

FINANCE STANDING COMMITTEE
Tuesday, October 26, 2021

A Regular Meeting of the Finance Standing Committee convened on Tuesday, October 26, 2021 at 10:12 a.m. in the Council Chambers, City Hall, 3000 Guildford Way, Coquitlam, BC with the following persons present:

COMMITTEE MEMBERS: Mayor Richard Stewart
Councillor Brent Asmundson
Councillor Craig Hodge
Councillor Steve Kim
Councillor Trish Mandewo
Councillor Dennis Marsden
Councillor Teri Towner
Councillor Chris Wilson

STAFF: Peter Steblin, City Manager
Raul Allueva, Deputy City Manager
Jim Ogloff, Fire Chief
Michelle Hunt, General Manager Finance, Lands and Police
Lanny Englund, General Manager Parks, Recreation, Culture and Facilities
Nikki Caulfield, General Manager Corporate Services
Stephanie James, Director Legal and Bylaw Enforcement
Andre Isakov, Manager Economic Development
Kathleen Vincent, Manager Corporate Communications
Renzo Del Negro, Director Human Resources
Gorana Cabral, Manager Financial Planning
Jay Gilbert, Director Intergovernmental Relations and Legislative Services
Stephanie Lam, Legislative Services Manager
Adam Shroff, Committee Clerk
Misty Temple, Legislative Services Clerk

ALSO PRESENT: Please note that these and other staff joined and left the meeting as required.

Councillor Marsden, as per the Acting Mayor schedule, assumed the role of Chair.

CALL TO ORDER

The Chair, on behalf of the Committee, thanked staff for all of their work in developing the draft financial plan.

REPORTS OF STAFF

Recess and Reconvene

The Committee recessed in order to resolve a technical issue at this time (10:13 a.m.) and reconvened at 10:21 a.m.

FINANCE, LANDS AND POLICE

1. Report of the General Manager Finance, Lands and Police – Draft 2022-2026 Financial Plan Highlights and Presentations

The Committee received the report of the General Manager Finance, Lands and Police dated October 14, 2021 and entitled “Draft 2022-2026 Financial Plan Highlights and Presentations” for information.

BUDGET PRESENTATIONS

2. City Manager

The City Manager appeared before the Committee and provided introductory comments regarding the presentation attached to the report. He thanked staff for their collective support in facilitating the City’s strong financial position, and noted the City’s success in prioritizing the community’s interests throughout the pandemic.

Mayor Stewart left the meeting at this time (10:33 a.m.) and returned at 10:34 a.m.

Discussion ensued relative to the following:

- The concern that privacy issues may obstruct the receipt of survey data
- The importance of reassuring the community that the City utilizes modern cybersecurity platforms

In response to a question from a member of the Committee, the Director Intergovernmental Relations and Legislative Services responded that the Province has relaxed some of its restrictions with respect to the geographical location of stored data. He added that this change stresses the necessity of privacy management and the use of contemporary cybersecurity safeguards.

Councillor Wilson left the meeting at this time (10:58 a.m.) and returned at 11:01 a.m.

Discussion continued relative to the following:

- The knowledge that Freedom of Information requests increase as the City grows
- The understanding that the Province will be charging for some requests in order to control the volume and reduce taxpayer expense
- The desire to help focus requests within the parameters of relevant information
- The understanding that sometimes legislative provisions may bring additional

challenges to cost-recovery endeavors

Councillor Kim left the meeting at this time (11:02 a.m.) and returned at 11:03 a.m.

3. City Draft 2022-2026 Financial Plan

The Manager Financial Planning appeared before the Committee and referred to slides contained in the presentation attached to the report.

Councillor Asmundson left the meeting at this time (11:39 a.m.) and returned at 11:43 a.m.

Discussion ensued relative to the following:

- Appreciation for the community's participation in the budget survey
- Clarification that the budget factors in costs associated with new assets and their operations, maintenance, and insurance
- The understanding that some inflation costs are offset by the City's continued growth
- Clarification that the base budget encapsulates increases within a variety of contracted services
- The understanding that there is a timing difference between tax revenue growth and future costs and a desire to understand the historical trend
- The desire to find balance in meeting the community's diverse range of needs
- The desire to utilize existing money versus new money in the self-funded budget requests

In response to a question from a member of the Committee, the Manager Financial Planning advised that the 10-year Operating Budget Forecast does not include potential impacts by Metro Vancouver's forthcoming utility increases. She further added that as Metro Vancouver finalizes the rates, staff will be able to recalculate the increases. She noted that Metro Vancouver's deferral of some costs may bring additional budgetary challenges in the future.

Councillor Towner left the meeting at this time (11:44 a.m.) and returned at 11:45 a.m.

4. Deputy City Manager

Mayor Stewart left the meeting at this time (12:01 p.m.) and returned at 12:04 p.m.

The Deputy City Manager appeared before the Committee and referred to slides contained in the presentation attached to the report.

Councillor Kim left the meeting at this time (12:11 p.m.) and returned at 12:14 p.m.

Discussion ensued relative to the following:

- Clarification that organizational structure was re-categorized after the presentation's publication

- Support for self-funding strategies, such as new revenue from application fees
- The desire to continue minimizing inconveniences to the public associated with development
- Concern that using funds from the Economic Development Reserve might not align with its intended use
- The potential to utilize a portion of the Economic Development Reserve as leverage in the acquisition of other funding

Recess

The Committee recessed at 12:24 p.m.

Reconvene

A Regular Meeting of the Finance Standing Committee reconvened in the Council Chambers of City Hall, 3000 Guildford Way, Coquitlam, BC on Tuesday, October 26, 2021 at 1:08 p.m. with all members of the Committee present. Members of staff present were the City Manager, Deputy City Manager, Fire Chief, General Manager Finance, Lands and Police, General Manager Parks, Recreation, Culture and Facilities, General Manager Corporate Services, Director Legal and Bylaw Enforcement, Manager Economic Development, Manager Corporate Communications, Director Human Resources, Manager Financial Planning, Director Intergovernmental Relations and Legislative Services, Legislative Services Manager, and Legislative Services Clerk.

Please note that these and other staff joined and left the meeting as required.

5: Parks, Recreation, Culture and Facilities

The General Manager Parks, Recreation, Culture and Facilities appeared before the Committee and referred to slides contained in the presentation attached to the report.

Discussion ensued relative to the following:

- Clarification that specified internal debt funding will not be serviced via taxation
- Appreciation for the budget's elimination of rodenticides from City property
- Concern that demand for recreational spaces may strain availability in spring
- The understanding that diminishing pandemic restrictions will allow for increased use of indoor recreational spaces
- The potential benefits a dedicated Youth Services Coordinator brings in effectively meeting the needs of adolescents
- The forecast of new revenue from the new fitness centre at City Centre Aquatic Complex
- Support for future planning to provide amenities that support growing demand for pickleball
- Appreciation for staff's continued success in identifying the community's evolving necessities and interests

6. Fire/Rescue

The Fire Chief appeared before the Committee and referred to slides contained in the presentation attached to the report.

Councillor Mandewo left the meeting at 2:26 p.m.

Discussion ensued relative to the following:

- Appreciation for the Fire Department's assistance in administering vaccinations
- The importance of providing fire and rescue service personnel with appropriate funding and resources
- Interest in effective strategies that support the Fire Asset Replacement funding including for staff to provide a detailed asset inventory
- The desire to have staff include a new budget request to address the annual funding gap related to fire asset replacement requirements
- The potential benefit that an annual increase to capital funding requests would have on reserve contributions

Mayor Stewart left the meeting at this time (2:31 p.m.) and returned at 2:34 p.m.

- Clarification that ECOMM's higher fees stem from a delay in standard inflation rates that would have otherwise been initiated in 2020
- Support for added provincial funding with respect to its use of ECOMM as a provincial resource

Councillor Kim left the meeting at this time (2:35 p.m.) and returned at 2:37 p.m.

In response to a question from a member of the Committee, the Fire Chief responded that some revenue opportunities are classified as highly volatile due to their unanticipated nature, such as increased firefighting services that arise with a large-scale forest fire.

Councillor Towner and Councillor Kim left the meeting at 2:45 p.m.

Councillor Mandewo returned to the meeting at 2:46 p.m.

Discussion continued relative to the following:

- The understanding that the opioid crisis also places strain on fire and rescue services
- The importance of protecting the Metro Vancouver watersheds from the increasing proliferation of wildfires
- The desire for additional supportive housing in the Tri-Cities area as a whole
- The desire to determine the scale of the financial impact in terms of fire resources expended with respect to the facility located at 3030 Gordon

Councillor Hodge left the meeting at this time (2:48 p.m.) and returned at 2:49 p.m.

The Chair thanked the Finance, Lands and Police Department for their work on the 2022 budget and the completion of the first Budget Presentation Meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 2:54 p.m.

CHAIR

I hereby certify that I have recorded the Minutes of the Finance Standing Committee Meeting held Tuesday, October 26, 2021 as instructed, subject to amendment and adoption.



Misty Temple
Legislative Services Clerk