

Budget 2022 – Council and Public Questions and Inquiries

General Budget Questions

Question	Date	Started by	Municipal Response	Posted Date
Do staff believe it is important to continue with the 1% for roads, 1% for bridges and 0.5% for facilities commitment?	January 10,2022	Deputy Mayor Shirley Keaveney	The Virtual presentation sent out last Friday includes slides that demonstrate our funding gaps for these assets. In addition, these gaps are set in time and do not account for cost of living adjustments (COLA) so it could be argued that the 1%, 1% and 0.5% is possibly not even covering the cost of inflation versus increasing the overall funding as intended. The Asset Management Plan will account for COLA going forward.	January 10, 2022
In the recent BMA study it is stated that property taxes as a % of household income in Meaford is 4.5%. The average of the communities surveyed is 3.6%. Do we believe that as Meaford grows development will lower our percentage?	January 10,2022	Deputy Mayor Shirley Keaveney	There are a number of factors that can impact this. The biggest would be to increase our non-residential tax base to reduce the burden on the residential portion. Another is a comparison of the Municipal commitment to fund capital replacement. It is difficult to quantify what impact residential growth will have on this number without doing a more detailed review.	January 10, 2022
Meaford Harbor lists a significant increase in the amount of the	January 10,2022	Deputy Mayor Shirley Keaveney	Our annual lease is based on a percentage of the revenue we bring in. In particular: twenty per cent (20%) plus taxes of all gross revenue derived by the Municipality from the	January 10, 2022

<p>federal lease, \$55,800 in 2021 to \$68,800 in 2022. Is there any potential of negotiating or contesting this increase?</p>			<p>management and operation of the Harbour, whichever is the greater amount, and the difference between the \$500.00 paid in advance and 20% gross revenue is payable within sixty days of the end of each agreement-year. On the basis that we have a projected increase in revenue based on previous year actuals the harbour lease costs go up as well.</p>	
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Operating Budget

Question	Date	Started by	Municipal Response	Posted Date
<p>Cleaning Budget I ask that you please take this into consideration next time a cleaning contract comes up and think about raising the budget for cleaning. Choosing local benefits everyone. Note: Full email provided to Council as it more relates to Purchasing Policy concerns versus Budget</p>	<p>December 20, 2021</p>	<p>Diana Simmons-Smith</p>	<p>The current Cleaning Contract expires in March, with a new tender going out the beginning of January. Staff have proposed an increase of approximately 10% based on anticipated increase in costs. The concerns expressed in the email relate to the Municipal Procurement By-law. Legally the Municipality cannot favour local companies in the procurement of services or products.</p>	<p>December 23, 2021</p>

Question	Date	Started by	Municipal Response	Posted Date
<p>Special Events Budget Line 632 in the budget materials identifies \$83,860 for special events, what is this for?</p>	<p>January 3, 2022</p>	<p>Councillor Steven Bartley</p>	<p>This budget item is a payroll charge for staff in Strategic Initiatives that organize and host Municipal events or support organizations hosting events in the community. The charge back amount of \$83,860 accounts for three staff and a summer student.</p>	<p>January 3, 2022</p>
<p>Information Technology (IT) We see significant increases in most departments in the amounts allocated to IT, why is this investment necessary?</p>	<p>January 10, 2022</p>	<p>Deputy Mayor Shirley Keaveney</p>	<p>The Municipality has come to rely on IT infrastructure for daily operations in all departments. Many IT functions are now critical to the smooth operation of the Municipality. Even short periods of downtime in the Municipality's IT system have become very disruptive to both staff and the public. As reliance on computer based systems grows, the number of support staff required to maintain these systems has increased. IT security has become a very hot topic and the threat actors that have installed ransomware on public sector organizations have evolved at a much greater rate than the processes and controls being implemented by these organizations to defend against these persons. On May 31, 2021 Council approved the addition of an IT Coordinator to the staff complement to allow for the IT Technician to focus on system security, monitoring, and other network requirements, while the IT Coordinator provides direct support to maintain daily end-user operations. The increase in each department's budget reflects the department's associated user based allocation of IT costs to reflect the cost of</p>	<p>January 12, 2022</p>

			delivering services on a costing centre basis. The 2022 increase is higher than in previous years due to the addition of the IT Coordinator as well as other software applications that have been proposed that will enhance the Municipality's cyber security, productivity, and the ability to collect data to support future decision making. Failure to resource the IT division with staffing and system funding leads to increased cyber-security threats and increased end-user downtime, ultimately passing these service disruptions on to the public.	
Question	Date	Started by	Municipal Response	Posted Date
Fleet Perhaps I could be more detailed about asking for hours on the snowblower only.	January 6, 2022	Forwarded by Deputy Mayor Shirley Keaveney from a resident	The Municipality has one snowblower and this will be our third winter season having it. This piece of equipment is used for urban snowbank removal, which also helps to prevent urban flooding so storm systems can work efficiently. It also utilized for rural snow bank removal however we have not yet required it for these services since ownership. The snowblower has just over 300 hours on it.	January 13, 2022
Fleet Forestry staff pretty much made the case to contract out the work of the boom truck. Current 1995 truck is 26 years old and only about 94,000	January 6, 2022	Forwarded by Deputy Mayor Shirley Keaveney from a resident	2021 the bucket truck completed 143 complex tree removals in urban and rural areas. This unit does have low kilometres but that doesn't estimate the work it has completed. When this unit is working it is stationary so no kilometres are being added however the hours of work on this unit is over 10,000 hours and with the dying ash trees, this number will go up as we develop a management plan for Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) to control the negative affects	January 13, 2022

<p>kms. If it was busy, it would have been replaced 10 years ago according to SDR Fleet Management. The budget shows transfer of wages from roads to forestry department. Ask for the number of work orders per year.</p> <p>Note: Budget questions from the resident email have been captured.</p>			<p>within our road rights-of-way. The transfer of wages is based on the number of staff and the percentage of their time working with the equipment.</p>	
Question	Date	Started by	Municipal Response	Posted Date
<p>Fleet Does it make sense to retain the 1995 Boom truck for the purposes of special events and sign installations?</p>	<p>January 10,2022</p>	<p>Deputy Mayor Shirley Keaveney</p>	<p>The Boom trucks main purpose is for tree work. However, it is also relied upon to support special events, sign installation, banner installation, along with various other tasks which has included removing debris from harbour water or auguring in post for road side safety devices. To support the banner program in downtown, banners are changed out monthly and sometimes multiple trips occur because of parked cars in front of work areas.</p>	<p>January 13, 2022</p>

			Currently this unit has low maintenance costs and does well in providing these function for the Municipality. Contracting these services out at an hourly rate is more expensive as compared to keeping the unit because depending on the contract, charges can be applied that include unit, time, type of work and minimum hourly charges (for example nothing less than 3hrs at a time).	
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Capital Budget Questions

Question	Date	Started by	Municipal Response	Posted Date
Nelson Street Booster Station Are we certain the allotted \$430,000 will cover the remainder of the costs? If Not I assume that means a heavier debt	December 15, 2021	Councillor Harley Greenfield	The approved budget for this project is being closely monitored and staff are confident the proposed amount will cover the remainder of the project, as long as nothing unforeseen happens.	December 19, 2021
Nelson Street Booster Station The booster station expense was in the 2021 budget. With most of the expense going to debt. what is the \$430k for this year	January 12, 2022	Councillor Steven Bartley	The \$430,000 is the remaining work for 2022 and is part of the original debt proposed for the project. Not additional debt.	January 12, 2022

Question	Date	Started by	Municipal Response	Posted Date
<p>Council Chambers Renovations</p> <p>If Council does not return to the Chambers in 2022, does this need completed?</p> <p>If no Council meetings, could at least one of the 2 projects be delayed?</p>	December 15, 2021	Councillor Harley Greenfield	<p>The Council Chambers washrooms are not currently compliant with accessibility requirements. As this building is open to the public, the renovations are required even if Council meetings do not take place.</p> <p>The renovations to the Council Chambers would not have to be completed in 2022 if it was guaranteed that no Council meeting will take place there in 2022. However, staff expect that Council meetings will go back to the Council Chambers at some point in 2022.</p>	December 19, 2021
<p>Parks and Facilities Shop</p> <p>Could staff not install the fence? We have the equipment.</p>	December 15, 2021	Councillor Harley Greenfield	The installation of the fence is a very small part of the overall cost of this project. Existing staff resources are dedicated to providing existing services.	December 19, 2021
<p>Parks and Facilities Shop</p> <p>Staff are requesting a fence around the garbage bin and lot at the Collingwood Street maintenance</p>	January 10, 2022	Deputy Mayor Shirley Keaveney	A fence will be installed at the rear of the facility to provide a private outdoor storage space and prevent the general public from accessing the garbage containers. This private area will allow staff to store equipment and materials outdoors in a safe area.	January 10, 2022

<p>building, could we not just lock the bin to prevent people from putting their garbage in this bin?</p>				
Question	Date	Started by	Municipal Response	Posted Date
<p>Meaford Hall Barrier Free Renovations \$39,000. Does the Hall have to be compliant before 2025? Could some of this work be delayed until 2023?</p>	<p>December 15, 2021</p>	<p>Councillor Harley Greenfield</p>	<p>Existing accessibility legislation aims to have all public buildings fully accessible by 2025.</p> <p>This work could be delayed, but is not recommended as there are additional projects required across various municipal facilities between now and 2025.</p> <p>Staff believe that ensuring Meaford Hall is as barrier free as possible is important to the community, and shows that the Municipality is committed to being an accessibility leader.</p>	<p>December 19, 2021</p>
<p>Cameron Park Improvement I would like a better description of the repairs/replacement of equipment in the park?</p>	<p>December 15, 2021</p>	<p>Forwarded by Deputy Mayor Keaveney from a resident</p>	<p>Municipal staff will be leading a public engagement process to hear from local residents and park users, and get their input into what play equipment should be installed at the park while meeting with requirements set out in the Canadian Safety Association standards and Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act. The project will include details for new play equipment and sports pad, as well as, safety surfacing. Project cost savings include having the Municipality prepare the area for the new equipment to maximize approved budget funding for spending on equipment desired by the community.</p>	<p>December 19, 2021</p>

Question	Date	Started by	Municipal Response	Posted Date
<p>Sterling Truck Replacement Is \$300,000 sufficient? Is a plow truck available in 2022?</p>	December 15, 2021	Councillor Harley Greenfield	The plow was pre-budgeted and approved in 2021 to safeguard that it would be available in 2022 and currently we are on schedule to receive the plow in 2022. The Plow was awarded following our tendering process and within the \$300,000 approved budget.	December 20, 2021
<p>Bridge 002 With a traffic count daily of 20 vehicles, (less than bridges 21 and 22) we need discussion on what to do with this structure. Can the Municipality afford \$1.5 million for a new bridge? Are there any alternative vehicle routes?</p> <p>What type of reconstruction is currently advised in the budget for almost \$1,500,000?</p>	<p>December 15, 2021</p> <p>January 10, 2022</p>	<p>Councillor Harley Greenfield</p> <p>Councillor Harley Greenfield</p>	<p>An alternative route could be established that would result in a permanent closure of the bridge and a change in route for access to two properties and Tom Thompson trail head. Based on the current direction of Council to maintain all existing bridges within the Municipality, staff continue to budget for rehabilitation and replacement of all bridges following recommendations in the 2020 Ontario Structure Inspection Manual.</p> <p>The costing for reconstruction is based on the Ontario Structure Inspection Manual - inspections of each structure, and reflects a like for like replacement (same size and span) and built to current construction standards and codes. The type of structure and construction would be determined during the design phase to meet the criteria of the Municipality.</p>	<p>December 20, 2021</p> <p>January 13, 2022</p>

Question	Date	Started by	Municipal Response	Posted Date
<p>Bridge 45 If the bridge on Side Road 13 immediately east of Bridge 45, is closed in the future, will this mean more traffic on Bridge 45? If so, will these repairs suggested be adequate to handle extra traffic?</p>	<p>December 15, 2021</p>	<p>Councillor Harley Greenfield</p>	<p>The load rating and traffic capacity of Bridge 45 will not be impacted if the bridge on Side Road 13 (Bridge 46) immediately east of Bridge 45 was to be closed. If Bridge 46 was closed it would create two dead end sections of road on either end of the bridge, where turn around areas would need to be established.</p>	<p>December 20, 2021</p>
<p>Rehabilitation total is about \$645,000 with \$3600 for 2022. Are there any residences between Concession Road 12 and this bridge? If not all properties east of the bridge can be accessed by travelling west on side road 13. Do we need to keep this bridge open? If not, do we know the cost of decommissioning it?</p>	<p>January 10, 2022</p>	<p>Councillor Harley Greenfield</p>	<p>There are no properties accessed between Structure 045 and County Rd. 12. We would need to maintain either Structure 045 or 046 to provide access to properties on Sideroad 13. At this time we do not have a cost for decommissioning this bridge.</p>	<p>January 13, 2022</p>

Question	Date	Started by	Municipal Response	Posted Date
<p>28 Nelson Street Parking Lot Can any (or all) downtown developers (i.e., former Stedmans) be asked to contribute a one-time funding to this or other Municipal parking lots?</p>	<p>December 15, 2021</p>	<p>Councillor Harley Greenfield</p>	<p>Our Official Plan outlines that where a new development or use in the Downtown cannot accommodate the Municipality's parking requirement, the Municipality may accept cash-in-lieu where the parking can be reasonably accommodated on the street or offsite. This is a one-time fee that is collected during the development application process. It is also the policy of our Official Plan that the Municipality may partner with the Downtown BIA and/or other stakeholders to maintain public space in a manner that is complementary to the Downtown and is consistent with the objectives of the Plan. With regard to the Nelson Street parking lot, it was demonstrated at the time of purchase that this lot was required to deal with existing parking needs, especially when the old Canadian Tire property is redeveloped behind the TD Bank. On this basis any new developments should be required to pay for additional parking over and above the proposed Nelson Street Development.</p>	<p>December 20, 2021</p>
<p>28 Nelson Street Parking Lot Are we considering more environmentally friendly products for surfacing the Nelson Street parking lot</p>	<p>January 10, 2022</p>	<p>Deputy Mayor Shirley Keaveney</p>	<p>The Consultant that has been hired to do the detailed design of the Nelson Street Parking lot is required to consider what elements of Low Impact Design (LID) can be incorporated into the design based on site conditions. In addition, staff are proposing the installation of a car charger in this location.</p>	<p>January 10, 2022</p>

(Smith Tire) such as permeable pavers?				
Question	Date	Started by	Municipal Response	Posted Date
Finger Docks Replacement 2 projects with a total of \$172,000, almost \$102,000 from tax levy (plus reserves of \$70,000). Was this reserve amount generated in 2021, or over a number of years? Is there more reserve dollars still in the fund?	December 15, 2021	Councillor Harley Greenfield	Although the Harbour docks are listed as being funded through the general tax levy, the cost will be covered through the revenues obtained at the Harbour in 2022. Harbour capital projects are budgeted based on the expected profit at the Harbour. The Operating budget shows both the revenues and the capital cost (transfer to reserves). The \$70,000 isn't from reserves, it's listed as being from federal grants (which we get as part of the lease agreement).	January 12, 2022
Memorial Park Entrance Road Reconstruction \$224,000. Are there any Memorial Park reserve funds available?	January 10, 2022	Councillor Harley Greenfield	\$180,000 of this project is funded through the expected 2022 profits at Memorial Park, with \$40,000 paid from the general tax levy to recognize that all municipal residents can use the park and beach areas. The full amount is listed as being paid for from the general tax levy, as all Memorial Park revenues and costs are included in the tax supported budget	January 13, 2022