

THE REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF NIAGARA

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

REPORT 1-2005

The Municipal Council of the Regional Municipality of Niagara met in the Council Chamber, Regional Municipal Building, Thorold, Ontario, on Thursday, January 20, 2005, commencing at 4:05 p.m.

ATTENDANCE

Council: Regional Chair Partington; Councillors Almas; Angelone; Bailey; Baty; Bentley; Bodner; Brock; Burroughs; Casselman; Collins; Eke; Gabriel; Goulbourne; Harry; Heit; Hildreth; Hodgson; Leavens; Marshall; Martin; Mastroianni; Redekop; Rigby; Salci; Saracino; Smeaton; Timms; Trombetta; Zimmerman.

Staff: Messrs. Trojan, Chief Administrative Officer; Bacchus, Commissioner, Corporate Services; Cambray, Commissioner, Planning & Development; Ms. Gilroy, Regional Clerk/Associate Director of Corporate Strategy; Messrs. Neville, Commissioner, Public Works; Nicol, Commissioner, Human Resources; Dr. Sider, Associate Medical Officer of Health; Mr. Ventresca, Acting Commissioner, Community Services; Ms. Pilon, Legislative Assistant.

Staff
(Part-time): Mr. Bowles, Executive Assistant; Mr. Brcic, Director, Water & Wastewater; Dr. Klooz, Associate Commissioner of Health; Ms. Crowley, Current Budget Analyst; Mr. Jones, Director, Administrative Services, P.H.; Mr. Kellendonk, Associate Director, Water & Wastewater Operations; Mr. Lockyer, Treasurer/Director, Financial & Accounting Services; Ms. Murphy, Manager, Current and Capital Budgets; Mr. Roach, Manager, Financial Services, P.W.

Others: Police Chief Southall, Niagara Regional Police Service; Ms. George, Accounting/Finance Manager, Niagara Regional Police Service; Mr. Burt, General Manager, Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority. Mr. Gedge, CEO, NETCorp.; Mr. Brickell, Smart Growth-Brownfields, NETCorp.

CALL TO ORDER

1. Regional Chair Partington called the meeting to order at 4:05 p.m.

RESOLVE INTO COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

2. Moved by Councillor Burroughs
Seconded by Councillor Mastroianni

That this Council do now resolve into Committee of the Whole.

Carried.

3. **CURRENT BUDGET – PUBLIC MEETING**

In accordance with the requirements of the Municipal Act, the Region of Niagara invited public input on the 2005 Current Budget for the Committee of the Whole and Council meeting on December 16, 2004. At that meeting, Regional Council made a public statement that consideration of the 2005 Current Budget would continue at the January 20, 2005 meeting.

Niagara Residential Energy Efficiency Project (REEP)

Mr. Stuart Lord, Program Director, Niagara Residential Energy Efficiency Project (REEP) advised Regional Council that the revised contribution request toward the creation of a Niagara REEP has been reduced to \$10,000 with a \$35 contribution per home energy evaluation to encourage the take up for the program.

Regional Chair Partington following Mr. Lord's address, asked whether there was anyone else who wished to speak to the Current Budget; there being no responses, the Committee of the Whole meeting continued.

2005 CURRENT BUDGET – UPDATE

4. Councillor Martin, Chair of the Corporate and Financial Services Committee and Mr. Bacchus, Commissioner of Corporate Services provided Regional Council with an update on the 2005 Current Budget.

Mr. Bacchus noted that the 2005 Current Budget has been prepared in accordance with Council's comprehensive Business Plan, in order to provide optimal access to Niagara; balanced, planned land use; environmental stewardship; affordable service excellence and satisfying work; healthy, safe and productive communities and sustainable economic development.

Regional Council was provided with Niagara's Economic Highlights, showing the figures from 2000 to 2004 for Assessment; Population; Unemployment Rates; Housing Starts and Assessment Growth; as well as the challenges Niagara faces through lower than average assessment growth; income per household; per capita assessment and the cost pressures from new standards, regulations and downloading; cost impact from tourism, border proximity and lack of support from higher levels of government; disproportionate share of social services costs and lower municipal revenue growth.

Mr. Bacchus reviewed the modernization of the budget; the modernizing of government; the revisions made to the current budget since December 2, 2004; the proposed adjustments (CAO 27-2004) that took into account the ranking exercise and the service delivery alternatives and the decisions required by the Committee of the Whole this evening.

Mr. Bacchus provided the Committee of the Whole with the 2005 Budget Summary before the proposed adjustments (CAO 27-2004) illustrating a tax levy burden after assessment growth of 6.68%.

CLOSED COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

5. Moved by Councillor Zimmerman
Seconded by Councillor Eke

That this Committee of the Whole do now move into Closed Committee of the Whole for the purposes of receiving information of a confidential nature relating to financial matters.

Carried.

6. Department Reduction Template – Closed Session

Moved by Councillor Martin
Seconded by Councillor Eke

That the Department Reduction Template – Closed Session, January 20, 2005, Items one (1) through eight (8), be approved and eliminated from the respective department budgets.

Carried.

CLOSED COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE, RISE AND REPORT

7. Moved by Councillor Martin
Seconded by Councillor Trombetta

That this Committee of the Whole do now rise with report.

Carried.

8. CMT-Endorsed Reductions

Moved by Councillor Martin
Seconded by Councillor Zimmerman

That all of the CMT-endorsed reductions totaling \$6,268,385, as proposed in Report CAO 27-2004, be approved and adopted.

Carried.

Conflict of Interest

Councillor Goulbourne declared an indirect pecuniary interest with respect to the Current Budget 2005, Visualization Project, as he is employed by Niagara College, and he therefore took no part in the discussion of, or voting on, this matter.

9. Visualization Project – Grant Request
Niagara Economic and Tourism Corporation

Moved by Councillor Martin
Seconded by Councillor Eke

That the grant request for the visualization project in the amount of \$100,000 in the budget for the Niagara Economic and Tourism Corporation, be denied; and

That staff pursue other creative opportunities with Niagara College to move the visualization project initiative forward.

Carried.

10. Economic Promotion – Grant Request
Niagara Economic and Tourism Corporation

Moved by Councillor Martin
Seconded by Councillor Casselman

That the grant request for the economic promotion in the amount of \$95,000 in the budget for the Niagara Economic and Tourism Corporation, be approved.

Carried.

11. Niagara Residential Energy Efficiency Project (REEP) Grant Request

Moved by Councillor Martin
Seconded by Councillor Eke

That the grant request for the R.E.E.P. program, be denied.

Carried.

12. Public Health Department Budget

Moved by Councillor Martin
Seconded by Councillor Bentley

That the Public Health Department be allowed to increase their budget by 2.7%, but that the hiring of staff, which is included in the budget, be phased over 2005, resulting in savings of \$215,000 which will be used to reduce the levy in 2005, for an overall increase of \$31,000 or 0.34%.

Carried.

13. Smart Growth Grant Request

Moved by Councillor Martin
Seconded by Councillor Trombetta

That the grant request for Smart Growth of \$250,000 be reduced and approved at \$125,000.

Carried.

14. Final 2005 Current Budget Total

Taking into consideration the reductions approved at this meeting (January 20, 2005), the final 2005 Current Budget Total impact on the tax levy is 3.87%.

Mr. Bacchus advised the Committee of the Whole that the revised figures will be distributed.

Moved by Councillor Martin
Seconded by Councillor Harry

That Regional Council approve the 2005 Current Budget, estimates and associated by-law relating to the Regional Departments Boards and Agencies:

Net Expenditure	\$265,161,304
Net Revenues	(\$13,475,151)
Net Tax Levy	\$251,686,153
Tax Levy Change 2004/05	\$16,621,327

Carried.

CORRESPONDENCE & INFORMATION

15. Niagara Children's Safety Village (NCSV)

Moved by Councillor Smeaton
Seconded by Councillor Harry

That the Memorandum from Councillor Smeaton and Mr. Mike Trojan, Chief Administrative Office, (January 19, 2005) respecting the Niagara Children's Safety Village (NCSV), be received; and

That the further meeting proposed in the memorandum be approved.

Carried.

16. Moved by Councillor Martin
Seconded by Councillor Leavens

That the Memorandum from Mr. Shafee Bacchus, Commissioner of Corporate Services, (January 14, 2005) respecting Staff Directions, 2005 Budget Review Committee, be received.

Carried.

17. Year End Forecast and Preliminary Report on
Required Transfers for the Year Ended December 31, 2004
Current Operations - Amended

Moved by Councillor Martin
Seconded by Councillor Leavens

That Report CSD 17-2005 - *Amended*, January 20, 2005, respecting the Year End Forecast and Preliminary Report on Required Transfers for the Year Ended December 31, 2004 Current Operations, be received for information.

Carried.

18. 2005 Current Budget Deliberations
Closed Session Budgetary Reductions for Consideration

Moved by Councillor Martin
Seconded by Councillor Leavens

That the Memorandum from Mr. Shafee Bacchus, Commissioner of Corporate Services (January 20, 2005), respecting the 2005 Current Budget Deliberations, Closed Session Budgetary Reductions for Consideration, be received.

Carried.

RISE FROM COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

19. Moved by Councillor Martin
Seconded by Councillor Smeaton

That this Council do now rise from Committee of the Whole.

Carried.

STAFF DIRECTIONS

That staff be directed to:

- add document numbers on the memorandums being distributed to Council in the future.

ADJOURNMENT

The Committee of the Whole adjourned at 6:45 p.m.

Peter Partington
Regional Chairman

Janet Pilon
Legislative Assistant

Pam Gilroy
Regional Clerk/Associate Director
of Corporate Strategy