



Municipality of Port Hope

56 Queen Street
Port Hope, ON
L1A 3Z9

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REPORT TO: General Government and Finance
FROM: David Baxter, Director of Finance
SUBJECT: Area Rating Community Consultation Stage 2 Update
DATE: March 25, 2014

RECOMMENDATION:

That Committee provides direction on what services are to be established as a special service for Municipal taxation purposes and establish a corresponding definable benefitting area for each special service to be incorporated into an implementing by-law and;

Further, a draft by-law be prepared accordingly for the Committee's consideration on April 15, 2014.

BACKGROUND:

On December 3, 2013 Council passed a resolution establishing that a comprehensive community consultation process be undertaken to provide opportunity for review with a minimum of 2 meetings in both Wards and the use of an external facilitator. Further, directed that this process be completed for the April 1, 2014 Committee of the Whole meeting to allow full consideration of all public input before the Municipality is required to set the 2014 tax rate and the Area Rating Implementation By-law be finalized.

On January 14, 2014 Council approved the commencement of a 2 stage community consultation process regarding area rating. The primary component of the first stage was an area rating survey, during which 818 survey responses were received and considered by Committee. The second stage included 4 open houses, being 2 sessions held on March 5th in the rural area and 2 sessions being held on March 6th in the urban area, as well as the opportunity for the community to provide further input for Council consideration throughout. The following provides a summary of information brought to Council's attention during stage 2 of community consultation regarding Municipal taxation:

Comments at the Open House's included (see summaries in appendix A):

- Attendees of the open houses sought clarification of rationale for changes, legislative framework and implementation implications
- Comments were received regarding level of spending and services, including comparison to other Municipalities
- Dissatisfaction with communication and process previously experienced
- An expressed desire to be taxed based on actual spending related to the location of their property
- What services they believe they should and should not financially contribute towards through Municipal property tax
- There was some desire expressed to better understand the overall financial situation of the Municipality
- Some emphasized this is not a Ward specific issue, but rather something the community needs to collaboratively resolve
- Desire to understand revenue sources for service and increase user fees to reduce funding from levy
- Acknowledgement of appreciation for open houses, opportunity to assist in understanding and provide input

Further, 98 feedback forms were received highlighting many of the Open House comments noted and generally these additional comments (provided to Council, posted on the website and available for viewing in hardcopy at Town Hall):

- Request for accounting to be done on a Ward specific basis in the future
- Desire for enhanced trust, honesty and transparency from Council and Staff
- Want for a decision to be made and not further prolong process, and conversely to extend the current process
- Request for LLRW funds to be kept separate and interest applied as a direct tax levy reduction
- The advocating for Parks Recreation and Culture costs to be paid for only by Ward 1, and conversely shared by the whole community
- Concern regarding Fire Stations and some support for considering as special service
- Comments against establishing a North/South type definable benefitting area for Library or Parks Recreation and Culture services
- Desire of Ward 1 residents to not continue to pay higher rates than they believe they should, and desire of Ward 2 residents to not pay more than they have in the past

In addition, the Parks Recreation and Culture Advisory Committee passed a motion recommending that Parks Recreation and Culture not be area rated or considered as a special service and provided supporting rationale for the advisory Committee's decision for consideration of Council members (appendix B).

On February 25, 2014 Council passed Resolution No. 17/2014 which established the following Municipal services as potential Special Services for discussion purposes during the Municipal taxation review community consultation stage 2:

- Parks, Recreation and Culture Facilities and Programming
- Harbour Dredging
- Sidewalks
- Streetlights
- Christmas Tree and Yard Waste Pickup
- Bulky Waste Pickup
- Transit
- Police Service
- Police Service Board
- Community Policing Services
- Library
- Parking

All services are considered common, unless the Municipality decides to pursue area rating, which is the unofficial name for the situation whereby different areas of the Municipality may be charged different property tax levy rates. In order to area rate, the Municipality must be able to identify special services under the Municipal Act, 2001 (Section 326) which defines a special service as a service or activity of a municipality that is,

- A) Not being provided or undertaken generally throughout the municipality,
or
- B) Being provided or undertaken at different levels or in a different manner
in different parts of the municipality.

The Focus Group recommended that if criteria indicated a potential special service, it is subject to the following limitations:

- C) Fair and equitable (just and reasonable)
- D) Significant (more than minimal financial impact)
- E) Implementable (cost and/or effort does not outweigh benefit)
- F) Justifiable and defensible (can be defended and supported legally)

Special services may be levied by by-law where a special service has been identified and the by-law designates the area of the Municipality in which the residents and property owners receive or will receive an additional benefit from the special service that is not received or will not be received in other areas of the Municipality. The Municipal Act Section 326(2) defines 'benefit' for this section of the Act as meaning a direct or indirect benefit that is currently available or will be available in the future. Special services are not determined based on political boundaries such as wards, demographics or property types, but on a geographic definable benefitting area. In some instances the contract for a service corresponds with the geopolitical ward boundaries, while in other circumstances some other geographic area such as a radius around a facility or more generalized north and south areas may be most appropriate.

Ultimately, for each service established as a special service staff require direction on what the corresponding definable benefitting area is in order to implement. Should the establishment of a definable benefitting area not be able to be implemented within the 2014 final property tax rate timeline, staff will adjust on an interim basis to Wards or as otherwise appropriate.

The Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing has identified that ultimately, Council should review and must be able to defend the justification of any service for being deemed by Council to be a special service under the Municipal Act. For clarity, if a service does not meet the definition of a special service then it is considered common. Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing further suggest Council should seek legal counsel as part of their due diligence and justification.

As you are aware from previous dialogue, including that with the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing representatives, it has been emphasized that the determination regarding whether a service is considered a special service is not about who utilizes the services, but rather if the service is available and accessible to all. Further, while the Ministry does not approve a decision regarding area rating by Council, staff will request Ministry staff review the by-law and identify any concerns.

In addition, it has been noted repeatedly that the current value assessment of a property takes into account all market factors and therefore to some degree the availability of service is already taken into account on the property tax levy allocation which is on a property value basis as this is established throughout the Province as the most fair and equitable approach to property taxation.

It continues to be evident in the responses that there may be a desire by some to charge property taxes based on who uses what services or similarly what cost is incurred by a specific area. While this is generally understandable, the means to do so within the Municipal Act is typically through user fees. A pay per use system, as is already somewhat in place in Port Hope but could be enhanced, is a means to charge those who use certain services directly and

reduce the financial amount required through property tax levy. Ultimately however, it should be noted that it is the same pool of cost, just a differentiation in the venue to fund those expenses.

The current decision is regarding property taxes and a subsequent next step could be user fees, which Council has already requested a review of through the Service Delivery Review process. Ultimately, the services provided by the Municipality are considered generally for the betterment of the community as a whole. Some funding of these services comes from property tax levy while other comes from user fee or other revenue sources. Property taxes are not meant to be a user fee and certainly many services would not be sustainable purely on a user fee basis so it is reasonable that property tax levy would provide financial support.

Relevant to any special service, when establishing the by-law it will need to be considered which costs, including operating, capital, debenture, depreciation, and/or reserve usage related to that special service would be included.

If stability in taxes is important, then consideration should be given to the potential impact of establishing special services. Effectively in years with larger capital investment this could have a much bigger impact on the property owners in a specific location as these costs would no longer be shared collectively. For any individual benefitting area for some years this would mean a decrease and others an increase which when pertaining to the financially material services creates instability. However for services that are more consistent in the costs to operate then the risk of property tax variability is not a cause for concern.

Further, the revised Municipal property tax allocation method must be able to be implemented in a way that is easily understood by taxpayers, which multiple special services with individual definable benefitting areas could make challenging.

The Municipality may decide to area rate some services within the legislative requirements of a special service but this should be done on a fair and equitable basis and not simply to achieve a desired property tax rate for any one group of property owners.

Ultimately, any change to the Municipal tax allocation methodology does not generate additional taxes for the Municipality as a whole; it is solely concerning apportionment and is revenue neutral. Only the Municipal portion of the property tax bill will change; the County and Education portions are not affected and are consistent across the County.

CONCLUSION:

Significant community consultation has occurred and the development of a revised Municipal property tax allocation methodology compliant with the Municipal Act continues to progress. The next step is for Committee to determine what Municipal services will be established as special services for the purposes of Municipal property tax allocation and generally the associated definable benefitting area. Potentially, Committee could request a draft by-law be provided for further review at the April 15, 2015 Committee of the Whole.

The December 3, 2013 Council resolution identified that the revised Municipal property tax allocation methodology be phased in over 5 years. Further, staff will develop a policy and guidelines for annual review of the Area Rating By-law as part of the budget process. In addition, the resolution identifies that as part of the 2016 review of the Area Rating By-Law consideration should be given to moving Parks, Recreation and Culture facilities and programs from special services to common levy, if established in 2014 as a special service.

This initiative is included in the updated draft Corporate Strategic Plan Goal 8: Fair and Equitable Taxation Apportionment, inclusive of the review and implementation of a new fair and equitable taxation apportionment for the Municipality inclusive of a consultative public process and potentially effective for 2014.

Original Signed by:

David Baxter
Director of Finance



March 5, 2014

Minutes of the Area Rating Open House of the Corporation of the Municipality of Port Hope held on Wednesday, March 5, 2014 at 2:00 p.m. at the Canton Municipal Office, 5325 County Rd 10, Port Hope, Ontario.

Present: Mayor L. Thompson, Deputy Mayor J. Gilmer, Councillor R. Austin, Councillor G. Burns, Councillor D. Turck, Councillor M. Ellis

Staff: C. Cannon, Chief Administrative Officer
D. Baxter, Director of Finance
D. Sherwood, Tax and Revenue Coordinator
D. Kripp, Finance Clerk

Members of the Public: There were approximately 96 members in attendance.

1. INTRODUCTION

Mayor Linda Thompson welcomed citizens to the open house and introduced the facilitator Nigel Bellchamber.

Mr. Bellchamber introduced himself providing an overview of credentials and how the process works, explaining that David Baxter, Director of Finance, would provide a presentation and afterwards the floor would be opened up to the audience to ask questions or provide comments.

2. STAFF PRESENTATION

David Baxter provided an overview of his presentation.

3. QUESTIONS AND/OR COMMENTS

Mark Probert – 3864 Hwy 2

Wishes that Council members and staff would speak the truth to enable the community to trust the Council members and staff.

Caroline Thornton – Elizabethville

Caroline noted that if a special service “could” be area rated, than it “should” be area rated and inquired on the timelines of when decisions would be made.

Scott Crooks – Ward 2

Scott indicated that finances were not included in the original presentations and why they were included on the current presentation.

Mr. Smith – Ward 2

Mr. Smith inquired about the timeline to have the audited financials posted on the municipal website. Further, Mr. Scott inquired if the Municipality could assess each ward by what they have spent.

Pat Toms – Ward 2

Pat commented that in Hope Township, there was never a common or special services, it was good service with low taxes. Residents are not receiving any more service and believes the Municipality should stop spending.

Christine C. Rowland – Ward 2

Christine commented that the original survey that was brought forward included 29 services, however the report only included 17 services. She inquired as to why some services were compiled together and why resident’s had to indicate which ward they were from.

Bill Murray – Gardenhill

Bill inquired as to what has prompted the change to a new way of taxation and if comparative numbers were available for the services received pre-amalgamation.

Steve Lucas – 5751 6th Line, Knoxville

Steve inquired if there was a shortfall in funds for policing and fire honourium then why is the Municipality building a brand new structure.

Bill Bickle – Canton

Bill commented that residents need a justification for moving away from the original tax allocation and for moving \$1 million from one Ward to another. Bill inquired why the community cannot review all 29 services and what was incorrect about the amalgamation formula.

Kevin Brady – 3723 7th Line

Kevin commented that if we knew exactly what was being spent in each Ward for all uses then there would be no need for this discussion as each Ward would pay their own share. The Municipality should be able to track costs to charge to the appropriate ward.

Donna Marie Abrams – Property in Ward 1 and Ward 2

Donna commented that the increase affects everyone. Donna inquired what was included in the water fees (i.e. staff, maintenance, etc.). Donna commented that as a Ward 1 resident, the bus is available for her to be transported around the Municipality but as a Ward 2 resident, she has to drive into town to use the transit, this proposed the question if travel costs will be taken into consideration. Donna believes that the basis is around availability. Donna inquired about cemeteries within Ward 1 and Ward 2.

Ron Bates – 4016 Pelmo Park, Ward 2

Ron commented that when the two townships were transitioning into amalgamation, residents were promised that the Municipality would reduce staff, save money and obtain better service. Now staff have increased and services have decreased. He indicated that there is an urban and rural divide and it is because the two Wards think and spend differently.

Dean Ross – 1283 6th Line

Dean commented that during the ice storm, his road was not touched for several days. Further, with the Welcome Fire Station closing, his house insurance will increase over \$500/year. Dean voiced his concerns regarding the dry hydrants.

Andy Choate – 3944 Larose Circle, Ward 2

Andy commented that he is a firm believer of pay by use (user fees), recognizing there needs to be stable funding for these services (JBSC, TPRC) to make them sustainable. Andy recognized that PIL's are a source of revenue but wanted clarification regarding how they work.

Pat Toms – Ward 2

Pat inquired about the OPP monies that are given back to the Municipality.

Bill Bickle – Canton

Bill stated that previously "Option 10" was introduced and noted that if this was fully implemented, 20% of the Municipal Tax Levy would be allocated to

Ward 2. Bill commented that assessments in Ward 1 and Ward 2 are different as well as the averages between the values. Further, Bill inquired about the justification for deviating away from the “amalgamation formula” and where the financial data is located.

Caroline Thornton – Elizabethville

Caroline commented that many residents did not understand the survey and that those who responded only accounts for 7% of the population. She inquired about the 93% of the population and their opinion and why it is being ignored.

Harrison Marshal

Harrison commented that it is difficult to obtain a building permit.

Nigel Bellchamber closed the session, thanking the audience for participating and encouraged participants to complete and submit the comment sheets.

Adjourn 4:01 p.m.



March 5, 2014

Minutes of the Area Rating Open House of the Corporation of the Municipality of Port Hope held on Wednesday, March 5, 2014 at 7:00 p.m. at the Canton Municipal Office, 5325 County Rd 10, Port Hope, Ontario.

Present: Mayor L. Thompson, Deputy Mayor J. Gilmer, Councillor R. Austin, Councillor G. Burns, Councillor D. Turck, Councillor M. Ellis

Staff: C. Cannon, Chief Administrative Officer
D. Baxter, Director of Finance
D. Sherwood, Tax and Revenue Coordinator
D. Kripp, Finance Clerk

Members of the Public: There were 86 members in attendance.

1. INTRODUCTION

Mayor Linda Thompson welcomed citizens to the open house and introduced the facilitator Nigel Bellchamber.

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2. STAFF PRESENTATION

David Baxter provided an overview of his presentation.

3. QUESTIONS AND/OR COMMENTS

Mark Probert – 3864 Hwy 2

Mark inquired about the emergency response time with regards to closing the Welcome Fire Station. Further, noted the LLRW interest money is

supposed to be used to reduce the Ward 2 taxes and inquired why this has not been completed.

Anna Parussini – 22 White Drive

Anna commented that she moved to Port Hope from Uxbridge in hopes that taxes would be lower in a retirement community. Anna also indicated that she has never had to pay directly for garbage before.

Kathy Dennis – 2761 Oak Hill Road

Kathy thanked David Baxter for the presentation as it was easy to understand and appreciated that Council has looked at areas to be a special service. Kathy commented that there is better library service now and she would be willing to pay for that on her taxes however, Kathy doesn't believe that Ward 2 should pay higher for Parks, Recreation and Culture because the services are different. Kathy indicated she is willing to pay a higher user fee to use these facilities but so should Cobourg residents.

Bob DeMatteo – 8158 Gilmer Road

Bob commented that when the focus group met, they had identified 29 potential services that should be reviewed and now Council is reviewing 12 services. Bob inquired if the numbers are based on the 2013 budget and when the detailed, line by line breakdown of the 2013 budget will be made available. Bob commented that it is easy to say something is accessible but there is a need to look at accessibility in a reasonable way.

David White – 5647 Heaslip Lane

David inquired about the Municipality's debt.

Al MacKenzie – 164 Hope St North

Al inquired about other comparator communities and if their tax rates are high. Al inquired the timeline regarding audited financial statements and the usage of LLRW document that are to be posted on the Municipal website.

Sandy Spencer – Dodd's Road

Sandy inquired if the reserves included LLRW monies.

Jackie Hill Bower – Ward 2

Jackie inquired why Fire and Emergency Services was not being considered a potential special service. Jackie commented on the various levels of

service that residents receive. Jackie inquired if the services were equally allocated.

Mary Condon – 3863 LaRose Crescent

Mary inquired about the next steps to the process and expressed her concerns regarding rushing the process.

Al MacKenzie – 164 Hope Street North

Al indicated that the discussion should only begin when all the information was provided.

Geoff Thompson – 5605 County Road 10

Geoff inquired about the services and what has changed in the past 15 years that warrants a change in taxes.

Pat Monteith – 3701 Slyvin Glen Road

Pat commented that she does not appreciate being put against Ward 1 and as a community we need to work together to create a solution.

Allan Richter – 3863 LaRose Crescent

Allan indicates that the services they are receiving are the same if not worse than the past 15 years. He commented about the process beginning 2 years ago; however he had only recently learned about the proposed changes. Allan commented on compliance with the Municipal Act and that the previously circulated survey was confusing and unhelpful.

Pat Monteith – 3701 Slyvin Glen Road

Pat inquired about the cost of garbage tags and how much money is generated from this incentive.

Bill Bickle – Canton

Bill inquired about the need to shift the tax burden between the Wards. Bill commented that he was on the Area Rating Citizen's Working Group and the group had agreed on services that should be common and should be special services. He stated Ward 2 has the lowest tax rate because of the impact of the LLRW interest, however Ward 2 taxes has increased similar as Ward 1.

Dale DeMatteo – 8158 Gilmer Road

Dale commented that residents are as upset as they are because of the promises agreed to at the time of amalgamation and the lack of knowledge

on how the Municipality's money has been spent. Dale further commented that as a Municipality, we should be putting more pressure on the Federal Government and their funding/lack of funding.

Marilyn Curson – 2 Clifton Road

Marilyn commented that amount owing for taxes is not all Municipal and indicated that this needs to be explained to residents.

Ken Swales – 3925 LaRose Crescent

Ken indicated he has been a volunteer firefighter for several years and was surprised that Fire and Emergency Services will be considered common. He noted that there is a difference in the level of service.

Nigel Bellchamber closed the session, thanking the audience for participating and encouraged participants to complete and submit the comment sheets.

Adjourn 9:00 p.m.



March 6, 2014

Minutes of the Area Rating Open House of the Corporation of the Municipality of Port Hope held on Thursday, March 6, 2014 at 2:00 p.m. at the Town Park Recreation Centre, 62 McCaul Street, Port Hope, Ontario.

Present: Mayor L. Thompson, Deputy Mayor J. Gilmer, Councillor R. Austin, Councillor G. Burns, Councillor D. Turck, Councillor M. Ellis

Staff: C. Cannon, Chief Administrative Officer
D. Baxter, Director of Finance
D. Sherwood, Tax and Revenue Coordinator
D. Kripp, Finance Clerk

Members of the Public: There were 56 members in attendance.

1. INTRODUCTION

Mayor Linda Thompson welcomed citizens to the open house and introduced the facilitator Nigel Bellchamber.

Mr. Bellchamber introduced himself providing an overview of credentials and how the process works, explaining that David Baxter, Director of Finance, would provide a presentation and afterwards the floor would be opened up to the audience to ask questions or provide comments.

2. STAFF PRESENTATION

David Baxter provided an overview of his presentation.

3. QUESTIONS AND/OR COMMENTS

George Keereweer – 5763 Lakeshore Road
George inquired how the committees contributed to the overall understanding of what common and special services are.

Brian MacFarlane – 13 Moore Drive

Brian inquired if the cost of special services had been agreed to and further if all the services had been considered as a potential special service. ‘

Janet Waddington – 3490 Loyalist Road

Janet inquired if all the services were up for discussion or if it was limited to what was indicated on the yellow flyer that was circulated. Further, Janet commented that roads should be considered a special service as the service is undertaken at different levels.

James Ronson – 37 Pine Street South

James inquired if user fees cannot be applied to either Wards, more specifically library and Parks, Recreation and Culture facilities. Further, why dredging was being considered if there is no levy impact. James suggested consideration to introduce a user fee for those who use the Marina that would cover its costs.

Cory Elliot – 2 Carol Place

Cory commented that when he looks at Parks, Recreation and Culture he looks at how it benefits the entire community and as a benefit to the whole Municipality, everyone should pay their equal share – similar to education tax. Further, Cory commented how PRC is often a social event for residents as well.

Dennis Waddington – 3490 Loyalist Road

Dennis inquired as the process of personal information, indicating the Stage 2 comment sheet requested name, address, phone number and email whereas the Stage 1 survey requested only Ward. Dennis explained he was surprised to see the surveys were placed on the Municipal website and was curious as to how important a name is as many survey respondents were anonymous.

James Rooney – 5 Croft Street

James inquired about what was included in harbour dredging and currently who pays for it. He inquired if there was a special levy for the usage of the harbour.

Rick Norman

Rick indicated that the 2013 Operating budget is not detailed.

Christa – 13 Moore Drive

Christa commented that there should be no division for Parks, Recreation and Culture. She is aware of several Ward 2 residents who participate in activities within Ward 1. Christa added that the community needs to pay more attention to the winter maintenance as conditions experienced have prevented activities.

Cory Elliot – 2 Carol Place

Cory discussed Parks, Recreation and Culture (PRC) facilities indicating that as a member of the hockey association, there are several children from the rural area who play for urban teams, whether it be Port Hope or Cobourg, etc. He spoke to the PRC Master Plan which is inclusive of a series of charts which indicate that 78% of residents agreed that travel time to facilities is appropriate. Further, it indicated that 45% of households had utilized the Town Park Recreation Centre and 42% of households had utilized the Jack Burger Sports Complex within the past twelve months.

Christine C. Rowland

Christine commented that there are 55 parks in Ward 1 and 3 parks in Ward 2. If Ward 2 residents want to use a park, they would have to drive.

Rick Norman

Rick suggested that since there are several numbers, to provide examples that indicate what the average weighted assessment for residents in each Ward is.

Ted Walker

Ted commented on the largest celebration that the Municipality of Port Hope holds, indicating that ever year, the poster indicated “everyone is welcome” – this includes people from out of town as well. He further stated that it is very reflective of the culture the town is promoting.

Bob Ketcheson – Campbellcroft

Bob inquired if taxes could be allocated by population of Ward 1 and Ward 2.

Bill Bickle – Canton

Bill thanked the Council members for opening up the debate and recognized that numbers were coming. Bill inquired if the tax increase would be on the bill has a whole (including Education and County).

Rick Norman –

Rick inquired about the latest weighted assessments from MPAC for properties and if it could be placed on the website.

Christine C. Rowland

Christine inquired about the trust fund and how it reduces tax requirements and asked if the figures shown had already applied the trust fund monies. Christine indicated that Ward 2 receives decreased taxes due to the trust fund.

Dennis Waddington – 3490 Loyalist Road

Dennis commented on the financial impact slide compared to the wall display board and why only policing (the largest dollar impact) was included and why roads and fire and emergency (the second and third largest dollar impact) were not included in the presentation. Further, Dennis commented on the response time and level of service residents are receiving.

Cory Elliot – 2 Carol Place

Cory indicated that resident's should appreciate the ability to obtain the principle of the LLRW fund money and the fact that the Municipality still has that money available.

Sue Stickley – Ward 1

Sue inquired what the reserve funds are used for and why the Municipality continues to borrow rather than using the funds.

Bill Bickle – Canton

Bill provided his concern about deviating from a two Ward system, and at amalgamation it was to be one accounting system. At the time, it was understood that costs would be allocated to each Ward. Bill suggested not changing the two Ward system to include North and South boundaries as it becomes too complicated.

Nigel Bellchamber closed the session, thanking the audience for participating and encouraged participants to complete and submit the comment sheets.

Adjourn 4:03 p.m.



March 6, 2014

Minutes of the Area Rating Open House of the Corporation of the Municipality of Port Hope held on Thursday, March 6, 2014 at 7:00 p.m. at the Town Park Recreation Centre, 62 McCaul Street, Port Hope, Ontario.

Present: Mayor L. Thompson, Deputy Mayor J. Gilmer, Councillor R. Austin, Councillor G. Burns, Councillor M. Ellis, Councillor J. Lees, Councillor D. Turck

Staff: C. Cannon, Chief Administrative Officer
D. Baxter, Director of Finance
D. Sherwood, Tax and Revenue Coordinator
D. Kripp, Finance Clerk

Members of the Public: There were 48 members in attendance.

1. INTRODUCTION

Mayor Linda Thompson welcomed citizens to the open house and introduced the facilitator Nigel Bellchamber.

Mr. Bellchamber introduced himself providing an overview of credentials and how the process works, explaining that David Baxter, Director of Finance, would provide a presentation and afterwards the floor would be opened up to the audience to ask questions or provide comments.

2. STAFF PRESENTATION

David Baxter provided an overview of his presentation.

3. QUESTIONS AND/OR COMMENTS

Joe Aiello – 36 Ravine Drive

Joe commented that Parks, Recreation and Culture assists everyone, young and old, to build healthy habits and a healthy lifestyle. He commented that

advertisements today are encouraging the youth to get active and that the master plan had input from all citizens. He further commented that the master plan was put in place to benefit the entire community and it should not be classified as a special service. Volunteers and staff are from the both Wards.

Marc Vermeire – 223 Wright Crescent

Marc applauded David Baxter for the information provided and indicated that some misconceptions have been clarified. He indicated that Ward 2 residents are beginning to look at the larger picture and inquired what grants and other sources of revenue are coming into the Municipality.

Scott Hagerman – 4714 County Road 2

Scott indicated that this was the first time he had viewed the financials and that he was not in support of common items. Scott inquired of the process and after narrowing down the services into common and special service where the numbers would be.

Greg Miller – 7 Lavinia Street

Greg inquired if the numbers remain the way they are currently presented, what the final amount would be and further how much do these options lower Ward 1 taxes over 5 years.

Mark Henry – 7605 County Road 65

Mark commented that going through the financials, a property with \$100,000 weighted assessment will experience an increase of \$250. With properties in the rural area, the assessments are in the \$400,000 range, which means Ward 2 residents can experience an increase of \$1,000. Mark indicated that he does not see any justification for the tax increase as the community does not receive better or more services than pre-amalgamation. Mark commented that his children cannot use Park, Recreation and Culture facilities due to his hours of work. He further noted his reminded wages are not increasing.

Aaron Peterson – Ward 2

Aaron commented that the sound system was not great.

Patricia Endicott – 3920 County Road 65

Patricia commented that residents are encouraged to attend budget meetings and ask questions, but do the questions affect the end result.

Patricia stated her concerns with the use of “if” in the presentation in respect to common or special service and inquired when the decision would be made.

Gord Walter – 27 Caroline Street

Gord commented that he is the resident who continually comes to budget meetings to listen and to ask questions if needed. He commented that he has followed the Council for the past three years, out of interest and care for the community. Gord indicated that he does not always agree with Council’s decision. He encouraged residents to get involved, pay attention, use intelligence and use their voice. Gord indicated he heard several comments/statements that are not factual.

Rick Norman – Ward 2

Rick indicated that if you go to a Budget meeting, ensure you are there at the start time.

Pat Steadman – 6990 7th Line

Pat commented that young adults never attend public meetings, they are not interested and this is a problem as these are the people who will be paying taxes in the future.

Scott Hagerman – 4714 County Road 2

Scott commented that he felt more confident and comfortable after attending the public meeting and getting more information, knowing that policing costs will be allocated to Ward 1 as a special service and the Fire and Emergency Services will be allocated to both Wards.

Joe Aiello – 36 Ravine Drive

Joe inquired if the intention of Council was to have a resolution before the upcoming election.

Mark Henry – 7605 County Road 65

Mark inquired about the new Police and Fire building and how those costs will be separated.

Jackie – 3639 Roseberry Hill Road

Jackie commented that her children have grown up in Ward 2 and are very active in hockey and soccer and have participated at these activities at Jack Burger Sports Complex, Town Park Recreation Centre and other locations.

Ward 2 children have an option to participate in different communities due to their location. Jackie understands the facility is available but they are not accessible. Children cannot participate in activities due to the hours these activities run and her work timelines.

Joe Aiello – 36 Ravine Drive

Joe wanted to remind everyone that the Jack Burger Sports Complex houses other activities than just hockey. Further, he indicated the master plan states that less than 5% of residents do have an issue getting to facilities.

Jackie – 3639 Roseberry Hill Road

Jackie indicated that it is accessibility of these programs – she is able to get her children to these activities if she is not at work.

Mark Henry – 7605 County Road 65

Mark indicated that his children are not interested in these activities and if they were to take these activities, it is a forty minute round trip.

Liz Stewart – 20 Crossley Drive

Liz commented that residents have a choice where they live. She indicated that the Jack Burger Sports Complex is not just for children and hockey – there are several activities for seniors, those with disabilities and adults to participate in.

Chris Terry – 2 Silver Crescent

Chris suggested there was some merit looking into the analysis of library. Chris indicated that there was not an argument over education, they will pay for that. However, Council needs to acknowledge there is an issue with accessibility.

Marc Vermeire – 223 Wright Crescent

Marc commented on the debt and indicated that we need to look at other elements and allocate specific items of the debt.

Nigel Bellchamber closed the session, thanking the audience for participating and encouraged participants to complete and submit the comment sheets.

Councillor Rick Austin thanked all staff members who had been involved.

Mayor Linda Thompson thanked residents for their input and indicated a report inclusive of all the comments received will be coming to Committee of the Whole on April 1, 2014 as well as posted on the Municipal website. Further, she thanked Nigel Bellchamber for facilitating the four open houses.

Adjourn 9:02 p.m.

March 24, 2014

PRC 14-14

MOVED BY C. ELLIOTT

SECONDED BY F. LANGMAID

“Whereas the Parks, Recreation and Culture Advisory Committee met on March 17, 2014 to review the Area Rating material as presented at the March 5 and 6 Open Houses and material posted to the Municipal Website to provide written comments to meet the March 21, 2014 deadline;

And whereas the Committee requested that the Committee Chair and Vice-Chair prepare a detailed response to Council reflecting the Committee’s concerns, comments, directions and observations related to potential impacts of additional user fees and establishing benefiting area boundaries as well as inclusivity and distribute back to the Committee Members for review and comment prior to submitting to meet the deadline of March 21, 2014;

And whereas Parks, Recreation and Culture Services, including facilities and programs are available and accessible to all residents;

And whereas the mandate of the Parks Recreation and Culture (PRC) Department is to enhance the quality of life for Port Hope Residents through a wide range of innovative and accessible programming, providing opportunities for physical activity, social interaction and community engagement and its vision supports community and individual well-being through a collaborative delivery system comprised of sustainable parks, recreation and cultural opportunities that are accessible to all;

And whereas the benefits (personal, social, economic and environmental) of PRC are documented in depth, specifically in the Leisure Services Master Plan, CPRA Benefits Catalogues, Parks and Recreation Ontario Use and Benefits of Local Government Research Summary, Affordable Access for Recreation to Ontarians documents;

And whereas the Municipality is a Youth Friendly Designated Community which supports healthy child development and youth engagement throughout the Municipality;

And whereas efforts are made to provide affordable opportunities for all residents to encourage active healthy living and broad services that reflect the dynamic nature of the community;

And whereas the Canadian Parks and Recreation Association has indicated that Parks, Recreation and Culture are essential to personal health, quality of life, key to human development, reduce anti-social behavior, builds families and communities and reduces the cost of social services and crime and there are many social, environmental, economic, health and positive community development outcomes from Parks Recreation and Culture;

And whereas determining and designating benefitting areas, which is being considered, encourages further fragmentation, confusion, bureaucracy, and divisiveness and does not support cultural unity, a sense of community or inclusivity;

And whereas imposing additional user fees for Ward 2 Residents would result in confusion, more administration, inhibit accessibility, potentially decreased participation, potentially negatively impact organizations (i.e. minor ball, hockey), therefore not supporting accessibility for all;

And whereas the report completed in 2009 by Parks and Recreation Ontario included a major finding that even those who did not participate in recreation indicated they benefited, and a full 73% who had not taken part in leisure activities in the previous year said that they benefit from the existence of those services;

And whereas the benefits of PRC encompass not only the entire Municipality of Port Hope but also reaches beyond our geographic boundaries;

And whereas social benefits know no boundary and as such cannot be attributed to a specific geo-political boundary, they are similar to education; and therefore the cost to realize such benefits must be shared by all;

Now therefore be it resolved that Parks Recreation and Culture Advisory Committee recommends to Council that PRC Services not be area rated or considered a Special Service based upon the vision goals and objectives of the Leisure Services Master Plan, Cultural Plan, Active Transportation and Trails Master Plan all of which provide services and accessibility to all residents of the Municipality of Port Hope.”

Carried