

Minutes of the **SPECIAL MEETING** of the **DISTRICT OF MISSION COUNCIL** held in the Council Chambers at the Municipal Hall at 8645 Stave Lake Mission, British Columbia, on Thursday, January 20, 2011 commencing at 6:30 pm.

Committee Members Present: Mayor James Atebe  
Councillor Terry Gidda  
Councillor Paul Horn  
Councillor Danny Plecas  
Councillor Mike Scudder  
Councillor Jenny Stevens  
Councillor Heather Stewart

Staff Members Present: Glen Robertson, Chief Administrative Officer  
Paul Gipps, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer  
Kim Allan, Director of Forest Management  
Ken Bjorgaard, Director of Finance  
Rick Bomhof, Director of Engineering & Public Works  
Sharon Fletcher, Director of Planning  
Ray Herman, Director of Parks, Recreation & Culture  
Inspector Walsh, RCMP  
Kris Boland, Deputy Director of Finance  
Larry Watkinson, Assistant Fire Chief  
Kerri Onken, Deputy Treasurer/Collector  
Margie Laue, RCMP Office Manager  
Debi Decker, Administrative Assistant

Mayor Atebe called the meeting to order.

## 1. 2011 Budget

SC 2011/01  
JAN 20/11

### Mayor's Welcoming Remarks

The Mayor welcomed the public to this meeting and explained the process for the evening's meeting. He explained that a second public budget consultation meeting was scheduled for Monday, January 31, 2011, starting at 6:30 pm where the general public would have an opportunity to formally address Council.

SC 2011/02  
JAN 20/11

### Staff PowerPoint Presentation

The Director of Finance presented a power point presentation of the Overview of 2011 Financial Plan/Budget document.

He pointed out the following highlights:

- Mission's relationship to other municipalities in regards to 2010 property taxes and utility charges, noting Mission was only 11<sup>th</sup> highest out of 27 communities.
- Mission's positive low positioning in comparison to other municipalities in regards to Fiscal Sustainability Gap Ratio which measure growth in operating expenditures versus growth in population and inflation.

- 2011 Operating Budget for revenues, noting that property taxes were the number one revenue source and that user fees and charges were reviewed annually.
- 2011 Operating Budget for expenditures, noting policing, engineering and public works, and utilities and capital contributions/debt repayment were the top expenditure areas.
- Water and sewer flat rate user rates would be experiencing an increase, 15% in water and 10% in sewer, and that all residential properties were expected to be on metered water by 2012.
- Waste Management curb-side collection rates would not be increasing in 2011 but that the drop-off rates at the landfill had increased. He noted that a new waste diversion project would be starting up in early summer.
- Water Utility Capital provisional budget and major capital projects were noted, explaining that these were one of the causes for the increase in user rates (to minimize debt).
- Sewer Utility Capital provision budget and major capital projects were noted.
- Waste Management major capital projects include the new curb side waste bins for urban residents.
- Water Utility operating fund expenditures includes money to be set aside to fund capital infrastructure.
- Sewer utility operating fund expenditures includes money (but not as much as for water) to be set aside to fund capital infrastructure.
- Waste Management operating fund expenditures includes transferring of funds to reserves to fund the closing and opening of cells at the landfill, plus any environmental standards that the District must meet.
- Capital Assets/Infrastructure shows historical costs of all the assets the District has acquired since its inception (almost ½ billion dollars). All municipalities will need to set aside reserve funds to replace their aging infrastructures in the future.
- Reserve and Surplus Balances need to be aggressively built up to minimize debt and interest. The budget includes a 1% (or approximately \$252,000) increase for this purpose.
- Debt – total borrowing limit is \$126 million; borrowing capacity available is \$105,800; have only used 16% of available borrowing as of December 2009; breakdown of external debt shows the debts we are paying off each year and we have set up a debt retirement reserve to help fund retirement debt early; internal debt from reserves stands at \$5 million, and is more flexible and preferable than external borrowing as there are no set terms and it can be paid off at any time.
- Grant funding has been received from the provincial and/or federal government(s) for the leachate control at the landfill, diking works, the Heritage Park Trail, the Cedar Street widening, and the Spirit Square/Experience the Fraser Trail. Grant funding totals \$9.1 million.
- Fire, Police and Transit Services - the District has moved towards a composite fire department which includes paid-on-call and eight full-time career fire fighters, which has improved response time to fires. Police resources have been added over the past years with crime statistics showing that they have improved. Transit services include the West Coast Express train and bus service along with Valley Max transit, the District needs to increase and maintain these services.

The Director concluded by explaining the four budget scenarios that are being presented:

- The full-service scenario (5.40%) includes the cost of maintaining existing services, additional revenue and new or enhanced services that include an additional police officer and a second assistant fire chief.
- The 4.66% tax increase scenario is the 5.40% scenario minus funding for the police officer and the second assistant fire chief.
- The 3.88% tax increase scenario continues with the reductions from the 4.66% scenario and includes:
  - Funding downtown security from the gaming reserve;
  - Defer electronic document management system upgrade;
  - Delay LiveScan implementation (RCMP);
  - Budget reductions within Corporate Administration i.e. reduce corporate training, legal costs; and,
  - Budget reductions within Engineering/Public works areas i.e. survey consulting, roads budget, remove insuring municipal bridges.
- The 3.50% tax increase scenario continues with the reductions from the 3.88% scenario and the following additional reductions and new revenue sources:
  - Fire/Rescue Service training;
  - Reduce public hearing overtime budget for Planning;
  - Reduce Recreation & Culture afternoon reception coverage;
  - Reduce Finance Department training budget;
  - Institute a \$10/player field fee for minor sports participants;
  - Advertising opportunities at the Mission Leisure Centre; and
  - Implement how we collect subdivision engineering administration fees.
- All of the tax increase scenarios include the 1.03% for the full-time fire fighters and a 1.00% for a capital contribution. If you take the fire fighter and capital contribution percentages away from the 3.50% scenario, it comes out to an approximate 1.50% increase for general operations.

The Director of Finance stated that Council has looked at other options to bring the tax increase down further, but felt the reductions would impact services and the community too much. The Director stated that Council may not settle on any one of the tax increase scenarios presented, but that it could be a combination of items from various scenarios and/or additional additions or reductions.

The Mayor thanked the Director of Finance for his presentation, and asked that the community members take this information home, review it, and then come back on January 31, 2011, where they will be allowed to formally address Council. The Mayor asked if any Council members would like to address the audience.

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## Councillors' Comments

Councillor Stevens sees her job as listening to the public, that she needs input in order to consider all the options to come up with the correct answer.

Councillor Plecas encourages everyone to read the documents, that he supports the increase for the fire fighters and the capital contribution, and asked the public to let Council know if they feel any areas should be cut.

Councillor Stewart hopes to get more feedback from the public, especially on the Domestic Violence RCMP Coordinator.

Councillor Gidda expressed how difficult the budget process is, involving all departments, and now it is the public's turn to provide their comments to help Council make a decision. He commented that he favours the lowest option.

Councillor Horn wants the community to take this information and to study it, and then provide detailed feedback to Council on what you can live without or what is worth it to pay a little bit more for.

Councillor Scudder indicated that Council gets their direction from the community but that there needs to be a consensus within Council as to which budget items stay and which are reduced or removed. He noted that the last page of the Overview of 2011 Financial Plan/Budget document is very important – Achieving Balance.

Mayor Atebe realizes that the current economic/budget situation is nation-wide and doesn't apply only to Mission. Past Councils were not futuristic, this municipality cannot continue to rely on a residential tax base and that infrastructure is needed to help the non-residential tax base grow. Council is trying to reduce the need for external borrowing with an additional 1% capital reserve contribution and would like to maintain the quality of life residents currently have. There is a consequence for every reduction that is made and council needs to hear from the public to help us make the correct choice.

## 2. ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Councillor Scudder seconded by Councilor Gidda, and

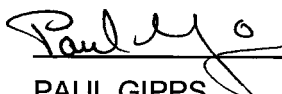
RESOLVED: That the meeting be adjourned.

CARRIED.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:30 pm.



JAMES ATEBE,  
MAYOR



PAUL GIPPS,  
DEPUTY CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER