



THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF SOUTHWOLD

MINUTES

Special Council Meeting – Budget Deliberations and a Closed Session
Wednesday January 10, 2024
6:00 p.m. Council Chambers, Fingal/Via Video Link

COUNCIL PRESENT: Mayor Grant Jones
Deputy Mayor Justin Pennings
Councillor John Adzija (online)
Councillor Sarah Emons
Councillor Scott Fellows

ALSO PRESENT: Lisa Higgs, CAO/Clerk
Michele Lant, Director of Corporate Services/Treasurer
Aaron VanOorspronk, Director of Infrastructure & Development
Services
Jeff McArthur, Director of Emergency Services/Fire Chief

Mayor Jones called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

DISCLOSURES: None.

REPORTS:

FIN 2024-02 2024 Budget Report #3 and 2024 draft budget

INFRASTRUCTURE AND DEVELOPMENT

Roads

Director of Infrastructure and Development Aaron Van Oorspronk provided a summary of the roads budget and the prioritization of projects. Mayor Jones asked about the required savings to reduce the overall levy ask by 1% and it was confirmed by staff that to realize a 1% savings on the levy, cuts to the budget must be \$68,000.00.

Council discussed options for removing items from the budget and there were suggestions to delay the mulcher flail attachment or to remove a portion from the granular conversion program.

Council indicated that ideally, they would like to reduce the increase to 3% overall and would prefer that this would be removed from expenses instead of from transfers from reserves. It was also requested that the capital budget presentations be included in the Binder.

Bridges and Culverts

Mr. VanOorspronk reviewed the bridges and culvert inclusions in the budget including the Burwell Bridge, Lake Line Culvert (result of washout in 2023), Woodplant Bridge Engineering, and various culvert and bridge replacements.

Line Painting

Deputy Mayor Pennings asked about the revenue generated from Line Painting in other municipalities and wondered whether this was still happening. Mr. VanOorspronk indicated that it was determined that it did not make good business sense to allocate three staff members to complete work in other municipalities.

Roads Facility

Director VanOorspronk presented on the Roads Facility and Council was generally agreeable to proceeding with the project, as presented in the budget.

Drainage

Director of Corporate Services Michele Lant summarized the drainage budget including the inclusion of the Stormwater Rate in the 2024 budget, which will be recovered through the rates themselves. Director VanOorspronk indicated that in 2024, the Township anticipates that the only municipal drain with costs to the road are the Palmer Drain. Director of Corporate Services Michele Lant indicated that the Drainage Superintendent has indicated that the drainage reserve looks healthy at this point so contributions to this reserve may be an opportunity for a reduction.

FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES

Director of Corporate Services Michele Lant summarized the Fire and Emergency budget including the Talbotville fire hall, community risk assessment, communications upgrade, increased reserve contributions for vehicles, and fire services coordinator hours increase.

ADMINISTRATION

Director of Corporate Services Michele Lant summarized the administration reserve including contributions to reserves for server and computer replacements and automation of processes using efficiency funding. Council also received information on the deferral of further additions or renovations to the administration facility.

BUILDING

Director of Corporate Services Michele Lant summarized the building department budget, indicating that there are reserve contributions to the Talbotville Fire Hall including \$100,000 for the office in Talbotville. Staff was instructed to review this calculation, given the updated tendered amounts and their proportionate share.

KEYSTONE AND LIBRARY FACILITY

No capital projects proposed for 2024, but that staff continue to recommend contributions to reserve. It was clarified that the range proposed for replacement was removed on the advice of the Committee. Council indicated that the stone pillars at the Keystone need repair since many of the stones are falling off.

MEDICAL BUILDING

The only item included in the budget is a possible HVAC replacement, however it is indicated to be when required.

PARKS

In the absence of Director of Community Services Corey Pemberton, Michele Lant provided the presentation to Council. There were questions regarding a repair required at Corsley Park and a wet squishy spot requiring repair. There were questions about the entrance to the Talbotville Heritage Optimist Park and it was clarified that the entrance has been paved now and barricaded properly. Council discussed the concrete conversion of the walking trail, and it was indicated that a report will be brought into the New Year.

RESERVES

Council instructed staff to take \$75,000.00 out of Drainage Reserves and \$75,000.00 out of the Tax Stabilization Reserve and report back to Council.

Deputy Mayor Pennings requested that there may be an opportunity to sell lands at the Talbotville Fire Hall site to Union Gas/Enbridge and that these funds could be allocated to the Fire building reserve and used for the bay expansion at the Shedden Fire Hall.

Operating Budget Deliberations:

Director of Corporate Services Michele Lant summarized the operating budget as drafted and responded to questions from Council.

Council requested information on the Police Operating Reserve in terms of its total balance and there was a discussion on the status of the reserve and interest in finding out where the funds in the reserve originally came from.

Staff were provided direction to provide an updated budget with the proposed amendments.

REPORT:

ENG 2024-06 Rural Economic Development Funding

Aaron VanOorspronk presented a report to Council on the RED funding, including presenting on the EDC recommendation to create a municipal lot adjacent to the medical building. It was suggested that the Rosy Rhubarb people movers be relocated to the Teetzel property. Deputy Mayor Pennings recommended that there may be an opportunity to apply the project to both streams. Director VanOorspronk indicated that the second stream.

2024-018 Councillor Fellows – Deputy Mayor Pennings

THAT Report ENG 2024-06 relating to Rural Economic Development Funding, be received for information; and

THAT Council authorize Staff to prepare and apply for funding to the Rural Economic Development Fund for the improvement of the Shedden Municipal Parking Lot.

Recorded Vote	Yeas	Nays
J. Adzija	√	
S. Emons	√	
S. Fellows	√	
G. Jones – Mayor	√	
J. Pennings	√	

CARRIED

CLOSED SESSION:

2024-019 Councillor Emons – Councillor Fellows

THAT Council of the Township of Southwold now moves again into a session of the meeting that shall be closed to the public at **8:27 p.m.** in accordance with Section 239 (2) of the Municipal Act, S.O. 2001, c. 25 for discussion of the following matters;

- Personal Matters about identifiable individual, including municipal or local board employees (Section 239(2)(b))- Summer Students
- A position, plan, procedure, criteria or instructions to be applied to any negotiations carried on or to be carried on by or on behalf of the municipality or local board (section 239 (2)(k))- Central Elgin Sanitary

Recorded Vote	Yeas	Nays
J. Adzija	√	
S. Emons	√	
S. Fellows	√	
G. Jones – Mayor	√	
J. Pennings	√	

CARRIED

Adjournment of Closed Session

2024-020 Councillor Emons – Deputy Mayor Pennings

THAT Council of the Township of Southwold adjourns the Closed Session of the Special Council meeting at **8:56 p.m.**

Recorded Vote	Yeas	Nays
J. Adzija	√	
S. Emons	√	
S. Fellows	√	
G. Jones – Mayor	√	
J. Pennings	√	

CARRIED

STAFF DIRECTION

Staff was given direction by Council to the items that were discussed in the Closed Session.

ADJOURNMENT:

2024-021 Deputy Mayor Pennings – Councillor Adzija

THAT Council for the Township of Southwold adjourns this Special meeting of Council at **8:57 p.m.**

Recorded Vote	Yeas	Nays
J. Adzija	√	
S. Emons	√	
S. Fellows	√	
G. Jones – Mayor	√	

CARRIED

Mayor
Grant Jones

CAO/Clerk
Lisa Higgs