



FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE

Thursday, September 10, 2020

An electronic meeting of the Finance and Administration Committee was held on Thursday, September 10, 2020 at 9:30 a.m., at the County of Renfrew Administration Office, 9 International Drive, Pembroke, Ontario.

Present were: Jennifer Murphy, Chair
 Debbie Robinson, Warden

Committee Members: James Brose, Glenn Doncaster, Michael Donohue, Brian Hunt,
 Tom Peckett, Robert Sweet

Staff Present: Paul Moreau, Chief Administrative Officer/Clerk
 Jeffrey Foss, Director of Finance/Treasurer
 Bruce Beakley, Director of Human Resources
 Craig Kelley, Director of Development and Property
 Laura LePine, Director of Social Services
 Lee Perkins, Director of Public Works and Engineering
 Shelley Sheedy, Director of Long-Term Care
 Michael Nolan, Director of Emergency Services
 Chris Ryn, Manager of Information Technology
 Ginette Poole, Manager of Provincial Offences Administration
 Rosalyn Gruntz, Deputy Clerk
 Debbie Gervais, Administrative Assistant, Human Resources

Chair Murphy called the electronic meeting to order at 9:32 a.m. The roll was called, and no pecuniary interests were disclosed.

RESOLUTION NO. FA-C-20-09-69

Moved by: Councillor Brose

Seconded by: Warden Robinson

THAT the minutes of the August 13, 2020 meeting be adopted. CARRIED.

ADMINISTRATION REPORT

Mr. Moreau overviewed the Administration Department Report which is attached as Appendix A.

The Committee reviewed the Follow Up Report to Council on the Continuity of Operations and Services in Response to COVID-19. Mr. Moreau advised that Committee and Council meetings will continue to be held electronically until the matter is reviewed in November of 2020.

Councillor Peckett joined the meeting at 9:40 a.m.

Warden Robinson noted that the Renfrew County Housing Corporation arrears are over 100% increase in July 2019 to July 2020, and questioned how this is going to impact the Housing Corporation's operations. Ms. LePine agreed that arrears are significantly higher this year due to COVID-19 and some of the reductions in income of the tenants, however advised that, through the Social Services Relief funding that was received, there is a component to assist with rental arrears, and a plan is in place to ensure rent is paid on time.

The Committee thanked the Senior Leadership Team and the entire organization for their achievements midst the COVID-19 pandemic.

RESOLUTION NO. FA-C-20-09-70

Moved by: Warden Robinson

Seconded by: Councillor Donohue

THAT the Finance and Administration Committee recommends that County Council approve the Follow up Report on the Continuity of Operations and Services in Response to COVID-19 dated September 30, 2020 and the recommendations therein, be approved, as amended; AND THAT the County of Renfrew continue to require that Long Term Care staff only work for one employer. CARRIED.

Mr. Moreau reviewed the Service Delivery Improvement Project provision of unallocated funds. Discussion arose regarding the Council Chambers renovations, the reallocation of funds and the conditions of the funding (operating expenses vs. capital expenses). Mr. Moreau advised that once the Safe Restart Program funding guidelines are received, staff will report back and this Committee will have the opportunity to review the direction provided at a later date.

RESOLUTION NO. FA-C-20-09-71

Moved by: Councillor Sweet

Seconded by: Councillor Peckett

THAT the Finance and Administration Committee recommend that County Council amend the resolution from May 27, 2020 to reallocate the funds reserved for the Renfrew County Economic Task Force to the Service Delivery Improvement Project (SDIP); AND FURTHER THAT \$300,000 from the COVID-19 Emergency Funding Assistance Program be reallocated to the Provision for Unallocated Funds; AND FURTHER THAT the Finance and Administration Committee recommend that County Council provide the Service Delivery Improvement Project (SDIP) with up to \$300,000 from the Provision for Unallocated Funds for necessary upgrades to the County Council Chambers to react to the realities of the COVID-19 pandemic, including social distancing and audio/visual requirements that were not part of the SDIP project contract. CARRIED.

RESOLUTION NO. FA-C-20-09-72

Moved by: Councillor Donohue

Seconded by: Councillor Brose

THAT the Finance and Administration Committee recommends to County Council that the approvals made under By-law Number 33-20, a By-law to Delegate Council's Authority be approved by County Council notwithstanding Section 4 of the by-law that reads, "THAT this By-law will be limited to the time that Renfrew County Council is unable to hold its regular or special meetings of Council or its Committees as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak." CARRIED.

Committee agreed that the special meeting of County Council on October 7, 2020 to discuss the Service Delivery Review should not be a rushed meeting. Mr. Moreau will get in touch with StrategyCorp to request a full morning meeting. Councillor Sweet suggested that County Council meet after the October 7, 2020 meeting to review StrategyCorp's presentation and discuss the long range impacts to community and staff. Mr. Moreau will ensure the Senior Leadership Team attend this meeting.

RESOLUTION NO. FA-C-20-09-73

Moved by: Warden Robinson

Seconded by: Councillor Peckett

THAT the Finance and Administration Committee recommend that County Council approve that a special meeting of Council be convened on Wednesday, October 7th to discuss the Service Delivery Review; AND FURTHER THAT representatives from StrategyCorp be invited to facilitate the discussion; AND FURTHER THAT Council enter into a closed meeting for the purpose of the discussion at the October 7, 2020 meeting of County Council, pursuant to section 239(1)(k) of the Municipal Act, 2001: "a position, plan, procedure, criteria or instruction to be applied to any negotiations carried on or to be carried on by or on behalf of the municipality or local board. 2001, c. 25, s. 239 (2); 2017, c. 10, Sched. 1, s. 26," to discuss the report being prepared by StrategyCorp. CARRIED.

RESOLUTION NO. FA-C-20-09-74

Moved by: Councillor Doncaster

Seconded by: Councillor Peckett

WHEREAS the Province of Ontario has adopted Bill 197, the COVID-19 Economic Recovery Act, which amends the Municipal Act, 2001, to permit regular electronic participation by members at meetings of Council, and committees;

AND WHEREAS Council and its committees have successfully held electronic meetings throughout the COVID-19 declared state of emergency, as previously permitted under the Municipal Act, 2001;

AND WHEREAS Council deems it expedient to continue to permit electronic participation at meetings of Council and its committees;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Finance and Administration Committee recommends that County Council approve the following amendments to the Procedural By-law 85-10 to allow for electronic participation in meetings;

AND FURTHER THAT sub-section 6.1 EMERGENCY ELECTRONIC MEETINGS be removed from the Procedural by-law in its entirety.

AND FURTHER THAT a new Section under PART III – COUNCIL, titled “Electronic Participation in Meetings” be added in order to permit council participation through electronic means according to the following guidelines:

- (a) Councillors are permitted to participate in a meeting remotely via electronic means (e.g. video or audio teleconference), and such Councillors shall have all the same rights and responsibilities as if they were in physical attendance.
- (b) Any Councillor participating electronically must be located within the Province of Ontario unless an Elected Official is on municipal business.
- (c) A Councillor who is participating electronically in a meeting shall be counted in determining whether or not a quorum of members is present at any point in time, and may participate electronically in any portion of a meeting that is closed to the public.
- (d) All Councillors participating electronically in a Closed Session of Council, Standing Committee or Ad Hoc Committees shall declare to the presiding officer and the Clerk that they are in a private room, where:
 - i. No other persons can overhear the deliberations;
 - ii. The internet connection is secure and not publically accessible; and
 - iii. It is strongly recommended that Councillors wear earbuds or headphones when in a closed session.
- (e) In the event of an interruption in connectivity for a member that is participating electronically, the meeting will resume without the participant and their absence will be noted in the minutes.

AND FURTHER THAT the Procedural By-law provisions relating to participation in electronic meetings be reviewed by Council at the June 2021 meeting of County Council; AND FURTHER THAT Section 7 of the Procedural By-law ‘Place of Meeting’ be amended to read as follows: “All the meetings of Council will be held in the Council Chamber of the

County Administration Building, 9 International Drive, Pembroke, Ontario or at such place as the Warden and Chief Administrative Officer/Clerk may from time to time determine; AND FURTHER THAT a By-Law to Amend By-Law 85-10, being a By-Law to Govern the Proceedings of the Council and Committees of the County of Renfrew be adopted at this session of County Council.

AND FURTHER THAT Council not take any action on proxy voting at this time. MOTION WITHDRAWN.

Discussion arose regarding the challenges of electronic participation of meetings (i.e. pecuniary interest, quorum, connectivity issues, departure from meetings, Chair losing connectivity, etc.) and how these items are to be addressed in the new Section under PART III – COUNCIL titled “Electronic Participation in Meetings” of the Procedural By-Law.

Mr. Moreau asked that the pecuniary interest issue be reviewed at a later date as it is in a different section of the Procedural By-Law.

RESOLUTION NO. FA-C-20-09-75

Moved by: Councillor Doncaster

Seconded by: Warden Robinson

THAT Item 5. Electronic Participation in Council Meetings and Proxy Voting be severed from the Administration Report. CARRIED.

RESOLUTION NO. FA-C-20-09-76

Moved by: Councillor Brose

Seconded by: Councillor Sweet

THAT the Finance and Administration Committee recommend that County Council adopt the revised Remuneration By-law at the next session of County Council to include compensation for electronic meetings, noting that if a member of County Council’s participation in an electronic meeting, should they need to travel for purposes of connectivity to participate, that they be remunerated as per the provisions of the Remuneration By-law, however that remuneration mileage will not exceed the cost of travel that would be provided from their home to the County Administration building, whichever is less. CARRIED.

RESOLUTION NO. FA-C-20-09-77

Moved by: Councillor Peckett

Seconded by: Councillor Brose

THAT the Administration Department Report, with the removal of Item 5. Electronic Participation in Council Meetings and Proxy Voting, attached as Appendix A be approved. CARRIED.

Committee recessed for lunch at 11:35 a.m. and reconvened at 12:35 p.m. with the same persons present.

Chair Murphy suggested an amendment to the agenda, moving Item 12 New Budget and Financial Report Format to the beginning of the Finance Department Report, due to Councillor Hunt's need to depart the meeting at 2:30 p.m.

FINANCE DEPARTMENT

Mr. Foss overviewed the Finance Department Report which is attached as Appendix B, and beginning with Item 12 as per the amended agenda.

Mr. Foss provided background regarding gross budgeting vs. net budgeting, and noted the advantages and disadvantages of going to a new statement format. Councillor Hunt added that in his opinion, this new format is an easier way to understand the County Budget and Financial Statements.

Councillor Donohue and Councillor Sweet both expressed concerns regarding how County Council as a whole will understand the differences between the two formats, and recommended that Mr. Foss provide a demonstration of gross vs. net budgeting, using a live document, at the September 30, 2020 meeting of County Council.

Committee discussed the merits of moving to a new budget and financial statement format and decided not to make any changes. Instead, Committee directed that staff develop the 2021 budget using the existing "Net" Budget format, also, that staff are to present a comparison of the current "net" and proposed "gross" budget formats for the first quarter 2021 financial report to County Council.

RESOLUTION NO. FA-C-20-09-78

Moved by: Warden Robinson

Seconded by: Councillor Peckett

WHEREAS the working group consisting of Warden Robinson, Chair Murphy and Councillor Hunt have recommended to the Finance and Administration Committee that staff be directed to develop the 2021 Budget using a new "gross" budget format vs the current "net" budget format;

AND WHEREAS the Finance and Administration Committee expressed concerns regarding how staff and Council will understand the differences between the formats;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Finance and Administration Committee recommends to County Council that staff be directed to continue using the current "net" budget format to develop and present the 2021 Budget;

AND FURTHER THAT staff also present a comparison of the current “net” and proposed “gross” budget formats for the first quarter 2021 financial report to County Council. CARRIED.

RESOLUTION NO. FA-C-20-09-79

Moved by: Councillor Donohue

Seconded by: Warden Robinson

THAT Item 9, 2021 Budget Guidelines, be severed from the Finance Department Report. CARRIED.

Councillor Hunt departed the meeting at 2:13 p.m.

RESOLUTION NO. FA-C-20-09-80

Moved by: Councillor Sweet

Seconded by: Councillor Brose

THAT the Finance Department Report, with the removal of Item 9. 2021 Budget Guidelines, attached as Appendix B be approved. CARRIED.

Committee recessed at 2:20 p.m. and reconvened at 2:30 p.m. with the same persons present.

ADMINISTRATION REPORT

Mr. Moreau overviewed an amendment to Item 1, Electronic Participation in Council Meetings and Proxy Voting.

RESOLUTION NO. FA-C-20-09-81

Moved by: Councillor Brose

Seconded by: Councillor Donohue

WHEREAS the Province of Ontario has adopted Bill 197, the COVID-19 Economic Recovery Act, which amends the Municipal Act, 2001, to permit regular electronic participation by members at meetings of Council, and committees;

AND WHEREAS Council and its committees have successfully held electronic meetings throughout the COVID-19 declared state of emergency, as previously permitted under the Municipal Act, 2001;

AND WHEREAS Council deems it expedient to continue to permit electronic participation at meetings of Council and its committees;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Finance and Administration Committee recommends that County Council approve the following amendments to the Procedural By-law 85-10 to allow for electronic participation in meetings;

AND FURTHER THAT sub-section 6.1 EMERGENCY ELECTRONIC MEETINGS be removed from the Procedural by-law in its entirety.

AND FURTHER THAT a new Section under PART III – COUNCIL, titled “Electronic Participation in Meetings” be added in order to permit council participation through electronic means according to the following guidelines:

Councillors are permitted to participate in a meeting remotely via electronic means (e.g. video or audio teleconference), and such Councillors shall have all the same rights and responsibilities as if they were in physical attendance.

Any Councillor participating electronically must be located within the Province of Ontario unless an Elected Official is on municipal business.

A Councillor who is participating electronically in a meeting shall be counted in determining whether or not a quorum of members is present at any point in time, and may participate electronically in any portion of a meeting that is closed to the public.

All Councillors participating electronically in a Closed Session of Council, Standing Committee or Ad Hoc Committees shall declare to the presiding officer and the Clerk that they are in a private room, where:

No other persons can overhear the deliberations;

The internet connection is secure and not publically accessible; and

It is strongly recommended that Councillors wear earbuds or headphones when in a closed session.

In the event of an interruption in connectivity for a member that is participating electronically, the meeting will resume without the participant and their absence will be noted in the minutes.

Any Councillor intending to participate electronically in a meeting shall notify the Clerk by email prior to the meeting.

Members must inform the clerk or presiding officer of their departure prior to leaving the meeting to ensure that there is quorum.

Should the presiding officer lose connectivity for longer than a period of 5 minutes, the Clerk shall ask the members to appoint a presiding officer from among the members present.

In the absence of the Chair at Committee, Section 74 (g) of the Procedural by-law will apply.

Should a Councillor declare a pecuniary interest, Section 47 of the procedural by-law shall apply.

Councillors must connect through a secure connection.

AND FURTHER THAT the Procedural By-law provisions relating to participation in electronic meetings be revoked effective June 30, 2021;

AND FURTHER THAT staff be directed to prepare a review of the effectiveness of the electronic meeting provisions of the procedural by-law prior to revocation of the electronic meeting provisions of the procedural by-law.

AND FURTHER THAT Section 7 of the Procedural By-law ‘Place of Meeting’ be amended to read as follows: “All the meetings of Council will be held in the Council Chamber of the County Administration Building, 9 International Drive, Pembroke, Ontario or at such place as the Warden and Chief Administrative Officer/Clerk may from time to time determine;

AND FURTHER THAT a By-Law to Amend By-Law 85-10, being a By-Law to Govern the Proceedings of the Council and Committees of the County of Renfrew be adopted at this session of County Council.

AND FURTHER THAT Council not take any action on proxy voting at this time. CARRIED.

FINANCE DEPARTMENT

Mr. Foss also noted that after the August 13, 2020 Finance and Administration Committee meeting when the separate working group, comprised of Warden Robinson, Chair Murphy, Councillor Hunt, Mr. Moreau and Mr. Foss met to discuss Mr. Hunt's request to amend the current format of the Financial Statements, they also discussed the budget workshop document and recommended that staff eliminate the creation of the large slide deck/PowerPoint presentation and simply email a copy of the consolidated budget document to all Council members following the January 15, 2021 Finance and Administration Committee meeting and prior to the Budget Workshop on Monday, January 18, 2021. This would allow for all changes at each Committee meeting to be made immediately within the 2021 budget and to be included in the email.

If Committee approves the 2021 Budget Schedule, this new process does not allow staff sufficient time to alter the PowerPoint presentation with Committee changes, nor does it allow sufficient time to have the revised budget booklet printed in time for the revised workshop date. Therefore, Committee directed that a powerpoint presentation and a printed/bound Budget Workshop booklet not be provided at the 2021 Budget Workshop and the 2021 Draft "Net" Budget document be emailed to Elected Officials on Friday, January 15, 2021 for the Budget Workshop scheduled for Monday, January 18, 2020.

RESOLUTION NO. FA-C-20-09-82

Moved by: Warden Robinson

Seconded by: Councillor Brose

THAT the Finance and Administration Committee recommend to County Council that the long term financial plan approved by County Council includes the following components:

- projected annual levy increase of 3%;
- restriction in the use of that levy increase to only 2.5% per year for operating expenses;
- utilization of the annual current value assessment (CVA) weighted growth into capital reserves (estimated at 1.48%); and
- new debt for projects in excess of \$3 million;
- annual Provincial funding of at least \$500 thousand;
- annual Federal Gas Tax funding of at least \$2.6 million; and
- Minimum Capital Reserve balance of \$2 million.

NOT VOTED ON

RESOLUTION NO. FA-C-20-09-83

Moved by: Councillor Donohue

Seconded by: Warden Robinson

THAT the Finance and Administration Committee recommends that County Council approve the 2021 Budget Guidelines as follows:

- annual levy increase of 2.5%;

AND THAT County Council also confirm the remaining elements of the Long Term Financial Plan as follows:

- restriction in the use of that levy increase to only 2.5% per year for operating expenses;
- utilization of the annual current value assessment (CVA) weighted growth into capital reserves (estimated at 1.48%);
- new debt for projects in excess of \$3 million;
- annual Provincial funding of at least \$500 thousand;
- annual Federal Gas Tax funding of at least \$2.6 million; and
- minimum Capital Reserve balance of \$2 million. CARRIED.

RESOLUTION NO. FA-C-20-09-84

Moved by: Councillor Donohue

Seconded by: Councillor Sweet

THAT the Finance and Administration Committee recommends that County Council approve that the Cost of Living Allowance (COLA) increase for non-union staff under Employment By-law #1 be set at 1.5% for 2021. CARRIED.

Councillor Sweet questioned how the 0.5% decrease will impact the 10 Year Long Term Financial Plan. Mr. Foss clarified that every dollar that we reduce moving forward has a cumulative 10 year impact on our Long Term Financial Plan, and that our base is that much lower each and every year.

Councillor Sweet departed the meeting at 3:00 p.m.

RESOLUTION NO. FA-C-20-09-85

Moved by: Councillor Donohue

Seconded by: Councillor Brose

THAT the Finance and Administration Committee recommends that County Council approve the 2021 Budget Schedule. CARRIED.

RESOLUTION NO. FA-C-20-09-86

Moved by: Councillor Donohue

Seconded by: Councillor Brose

THAT this meeting adjourn and that the next regular meeting be held on October 15, 2020. Time: 3:20 p.m. CARRIED.