

**CAPE BRETON REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY**  
**Special Council Meeting – Minutes**  
**BUDGET SESSION 2021-22**

**Tuesday,**  
**April 29, 2021**  
**9:35 a.m.**

**Via Video Conference**

**Mayor McDougall called the meeting to order.**

**Present:** Mayor Amanda M. McDougall  
Councillor Gordon MacDonald  
Deputy Mayor Earlene MacMullin  
Councillor Cyril MacDonald  
Councillor Steve Gillespie  
Councillor Eldon MacDonald  
Councillor Glenn Paruch  
Councillor Parsons  
Councillor Edwards  
Councillor Ken Tracey  
Councillor Darren Bruckschwaiger  
Councillor O’Quinn  
Councillor Green

<b>Staff:</b>	Marie Walsh	Kathy Donovan
	Jennifer Campbell	Robert Nearing
	Deborah Campbell Ryan	Francis Campbell
	Demetri Kachafanas	Ray Boudreau
	Wayne MacDonald	Gilbert MacIntyre
	Michael Ruus	Chris March
	John MacKinnon	Bruce MacDonald
	Deanna Evely	Bruce Hardy
	Robert Walsh	Adam MacNeil
	Michael Seth	Greg Penney
	Bill Murphy	Jennifer Collins
	Kirk Durning	Greg Campbell
	Matthew Viva	Sharon MacSween
	Paul MacDonald	Angela Ross
	John Phalen	

**Absent:** N/A

**Summary of Decisions**

**4. DRAFT Operating Budget 2021-2022**

**Motion** to approve the Operating Budget for 2021-22 totaling \$157,362,157 as presented, including a transfer from the Operating Reserve totaling \$125,000. **Carried.**

**Motion** that staff be directed to prepare an Issue Paper to include of a review of the current Street Light Policy as it exists in CBRM, the number of lights, abundance of lights in selected areas, and where lights can be relocated and or reduced. **Carried.**

**Motion** that a letter be sent to the Premier of Nova Scotia requesting information on COVID Cost Recovery. **Carried.**

**5. DRAFT CBRM Water Utility 2021-2022 Capital and Operating Budgets**

**Motion** to approve the CBRM Water Utility Operating Budget for 2021-2022 as presented totaling \$27,520,833. **Carried.**

**Motion** to approve the CBRM Water Utility Capital Budget for 2021-2022 as presented totaling \$5,100,000. **Carried.**

**ADJOURNMENT**

Mayor McDougall welcomed Council and staff back for day two of Council Budget deliberations and called upon the Chief Financial Officer to present the Operating Budget.

#### **4. DRAFT Operating Budget 2021-2022**

Jennifer Campbell, Chief Financial Officer, presented the Operating Budget.

Some of the items highlighted were as follows:

##### Budget Highlights

- COVID continues to impact revenue streams and operating costs
- Municipalities are required to present a balanced budget. CBRM's Budget is mathematically balanced, however only truly balanced if CBRM receives COVID Safe Restart funding

##### Budgeted Impacts of COVID on Operations

- No planned reduction in services or increases in tax rates
- NSFMs are working on funding
- Overtime included in the wage line by department

##### Budgeted Revenue Highlights

- Deed Transfer Tax adjusted
- Commercial properties taxes based on assessment
- Provincial Operating Grant
- List of provincial assets included in the Grant when finalized
- Amount of the mandatory contributions to the Province
- Grant revenue not confirmed
- Transfer from Operating Reserve

*Deputy Mayor MacMullin assumed the Chair.*

The Chief Financial Officer reviewed the Expenditure Summary, and the items highlighted for discussion included the following:

- Percentage of salary increases for non-union employees (tied to respective collective agreements)
- Street light budget
- Increase in Provincial Mandated Costs
- Accounts receivable
- Additional staff hired for collection of outstanding taxes
- Further discussion is needed on the Funding Formula for Provincial transfer
- Cost of in-person meetings
- Doubtful accounts and those amounts written off

*Mayor McDougall reassumed the Chair.*

Continued...

**DRAFT Operating Budget 2021-2022 (Discussion Cont'd):**

- Heavy Garbage
- No changes in the tax rate, however amount of property taxes is determined by assessment values set by PVSC
- Commercial rate increased when Business Occupancy Tax ended
- Assessment and the CAP
- Update on 311
- Fleet

The Chief Financial Officer reviewed the expenditures by Department and the following items were highlighted and discussed:

- Engineering & Public Works
  - Savings this year on snow clearing
  - Increase in Solid Waste costs
- Parks, Buildings & Libraries
- Facilities
- Recreation
  - Municipal Grants Program allocation
  - Summer student budget
- Police
  - COVID vaccinations for Officers
  - Staffing
- Conditional Transfer/Fiscal
  - Negotiation of banking services/charges
  - Procurement Policy
- Fire & Emergency Services
  - Reason for increase in overtime
  - Special services funding
- Finance
- Technology & Communications

Deputy Mayor MacMullin assumed the Chair to allow the Mayor to participate in discussion specific to the Municipal Grants Program.

In response to a request for information regarding the Provincial transfer payment amounts over a ten (10) year period, the Chief Financial Officer indicated she has the information compiled and will circulate to Council after today's meeting.

*Council recessed for lunch at 12:00 p.m.*

*Council reconvened at 1:01 p.m.*

**Continued...**

**DRAFT Operating Budget 2021-2022 (Cont'd):**

- Municipal Clerk
  - Staffing complement
  - FOIPOP Position
- Administration
- Planning and Economic Development
  - Staff productivity and outsourcing
  - Provincial Funding
  - Permit turnaround time
  - By-law enforcement
- Economic Development/Grants to Organizations
  - CBRM funding model for Destination Cape Breton
- Human Resources/OHS
- Legal
- Legislative

Mayor McDougall advised that Destination Cape Breton will be leading a themed Council meeting around tourism in the next few weeks.

**Motion:**

Moved by Deputy Mayor Earlene MacMullin, seconded by Councillor Gillespie, to approve the Operating Budget for 2020-21 totaling \$157,362,157 as presented, including a transfer from the Operating Reserve totaling \$125,000.

*Discussion on the Motion:*

Some of the Council discussion included the following:

- Reducing Overtime Costs and Travel Budget
- Budget allocation for the Blossoming Program (multiple year approval)
- Alternative uses for recreation facilities
- The need for additional staff, including a dedicated FOIPOP position
- Costs associated with fire and police services (requirement for minimum staffing) due to staff shortages resulting in overtime
- Cost of Design Build for projects
- Management salary increases tied to associated bargaining unit collective agreement increase
- Solid Waste issues including Heavy Garbage vs. Call to Haul (equipment requirements); public education; Northside drop-off depot; and enforcement of illegal dumping and associated fines
- Future consideration of indexing Minimum Tax & other fees for service, and review of tax structure (post-pandemic)
- Savoy Theatre

**Continued...**

**DRAFT Operating Budget 2021-2022 (Cont'd):**

**Following the discussion on the motion, Mayor McDougall called for the vote. Motion Carried unanimously.**

The following motions were then put forth:

**Motion:**

Moved by Councillor Parsons, seconded by Councillor Cyril MacDonald, that staff be directed to prepare an Issue Paper to include a review of the current Street Light Policy as it exists in CBRM, the number of lights, abundance of lights in selected areas, and where lights can be relocated and or reduced.

*Discussion:*

- Possible relocation of streetlights
- Review and revision of the Streetlight Policy
- Lights of convenience
- Lighting for CBRM-owned ballfields, walking tracks and trails
- Property owners can request streetlights for private driveways for a monthly fee

**Motion Carried.**

**Motion:**

Moved by Councillor Green, seconded by Councillor Gillespie, that a letter be sent to the Premier of Nova Scotia requesting information on COVID Cost Recovery.

**Motion Carried.**

Mayor McDougall thanked staff for the great work on the Budget.

**5. DRAFT CBRM Water Utility 2021-2022 Capital and Operating Budgets:**

Wayne MacDonald, Director of Engineering & Public Works, introduced the draft Water Utility Operating and Capital Budgets for 2021-2022. Then the following motions were put forward:

**Motion:**

Moved by Councillor Green, seconded by Councillor Bruckschwaiger, to approve the CBRM Water Utility Operating Budget 2021-2022 as presented totaling \$27,520,833.

**Motion Carried.**

**Motion:**

Moved by Councillor Parsons, seconded by Councillor Green, to approve the Capital Budget for 2021-2022 as presented totaling \$5,100,000.

**Motion Carried.**

**Meeting adjourned at 3:13 p.m.**

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**Mayor Amanda M. McDougall**

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**Deborah Campbell Ryan**  
**Municipal Clerk**  
/acr