



Village of Belledune
Committee of Whole Council Meeting
Budget Session #4
November 9, 2021

Time: 6:37 PM
Place: Belledune Council Chambers
Mayor, Paul Arseneault
Deputy Mayor, Ron Bourque
Present: Councillor, Lilliane Carmichael
Councillor, Cynthia Robinson
Councillor, Kristie Carrier
Councillor, Marilyn Guitard-McDonnell
Staff Present: CAO, Ferguson
Clerk - Treasurer, Brenda Cormier

Call to Order & Welcome

Mayor called meeting to order
Acknowledgement of “Treaties of Peace and Friendship”
Reaffirmation of Oath of Office

Marilyn Guitard-McDonnell moved that the Agenda be Adopted as Presented, seconded by Lilliane Carmichael. MOTION CARRIED.

Statements of Conflict of Interest:

- Councilor, Carmichael noted she will be stepping out if there is discussion on salaries.

Business

- 2022 General Operating Budget Preparation

Councillor, Carmichael said the budget has to be finalized as we need to have it in before the 15th of November. If we cannot finalize this evening, we would need to schedule another meeting this week.

Deputy Mayor, Bourque said the cost of employment has to be allocated in the budget and then we can move forward.

Clerk/Treasurer, Cormier noted that those employment figures were only finalized this evening; she will now need to calculate the cost of employment for everyone before those figures can be put in the budget.

To adopt before the 15th another meeting would be required to finalize and then a Special meeting to adopt.

Deputy Mayor, Bourque noted that Belledune is probably not the first municipality to not get their budget in on time. What is the province going to do; fire us. We could send in a request asking for an extension of a week. WE need to make sure we get it right.

Mayor, Arseneault stated Deputy Mayor, Bourque is correct. We can take another evening, take a long look and see where the numbers are. We will follow Councillor, Carmichael's leadership and guidance on this one.

Councillor, Carmichael recommended we meet on Friday evening to finalize.

Mayor, Arseneault noted that was not a good time for him. He said it is better to take time and spend one more night on this. He does not just want to pass just because we need to meet a deadline. The government won't get upset, there should be no issue with this.

Deputy Mayor, Bourque said we still don't know where the budget will finish. We will need to debate where we are going to make alterations. He is confident that we will have to make cuts.

Clerk/Treasurer, Cormier said she had inquired if the Council could approve their budget at the scheduled Regular Meeting on December 15, 2021. She was advised that it was due prior to December 15th, but there was no mention of any consequences if it was late. So, if Council wish to take another week to have it done right, that is not a problem for her.

Councillor, Guitard-McDonnell inquired if Belledune has ever had a late budget submitted.

Deputy, Mayor Bourque said yes. He is comfortable asking for another week, leaving the budget to be presented prior to November 19th.

Councillor, Guitard-McDonnell feels this is a reflection on this Council if it goes in late.

Councillor, Carmichael agreed and perhaps the budget meetings should have been before now and should have met more frequently. We can do as much as possible tonight.

Council discussed in general terms:

Clerk/Treasurer, Cormier noted that in the Closed Meeting this evening the personnel salary deliberations did not include any discussion or recommendation on the new CAO position. There will need to be some information provided in order to determine the cost of employment for that position as well as recruitment costs, to determine a figure for the budget.

Mayor, Arseneault noted in the sessions with Mr. Novack the rational is if Belledune wants the best they will have to pay for the kind of CAO they want. The last salary range being between \$80,000 - \$110,000. To be honest that has not worked out, we haven't been able to get a top professional. That

may seem high to people listening. If we want quality, we may have to pay between \$140,000 - \$145,000.

Deputy Mayor, Bourque noted that part of the mandate of the next CAO, is they will have to be able to bring extra funding out there, to Belledune. Any good CAO worth his salt should be able to find and apply for extra funding. This position should be a contract position. He is comfortable with suggesting a salary between \$125,000 - \$135,000.

Clerk/Treasurer, Cormier asked about recruitment cost and was instructed it should be about \$5,000. She will calculate the cost of employment based on the range recommended by Deputy Mayor, Bourque and include the recruitment cost as well to establish the budget figure.

CAO, Ferguson noted that in comparison to other municipalities (used Bathurst and Moncton as examples) a COA here in Belledune has limited staff to work with – only 4 staff members. That means the COA has to be able to do it all.

Deputy Mayor, Bourque noted that there may also be a need to add some funds for moving here.

Councillor, Carmichael noted that \$10,000 should be allocated for moving expense.

Budget figure established is set at \$165,000.

Revenues

- Clerk/Treasurer, Cormier noted that she has included in the Revenue section \$40,000 in relation to reimbursement for rail spur line repairs from the user. This is for half the project costs and ½ is to be done this year, leaving the second half to be done in 2022. The offsetting expense for these repairs are in the correct expenditure department of the Budget. It is basically an in and out, but needs to be accounted for in the budget as it is a municipal asset and the work will be schedule by the municipality and paid by the municipality.
- CAO, Ferguson said he sent the cost to the company, but did not hear back yet. They are responsible for 100% of the cost not 50%.
- Deputy Mayor, Bourque inquired about the cancellation of summer maintenance with DTI and keeping the winter maintenance with DTI.
- CAO, Ferguson advised that the deadline to advise DTI for this is September. We are too late to have this done form 2022.

Signs- Turgeon/Main Intersection, Jacquet River Dr./Main Intersection and Municipal building

- CAO, Ferguson said the signs would cost about \$40,000 - \$50,000 each. He suggested they would not have to do all at once. The Municipal sign should be done but the Turgeon/ Main Intersection could be done this year and then the Jacquet River DR./Main could be in the next budget (2023).
- All three signs will be allocated in the budget in the appropriate departments.

Deputy Mayor, Bourque spoke about the Capital funds and there being over \$2 million in that fund. Each year there are monies put in the Capital Fund and this is because Councils did not do the jobs, they said they were going to do. This fund should be used for municipal beautification projects, etc.

Mitchell/Lawlor Intersection \$125,00 allocated to the Budget or not

Council, deliberation included scope of work to be done, reengineering for other options or not doing, etc.

Councillor, Carrier inquired why are we budgeting for an item that has been turned down.

Mayor, Arseneault said budgeting the \$125,000 means it can be brought back in for Council consideration. Councillor, Robinson asked to have it back in based on the previous costs.

Councillor, Robinson noted that it was voted down because they did not like engineering proposal; money will be needed in the budget to get reengineered.

Councillor, Carmichael said she is not sure any engineering plan would change her mind. She does not see changing her view on this.

Councillor, Carrier said she feels that the issue can be address if people drive the speed. She spoke with family and others and they have no issue with that turn if the 40 km speed is followed. This money could be spent somewhere else.

Mayor, Arseneault said the money does not have to be in the budget. We can go back and take it from somewhere else. The issue is not closed, it can come back up. Council members can bring it back.

Councillor, Guitard-McDonnell said we keep going over and over this, and now we are getting another engineer. She recommended highlighting this item and see where we are with the budget after all figures are put in.

Council members discussed about the Capital fund and whether money can be used there for this type of project.

On a consensus vote of 3 to 2 the \$125,000 was left in the budget for Mitchell/Lawlor Intersection. Yes (Councillor's Bourque, Robinson & Guitard- McDonnell) No (Councillor's Carmichael & Carrier)

Gravel Roads

Clerk/Treasurer, Cormier noted that there are funds in the 2021 budget to upgrade some gravel roads. Grading is no longer possible as there are not enough materials to grade and therefore some loads of gravel have to be put on these roads in order to do a better job. Some were done this year but not all. The funds would have to be included in the 2022 budget to complete some other roads.

Deputy Mayor, Bourque noted the Davidson Flats Road (where his cottage is) where he travels more that most people is solid rock and needs some work. It is used a lot by people going to the flats; a lot of traffic on it.

Two Drainage Jobs – Noel Rd. & Main St.

Clerk/Treasurer, Cormier inquired if additional engineering is needed for these jobs and work is to be done at both these properties, money would have to be allocated to the budget.

CAO, Ferguson noted the work on Noel Rd. is mostly on private property.

Mayor, Arseneault asked CAO, Ferguson to check to assure the work will be on private property.

Councillor, Guitard-McDonnell said this was all ready assessed by engineers – Roy Consultants did.

Councillor, Carmichael asked if the work gets done where does the money come from.

Deputy Mayor, Bourque referred that the Capital Budget is there for our use.

Clerk/Treasurer, Cormier clarified that the Capital Reserve funds can be used for Capital projects that are Village assets, not on private property.

Transportation Budget – engineering, roads & streets & drainage budget remain the same amount as 2021.

Signs

Councillor, Carmichael inquired if the municipal sign should be in 2022 or wait for another year. The intersections are more important at this time.

Councillor, Carrier said definitely the municipal sign should be done and inquired about the cost of digital sign at Arena.

The amount was between \$25,000- \$35,000 and was quite a few years ago.

All three signs will be allocated in the budget at \$50,000 each.

Solid Waste Collection

The 2021 budget is over substantially due to vehicle costs – maintenance and repairs. Costs should be reduced in 2022 with the new truck coming in.

Economic Development

Councillor, Carmichael inquired what do we do with this budget. Do we leave the 2021 amount, remove or reduce?

Deputy Mayor, Bourque noted that giving money away and for what benefit. It did nothing but cause controversy in the community and Council. He suggested striking them all from the budget.

Councillor, Robinson noted that there is no harm in having some funding in there. With the committee structures we would need some budget for them to work with.

Mayor, Arseneault said some number would have to be put in there, suggested \$10,000 for whoever working in that committee has something to work with.

Councillor, Carmichael said the By-law will need to be looked at – to cancel or change.

Student Subsidy budget will remain at \$30,000 and the Economic Development will be at \$25,000. All other amounts will be removed.

The Xmas Decoration Budget will remain at \$8,000. It is very nice and people like it.

Councillor, Carmichael said there was a swing purchased for the Belle View Seniors Complex and one will be purchased next year for Jacquet River complex.

This will come out of the Recreation & Wellness budget.

Arena Operations

Councillor, Carmichael discuss the summer operation – hockey school and the impact it is having on the equipment. The arena was not made for summer. It is a great thing for the kids, but there are other hockey camps out there in other places. She noted that in the summer, the ice is lumpy due to drips, it makes holes in the ice. She does not know if this is a safety issue or not. The feedback from parents and organizers is good but from the workers not so good.

CAO, Ferguson said the KC Irving did not do this year.

Councillor, Carrier said the arena was never designed for summer months. This could put our arena at jeopardy; if it is not working properly it could be putting the arena at risk.

Deputy Mayor, Bourque noted the water supply for flooding comes from the creek in back of the arena, summer months for water supply is a problem. The compressor is working harder than it should. He recommended contacting the summer school organizers and commending them on a job well done. This time we did not come out on the short end of the stick, but the arena equipment is working harder. Council needs to decide what they want to do with it.

Councillor, Carrier inquired about the number of local kids for summer camp.

Councillor, Carmichael noted she is not aware of any who attended.

Councillor, Carrier said we need to look at a way to get more kids here – years ago there use to be a bus to pick up kids in the area and bring them to the arena. The canteen also needs to be addressed; there is none open now.

Deputy Mayor, Bourque noted that years ago there were hundreds of kids; now there is no one from our community, no minor hockey team or minor hockey association. From a tourism exposure for our community; it may be good, but it is more important to save our arena.

Mayor, Arseneault noted there is one of three ways to look at this:

1. Is there an obligation contractually wise to continue
2. Continue with hockey school – maybe defer to another time
3. We do not do this.

Final conclusion of Council is to not open arena in summer – Arena to operate from September 1–May 1 annually – everyone happy, including workers.

Final Budget meeting will be scheduled

- 2022 Utility Operating Budget Preparation

No changes to Budget from last meeting.

Adjournment

Lilliane Carmichael moved that the meeting adjourned at 8:08 P.M., seconded by Marilyn Guitard-McDonnell. MOTION CARRIED.

Mayor

Clerk/Treasurer