

## Budget Committee Minutes

**Meeting Number 5**

**November 20, 2020, 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM**

**Live streamed**

Members	Councillor Amanda Collucci, Chair Councillor Andrew Keyes, Vice-Chair Deputy Mayor Don Hamilton Regional Councillor Jack Heath	Councillor Keith Irish Councillor Reid McAlpine Councillor Karen Rea Councillor Khalid Usman
Regrets	Mayor Frank Scarpitti (ex-officio)	
Roll Call	Regional Councillor Jim Jones Councillor Isa Lee Andy Taylor, Chief Administrative Officer Trinela Cane, Commissioner, Corporate Services Arvin Prasad, Commissioner Development Services Claudia Storto, City Solicitor and Director of Human Resources Joel Lustig, Treasurer Bryan Frois, Chief of Staff	Mark Visser, Senior Manager of Financial Strategy & Investments Kimberley Kitteringham, City Clerk Morgan Jones, Director, Operations Laura Gold, Council and Committee Coordinator Lisa Chen, Senior Manager, Financial Planning & Reporting, Financial Services Shane Manson, Senior Manager, Revenue & Property Taxation Janet Ashfield, Manager of Human Resources, Employee & Labor Relations Health & Safety Christy Lehman, Licensing and Animal Services Coordinator

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### 1. CALL TO ORDER

The Budget Committee convened at 9:03 AM with Councillor Amanda Collucci in the Chair.

**2. DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY INTEREST**

There were no disclosures of pecuniary interest.

**3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Moved by Councillor Keith Irish

Seconded by Councillor Andrew Keyes

That the November 17, 2020 Budget Committee Minutes be approved as presented.

**Carried**

**4. WATER AND WASTE WATER UPDATE AND TAX PAYMENT PLANS**

Joel Lustig, Treasurer advised that York Region will now be approving its Water and Wastewater Rate at a Special Council meeting on December 10<sup>th</sup>, which is after Markham approves its 2021 Budget. Staff anticipated that York Region's Water and Wastewater Rate will be 2.9%, and requested that the Committee approve the City's rate increase by the same percentage, and should the Region's rate decrease, Markham's rate will be adjusted accordingly.

The Committee discussed flowing through the Region's rate increase on the water supply (wholesale) portion of the City's rate while keeping the City's expenditure portion of the rate increase to 0%. Staff advised that should the Region approve a 2.9% increase, the City's blended rate increase would be 2%, with a \$1.2M impact to the annual reserve funds contribution.

Committee was committed to keeping Markham's expenditure portion of the 2021 Water and Wastewater rate at 0%, and flowing through only the Region's rate increase on the water supply portion of the rate.

Moved by Councillor Reid McAplene

Seconded by Councillor Deputy Mayor Don Hamilton

The wholesale component of the 2021 Markham water and wastewater rate be adjusted by the corresponding water and wastewater rate increase approved by the Region of York.

**Carried**

Staff also responded to inquiries from the Committee on tax payment plan options. Before and after COVID, the City has always provided flexible property tax payment plans for residents and businesses. On average, payment plans range from six to twelve months. In accordance with the *Municipal Act*, the maximum amount of interest the City can charge on unpaid property tax is 15% per year or 1.25% per month.

## **5. LEGISLATIVE SERVICES - ANIMAL SERVICES DELIVERY MODEL**

Martha Pettit, Deputy Clerk provided a new presentation on the Legislative Services - Animal Service Delivery Model in response to questions raised on this matter at the November 17, 2020 Budget Committee meeting. Staff provided the following feedback to inquiries from the Committee:

### Hours of Service

Staff advised that reducing the number of full time Animal Care Officers would lead to a reduction in the current service level, which could include a reduction in the hours of coverage and being unable to transfer wildlife to Shades of Hope, the City's Wildlife Services provider.

### Current Budget versus Proposed Budget

Staff reminded Committee Members that the OSPCA would no longer be providing animal enforcement services to Ontario municipalities. The current cost of providing the City's Animal Services sheltering and enforcement program via a contract with the OSPCA is \$578,000 per annum, which is one of the lowest per resident in Ontario. Staff provided that the OSPCA had advised prior to announcing they'd no longer provide enforcement services, that they had undervalued this service and the costs would be raised were they to continue offering this service to the City. The cost of bringing the Animal Care Unit enforcement program in-house adds an additional \$213,253 in 2021.

### Salaries

The salaries of the proposed 7 Animal Care Unit staff (inclusive of benefits) were determined in consultation with the City's Human Resources Department. The number of staff included in staff's proposal represents the same number of staff that the OSPCA has utilized to provide the City's animal enforcement services for the past 20 years.

### Role of the Supervisor

Some of the responsibilities of the Animal Care Supervisor are to create the work schedule, ensure the safety of the officers, ensure a quality level of service is being provided, provide feedback on whether the animal services model is working, manage the performance of the officers, and manage the Shades of Hope and OSPCA contracts.

### City of Vaughan Animal Services

The City of Vaughan currently provides its Animal Services in-house, and does not provide wildlife service. It refers all of its wildlife calls to Toronto Wildlife. It also provides Animal Services to Richmond Hill, but does not have the capacity to serve any additional municipalities without expanding its facility. Vaughan is currently exploring expanding its facility.

### Partnering with York Region or Other Municipalities to Provide Animal Services

Staff will continue to explore opportunities to partner with York Region or other municipalities to provide for future shared domestic animal services delivery.

### Markham Providing Animal Shelter and Enforcement Services

Staff advised they are open to exploring different models of providing Animal Services. Staff noted that a significant initial expenditure would be required if the City were to open its own animal shelter.

### Wildlife Services

Most municipalities do not pay for wildlife rehabilitation. In the last several years, Toronto Wildlife has also started to request compensation for its services. In 2012, the Study of Animal Service Delivery Model recommended that Markham be a leader and expand its Wildlife Services to include rehabilitation.

### Provincial Animal Welfare Services

The Provincial Animal Welfare Services are called when the City has a severe animal welfare case, but it does not replace municipal animal services.

### Alternatives Funding Strategies

Staff agreed to explore alternative funding strategies to address the funding shortfall and to mitigate a future tax rate increase, including increasing revenue from animal licensing fees.

Committee discussed how animal licensing revenue should be reported in the Budget.

Moved by Councillor Karen Rea

Seconded by Deputy Mayor Don Hamilton

That, in accordance with Section 239 (2) (d) (f) of the Municipal Act, Budget Committee resolve into a confidential session at 10:40 AM to discuss matters pertaining to labour relations or employee negotiations and receive advice that is subject to solicitor-client privilege, including communications necessary for that purpose.

Carried

Moved by Deputy Mayor Hamilton  
 Seconded by Councillor Keith Irish

That the Budget Committee rise from the confidential session at 11:31 AM and return to open session.

Carried

Committee requested that its recommendation on the Legislative Services – Animal Services Model go directly to Council.

The Committee discussed the proposed staff recommendations and put forward various amendments. The Committee consented to vote on Clause #4 separately.

Moved by Councillor Keith Irish  
 Seconded by Councillor Reid McAlpine

1. That Council approve an increase in the 2021 operating budget for Animal Services of **\$120,652** to accommodate the change in service delivery; and,
2. That Council approve a new 2021 capital budget request of \$142,464 for the procurement of 2 animal care enforcement vehicles with funding as follows: \$124,769 from the Ramp-Up Reserve and \$17,695 from donations; and,
3. That staff be authorized to enter into a 3 year contract (plus possible 2 year extension) with the OSPCA for domestic animal sheltering services and CAEC management services, subject to the satisfaction of the City Clerk and City Solicitor; and
4. **(Voted on Separately)**
5. That staff be directed to continue to explore opportunities with other municipalities, **York Region**, and **private providers** for future shared domestic animal services delivery; and,
6. **That staff report back on options to increase revenue through user fees to help mitigate the cost;** and further,
7. That staff be directed to do all things necessary to give effect to this resolution.

Carried

Moved by Deputy Mayor Don Hamilton

Seconded by Councillor Andrew Keyes

4. That staff be authorized to hire 1 full-time Animal Care Supervisor, **2** full-time Animal Care Officers, and **4** part-time Animal Care Officers at a cost of **\$390,364** for 2021 and **\$472,189** annually for 2022 for the delivery of the City's animal enforcement services, **and, that subject to clause 5 of this resolution, that Staff report back after one year regarding the cross training of Officers within the Legislative Services and Corporate Communications Department to determine if further efficiencies can be achieved; and,**

Carried

Main Motion as Amended

1. That Council approve an increase in the 2021 operating budget for Animal Services of \$120,652 to accommodate the change in service delivery; and,
2. That Council approve a new 2021 capital budget request of \$142,464 for the procurement of 2 animal care enforcement vehicles with funding as follows: \$124,769 from the Ramp-Up Reserve and \$17,695 from donations; and,
3. That staff be authorized to enter into a 3 year contract (plus possible 2 year extension) with the OSPCA for domestic animal sheltering services and CAEC management services, subject to the satisfaction of the City Clerk and City Solicitor; and,
4. That staff be authorized to hire 1 Fulltime Animal Care Supervisor, 2 Fulltime Animal Care Officers, and 4 Part Time Animal Care Officers at a cost of \$390,364 for 2021 and \$472,189 annually for 2022 for the delivery of the City's animal enforcement services, and, that subject to clause 5 of this resolution, that Staff report back after one year regarding the cross training of Officers within the Legislative Services and Corporate Communications Department to determine if further efficiencies can be achieved; and,
5. That staff be directed to continue to explore opportunities with other municipalities, York Region, and private providers for future shared domestic animal services delivery; and,
6. That staff report back on options to increase revenue through user fees to help mitigate the cost; and further,
7. That staff be directed to do all things necessary to give effect to this resolution.

Carried

**6. NEW BUSINESS**

There was no new business.

**7. NEXT MEETING DATE**

The next meeting of Budget Committee will be held on November 27, 2020, if required.

**8. ADJOURNMENT**

The Budget Committee adjourned at 12:56 PM.