

ST. CLAIR TOWNSHIP
SPECIAL FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION
SESSION # 4

St. Clair Civic Centre
Council Chambers
Monday, February 13, 2006
1:00 p.m.

The Special Finance and Administration Committee meeting of the Council of the Corporation of the Township of St. Clair was held in the Council Chambers. This Special Meeting was called to consider the first draft of the 2006 St. Clair Township Operating Budget.

	S. Warner	Chairperson
	J. Dedecker,	Mayor
	S. Arnold	Deputy Mayor
	P. Alexander,	Councillor
	S. Miller,	“
	P. Gilliland,	“
	D. Randell,	“
Staff:	J. Rodey,	CAO
	J. DeMars,	Director of Administration/Clerk/ Deputy CAO
	R. Kerr	Director of Public Works
	C. Quenneville	Treasurer
	G. Hackett	Director of Community Services
	R. Dewhirst	Fire Chief

AGENDA:

Call to order

1. Opening Remarks – John Rodey, CAO 1:00 – 1:30 p.m.
- Charles Quenneville, Treasurer
2. Operating Budget
 - a) Fire Department presentation 1:31 – 2:00 p.m.
 - b) Community Service presentation 2:01 – 3:00 p.m.
 - c) Public Works, Water & Sanitary presentation 3:01 – 4:00 p.m.
 - d) Administration 4:01 – 4:15 p.m.
3. Operating Budget Wrap-up 4:16 – 4:30 p.m.

Chairperson Warner called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. and asked members of to declare any possible conflicts of interest at the appropriate time.

DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST:

None declared.

CAO John Rodey presented to the meeting an overview of the budget and the process for presentation that would be conducted to-day. The meeting was then turned over to Treasurer Charles Quenneville who reviewed with the Committee the statements contained

in the budget package such as reserve fund statements including a review of the existing reserves and the reason for the major increases or decreases in these levels. It was projected that the 2006 level of reserves will be approximately 10.5 million dollars. In response to members questions, the Treasurer also detailed to the Committee the tax implications of the Ontario Power Generation tax assessment relative to an OMB ruling on OPG's assessment appeal. Mr. Quenneville stated that using recognized conservative accounting practices 1/3 of the projected revenue to the Township for the Township and education portions of the levy has been incorporated in the draft 2006 budget but as earlier directed by Council, 2/3 of the special levy has been devoted to reserve funding. This reserve funding was established if the prediction that the OMB will uphold OPG's assessment appeal and order a reimbursement to OPG the Township will have the funding in place. Mr. Quenneville pointed out that the allocation to the 2006 budget for the OPG taxation is approximately \$900,000.00. Also, the Committee was advised that the budget in its current form represents a \$241,000.00 shortfall statistically representing a 4.37 % tax rate increase to balance the budget.

Fire Chief Roy Dewhirst, Community Services Director Gary Hackett and Public Works Director Ron Kerr detailed to the Committee the highlights of their respective department budgets and explanations of areas where the 2006 projected budget deviates significantly from either the 2005 budgeted amount or the 2005 actual expenditure or revenue. In discussion of the Community Services budget, Mr. Hackett advised the Committee that Sombra Museum Curator Glenda Young has indicated her desire to retire from her position in May of 2006. In discussion with Mr. Hackett the Committee advised that efforts should be made by Community Services to operate the Moore and Sombra Museums under the direction of one Curator subject to the consultation and input from the 2 separate Museum Advisory Boards. The Committee suggested to Mr. Hackett that he contact the various Township Community Hall Boards and ask for an annual summary to be included perhaps with their annual financial request to the Township but a report not only on the Hall Board's rental revenue but also the areas in which the hall's may be used for the community without significant rental streams such as local volunteer groups, scout groups or for Board meeting purposes. A suggestion was also forthcoming from the Committee that perhaps as a Year 2007 project the Sombra Village Tourist Information Booth be relocated as was discussed several years ago to the Sombra Village General Store Park on the south side of Smith Street opposite the Sombra Museum. Also, Mr. Hackett advised that Trillium Grant Funding has been applied for, for the Courtright Community Hall washrooms and kitchen as well as the Brigden Community Hall and the Port Lambton Community Hall. The Committee was of the opinion that Council had earlier tentatively committed that the work at the Courtright Hall would proceed with or without Trillium funding.

Mr. Kerr provided details of his Department's draft 2006 budget and the Committee discussed in detail the issue of various sidewalk repair / replacement or removal and well as Mr. Kerr's recommendation to hire a new Work's Coordinator who main function would be in the water and waste water systems. The current budget as drafted provided for the hiring of such a coordinator for a six month period for 2006. After considerable review and discussion it was:

Motion #1:

Moved by Steve Arnold

Seconded by Joe Dedecker

That it be recommended to Council that the draft 2006 Township Operating Budget be referred back to staff with the instructions that expenditures be cut to a level represented a zero tax rate increase for 2006 relative to the 2005 rate.

CARRIED

It was directed that the second draft of the budget be presented at the March 8th meeting of the Finance and Administration Committee.

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Motion #2:
Moved by Joe Dedecker
That the meeting due hereby adjourn.

Seconded by Steve Arnold

CARRIED

The meeting adjourned 3:30 p.m.

MAYOR

CLERK