



**ROTHESAY**  
**SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING**  
Rothesay Town Hall Common Room  
**Monday, October 28, 2024**  
**7:00 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 OPERATIONS (DO) BRETT McLEAN  
DIRECTOR OF REC/PARKS (DRP) CHARLES JENSEN  
TREASURER DOUG MacDONALD  
ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT LIZ HAZLETT

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Mayor Grant called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

**1. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

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

**CARRIED.**

**2. DRAFT 2024 Rothesay Budgets (Presentation by the Treasurer)**

2.1 24 October 2024 Memorandum from Treasurer MacDonald

Mayor Grant invited Treasurer MacDonald to give a presentation. Treasurer MacDonald confirmed questions can be put forth during the presentation.

Treasurer MacDonald explained the documentation provided for the General Fund and Utility Fund operating budgets. He reviewed the standard process for budget development, noting input was gathered from senior staff and various committees. Minor changes were made but the draft presented tonight is not significantly different from the one reviewed by the Finance Committee at its last meeting.

Treasurer MacDonald explained that the budgets are in draft form until the property tax assessment base is approved by Cabinet, which will not be sworn in until November 2<sup>nd</sup>. In this case, it is expected approval of the operating budgets would occur in December, along with the capital budget, as it is unlikely the information will be available before the next Council meeting (November 12<sup>th</sup>) or submission deadline (November 15<sup>th</sup>). Budgets can be submitted 30 days after the assessment base information is received. The deadline for public comments is November 7<sup>th</sup>.

Treasurer MacDonald gave a brief explanation of the differences between the General Fund and the Utility Fund. Since the property tax assessment base is unknown, last year's assessment base was used, and no changes are proposed to the tax rate (\$1.19 per \$100 of assessed value) or percentage applied to non-residential properties (170% of the base rate). Adjustments will be made once the information is received. He shared that: updates to other revenue sources were based on recent history; 2025 will be year three of a five year reduction of "core" equalization funding (\$26,000); and other revenue includes 2023 surplus of \$110,000 (a reduction of \$20,000). He briefly reviewed the tax rate (residential and non-residential) and assessment history (2021-2024) including cost of assessment.

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- 2.2 Draft 2025 General Operating Fund Budget
  - General Operating Fund Draft Budget Highlights
  - Draft 2025 General Operating Fund Budget

Treasurer MacDonald reviewed items of note:

- Revenue:
  - Reflects actuals and is slightly higher than 2024 (0.3%)
  - Second Year Surplus carryover and Utility Fund Overhead transfer
  - Other revenue includes building permits
- Expenses:
  - Annual percentages for each category do not fluctuate significantly
  - Wages and benefits (25% of total expenditures; an increase of 6.6% over 2024):
    - In process of discussing collective agreement re: unionized staff
    - General rate of inflation for non-unionized staff
    - Comparisons to similar entities
    - Budgeted for two new positions (Finance, and Works, departments)
    - Expansion of services (new recreation facilities)
    - Final information not yet available for cost of benefits (estimate is an assumption based on historical outcomes)
  - Protective Services - provided by Fire and Police Board budgets (0.7%) increase
    - Fire protection \$2.9 million – includes capital
    - Police services \$3.4 million
  - General Government (increase of 7.8%):
    - Payroll adjustments (one new position)
    - Includes FRSC budget
    - \$50,000 for Communications planning
    - \$40,000 for Sponsorship consulting
    - Insurance assumption as data is not yet available
  - Transportation Services (increase of 4.2%)
    - Contract for snow and ice removal
  - Environmental Health (reduction of 3.6%)
    - Waste disposal – tipping fee increase
    - Reduction in recycling costs owing to service provided by separate entity
    - Fuel escalation cost lower than 2024
  - Environmental Development (reduction of 3.9%)
    - Less projects anticipated
    - Includes Envision Saint John funding through regional agreement
  - Recreation and Cultural (increase of 4.4%):
    - Realignment of positions
    - Error – no new hires for the Recreation Department
    - Includes Regional Facilities budgets
    - Building maintenance (\$75,000)
      - Not just for the Wells Building
  - Capital from Operating of \$4.25 million dollars (decrease of \$200,000 from 2024)

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- 2.3 Draft 2025 Utility Operating Fund Budget
  - Utility Operating Fund Draft Budget Highlights
  - Draft 2025 Utility Operating Fund Budget
  - Draft 2025 Utility Rate Summary
- Increase in Water (4.5%) and Sewer (10.5%) Fees (owing to inflationary operational costs and capital projects):
  - Proposed base water rate of \$1.35 (from \$1.29) per cubic meter, and fixed charge increase to \$235 (from \$225)
  - Sewer rate increase to \$525 (from \$475)
  - Annual charge for “typical” user (water and sewer) will increase from \$1,055 to \$1,130
- Revenue:
  - Projected revenue reflects actuals
  - Sewer revenue \$2.4 million dollars
  - Total revenue for the Utility Fund (\$4.24 million dollars)
- Expenses (total increase of 6.2%):
  - Water expenses 6% increase
  - Sewer expenses 4.6% increase
  - Fiscal services 7.3% increase
- Capital from Operating (\$775,000)

The following was discussed based on questions from Council:

- Utility budget differences between 2024 and 2025 based on Capital from Operating
- Public comments can be submitted to [rothesay@rothesay.ca](mailto:rothesay@rothesay.ca)
- Benefits comprise roughly 20% of Wages and Benefits
- A conservative number was used for building permit revenue as project trends may fluctuate
- The decrease in Interest and Sundry is a result of lower interest rates (revenue) – conservative estimate
- Increase in insurance reflective of market but reduced from 2024-2025, owing to high estimate in 2024
  - The new Wells Building is also included, as well as the property on the Renforth Beach
- Mayor and Councillors (Gen. Gov’t expense)
  - Decrease in Mayor’s expenditure reflects actuals
  - Decrease in Councillors is to provide a more precise number
- Bill McGuire Centre revenue includes short-term and long-term (office) rentals
- Community Garden costs may have been overestimated in 2023
- The substantial expense in 2023 for the Fox Farm rental relates to work required following a tenant’s departure
  - The \$4,000 is an annual allowance for regular maintenance
- Professional Fees in 2024 included recruiting expenditures
  - In 2025 it includes Sponsorship consulting
- Funds for the Communications Study were carried over from 2024
- Improvements to the Wells Recreation Park such as paving the parking lot were included in the budget envelope
- The Regional Facilities Commission no longer exists (now part of the Fundy Regional Service Commission)
  - The lines will be renamed “Regional Facilities Operating”, and “Regional Facilities Capital” in the next iteration of the budget

Town Manager Jarvie mentioned it is a “stay-the-course” budget to maintain current service standards and address inflationary operational costs. He concluded by noting upcoming discussions will outline plans for capital projects.

As a reminder, Mayor Grant noted the deadline for public comments is November 7<sup>th</sup>, which can be submitted by email to rothesay@rothesay.ca, and all comments will be discussed by the Finance Committee.

**3. NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting is scheduled as follows:

**Regular meeting**                      Tuesday, November 12, 2024

**4. ADJOURNMENT**

**MOVED** by Counc. Mackay French and seconded by Counc. Shea the meeting be adjourned.  
**CARRIED.**

The meeting adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

Original signed by Mayor  
MAYOR

Original signed by Clerk  
CLERK