



ROTHESAY
SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING
Rothesay Town Hall Common Room
Tuesday, October 28, 2025
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 (*electronic participation*)
COUNCILLOR DON SHEA

CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER (CAO) BRETT McLEAN
TOWN CLERK MARY JANE BANKS
TREASURER DOUG MacDONALD
ASSISTANT CLERK LIZ HAZLETT
DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT/PLANNING SERVICES (DPDS) MARK READE
DIRECTOR OF REC/PARKS (DRP) CHARLES JENSEN
DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS (DO) TIM COLWELL

Mayor Grant called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

1. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

CARRIED.

2. DRAFT 2026 Rothesay Budgets (Presentation by Treasurer)

- 2.1 23 October 2025 Memorandum from Treasurer MacDonald
- 2.2 Draft 2026 General Operating Fund Budget
 - General Operating Fund Draft Budget Highlights
 - Draft 2026 General Operating Fund Budget
- 2.3 Draft 2026 Utility Operating Fund Budget
 - Utility Operating Fund Draft Budget Highlights
 - Draft 2026 Utility Operating Fund Budget
 - Draft 2026 Utility Rate Summary

Treasurer MacDonald reviewed the documentation provided and highlighted the following:

- Budget process
 - input from various sources such as Council priorities, projected 2025 financial results, operational issues, funding sources, and committees
 - Tonight's public session - public comments will be received until 8:00 a.m. November 3rd
 - Comments and amendments (if any) presented at Council's regular November 10th meeting
 - Council to vote on the budget (November 10th), and submission to the Province for approval
 - Capital Budget to be considered in November and December
 - 'Capital from Operating' will be discussed tonight
- Two independent operating budgets – Utility (water and sewer), General (everything else)
 - Some overlap as the Utility portion is charged for some expenses in the General budget
- General Fund (Revenue)
 - Despite an assessment freeze Rothesay will receive a 1.8% increase owing to new construction and spike protection deferrals from 2025
 - Warrant of assessment will increase from roughly \$23,655,395 (2025) to \$24,073,916 (2026)

- No change to tax rates from 2025 to 2026
 - residential (\$1.17 per \$100 of assessed value) and
 - non-residential (170%)
 - Cost of Assessment is 1.94% (\$395,059)
- Fiscal Capacity Funding (formerly the Core Equalization Grant) increased from \$52,000 (2025) to \$53,660 (2026)
- Revenue sources were updated to reflect recent history
- Surplus carried forward from 2024 (\$112,000)
- Sale of Services (ex. rental revenues)
- General Fund (Expenses)
 - Aggregate General Fund budget increase of 1.5%
 - Categories mandated by the provincial government
 - Wages and benefits (approximately 25% of total expenditures)
 - Increase of 7% from 2025 owing to
 - Collective agreement (unionized staff)
 - General rate of inflation (non-unionized staff)
 - Comparisons to similar entities
 - Creation of three new positions
 - Communications Coordinator
 - Building Inspector (separation from an existing position)
 - RICC Fundraising Coordinator
 - Increase in cost of benefit programs
 - Protective Services (aggregate increase of 3.1%)
 - Contributions to Fire and Police Departments
 - Line item of \$30,000 added for replacement/repair of fire hydrants based on recent history
 - General Government (reduction of 2.5%)
 - Payroll adjustments - one new position and one retirement
 - Reduction in one-time consulting projects of \$115,000
 - Increase to information systems of \$75,000
 - Inflationary increase for insurance costs
 - Transportation Services (increase of 6.25%)
 - Payroll – full year of 2024 hire plus inflation
 - Reduction in equipment repairs/maintenance owing to fleet replacement program
 - Increase in maintenance costs of roads, drainage, and sidewalks (reflection of actual costs)
 - Environmental Health (reduction of 4%)
 - Tipping fee increase of \$4 per tonne (based on the most recent version of the FRSC budget)
 - Decrease owing to renewal of waste disposal contract (lower fuel escalation charges)
 - Environmental Development (increase of 31.2%)
 - Addition of a full-time Building Inspector
 - Change in funding formula for Envision Saint John and increased costs
 - The overall increase appears significant because the total costs were relatively low
 - Recreation and Culture (4.4%)
 - Addition of full-time RICC Fundraising position
 - Regional Facilities budget decrease of \$100,000
 - Capital from Operating and reserve allocation – decrease of \$200,000
 - 2025 allocation (\$5.4 million) was significantly higher than 2024 (\$4.45 million)
 - 2026 allocation (\$5.2 million) adequate for capital needs
- Utility Fund (Revenue)
 - Proposed increase in water fees of 3%
 - Base water usage rate increase from \$1.35 per cubic meter to \$1.40
 - Water “fixed” user charge increase from \$235 annually to \$240
 - Base sewer rate per equivalent user increase from \$525 annually to \$550 – 4.8%

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- “Typical” single family residential aggregate annual fee increase of approximately \$40
 - Transfer from General Fund for Fire Protection
- Utility Fund (Expenses)
 - Increase of approximately 5.7% for water, sewer, and fiscal services expenses to reflect the actual cost of operations
 - No change in Utility Capital from Operating (\$775,000)

Questions were raised by Council, and the following comments were made:

- Debt ratios can be presented to Council at its November meeting
 - New debt for the Utility Fund to reflect \$1.5 million dollars borrowed for the Wastewater Treatment Facility (WWTF) project
- The 1.5% aggregate increase for General Fund expenditures relates to an initial intent to have a 0% budget increase, but the 1.8% assessment base increase allowed some items to be reinstated in the budget
- Rothesay utility rates remain lower than Saint John and Quispamsis
- Increased sewer rates are in response to new debt that has – and will be – incurred for the WWTF project
- The Wijac Street Extension project is expected to move forward which has led to the removal of rental revenue and expenses for the Fox Farm Road property in the 2026 budget
- A reduction in Town Hall rental revenue is based on current rental agreements and potentially reverting rental space upstairs back to the Town to accommodate office space needs
- There is a distinction between increases for joint entity budgets and Rothesay contributions towards each
- Appreciation for a budget with growth that was able to maintain a specific target
- The reduction in Solid Waste Collection from \$615,000 to \$567,000 relates to renewal of the contract which includes a fixed amount for fuel escalation costs

Discussion ensued on the RICC Fundraising Coordinator position. CAO McLean explained that the purpose is temporary in nature, and once completed, the full-time staff member will transition to another role in the Parks and Recreation Department. He noted it is the only department without a ‘Deputy’. An internal staff transition was made to fill the RICC Fundraising Coordinator position, and as a result the vacant Recreation Coordinator position was backfilled with another full-time staff member. The decision to hire a permanent full-time Recreation Coordinator, instead of a contract position, was credited as a means to ensure a pool of dedicated applicants. CAO McLean further explained that the former Recreation Coordinator’s workload resulted in significant overtime from responsibilities related to recreation events, program coordination, and communications. He added that creation of three new positions was possible in a budget constrained by a property assessment freeze, that still maintained cost of living increases for wages and benefits (7%), and an overall budget increase of 1.5%. When questioned, DRP Jensen advised that adding a new facility such as the Rothesay Intergenerational Community Complex (RICC) will create a need for additional staff in the Parks and Recreation Department, especially to operate the facility. Counc. Mackay French asked for further clarification as it appears the workload issues would be alleviated by the new Recreation Coordinator and the proposed Communications Coordinator. CAO McLean mentioned that Rothesay operates with a skeleton staff, especially compared to Quispamsis – which has double the staff complement of Rothesay.

Treasurer MacDonald concluded by noting that Council will vote on the operating budgets at its regular November 10th meeting, and the budgets will be submitted to the Province, for approval, before the November 15th deadline.

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3. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is scheduled as follows:

Regular meeting Monday, November 10, 2025

4. ADJOURNMENT

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

The meeting adjourned at 6:38 p.m.

Original signed by Mayor

MAYOR

Original signed by Clerk

CLERK