

NOTL NEWS

A NEWS UPDATE FROM THE COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF Niagara-On-The-Lake

Issue # 178 – October 7, 2009

2010 BUDGET GUIDELINES

The Corporate Services Advisory Committee endorsed a staff report outlining 2010 Budget Guidelines with modifications, being the request of information on data previously provided by staff to Committee, a discussion on 'user pay' fees to be included in the process, and a Council workshop session also to be included. The Committee stressed the numbers are very preliminary, but noted the forecasted local residential change of 9.7% and, based on early Regional estimates, an overall property tax bill impact of 3.7%. Under New Business, Committee requested additional information on the status of provincial partnership funding and an opportunity to discuss aspects of municipal debt load.

HERITAGE DISTRICT SHUTTLE ENDS OCTOBER 31

The Corporate Services Advisory Committee endorsed a staff recommendation to stop the heritage shuttle operation carrying tour bus passengers from the Fort George parking lot to the core area of the Old Town effective October 31 rather than mid-November. Following up on the Chamber of Commerce request, the staff report noted having bus passengers dropped off at the Court House and Royal George Theatre, rather than the Fort George parking lot, will benefit local businesses without causing traffic problems. The savings of not operating the shuttle and visitor centre compared with the costs for enforcement personnel to assist buses in the core area are considered neutral, and therefore, no impact on the budget is anticipated.

CODE OF CONDUCT TASK FORCE

The Corporate Services Advisory Committee endorsed a recommendation to establish a Task Force with a Terms of Reference. First, the Task Force will determine if a Code of Conduct for Council is required and, if so, work towards creating one for Council's review. The Task Force will consist of staff, solicitor representation, a community member, and Councillors M. Mazza and J. Lowrey.

COMMUNITY CENTRE UPDATE

The Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee endorsed a staff update for the new Community Centre with a modification to pursue opportunities for funding 'green' initiatives for the building. The report noted a revised budget of \$6,676,049 with funding sourced as \$2,031,000 from federal, provincial, and Town contributions. The Town's contribution is funded from the Community Centre Reserve (\$550,000), development charges (\$1,031,000), and \$450,000 from a fund raising campaign. A provincial grant in 2007 provided \$583,049. Revised plans, with information on the fund raising campaign, are available on the Town's website at www.notl.org.

PRIDEAUX STREET RECONSTRUCTION

The Public Works Advisory Committee modified a staff recommendation opting for a swale design rather than curb and gutter for the reconstruction of Prideaux Street between King and Gate Streets. The project includes sanitary work, water main work, storm sewer construction, and road reconstruction on various sections of the street. A public open house will be scheduled to receive input on the project prior to finalizing the road design.

ZONING AMENDMENTS/CONDO PLAN

Following the public meetings, the Planning Advisory Committee endorsed a zoning amendment, including a revised site plan to provide for Phase II expansion of Diamond Estates Winery on Regional Road 55 (20 Bees Winery). Secondly, Committee deferred action on a draft plan of condominium for 118, 122-124, 126 Queen Street, and 219 Victoria to provide time to resolve certain drainage concerns. The report noted this application is a matter of land ownership only and does not involve any changes to land use on the properties.

COUNCIL SUMMARY – SEPTEMBER 21, 2009

Council received a deputation regarding a resident's excessive water bill and referred the matter to staff for a review and report. Under New Business, Council requested information from staff regarding policies and procedures when dealing with Town contractors and resident's concerns.

Following a deputation from the Bed and Breakfast Association, Council deferred passage of a by-law relating to a new fee schedule and adopted a staff report to form a sub-committee to meet with the Association to review items of concern.

Council modified the recommendations of the Corporate Services Advisory Committee to replace Councillor Kaiser with Councillor Zapela on the Task Force formed to review the financial management system.

After discussions regarding the proposed final stage of the Regional Road 55 multi-purpose trail about potential impacts of traffic and the concerns of abutting landowners, the Public Works Advisory Committee's recommendations were modified to add direction for the Lord Mayor and Regional Councillor to approach the Region regarding the status and timing of possible upgrades to Regional Road 55.

The balance of the recommendations of the Committee of the Whole were adopted without change.

Council received a staff information report regarding the potential use of the 'Virgil Wing' of NDSS noting there does not appear to be a need by the Town for additional space. Information regarding the Ministry's 'Encouraging Facilities Partnerships' was provided to Council.

Under 'Notice of Motion' a number of potential motions for consideration at the next Council meeting were presented on a variety of topics, including road safety, the possibility of a VQA wine store in the Glendale Area, Regional inter-municipal transportation and associated costs, sharing the savings of uploading Regional services to the province with local municipalities, and the economic state of the agricultural industry.

The next Council meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, October 13, 2009, at 7:00 p.m. The NOTL Newsletter, as well as additional information on meeting schedules and deputation procedures, is also available on the Town's website at www.notl.org. Further questions may be directed to the Clerk's Department at 905-468-3266.

**Lord Mayor Gary Burroughs, Councillors: Jim Collard, Dennis Dick, Terry Flynn,
Andrea Kaiser, Jack Lowrey, Martin Mazza, Art Viola, Gary Zalepa**