

BUDGET COMMITTEE

Thursday, October 13, 2016

9:30 a.m.

Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority Boardroom
Morrison Dam Conservation Area

DIRECTORS PRESENT

Ray Chartrand, Doug Cook, Dave Frayne, Wayne Hall, George Irvin, Don Shipway, Mike Tam

DIRECTORS ABSENT

Burkhard Metzger

STAFF PRESENT

Jenna Allain, Bev Brown, Geoff Cade, Brian Horner, Tracey McPherson, Kate Monk, Judith Parker, Alec Scott, Mari Veliz

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Mike Tam welcomed members and staff to the Board of Directors Budget Committee information session and called the meeting to order at 9:34 a.m.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

MOTION #BD 58/16

**Moved by Ray Chartrand
Seconded by Doug Cook**

“RESOLVED, THAT the agenda for the October 13, 2016 Board of Directors Budget Committee meeting be approved.”

Carried.

DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY INTEREST

None

PROPOSED 2017 BUDGET

General Manager Brian Horner provided an overview of the 2017 budget preparation by staff and the format for the meeting. Each department will present the budget for their program and a summary of the individual projects that are proposed for 2017. Staff prepared the budget with a 2% wage increase for CPI on the proposed pay grid.

Vehicle and Equipment

Kate Monk, Stewardship, Conservation Lands & Education Manager advised that the motor pool has been influenced by the break and enter in August 2016. The vehicle and equipment replacement schedule will need to be altered as there is now new equipment all bought in the same year. A copy of the schedule will be circulated to the directors following the meeting. There is no project or general levy required for the vehicle and equipment budget as expenses are offset by the revenue received when charging mileage and equipment rates to the users.

Stewardship

Kate Monk reviewed the private-land stewardship budget wherein staff provide one-on-one technical advice, site visits, and assistance with paperwork in connecting landowners with cost-share funding to maximize grants for their stewardship projects. Expenses in the stewardship program are offset with tree sales, providing tree planting plans, phragmites management spraying and forest management plans for clients. The ABCA is a full service tree delivery agency in the area and does not require project or general levy funding.

Recreation Areas

Kate Monk explained that the ABCA provides essential recreation areas for municipal residents and tourists. The routine maintenance of the facilities at the conservation areas is carried out by ABCA employees. Gate fees and donations offset the property patrol and enforcement duties. The emergency replacement of the culvert at Rock Glen Conservation Area increased the expenses for 2016. Projects proposed in 2017 are resurfacing of the roadway in Rock Glen CA, repairs to stairs at Rock Glen and removal of hazard trees for public safety.

Property Management

Kate Monk summarized the goals of managing the ABCA properties and water bodies which includes conservation areas, wildlife areas, management areas, conservation forests and agriculture land. Property management revenue is generated from timber harvests, farm land rental and the Parkhill CA campground lease. Any surplus in property management through woodlot harvesting operations is used to compensate for the shortfall in the recreation budget for maintaining conservation areas. Projects proposed are invasive species management and terrestrial species at risk inventory.

Drinking Water Source Protection

Jenna Allain, DWSP Program Supervisor advised that the Source Protection Planning project is funded largely by the Province who deem the project is now in a steady state. Funding is being scaled back somewhat to cover legislative responsibilities. Eight municipalities have signed service agreements with ABCA to deliver Risk Management Services until 2018. The implementing bodies will continue to receive support in the form of meetings, training sessions, workshops, data and its management, risk management services and planning ad review.

Environmental Monitoring

Mari Veliz, Healthy Watersheds Supervisor, Geoff Cade, Supervisor of Water & Planning and Tracey McPherson, GIS/IT Supervisor assisted Alec Scott, Water & Planning Manager in presenting the Environmental Monitoring project factsheets and budgets. Alec Scott explained that there can be swings in comparing one budget year to another because of the various sources of revenue the department seeks in grants. Funds are deferred to meet the funder's year end. Geoff Cade explained that the planning and regulation budget includes \$30,000 of reserves accumulated from the wind generation funds. Mari Veliz explained that some projects are fully funded through other partners while the project levy contribution often leverages other sources of substantial funding to undertake environmental monitoring and research projects. Directors inquired whether there could be more revenue generated from marketing the watershed photography to the public.

Floodplain Management

Alec Scott presented the four main components of the floodplain management program. They include maintenance of 16 erosion control projects, 7 flood control projects, the flood forecasting and warning system and the Port Franks ice management project. Since 1996 MNR has provided a 50% grant towards this program, however it has remained at the same dollar amount so for 2017 only 40% grant funding is available.

Education

Kate Monk presented the conservation education budget. The Weston Family Foundation Environmental Leaders of Tomorrow program at Camp Sylvan is now ended. To continue reaching students, staff will be increasing the number of day programs at conservation areas, in-class visits and bus tours as an alternative. The general levy required for this program has decreased because contract staff are not required at Camp Sylvan.

Corporate Services

Brian Horner presented the consolidated Corporate Services budget. Projects include some major maintenance at the Workshop, telephone system, upgrades, involvement at the 2017 International Plowing Match and upgrades to the website. Funds continue to be set aside annually in a reserve to meet office building accessibility legislation.

Project Levy

Brian Horner presented the proposed project levy summary for 2017 at \$441,813 as compared to \$383,446 in 2016. This includes ongoing, phased and new projects proposed for 2017. The proposed project levy will be leveraged with other sources of funding to undertake projects totalling \$964,968.

General Levy

The proposed general levy for 2017 is a 1.54% increase totalling \$876,145 in comparison to \$862,864 in 2016.

Proposed 2017 Budget

The proposed fee schedule and 2017 pay grid at a 2% CPI increase, were presented for review as these figures were used in preparing the consolidated budget. The combined project and general levies proposed total \$1,317,458 as compared to \$1,246,310 in 2016. Brian Horner reminded the directors that not every program is sustained by levy dollars.

The Board asked staff to provide for discussion at the next meeting a breakdown of the 2016 reserve totals, adjustments to the Planning and Regulations budget, prioritization of the proposed new projects, a statement of the investments and scenarios for reducing the wages and benefits line on the consolidated budget.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 12:20 p.m.

Mike Tam
Chair

Judith Parker
Corporate Services Coordinator