



Minutes of the Committee of the Whole

Place: Council Chambers

Date: Monday, March 2, 2020

Presiding Officer: Mayor Patricia Stewart

Councilors Present: Councilors Brenton Colborne, Dave Clark, Dawn Thompson, Rick Draper, Wendy Sweet-Kontuk and Wade Adshade.

Regrets: Nil

A quorum was present throughout the meeting.

Staff present: CAO - Rachel Jones, Senior Accountant – Ruthann Brookins, and Deputy Clerk - Linda Cloney (recording secretary)

In attendance: Mark Rushton – Reporter, Six Rivers News

1. Call to Order

Mayor Stewart called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

2. Approval of Agenda

Defer 4.1 – Debt Affordability Model – Paul Wills, Municipal Finance Corporation – to the March 16, 2020 Regular Council Meeting.

It was moved and seconded that the agenda of the Committee of the Whole Meeting for March 2, 2020 be approved, as amended.

Motion Carried

3. Approval of Previous Minutes

3.1 Committee of the Whole – 3 February 2020

It was moved and seconded that the minutes of the previous Committee of the Whole Meeting dated February 3, 2020 be approved.

Motion Carried

4. New Business

4.1 Debt Affordability Model – Paul Wills, Municipal Finance Corporation – Deferred to March Regular Council Meeting.

4.2 Draft 2020/21 Capital Budget – Preliminary

CAO Jones reported to Council, in detail, the draft 2020/21 Capital Budget. Highlights from this discussion are listed below.

- The TownSuite software cost is a carry-over from last year. Staff anticipates implementing the TownSuite software this summer. Last year the funding was not approved from the Province. Staff will make a grant application for \$26,000.00 to the Province for the remainder costs of the TownSuite Software.
- An estimate of \$65,000.00 for Town Hall upgrades (air conditioning, heating, leak in the roof and painting) has been brought forward to be considered in the Capital Budget.
- The Arena Energy Project is still on the books. Staff are working with Nova Scotia Power. Nova Scotia Power offered to reach out to their list of contractors, and they could be a project manager, at no cost, to the Town of Oxford.
- Paving is budgeted at 80,000.00 and the funding is allocated from the Gax Tax. Staff anticipates installing culverts in at Horton Street and the Hansford Road intersection. Staff also plan to pave Horton Street and finish Thompson Road. There was a discussion on paving for Water Street and Main Street.
- Recreation small projects – staff are applying to the Municipality of the County of Cumberland for a \$20,000.00 grant for upgrades.
- Information Kiosks – Staff are collecting quotes. If the Downtown beautification grant is awarded, the Town of Oxford can partner with the Amherst Chamber of Commerce to process that funding. There is an option to utilize some of this funding for Town projects as well as offering it to the businesses.
- The fire truck with the Fire Department will need to be entered in the debt affordability model process.
- Water utility – The Main Street project was not completed last year. Staff are anticipating combining the Main Street project with the Rideau Street, Duke Street, and Waverly Street project. If a contractor can come in and do all the work at once, staff are hopeful to get a better bottom line price. The PCAP (Provincial Capital Assistance Program) don't usually award much more than \$200,000.00, a suggestion was to find ways to phase this project for successful completion. Staff are currently working with a consultant to accomplish this.
- Trails will carry the remainder of the 2019/2020 Capital Budget to the 2020/2021 Capital Budget and apply for another \$10,000.00 to the 2020/2021 Capital Budget.

4.3 RFD #005-2020: Preliminary Elector's List

It was moved and seconded that the Committee of the Whole recommends to Council to approve entering into the Information Sharing Agreement with the Chief Electoral Officer of the Province of Nova Scotia for the use of the provincial list of electors from Elections Nova Scotia for the purpose of the upcoming general or special municipal elections.

Motion Carried

4.4 Proclamation: Epilepsy Awareness Month

On this date, March 2, 2020, Mayor Stewart declared March to be Epilepsy Awareness Month for the Town of Oxford.

4.5 Doctor Retention Grant: Discussion

The Doctor Recruitment Committee and the Doctor Retention Committee worked collaboratively on a grant from the Province. Due to the committee's efforts, they were awarded \$15,700.00 from the Healthy Community Streams under the Culture Innovation Fund.

It was moved and seconded that the Committee of the Whole recommends to Council to approve contributing up to \$350.00 to the Doctor Recruitment Fund.

Motion Carried

4.6 Department of Communities Culture and Heritage: Library Funding

Council had a general discussion regarding the Library Funding Update. The municipal funding will remain at the current levels for the 2020-21 fiscal year and the new library funding contributions will come into effect in the 2021-22 fiscal year. The Town of Oxford contribution, as per the funding formula model proposed, has increased by 39%. Council and staff expressed disappointment in the lack of consultation during the implementation of the new library funding model.

4.7 Occupation Health & Safety Policy: Review

It was moved and seconded that the Committee of the Whole recommends to Council to approve the Occupational Health & Safety Policy as presented.

Motion Carried

5. Correspondence


5.1 International Women's Day Committee

Saturday, March 7, 2020 is the International Women's Day Event at the Oxford Capitol Theatre. The International Women's Day Committee sent a thank you to the Oxford Town Council for the donation of a door prize.

6. Adjournment

At 6:48 pm, it was moved and seconded that the meeting be adjourned.

Motion Carried



Patricia Stewart, Mayor



Linda Cloney, Recording Secretary