



**Village of Chester Commission
Committee of the Whole (COW) Meeting
Zoom Video Conference
Wednesday, April 22, 2020 – 7:00 pm**

Attendance: Bill Nauss, Commission Chair; Nancy Hatch, Commission Vice Chair; Jo-Ann Grant, Commissioner; Martin Hiltz, Commissioner; Dennis Egyedy, Clerk Treasurer; Maxine Veinot, Recording Secretary; Everett Hiltz, Fire Chief

Absent: Michael Heisler, Commissioner

1.0 Call to Order

Chair Nauss called the April 22, 2020, COW meeting of the Village of Chester Commission to order at 7:03 pm.

Chair Nauss stated the Village should send a note of condolence to Colchester Municipality and the local RCMP office expressing the Village's condolences. Commissioners agreed.

2.0 Public Forum

As the meeting was a Video Conference, no public were in attendance.

3.0 Agenda Approval and Additions

MOTION #20-189: Commissioner Grant moved; Commissioner Hiltz seconded:
The approval of the agenda as presented.

Unanimously Carried

4.0 Clerk's Report

None

5.0 New/Other Business

a) Draft Budget 2020/21

Chair Nauss stated that if any Commissioners have any questions outside of the meetings, they should be directed to the Chair. He will discuss their concerns with the Clerk Treasurer.

Chair Nauss asked the Clerk Treasurer for clarification on budget items; commissioner honorarium \$11,000.00, office rent \$20,000.00, administrative wages \$123,000.00, medical insurance \$8,000.00, and insurance \$12,000.00.

Clerk Treasurer Egyedy stated that commissioner honorarium actual amount of \$10,400.00 was increased by \$600.00 for cover any unforeseen increases. Actual office rent for the year is \$18,630.00

however, rent increases start as of January 1st in any year. There is a modest \$1,370.00 for any increases or charges in the current or next calendar year. Administrative wages were budgeted at \$130,000.00 which includes a base wage of \$105,761.47 + EI \$2,865.18 + CPP \$5,631.46 + severance fund \$6,300.00 + WCB \$1,985.56 + COLA \$2,327.00 for an actual total of \$124,871.17. The additional \$5,128.83 is to cover off extra wages for elections or additional staffing for special projects. Medical insurance of \$8,000.00 is the cost of Blue Cross. Insurance costs under Administration for \$12,000.00 had an actual cost of \$11,500.00 which covers various buildings such as the Lido pool/washrooms, signs, office furniture, computers, copiers, etc.

Chair Nauss felt the splitting of some costs between the village accounts and the fire accounts should be 50/50 as opposed to 60/40 or 65/35 to ensure the outside area is not paying more than the village.

Clerk Treasurer Egyedy stated the split was for the share of workload expenses and not the tax rate. Egyedy suggested that the surplus of \$18,487.00 in the 2020/21 budget may be transferred to the operating reserves which now stands at \$177,964.81 as of December 31, 2019. The funds may be used as a tax rebate for residents having difficulty during this COVID 19. He spoke with the finance department at MODC which has a tax exemption for low income households. Egyedy recommended that the Village develop a tax exemption or rebate policy.

Fire Chief Hiltz reviewed budget items that were proposed by the fire department and the rationale for the requests. Chief Hiltz requested the honorariums be increased by 5%. The recommended changes were as follows:

	Clerk Budget	Fire Budget	Change
Firefighters Honorarium	\$45,000.00	\$50,000.00	+\$5,000.00
Uniforms	3,000.00	6,000.00	+ 3,000.00
Firefighters banquet	3,000.00	5,000.00	+ 2,000.00
Communications Contract	4,000.00	5,000.00	+ 1,000.00
Pagers	3,000.00	4,000.00	+ 1,000.00
Radio Upgrades	3,000.00	5,000.00	+ 2,000.00
Vehicle Repairs	20,000.00	25,000.00	+ 5,000.00
Boat Maintenance	3,500.00	4,000.00	+ 500.00
Consumables	2,000.00	4,000.00	+ 2,000.00

Commissioner Hiltz left the meeting at 8:17 pm, for the firefighter honorariums.

Commissioner Hiltz rejoined the meeting, at 8:23 pm.

Chief Hiltz stated that the eDraulic Combi Tool \$21,000.00, SCBA Breathing Apparatus \$50,000.00, and Fall Arrest/Stabilization Upgrade \$8,500.00 are Capital expenses and should not in be in the operating budget. It appears that every Clerk Treasurer has a different perspective of operating versus capital.

Egyedy reminded the Chief that he has 30 years experience in Municipal government and knows the difference between capital and operating. The final decision lies with the Auditor.

Clerk Treasurer Egyedy suggested that the increases of \$21,500.00 in the fire budget will be covered by the projected surplus of \$18,487.00. There are other reductions to be made in the budget such as the Lido pool since it is doubtful that it will open this year. The change will be made to two capital expenditures.

Chief Hiltz stated that each SCBA costs \$12,477.67 and they required 23 units over the next 4 to 5 years. The safety certification requires the department to replace all units over time.

Chair Nauss stated that he, the Clerk Treasurer and Fire Chief should meet to review some items prior to the next meeting on this budget. He stated that the budget will need to consider Phase 3 of the MODC Fire Study as there are some major financial considerations for the commission.

A discussion on the Fire Study was held and Chief Hiltz stated that Phase 2 recommended four pumping apparatuses requirement and CVFD only have two pumpers.

Commissioner Grant expressed concerns that the budget cannot be approved unless there is a measure of relief for the taxpayers.

6.0 Adjournment

Next Regular Meeting – May 13, 2020.

Commissioner Grant adjourned the April 22, 2020 COW meeting at 8:30pm.

Bill Nauss
Commission Chair

Dennis Egyedy
Clerk Treasurer