



Minutes of the Town of Erin Special Council Meeting

January 27, 2015

7:30 p.m.

Municipal Council Chamber

PRESENT:	Allan Alls	Mayor
	John Brennan	Councillor
	Matt Sammut	Councillor
	Rob Smith	Councillor
	Jeff Duncan	Councillor
STAFF	Kathryn Ironmonger	CAO/Town Manager
PRESENT:	Dina Lundy	Clerk
	Sharon Marshall	Director of Finance
	Larry Wheeler	Financial Analyst

1. Call to Order

Mayor Alls called the meeting to order, and explained the purpose of this meeting. The meeting has been called to give members of the public the opportunity to comment on the proposed 5 year capital plan.

Larry Wheeler explained that the items on this first draft being introduced to Council are recommendations from 4 different studies that have been completed, including the Asset Management Plan, the Development Charges Study, Roads Study, and Bridges and Culverts Study.

2. Declaration of Pecuniary Interest

None.

3. Topic for Discussion - Proposed 5 Year Capital Plan

Mayor Alls called upon the first delegation.

Brian Gray

- President of Erin Tennis Club
- Club is self-funded through membership dues/donations
- Courts are used by members, general public, high school students and have become a valuable asset to the Town
- Currently at a crossroads, where courts need repair and resurfacing
- the Club has been building a reserve over the years, however need assistance to complete the repairs and would like Council to consider the request.

Pauline Follett

- Does not feel that cost reductions have been practiced since amalgamation
- Hillsburgh Fire hall should not have went ahead without an independent analysis
- Regarding the Station Road Bridge, the Town should not be in the dam

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business - it is the most expensive solution

- Safe and reliable Town water system should be expected and residents should accept that they need to hook up to the system
- taxpayers want to see change and need a clear picture of what they can expect for the next 4 years

Anna Spiteri

- the proposed plan doesn't paint a good financial future for the Town
- would like to know needs vs wants and Town needs to look for efficiencies before borrowing
- difficult time seeing what was proposed for 2014 and what was actually spent
- would like to see an Organizational Review as soon as possible
- there were gross cost overruns in the past term (fire hall, SSMP, Station Road), and there needs to be a mechanism going forward to put penalties in place for projects not completed on time
- suggests Council have a master plan and identify priorities

Deanna MacKay

- based on the information in the plan as presented, the capital budget for 2014 was over 4 million and the tax increase was 2.97%, does that mean the tax increase will be much higher due to the 13 million shown for 2015?
- would like to know what the actual capital expenses were for 2014 and if all costs were covered or if it was necessary to borrow
- would like to know what is meant by the column 'funding gap by project'
- are the grants indicated for 2015 guaranteed?
- for sidewalks on Wellington Rd 124 - is there not a reserve built?
- for Station Street rehabilitation - is this the only money being borrowed?
- what is the present debt, at what rate is it being repaid, and how much money will need to be borrowed for 2015 projects?

Laurie Davis

- would like Council to be more communicative
- when you ask people for money, they want to know where it goes and that it is spent well
- got to believe there are efficiencies to be found
- why does Wellington County receive so much and how to we help the Town to get more of those dollars?
- fire truck - this is a good analogy for Council - when taxes are increased, it's forever. I can go to my insurance company and argue for better rates.
- when building a budget, start at zero

Joe Spiteri

- would like to see the Town budget executed as I do at home - have to live within means (needs vs wants)
- use the minds of the people in the community as much as possible and use their money as if it was your own
- need strong project management for future projects
- personal experience is that budgets are padded so there is something to cut
- department heads should rank capital projects and there should be a process to

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determine needs from wants

- 10 yrs ago insurance rates doubled due to distance for fire trucks to respond to his property - did some shopping around to get a better price - some things are critical but we need to push back as well
- fixed costs - there is no such thing as fixed costs - there are variable costs and non-variable costs - everything should be looked at

Paul Metcalfe

- speed signs being installed, but not on 22 Sideroad
- realize this is a County Road, but would like to bring it to Council's attention
- concern with speeding on this road and safety

Don Chambers

- proposed capital plan is heavily front-end loaded
- regarding return on investment - there is a fundamental difference between government and business - ROI not always possible, there is also the need to look at the betterment
- can we afford to run 2 arenas
- how to we get more money from the County

Roy Val

- there is 1.6 million allocated to replacing 5 fire trucks, does that mean that all 5 trucks will be losing their accreditation

Chris Naraysingh

- extensive list of projects - how much control does council have over whether they are done or not - are some projects provincially mandated

Claire Booker

- there is a need for communication in plain english
- the small tax increases over the years have resulted in infrastructure that is starting to fall apart
- if we want to attract economic development we need a good solid infrastructure and at some point we will have to reach deep into our pockets

Brett Davis

- fire truck - these items are so custom and overbuilt - what if the new truck fails when the old one would have worked? why take the status quo?

Eleanor Rowan

- can we look at leasing vehicles (trucks/ graders) to keep costs down or outsourcing for efficiency?
- the more you charge, the more you drive people away

Stan Dera

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- 20 years as a volunteer firefighter - how many pumpers does the Town have and do we have agreements with neighbouring municipalities

Paul Dermott

- confused as to what we are trying to achieve at this meeting
- wondering if there will be a vetting of the operating budget
- if you prepare a budget, you should be prepared to defend it
- fire truck - we shouldn't always believe what we are told
- sometimes can save money by looking at alternatives

Dave Dorman

- don't envy Council's situation, especially since there will be no significant growth for the foreseeable future
- Council has a number of things going against them - lack of funding, lack of growth
- a little disappointed that there is zero cost recovery for the fire trucks

Josie Wintersinger

- until you do a full review you won't know where the shortfalls are
- good idea to look at contracting out services and leasing vehicles
- the filing system has been on the budget and pushed forward for 7 or 8 years - this system will create efficiencies - if records are not up to date and filed properly, you are not efficient
- there should be a way to negotiate accreditation of the fire truck

Bill Oughtred

- the reconstruction of 17th sideroad has been on the budget for years
- would hope that Council will go ahead with this project

Evelyn MacLean

- What is the tender system for projects going forward?
- Projects have been running over budget
- Seems to be no penalty for projects not being completed on time

Mayor Alls thanked everyone for attending the meeting and providing their input.

4. **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:15pm

Mayor

Clerk

