

There were no disclosures.

The following matters were considered:

C-2015.10 Labour Relations

C-2015.11 Solicitor-Client Privilege and Acquisition or Disposition of land

Rise from Closed Meeting (5:48 p.m.)

Council recessed.

Open Meeting (6:00 p.m.)

Mayor Guthrie called the meeting to order.

Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest and General Nature Thereof

There were no disclosures.

Presentation of the 2015 Tax Supported Operating Budget

Ms. Ann Pappert, Chief Administrative Officer, presented an overview of the proposed 2015 tax supported operating budget. This overview included a brief recap of the budget process and guiding principles.

Mayor Guthrie presented an overview of the proposed 2015 budget for the Office of the Mayor and Council. Councillor Downer presided over the meeting as Acting Mayor while Mayor Guthrie presented the budget.

Mr. Derrick Thomson, Deputy CAO, Public Services, presented an overview of the proposed 2015 Public Services operating budget. He outlined last year's achievements and focus areas for 2015 on a department-by-department basis. In addition he explained what efforts had been taken to reduce the operating budget to the proposed percentage increase.

Mr. Al Horsman, Deputy CAO, Infrastructure, Development and Enterprise (IDE), presented details of the proposed 2015 IDE operating budget. He outlined the various departments within IDE, focuses for the year and achievements from last year on a department-by-department basis.

Mr. Mark Amorosi, Deputy CAO, Corporate Services, presented an overview of the proposed 2015 Corporate Services operating budget. He outlined the various departments within Corporate Services, opportunities and challenges for the upcoming year, and achievements from last year. In addition he explained what efforts had been taken to reduce the Corporate Services budget to the proposed percentage increase.

Ann Pappert provided a high level overview of the proposed 2015 operating budget for the CAOs Office; this included service area structure, purpose, focuses for the year and achievements from last year. In addition, information was provided on how the CAO achieved the proposed year-over-year budget variance.

Al Horsman provided information on what has been added to the proposed operating budget to create the 3.05% tax increase. This included detailed information on the specific actions being taken and the impact of those actions on the overall operating budget, tax increase and risk management position of the City. This information included descriptions of the purpose and costs associated with full time equivalent (FTE) expansions. In addition, Mr. Horsman provided information on elements of the budget which ensure the City is able to meet its obligations for specific collective agreements with unions or other bodies.

Following the presentation of the proposed 2015 operating budget, Mr. Horsman provided information on what would need to be removed from the proposed budget to reach successively lower tax increase thresholds.

Main Motion

Moved Councillor Downer

Seconded by Councillor Hofland

1. That the 2015 Tax Supported Operating Budget with a net levy & payment in lieu of taxes requirement of \$206,303,226 or 3.05% above the 2014 tax levy and payment in lieu of taxes be received for information and referred to the March 25, 2015 meeting for Council consideration; and
2. That user fees and proposed reserve and reserve fund transfers be received and referred to March 25, 2015.

Mayor Guthrie suggested that Councillors categorize their questions to clarify elements of the budget, inquire regarding the impact of specific actions on the budget, or indicate intentions for future budget meetings.

In response to Council discussion staff clarified:

- The cost sharing agreement between the City of Guelph, County of Wellington and Province of Ontario with regard to the provision of shared services such as land ambulance.
- That as the population of Guelph increases it will become harder to meet the minimum legislated requirements for the provision of emergency services without increases in operating funds.
- That the funding included in the proposed budget for the IMICO property will be used to finalize the sale of the property with potential investors.
- That the current balance of the Rate Stabilization Reserve Fund is \$1.8 million, not including a \$100,000 deposit included in the proposed 2015 operating budget, which could be used to cover the variance from the 2014 budget.
- That wait times for urban forestry maintenance vary significantly depending on the specific activity requested.
- That the City is not meeting its tree canopy target and more proactive inspection is required in order to meet it in the future.

- That the GIS project plan is moving forward despite reductions in proposed 2015 budget.
- That the City sets its fuel cost projections at the end of the previous year.
- That the Innovation District Strategic Business Development Framework will be completed by a consultant and, if no funding is made available, will be difficult to complete in house.
- That the Dragon's Den program was removed due to financial constraints.
- That the new ice resurfer for the Market Square ice rink has different specifications for maintenance and parts than the current ice resurfer.
- That the Guelph Transit Control Room operates 24/7 for the purposes of scheduling and because late night service on weekend ends only a few hours before morning service begins.
- That funding for the development of an asset management framework could be used to develop the framework in house or to hire a third party.
- That the capital budget is funded at less than 18% in part to fund operating expenses.
- That the 7% average increase in funding for City departments does not take into account a variety of offsets.
- That there is a refund policy in place for the rental of sports fields in rain or bad weather.
- That the proposed budget increases the average fee for the rental of outdoor spaces by 10%. Sports field fees have gone up ~3% while picnic shelters have increased ~20%.
- That funding to begin picking up residential waste from condominiums has not been included in the 2015 budget.
- That projected revenues for Guelph Transit over the last three years were too high and the increase in the Guelph Transit budget for 2015 reflects realistic projections for revenue.
- That moving funding for school speed zones to 2015 will not impact the operating budget.

Staff indicated they would forward the following to Council:

- A payment schedule for Public Health and City of Guelph debt servicing.
- Information on an expansion that would allow for the pick-up of residential waste from condominiums in 2015.
- An issue paper addressing the façade improvement grants.

Council identified the following intentions for the 2015 operating budget moving forward:

- To ensure the City of Guelph's ability to meet shared rental housing standards.
- To reinstate Sunday bus service at 2014 levels.
- To debate the merits of extending Guelph Transit Sunday service levels beyond 2014 levels.
- To explore additional options for Guelph Transit service levels.
- To invest in the urban forestry plan.
- To debate the Guelph Innovation District Mitigation Plan and associated budget funding.
- To fund the Dragon's Den program.
- To move \$2,000,000 into the rate stabilization reserve fund.
- To move the budget process and debate for future years to the standing committee level.
- To increase the urban forestry budget to mitigate tree canopy loss.
- To fund the GIS Program Manage FTE expansion.
- To fund the Parks Supervisor FTE expansion.
- To hold the tax increase at 3.05% or lower.

- To examine and vote on every FTE expansion proposition one by one prior to budget approval.
- To consider programs to assist lower income individuals joining organized sports.

Main Motion

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VOTING IN FAVOUR: Mayor Guthrie, Councillors Allt, Bell, Billings, Downer, Gibson, Hofland, MacKinnon, Piper, Salisbury, Van Hellemond and Wettstein (12)

VOTING AGAINST: (0)

CARRIED

Adjournment (9:04 p.m.)

3. Moved by Councillor Billings
Seconded by Councillor Hofland

That the meeting be adjourned.

CARRIED

Minutes to be confirmed on March 23, 2015.

Mayor Guthrie

Stephen O'Brien - City Clerk