

Harvey Rural Community Council in Committee Minutes

Location: Harvey Rural Community Boardroom

Date: November 27, 2023 at 7:00 pm

Present: Mayor Corey, Councillor Pepin, Councillor Little, Councillor Chase, Deputy Mayor McLean and CAO/Clerk, Katherine Henry.

1. Call to Order - The meeting was called to order at 7:00pm by Mayor Corey.
2. Adoption of the Agenda – **The MOTION was made by Councillor Chase to adopt the Agenda. It was seconded by Councillor Pepin. MOTION carried.**
3. Disclosure of Conflict of Interest - No conflict declared.
4. Discussion and Recommendation
 - a) CAO Recruitment Consultant – Mayor Corey reported that the Committee of himself, Councillor Pepin and Councillor Chessie had met with and/or received proposals from four consulting companies. Pricing was similar from all. The two main ones were presented in more detail. One company has fees of 15% of starting salary with a \$2,500 deposit. The second, JMC, charges a fee of 22% of starting salary with a 50% deposit. They also provide a guarantee that if the person quits or is removed from the position within six months, they will provide a second search for no charge. This company did a number of the CAO searches for the province last year for the new municipalities. They will also do personality testing for the applicants chosen for interview and can provide coaching as required during the first six months. Although they are more expensive, the warranty has a lot of value if a second search is required. For these reasons, the Committee has selected JMC to conduct the CAO job search.
 - b) Budget 2024 – The CAO presented the latest draft budget document for review with a number of items to consider. The spreadsheet will update the tax rate as line item amounts are changed. The first decision is what the tax base ration for Non-Residential properties should be for 2024. It has been set 1.5 in the past but the allowable range is 1.4 to 1.7. The tax rate for non-residential properties is multiplied by this factor. There was consensus to leave it at 1.5.
 - i) Harmonization of Fire and Policing – The Fire and Policing costs are entered into the subunit expenses and not as a shared expense. The Policing costs are significantly higher for the Village and Manners Sutton subunits because they are still being costed for RSC 10 which has higher policing costs. A grant amount of \$34,877 came with the LSD policing costs and could be applied to the Manners Sutton subunit to assist with equalization of costs. There was little impact to moving the costs to shared but should be considered for next year.
 - ii) Operating Reserve – There is an option to budget funds as an Operating Reserve. The balance of this fund can be up to 5% of the previous year's expenditures which for Harvey would be \$66,376. This fund is useful for having cash for expenses which are later reimbursed such as unsightly premises projects or other grant funded projects.

- iii) Funds for Unsightly Premises – There are few costs for unsightly premises as the expenses are refunded later by the province.
- iv) Recreation Facilities – This is currently on the line item called Community Centres & Halls: Other. This was set at 2 cents on \$100 of assessment. There was some discussion about raising this amount to ensure enough funds to support our community infrastructure.
- v) Costs to extend existing offices – The suggestion was made to build the municipal offices out into the HMCC hallway to create more space for staff. While this has not been approved by Council, there should be some funds allocated to this project so that it can go ahead, if approved. Funds would be needed for design and approval would also be required by the Fire Marchall.
- vi) Design/Construction costs for new building – Harvey does not yet own either of the land options that are being pursued for the construction of a new building. Funds would have to be borrowed from the Municipal Capital Borrowing Board if land is procured, and there is a borrowing cost. The existing space is too small and too noisy.
- vii) Water access – There should be consideration for land purchase and park construction for future public water access to lakes and the river.
- viii) Recreation/Community Coordinator Position – This position has not been approved. The suggestion is to put a summer student in the budget for the summer recreation programming. Some of the activities suggested for the Community Coordinator may be picked up by providing more hours for the Assistant Clerk. The hours for the Treasurer were also discussed here and increased to 21 hours per week and 35 hours per week for the Assistant Clerk.
- ix) Purchase of a truck-new/used, with plow? – The Village has not had a vehicle but has paid mileage to the Manager of Public Works for the use of his truck. He has suggested that Harvey consider purchasing a truck. There was discussion if a larger truck would be useful as it could be used for plowing as well. Snow clearing is now done by the tractor and snowblower or contracted out. If funds are borrowed from the Municipal Capital Borrowing Board, the term can only be 5 years less the age of the truck. The vehicle would be primarily used in the Village subunit so the truck could be purchased using the Village capital reserve funds.
- x) Cost of borrowing – When funds are borrowed from the Municipal Capital Borrowing Board, there is a cost to set up the loan.
- xi) Staffing rate increase – The CAO reported that the CPI for the Province was 4% in September and that most municipalities are using 3-5% with 4% being the most used.
- xii) HAF incentives – The CAO asked if Council wanted to create any incentives for housing construction.
- xiii) Branding – Funds will need to be set aside for branding. There will be a rebate for this activity as well as part of the LGReform funding. The rebate will be put in the Revenue and cost in the Expenses.

- xiv) Signage - Funds will need to be set aside for signage. There will be a rebate for this activity as well as part of the LGReform funding. The rebate will be put in the Revenue and cost in the Expenses.
 - xv) GNB Revenue for expenditures related to reform – There are a few other expenditure items that were approved for funding but some of them have occurred in 2023.
 - c) Staffing – Assistant Clerk and Treasurer – This item was discussed under b) viii above.
5. Motion for Adjournment - **The MOTION to adjourn was made by Councillor Little and seconded by Councillor Chase.**

The Meeting was adjourned at 10:45pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Katherine Henry
CAO

Richard Corey
Mayor

Katherine Henry
CAO