

Council Highlights

February 20, 2018

2018 Budget

Council received the budget for 2018 calling for a municipal levy increase of 5.11% over 2017. The Municipal levy for 2018 went up to 9,159,550.03 from the 2017 figure of \$8,714,311.85. Council members will vote on the final budget at a future meeting.

The budget presented on Tuesday would mean the average homeowner (with the average home assessed at \$368,858.87) would face an increase of \$56.44 for the year.

Major items affecting the 2018 budget include:

- funding being set aside for future tangible capital asset replacement
- continued work on Beaver Lake Road –3 km
- election costs
- Community Improvement Plan work
- ongoing studies on the proposed new centralized depot studies
- Energy Reduction requirements under Ontario Reg. 397/11-Facility improvements in budget
- Bill 148 Changes (minimum wage and benefit increases)

Cost savings included in the budget include insurance savings of \$30,165 (16%) because of switching insurance carriers, waste haulage costs down \$81,596 because of process changes, closed landfill site monitoring budgets reduced by \$45,000 because due to awarding an RFP in 2017 and hydro and heating fuel budgets down \$9,000 because of savings from energy upgrades and hydro credits.

General government expenditures total \$1,635,309.67, the budget for fire and rescue is \$1,108,346.64, and costs for other protection, including the OPP levy, are \$2,440,808.75.

Public work expenditures for road maintenance, vehicle and equipment maintenance, administrative costs, environmental services and snowplowing, sanding and salting are \$3,749,463.

The total budget for parks, recreation, culture and heritage are \$553,069 and covers grants and operating costs for all halls, costs of all recreational facilities and beaches, a \$157,720 library levy and the Buckhorn Rink.

Proposed development dead

A developer who had proposed building a 46 home subdivision and golf course near Flynn's Corners told council that his plans have been cancelled because of the Provincial Growth Plan passed by the provincial government that came into effect July 1, 2017.

Keith Leckie and his partner Doug Summers bought the 368 acres in 2004 and had been working on a number of plans and studies over the years to develop the property.

He told council that in addition to the homes, the project also included an 18 hole golf course, walking trails on 80 acres of the property, a dining room, a shop and the possibility of a spa in the future.

He said that over the years he and his partner paid for a number of studies and said they were able to adjust to changes over the years until the growth plan came into effect.

“Under the new Provincial Growth Plan we could only have 30 to 32 building lots, so the project is no longer feasible,” Mr. Leckie said. “The development is dead.”

Mayor Bev Mathews and the councillors all expressed their disappointment that the development had run into problems after putting so many years of work and so much money into it.

“All council thought this was a good idea,” Mayor Mathews said. “It’s sad that the rules of the game changes and that the growth plan is really a growth inhibitor plan.”

Mr. Leckie told council that in the end the provincial plan will most likely mean that an area that would have included homes, a golf course, trails and would have created jobs and brought tax revenue to the community will end up becoming a quarry.

“And quarries are exempt from that plan.” he added.

Council decided they will look at ways to communicate their displeasure with the provincial government.