



CITY OF MERRITT

MINUTES

SPECIAL COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING

COUNCIL CHAMBER, CITY HALL
2185 VOGHT STREET

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 02, 2016
AT 6:00 PM

1. PRESENT:

Mayor Neil Menard
Councillor D. Baker
Councillor L. Brown
Councillor K. Christopherson
Councillor M. Goetz
Councillor G. Prowal

REGRETS

Councillor D. Norgaard

IN ATTENDANCE

Mr. S. Boven, Chief Administrative Officer
Ms. S. Bird, Director of Engineering & Development
Ms. C. Fraser, Deputy Clerk/Human Resources Manager
Mr. S. McKeown, Fire Prevention Officer/Emergency Program
Coordinator
Ms. M. Miles, Director of Corporate Services
Ms. S. Thiessen, Director of Finance & IT
Mr. D. Tomkinson, Fire Chief

Merritt Herald
Q101

3 Members of the Public

2. CALL TO ORDER

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

3. PUBLIC INPUT

Nil

4. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

Nil

5. GENERAL MATTERS - Delegations and Recognition

Nil

6. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Nil

7. NEW BUSINESS

**LEISURE &
RECREATION
SERVICES,
PROTECTIVE
SERVICES AND
DEVELOPMENT
SERVICES**

7.1 Leisure & Recreation Services, Protective Services and
Development Services Budgets
File: 1705

Protective Services

- Fire Department
- RCMP
- Bylaw
- Building Inspection

Development Services

- Planning
- Economic Development

Leisure and Recreation

Fire Department

Council had the following discussions:

- TNRD grant - \$187,000 included \$125,000 gas tax for new fire truck
- Portable facilities for Work Experience Program participants
 - Construction portion of the budget
 - Proper living quarters for staff
 - Anticipated turning back lease

- \$215,000 actual firefighter costs in 2015
 - Suspicious fires
 - 3 year comparison
 - Increase in call volume and types of calls
- False alarm call frequency – Occupant pays fine on fourth false alarm in same year
- Statutory reserve v. non-statutory reserve
 - Statutory reserve is set by bylaw
 - Non-statutory reserve is informal designated surplus
 - Cannot budget to non-statutory reserve
- License & Permits - Budget was deleted as this was for building permit for expansion last year
- City equipment charges
 - Paving of Langley Avenue behind Fire Hall done by City staff
 - Was a one-time expense – not recurring
- Fleet insurance
 - Why is budget high – low – high?
 - Will be finalized before final draft of budget
- Breathing apparatus - Why not budget seven (7) per year rather than six (6)?
- Calling out of tender
 - Attempt to have insurance cover costs
 - Presently there is no account
 - Utilize contracted services – security
- FTE across the board
 - Three (3) full time employees for years at Fire Hall and endeavor to achieve forty (40) paid on call volunteers
- Insurance reimbursements – offsets – A/R and general revenue, no impact to each department
- Wildfire truck from Forestry – Ministry withdrew contract in spring of 2015 and sold truck at auction

- E-links
- Class A firefighting foam – shelf life 5 years
- Class B foam has a shorter shelf life
- Replacement of Command 2
 - 120,000 km
 - 15 years
 - Hard starts and stops
 - Maintenance issues
 - Are quotes provided for replacement?
- Insurance charges – are they reviewed every couple of years? The coverage is rotated through local providers for ICBC
- Rescue 1 retrofit
 - How was repair?
 - Was cost to repair worth it or should the vehicle have been replaced
 - ICBC chose to repair
 - Many issues – suspension and mechanical
 - Can we stretch out so there are not two (2) vehicles to be replaced in the same year?
 - Rescue 1 already in the five (5) year plan
 - Repurpose rescue body on a new cab and chassis
 - Rescue truck is a priority
 - Command 2 has already been stretched by three (3) years
- Fire station phase II addition - Have any funds been set aside? No, this would be financed through debt after public approval
- Training base at the airport – has been moved along in five (5) year plan to 2018 - \$50,000 fire training grounds

RCMP

- Major increase is within the Policing Agreement
- Office supply increased by sixty (60%) percent
- Benefits – different levels of benefit burden for employees

- Contractor v. exempt v. unionized
 - Contractor – outside contractor
 - Exempt – administration
 - Unionized – personnel
- CPO – phone charges – do clients use the CPO phone?
- DNA Analysis – being addressed at UBCM
- Criminal records check cost issues
- Budget based on fifteen (15) municipal officers
- Accommodation – is this for events? No, this is the cost of the RCMP office. The City pays approximately fifty (50%) percent of the operating costs
- Purchase of RCMP station

Bylaw

- Revenue
 - Increase in 2015 due to Merritt Green Energy and two (2) hotels. Rate has been reduced but will be reviewed
 - Dog licenses
 - SPCA grant
 - Fines
- Major increase is the catch-neuter-release program for feral cats. \$10,000 - 50/50 with BCSPCA and contingent on grant approval
- Fines for bylaw infractions not enough and neither are rates at the Aquatic Centre – if Council wishes to increase rates for services or fines, direction required to staff to bring the bylaws back before Council for consideration
- Licensing cats – look at possibility of licensing cats to offset costs of catch-neuter-release program

Building Inspection

- Increase from four (4) days per week to five (5) days per week
- Consider full time employee
- Is there a process in place to increase full time equivalents?
 - Either when a new person is added or service level increased
- An increase in service level would come back to Council for approval
- Consider full time building inspector by reallocating funds from part-time bylaw officer
- Compare work load from other jurisdictions
- Provide building permit report on more frequent basis i.e. monthly, quarterly

Development Services

- Age-Friendly plan – why \$10,000 to implement plan – this is a carryover from 2015 to complete the Age-Friendly plan
- Banner program – is this under signage and how are the banners working?
 - The new fabric is great – visible from both sides and would be nice to have banners for all four (4) seasons rather than just the current two (2) seasons
 - Within the Public Works operational budget
- What was BC Hydro grant for – multi use pathway along Voght Street
 - Hydro trail was not supposed to cost anything – just shows as expense and revenue – in and out
- Trans Canada Yellowhead Highway Association can be removed from the budget as we are no longer a member

Mayor Menard called a recess at 7:10 p.m.

Mayor Menard reconvened the meeting at 7:22 p.m.

Leisure and Recreation

- Aquatic Centre
 - is at nineteen (19%) percent recovery - aim for thirty (30%) percent
 - How accurate are the numbers? Director of Finance & IT confident the actuals are allocated to proper accounts
 - Stats - how many participants in each program
 - Full time equivalent increase is high - historic has been over budget by same amount but budgets had not been increased and actually under budgeted
 - How is the TNRD contribution calculated? - through an agreement

- Claybanks RV Park
 - New operators running the park - fifty-eight (58%) percent of revenue is retained by the operators
 - Operators do regular maintenance
 - Natural gas is paid by the City
 - Telephone and hydro paid by contractor
 - The transition has been smooth

- Civic Centre
 - \$40,000 cost to replace chairs
 - Not even five (5) years old
 - Push forward to next year and concentrate on sound system rather than chairs
 - Why can the sound not be piped outside the building?
 - Stats for program participants

- Nicola Valley Memorial Arena
 - Arena revenue - has the potential of the School Board hockey school through MSS been taken into consideration? No, not in this budget
 - What is the cost to Merritt Centennials and Merritt Minor Hockey for the year?

- Curling Club - Curling club owns the building and leases the land - Do they contribute towards the cost of the chiller and ice maker? Yes - \$1,000 per month during the curling season

- Baillie House – Where is the expense for the contract for tourism information? – Within the Economic Development budget. This portion of the budget is the maintenance of the building

Capital

Moved, Seconded and CARRIED

THAT chairs for the Civic Centre budgeted under Capital budget in the amount of forty thousand (\$40,000) dollars be removed from the budget

Voting Opposed: Councillors Baker and Prowal

Moved, Seconded and CARRIED

THAT the wood restoration at Spirit Square in the amount of twenty thousand (\$20,000) dollars be moved to 2017;

AND THAT the sunshade for Spirit Square in the amount of twenty-five thousand (\$25,000) dollars be moved from 2017 to 2016;

AND FURTHER THAT more information be provided on the sunshade and brought back to Council when the Capital Plan is brought back

Voting Opposed: Councillor Prowal

Moved, Seconded and CARRIED

THAT one round picnic table, pad and plaque be installed in the parking lot for the Farmers' Market in time for the 2016 summer season

Council also discussed:

- The stop sign on Second Avenue getting shorter
- Complimented on the timely manner of the sweeping of the streets

Schedule for budget meetings:

- Next meeting to be determined after the City audit with possible dates to be circulated

8. TERMINATION OF MEETING

The Mayor declared the meeting closed at 8:07 p.m.

**Certified correct in accordance with Section 124 (2) (c) of the
Community Charter.**

**Original signed by
Deputy Clerk**

Confirmed on the 05th Day of April, 2016

**Original signed by
Mayor**