

**DISTRICT OF SEHELDT
MINUTES OF THE FINANCE, CULTURE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
COMMITTEE MEETING
Held at 5797 Cowrie Street, Sechelt, BC
Wednesday, March 7th, 2018**

PRESENT Mayor B. Milne; Councillor A. Lutes; Councillor D. Inkster; Councillor N. Muller; Councillor D. Siegers, Councillor M. Shanks, Councillor D. Wright

STAFF Director of Corporate and Financial Services D. Stewart; Communications Manager J. Rogers; Arts and Culture Coordinator S. Smith; Receptionist M. Kwasney; Recording Secretary M. Roberts

1. CALL TO ORDER AND DECLARATION OF CONFLICT

The Chair called the Finance, Culture and Economic Development Committee Meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. and asked for any declarations of Conflict of Interest.

2. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Recommendation No. 1 – Agenda

Moved/Seconded

That the Agenda be adopted.

CARRIED

3. APPOINTMENTS AND DELEGATIONS

4. RECEIPT OF MINUTES

4.1 Minutes of the Finance, Culture and Economic Development Committee of February 14th, 2018

That the minutes be amended as follows:

- Under the bullet point that reads “The pedestrian path across Wharf Avenue near Daphne’s Restaurant and the Old Boot Eatery is not included in the Wharf Avenue sidewalk improvement plan” add “but there is a separate budget for capital works for redesigning Wharf Avenue, which will include the crosswalk noted above”.

Recommendation No. 2 – Minutes of the Finance, Culture and Economic Development Committee Meeting of February 14th, 2018

Moved/Seconded

That the Minutes of the Finance, Culture and Economic Development Committee Meeting of February 14th, 2018 be received as amended.

CARRIED

5. BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES

6. BUSINESS ITEMS

6.1 Public Input 2018-2022 Financial Plan

Recommendation No. 3 – Public Input 2018-2022 Financial Plan

Moved/Seconded

That the report from the Communications Manager dated March 1st, 2018 be received.

CARRIED

In discussion it was noted that:

- The e-town hall meeting was not streamed due to a technical issue
- The question and answer period during the e-town hall meeting was typed and posted on the website
- Several Councillors have decided not to go to UBCM this year
- The response to the question “How much of the proposed 7.7% tax increase goes towards the capital reserves?” in the report is inaccurate. The answer to question is 48%. To break it down 3% of the total budget or \$225,000 is going towards capital reserves. The 2% of the \$150,000 is going to the transfer of surplus. This information will be updated on the District of Sechelt’s website.
- Councillors get to choose which conferences they feel are most valuable to attend
- Concern was raised about low levels of community engagement on the budget.

6.2 2018-2022 Financial Plan Deliberation

Recommendation No. 4 – 2018-2022 Financial Plan Deliberation

Moved/Seconded

That the report from the Director of Corporate and Financial Services dated February 28th, 2018 be received.

CARRIED

The Director of Finance and Corporate Services gave a presentation on the General Operating Fund Budget and reviewed the increase and decrease in budget line items from 2017 to 2018.

In his presentation it was noted that:

- The salary and benefit costs for existing staff are projected to increase by 1.97% in 2018. Neither Parks or Public Works has had a staff increase in the past ten years
- Debt costs are for short term borrowing for the repair of the District's roof and for the purchase of a backhoe. A 5 year payback plan has been put in place.
- Information and technology costs are largely for software licensing fees.
- Utility companies (including Telus and Shaw) pay the District of Sechelt 1% in revenue based on their profits. A reduction has been seen due to a decline in telephone landlines.
- The responsibility of Sechelt's downtown Wi-Fi was given to the Sechelt Downtown Business Association (SDBA) to run. The District agreed to pay the maintenance costs for the past year until the SDBA has the ability to take it over and generate revenue to cover the costs.
- There has been approximately a \$10,000 reduction in training plans.
- A new cell phone contract with Telus has reduced cell phone charges by approximately \$14,000
- There has been a reduction in audit fees by \$15,000 as a new contract has been awarded to MMP
- There has been a reduction in the tax subsidy for the airport as the District plans to start leasing some of the lands to generate revenue.
- Miscellaneous charges totaling \$45,000 have been removed from the budget
- It is estimated that the development permit fees and engineering fees will increase. If development activity continues as it has for the past three years, it is projected the additional revenue generated will be close to \$125,000
- The District has an accumulated operating deficit of about \$450,000.
- The District saw growth of \$56 million from new construction, which generates approximately \$180,000 in new taxes
- The capital renewal strategy endorsed by Council includes a 3% tax increase. The idea is to be taxing for the depreciation of the District's assets to allow for funds to be available when capital assets need to be renewed.
- Total property tax increase proposed is 7.7%

In discussion it was noted that:

- Service levels at the District should be maintained
- There has been a reallocation of staff within the District
- Two new full time positions in Parks and Public Works are needed to respond to

the increase of infrastructure that is maintained. There is a demand for safety issues to be dealt with quickly. Service requests are being completed, but not in an efficient and timely manner.

- Infrastructure in the District of Sechelt is ageing and roads are deteriorating. Staff need to respond faster to prevent further deterioration.
- There has been understaffing in Parks and Public Works for some time. The service levels have not objectively changed but staff are putting in far more overtime.
- Overtime may be reduced with additional staff members
- The District gets approximately 800 service requests per year, of that, 572 requests are for Public Works
- A snow removal budget is unpredictable.
- The District has 147km of roads which need to get plowed on both sides of the street when it snows
- A new vehicle will not be purchased for the new employees
- Bylaw No. 430 governs subdivision and development control. It is outdated and causing issues for staff and developers.
- The \$80,000 budgeted for Bylaw 430 reflects the cost of hiring a consultant to complete the review and rewrite of the bylaw.
- Sechelt's downtown Wi-Fi was supposed to have been taken over by the SDBA. For the past year the District has paid \$10,000 in maintenance costs to run the downtown Wi-Fi. Currently, the SDBA do not have the business model in place to operate the system and they are asking for an additional year of support.

Recommendation No. 5 – Ocean Day Event

Moved/Seconded

That the Finance, Culture and Economic Development Committee consider adding the Ocean Day Event for \$1,000 to the 2018 General Operating Fund Budget.

CARRIED

In discussion it was noted:

- The library's demonstrated need for capital items, such as computers, should be dealt with by MOU discussions
- Community Forest Dividend of \$25,000 could be used to go to the additional operating items for the library
- All partners that help fund the library, such as the Sunshine Coast Regional District, need to be a part of discussions for putting money forward for the library
- SDBA was unable to take over operating Sechelt's downtown Wi-Fi this year and has asked for an additional year of support because they need to learn how to use the network and analytics needs to be enabled to see the traffic and use.
- SDBA was unable to receive the training required to operate the network because the IT firm that was going to provide the training went out of business two months into the District's transition plan

Recommendation No. 6 – Downtown Wi-Fi

Moved/Seconded

That the Finance, Culture and Economic Development Committee supports the amount of \$8,000 being included in the 2018 budget for downtown Wi-Fi network with the understanding that the proposed increase in the Community Investment Program grant will not go forward.

CARRIED

In discussion about the Seniors Planning Table it was noted that:

- 50% of the District of Sechelt's population is over 55 years old
- The Seniors Planning Table had previously put forward a request for \$50,000 to hire a coordinator
- The Seniors Planning Table does not have fixed funding and is looking for sustainable funding
- The District could work to revive an MOU with other governments to help find sustainable funding
- The grant being requested is for one year
- The Seniors Planning Table needs to provide clear deliverables and their terms of reference in order for the District to agree to consider providing sustainable funding.

Mayor Milne invited a representative from the Seniors Planning Table to speak to their initiatives and whether they are interested in receiving \$20,000 instead of \$25,000 not knowing whether funding will be available in the following year.

The representative from the Seniors Planning Table noted that:

- The priorities of the Seniors Planning Table are to increase 1) communication and collaboration and 2) safety at home
- There were four action teams working on the priority to increase safety at home but the teams were folded due to lack of support
- The second initiative of the Seniors Planning Table has been put on hold but communication and collaboration efforts continue
- The Seniors Planning Table will have a discussion as to whether they will continue in the future if there is no funding
- The Seniors Planning Table is hoping the District of Sechelt will work with them to get the Sunshine Coast Regional District and the Town of Gibsons to help fund their initiatives

In discussion it was noted that:

- Other funding options may be available other than through local government

Recommendation No. 7 – Seniors Planning Table

Moved/Seconded

That the Finance, Culture and Economic Development Committee support providing \$20,000 to the Seniors Planning Table for one year with future years to be discussed once stronger terms of reference are established and potential agreements with other funders are identified.

CARRIED

In discussion it was noted:

- Oceans Day is celebrated around the world and brings awareness around conservation
- The ocean is extremely important to Sechelt's identity
- Last year members of Council participated in a beach clean-up with citizens
- The \$1,000 will go towards coordination efforts for the event

Recommendation No. 7 – Ocean Days Event

Moved/Seconded

That the Finance, Culture and Economic Development Committee supports providing \$1,000 in funding for the Oceans Day Event.

CARRIED

In discussion it was noted:

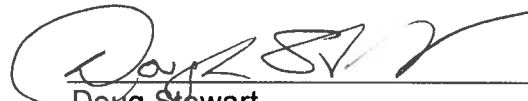
- The revised proposed tax increase is 7.58%, 4.58% will go towards general operating costs and 3% will go towards capital renewal costs
- There will be no vote on the General Operating Fund Budget until further discussion

7. ADJOURNMENT

The Finance, Culture and Economic Development Committee Meeting of March 7th, 2018 was adjourned at 3:14 p.m.



Bruce Milne, Mayor



Doug Stewart,
Director of Corporate and Financial
Services