



Naturally Yours

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**SPECIAL SESSION OF THE 52nd COUNCIL
OF THE
MUNICIPALITY OF THE DISTRICT OF SHELBURNE
March 29, 2021**

The Special Session of the 52nd Council of the Municipality of the District of Shelburne was held on Monday, March 29, 2021 commencing at 6:00 pm at the Courthouse, Shelburne NS.

THOSE IN ATTENDANCE:

Warden Penny Smith
Deputy Warden Dale Richardson
Councillor Heidi Wagner
Councillor Ron Coole
Councillor Terry McIntyre
Councillor Doris Townsend
Councillor Sherry Thorburn Irvine
Trudy Payne, CAO

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Erin Hartley, Director of Corporate Services
Val Kean, Community Development Coordinator
Michelle Williams, Director of Finance via Teams
Adam Dedrick, Director of Recreation and Parks via Teams

1. CALL TO ORDER:

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm by Warden Penny Smith.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

MOTION: APPROVAL OF AGENDA – MARCH 29, 2021

Being duly moved and seconded, be it resolved that the Agenda of March 29, 2021, be approved with the following additions:

- 6(a) In Camera Item – Land Negotiation
- 6(b) In Camera Item – Contract Negotiation

- **MOTION CARRIED**

3. ADMINISTRATION:

(a) Town of Lockeport Fire Truck – Rescind Temporary Borrowing Resolution*

7(a) Erin Hartley, Director of Corporate Services, presented Council with the Town of Lockeport Fire Truck – Rescind Temporary Borrowing Resolution staff report which provided details of the motion made at the June 29, 2020, Council meeting regarding the temporary borrowing resolution for the purchase of a Town of Lockeport Fire Truck, which is now recommended to be rescinded. It was noted that the Municipality will continue to contribute funds to the Town of Lockeport for its share of this purchase and other funding options are being explored. There is an area rate in place for this purchase.

MOTION: TOWN OF LOCKEPORT FIRE TRUCK – RESCIND TEMPORARY BORROWING RESOLUTION

Being duly moved and seconded, be it resolved that the Council of the Municipality of the District of Shelburne rescind the motion made at the June 29, 2020, Council meeting titled “Town of Lockeport Fire Truck Purchase – Temporary Borrowing Resolution”.

- **MOTION CARRIED**

4. FINANCE:

(a) 2021/22 Capital and Operating Budgets and Five-Year Plan

8(c)Trudy Payne, CAO, presented Council with the Proposed 2021/2022 Operating and Capital Budget and Five-year Plan staff report. CAO provided details of the strategic priorities for fiscal year 2021/2022, as determined by Council, and an outline of some planned projects included in the proposed budget.

The budget presented to Council recommends the 2021-22 operating budget be set at \$7,553,882 and its capital budget to be set at \$3,738,000. This will allow Council to maintain the current residential and resource tax rate of \$1.26 per \$100 of assessment and current commercial tax rate of \$1.82 per \$100 of assessment. It is further recommended that Council maintain the interest rate charged on tax bills at 10% - a rate that was reduced from 14% last fiscal to aid residents and businesses during the pandemic.

Discussion was held regarding the inclusion of the Woodland Multi-use Trails in the Municipality’s proposed five-year plan. Mr. Dedrick, Director of Recreation and Parks indicated that the request recently presented from this organization was to provide funding as an annual budget line item. CAO advised that the plan can be amended to include annual support of the Woodland Multi-use Trails.

Discussion was also held regarding the funding structure to finance the new administration building. CAO indicated that Council would review options once the project tender is received. All decision will require Council approval. It was further noted that the proposed five-year plan is based on budget estimates and annual changes will be determined by fiscal responsibility.

MOTION: 2021/2022 OPERATING BUDGET

Being duly moved and seconded, be it resolved that Council of the Municipality of the District of Shelburne approve its 2021/2022 operating budget reflecting revenues and expenditures of \$7,553,882.

- **MOTION CARRIED**

MOTION: 2021/2022 TAX RATE

Being duly moved and seconded, be it resolved that Council of the Municipality of the District of Shelburne approve a 2021-2022 residential tax rate of \$1.26 per \$100 of assessment, resource tax rate of \$1.26 per \$100 of assessment, and commercial tax rate of \$1.82 per \$100 of assessment.

- **MOTION CARRIED**

MOTION: 2021/2022 CAPITAL BUDGET

Being duly moved and seconded, be it resolved that Council of the Municipality of the District of Shelburne approve its 2021/2022 capital budget reflecting expenditures of \$7,553,882 and the proposed five-year plan, with amendments.

- **MOTION CARRIED**

MOTION: 2021/2022 INTEREST RATE

Being duly moved and seconded, be it resolved that Council of the Municipality of the District of Shelburne set the 2021/2022 interest rate on all types of overdue accounts (tax, sewer, area rate, tipping, septage, and so forth) to be 10%.

- **MOTION CARRIED**

Warden Penny Smith delivered her 2021-2022 Warden's Budget Address. This document is attached.

Discussion was held regarding public engagement surrounding the new municipal administration building. CAO indicated that public engagement would take place for the review of the finalized building design and will focus on delivering information and details.

Discussion was also held regarding the order of the Council's priorities listed in the Warden's Budget Address. It was noted that although investments in healthcare are the top priority of this current Council, the new municipal administration building is listed first to honor a commitment of a previous Council.

5. Other:

(a) MGA Amendments – Accessibility Funding

Trudy Payne, CAO, provided Council with details regarding the MGA Amendments – Accessibility Funding, Bill No. 47. This Bill amends the Municipal Government Act and the Halifax Regional Municipality Charter to allow municipalities to provide direct financial assistance to businesses for the purpose of improving accessibility for people with disabilities.

Discussion was held regarding the workbook consultation, position and intentions of neighbouring municipalities, NSFM's resolution supporting the initiative and the true accessibility of such an accessibility grant. Council expressed concerns for the amendment and noted that it would be helpful to see the results on the workbook consultation.

It was noted that this will be a topic on the Shelburne County Mayors/Wardens, CAO and Clerks meeting scheduled for March 31, 2021. CAO will write to the Minister, copying NSFM, to address Council's concerns and questions.

6. IN CAMERA:

- (a) Land Negotiations, as per MGA Section 22(2)(e)
- (b) Contract Negotiations, as per MGA Section 22(2)(e)

MOTION: ENTER "IN CAMERA"

Being duly moved and seconded, be it resolved that the Council of the Municipality of the District of Shelburne enter "In Camera" at 7:24 pm to discuss land and contract negotiations.

- **MOTION CARRIED**

MOTION: EXIT "IN CAMERA"

Being duly moved and seconded, be it resolved that the Council of the Municipality of the District of Shelburne exit "In Camera" at 8:03 pm.

- **MOTION CARRIED**

Council provided the CAO directions on the land and contract negotiations discussed in camera.

7. ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:04 pm. The next Council meeting will be held on April 12, 2021 at the Courthouse in Shelburne, NS.

**Val Kean
Recording Secretary**

Date

Penny Smith, Warden

Erin Hartley, Director of Corporate Services



WARDEN'S 2021-22 BUDGET ADDRESS

March 29, 2021

As we enter into the first full fiscal year of a four-year mandate, I am pleased to outline the plans and priorities that the 52nd Council of the Municipality of the District of Shelburne will undertake in the 2021-22 fiscal year.

Before I begin outlining this year's plan, on behalf of Council, I want to recognize that this past year has been a challenging one due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Although there are many financial uncertainties and other challenges, Council will continue to work on your behalf, seeking and seizing opportunities that will help grow our economy, contribute to the great quality of life we have come to enjoy, and to continue to strive to be a more accessible and inclusive municipality.

We are hopeful that with the vaccination program currently being rolled out, we will soon see the light at the end of the tunnel and look forward to physically being together as a community once again.

The five priorities as follows will see the Municipality investing not only for today but in our future:

1. Design and construction of a new municipal building
2. Development of an Eastern Shelburne County Accessibility Plan and accessibility upgrades to Welkum Park
3. Investment in Health Care
4. Developing and investing in a plan for the C&D site
5. Investment in Economic Development

New Municipal Building

Plans are underway to finalize the design to go out to tender to begin construction of a new, modern municipal building. We have worked with the federal government and they have secured space in our new building. The provincial government has advised us that they wish for their offices to remain at the current location at this time and we are working with them to secure a new

lease agreement. We recognize that maintaining these services and jobs are extremely important to the community.

The new municipal building will meet Rick Hansen accessibility standards, designed with staff and public safety in mind, will be more energy efficient and will be equipped with audio and visual equipment that will improve citizen engagement. Opportunities will be provided to the public to review the designs once completed.

Council will consider utilizing a combination of reserves, borrowing and program funding to fund the municipal building. We will continue to consult with our Audit and Internal Control Committee, the Province's Municipal Finance Corporation, and our Finance Department to seek financial advice to ensure we remain in a strong financial position, while continuing to invest in our community.

Development of an Eastern Shelburne County Accessibility Plan and Accessibility Upgrades to Welkum Park

Accessibility Committee representatives will soon be appointed to serve on the Eastern Shelburne County Accessibility Committee. The mandate for their first year is to develop an accessibility plan that will address the identification, removal, and prevention of barriers in the Municipality's policies, programs, practices, and services. This plan will help guide the Municipality as we all strive to reach the goal of an accessible and inclusive Nova Scotia by 2030, as per the Accessibility Act. As previously stated, the Municipality's new municipal building will also meet accessibility standards and is one of the reasons why a new municipal building has been identified as a strategic priority.

Improving accessibility and inclusion have been part of the Municipality's plans even before the Accessibility Act was enacted in 2017. The Municipality adopted an Inclusive Recreation Policy in 2015 with the vision that "individuals with disabilities, intellectual, physical and sensory disabilities and mental health challenges feel welcomed, included and supported in municipal recreation

supported programs and facilities. They experience the personal health - mental, emotional, and social benefits of recreation and physical activity. The Municipality and community organizations have a strong partnership in the delivery of a choice of recreation opportunities for people with disabilities.” We were one of the first municipalities in the Province to adopt such a policy, which has provided a strong foundation as we work with the community and various partners to ensure we meet the accessibility needs of individuals, their families and those in our community.

Phase 1 of the Municipality’s plan to increase accessibility at Welkum Park was completed in 2020, which included renovations to the change rooms and toilet enclosures to meet accessibility standards, adding accessible picnic tables and ramps to all of the gazebos and adding an accessible parking space as well as appropriate signage. For the upcoming fiscal, Phase 2 plans include a new parameter fence and gate in the parking area and new sorting bins throughout the park. As well, planning and consultation for Phase 3 will take place, which includes an accessible pathway to enable access to all amenities and features of the park.

We understand in order to do our part in meeting the goal of an Accessible Nova Scotia by 2030 that we will need the support and assistance of every resident, business, community organization, the Provincial and Federal Governments and various stakeholders to achieve success.

Investment in Health Care

Quality health care for our residents has been, and continues to be, one of Council’s top priorities. The Municipality continues to invest in health care by providing financial support for the Roseway Hospital Student Sponsorship Program, housing allowances, locum funding, as well as recruitment efforts, including the creation of two recruitment videos for doctors and nurse practitioners (NPs). We were previously approached by the Roseway Hospital Charitable Foundation to assist with the purchase of a new, digital x-ray machine

and approved funding the total request of \$53,000, once the equipment is purchased.

In this year's budget, a further \$50,000 has been allocated towards health care. Council approved \$4,288 of this amount to be given to the Foundation, which represents \$1 for every resident in the Municipality, to be used towards funding equipment. We hope our residents and business owners will consider being a financial contributor as well as an ambassador for Roseway Hospital.

This budget also provides staff resources to focus more on health care, particularly in the area of recruitment and retention. This role will be part of the Community Development Coordinator's responsibilities.

Emergency room data for Roseway Hospital shows an improvement in the number of closures between 2019 and 2020. In 2019, the emergency department was closed 2648.5 hours. In 2020, it was closed 1256 hours. The emergency department was closed 34 hours in February 2021 compared to 132 hours in February 2020.

The Shelburne Family Practice continues to provide appointments each week to people without a primary health care provider. The number of appointments each week are based on the availability of providers. There is a growing demand for this clinic.

The Registered Nurse (RN) Treat & Release initiative is being considered for Roseway Hospital. This will allow appropriately trained RNs to treat and release patients for certain types of conditions that do not require the patient being admitted. This could make a difference in patient wait times, while giving RNs the opportunity to use more of their skills.

A community group that is playing a significant role in mental health services is the Shelburne County Mental Health & Wellness Association. In July of 2019, they launched the Warm Line program which offers the opportunity for people

in Shelburne County to call and speak with a trained volunteer if experiencing challenges in life, feeling lonely, anxious, depressed, or just needing someone to talk to. The Warm Line began as a local initiative and is now a Province wide program based out of Shelburne County. A local health success story to be celebrated!

The five municipal units in Shelburne County jointly sent a letter to the Premier of Nova Scotia expressing concerns that Roseway Manor was not on the list of recently announced new builds for long-term care facilities. It has been several years since a new facility for Roseway Manor was to be constructed. Shelburne County has an aging population and the need to have a safe and comfortable long-term care facility must be addressed now to meet today's standards, especially in light of the pandemic. We have asked to meet with the Premier to continue to advocate for a new facility for Roseway Manor.

Finally, we are pleased to welcome Dr. Adeleke Ifesanya to the Shelburne Family Practice Team. Recruitment work is also underway for another practice ready assessment physician candidate for the area, later this year.

The Municipality will continue to meet with the Province, other municipal units, and health organizations to help create solutions that will work for Shelburne County. To find out more about what is happening in health care in Shelburne County, please visit the Municipality's website at www.municipalityofshelburne.ca.

Developing and Investing in a Plan for the Regional Materials Recovery Facility (C&D Site)

The Municipality recognizes the vital service the C&D Site provides to residents and businesses. In partnership with the Towns of Shelburne and Lockeport, investments are being made to install a new scale, security cameras and to provide funding for two staff positions instead of 1.5 positions at the site year-round to improve service. The Municipality will be working with the Towns and staff on a four-year plan to make investments to continue to maintain and

improve services. Public consultation sessions will be conducted to ensure the plan is based on community input.

Investment in Economic Development

Council understands that economic development at the municipal level is vital to the growth, accessibility, stability, and strength of the Municipality. From investments in access to high-speed internet, trails and bridges, marine innovation, tourism and other important initiatives, the Municipality continues to invest in initiatives that it feels positively promotes the area as well as works towards ensuring a prosperous tomorrow. These also include partnerships with other municipalities and stakeholders.

By the end of the 2020-2021 fiscal year, the Municipality will have reached the milestone of providing access to fibre to the home internet, the best internet you can access in Canada, to over 98% of residents and businesses that have access to power. The 2021-2022 budget includes funds that will see the remaining residents and businesses, that have access to power, receive access to this same high-quality internet. We believe we are the first rural Municipality in the Province to provide fibre to the home internet to close to 100% of its residents and businesses. One of the first questions people ask when moving or establishing a business in a community is - Is there access to high speed, quality internet? We are already hearing from local businesses that having this superior internet has been a game changer for them.

Recognizing the ocean environment as a resource that has contributed significantly to our economy, the Municipality understands that research and innovation are key for industry growth in our area. For some time, NSCC - Shelburne Campus and the Municipality of Shelburne have been working together to create marine innovation infrastructure. One project that will provide ongoing opportunity for the current industry to test out ideas and explore new and improved ways of doing things, as well as provide a state-of-the-art training experience, is a fishery simulator. The simulator will be a part of the NSCC-

Shelburne Cube – Space for Innovation, which is a maker space environment focused on the marine sector for industry, the community, and students to develop new ideas and work out challenges. This will also provide a platform to promote opportunities for research, to explore new technologies and ideas for safe operations, and increase fishing vessel operations and navigation simulation, accessibility, and flexibility to suit unique learner needs. COVID-19 has slowed the progress on this project but it is hoped that it will be completed in increments over the next year. We believe this will position Shelburne County as a leader in fishery and marine innovation.

Council understands the need to invest in economic development to meet the challenges of today and seize opportunities. One such opportunity is the migration of people moving to our communities as a result of the pandemic. Nova Scotia is viewed as one of the safest provinces in North America, and Southwest Nova Scotia as being the safest and friendliest part of the province. In order to help meet the demands, the Municipality is investing in a staff resource, a Director of Economic Development, who will reach out to existing businesses to determine how best the Municipality can support them in order to retain these businesses and to support them in their growth. We also must consider opportunities to attract new businesses. One of the focuses of the Director of Economic Development will be on developing a plan for the Shelburne Industrial Park and marketing initiatives that will promote our community as an attractive place to live, work and thrive – to promote we are open for business!

Council recognizes that quality of life also influences economic development, which is why the Municipality continues to invest in recreation and community programs and services such as municipal trails, infrastructure improvements and daycare.

Community Support

This budget continues to invest in grants to organizations, extending the Emergency Fund for Community Groups and increasing the funds available to \$30,000 compared to \$15,000 in fiscal 2020-2021, support special events and programs, and to provide support to those most vulnerable. In fiscal 2020-2021, our revised Low-Income Property Exemption Tax program assisted 173 residents; last year, we assisted 81. This budget provides for the continuation of this successful program. The Municipality has also committed to advocate to the Province to improve their Property Tax for Seniors Program so that they do not penalize seniors when they receive financial support from municipalities. The Province and municipalities should have the same goal and that is to support our seniors so that they may be able to stay in their homes.

Municipal Relations and Partnerships

This Council is committed to continue to work with our neighbouring municipalities. Since being sworn in, all five municipal units in Shelburne County have united on a number of issues, such as the lobster fishery, health care and anti-discrimination. The Municipality is committed to this relationship to build capacity, communication, and collaboration and to provide services to our residents as efficiently and effectively as possible.

This Council is also committed to working with various partners and stakeholders such as businesses, community groups, provincial and federal governments, the Nova Scotia Federation of Municipalities, the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, other agencies, and our residents, as we all know we can accomplish so much more by working together.

2021-2022 Budget

The Municipality's 2021-22 operating budget is set at \$7,553,882. Its capital budget is set at \$3,738,000.

Council will maintain the current residential and resource tax rate of \$1.26 per \$100 of assessment and current commercial tax rate of \$1.82 per \$100 of assessment. One cent of residential and resource generates \$38,903; one cent commercial generates \$3,302.

Council will continue to fund reserves contributing \$209,798 to the capital reserves.

Council will maintain the interest rate charged on tax bills at 10% (pre COVID was 14%).

At the end of fiscal 2020-2021, the Municipality's total reserves is anticipated to be approximately \$7,267,318. Of that amount:

- \$63,532 is earmarked for capital for fire departments
- \$18,610 is held area rate funds for the Town of Lockeport
- \$68,000 is earmarked for: \$53,000 - x-ray machine, \$5,000 - SCEEMO, \$5,000 - dry hydrant/fire access road installation and maintenance reserve, \$5,000 - cyber insurance
- Assumes a surplus for 2020-2021 of \$384,000
- MDS new building expense of \$25,000 is still left to be spent for 2020-2021

These reserves are estimates only as our final audited statements will not be completed for the 2020-21 fiscal year until July, 2021. At this time, we cannot forecast the amount we will have in reserves at the end of fiscal 2021-2022, as the amount will be dependent on how Council decides to fund the new administration building.

This budget ensures that we will continue to maintain and improve services our residents and businesses have come to expect, while strategically investing in our community within our fiscal resources.

This year, Council has worked on a five-year plan that involves future investments in infrastructure and various projects. To accomplish this plan, it will involve an investment of an estimated \$10,305,240, representing a combination of operating and capital reserves, borrowing, gas tax funds and grants and funds from other agencies. Although Council can only approve an annual operating and capital budget, it must forecast upcoming maintenance, operations, refurbishing, replacement, or decommissioning costs to make informed decisions and to financially plan to meet the needs for not only today but for the future.

As I conclude my remarks, I must recognize Municipal staff for going above and beyond in ensuring that programs and services are provided efficiently and effectively, and that we as Council have timely and accurate information to make the best decisions for our residents. Staff pivoted quickly when the Province shut down, continuing to provide services while working from home. With the use of technology, this was possible. On behalf of Council, thank you. We appreciate everything you do.

I would also like to thank my fellow Council members. Of our seven-member Council, four are new to the Council table. There has been a lot to learn over the past few months pertaining to Council's role, its' authority and powers, as well as the services being provided that are discretionary and non-discretionary. As a Council, we have set strategic priorities and have made investments in this budget that will continue to maintain as well as provide additional services, all while being able to maintain the tax rate. Our excellent financial position enables us to provide these new services and to move ahead with projects, while ensuring funds are available to address any unforeseen situations.

Last but not least, I would like to extend a sincere thank-you to our residents who have shown resilience, kindness, and compassion as we continue to live in this pandemic. It is truly the people that make the Municipality a great place to live, work and thrive.

These are exciting times for the Municipality of the District of Shelburne. On behalf of Council, we look forward to continuing to serve you, to work with you, and to seize opportunities that improve our economy, our communities, and our future.

Warden Penny Smith