



**SIXTH MEETING OF THE
2015 BUDGET COMMITTEE
CANADA ROOM, MARKHAM CIVIC CENTRE
MARCH 9, 2015**

MINUTES

Attendance:

Members Present: Mayor Frank Scarpitti (ex-officio) (afternoon session only) Deputy Mayor Heath (ex-officio) Councillor Logan Kanapathi, Chair Councillor Amanda Collucci, Vice-Chair Regional Councillor Nirmala Armstrong Councillor Alex Chiu Councillor Don Hamilton Councillor Alan Ho (afternoon session only) Councillor Karen Rea Guests: Regional Councillor Jim Jones Councillor Valerie Burke	Staff Present: Andy Taylor, Chief Administrative Officer Jim Baird, Commissioner of Development Services Trinela Cane, Commissioner of Corporate Services Brenda Librecz, Commissioner of Community & Fire Services Joel Lustig, Treasurer Moe Hosseini-Ara, Director of Culture A. Brown, Director of Engineering Andrea Tang, Manager of Financial Planning Laura Gold, Council/Committee Coordinator
--	---

The Budget Committee convened at 9:15 am with Councillor Kanapathi presiding as Chair.

1. Approval of the Minutes

Moved by Councillor Karen Rea

Seconded by Councillor Don Hamilton

That the Minutes from the February 18, 2015 Budget Committee be approved as presented.

CARRIED

2. 2015 Operating Budget

Andrea Tang provided an update on the proposed 2015 operating budget. The following feedback was provided:

- Look for additional opportunities to reduce the library budget in 2016;
- Review the performance of existing City programs and look for opportunities to generate more revenue;
- Review the parking by-law for revenue generating opportunities after the new Administrative Municipal Parking program is put in place;
- Communicate clearly to residents upcoming changes to Markham's parking enforcement program, for example if by-law officers will be able to take a photo of parking infringements and mail the parking ticket;
- Continue to work on clearly communicating parking regulations to Markham residents;
- Look into whether the City can issue tickets to driver making illegal U turns;
- Consider capping the number of Councillors attending the Association of Municipalities of Ontario and the Federation of Canadian Municipalities conferences to three or four per year.

Staff advised that Markham's parking fines are competitive with other municipalities and that they are currently focusing on generating more revenue from its business licensing program.

3. Stormwater Fee

Andrea Tang provided an update on the the new stormwater fee introduced in 2015, as a 30 year initiative to improve storm drainage capacity and limit flooding risks in urban areas. Council approved a \$47 annual fee per residential property effective 2015. The fee will be included as a separate fee on the 2015 tax bill. Staff will conduct a cost benefit analysis to determine the most viable option for future fee collection. The non-residential stormwater fee is delayed to 2016 until the business community has been consulted on the methods of apportioning the non-residential share of the City wide flood control program.

4. Update on the 2015 Capital Budget Requests Miller Avenue Extension

Alan Brown provided a presentation on the need and justification for the Miller Avenue extension to Kennedy Road. The road is required to provide east-west traffic relief and to support planned growth for Markham Centre. The preferred road alignment for Markham Centre will be brought back to the Development Services Committee in late 2015.

The Committee discussed whether the Miller Avenue extension should be postponed. Some Members felt that the City should refrain from spending any money on the project until the vision for Markham Centre is complete and careful consideration has been given to the usage of the remaining Markham Centre land, as land values in the area have increased substantially in recent years. Other Members

supported proceeding with the design of the road due to the challenges the City has faced getting approval of Environmental Assessments for proposed road connections in the Markham Centre area, and to provide east-west traffic relief in the area in a timely manner, as it would take 2 or 3 years for construction to start after the approval of the road design.

Councillor Karen Rea requested a copy of Markham's Transportation Study. It was also suggested that staff itemize the capital costs of building the road network for Markham Centre so that projects can be prioritized.

Moved Deputy Mayor Jack Heath

Seconded by Councillor Alex Chiu

That the Budget Committee approve capital budget item no. 15061 design; and

That Budget Committee defer consideration of capital budget item no. 15059 to the 2016 Capital Budget review.

CARRIED

Moved by Councillor Alex Chiu

Seconded by Regional Councillor Nirmala Armstrong

That the Budget Committee add the staff ramp-up for the expansion of the Milliken Mills Library expansion back to the 2015 Operating Budget.

CARRIED

5. Deputation on the Celebrate Markham Grants

Linda Briggs, Markham Jazz Festival, provided a deputation on why its Celebrate Markham Grant should be increased. It was highlighted that new City event charges add up to about \$3K in additional expenses for the Jazz Festival. The event brings tourist to Markham and it provides a local attraction for Markham residents. The event is currently held on Main Street Unionville. Jazz performances are held at participating locations/hot spots in Markham the week prior to the event.

It was suggested that a participating location/hotspot in Thornhill be added to the Jazz Festivals pre-event festivities, and that the organizing committee consider rotating the location of the event on an annual basis from Main Street Unionville to Main street Markham. It was also noted that York Region Police is currently looking at adding the cost of paid duty officers for municipal events to its budget.

Moved by Councillor Don Hamilton

Seconded by Regional Councillor Nirmala Armstrong

That the deputation and presentation from Linda Briggs, Markham Jazz Festival be received.

CARRIED

6. Celebrate Markham Grants

Andrea Tang presented the proposed 2015 Celebrate Markham Grants.

The Committee discussed the proposed grant amount of \$60K for the Markham Arts Council and \$60K for the Kindred Spirit Orchestra, and whether these grant amounts should be reduced. Members suggested deducting the \$19K advanced to the Markham Arts Council in 2014, from its proposed 2015 grant of 60K. Staff advised that this would be in contrary to the Council resolution approved in 2014. A breakdown of the \$66K provided to the Markham Arts Council in 2014 was presented to the Committee.

The Committee discussed whether it should provide a Celebrate Markham Grant to the Tony Roman Hockey Tournament, as the event will not be held in 2015. The Committee hoped that the event would continue to be held in the future and wanted to hold a place in the budget for the event. The event is provided with a Celebrate Markham Grants Program, as it is a local event rather than a national event.

It was questioned if the Thornhill Village Festival will be held in 2015, as they have not submitted an application for the Celebrate Markham grant yet, and a grant of \$10K is being allocated to the festival. It was confirmed that the event will be held in 2015 and that the Organizing Committee is very appreciative of the annual grant provided by the City.

It was questioned if the Canada Day event still has an operating deficit. Staff advised that the Canada Day event no longer has a deficit. In 2014 the event ended with a surplus of revenue over expenditures.

Further discussion on the Celebrate Markham grants was deferred until after the workshop on the Celebrate Markham Grant Policy being held this afternoon.

Moved by Councillor Amanda Collucci

Seconded by Councillor Karen Rea

That the Budget Committee recess at 12:09 p.m.

CARRIED

The Budget Committee re-convened at 4:09 pm with Councillor Logan Kanapathi presiding as Chair.

7. Continuation of the Discussion on the Celebrate Markham Grants

The Committee further discussed the Tony Roman Hockey Tournament and agreed to continue to allocate \$5,400 to the tournament.

Moved by Mayor Frank Scarpitti

Seconded by Regional Councillor Nirmala Armstrong

That the Budget Committee approve presenting a proposed tax rate of 2.5% at the March 23, 2015 Budget Public Meeting; and,

That a Budget Committee meeting be scheduled the week of March 23, 2015.

CARRIED

8. Adjournment

The Budget Committee adjourned at 4:21 p.m.