



The City of Saint John

MINUTES – OPEN SESSION FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING
FEBRUARY 28, 2024 AT 5:15 PM
MEETING CONDUCTED BY ELECTRONIC PARTICIPATION

Present: Mayor D. Noade Reardon
Councillor G. Sullivan
Councillor G. Norton
Councillor D. Hickey
Councillor P. Radwan

Also

Present: Chief Administrative Office B. McGovern
Commissioner of Finance and Treasurer K. Fudge
Fire Chief R. Nichol
Commissioner Public Works & Transportation M. Hugenholtz
Commissioner Utilities & Infrastructure I. Fogan
Commissioner Growth & Community Services A. Poffenroth
Manager Employee & Labour Relations D. McQuade-Clark
Director Financial Services J. Forgie
General Manager Canada Games Aquatic Centre A. McLellan
Director Engineering & Chief City Engineer M. Baker
Director Financial Services C. Lavigne
Intermediate Accountant V. Parikh
Director Corporate Performance S. Rackley-Roach
Director Transit & Fleet I. MacKinnon
City Clerk J. Taylor
Administrative Assistant A. MacLean
Administrative Assistant K. Tibbits

1. Meeting Called to Order

Councillor Sullivan called the Finance Committee open session meeting to order.

2. Approval of Minutes

2.1 Minutes of November 29, 2023

Moved by Mayor Noade Reardon, seconded by Councillor Hickey:
RESOLVED that the minutes of November 29, 2023 be approved.

MOTION CARRIED.

3. Approval of Agenda

Moved by Councillor Radwan, seconded by Mayor Noade Reardon:
RESOLVED that the agenda of February 28, 2024 be approved.

MOTION CARRIED.

4. Disclosures of Conflict of Interest

No disclosures.

5. Consent Agenda

6. Business Matters

6.1 Transit Fleet Replacement – February 2024

I. MacKinnon stated that in 2023 \$175K was transferred to the General Fund Capital Reserve to purchase one paratransit bus to replace a unit deemed non-operational by the City's insurer. Higher-than-expected insurance proceeds in the amount of \$109,631 were received for the non-operational unit. Two paratransit buses can be purchased for \$154,293.83 each. Staff recommends that the Finance Committee approve the use of the entire reserve amount of \$175K toward the purchase of two paratransit buses. The total cost is \$308,587.66, with the balance of the funding coming from insurance proceeds (\$109,631) and Transit Reserves (\$23,956.66).

Moved by Mayor Noade Reardon, seconded by Councillor Hickey:

RESOLVED that as recommended in the submitted report entitled Transit Fleet Replacement – February 2024, the Finance Committee approve the use of surplus capital funds approved in 2023 toward the purchase of an additional Saint John Transit paratransit bus.

MOTION CARRIED.

6.2 Market Place West Ballfield Storm Sewer Separation Project

M. Baker noted that during review of the Market Place West Ballfield drawings, it was determined that the City should separate storm and sanitary sewers in the area of the project. As a result, it is proposed that a new project be added to the 2024 General Fund Capital Program (Market Place West Ballfield Storm Sewer Separation Project) and the required \$250K of funding be taken from the Stormwater Strategy Project. The Stormwater Strategy Project will continue to proceed within its revised budget and future funding for this project will be added to the 2025 General Fund Capital Program.

Moved by Mayor Noade Reardon, seconded by Councillor Norton:

RESOLVED that as recommended in the submitted report entitled Market Place West Ballfield Storm Sewer Separation Project, the Finance Committee endorse the reallocation of \$250,000 within the approved 2024 General Fund Capital Program from the Stormwater Strategy Project to a new capital project titled Market Place West Ballfield Storm Sewer Separation Project; and that the Finance Committee recommend approval of the above noted budget adjustment at the next meeting of Council.

MOTION CARRIED.

6.3 Capital Reserves Required for Dredging at the Lancaster Lagoon

Referring to the submitted report, M. Baker stated that in order to install the new aeration system at the Lancaster Lagoon, extensive dredging must be completed at an additional estimated cost to the Utility of \$2,470,000. The Utility currently has \$750K budgeted to complete dredging at the Lancaster Lagoon facility. The additional funds (Utility Share - \$1,720,000) to complete the required dredging are available in the Utility's Potable Capital Reserves and staff recommends that reserve funding be allocated to this project.

Moved by Councillor Hickey, seconded by Mayor Noade Reardon:

RESOLVED that as recommended in the submitted report entitled Capital Reserves Required for Dredging at the Lancaster Lagoon, the Finance Committee recommends the following:

- An adjustment to the 2023 Utility Fund Capital Budget of \$1,720,000 for dredging required at the Lancaster Lagoon (to be completed as part of the Lancaster Lagoon Aeration System Renewal Project); and,
- The project be funded by the approval of the withdrawal from the Utility Fund Potable Capital Budget Reserve of \$1,720,000; and
- The Finance Committee recommend approval of the above noted item at the next meeting of Council.

MOTION CARRIED.

6.4 Capital Budget Recommendation – Starting Blocks at Canada Games Aquatic Centre

General Manager, CGAC, A. McLellan explained that this project would support the purchase of eight swim blocks that are in line with competition standards and would likely attract more events to the region. The blocks will also ensure local athletes are equipped to achieve the qualifying times necessary to compete in national and international competitions. The current starting blocks are beyond their useful life and do not meet the standard for hosting competitions. The total project cost is estimated at \$72,600. Swimming NB is contributing \$5,000 towards replacement and the Fundy Regional Services Commission (FRSC) could add this project to the list of regional projects for support to be sought from the Regional Development Corporation (RDC). RDC support in the past has been at 40% of overall project cost. If successful with the funding from RDC, the cost to the Fundy Regional Service Commission partners would be \$38,560. The replacement of the starting blocks is a necessary component of a Canada Games Hosting Requirement.

Moved by Mayor Noade Reardon, seconded by Councillor Hickey:

RESOLVED that as recommended in the submitted report entitled Capital Budget Recommendation – Starting Blocks at CGAC, the Finance Committee support a referral to the Fundy Regional Services Commission to add a Capital Project for 2024 to replace the starting blocks at the Canada Games Aquatic Centre.

MOTION CARRIED.

6.5 Market Slip Floating Docks Capital Project

Commissioner Utilities & Infrastructure I. Fogan reviewed the submitted report. The purpose of this report is to include \$210K in the 2024 General Fund Capital Budget toward the installation of the floating docks system on the Fundy Quay side of the market slip. The proposed capital project will significantly increase the dock system capacity to allow additional recreation boats. Additionally, the city will seek funding from the Regional Development Corporation (RDC) under the Province.

Moved by Mayor Noade Reardon, seconded by Councillor Radwan:

RESOLVED that as recommended in the submitted report Market Slip Floating Docks Capital Project, the Finance Committee recommends the following:

- Adjust the 2024 Capital budget to include \$210,000 for the installation of the floating docks system on the Fundy Quay side of the market slip; and,
- Approve the transfer of \$210,000 from the \$500,000 transferred into 2023 Capital Reserves for additional Recreation Asset Investments; and,
- Recommend the approval of the above noted at the next meeting of Council.

MOTION CARRIED.

6.6 Ernst & Young Implementation Plan Update

S. Rackley-Roach reviewed the submitted presentation “EY Implementation Plan Update”. In May of 2020, Council endorsed the City of Saint John Operational Review prepared by Ernst & Young, in partnership with the Province of NB. The City Manager was directed to develop a five-year implementation plan based on the recommendations from the EY Operational Review. In November 2020 a presentation was given to the Finance Committee outlining the 75 recommendations outlined in the Operational Review.

As outlined in the submitted presentation, S. Rackley-Roach, provided a status update on the short-term, medium-term, long-term, and other actions as identified through the process.

Moved by Councillor Hickey, seconded by Mayor Noade Reardon:

RESOLVED that the Finance Committee receive and file this progress update of the EY Operational Review and approve further progress updates through the reporting of annual CAO Work Plan Initiatives.

MOTION CARRIED.

6.7 Council Community Fund

J. Taylor, City Clerk, described the purpose of the Council Community Fund Policy, which provides a framework to enable Council Members to provide financial support to community-based organizations and to facilitate minor City asset improvements. The Policy ensures the application process is open,

Finance Committee Meeting
Open Session
February 28, 2024

transparent, and accountable to the public. The Policy provides Council Members with an annual budget allocation of \$1500 for use towards eligible projects and initiatives.

Moved by Mayor Noade Reardon, seconded by Councillor Norton:

RESOLVED that the Finance Committee endorse the draft Council Community Fund Policy and refer the matter to Common Council for consideration.

MOTION CARRIED.

7. Adjournment

Moved by Councillor Norton, seconded by Mayor Noade Reardon:

RESOLVED that the Finance Committee meeting be adjourned.

MOTION CARRIED.

The Finance Committee open session meeting held on February 28, 2024, was adjourned at 6:30 pm.