

BUDGET COMMITTEE

Thursday, October 11, 2018

9:30 a.m.

Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority Boardroom
Morrison Dam Conservation Area

DIRECTORS PRESENT

Doug Cook, Dave Frayne, Bob Harvey, George Irvin, Jim Ginn, Brian Ropp

DIRECTORS ABSENT

Ray Chartrand, Wayne Hall, Mike Tam

STAFF PRESENT

Bev Brown, Geoff Cade, Brian Horner, Kari Jean, Tracey McPherson, Kate Monk, Judith Parker, Angela Van Niekerk, Mari Veliz

CALL TO ORDER

Chair George Irvin welcomed members and staff to the Board of Directors Budget Committee information session and called the meeting to order at 9:33 a.m.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

MOTION #BD 83/18

**Moved by Dave Frayne
Seconded by Jim Ginn**

“RESOLVED, THAT the agenda for the October 11, 2018 Board of Directors Budget Committee meeting be approved.”

Carried.

DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY INTEREST

None

PROPOSED 2019 BUDGET

General Manager Brian Horner provided an overview of the 2019 budget preparation by staff and the format for the information session. Each department will present the budget for their program and a summary of the individual projects that are proposed for 2019.

Corporate Services

Brian Horner presented the consolidated Corporate Services budget. It is proposed to replace the Annex furnace in 2019 and make repairs to the Admin Centre parking lot. Doug Cook suggested that the Admin Centre Reserve be re-established for future maintenance, instead of including repairs in the project levy. The amount of \$5,000 continues to be set aside annually in a reserve to meet building accessibility legislation. Also proposed is the purchase of a back-up generator to run the office building during a power outage.

Education

Kate Monk, Stewardship, Lands and Education Manager presented the conservation education budget. Revenue for providing effective and meaningful outdoor education experiences comes from the municipal levy, program fees, donations, foundations, provincial and federal governments. Staff promote environmental awareness through classroom programs, class field trips, summer day camps, spring water awareness program, community presentations and special events. It is anticipated there will be an increase in revenue due to the volume of nature programs being delivered.

Floodplain Management

Geoff Cade, Water & Planning Manager 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 2019 only 39% grant funding is available. A new project is the replacement of safety log booms at Morrison Dam and Parkhill Dam.

Environmental Monitoring

Tracey McPherson, GIS/IT Coordinator and Mari Veliz, Healthy Watersheds Manager assisted Geoff Cade in presenting the Planning & Regulations program and Environmental Monitoring project factsheets and budgets. In some cases funds are deferred to meet the funder's year end. Mari Veliz explained the project levy contribution often leverages other sources of funding to undertake environmental monitoring and research projects. New projects introduced for 2019 were the National Disaster Mitigation Program to attend meetings regarding the federal NDMP program, migrating the flood forecasting & warning system from the Quintee CA 'hub' to the Upper Thames River CA 'hub'. Mari Veliz advised that the core funding for coordination and community engagement of the Healthy Watersheds program has been moved from project levy to general levy category. She explained the Natural Heritage System Plan project is to map a pilot area with existing policies and help document gaps for natural heritage, in particular wetland enhancement.

Drinking Water Source Protection

Geoff Cade presented the Drinking Water Source Protection budget on behalf of Mary Lynn MacDonald, DWSP Co-Program Supervisor. There are no levy dollars allocated to the Drinking Water Source Protection budget. Ongoing mandatory implementation responsibilities for Source Protection Authorities are funded by the Province. Implementation costs are coordinated by the

implementation body for each source protection policy. However, the program is currently under review by the new government. By agreement, ABCA delivers Risk Management Services for eight municipalities. Agreements have been signed for these services until December 2020.

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 services budget for maintaining conservation areas. Projects proposed are controlling invasive species like phragmites and undertaking revisions to the Land Securement Plan (2008-2020).

Recreation Services

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. The ABCA has a part-time contract with one individual to provide property patrol and enforcement duties. Revenue is generated by gate fees at Rock Glen Conservation Area, hunting passes and community donations. Projects proposed in 2019 at conservation areas are fresh parking lot gravel and new signs to indicate permitted/prohibited uses with trail maps, and steel bridge inspections.

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. The annual goal is to complete 100 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 County of Huron continues to provide grants to landowners for stewardship projects through the very successful Huron Clean Water Program. There is no municipally-funded grants available in Middlesex, Lambton or Perth Counties for landowners to access a similar cost-share program to improve rural water quality issues.

Vehicle and Equipment

Kate Monk presented the vehicle and equipment motor pool budget. 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. There is no vehicle and equipment replacement scheduled for 2019, but a tractor will be replaced in 2020.

Project Levy

Brian Horner presented the proposed project levy summary for 2019 at \$338,254 as compared to \$388,341 in 2018. This includes ongoing, phased and new projects proposed for 2019. The project levy dollars will be leveraged with other sources of funding to undertake projects totalling \$785,271.

General Levy

The general levy proposed for 2019 totals \$998,637 in comparison to \$908,320 in 2018.

Proposed 2019 Budget

The proposed fee schedule and pay grid were presented for review as these figures were used in preparing the consolidated budget. Fluctuations between the general levy and project levy are due to re-allocating funds within the healthy watersheds program. Some wages will be contingent on securing partnership contributions that remain unconfirmed at this time. The combined project and general levies total \$1,336,891 (3.10 per cent increase) as compared to \$1,296,661 in 2018. Brian Horner reminded the directors that not every program area is sustained by levy dollars.

Initial comments from the Board were positive on the presentation of a reasonable budget for review. Further direction and discussion will be held at the next Board meeting on October 18, 2018.

NEW BUSINESS

None

ADJOURNMENT

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

George Irvin
Chair

Judith Parker
Corporate Services Coordinator