (CIP) assumes 1% annual increase – updates will be provided at the February COW meeting
  - The Town's sidewalk machine is due to be replaced as a trade-in; however, there may be benefits to the Town having two machines
- Not included at this stage are Operational Project Charters. Senior management is working on these documents and plans are to bring them forward to the February Committee of the Whole meeting to inform the budget process
- In terms of moving forward with the next version of the Budget, Council will be provided year-end forecasts, as provided to the Audit Committee on January 20<sup>th</sup>, at the February Committee of the Whole meeting

**4. QUESTION PERIOD**

- Audrey Conroy – Gateways inquiry. When, if at all, is there going to be more public input into the development of future 'Gateways'? Yes, there will be future input sought from the public

**5. STAFF REPORTS FOR DISCUSSION:**

**b. PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE (PAC) MEMBERSHIP DISCUSSION**

- Committee applications for the PAC were reviewed by Council.

**ADJOURNMENT TO IN CAMERA**

**13-01-17 IT WAS REGULARLY MOVED AND SECONDED THAT THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING BE ADJOURNED 11:25AM TO AN IN CAMERA MEETING UNDER THE MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT ACT, SECTION 22(2)(C) TO DISCUSS A PERSONNEL MATTER**

**6. IN CAMERA AND SPECIAL MEETINGS ADJOURNED**

**14-01-17 IT WAS REGULARLY MOVED AND SECONDED THAT THE IN CAMERA AND SPECIAL MEETINGS OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE BE ADJOURNED AT 11:48 AM** **CARRIED**

**Approved by Committee of the Whole Motion 02-02-17, February 7, 2017**

**As recorded by Dan Stovel, AA Corporate Services/Town Clerk**