

**CITY OF MELFORT
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
January 25, 2022**

Minutes of the Committee of the Whole meeting held on Tuesday, January 25, 2022, in the City Hall Council Chambers, Melfort, Saskatchewan, commencing at 2:00 p.m.

PRESENT: COUNCIL: Deputy Mayor Terry, Chair; Mayor George, and Councillors Phillips, Enge, Mitchell, Muntain and Hoenmans (Zoom).

STAFF: A. Homes, City Manager, S. Stewart Director of Protective Services, G. Gilmore, Director of Works and Utilities, S. Peterson, City Treasurer and M. Seymour, City Clerk.

1. 2022 Budget Session

General Capital

The City Treasurer presented changes to the proposed 2022 Capital Budget outlining the major variations including adding a project manager position, adding one time procurement process transfer, and proposing a flat rate monthly utility infrastructure fee of \$30 to utility bills to fund the replacement of utility infrastructure. Administration proposed a landfill usage fee of \$3.50/month to fund landfill capital requirements, and a policy shift of how internal transfers are handled with the external borrowing of \$4,000,000.00 to be financed for 5 years from the newly proposed fees. Council directed administration to re-create and simplify the comparison utility bill chart prior to the next presentation for clarification. Council agreed to implementing and infrastructure and landfill usage fee however would like to see it phased in over 2 years, so it allows for residents to prepare for the increase. Council recommends adding \$15/month in 2022 with an additional \$15/month in 2023 and the \$3.50/monthly landfill fee to be introduced in full in 2022. Council agreed to deferring the transfer reserve policy for the year of 2022 and reviewing the feasibility of the current policy moving forward. Council agreed to the addition of the project manager position to the capital budget, and the one time procurement process transfer.

General Operations

The City Treasurer indicated that administration has done a full review of the initial proposed status quo operational budget making changes that reflect approximately a \$95000.00 adjustment savings. Administration has utilized previous years surplus to deal with uncertainty of budget revenue projections with respect to the pandemic. Administration is proposing putting a hold on the 2022 transfer of \$43,532 to Land Development until a comprehensive review of the current policy can be completed. Administration is proposing that the city's base tax, which is related to essential services, increases to accommodate the RCMP Contract 3% increase. Administration is recommending a review of future tax options which could see special tax levies specific to programs or projects to allow for the city to plan for the future this will require policy review and change in 2022. Council would like to see all reserve transfers and respective policies undergo a holistic review. Council agreed to the addition of the annual Government Frameworks Fee however the one time set up fee will have to be funded a different way. All proposed changes would see a 4.16% increase to the mill rate, Council agreed.

Utility Operations

The main challenge for the city is the utility infrastructure status and the newly proposed infrastructure fee would begin to address this concern.

Landfill Operations

The cost associated with the free usage was questioned by Council and a discussion around eliminating one of the two weeks of free landfill use to residents, Council recommended this go to committee for further discussion.

Waste Collection Operations

The proposed environmental landfill requirement fee was agreed on at a cost of \$3.50/month for each utility customer.

Wellness Center Medical Clinic Operations

No changes

Council gave direction to administration to present balancing options for the budgets at a Committee of the Whole February 14, 2022.

The meeting adjourned at 4:02 p.m.

Mayor

City Clerk