



The Corporation of the City of Stratford Finance and Labour Relations Committee MINUTES

Date: Tuesday, January 25, 2022
Time: 5:30 P.M.
Location: Electronic Meeting

Committee Present Electronically: Councillor Gaffney - Chair Presiding, Councillor Clifford - Vice-Chair, Mayor Mathieson, Councillor Beatty, Councillor Bunting, Councillor Burbach, Councillor Henderson, Councillor Ingram, Councillor Ritsma, Councillor Sebben, Councillor Vassilakos

Staff Present in Council Chambers: Joan Thomson - Chief Administrative Officer, Tatiana Dafoe - City Clerk

Staff Present Electronically: Karmen Krueger - Acting Director of Corporate Services, Kim McElroy - Director of Social Services, David St. Louis - Director of Community Services, John Paradis - Fire Chief, Anne Kircos - Acting Director of Human Resources, Taylor Crinklaw - Director of Infrastructure and Development Services, Spencer Steckley - Manager of Financial Services, Chris Bantock - Deputy Clerk, Naeem Khan – Chief Technology and Security Officer, Marilyn Pickering - Supervisor of Tax Revenue, Wendy Partridge - Administrative Assistant to the Director of Corporate Services, Michael Mousley – Manager of Transit, Mark Hackett - Manager of Community Facilities, Brad Hernden - Manager of Recreation & Marketing, Quin Malott - Parks, Forestry & Cemetery Manager, Nancy Roulston - Manager of Engineering, Alyssa Bridge - Manager of Planning, Jonathan DeWeerd - Chief Building Official, Johnny Bowes - Manager of Environmental Services, Alex Burgess - Manager of Ontario Works, Darren Barkhouse - Manager of Child Care & Early Years, Corry Gunn - Manager

Anne Hathaway Day Care Centre, Jeff Wilson - Manager of Housing, Angie Juarez - Supervisor of Housing, Julia Merritt - Library CEO, Adam Ryan - Manager of Public Works, Stephanie Potter – Corporate Initiatives Lead, Andy Woodham - Airport Manager, Chief Greg Skinner - Stratford Police Services, Deputy Chief Gerry Foster - Stratford Police Services

Also Present: Members of the public and media

1. Call to Order

The Chair called the Meeting to Order.

2. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest and the General Nature Thereof

The *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act* requires any member of Council declaring a pecuniary interest and the general nature thereof, where the interest of a member of Council has not been disclosed by reason of the member's absence from the meeting, to disclose the interest at the first open meeting attended by the member of Council and otherwise comply with the *Act*.

Name, Item and General Nature of Pecuniary Interest

No declarations of pecuniary interest were made by a member at the January 25, 2022, Finance and Labour Relations Committee meeting.

3. Adoption of Addendum to the Finance and Labour Relations Committee Agenda

Motion by Councillor Ritsma

Seconded by Councillor Henderson

Committee Decision: THAT the Addendum to the Finance and Labour Relations Committee Agenda dated January 25, 2022, to add a delegation, be added to the agenda as printed.

Carried

4. Delegations

4.1 ADDED - Request for Delegation by Mike Sullivan

Motion by Councillor Burbach

Seconded by Councillor Sebben

Committee Decision: THAT the delegation by Mike Sullivan, regarding the inclusion of Climate Change Coordinator position(s) in the 2022 budget, be heard.

Carried

Committee Discussion: Mike Sullivan congratulated Council for declaring a climate emergency, setting targets and voting to approve the plan prepared by the shared Climate Change Coordinator. One of the recommendations within the report was to hire a climate change team, however the proposal for 2022 is for staff to find time within the existing workday to work on climate change initiatives.

Mr. Sullivan expressed concern that the declaration has not been met with an emergency response. Further concern was expressed that a climate lens is not being applied and there are no incentives to encourage greenhouse gas emission reductions. He noted the service delivery review did not mention the climate emergency and that this is just one example.

Mr. Sullivan requested the Committee to place funding in the 2022 budget for a Climate Change Coordinator.

5. Report of the Fire Chief

5.1 Airport Financial Sustainability Study Consultant Costs (FIN22-006)

Committee Discussion: The Fire Chief advised the purpose of the report was to present information requested at the last meeting. An overview of the report was provided to Committee members. A question and answer period ensued between members and staff with respect to:

- the service delivery review highlighting a broad overview of what may or may not be possible; and,
- there being a need to undertake a more detailed study focused on the airport.

Motion by Councillor Vassilakos

Seconded by Councillor Burbach

Committee Recommendation: THAT the report of the Fire Chief detailing the costs to retain a consultant for the purpose of undertaking a review of the Stratford Airport (FIN22-006), be received for information;

THAT staff be directed to initiate the Airport Financial Sustainability study, subject to 2022 budget approval;

AND THAT the study be funded from the Airport reserves.

Discussion continued with respect to:

- the study being all encompassing;
- additions to the 2022 budget not being supported;
- there being funding in the airport reserve to cover the cost of the study if directed by Committee;
- the airport continuing to operate in a deficit position;
- an increase of fees for the airport having been included in the 2022 budget;
- revenue having increased in 2019 and the airport maintaining its financial position regardless of COVID-19;
- requesting a review of the 10 year capital forecast be undertaken to identify projects that need to be completed versus those that would be nice to complete;
- grant funding applications remaining outstanding;
- a request being made to separate the motions;
- the criteria for the study to be brought back to Council for review;
- the addition of a climate lens being important and the airport not having been included in the original climate plan; and,
- the addition of criteria based on climate potentially increasing the cost to undertake the requested study.

The Chair called the question on the first part of the motion, being to receive the report for information.

Carried

The Chair called the question on the remainder of the motion.

Carried

6. Treasurer Update

Committee Discussion: The Acting Director of Corporate Services/Treasurer, referring to a PowerPoint presentation, provided an update on the 2022 draft budget. Highlights of the presentation included:

- the objective of this session being to continue Council deliberations around the 2022 draft budget starting with a summary of changes made to date;
- to review the expansion requests presented in the draft budget;
- to review the divisional budgets, obtaining any necessary information from staff on specific items and deliberating any items requiring discussion by Committee;
- an overview was provided on the updates made to date and on any implications to the draft budget; and,
- next steps being to consider further amendments to the operating budget, continued deliberations, and final council approval anticipated in February.

A discussion and answer period ensued between members and staff with respect to:

- there being an opportunity to gap the expansion requests; and,
- there being a decrease of \$94,600 to the budget following approval of the amendments identified in the Acting Director's presentation.

Motion by Councillor Ritsma

Seconded by Councillor Ingram

Committee Decision: THAT staff be authorized to make the proposed changes to the budget as noted in the Treasurer's presentation dated January 25, 2022, as follows:

- **Adjust Community Grant \$39,600 for Curling event that is to be funded from G-R18-SPEC-0000**
- **Remove \$10,000 transfer to G-R18-STUD-0000 Reserve in Development Services division**
- **Eliminate duplication of \$50,510 recovery from Tourism in Development Services division**

- **Add \$30,000 transfer from reserve G-R18-STUD-0000 to CAO division for GO Train initiative**
- **Remove \$15,000 transfer to G-R18-SPEC-0000 in CAO division.**

Discussion continued with respect to:

- The expected impact to the levy being 5.16% with the expansion requests, or 4.87% without; and,
- Approximately 3% representing the amount to be paid for debt repayment.

The Chair called the question on the motion.

Carried

7. Expansion Requests

Committee Discussion: A discussion and answer period ensued between members and staff with respect to expansion requests. On the Manager Inclusion, Equity, Indigenous Initiatives and the Coordinator Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility Initiatives:

- whether the Manager position can be hired in 2022 to set-up the foundation and then hire the Coordinator position in 2023;
- the Coordinator position being more critical in order for the City to meet its accessibility requirements;
- it being anticipated that the search to find suitable candidates to fill these roles will be lengthy and difficult;
- the Manager position not expected to be filled until the fall of 2022 or early 2023;
- being able to defer the Manager position to 2023 or being gapped; and,
- there needing to be dedicated persons with expertise to drive the portfolios and begin building and fostering required relationships.

On the need for a Climate Change Coordinator it was noted:

- it being important to apply a climate lens to services and activities;

- the cost for a coordinator could be the same as the amount quoted for the Coordinator Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility Initiatives;
- the shared Climate Change Coordinator still being hired and focusing on the community plan, while a dedicated Climate Change Coordinator would focus on the Corporation; and,
- the working group to be established will identify resource requirements and whether the addition of a Climate Change Coordinator is beneficial in 2022 or 2023.

The discussion returned to the Manager Inclusion, Equity, Indigenous Initiatives and the Coordinator Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility Initiatives.

Motion by Mayor Mathieson

Seconded by Councillor Burbach

Committee Decision: THAT the Manager Inclusion, Equity, Indigenous Initiatives be budgeted for 25% of the year in 2022 with the remaining financial impact deferred to 2023;

AND THAT the Coordinator Equity, Inclusion, Accessibility Initiatives be approved and funded at an average of 50% for 2022 with the remaining financial impact deferred to 2023.

The discussion and answer period continued with respect to:

- it not being recommended to post these positions for a one-year contract as the required expertise will not be found;
- the probationary period being noted and any period selected needing to be applied to all positions;
- the need to fulfill legislative obligations for the city; and,
- the intent being to gap all positions by 50%, excluding the Manager Inclusion, Equity, Indigenous Initiatives, which is to be budgeted for 25% of the year.

The Chair called the question on the motion.

Carried

Motion by Councillor Burbach

Seconded by Councillor Henderson

Committee Decision: THAT a Climate Change Coordinator be added to the 2022 expansion requests and funded at an average of 50% for 2022 with the remaining financial impact deferred to 2023.

A question and answer period ensued between members and staff with respect to the addition of a Climate Change Coordinator, including:

- staff having developed and outlined a plan for 2022;
- the Shared Climate Change Coordinator working on a different plan, that being the community plan;
- the process to be followed for hiring a Climate Change Coordinator if given direction;
- there being a need to support the addition of a Climate Change Coordinator;
- concern being noted that there are no available details on this position as an added item; and,
- there being an opportunity to provide additional details at an upcoming meeting.

The Chair called the question on the motion.

Carried

With respect to the request for a Transit Supervisor on Weekends, a question and answer period between members and staff ensued with respect to:

- there not appearing to be any issues on the weekends;
- the Transit Division previously having a Manager and two Supervisors;
- the reason for the request being noted; and,
- whether the position could be deferred a year.

Motion by Councillor Clifford

Seconded by Councillor Sebben

Committee Decision: THAT the expansion request for a Transit Supervisor Weekends be deferred to the 2023 budget deliberations.

Discussion continued with respect to:

- the rationale for hiring a supervisor on the weekend;
- support being expressed for approving the position and the need to support staff;
- the Manager and Supervisor positions not receiving overtime but being given 5 days in lieu annually;
- the Corporate Leadership Team having reviewed the requested positions and noting the Transit Service operates seven days a week;
- the addition of a weekend supervisor will assist with responding to issues and continuing to have staff on call seven days a week being a health and safety concern; and,
- the position to work only during weekend peak times.

The Chair called the question on the motion.

Defeated

It was questioned what the process will be to consider the remaining expansion requests. The City Clerk recommended considering each request as presented. Discussion was held on the Recreation Custodian position requests and the Municipal Cultural Plan. It was questioned whether 50% of the cost for the Municipal Cultural Plan can be deferred to 2023.

Motion by Mayor Mathieson

Seconded by Councillor Ritsma

Committee Decision: THAT the cost of the Municipal Cultural Plan be split over 2022 and 2023.

It was clarified that the total cost for the municipal cultural plan as reflected in the 2022 budget was \$65,000. The motion was withdrawn.

On the Municipal Partnership Program, it was questioned and confirmed that staff have the resources to complete this project. Discussion was then held on the request for a Records Manager at Stratford Police Services. Chief Skinner and Deputy Chief Foster explained the rationale for including this request in the 2022 budget. It was also confirmed that both positions for Stratford Police Services will be one-year pilot positions to start.

Motion by Councillor Vassilakos

Seconded by Councillor Ritsma

Committee Decision: THAT the expansion request for Recreation Custodians be approved and funded at an average of 50% for 2022 with the remaining financial impact deferred to 2023.

Carried

Motion by Councillor Beatty

Seconded by Councillor Bunting

Committee Decision: THAT the expansion request for a Transit Supervisor Weekends be approved and funded at an average of 50% for 2022 with the remaining financial impact deferred to 2023.

Carried

Motion by Councillor Vassilakos

Seconded by Councillor Burbach

Committee Decision: THAT the expansion request for a Clerk Secretary II in Planning be approved and funded at an average of 50% with the remaining financial impact deferred to 2023.

Carried

Motion by Councillor Sebben

Seconded by Councillor Ingram

Committee Decision: THAT the expansion request from the Stratford Public Library for a MarkerSpace Assistant be approved and funded at an average of 50% for 2022 with the remaining financial impact deferred to 2023.

Carried

Motion by Councillor Burbach

Seconded by Councillor Henderson

Committee Decision: THAT the expansion request for a Public Housing Review Officer be approved with funding included in the 2022 proposed budget.

Carried

Motion by Councillor Clifford

Seconded by Councillor Bunting

Committee Decision: THAT the expansion request from Stratford Police Services for a Records Manager be approved with funding included in the 2022 proposed budget.

Carried

Motion by Councillor Bunting

Seconded by Councillor Ritsma

Committee Decision: THAT the expansion request from Stratford Police Services for a Mental Health, Wellness, and Resiliency Coordinator be approved with funding included in the 2022 proposed budget.

Carried

Motion by Councillor Beatty

Seconded by Councillor Ritsma

Committee Decision: THAT the Municipal Partnership Program expansion request be approved with funding included in the 2022 proposed budget.

A member noted they did not support approving this initiative. The Chair called the question on the motion.

Carried

Motion by Councillor Clifford

Seconded by Councillor Ingram

Committee Decision: THAT the Municipal Cultural Plan expansion request be approved with funding included in the 2022 proposed budget.

It was confirmed direction was requested to approve this project as it is an expansion request.

The Chair called the question on the motion.

Carried

Motion by Councillor Sebben

Seconded by Councillor Ritsma

Committee Decision: THAT the Sewer Acoustic Inspection Program expansion request be approved with funding from user fees or reserves as required in the 2022 proposed budget.

Carried

The Finance and Labour Relations Committee meeting recessed from 7:50 p.m., to 8:02 p.m.

Councillor Ingram no longer present at the meeting.

8. 2022 Draft Operating Budget

8.1 Mayor/Council/CAO Operating Budget

Committee Discussion: A question and answer period ensued between members and staff regarding the Mayor, Council and CAO operating budget, including:

- staff continuing to track expenses related to COVID-19;
- staff not being aware of additional funding for municipalities but continuing to pursue opportunities; and,
- the potential to decrease funds in the conference line and the special projects line with the understanding funds will need to be added back in for 2023.

Motion by Councillor Clifford

Seconded by Councillor Ritsma

Committee Decision: THAT the Mayor's Office 101 operating budget be amended to remove \$8,000, comprising a reduction of \$5,000 from the Special Projects line item, and a reduction of \$3,000 from the Conferences line item.

Concern was expressed that by removing these funds they cannot be applied to cover any year end deficit if not used. It was also noted that once the full amount is added back in, it will look like a higher increase in future years.

The Chair called the question on the motion.

Carried

Motion by Councillor Clifford

Seconded by Councillor Sebben

Committee Decision: THAT the City Council 102 operating budget be amended to reduce the Conference line item to \$8,000.

Carried

In the City Council 102 budget, discussion was held on the need to include funds for meeting meals. The memberships being maintained were also noted.

Motion by Councillor Sebben

Seconded by Councillor Clifford

Committee Decision: THAT the City Council 102 operating budget be amended to reduce the Meals and Meeting Costs line item to \$2,000.

Discussion continued with respect to:

- needing to include some funds for meeting meals should there be a return to in-person meetings;
- budget meetings being held electronically in 2022 and not needing funds to cover meal costs; and,
- concern noted that the amount will need to be added back in, in 2023.

The Chair called the question on the motion.

Carried

A member noted that in order to reduce the tax levy significant cuts are required. It was suggested a meaningful cut could be a 10% salary reduction for members of Council. A member noted they would support a 20% salary reduction if it would be supported. Discussion was held on the costs of being a councillor and the need to review long term implications and not just cutting a few dollars or punting projects.

Discussion was held on the funds included in the consultant line item in the CAO's budget. It was questioned whether the size of council could be reduced which would impact the budget. The City Clerk advised staff would need to review the legislation to determine whether changes could be made to the size of Council.

Motion by Councillor Vassilakos

Seconded by Mayor Mathieson

Committee Decision: THAT the development of a report on amending the size of council, to be considered at the January 31, 2022, Finance and Labour Relations Committee meeting, be referred to staff.

Carried

A member requested a list of committees and boards and their number of councillor representatives be provided for review at the next Committee meeting.

Motion by Councillor Vassilakos

Seconded by Councillor Clifford

Committee Decision: THAT a review of Council appointments on City of Stratford advisory committees and local boards be presented for consideration at the January 31, 2022, Finance and Labour Relations Committee meeting.

Carried

8.2 Community Services Operating Budget

Committee Discussion: Members considered the draft 2022 Community Services Operating Budget. A question and answer period ensued between members and staff with respect to:

- whether flowers need to be planted and required maintenance staff need to be hired in 2022;
- complaints being received about the lack of flowers;
- the amount budgeted for maintenance of flowers and flower beds, along with the staff required to maintain them and perform other required tasks; and,
- there being savings that can be achieved with reducing lawn maintenance and the flower budgets in future years but not in 2022.

A request was made to remove the goose management project in 2022.

Motion by Councillor Clifford

Seconded by Councillor Sebben

Committee Decision: THAT the goose management project be removed from the 2022 budget.

Discussion ensued on the goose management plan with respect to:

- the plan being developed for five years and if stopped will undo all of the work completed and complaints will increase;

- the program costing \$50,000 and the population of geese being kept at a manageable amount;
- a friendly amendment being requested to reduce the amount to \$38,000;
- discussion being held on the process to take care of the eggs;
- the reduction or removal of this program having a negative impact on the quality of life for residents;
- the various components of the program working hand in hand; and,
- feedback being received from persons with disabilities that they can use the path around the river as a result of the goose management plan.

The Chair called the question on the motion.

Defeated

Discussion was held on the transfers to reserves in 711 and needing these funds to support the capital allocation to parks.

Motion by Councillor Vassilakos

Seconded by Councillor Burbach

Committee Decision: THAT a review of options available to reduce the lawn maintenance and flower budgets and the implications be referred to Community Services Staff;

AND THAT a report be presented at a future Community Services Sub-committee meeting.

Carried

Discussion was held on:

- the impact of COVID-19 on the recreation budget;
- potential for snow removal consolidation;
- transfers to reserves and the use of development charges to support debt;
- the interest on long term debt; and ,

- bringing back information to the Finance and Labour Relations Committee meeting on January 31st on the use of reserves and the interest on long term debt.

Discussion was then held on the Cemetery budget, including:

- the budget showing different splits for salaries but the amounts remaining the same;
- the transfer to reserve having increased and Community Services being a department that has not been able to build reserves to support their capital program; and,
- replacement of fuel tanks taking time and needing to include funds and begin work in 2022.

On the Transit budget, discussion ensued on:

- consultants being retained to undertake a feasibility study on electric buses and to complete design work for a new facility and required upgrades; and,
- the costs for snow removal having increased.

On the Parallel Transit budget, discussion ensued on:

- the receipt of grants in response to COVID-19; and,
- the SRA funding that was not used being carried over into 2022.

A decision was made to defer consideration of Items 8.3 to 8.9 to the January 31, 2022, Finance and Labour Relations Committee meeting.

8.3 Corporate Services Operating Budget

8.4 Fire Operating Budget

8.5 Human Resources Operating Budget

8.6 Infrastructure and Development Services Operating Budget

8.7 Social Services Operating Budget

8.8 Stratford Public Library Operating Budget

8.9 Stratford Police Services Operating Budget

9. Upcoming Meetings

Monday, January 31, 2022 at 5:30 p.m., via Zoom.

10. Adjournment

Motion by Mayor Mathieson

Seconded by Councillor Henderson

Committee Decision: THAT the Finance and Labour Relations Committee meeting adjourn.

Carried

Meeting Start Time: 5:30 P.M.

Meeting End Time: 9:20 P.M.