



**Minutes**

**Owen Sound City Council**

**December 1, 2023**

**9:00 a.m.**

**City Hall - 808 2nd Avenue East - Council Chambers**

**MEMBERS**

**PRESENT:**

- Mayor Ian Boddy
- Councillor Travis Dodd
- Councillor Jon Farmer
- Councillor Brock Hamley
- Councillor Marion Koepke
- Councillor Suneet Kukreja
- Councillor Carol Merton
- Councillor Melanie Middlebro'

**MEMBERS**

**ABSENT/REGRETS:** Deputy Mayor Scott Greig

**STAFF PRESENT:**

- Tim Simmonds, City Manager
- Kate Allan, Director of Corporate Services
- Pam Coulter, Director of Community Services
- Lara Widdifield, Director of Public Works and Engineering
- Phil Eagleson, Fire Chief
- Aidan Ware, Director and Chief Curator, TTAG
- Michelle Palmer, Senior Manager, Strategic Initiatives and Operational Effectiveness
- Briana Bloomfield, City Clerk
- Staci Landry, Deputy Clerk

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Boddy called the meeting to order at 9:01 a.m.

All Council members and staff listed above were present except for Councillor Dodd.

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Farmer declared a non-disqualifying interest with the budget process as his sister-in-law is the Director of Corporate Services and is responsible for the City's annual budget exercise and administers the City's finances on behalf of Council. Councillor Farmer advised that should an item that directly impacts the Director of Corporate Services be discussed, he will need to declare an interest.

**3. MOTION TO MOVE COUNCIL INTO COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE**

Prior to the motion to move into Committee of the Whole, the Mayor and City Manager provided opening remarks.

S-231201-001

Moved by Councillor Hamley

Seconded by Councillor Koepke

**"THAT City Council now move into Committee of the Whole to consider presentations and reports of City staff respecting the 2024 draft budget."**

Carried.

## COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

### 4. PRESENTATIONS

#### 4.a Presentation from the Director of Corporate Services Re: 2024 Draft Budget

The Director of Corporate Services reviewed the meeting agenda and provided a presentation on the 2024 draft budget. Ms. Allan highlighted the key indicators of the draft BMA Study which include unweighted assessment, tax levy per capita, relative taxes comparison, and financial indicators.

Ms. Allan highlighted the pressures being faced by staff and Council in 2024, as well as some achievements included in the 2024 draft budget. The proposed combined levy increase, estimating that Grey County's budgetary increase will be 7%, is 3.89%.

In response to a question from Council, Ms. Allan advised that the City is currently collecting \$25,000 from the Township of Georgian Bluffs and \$25,000 from the Municipality of Meaford as per the agreements for their residents' use of the City's Leaf and Yard Waste Composting Site.

Ms. Allan highlighted the staffing and service level changes that will be presented today for Council consideration and noted that should Council wish to remove any of these proposed items from the draft budget, it will need to be done by motion.

Council recessed from 10:04 a.m. to 10:18 a.m. All Council members and staff listed above were present except for Councillor Dodd.

The Police Chief and Owen Sound Police Services Board Chair joined the meeting.

The Police Chief presented the budget for the Owen Sound Police Service (OSPS), which represents a 6.9% increase over 2023. The increase is entirely related to wages and wage-related overhead costs increasing by \$1.9 million, offset by increased grants and revenues related to dispatch services.

In response to questions from Council, the Police Chief advised that the new Justice of the Peace at the Courthouse comes from another jurisdiction and has requested that all individuals that appear before them be not handcuffed. This results in the OSPS having to double staff in these circumstances because the individuals are unsecure in the court room and require more supervision.

In response to questions from Council, the Police Chief noted that this unfair burden on the lower tier municipality to be responsible for court security costs has been brought forward to the Association of Municipalities of Ontario and the provincial government through the Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police. The *Police Services Act* is currently being rewritten; however, changes to the court security processes have not been included in this rewrite. The Police Chief advised that the City of Woodstock and the Town of Cobourg both receive a subsidy from their counties to cover these costs. Mayor Boddy advised

that a motion will be forthcoming with a request for Grey County Council to consider covering court security costs as this is a service that is accessed by the entire region.

In response to questions from Council, the Police Chief noted that the revenue from NG911 is anticipated to continue to increase with the planned improvements to their Communications Centre. Ms. Allan noted that the contract services budget line is included as an expenditure in the Fire Department's budget for their use of the OSPS dispatch service.

In response to questions from Council, the Police Chief advised that the OSPS budget includes revenue from contracts for dispatch services, IT services, and NG911 services. The Police Chief noted that the IT staff at the OSPS have specialized knowledge and skills relating to more than just typical IT services, including but not limited to, providing servicing for radios for Grey County Fire and Grey County Roads which result in revenue for the OSPS. The services that the IT staff provide cannot be outsourced.

The Police Chief and Owen Sound Police Services Board Chair left the meeting.

Councillor Koepke left the Council Chambers.

Ms. Allan reviewed the general revenues budget for the City, including tax revenue, rebates, the Ontario Municipal Partnership Fund, and interest revenue.

Councillor Koepke returned to her chair.

Ms. Allan reviewed the staffing and service level changes included in the 2024 draft budget.

Council discussed Staff Report CR-23-115 (Item 5.a) respecting 2024 budget recognition of interest revenue.

Ms. Allan reviewed the governance budget which includes the following divisions: City Council, City Manager, Communications, Emergency Management, Community Development and Marketing, non-departmental, and debt payments.

Council discussed Staff Report CR-23-111 (Item 5.b) respecting 2024 aggregate capital spending.

In response to questions from Council, Ms. Allan noted that parking is a revenue generating division and staff want to reflect that these revenues go back into the service that is generating them. Ms. Allan advised that in the future, as the reserve generates a balance, Council will have discretion as to how it is being spent.

Ms. Allan reviewed the third-party transfers budget which includes grants and in-kind services for eligible community groups that utilize meeting space at the Bayshore Community Centre, Owen Sound Community Band, Community Waterfront Heritage Centre, Billy Bishop Museum, and Festival of Northern Lights.

Council discussed Staff Report CR-23-113 (Item 5.c) respecting an operating grant request from the Grey Bruce Hospice.

Councillor Merton presented a motion respecting a review of Policy CS9 - Guidelines for Corporation Grants which she subsequently withdrew as Ms. Allan advised that staff are already planning to review this policy in 2024.

S-231201-002

Moved by Councillor Farmer

**"THAT in consideration of Staff Report CR-23-113 respecting Operating Grant Request – Grey Bruce Hospice, City Council directs staff to remove the \$5,000 commitment to the Grey Bruce Hospice from the 2024 draft budget."**

Carried.

Council discussed Staff Report CR-23-104 (Item 5.d) respecting training and education.

Council discussed Staff Report CR-23-105 (Item 5.e) respecting an online accessibility module.

Ms. Allan reviewed the Fire Services budget.

In response to a question from Council, Ms. Allan advised that there are two full-time facility maintenance staff focused on the operating maintenance of City facilities. Their original focus was on capital projects; however, the need is now on operating maintenance.

Mayor Boddy left the Council Chambers and Councillor Koepke assumed the position of Chair.

In response to a question from Council, Ms. Allan advised that when staff reports come forward to Council in mid-2024, they will provide details on every City facility, capturing the current conditions, revenues that they generate, and the net cost to the taxpayer to run the facility.

The Fire Chief noted that most of the increase to the Fire Services budget is related to wages and dispatching costs. There is no increased level of service proposed in the 2024 draft budget.

Mayor Boddy returned to his chair and resumed the position of Chair.

Council discussed Staff Report CR-23-108 (Item 5.f) respecting increase revenue for fire inspections in Georgian Bluffs.

In response to a question from Council, the Fire Chief noted that this is a great partnership with the Township of Georgian Bluffs and the \$50,000 annual fee is a fair representation of the service that is being provided by Owen Sound Fire Department staff.

S-231201-003

Moved by Councillor Merton

**"THAT in consideration of Staff Report CR-23-018 respecting Service Level Change – Increase Revenue for Fire Inspections in Georgian Bluffs, City Council:**

- 1. Directs staff to contact The Township of Georgian Bluffs to negotiate an agreement for the provision of fire inspection services with an annual fee of \$50,000 for this service; and**
- 2. Directs staff to bring forward a by-law to authorize the Mayor and Clerk to execute the agreement."**

Carried.

Ms. Allan reviewed the Corporate Services Department budget which includes Clerks, By-law Enforcement, Parking, and Animal Control.

Council recessed for lunch from 12:00 p.m. to 12:38 p.m. All Council members and staff listed above were present except for Councillor Dodd.

Ms. Allan continued to review the Corporate Services Department budget, including Human Resources, Health and Safety, Information Technology, Finance, Tax and Water Billing Collection, Service Owen Sound, GRAMP (Grants, Risk, Asset Management, and Purchasing), and GIS (Geographic Information Systems).

In response to a question from Council, Ms. Allan advised that one of the approved recommendations from Service Review is to develop an allocation policy regarding internal costs to enhance the transparency of gross costs versus levy requirement costs and this will be provided to Council in the future.

Council discussed Staff Report CR-23-112 (Item 5.g) respecting staffing level changes.

In response to a question from Council, the Director of Community Services advised that the Community Services Department has had high school students assist in the past with the Building Division, Tourism and Events Division, as well as co-op students. The City Manager noted that staff will bring forward Council's comments to the Human Resources Division and have them determine if a more formal process can be developed in terms of student and co-op placements.

Councillor Dodd joined the meeting.

S-231201-004

Moved by Councillor Merton

**"THAT City Council now moved into 'Closed Session' to consider:**

- a. Three matters regarding personal matters about identifiable individuals respecting staffing; and**
- b. One matter regarding labour relations and employee negotiations respecting service review."**

Carried.

Council moved into the Closed Session at 1:02 p.m.

Mayor Boddy advised that Council returned to the open session at 2:00 p.m.

Mayor Boddy advised that in Closed Session, City Council:

- Discussed three matters regarding personal matters about identifiable individuals respecting staff, and direction was provided to the City Manager; and
- Discussed one matter regarding labour relations and employee negotiations respecting service review and no direction was provided.

The Owen Sound and North Grey Union Public Library CEO and Library Board Chair joined the meeting.

In response to questions from Council, Ms. Allan advised that By-law Enforcement Officers work closely with Grey County and social service agencies. When By-law encounters an encampment, their first step is to ensure that the individuals are connected to the services they need. The City Clerk added that a By-law summer student would be able to assist with encampment clean-ups once the encampment is no longer active and allow the By-law Enforcement Officers to work on other matters.

S-231201-005

Moved by Councillor Merton

**"THAT in consideration of Staff Report CR-23-112 respecting Staffing Level Changes - 2024 Draft Budget, City Council directs the City Manager to bring back a report on the part-time hours based on a review of current resources and staffing allocation."**

Carried.

In response to questions from Council, Ms. Allan noted that the distribution and number of staff in Owen Sound is comparable to other municipalities of our size. With respect to using contract staff instead of part-time staff, Ms. Allan advised that from an employment perspective, our liabilities and duties to these individuals are often the same. For example, the City is still responsible for contributing to OMERS on the individual's behalf if they are a contract staff person. In terms of income tax, the Canada Revenue Agency views part-time and contract staff the same. Ms. Allan noted that the City has more flexibility with employment contracts for part-time and contract staff for changes to the working hours.

Council discussed Staff Report CR-23-114 (Item 5.h) respecting I.T. contract services for systems enhancements.

Ms. Allan reviewed the Corporate Facilities Division budget which includes facilities management, City Hall, Owen Sound Police Service building, and other corporate facilities such as the CP Station, Farmers' Market, McQuay Tannery, and Billy Bishop Museum.

Ms. Allan reviewed the Public Works and Engineering Department budget which includes Public Transit, Public Works Manager and Facility, Public Works Labour and Fleet, Road Maintenance, Winter Control, and Waste Management.

The Supervisor of Environmental Services joined the meeting.

Council discussed Staff Report OP-23-047 (Item 5.i) respecting recycling budget reallocation to future source separated organics program.

S-231201-006

Moved by Councillor Hamley

**"THAT in consideration of Staff Report OP-23-047 respecting Service Level Change – Recycling Budget Reallocation to Future Source Separated Organics Program, City Council directs staff to reserve any realized savings in the curbside recycling collection program to fund startup costs related to the future Source Separated Organics (Green Bin) program."**

Carried.

Council discussed Staff Report OP-23-048 (Item 5.j) respecting a proposed garbage bag tag price increase.

In response to comments from Council, the Supervisor of Environmental Services noted that suggestions were received from the River District Board, and she will work with the By-law Enforcement Division to prepare another staff report and provide some potential solutions to improve the challenges with waste in the River District. The Supervisor of Environmental Services advised that letters have been provided to building owners, business owners, and tenants within the River District respecting waste management concerns. By-law Enforcement Officers have been able to speak to some people and the compliance rate has increased since this communication.

In response to a question from Council, the Supervisor of Environmental Services advised that the Property Standards By-law stipulates that any multi-residential building must have a storage area for recycling and garbage for their tenants. Since the By-law Enforcement Division works on a complaint basis, any issues need to be brought forward to By-law and then they can follow up on these complaints.

S-231201-007

Moved by Councillor Farmer

**"THAT in consideration of Staff Report OP-23-048 respecting Proposed Garbage Bag Tag Price Increase, City Council:**

- 1. Directs staff to provide notice of an amendment to the Fees and Charges By-law as required by the Notice By-law; and**
- 2. Directs staff to bring forward a by-law to amend the Fees and Charges By-law to increase the cost of garbage bag tags to \$3.50 from the current \$2.50, effective January 1, 2024."**

Prior to a vote on the motion, Councillor Merton requested a recorded vote:

	In Favour	Opposed
Councillor Dodd	X	
Councillor Farmer	X	
Councillor Hamley	X	
Councillor Koepke		X
Councillor Kukreja	X	
Councillor Merton		X
Councillor Middlebro'		X
Mayor Boddy	X	

The resolution was carried with five (5) votes in favour and three (3) votes opposed.

Ms. Allan advised that with the changes made to the 2024 draft budget up until this time, the total municipal levy increase has decreased from 3.52% to 3.2%.

Councillor Dodd left the Council Chambers, and the Supervisor of Environmental Services left the meeting.

Ms. Allan continued to review the Public Works and Engineering Department budget, including solar revenues, post closure landfill costs, storm water management, Engineering Services, and traffic and streetlights.

Councillor Dodd returned to his chair.

Council discussed Staff Report OP-23-048 (Item 5.k) respecting the Grey Sauble Conservation Authority levy.

In response to a question from Council, Ms. Allan advised that there will be no reduction in water rates if this amount was to be funded through the tax levy as opposed to water rates.

In response to a question from Council, Ms. Allan noted that the Grey Sauble Conservation Authority (GSCA) budget is provided to Council for information purposes only as it is the GSCA Board members who have the full authority to approve the budget.

S-231201-008

Moved by Councillor Hamley

**"THAT in consideration of Staff Report CR-23-110 respecting the Grey Sauble Conservation Authority Levy, City Council directs staff to continue to fund the levy through the water rates."**

Carried.

Council requested that staff invite the GSCA to present their budget, including information on their staff complement and the building refresh at the December 18, 2023 Council meeting.

Ms. Allan reviewed the Community Services Department budget, including Building, and Planning and Heritage.

Council discussed Staff Report CS-23-121 (Item 5.l) respecting the Community Improvement Plan grant funding.

In response to a question from Council, Ms. Allan advised that there is a façade reserve that can be utilized in the years that the annual budget is surpassed. The Director of Community Services noted that priority is given under the Community Improvement Plan for the façade program to buildings designated under the *Ontario Heritage Act*, certain programs to properties within the River District, and certain programs to properties within the harbour area.

Ms. Allan continued to review the Community Services Department budget, specifically Parks and Greenspaces.

Council discussed Staff Report CR-23-107 (Item 5.m) respecting the living wage.

In response to a question from Council, Ms. Allan advised that any wage increase approved through 2024 union negotiations would be applied over and above the \$20.00/hour wage.

S-231201-009

Moved by Councillor Merton

**"THAT in consideration of Staff Report CR-23-107 respecting Living Wage, City Council directs staff to set a minimum wage for part-time and seasonal staff, not including students and Household Hazardous Waste, at \$20.00 per hour effective January 1, 2024."**

Carried.

Ms. Allan continued to review the Community Services Department budget, including cemetery and burial services, River District, Bayshore Community Centre, Julie McArthur Regional Recreation Centre, Facility Booking, Recreation Programming, and Tourism.

In response to questions from Council, the Director of Community Services advised that historically, for youth participation for minor sports, it is approximately 60% Owen Sound residents, approximately 25% Georgian Bluffs residents, and approximately 14% Meaford residents.

Council discussed Staff Report CR-23-127 (Item 5.n) respecting the tourism advertising budget.

Ms. Allan continued to review the Community Services Department budget, including Events and the Tom Thomson Art Gallery.

In response to a question from Council, Ms. Allan noted that the increase to the Art Gallery budget is \$66,000 over 2023. The Director and Chief Curator of the Tom Thomson Art Gallery clarified that the budget is not



solely funded through the tax levy as staff fundraise approximately \$150,000 each year to cover some of their wages.

The Owen Sound and North Grey Union Public Library CEO presented the budget for the Library, which represents a 3.98% increase in their overall budget of the funding they receive from the municipalities that are included in the Union Library Agreement.

In response to a question from Council, the Owen Sound and North Grey Union Public Library CEO advised that libraries take on a huge role in how they support the public and they tend to support the largest range of people in terms of accessing their services. During the pandemic, libraries were complimented for being the most responsive service to meet the community's need and being able to provide the community with access to their services during those difficult times.

The Owen Sound and North Grey Union Public Library Board Chair left the meeting.

Ms. Allan advised that with the changes made to the 2024 draft budget today, the total municipal levy increase has decreased from 3.52% to 3.16%, representing an average household impact of \$155. This percentage may be further amended by the Grey County levy increase, final growth calculation, changes to ratios, and any Council directed amendments following the draft budget or public meeting presentations.

Ms. Allan advised that a public meeting on the draft 2024 budget will be held during the Regular Council meeting on January 29, 2024, with a final budget presentation during the Regular Council meeting on February 12, 2024, and the budget by-law during the Regular Council meeting on February 26, 2024.

Council discussed Staff Report CR-23-111 (Item 5.b) respecting 2024 aggregate capital spending.

S-231201-010

Moved by Councillor Hamley

**"THAT in consideration of Staff Report CR-23-111 respecting 2024 Aggregate Capital Spending, City Council directs staff to establish a reserve fund for setting aside capital reserve contributions to be applied to future parking lot capital needs."**

Carried.

S-231201-011

Moved by Councillor Hamley

**"THAT in consideration of the reports presented at the December 1, 2023 Special Budget Meeting, City Council:**

- 1. Approves Items 5.a, 5.d, 5.e, 5.h, 5.l, and 5.n; and**
- 2. Directs staff to implement the actions outlined in the corresponding staff reports."**

Carried.

S-231201-012

Moved by Councillor Kukreja

**"WHEREAS the Provincial Ontario Court of Justice (OCJ) and Superior Court of Justice (SCJ) are located at 611 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue East in Owen Sound; and**

**WHEREAS the Courthouse has a Service Area roughly bounded by Tobermory down to the south of Sauble Beach and Wiarton to Highway 21, not including Saugeen Ojibway Nation. Which includes all Grey County, apart from the Municipality of West Grey and the Town of Hanover; and**

**WHEREAS the Owen Sound Police Service (OSPS) incurs an estimated annual gross cost of approximately \$550,000 for providing court security and prisoner transportation for the entire Service Area; and**

**WHEREAS the OSPS receives approximately \$325,000 annually from the provincial transfer payment program, leaving an annual net cost of approximately \$225,000. These net costs are subsequently allocated to the Owen Sound municipal property tax base within the OSPS budget, placing the financial responsibility of court security and prisoner transportation for the entire Service Area solely on the residents of Owen Sound; and**

**WHEREAS the *Municipal Act*, 2001 allows for upper-tier and lower-tier municipalities to collaborate and share services and costs through various mechanisms;**

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT:**

- 1. The City of Owen Sound requests that the annual net cost of Court Security and Prisoner Transportation for the OCJ and SCJ, currently funded solely by the City of Owen Sound, be funded through Grey County until such time that the province modifies its Court Security and Prisoner Transportation Transfer Payment Program; and**
- 2. The City Manager, in consultation with the OSPS, prepare a motion for the Mayor or Deputy Mayor, as the City's representatives at Grey County Council, to make a formal request through the County of Grey 2024 budget process."**

Carried.

## **5. REPORTS OF CITY STAFF**

5.a Report CR-23-115 from the Director of Corporate Services Re: 2024 Budget - Recognition of Interest Revenue

Council dealt with Item 5.a during Item 4.a.

5.b Report CR-23-111 from the Director of Corporate Services Re: 2024 Aggregate Capital Spending

Council dealt with Item 5.b during Item 4.a.

5.c Report CR-23-113 from the Director of Corporate Services Re: Operating Grant Request - Grey Bruce Hospice

Council dealt with Item 5.c during Item 4.a.

5.d Report CR-23-104 from the Strategic Human Resources Manager, Senior Manager of Strategic Initiatives and Operational Effectiveness, and the Fire Chief Re: Service Level Change - Training and Education

Council dealt with Item 5.d during Item 4.a.

5.e Report CR-23-105 from the Communications Advisor Re: Service Level Change - Online Accessibility Module

Council dealt with Item 5.e during Item 4.a.

- 5.f Report CR-23-108 from the Fire Chief Re: Service Level Change - Increase Revenue for Fire Inspections in Georgian Bluffs  
Council dealt with Item 5.f during Item 4.a.
- 5.g Report CR-23-112 from the Director of Corporate Services Re: Staffing Level Changes - 2024 Draft Budget  
Council dealt with Item 5.g during Item 4.a.
- 5.h Report CR-23-114 from the Manager of Information Technology Re: Service Level Change - IT Contract Services for Systems Enhancements, Supported by the Blackline IT Needs Assessment  
Council dealt with Item 5.h during Item 4.a.
- 5.i Report OP-23-047 from the Director of Public Works and Engineering Re: Service Level Change - Recycling Budget Reallocation to Future Source Separated Organics Program  
Council dealt with Item 5.i during Item 4.a.
- 5.j Report OP-23-048 from the Supervisor of Environmental Services Re: Proposed Garbage Bag Tag Price Increase  
Council dealt with Item 5.j during Item 4.a.
- 5.k Report CR-23-110 from the Director of Corporate Services Re: Grey Sauble Conservation Authority Levy  
Council dealt with Item 5.k during Item 4.a.
- 5.l Report CS-23-121 from the Director of Community Services Re: Service Level Change - 2024 Operating Budget - Community Improvement Plan Grant Funding  
Council dealt with Item 5.l during Item 4.a.
- 5.m Report CR-23-107 from the Strategic Human Resources Manager Re: Living Wage  
Council dealt with Item 5.m during Item 4.a.
- 5.n Report CS-23-127 from the Director and Chief Curator - Art Gallery, Culture and Tourism Re: Service Level Change - Tourism Advertising Budget  
Council dealt with Item 5.n during Item 4.a.

**6. MOTION THAT COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE RISE AND REPORT**

S-231201-013

Moved by Councillor Hamley

**"THAT the Committee of the Whole rise and report."**

Carried.

**FORMAL SESSION**

**7. MOTION TO ADOPT PROCEEDINGS IN COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE**

S-231201-014

Moved by Councillor Hamley

Seconded by Councillor Koepke

**"THAT the action taken in Committee of the Whole in considering presentations and reports of City staff respecting the 2024 draft budget be confirmed by this Council."**

Carried.

**8. BY-LAWS**

8.a By-law No. 2023-125

"A By-law to confirm the proceedings of the Special Meeting of the Council of The Corporation of the City of Owen Sound held on the 1st day of December, 2023"

S-231201-015

Moved by Councillor Hamley

Seconded by Councillor Koepke

**"THAT By-law Number 2023-125 be passed and enacted."**

Carried.

**9. ADJOURNMENT**

The business contained on the agenda having been completed, Mayor Boddy adjourned the meeting at 4:30 p.m.

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Mayor Ian C. Boddy

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Briana M. Bloomfield, City Clerk