



**The Corporation of the Township of Norwich
Council Meeting Minutes
Tuesday November 30, 2023
Council Meeting – Capital Budget**

In Attendance:

Council:

Mayor Jim Palmer
Councillor Scholten
Councillor DePlancke
Councillor Gear
Councillor Couwenberg

Staff:

Lee Robinson, CAO
James Johnson, Director of Finance/Treasurer
Derek Van Pagee, Director of Fire and Protective Services
Brad Smale, chief Building Official
Ken Farkas, Public Works Superintendent
AJ Wells, Manager of Medical Services
Patrick Hovorka, Director of Community Development Services
Kimberley Armstrong, Director of Corporate Services/Clerk

1. Call to Order

The Capital Budget Meeting of the 2022-2026 Council of the Township of Norwich was held in the Council Chambers, Norwich, commencing at 9:00 a.m. with Mayor Palmer presiding.

2. Approval of Agenda

Resolution #1

Moved by Shawn Gear, seconded by Adrian Couwenberg:

That the Agenda be accepted as presented.

Carried

3. DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY INTEREST

No disclosures were reported.

4. 2024 ASSET MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

4.1 Jennifer Lavallee, Oxford County Manager of Capital Planning

Re: Presentation

Ms. Lavallee explained the purpose of the Asset Management Plan advising it will help support Council priorities, guide future investments, aid long term financial planning and capital reserve targets. She explained the areas of compliance as required by O.Reg 577/17 and the concept of sustainable development.

Ms. Lavalee advised that requirements include: strategic asset management policy, an asset management plan for core assets, asset management plan for all assets and a plan updated for proposed levels of service, overview of contents included in the plan, levels of service framework. She stressed the importance of creating strategies to address lifecycle management by making an annual contribution to the asset reserves to lessen tax payer impacts.

There were Council questions with respect to: the asset assessments, distribution of grant funds and gravel road assessments.

Resolution #2

Moved by Adrian Couwenberg, seconded by Shawn Gear:

That the Asset Management Plan Presentation from Jennifer Lavallee, Oxford County Manager of Capital Planning, be received as information.

Carried

5. INTRODUCTION

5.1 Re: Introduction Presentation

Mr. Johnson provided an overview of the budget process, advising that it includes 2024 projects and a ten-year capital plan, although some departments have 20-year plans. He advised that funding for Capital projects includes: the Canada Community Building Fund (formerly gas tax), Ontario Community Infrastructure Fund, donations, debentures, development charges, parkland levy fees, tax stabilization reserve, reserves, tax levy, discretionary reserve funds and obligatory reserve funds. Mr. Johnson also provided an overview of tax payer impacts for a gravel road conversion program based on three different scenarios.

There was Council discussion with respect to: the fact that MPAC has not completed a re-assessment since 2016, inflationary increases, lack of adequate funding for road infrastructure.

6. DEPARTMENTAL CAPITAL BUDGET

6.1 Overall Capital Budget & Executive Summary

Mr. Johnson advised that the executive summary contains a brief summary of the 2024 capital projects for the purpose of future quick reference.

6.2 General Administration

Mr. Johnson provided an overview of general administration expenses. It was clarified that since the municipality switched Police Forces, the \$400,000 savings has been placed into reserves annually and has been used for large projects such as the new administration building.

There was Council discussion with respect to the ceiling fan and light replacement required in the main office area and the proposed key fob project.

Break: 10:50

Resume: 11:00

The Mayor advised that as Council go through each department and identify individual projects they would like removed from the draft capital budget document, that staff be advised and they will prepare individual motions for Council consideration at the end of the meeting

6.3 Fire and Protective Services

Chief Van Patee advised that this year's expenses include; computer equipment, communications system, water softeners and removal of epoxy flooring in Station 2. He advised that the price of PPE has increased and that items identified will maintain the current service levels.

6.4 Building Services

Mr. Smale advised that this budget consists of contributions to reserves for future vehicle replacement and software/IT equipment reserves.

6.5 Transportation

Mr. Farkas provided an overview of projects, explaining that the pulverizer would come in once and do all at the same time to reduce expenses and that some pulverized material is used as granular material. Staff explained that roads have a wearing surface similar to a house roof, which protects the surface. The surface is repaired as needed to protect the base layer underneath and avoid the large expense of a complete replacement. It was noted that the guiderail program, bridge repair and Roads Needs Study are based on Inspection Reports.

There was Council discussion with respect to: proposed gravel conversion program, residents under financial strain, finding savings in other departments, weather pattern changes, lack of infrastructure funds spent on rural residents and current levels of service. There was also comment about the Roads Needs Study and the importance of following it, the Otterville Pedestrian bridge, Milldale Road box culvert, mower with brusher and proposed Middletown Line lot paved based and fencing.

6.6 Medical Services

Mr. Wells advised that this budget consists of the computer replacement program and contributions to reserves for future capital needs in anticipation of Building Assessment Report.

Recess for lunch: 12:17

Resume: 1:00 pm

6.7 Cemeteries

Mr. Hovorka advised that funds are set aside in reserves for future Cemetery related Capital costs.

6.8 Parks and Recreation

Mr. Hovorka provided an overview of proposed projects. In response to Council questions, it was explained that the outdoor fitness equipment for the South-West Park is being partially funded by Development Charges so mostly paid for by the development community. If Council were to wish to remove this item, Development Charge funds could not be reallocated.

In response to questions, staff clarified that the proposed Recreation Master Plan would identify projects and that the former plan was for parks only and did not include other recreational items such as the arena. There was Council discussion with respect to: the arena dehumidification system, the Otterville Pool and adding a 7th dressing room.

Mr. Johnson provided an overview of the capital reserves and the reserve forecast, including future reserve deficits. Mr. Johnson also spoke of the infrastructure gap in funding capital projects to maintain current service levels.

Resolution #3

Moved by Shawn Gear, seconded by Adrian Couwenberg:

That the Administration Building Key Fob Project in the amount of \$30,000 be removed from the Draft Capital Budget.

Carried

Resolution #4

Moved by Shawn Gear, seconded by Adrian Couwenberg:

That the Water Softeners proposed for Fire Stations 1 and 2 in the amount of \$7,000 be removed from the Draft Capital Budget.

Lost

There was Council discussion with respect to Airport Road and staff clarified that if it is being removed from 2024, the project will need to be allocated elsewhere and also that the overlay may not be an option if delayed too long.

Resolution #5

Moved by Sean Gear, seconded by Adrian Couwenberg:

That the Airport Road Project in the amount of \$114,000 be deferred in the Draft Capital Budget to 2025.

Carried

In response to Council questions, staff advised that reports will be forthcoming regarding the former works yard in Burgessville and Council may decide what to do with the property and any related funds at that time.

Resolution #6

Moved by Lynne DePlancke, seconded by John Scholten:

That the Gravel Road Conversion Program be included in the Draft Capital Budget in the amount of \$500,000

Carried

Resolution #7

Moved by Shawn Gear, seconded by Adrian Couwenberg:

That the Middletown Line Lot works for gravel, base and fencing in the amount of \$20,000 be removed from the Capital Budget

Lost

There was Council discussion with respect to the current 7-year rotation for Township vehicles, varied mileage depending on department, repair costs and current vehicle prices.

Resolution #8

Moved by Shawn Gear, seconded by Adrian Couwenberg:

That the Pick-up Truck Replacement schedule for Public Works be extended to 10 years instead of the current 7-year replacement schedule

Lost

In response to questions, Mr. Farkas explained that the equipment for brushing and ditching is important to maintaining the current level of service, it saves money and allows for provision of service year-round.

Resolution #9

Moved by Adrian Couwenberg, seconded by Shawn Gear:

That the Public Works Tractor and Brusher in the amount of \$325,000 be removed from the Capital Budget

Lost

Resolution #10

Moved by Adrian Couwenberg, seconded by Shawn Gear:

That the Recreation Master Plan in the amount of \$50,000 be removed from the Capital Budget.

Carried

There was Council discussion with respect to the proposed seventh dressing room at the Arena. Staff explained that this would meet many needs, including: human rights, diversity, inclusivity, caregiver help and to provide a safe space. There was discussion about possible sponsorship opportunities.

Resolution #11

Moved by Adrian Couwenberg, seconded by Shawn Gear:

That the 7th Dressing Room at the Norwich Arena in the amount of \$20,000 be removed from the Capital Budget

Lost

Recess: 2:30 p.m.

Resume: 2:45 p.m.

Resolution #12

Moved by Adrian Couwenberg, seconded by Shawn Gear:

That \$164,000 be transferred from their prospective reserves to the gravel road conversion program.

Carried

Resolution #13

Moved by Adrian Couwenberg, seconded by Shawn Gear:

That Report FS 2023-23, 2024 Capital Budget Executive Summary be received as information;

And That Council continue to approve a 1% levy increase plus inflation as a strategy to close the infrastructure gap;

And Further That Council approve the Capital Levy of \$3,683,000 to be included in the 2024 Operating Budget deliberations.

Carried

7. BY-LAWS

No. 62-2023

To Confirm All Actions and Proceedings of Council

7.1 First and Second Reading of the Following By-law(s)

Resolution #14

Moved by Lynne DePlancke, seconded by John Scholten:

That the following By-law as listed, be introduced and taken as read a first and second time.

No. 62-2023 To Confirm All Actions and Proceedings of Council

Carried

7.2 Third Reading of the Following By-law

Resolution #15

Moved by John Scholten, seconded by Lynne DePlancke:

THAT By-law 62-2023 as listed, be taken as read a third and final time and passed and signed by the Mayor and Clerk and the Corporate Seal be affixed thereto.

Carried

8. Adjournment – 2:49 p.m.

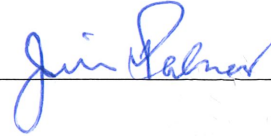
Resolution #16

Moved by John Scholten, seconded by Lynne DePlancke:

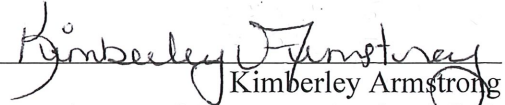
That this Council do now adjourn.

Carried

These minutes adopted by way of Resolution No. 2 as approved by Council at its meeting on the 14th day of November, 2023.



Jim Palmer
Mayor



Kimberley Armstrong
Director of Corporate Services/Clerk