



**FIFTH MEETING OF THE
2015 BUDGET COMMITTEE
COUNCIL CHAMBER, MARKHAM CIVIC CENTRE
February 18, 2015**

MINUTES

Attendance:

Members Present: Deputy Mayor Heath (ex-officio) Regional Councillor Jim Jones Councillor Logan Kanapathi, Chair Councillor Amanda Collucci, Vice-Chair Councillor Alex Chiu Councillor Don Hamilton Councillor Alan Ho Councillor Karen Rea Guests: Councillor Valerie Burke Regrets: Regional Councillor Nirmala Armstrong	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 Biju Karumanchery, Acting Director of Planning & Urban Design Dennis Flaherty, Director of Communications Bob Nicholson, Director of Operations Andrea Tang, Manager of Financial Planning Laura Gold, Council/Committee Coordinator
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The Budget Committee convened at 9:03 am with Councillor Kanapathi presiding as Chair.

1. Approval of Budget Committee Minutes

Moved by Councillor Hamilton

Seconded by Councillor Collucci

That the February 4, 9, and 10, 2015 Budget Committee Minutes be approved as presented.

CARRIED

2. Review of Responses to Questions from Previous Meetings

The Committee reviewed the responses to questions from the previous Budget Committee Meetings. A handout with staff responses was circulated with the agenda package.

The Committee discussed the need to prioritize unfunded capital projects. Once the projects are prioritized, funding sources can be identified for the priority projects.

3. Continuation of the Review of the 2015 Councillor Budget Requests

#	Councillor Request	Discussion	Approval of Staff Recommendation
32	Winter Maintenance of Pathways in areas of high traffic	It was noted that residents are increasingly requesting that pathways in high traffic areas be cleared during the winter.	Yes
33	Wild Life Services	There was a discussion on wildlife conflicts increasing in East Markham and on the proposed new wildlife facility to be built in the Rouge Park. The City has helped Toronto Wildlife seek sponsorship opportunities for the project. It was noted that the City is very satisfied with its contract with Toronto Wildlife.	Yes
34	Thornhill Cemetery East Gateway and Fence	It was clarified that the request is to enhance the Thornhill Cemetery east gateway and fence rather than replace the fence. Staff advised they would engage the Cemetery Board and Heritage Markham regarding the possibility of making improvements to the gateway. This request would have funding implications if approved by the Committee.	Staff will investigate this request further.
35	German Mills Settler's Park		Yes
36	Invasive Species Management Program	Staff advised that City has an Invasive Species Management Program. The program is run by Staff and is operated by volunteer groups. To expand the program more staff resources would be required to manage additional volunteer groups. A more comprehensive review of the program would need to be undertaken prior to	Yes

		<p>making any future goals for the program.</p> <p>A Member suggested that residents would benefit from more education on invasive species.</p>	
37	Refurbishment of the Fireside Lounge, Thornhill Community Centre.	<p>There was a discussion on revitalizing the Fireside Lounge, Thornhill Community Centre. The revitalization plan should include having versatile lighting to accommodate multiple usages of the space.</p> <p>The Committee recommended that the City refrain from spending any money on upgrading the lounge at this time and directed staff to develop a plan to revitalize the lounge. The project could then be reviewed and prioritized against the list of other unfunded capital projects.</p>	Yes
38	Tennis Courts in Upper Greensborough	Staff were requested to provide Councillor Campbell with the location of the proposed future tennis courts for the Upper Greensborough area.	Yes
39	Beautification of Bur Oak Avenue	There was a discussion on the staff proposal to place barrels on Bur Oak Avenue on the condition that the businesses assume the responsibility of watering of the barrels.	Yes
40	Establishment of an Off Leash Park in Markham East	<p>The Committee discussed the need for an off leash dog park in East Markham.</p> <p>A Member advised that the City has asked Parks Canada to put 2 to 3 off leash dog parks in the Rouge National Park. Getting the off leash dog parks will be dependent on funding. The proposed locations of the proposed parks will be identified in the next few months. Other locations suggested for an off leash park in the East end of Markham included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On the North, West corner of Delmark and Highway 407 on the Ministry of Transportation Lands (Deputy Mayor Heath will look into this possibility with Councillor Karen Rea); • Milne Park; <p>Staff were requested to see if Milne Park was ever looked at as a potential location for an off leash dog park.</p>	Yes

41	Additional Snow Clearing for Cornell Business Area		Yes
42	Tree Planting along the Go Track on Castlemore Avenue beside the new Mosque Site		Yes
43	Shade Gazebo for Randall Park	Staff advised that a process for evaluating park amenity requests for existing parks is required in order to add/revitalize existing park amenities in a fair and equitable manner.	Yes
44	Pathway Extension for Randall Park		Yes

Moved by Deputy Mayor Heath

Seconded by Councillor Amanda Collucci

That the Budget Committee approve the staff recommendations for Councillor Requests Nos. 32-44 (Excluding Item No. 34); and,

That staff report back on Councillor Request No. 34.

CARRIED

4. Status Update on the Operating Budget

Andrea Tang presented a status update on the proposed 2015 operating Budget. The changes to the operating budget were highlighted and explained to the Committee.

Some of the feedback from the Committee included:

- Evaluate the cost and benefits of Councillors participating in the business mission trips;
- Increase the transparency of the library budget and salaries;
- Look into reducing the library budget and into the impact it would have on library services;
- Hire the Water Conservation Specialist on a one year contractual basis. The job responsibilities included: (75%) of the time educating the public on how to conserve

water; and (25%) of the time analysing water conservation trends and the impacts they have on the City's water systems.

- Provide a workshop on the proposed water program that was created by staff (do not wait until the Region launches its program).

The Committee asked if the City had obtained any funds from the Province for the ice storm. Staff advised that the City will be receiving an interim payment of 2.4M from the Province. Staff are hopeful to get 100% of the claim.

5. Next Steps

It was suggested that a representative from the Library Board come to the next Budget Committee or to the General Committee to discuss the Library's budget and opportunities to reduce the budget. The Committee directed staff to reduce the tax rate increase from 2.98% to 2.5% or less.

6. Adjournment

The Budget Committee adjourned at 11:44 am.