

HIGHLIGHTS

2016/17 Budget

DESCRIPTION

- Final Year of Council's four-year Strategic Plan.
- Reassessment identified economic development projects, infrastructure improvements, and enhanced services as focus areas.
- Budget reflects financial stability and long-term sustainability strategies.
- Capital and operational projects, work programs and services ensure quality delivery to residents and businesses.

KEY STRATEGIC PLANNING AND GOALS

Fiscal responsibility: Programs and decisions supporting our continued obligation to financial accountability and efficiency.

- Develop a Debt Management Strategy;
- Develop an Investment Policy for Landfill reserve;
- Pursue options for non-tax revenue through a wind energy project with other municipal units (\$550,000 capital investment);
- Improve accountability, budget management, and internal controls by using a purchase order module; and
- Increase reserves (net increase \$470,802).

Improving municipal services: We want to meet the needs of citizens. In this year's budget, we have accounted for:

- e-Post delivery of tax bills;
- Recertification to ISO 9001:2015 standards;
- Expanded Saturday hours at Kaizer Meadow; and
- Reviews of
 - Procurement guidelines
 - Application forms
 - Streetscape Plan action items
 - Selected by-laws and Heritage Standards and Guidelines

- Annex Building Renovation to address Space Needs

Sufficient infrastructure availability: We are insuring the strength and availability of municipal infrastructure by:

- Improving the delivery of public sewer use;
 - Infiltration and video/cleaning program
 - Upgrades to Chester, Mill Cove, New Ross and Otter Point systems
- Improving both pedestrian and motorized routes
 - Repairs to Foxwood Drive, Mill Cove
 - Upgrades to trail
 - Parking Study for Chester Village
- Repairing Chester Basin Wharf;
- Repairing drainage at Wild Rose Park;
- Installing a second EVC tower at Kaizer Meadow; and
- Exploring options for the organics and landfill process;

Support for environmental, social, and cultural resources: We all want healthy communities, environmental stability, and opportunities for a better lifestyle. The Municipality working towards these choices by:

- Completing the Municipal Plan Review;
- Making community grants available;
- Collecting flood plain mapping;
- Recreation 4 Life Project;
- Exploring possible roles in affordable housing;
- Providing property tax rebates for those with low income;
- Fundraising for PRO Kids; and
- Providing a tax exemption/reduction program to non-profits.

Leadership in public engagement and communication: The Municipality continues to invite public participation in key discussion areas. We will:

- Develop a public participation program in municipal planning initiatives; and
- Continue to reach out to the community through online and published communications.

Economic prosperity: The Municipality continues to make economic prosperity a priority. If we want sustainability, we must attract viable business and productive citizens to our District. We plan to:

- Make funds available for acquisition of land for a potential Business/Industrial Park;
- Develop a Marketing Strategy;
- Develop an Investment Readiness Profile; and
- Continue
 - Participating in the South Shore REN
 - Local Business Excellence Awards
 - Economic Development Sponsorship grants
 - Working with Sustane
 - Business retention and expansion program
 - Branding
 - Support our Tourism Industry through grants and direct funding to the VIC

OTHER KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- Residential/Resource tax rates hold at \$0.685/\$100 and Commercial tax rate holds at \$1.53/\$100, among the lowest in Nova Scotia;
- All rates and fees remain the same, except
 - Base Landfill tipping fees drop to \$65.88/tonne
 - Streetlight area rates decrease 20% overall
 - Waste collection area rates are now \$0.0957 (marginal increase of \$0.00227/\$100)
 - Universal Sewer Rate increases by \$20.37 to \$550 per EDU per year.
- Operating budget, including Capital expenditures, is \$28,403,233;
- Amount of capital projects has almost doubled over last year (\$8.17 million), with projected assistance from \$1.6 million in grants;
- Rise in net expenditures of 4.1%;
- Wind Energy projects will generate an estimated \$1,376,224 gross in revenue; and

- \$958,578 will go to reserves from the Wind Energy Projects, further eliminating the need to borrow resulting in avoided borrowing costs (interest).

PROVINCIAL STATISTICS

Mandatory contributions towards provincial services equal 63.44% of our general tax revenue or \$7.20 million;

• Education	\$ 4,602,030	3.48% increase from last year
• RCMP	\$ 1,751,980	4.10% increase from last year
• Corrections	\$ 236,441	no change from last year
• Assessment	\$ 340,514	0.28% decrease from last year
• Roads	\$ 182,494	1.60% increase from last year
• Library	\$ 69,056	no change from last year
• Housing Authority	\$ 20,000	no change from last year