



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
December 04, 2019

Budget Update #3

Wasaga Beach – On Tuesday, Dec. 3, members of Wasaga Beach council, sitting as committee of the whole, received Draft 3 of the 2020 operating and capital budgets.

Treasurer Jocelyn started the meeting with an overview.

Lee reviewed the history of the budget exercise. This information is here:
<http://bit.ly/2rhjCXY>.

The treasurer then highlighted proposed changes between Draft 2 and Draft 3.

The draft 3 budget now reflects the updated benefit rate for full-time employees, as well as the Ontario Clean Water Agency capital forecast for 2020.

Also, the Events budget has been adjusted by \$35,000 to accommodate the development of three additional new events for 2020.

Another adjustment is to the beachfront part-time staffing levels to reflect the elimination of the beach maintenance program.

Staff also added to the budget estimated costs for beachfront studies required for the town-owned beachfront redevelopment area.

And town staff reallocated \$166,000 towards the West End Secondary Plan Study for 2020 and \$100,000 towards the growth node studies for 2021.

In addition, \$25,000 was allocated to offer visitor enhancements at the beachfront, including a fire pit as well as a public art installation.

A brief discussion took place about potential assistance for the After-hours Clinic and it was confirmed that if funding is required, staff would recommend using existing reserve funds so there is no tax rate impact.

The contribution to the Capital Asset Replacement Reserve was set at \$71,830 to help offset the loss of \$318,763 from the Ontario Municipal Partnership Fund grant. The province is reducing the grant each year. In 2020, the town will receive \$1.8-million but by 2030 the amount will be only \$355,619.

As part of the presentation during Draft 2, staff presented to council the estimated preliminary costs associated with the new library and arena. These costs amounted to

\$1.7-million. Under this draft, staff outlined the impact of phasing the budget impact evenly over three years, resulting in a 4.96 percent tax rate increase for 2020.

As part of the preparation of Draft 3, staff undertook a detailed analysis of future budget requirements and determined that a varied phased approach to building the budget for the future would work and would reduce the tax rate.

If the phase-in of the additional costs over the next three years is varied, the proposed tax rate increase moves from 4.96 percent to 3.79 percent. This means setting aside \$300,000 in 2020 and \$400,000 in 2022 for a total of \$700,000, subject to annual forecast updates.

As a result, staff recommended a varying phased in approach, resulting in the 3.79 percent tax rate increase for 2020.

For full details, see the treasurer's staff report here: <http://bit.ly/2Pbckxc>.

Staff recommended committee receive Draft 3 of the budget for information, as well as the 4-Year Operating Forecast, and the 10-Year Capital Forecast.

They also recommended committee take a varied phase-in approach to implementing the town's financial plan to pay for the new library and arena, resulting in a proposed tax rate increase of 3.79 percent, and they recommended council hold a public meeting on the budget.

Council approved the recommendations.

The following are the key dates in the coming weeks regarding the budget process:

Dec. 10 – Public meeting for the proposed 2020 Operating and Capital Budgets, plus the 4-year Operating Forecast and the 10-Year Capital Forecast.

Dec. 17 – Council considers approving the 2020 Operating and Capital Budgets, plus the 4-year Operating Forecast and the 10-Year Capital Forecast.

Members of the public are welcome to provide comment and input to the 2020 budget. Please send them to the undersigned and they will be forwarded to the treasurer.

Further updates will be provided as the town moves forward.

For media requiring additional information, please contact:

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