

January 30, 2013

Council approves additional services for 2013 budget – Sets property tax increase at 3.91%

City Council decided on a 3.91 per cent property tax increase for Campbell River residents. The increase equates to approximately \$55.43 per year for the average Campbell River home (valued at \$286,000). Council also re-affirmed the Parks Parcel Tax rate of \$25 for 2013 and confirmed no property tax increase for other tax classes.

During the Jan. 28 and 29 meetings, Council discussed capital projects, new projects and services and potential service-level increases enhancements, for new, enhanced or previously-supplied services.

“Again this year, Council approved a fiscally conservative plan to maintain service levels and incorporate enhancements they considered important to the community,” says Laura Ciarniello, the city’s general manager of corporate services.

Service enhancements approved by Council include:

- RCMP building repairs: \$40,000
- Fire Hall No. 1 exterior repairs and painting: \$25,000
- Community Centre exterior painting: \$30,000
- A statistically-valid community survey: \$7,000
- Downtown and Campbellton design charrette: \$50,000
- Increase in the Remuneration Paid to Auxiliary Firefighters: \$15,340
- Airport brochures, business cases and mapping: \$6,500
- Airport air service development and land development: \$40,000
- Restore maintenance & repairs on City facilities: \$45,000
- Improve horticulture services: \$24,500
- Seasonal lighting at Spirit Square: \$20,000
- Airport business opportunities: \$100,000
- Airport signs: \$55,000

In 2013, the Gaming Reserve will fund:

- Centennial Pool and summer recreation program: \$300,000
- Capital Works Reserve: \$90,000
- Council’s strategic initiatives: \$90,000
- Council Contingency – emergent Council / community needs: \$120,000

The Capital Works Reserve provides funding of new and replacement infrastructure for items such as parks, roads, vehicles, airport, fire, facilities and capital projects. Council contributed one per cent of residential taxation revenue annually into the Capital Works Reserve to fund new and replacement capital infrastructure. Current reserve funds will not cover the costs of building new capital infrastructure and replacing or rehabilitating existing infrastructure.

“In an effort to build a sustainable financial plan, Council is providing ongoing maintenance and asset replacement funding for facilities, equipment and infrastructure. Council sees the need to replenish these reserves to ensure that both current and future taxpayers fund daily used



infrastructure,” Ciarniello explains. “By apportioning funds for annual reserve allocations, Council is building financial resilience upon which the community and continue to prosper.”

Council approved extensive capital plans for water and sewer infrastructure – projects such as the Water Intake System (project in combination with BC Hydro), annual water and sewer main renewal programs, and NWECC upgrades. This plan involves borrowing up to \$15 million dollars with a term of 15 years.

Also approved were capital plans for vehicle purchase, facility maintenance, sidewalks, transit shelters and parks. Of specific note is that the Splash Park Change-house is approved in the 2013 budget.

At a Dec. 4 meeting, Council endorsed a core services operating budget for 2013 that will provide similar services to the 2012 levels. The anticipated tax increase to maintain most services at the 2012 level is approximately two per cent (2%) for the residential tax class (no property tax increase for other tax classes). This amounts to approximately \$28.33 per year for the average home in Campbell River (valued at \$268,000 in 2012). This cost increase reflects contract and wage obligations. The basic operating budget also includes items already approved by Council such as grants in aid (\$527,079), permissive tax exemptions (\$627,282) for non-profit community organizations and one-time grants to the Tidemark Theatre (\$250,000) and Campbell River Creative Industries Council (\$30,000).

City services include: drinking water, sewer, emergency response, garbage, recycling and yard waste collection, flood protection, streets, sidewalks and traffic control, public recreation facilities, planning and building inspection, law enforcement and firefighters, parks, recreation and culture, transit and airport, environmental management, economic development, museum, art gallery and other facilities.

The City of Campbell River is legally required to table a balanced budget and to adopt a taxation bylaw before May 15, 2013.

People can view recordings of the budget meetings on the City’s website (click on the Council Webcast button).

For more information about the City’s 2013 budget, please contact the City’s Finance Department at 250-286-5700.

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