



**ROTHESAY**  
SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING  
By Webex Videoconference  
**Monday, October 25, 2021**  
**6:00 p.m.**



**PRESENT:** MAYOR NANCY GRANT  
DEPUTY MAYOR MATT ALEXANDER  
COUNCILLOR HELEN BOYLE  
COUNCILLOR DAVE BROWN  
COUNCILLOR PETER J. LEWIS  
COUNCILLOR TIFFANY MACKAY FRENCH  
COUNCILLOR BILL McGUIRE  
COUNCILLOR DON SHEA

TOWN MANAGER JOHN JARVIE  
TOWN CLERK MARY JANE BANKS  
DIRECTOR OF PLANNING/DEVELOPMENT (DPDS) BRIAN WHITE  
DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS (DO) BRETT McLEAN  
DIRECTOR OF REC/PARKS (DRP) CHARLES JENSEN  
TREASURER DOUG MacDONALD  
ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT LIZ HAZLETT

Mayor Grant called the videoconference to order at 6:00 p.m. noting she, and Town Clerk Banks are present in the Sayre Room, at Rothesay Town Hall, observing physical distancing requirements and wearing masks. All other Council members and Town staff were connected remotely. She noted no registrations were received from the public to attend the meeting. Community members are encouraged to submit their comments before October 29<sup>th</sup>.

**1. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

**MOVED** by Deputy Mayor Alexander and seconded by Counc. Shea the agenda be approved as circulated.

**CARRIED.**

**2. DRAFT 2022 Rothesay Budgets (Presentation by the Treasurer)**

- 2.1 2021 Memorandum from Treasurer MacDonald
- 2.2 Draft 2022 General Operating Fund Budget
  - General Operating Fund Draft Budget Highlights
  - Draft 2022 General Operating Fund Budget
- 2.3 Draft 2022 Utility Operating Fund Budget
  - Utility Operating Fund Draft Budget Highlights
  - Draft 2022 Utility Operating Fund Budget

Treasurer MacDonald gave a brief overview of the budget process noting it is a collaborative effort by senior staff, Council, and various Committees. The intent is to approve the General Fund and Utility Fund operating budgets, for submission to the Province, by the November 15<sup>th</sup> deadline. Capital budgets will be reviewed once the operating budgets are submitted. He asked that written public comments be submitted to the Town (rothesay@rothesay.ca) on, or before, noon on October 29<sup>th</sup>. Comments will be reviewed by the Finance Committee for recommendations to Council before November 15<sup>th</sup>.

Treasurer MacDonald highlighted the following from his memorandum:

- Increase in assessment base of 9.10%
- No significant changes to operations (Recreation includes additional seasonal positions)
- Annualized Saint John inflation rate currently is 4.9%
- Wage adjustment (including benefit changes) of 3% *could be modified based on cost of living*

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- Protective services budgets based on revised submissions
- Police - \$3,035,186 (8.3% increase)
- Fire - \$2,365,873 (4.5% increase)
- Regional Facilities, Library, Comex, Envision, Waste Disposal, Snow Clearing, Insurance all based on approved contracts and/or budgets
- Minor changes in the number of utility equivalent users
- “Capital from Operating” increased to reflect expected capital expenditures (general fund = \$3.0 million and utility fund = \$700,000)

### UTILITY FUND

- Water Expenses (well cleaning and maintenance requirements, power increases) up 6.85%
- Not much of a change in sewer expenses (0.22%)
- Share of Overhead Expenses (Water & Sewer) included in General Fund and charged to Utility Fund
- No change to “Capital from Operating” from prior year budget
- Increase in sewer charge to \$410 per equivalent user (increase of \$10)
- No change to water revenues (consumption or fixed fees)
- Wastewater Treatment Plant project to begin in 2022 (expected increases to sewer rate over the next few years)
- Total “typical” water and sewer charge for a single family: \$934 (comparable to neighbouring communities)

### GENERAL FUND

- Categories mandated by the Province:
  - General Government
    - 4.4% increase largely due to anticipated 15% increase in insurance costs, and cost of assessment increase of 9.1%
  - Protective Services
    - Police budget increase of 8.3%
    - Fire budget increase of 4.5%
    - Police and Fire budgets approved by respective Boards (requires municipal approval)
  - Transportation
    - Snow clearing, streets, fleet, wages, etc.
    - Measures taken to mitigate most flood concerns but funds included to cover any unexpected costs
    - Increase in snow removal costs to reflect contract
    - Public transit costs reflect invoice received from Saint John Transit
  - Environmental Health
    - Increase in tipping fees for solid waste and recycling
  - Environmental Development
    - Planning Department
    - Increase of \$40,000 to Envision Saint John (Rothesay share of ESJ 5 Year budget)
  - Recreation and Parks
    - 4.6% increase mostly due to new seasonal positions
    - Includes contributions to Kennebecasis Public Library and Regional Facilities Commission (RFC contribution reduced in 2022)

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- Fiscal Services
  - Increase owing to debenture changes and capital from operating
- Revenue
  - Proposed tax rate of \$1.20 (a reduction of 4 cents)
  - Other revenues slightly decreased given expected level of activity
  - 5.6% increase in revenue (sufficient to cover expenses and transfer to reserves)

Deputy Mayor Alexander thanked, and commended, staff on preparing a budget that reduces the tax rate while maintaining growth in the Town. He asked about planned sidewalk projects for 2022. Staff advised these projects will be discussed when the Capital budgets are reviewed.

Counc. Shea compared the increases to water (6.85%) and sewer (0.22%) expenses, and asked why sewer rates will be increased as opposed to water rates. Treasurer MacDonald explained the increase in water users is sufficient to cover water expenditures, whereas the largest percentage of capital spending is actually for sewer, and so in a sense, the increase to the sewer rate will be used to cover more of the capital, than operating, expenditures.

Counc. Shea noted the assessment base increase of 9.1% is expected to generate roughly \$961,000 in revenue despite a \$0.04 reduction in the tax rate. Treasurer MacDonald clarified, a significant portion of the revenue will be used to offset the increases to the Police and Fire budgets, the snow removal contract, and the \$40,000 increase to Envision Saint John. Counc. McGuire emphasized the revenue is not “extra” funds but will be used to cover a rise in expenses for insurance, contracts, and protective services. He added he is pleased to see a reduction in the tax rate. Treasurer MacDonald added, the revenue will also be used to cover capital from operating costs. Mayor Grant mentioned Rothesay’s contribution to Envision Saint John is expected to increase over the next few years until it reaches \$250,000.

Counc. Brown requested clarification regarding approval of the protective services budgets. Treasurer MacDonald advised respective Boards for protectives services have approved their budgets and submitted them to the Town for final approval. The budgets are formally approved upon approval of the municipal budgets.

Counc. Brown noted the proposed tax rate for 2022 is lower than the tax rate in 2016 (\$1.21). Treasurer MacDonald briefly reviewed the tax rate history, noting the tax rate remained static from 2018-2021. Counc. Brown inquired about the rationale for proposing a tax rate of \$1.20. Staff acknowledged the financial impact to residents due to inflation and increased property assessments, and suggested a tax rate of either \$1.20 or \$1.21 could be sustained for a few years. Since it is difficult to predict if the assessment base will experience similar growth next year, it may be beneficial to implement a \$1.21 tax rate to err on the side of caution.

Mayor Grant thanked staff, and concluded by summarizing the budget includes: a considerable increase in the assessment base used to offset increased expenses; a \$0.04 reduction in the tax rate (\$1.24 to \$1.20); no changes to water fees (fixed or consumption); a \$10 increase to the sewer rate; and an annual water and sewer charge of \$934 for a “typical” single family household.

Mayor Grant reminded viewers public comments can be submitted to [rothesay@rothesay.ca](mailto:rothesay@rothesay.ca) before noon on October 29<sup>th</sup>.

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**3. NEXT MEETING**

The next meetings are scheduled as follows:

<b>Monday, November 8, 2021</b>	<b>Regular Council meeting (7:00 p.m.)</b>
<b>Monday, November 15, 2021</b>	<b>Public Hearing – Holland Drive (7:00 p.m.)</b>
<b>Monday, November 15, 2021</b>	<b>Special Budget Approval Meeting</b>

Town Clerk Banks asked that community members register before noon on November 10<sup>th</sup> if they wish to participate in the Public Hearing on November 15<sup>th</sup>.

**4. ADJOURNMENT**

**MOVED** by Counc. Shea and seconded by Counc. McGuire the meeting be adjourned.

**CARRIED.**

The meeting adjourned at 6:35 p.m.

  
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MAYOR

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
CLERK