

SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING
March 23, 2022
Approved Minutes

DATE: March 23, 2022
TIME: 4:00 p.m. – 4:28 p.m.
PLACE: Council Chambers – Public via Social Media

ATTENDANCE: Deputy Mayor Gary Clow; Councillors Derek Smith; Darren MacDougall; Jill Burridge; Steve Gallant; Gail MacDonald; Jeremy Crosby, CAO; Kim O’Connell, Director of Finance and Technology Wendy Watts, Jeremy Pierce, Recreation Director; Community and Business Engagement Manager; and Mary McAskill, Recording Clerk

REGRETS: Mayor Steve Ogden

CHAIR: Deputy Mayor Gary Clow

1. CALL TO ORDER

Deputy Mayor Gary Clow called the Special Council Meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. and welcome those viewing via social media.

Deputy Mayor Clow took a moment to acknowledge the land upon which we gather is the unceded territory of the Mi’Kmaq people, and we pay our respects to the indigenous Mi’Kmaq people of this territory past, present, and future.

Deputy Mayor Clow noted that Councillor Gail MacDonald will be doing the 2022/23 budget highlights as well as bring the resolutions forward to approve the Town and Utility budgets.

Deputy Mayor Clow stated that he received a message from Mayor Steve Ogden who advised him that that he was sorry that he was unable to attend the special meeting of Council, as his wife has tested positive for Covid so he will be isolating for seven days. He expressed his appreciation to Council and staff for the excellent work done on the 2022/23 budget. He added that he would have liked to have attended the meeting to personally express his gratitude, but since he wasn’t able to do that, he wanted to give special recognition to the following: Jeremy Crosby, CAO; Kim O’Connell, Director of Finance; Councillor Gail MacDonald, Chair of the Finance and Technology Committee and her Vice-Chair Councillor Jill Burridge; Wendy Watts, Community and Business Engagement Manager; and all members of the Finance and Technology Committee. Each and everyone of these individuals contributed immensely to the building of this year’s budget. Mayor Ogden also expressed his appreciation to all residents who participated in this year’s budget consultation.

2. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

It was moved by Councillor Derek Smith and seconded by Councillor Darren MacDougall that the agenda be approved as presented.

At this time Councillor MacDonald gave the highlights of the budget for the Town and the Utility.

Councillor Gail MacDonald – it is my pleasure to highlight for residents, the 2022/23 Town of Stratford Budget. This budget contains no tax increases to residential or commercial rates, and there will be no increase in our Stratford Utility charges for the second year in a row.

However, the Town of Stratford continues to face significant pressure from growth. The growth we are experiencing, while positive for our community, places pressure on our finances. With growth comes the need to provide additional infrastructure, programming, and services, all of which require additional revenue to deliver. Growth does not directly relate to increased revenue for the Town, as one might assume, but requires the Town to deliver expanded services, including water and sewer infrastructure, trails and sidewalks, increased recreation, and cultural programming, fire protection, among others in order for the growth to occur. These come at an expense that is not equal to the growth revenue.

We continue to negotiate alongside our fellow Island municipalities for a new revenue sharing agreement with the Province of PEI and remain hopeful that a fresh approach can be found which will provide a long term model that is predictable, stable, and fair.

As we look forward to the next 12 months, the Town of Stratford has many exciting projects underway, as well as through private development planned to take place in our community. Some of these will be highlighted in more detail on the following pages, but include the Michael Thomas Waterfront Park, the Community Campus, the start of the Pondsides Watershed Restoration project, additional Town staff being hired, continued energy and water conservation programs, and much more!

The biggest asset our community has is our residents. We thank those who participated in our recent draft budget presentation and provided their feedback to us. We also thank residents for their budget requests, some of which we have been able to incorporate at this time, and others we will review for future consideration. We hope that all residents will continue to be proud to call Stratford home, and that we are building a community not only for today, but for tomorrow as well. With many things on the horizon, our community is poised to transition to a fully serviced community in the coming years, one that continues to welcome and celebrate our diversity. We are truly building the best community possible!

REVENUES AND EXPENSES

The 2022/23 Town of Stratford budget forecasts revenue of \$8,505,800 which includes government transfers of \$1,408,700 and expenses of \$8,499,000, resulting in a surplus of \$6,800. The Town of Stratford, like all Island municipalities, is limited in the sources of revenue available, and like others rely primarily on property taxes, utility charges and fees to pay for services and infrastructure. With no tax increase, your Town Council and staff will continue to make necessary investments in our community while still managing to expand some services as well. We will work within the amount of revenue available to us in the upcoming year and manage our expenses. This is our commitment to you.

This budget includes continued investments in our parks, green spaces, and environment, in our active transportation, sidewalks and trail networks, and in our people. The past year has once again seen growth in the number of people using our outdoor spaces, including the newly opened multi-use path along Keppoch Road. The increased usage has demonstrated the need in this area, and now completes a loop connecting our community. We look forward to further investments this coming year, including those recently announced by the Province of PEI related to the round-about project and Trans Canada Highway improvements. The addition of active transportation along this busy stretch will further enhance the completed dedicated lane across the Hillsborough Bridge. We thank the Province of PEI for their support of our community.

CAPITAL BUDGETS

The Town's capital budget is \$19,964,800, which after infrastructure funding and other funding partners in the amount of \$15,058,600, will have a net cost of \$4,906,200. Funding for Town capital includes \$2,794,400 in New Deal Gas Tax Funding, \$10,512,100 in Investing in Canada funding, and \$1,752,000 in other funding. The Town will use the surplus from 2021/22 to reduce our capital financing.

The utility capital budget is \$2,977,100 of which the Town will receive infrastructure funding of \$238,200 from the Municipal Strategic Component funding, and \$1,455,200 from the Investing in Canada Fund for a net capital of \$1,283,700.

COMMUNITY CAMPUS

Last year the Town of Stratford finalized the purchase of the community campus land. Applications for funding have been submitted to begin developing the property during the 2022/23 budget year, with the work to design and construct required roads and trails; water and sewer; a solar array to offset our energy outputs; and electrical distribution. The Town has also entered into a lease agreement with Island Gymnastics Academy who has applied for their own funding to construct a larger facility on the Stratford community campus then they currently operate from. Many other organizations have expressed similar interest and

the Town of Stratford will continue to work with these groups where possible for the development of recreational and cultural infrastructure on the community campus.

The Stratford Community Campus Master Plan has recently been completed by our consultant. The plan will be released to the public in the near future and includes a site plan with elements and amenities laid out in accordance with their relationship to one another, and showing where the roads, water and sewer services, electrical and communication services, stormwater infrastructure, and active transportation infrastructure will be located following the natural topography to the extent possible. The plan also includes a phasing scheme to enable the campus to be developed in an orderly fashion. However, funding opportunities and community needs may also dictate the development.

MICHAEL THOMAS WATERFRONT PARK

The upcoming year will be an exciting one for the Town of Stratford as we look forward to the anticipated completion of the first phase of the new park on our waterfront. Our workplan includes the installation of a boardwalk to allow residents to access this space on our waterfront. The decommissioning of the lagoons is also creating renewed interest in the commercial lands around the waterfront park.

ARTS INVESTMENTS

The 2022/23 Town of Stratford budget includes an increase in funding for public art. This will allow for the procurement of more substantive art pieces and takes into consideration the rising costs of goods and services. The 2022/23 budget also includes a new bursary available to Stratford artists.

PONDSIDE WATERSHED RESTORATION

Funding has been received to allow the Town of Stratford to begin work on the Pondside Watershed. Work will include dredging both Moore's and Kelly's ponds, and the rehabilitation of the wetland and buffer zones surrounding the ponds. This project has been on the Town's workplan for a number of years, and we are excited to see it funded and moving forward at this time.

INVESTMENTS IN STAFFING RESOURCES

As the Town of Stratford continues to grow staffing resource was identified and staffing resources investments are being made in the upcoming year. The Town of Stratford budget includes the addition of a 36 week position in the planning department, a full time Information Technology position to eliminate the current contract for related services, a full and part time position to provide custodial services by Town staff rather than a private contract, and an additional staff person to assist with fall, winter, and spring maintenance and expanded services.

OTHER HIGHLIGHTS

- Continued investment in active transportation, including a paved multi-use path on Kinlock Road from JK Beauty Lane to the Trans Canada Highway
- Solar panel installation at the Stratford Emergency Services Centre (subject to funding)
- Purchase of a new electric vehicle to add to the Town's fleet
- Implementation of additional supports identified in the first annual business survey
- Town operational review
- Continued implementation of and reporting on the progress made in the Town's Community Energy Plan
- Power connection installed at the Stratford Community Gardens
- Stratford Youth Centre introduction of the Cheryl Duffy Bursary
- An anticipated return to full scale in person events and activities

UTILITY UPDATE

The Stratford Utility operates on a cash recovery basis, and as such, the Town continually analyzes expenses to ensure that the rates for customers are equitable while being sufficient to meet our long term goals. This past year the Stratford Utility Corporation, and ultimately all residents, reached a milestone as the Town's wastewater began successful pumping to the Charlottetown Pollution Control Plant, allowing a large portion of the land on the waterfront to be developed into a signature park. In 2020, a comprehensive review of water and wastewater expenses, as well as a five year projected capital plan was completed, and these projections are put through a utility rate model. For a second year in a row, the upcoming budget will see no increase to water and sewer rates for the Town of Stratford's utility customers. Stratford utility customers continue to demonstrate their support by limiting their personal use of water where possible and supporting conservation methods and programs.

Further budget investments include an additional water reservoir tower to supply domestic and fire protection for our growing community, and upgrades to the Corish sewage pump station and forcemain, with the ultimate goal to redirect the Corish station flows away from the Pondside station and into the gravity trunk main instead. Pending funding, the completion of upgrades to the Bunbury sewage pumping station to accommodate the current and future growth in that area will also take place.

The Utility will continue to implement the inflow and infiltration reduction program as a means to minimize the amount of water entering the sewer system that does not require treatment. Since we are now pumping our sewage to Charlottetown, this work is even more important to complete, and will reduce the amount of surface and groundwater seeping into the sewer system. The Utility continues to monitor and review the sewer system to identify

areas that require attention and repairs. In 2021, we have been able to rehabilitate 210 meters of sewer by using innovative technology where the existing pipe was lined through manhole access with no excavation was required. We will continue to look for opportunities to use this technology where possible and minimize both expense and interruption of service to our customers.

The Town of Stratford and the Stratford Area Watershed Improvement Group (SAWIG) continues to provide Stratford Utility customers with a free in home water audit. The program aims to teach residents how to read their water meter and check regularly for leaks in their home, to educate residents about how much water they are using and provide homeowners with recommendation on how to reduce their water consumption.

CLOSING

In closing, on behalf of all members of Council, I thank residents for their support. You should be proud of the work undertaken in this budget. With no tax increases, we have still managed to expand some services and deliver necessary investments and improvements as required. As your Council, and alongside Town staff, we continue to work hard on your behalf every day. There is a tremendous amount of optimism in the air around Stratford with lots of exciting positive changes coming to our Town. We hope that along with us you will continue to be proud to live here, and we eagerly look forward to seeing residents in person soon.

At this time Councillor MacDonald proceeded with the budget resolutions.

3. RESOLUTION FT004-2022 ADOPTION OF THE 2022/23 OPERATING BUDGET

Moved by Councillor Gail MacDonald

Seconded by Councillor Darren MacDougall

BE IT RESOLVED that the 2022/23 Town of Stratford Operating Budget with revenue of \$8,505,800 and expenses of \$8,499,000 for a surplus of \$6,800, be hereby approved in accordance with the following revenue and expense tables:

SPECIAL COUNCIL MINUTES MARCH 23, 2022

	Actual 2021	Budget 2021/22	Budget 2022/23
Property Tax	\$4,807,573	\$5,108,000	\$5,565,700
CUSA Grant	\$1,237,751	\$1,334,000	\$1,408,700
Salary Recovery	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000
Rent Income	\$647,479	\$657,200	\$671,100
Police Fines	\$42,481	\$60,000	\$60,000
Fees and Permits	\$165,309	\$151,000	\$163,200
Interest Income	\$0	\$100	
Recreation	\$67,889	\$96,100	\$118,700
Other	\$43,981	\$526,600	\$508,400
Total Operating Revenue	\$7,022,463	\$7,943,000	\$8,505,800
Government Grants	\$2,128,564	\$0	\$0
Total Revenue	\$9,151,027	\$7,943,000	\$8,505,800

Operating	Actual 2021	Budget 2021/22	Budget 2022/23
General Government Expenses	\$2,853,370	\$3,616,500	\$3,854,200
Finance Expenses	\$674,335	\$825,600	\$987,600
Recreation Expenses	\$621,030	\$739,900	\$812,300
Infrastructure Expenses	\$1,054,814	\$1,422,100	\$1,609,200
Planning Expenses	\$351,693	\$398,100	\$427,400
Depreciation	\$871,446	\$940,000	\$808,300
Total Expenses	\$6,426,688	\$7,942,200	\$8,499,000

Operating	Actual 2021	Budget 2021/22	Budget 2022/23
Total Surplus	\$595,775	\$800	\$6,800
Add: Depreciation	\$870,684	\$940,000	\$808,300
Less: Principal payment	(\$712,118)	(\$814,500)	(\$858,000)
Total Cash Flow Surplus	\$754,341	\$126,300	-\$42,900

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that:

- The non-commercial municipal tax rate be set at \$0.45 per \$100 of assessment for 2022
- The non-commercial non-resident municipal tax rate be set at \$0.90 per \$100 of assessment for 2022
- The non-commercial apartment municipal tax rate be set at \$0.66 per \$100 of assessment for 2022
- The non-commercial non-resident apartment municipal tax rate be set at \$1.32 per \$100 of assessment for 2022
- the non-commercial motel municipal tax rate be set at \$0.66 per \$100 of assessment for 2022
- the non-commercial non-resident motel municipal tax rate be set at \$1.32 per \$100 of assessment for 2022
- the commercial municipal tax rate be set at \$1.25 per \$100 of assessment for 2022

Discussion: This resolution bears the recommendation of the Finance and Technology Committee.

Question: **CARRIED**

4. RESOLUTION FT005-2022 ADOPTION OF THE 2022/23 CAPITAL BUDGET AND FOUR YEAR CAPITAL PLAN

Moved by Councillor Gail MacDonald

Seconded by Councillor Derek Smith

WHEREAS as part of the new Municipal Government Act the Town of Stratford is required to submit a five year capital expenditure plan that includes an asset management program; and

BE IT RESOLVED that the 2022/23 Capital Budget per the following schedules be approved in the amount of \$19,964,800 less New Deal funding of \$2,794,400, less Investing in Canada funding of \$10,512,100, other funding of \$1,752,100 for a net Town Capital Budget of \$4,906,200.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the attached four year capital plan covering the years 2023/24 to 2026/27 per the following schedules be approved:

Capital	Budget 2021/22	Budget 2022/23
Park Development	\$100,000	\$100,000
Recreation Centre Equipment	\$9,000	\$9,000

SPECIAL COUNCIL MINUTES MARCH 23, 2022

Recreation Capital Projects		\$88,000
Sidewalk/Bike path Trail Construction	\$2,250,000	\$1,262,900
Electric Vehicle Charging Stations	\$40,000	\$3,500
Street Lighting		\$20,000
Equipment Replacements/Additions	\$105,500	\$182,500
Town Centre Capital Repairs/Additions	\$161,000	\$111,000
Cotton Park Building Repairs/Additions	\$36,800	\$138,600
Other Building/Grounds Repairs/Additions	\$35,000	\$5,000
Emergency Services Facility	\$26,000	
Public Art	\$15,000	\$25,000
Computer Hardware	\$17,500	\$42,500
Solar on Town Buildings	\$413,300	\$377,300
Waterfront Park	\$925,000	\$1,910,000
Community Campus Land	\$2,470,000	
Community Campus Phase 1	280,000	15,224,500
Aintree Drive Extension		20,000
Transit	\$95,000	\$105,000
Traffic Calming	\$25,000	\$25,000
Pondside Watershed Restoration	\$315,000	\$315,000
Fullerton's Creek Conservation Park	\$58,000	
Maintenance Building	\$498,000	
Total Capital Expenses	\$7,875,100	\$19,964,800

Capital Funding	Budget 2021/22	Budget 2022/23
New Deal Funding	\$2,570,000	\$2,794,400
ACOA Funding		\$985,000
Canada 150 Fund		
Investing in Canada	\$670,200	\$10,512,100
TIE sidewalk/bike lane Partnership	\$1,050,000	\$537,500
Other Grants	\$82,000	\$229,600
Total Capital Funding	\$4,372,200	\$15,058,600
Reserve Allocation	\$82,000	

Net Capital Expenditure	\$3,420,900	\$4,906,200
--------------------------------	--------------------	--------------------

Four Year Capital Plan

Capital	Budget 2023/ 24	Budget 2024/ 25	Budget 2025/ 26	Budget 2026/ 27
Other Building/Grounds Repairs/Additions	\$ 80,000			
Recreation Equipment	\$ 9,000	\$ 9,000	\$ 9,000	\$ 9,000
Traffic Calming	\$ 25,000	\$ 25,000	25,000	25,000
Street Lighting	\$ 20,000	\$ 20,000	20,000	20,000
Lights on Robert Cotton Trail	\$ 200,000			
Signage	\$ 50,000			
Active Transportation Path Construction/Sidewalk	\$ 350,000	\$ 495,000	350,000	350,000
Park Development	\$ 200,000	\$ 200,000	200,000	100,000
Public Art	\$ 25,000	\$ 25,000	\$ 25,000	\$ 25,000
Waterfront Park & Connecting Trails (TBD)	\$ 1,693,400	\$ 1,848,700	1,848,700	1,848,700
Computer Replacement	\$ 17,500	\$ 17,500	17,500	17,500
Equipment Replacements	\$ 65,000			
Transit	\$ 102,200			
Electric Bike Sharing Program	\$ 125,000			
Town Centres Additions/Replacements	\$ 170,000	\$ 270,000	20,000	320,000
Shore Access	\$ 551,300			
Community School Campus	\$ 5,000,000	\$ 25,000,000		
Total Capital Expenses	\$ 8,683,400	\$ 27,910,200	\$ 2,515,200	\$ 2,715,200
Capital Funding	Budget 2023/ 24	Budget 2024/ 25	Budget 2025/ 26	
Investing in Canada	\$ 4,161,100	\$ 18,325,000		\$ 220,000
New Deal Funding	\$ 200,000	\$ 270,000		\$ 350,000
Other Funding	\$ 62,500	\$ 225,000		
Total Capital Funding	\$ 4,423,600	\$ 18,820,000	\$ -	\$ 570,000
Net Capital Expenditure	\$ 4,259,800	\$ 9,090,200	\$ 2,515,200	\$ 2,145,200

Discussion: This resolution bears the recommendation of the Finance and Technology Committee.

Question: **CARRIED**

5. RESOLUTION FT006-22 ADOPTION OF THE 2022/23 UTILITY OPERATING BUDGET

Moved by Councillor Gail MacDonald

Seconded by Councillor Jill Burrige

BE IT RESOLVED that the attached 2022-23 Stratford Utility Corporation operating budget with revenues of \$3,257,400 and expenses of \$3,256,500 for a surplus of \$900 be approved as follows:

SPECIAL COUNCIL MINUTES MARCH 23, 2022

Revenue	Actual 2021	Budget 2021/22	Budget 2022/23
Unmetered Sales Sewer	\$298,544	\$295,000	\$283,000
Unmetered Sales Water	\$67,528	\$64,700	\$55,100
Metered Sales Sewer	\$1,168,465	\$1,592,200	\$1,634,500
Metered Sales Water	\$795,611	\$1,089,700	\$1,150,500
Frontage Charges Sewer	\$28,597	\$28,200	\$27,000
Frontage Charges Water	\$7,878	\$7,500	\$7,100
Penalty Charges/Late Fees	\$11,058	\$36,000	\$36,000
Connection Fees	\$5,615	\$5,000	\$7,200
Interest Income		\$2,500	
Other Income	\$44,413	\$58,000	\$57,000
Donated Capital			
Total Operating Revenue	\$2,427,709	\$3,178,800	\$3,257,400
Government Grants	\$5,439,053	\$0	\$0
Total Revenue	\$7,866,762	\$3,178,800	\$3,257,400

Total Expenses	\$2,633,662	\$3,153,400	\$3,256,500
Total Surplus	\$5,233,100	\$25,400	\$900
Less: Donated Capital	(\$188,188)	\$0	
Less: Government Transfers	(\$5,250,865)	\$0	
Add: Depreciation	\$1,034,845	\$1,035,000	\$1,226,800
Less: Principal payments	(\$676,145)	(\$742,000)	(\$695,000)
Total Cash Flow Surplus	\$152,747	\$318,400	\$532,700

Discussion: This resolution bears the recommendation of the Finance and Technology Committee.

Question: **CARRIED**

6. RESOLUTION FT007-2022 ADOPTION OF THE 2022/23 UTILITY CAPITAL BUDGET

Moved by Councillor Gail MacDonald

Seconded by Councillor Derek Smith

WHEREAS as part of the new Municipal Government Act the Town of Stratford is required to submit a five year capital expenditure plan that includes an asset management program; and

BE IT RESOLVED that the following tables for the 2022/23 Utility Capital Budget be approved in the amount of \$2,977,100 less Investing in Canada funding of \$1,693,400 for a net Capital expenditure of \$1,283,700.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the following table for the four year capital plan be approved covering the years 2023/24 to 2026/27.

Capital	Budget 2021/22	Budget 2022/23
Misc Capital Items	\$176,000	\$107,000
Water and Sewer Upgrades	\$1,418,300	\$2,687,000
Replace Treatment Plant	\$1,200,000	
Inflow Infiltration Study Recommendations	\$100,000	\$100,000
Solar Array Water Stations	\$118,300	\$51,500
SCADA Upgrades	\$236,500	
Metering	\$10,000	\$31,600
Total Capital Expenses	\$3,259,100	\$2,977,100
Capital Funding	Budget 2021/22	Budget 2022/23
CWWF Funding	\$900,000	
MSC Funding	\$206,200	
Investing in Canada	\$1,041,000	\$1,693,400
Green Fund		
Total Capital Funding	\$2,147,200	\$1,693,400
Net Capital Expenditure	\$1,111,900	\$1,283,700

Four Year Capital Plan

Capital	Budget 2023/24	Budget 2024/25	Budget 2025/26	Budget 2026/27
Misc Capital Items	\$ 135,000	\$ 125,000	\$ 50,000	\$ 50,000
Water and Sewer Upgrades	\$ 4,979,800	\$ 1,873,600	\$ 6,933,800	\$ 7,721,000
Inflow Infiltration Recommendations	\$100,000	\$ 100,000	\$ 100,000	\$ 100,000
Solar Array Water Stations	\$ 552,300	\$ 815,500		
Total Capital Expenses	\$ 5,767,100	\$ 2,914,100	\$ 7,083,800	\$ 7,871,000
Capital Funding	Budget 2023/24	Budget 2024/25	Budget 2025/26	Budget 2026/27
Investing in Canada	\$ 3,663,100	\$ 708,000	\$ 4,919,600	\$ 5,661,800
Total Capital Funding	\$ 3,663,100	\$ 708,000	\$ 4,919,600	\$ 5,661,800
Net Capital Expenditure	\$ 2,104,000	\$ 2,206,100	\$ 2,164,200	\$ 2,209,200

Discussion: This resolution bears the recommendation of the Finance and Technology Committee.

Question:

7. RESOLUTION FT008-2022 APPROVAL OF THE 2022 UTILITY TARIFF

Moved by Councillor Gail MacDonald

Seconded by Councillor Derek Smith

WHEREAS a comprehensive review of water and sewer expenses, as well as a projected 5 year capital plan was completed in 2020; and

WHEREAS these projections were analyzed through utility rate models to determine the rates for the water and sewer rate payers.

BE IT RESOLVED that the attached Stratford Utility tariff for 2022, which incorporates the following, be hereby approved:

- the water for a single family dwelling (SFD) will remain at \$82.05 per quarter as of April 2022;
- The sewer for a single family dwelling (SFD) will remain at \$122.86 per quarter as of April 2022;
- the consumption charge for metered water will remain at \$0.9680 per cubic metre as of April 2022; and

- the consumption charge for metered sewer will remain at \$1.4530 per cubic meter as of April 2022.

Discussion: This resolution bears the recommendation of the Finance and Technology Committee.

Question: **CARRIED**

8. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:28 p.m.

Mayor Steve Ogden

Jeremy Crosby, CAO