

**CITY OF KENORA**

**2008 BUDGET MEETING**

**August 1, 2007 – 11:00 A.M.**

**Council Chambers**

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**In Attendance:**

**Mayor Len Compton**

**Councillor David McCann**

**Councillor Chris Van Wallegghem**

**Councillor Charito Drinkwalter**

**Karen Brown**

**Councillor Rory McMillan**

**Councillor Wendy Cuthbert**

**Councillor Andrew Poirier**

**Bill Preisentan**

Councillor Rory McMillan chaired the meeting and called the meeting to order.

**2008 Budget Process**

A discussion ensued on the use of zero based budgeting and modified zero based budgeting, as well as the definitions of those two types of budgeting and what individual members of Council felt budgeting represented to them.

Council direction was that the 2008 budget process would focus on existing service levels, and review changes in service levels. Council further directed that the 2008 draft budget be based on 2007 budgeted expenditure levels as a starting point, and that any increases to this level of expenditures be presented independently to Council, together with justification for those increases, for Council review and approval prior to being included in the 2008 draft budget.

Council direction was to work towards an earlier passing of the municipal budgets. In addition, Council suggested that the City work towards a balance between a fair and reasonable budget process and regular updates of Council, without resulting in excess demands on either Council or staff time.

Some discussion ensued on the difficulty of completing capital works within the year, particularly when the budgets are not approved by the beginning of the year, including the City's requirement to wait for external approvals on specific projects from external agencies, such as the Province, before these projects can commence. Council requested that the Managers establish critical commencement dates for capital works to ensure that projects can proceed as intended during the year for which they are budgeted.

**Public Consultation Process**

Preliminary results for the municipal services survey were distributed. It was noted that this was provided for information purposes only, and that amended final information will

be made available by the end of the week. In addition, survey comments are currently being consolidated and will be distributed to Council by the end of the week.

There was some discussion with regards to holding public meetings for the budget consultation. Council consensus was that a central location be used for these meetings, recognizing that we are now a City, and we need to move forward in that manner. Council directed that as the process moves forward, the public meetings be scheduled accordingly

### **2008 Budget Priorities**

Council agreed that the existing process of Council members distributing priorities direct to the appropriate Managers for inclusion in the budget process be continued at this time. Council further directed that administration look towards building on this existing process.

Some discussion ensued regarding general priorities in the budget process. These included:

- Asking City employees how to better cut costs and improve service delivery, possibly through an employee survey. Some discussion ensued on whether or not employees would be required to provide their names with their input, or if the opportunity for anonymous input would be accepted, as well as whether responses should be sent directly to Council or Managers. Council directed administration to come back with a plan to allow employees input into the budget process.
- Providing increased communication with ratepayers through ensuring a broader base of ratepayers was included in the consultations, as opposed to hearing only from special interest groups about specific issues. Ideas included personal invitations to individuals from organizations who would be interested in the budget process (for example, the BIZ, Harbourtown Centre, LOTW District Property Owners, etc.) Council direction was for administration to make every effort to ensure transparency with all taxpayers, not just certain special interest groups.

### **2008 Budget Scheduling**

A draft budget schedule was distributed for Council information. It was noted that the proposed schedule is tight, and that as Council adds increased components, such as increased communication, it may ultimately result in a shift to the targets and deadlines included in the current schedule. Council agreed in principal with the schedule as distributed, however agreed that the schedule is a moving target and may need to be modified based on budget factors, for example, the PSB review, unknown info from agencies funded, etc.

**Preliminary Major Impacts for 2008**

A preliminary analysis of major impacts to the 2008 budget was distributed for information purposes.

**Other Items – Reduction to Large Industrial Tax Rates**

Some general discussion ensued on reducing the large industrial tax rates in accordance with the direction in the City's Strategic Plan. Council agreed that consideration of this option should be dealt with during the 2008 budget process.

**In Camera Discussion**

Moved by Councillor Poirier and seconded by Councillor Cuthbert that the meeting be moved to in camera at 12:15 p.m. to discuss property related issues and personnel matters about identifiable individuals.

The in camera session of the meeting was completed at 12:50 p.m. There was no action required as a result of the in camera discussion.

The meeting closed at 12:50 p.m.