GENERAL ISSUES COMMITTEE
MINUTES 14-002(a)
9:30 a.m.
Wednesday, January 29, 2014
(Rescheduled from January 27, 2014)
9:30 a.m.
Council Chambers
Hamilton City Hall
71 Main Street West

Present:
Deputy Mayor B. McHattie
Mayor R. Bratina
Councillors B. Clark, C. Collins, J. Farr, L. Ferguson,
T. Jackson, B. Johnson, S. Merulla, J. Partridge, R. Pasuta,
M. Pearson, R. Powers

Absent:
Councillor T. Whitehead – City Business
Councillor S. Duvall – City Business

1. CHANGES TO THE AGENDA

The Clerk advised that there were no changes to the agenda.

(Collins/Farr)
That the agenda be approved as presented. CARRIED

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

3. APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

None

4. STAFF PRESENTATIONS
4.1 2014 Corporate Budget Overview

Chris Murray, City Manager, provided introductory remarks with respect to the 2014 operating budget, at 1.8%. His comments included, but were not limited to, the following:

- 2014 budget, as it currently stands, is an increase of 1.8%
- during this term of Council, staff took the direction of Council seriously to try to achieve a zero tax increase while maintaining services
- over the last 3 years, the average increase has been in the order of 1.2%, which is the lowest tax increase in the Golden Horseshoe
- if the 1.8% increase is to be approved, the average over 4 years is 1.5%
- in terms of the Province, Hamilton is the third lowest in Ontario in terms of tax increase
- Not only have services been maintained, but have added services and improved services in a number of areas
- Have done work on engaging citizens, work on neighbourhood development strategies, invested heavily in the community e.g., waterfront and downtown
- Increased number of building permits issued
- There are now things that we didn’t have before that we now have i.e., business planning by all Departments, which will be presented during the departmental budget presentations
- Talked about the future of the City in terms of what is going to be done with the next strategic plan – 10-year look at where this community is going and develop a business plan to be able to provide more sustainable way of operating the City
- Maintained good credit rating and have made some significant progress in terms of Reserves
- Spoke with each Councillor to find out their objectives in what is to be achieved in this year’s budget
- Communication to citizens – will be using social media, Twitter, YouTube, using website more effectively to ensure that the message is delivered to constituents; need to do better job in terms of communication
- Thanked Mike Zegarac and the Senior Management Team for accomplishments to date; and acknowledged good relationship with Council

Mike Zegarac, Acting General Manager of Finance and Corporate Services, thanked his staff and their teams and the F&A Managers for all of their work, and working with the General Managers and their teams to bring the budget documents together.

With the assistance of a PowerPoint Presentation, Mr. Zegarac spoke to the following issues:
2014 Preliminary Tax Operating Budget – Corporate Overview

- Mitigation since original Outlook in September, 2013
  - 2014 Operating Budget Levy Impact
  - 2014 Base Budget Savings
- Enhances sustainability
- 2014 Preliminary Tax Impact – Average Home
- 2014 Total Preliminary Impact for the Average Residential Tax Bill
- 2014 Total Preliminary Impact for $100,000 of Residential Assessment
- 2014 Preliminary Budget by Department
- Significant Budget Items – City Departments
- 2014 Preliminary Budget – Boards and Agencies/Other
- 2014 Tax Complement (Appendix 1 to 4)
- Risks and Assumptions

Council-Refereed Items and Other Items

- Council-referred Enhancements (Appendix 1 to 6)
  - 14 items referred by Council to the 2014 budget process
  - represents $3.1 million gross, $2.9 million net; 12.7 FTE
  - Not included in the preliminary budget pending Council’s consideration
  - If all approved, would increase total tax impact by 0.3%
  - Details to be presented at February 13 GIC meeting

- Requested Enhancements (Appendix 1 to 7)
  - 8 requested items submitted to the 2014 budget process
  - represents $3.3 million gross, $2.1 million net; 21.7 FTE
  - Not included in the draft budget pending Council’s consideration
  - If all approved, would increase tax impact by 0.2%
  - Details to be presented at February 13 GIC Meeting

Additional Information and Process

- Average Residential Tax Increases since Amalgamation
- Property Taxes as a % of Income
- Residential Taxes – Detached Bungalow
- 2012 Net Levy per Capita
- Household Daily Cost Comparison
- 2014 Average Municipal Tax Impacts
- 2014 Council-approved Guidelines
- Reducing the Tax Impact
- Process

- 2014 Additional Information
- Process Dates

(Johnson/Powers)
That the presentation respecting the 2014 Operating Budget be received.  

**CARRIED**

5. **DISCUSSION ITEMS**

None

6. **MOTIONS**

None

7. **NOTICES OF MOTION**

None

8. **GENERAL INFORMATION/OTHER BUSINESS**

None

9. **PRIVATE & CONFIDENTIAL**

10. **ADJOURNMENT**

   **(Collins/Farr)**
   There being no further business, the Committee adjourned at 11:17 a.m.  

**CARRIED**

Respectfully submitted

Councillor B. McHattie  
Deputy Mayor  
General Issues Committee

Carolyn Biggs  
Legislative Co-ordinator  
Office of the City Clerk