



**QUISPAMISIS TOWN COUNCIL
SPECIAL MEETING
MINUTES**

**October 23, 2021, 8:30 am
Council Chambers
Quispamsis Town Hall**

Members Present: Mayor Libby O'Hara
Deputy Mayor Mary Schryer
Councillor Mike Biggar
Councillor Noah Donovan
Councillor Kerrie Luck
Councillor Kirk Miller
Councillor Emil T. Olsen
Councillor Beth Thompson

Staff Present Brandon, Krista; Town Treasurer
Kennedy, Aaron; Acting CAO
Losier, Gary; Director of Engineering & Works
Purton Dickson, Dana; Director of Community Services
Shannon, Katherine, Human Resources Manager
Snow, Catherine; Town Clerk

1. Treaty Acknowledgement and Moment of Reflection

Deputy Mayor Schryer read the Treaty Acknowledgement - Moment of Reflection.

2. Motion of Council to Resolve into Committee of the Whole

MOVED BY Deputy Mayor Schryer

SECONDED BY Councillor Donovan

Council resolve into Committee of the Whole – Open – to allow for a more informal discussion concerning the proposed 2022 Budget.

Motion Carried

3. Proposed 2022 Town of Quispamsis Budget

3.1 Town Treasurer to Provide Overview of Budget Package -(Budget Attached)

The Town Treasurer provided an overview of the proposed 2022 Budget package.

3.1.1 2022 General Borrowing Power & Rate Projections – Showing Years 2020 to 2027- Information Only – Town Treasurer

3.1.2 2022 Utility Borrowing Power & Rate Projections- Showing Years 2020 to 2026 - Information Only – Town Treasurer

3.2 Staff Presentations: -

3.2.1 *Aaron Kennedy, Acting CAO - Opening Remarks and Proposed 2022 General Operating Budget - (Presentation Attached)*

Mr. Kennedy welcomed those in attendance and provided highlights of the past year. He noted COVID is still ongoing, and the Town continues to implement the ongoing measures required pursuant to the evolving mandatory order. He congratulated the new Council sworn in this past June, and identified the various projects completed amidst the pandemic.

Mr. Kennedy referenced the Internal Sources under General Government, Internal Protective Services, Environmental Health & Development, Transportation Services, Community Services, Debt Servicing and Capital and Reserves – all of which the Town controls, unlike the External Sources part of the Budget, which he will touch on later in the Presentation.

He noted the proposed 2022 Budget being presented to Council today reflects a tax rate of 1.3163; a 2.65 cent decrease over the 2021 tax rate.

3.2.2 *Dana Purton Dickson, Community Services Director - Proposed 2022 Community Services General and Capital Budgets - (Presentation Attached) – Also, In Attendance, Barry Brown, Facilities & Parks Manager, and Chris Lawrence, Arena Operations & Project Manager*

Ms. Purton Dickson presented to Council the Community Services' proposed 2022 Operating Budget, which totals \$4,443,567, up 4.05% over 2021. She referenced various 2022 Facility Maintenance plans and budget variations as highlighted in her attached presentation, including the completion of a Recreation Master Plan, \$60,000.

Ms Purton Dickson expanded on the proposed 2022 Capital Budget items, as follows:

- Expansion of Pickle Ball Courts - \$75,000;
- Mountain Bike Trails - Parking Area & Driveway - \$125,000;

- Tennis Court Rehabilitation - \$245,000;
- Active Transportation Trail Connector – Grafton to lower Queensbury - \$24,000;
- Hammond River Park Upgrade - \$384,000;
- Qplex Roof Reflective Coating Reinstatement - \$150,000;
- Replace 2006 Gator - \$30,000;
- qplex Kube Parts - \$15,000;
- qplex Pool – Replace Wooden Stairs with Steel (both sets) - \$70,000;
- qplex – Lighting Upgrade to LED - \$125,000;
- qplex – Concrete Floor Repairs in Zamoni Room - \$13,000;
- qplex – Replace 2011 Floor Scrubber - \$12,500;
- qplex – Replace Counters in Dressing Rooms (6), Washrooms (2), Staff Room (1), and Referee Room (2) - \$21,000;
- qplex – Pool Piping Replacement - \$50,000;
- qplex – Upgrade to Moosehead Conference Centre Audio Visual - \$30,000;
- qplex – Grey Water Booster Pumps Replacement - \$25,000; and
- Quispamsis Memorial Arena – Dressing Room & Zamboni Room Heaters - \$15,000.

A discussion of Council ensued..

Ms. Purton Dickson spoke to the value of a Recreation Master Plan, estimated at \$60,000; noting it would encompass all aspects of recreation, including community engagement to determine what residents from all demographics are looking for in leisure and recreation. Such a plan will also examine all existing facilities, including regional amenities, programs, events, projections for revenue growth, etc. This document would greatly assist the Town in aligning its future planning efforts in community services, she noted.

It was noted \$15,000 for signage for the proposed Smoking By-law was carried forward to Reserve Funds, and can be used if required, acknowledging this item has been referred to the Strategic Plan.

Recognizing the importance of recreation being accessible to everyone, it was noted there are free skates and free swims held regularly at the qplex, there is also no charge for Movies in the Park and Music in the Park; all of which are well attended.

Other items noted during Council's discussion that could be evaluated as part of a Recreation Master Plan included –

- Consideration of a retractable cover for the qplex pool;
- More paving of trails for added accessibility;

- Consideration of expanding the Meenan’s Cove Park parking lot, noting the current issue of boaters using the boat launch and leaving their vehicles and boat trailers in the parking lot;
- Consideration of uses for the town owned property on Hampton Road across from Sleepy Hollow, originally purchased for potential field development;
- The 3% increase in facility rentals will result in \$15,226 on a budget of \$1.15m; with it being noted the Town’s Arena rates are still the lowest in the area.

Ms. Purton Dickson was thanked for her Presentation.

Committee of the Whole recessed for a 10 minute health break.

BACK TO COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

3.2.3 *Gary Losier, Engineering, Works & Utility Director - Proposed 2022 Engineering, Works and Utility General and Capital Budgets*

Mr. Losier presented the proposed 2022 Transportation, Environmental Development & Internal Protective Services Budgets – (Building Inspection & Animal Control) Budget -

- Total Budget, \$5,683,761; (increase of 4.38% or \$238,626 over 2021);
- Represents 20.15% of total municipal general expenses.
- No significant line-item changes;
- Main increase is +\$14K winter snow contracts;
- Largest project increase -
 - Completion of Subdivision Standards - \$20,000;
 - Phase B – Master Transportation Plan - \$64,000;
- Payroll – 1 Entry Level Full Time Technician (\$53k - \$67k);
- Building Inspection – 10 year historical high average Building Starts;
- Shift focus to developing and supporting Strategic Plans.

Proposed 2022 Transportation Capital

Equipment	Plow Truck c/w dump-sander body (replacement Unit 320)	340,000
	Wheeled Excavator top up	95,000
Vehicles	1 ton replacement - Crew Cab	56,000
Storm	Miscellaneous Storm Sewer	150,000
	Local Improvement Program	15,000
Traffic Calming	Equip - Various areas (Ped beacons, Radar speed signs)	15,000
	Upgrade Signal Controls Hampton Rd/Pettingill	55,000
Roads		
	Meenan's Cove Road 1km (Rte 119 to Fullyer)	545,000
	Gondola Point Rd Corridor Analysis	100,000
	Parkside Road Ph 3 - entrance to Gwen	255,000
	Reynar Drive (0.9km)	148,000
	Swanton Drive (0.6km)	139,000
	Muriel (0.15 km)	20,000
	Sylvia (0.3km)	62,000
	Pleasant Ave (0.25 km)	49,000
	Braun Court (0.25 km)	52,000
	Roberts Lane (1.34 km)	240,000
	Rynlon Dr (0.7 km)	162,000
	Regal Drive (0.6km)	90,000
	Hill Ct (0.1km)	18,000
	Sunybank St (0.4km)	54,000
	Old Coach Road (1.3km)	94,000
	Hovey Road (0.1km)	73,500
	Sidewalks - TBD	100,000
	TOTAL TRANSPORTATION SERVICES	2,927,500

A discussion of Council ensued with the following points noted:

- Flexibility to transfer location of one of the two pedestrian flashing beacons (2) included in budget to the Hampton Road crosswalk near KVHS if the Province does not financially support this ask.
- The current Active Transportation Plan established 10 years ago was based more on a shared road system with sharrows for cyclists and a 1 meter pedestrian lane. Dedicated bicycle lanes would be expensive, but there are other ways to more realistically co-exist with the infrastructure that is in the ground now and what can be done in future to transition appropriately.

- Recommended that a street hierarchy be established for Active Transportation in the new Master Transportation Plan that can then be applied to all streets, going forward, acknowledging that main corridors would be priority.
 - Meenan's Cove Road (Route 119 to Fullyer) - Some areas would require digging into the banks to create sufficient width for road widening, and then there may be storm sewer considerations.
 - As roads are done, if can build in sufficient width for paved pedestrian/cycling lanes in design phase as difficult to go back after the fact, and gravel is not a good surface for cyclists.
- Traffic Calming – different approaches – partnering with Police, public educational awareness programs.
 - Gondola Point Road Corridor Analysis, \$100,000 – The design will take into consideration the sewer pump station infrastructure situated along the Gondola Point Road. Study will include public input, and will result in a design for the street top, not the infrastructure below the ground. Many spurs come off of this corridor including the Quispamsis Road. Included will be a review and public consultation process with respect to development of pedestrian and AT options. The Town's 66' right of way was noted, typically extends 15' beyond the ditch.
 - The \$100,000 allocated for sidewalks – budget notes to be determined, concentrate in school areas for sidewalks - Princeton Avenue or continuation of Minstrel Drive sidewalk were noted as potential areas.
 - Consideration to pursue one-way access onto the Gondola Point Arterial from Gondola Point Road, (near ferry landing).

Committee of the Whole recessed for lunch from 12:50 to 1:20 p.m.

BACK TO COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

3.2.3. Gary Losier, Engineering, Works , & Utility Director - Proposed 2022 Utility Operating & Capital – (Presentation attached)

Operating -

- Water System - \$280,356
- Sewerage System - \$765,307
- Utility Administration - \$732,413
- Total Utility Operating - \$1,778,076; reflects a 5.87% increase over 2021.

Capital –

- Sewer Department - \$2,185,000
 - Utility Capital Fleet –
 - Hoist Truck - \$145,000 &
 - Fleet Tech Van (Electric) - \$65,000
 - Utility Treatment
 - Scada Radio Upgrades - \$30,000
 - In-lagoon Aerator Upgrades - \$15,000
 - Utility WWPS
 - Gondola Point Road WWPS Upgrades – Phase 2 - \$1,730,000
 - Utility Building Completion - \$200,000

- Water Department - \$737,000
 - Distribution – Hampton Road (Millennium System)
 - Old Coach Road to Hovey Road Water System Expansion - \$550,000
 - Distribution – Millennium Drive Water Tower Maintenance
 - Interior and Exterior Protective Coating/Painting - \$150,000
 - VFD – Pump Drive Replacement - \$25,000
 - SCADA Radio Upgrades - \$12,000

- Asset Management Plan – 2022
 - Continue with next phases – includes Asset Inventory, Condition Assessments & Level of Service Goals

- Council has Significant Role to Play in Determining “Strategic Vision” for Community
 - Strategic Plan,
 - Master Transportation Plan,
 - Master Recreation Plan,
 - Master Stormwater Plan,
 - Master Water Plan, and
 - Master Wastewater Plan

A discussion of Council ensued, with the following points noted:

- Utility Borrowing more restrictive, try to maintain rate increases reflective of the economy;

- The Town’s Utility Assets have a long, useful life – 100 Year Plan for Utility, so rates can be increased on a gradual basis.

- Water Expansion plans, hopefully 2024, will see the water line extending down the Hampton Road to Donlyn Drive, then, over phases, will loop up through Cedar Ridge Boulevard. When the water line is installed along the Hampton Road, it will be a good time to widen it for AT lane(s). The water line, long term, will eventually make its way down to the Pettingill Road as demand and resources warrant.
- The Town is working with NB Power on a potential solar generation program, looking at solar panels at the Longwood Lagoon site.

3.2.4 *Aaron Kennedy, Acting CAO - Proposed 2022 Budgets from External Sources, (Regional Services) - (Presentation Attached)*

Mr. Kennedy recognized the Town Treasurer and her team for their dedication and hard work in compiling the data and information to make the Town's \$28m Budget consumable for Council, Staff and the Public.

He presented the External Sources Budget which includes –

- Kennebecasis Regional Police Force - \$4,490,676 (7.25% increase)
- Kennebecasis Valley Fire Department
 - Operating - \$3,338,718
 - Capital – Fire Station 2 - \$74,834
- Regional Service Commission - \$7,602
- Envision Saint John - \$219,000
- Regional Facilities Commission - \$479,207
- Kennebecasis Regional Library - \$154,418
- Garbage Collection & Tipping Fees - \$1,194,900
- COMEX - \$74,938
- Civic Relations Sponsorships and Grants - \$27,960
- *Total All External Sources - \$10,162,253*

Comex – Mr. Kennedy noted while the Town has decreased its cost in the COMEX service by merging Route 52 and sharing the one bus with the town of Rothesay, the Town is not giving up on its Bus service, and as such has made a commitment to see the public transit system succeed. It is an important part of the Town's Climate Change initiatives, and the Town is promoting increased ridership by offering free bus service until the end of the year, beginning November 1st.

Tax Rate Comparison - Mr. Kennedy noted the Town's proposed 2022 tax rate is considerably lower than comparably sized Towns and Cities, -

Quispamsis, 1.3163,
Edmundston, 1.6350,
Riverview, 1.5936,

Miramichi, 1.7400, and
Dieppe, 1.6295.

Province's Unequal Equalization Formula – Quispamsis and Rothesay are receiving no Equalization funds, Riverview is receiving \$1,281,777.

3.2.5 *Krista Brandon, Town Treasurer, Final Budget Summary and Comments -- (Presentation Attached)*

The Town Treasurer clarified Quispamsis' portion of the Kennebecasis Regional Police budget comes in at a 7.25% increase vs. the 8.388% overall Police Budget increase as the Town had budgeted for extraneous legal costs in its 2021 budget, thus reducing its overall percentage increase by this amount.

Ms. Brandon noted this is her 4th Budget Presentation before Council, her favourite time of the year, noting the budget compilation was a full team effort. She thanked the Finance Committee, the Executive Team, the Management Team and her Staff, especially Nancy Young and Lia Estey for their hard work and dedication.

She summarized the changes from when the proposed Budget was initially presented to the Finance Committee October 6, 2021, when the tax base assessment was estimated at 5%. The Province's actual tax base numbers subsequently came in at 9.06% allowing consideration of a 1.97% decrease in the proposed 2022 tax rate from the 2021 rate.

General Budget

- Total General Budget, \$28,205,519; (7.02% increase over 2021);
 - External Sources, \$10,162,253
 - Internal Sources, \$18,043,266
- Tax Base Amount, \$2,018,558,700; (9.06% increase over 2021);
- Proposed Tax Rate, 1.3163 cents per \$100 property assessment, (decrease of - 1.97% over 2021, {1.3428});
- Debt Service Ratio, 6.85%

Rental Rates

- Arena Ice Rental Rates (qplex & QMA) – Increase of 3% over 2021
- qplex Pool Rates – Increase of 3% over 2021
- Facility Rental Rates – Increase of 3% over 2021

The General debt service ratio is down to 6.80% for 2022. Total Debt Service Costs is \$1,839,605; (down -20.4% over last year), and total Fiscal Services is \$4,911,871; (up 22.0% over 2021). In 2027 the town will have paid off its largest debt, the qplex. The Utility debt ratio is at 25.7%; the Province allows up to 50%.

Ms. Brandon noted in 2022 the average priced home in Quispamsis will be \$281,215, which will equate to a property tax bill of \$3,702 based on the proposed tax rate of 1.3163 per \$100 of assessment value. This reflects an increase of \$152 more or \$13 per month more from last year's property tax bill of \$3,550. One cent on the tax rate represents \$201,856.

Utility Budget

- Total Utility Budget, \$3,649,047; a 6.02% increase over 2021;
- Sewer User Rate, \$518 per user, up 3% from 2021's rate of \$503;
- Water User Fixed Rate, \$250 – Increase of 3% over 2021's rate of \$243;
 - Consumption Fees –
 - Low Rate, \$1.0199; a 3% increase over 2021;
 - High Rate, \$1.6151, a 3% increase over 2021.

The Canada Community Building Fund, (formerly known as the Gas Tax Fund), continues to annually support the Town's Utility projects to the tune of \$1,314,412 in 2022.

Councillor Luck expressed concern that while Active Transportation has been referred to the Strategic Plan and Master Transportation Plan discussions, where would funding come from if not specifically earmarked if there is a desire to widen roads to accommodate AT on roads that are slated for upgrading in 2022. The Town Treasurer confirmed that if an item was to be introduced that is not included in the Budget, it would come back before Council for consideration, noting the Reserve Funds are helpful in such cases.

Mayor O'Hara noted the Nominating Committee will be making recommendations at the next meeting concerning the establishment of an Active Transportation Ad Hoc Committee, and Council will be in the midst of a Master Transportation Plan, Master Recreation Plan, which will all fall under the umbrella of the Town's overarching Strategic Plan, and the Town Treasurer has confirmed that there are monies set aside in Reserve, if required.

3.2.6 Council Consensus/Directive:

The Acting CAO noted this meeting has traditionally been designed to give Staff the go ahead to finalize the budget documents, to submit to Council for final approval to meet the mid-November deadline set by the Province. He noted during this discussion would be the time to make any changes.

MOVED BY Councillor Olsen

The Council of the town of Quispamsis accept the 2022 tax rate as proposed at 1.3163 cents and it be presented with the overall proposed budget for final approval at the November 2, 2021 Regular meeting.

Motion Carried

4. Province of New Brunswick Documents (Information Only)

- 4.1 PNB - 2022 Tax Bases & Community Funding & Equalization Grant
- 4.2 SNB Assessment and Tax Base Comparisons - Quispamsis
- 4.3 Quispamsis Municipal Report Information

5. Joint Finance Committee Follow Up - Revised 2022 Budgets (Information Only)

- 5.1 Kennebecasis Regional Joint Board of Police Commissioners
- 5.2 Kennebecasis Valley Fire Department Inc.

6. Adjournment

MOVED BY Councillor Olsen

Committee of the Whole resolve back into the Special Meeting. Meeting adjourned at 3:25 p.m

Motion Carried

MOVED BY Councillor Olsen

SECONDED BY Councillor Biggar

Special Meeting adjourn to November 2, 2021.

Motion Carried

X

Elizabeth O'Hara
Mayor

X

Catherine Snow
Town Clerk

ATTACHMENTS – PROPOSED 2022 DEPARTMENTAL BUDGET PRESENTATIONS

