

# NOTL NEWS

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

Issue # 185 – March 10, 2010

## **2010 BUDGET**

The Corporate Services Advisory Committee conducted a detailed review of potential adjustments to the 2010 Budget proposals.

Working from a proposed base budget of \$7,089,565, providing for a 3.3 percent increase on the Town's tax levy, Committee reviewed a number of budget adjustments based on business cases submitted with the initial budget and a previous budget workshop.

Staff advised Committee that following their recommended changes, the base budget is \$7,173,440. Committee directed staff to prepare a report on the long term impacts of issuing a debenture for the purchase of the Fire Department breathing apparatus and requested information on a possible dividend policy related to Niagara-on-the-Lake Hydro funds.

Committee determined not to proceed with recommending approval of the 2010 Budget as amended, and directed the budget to be reviewed at another Committee of the Whole meeting to be scheduled prior to the next Council meeting. (This meeting will take place on March 22 at 4:30 p.m.)

In related matters, Committee endorsed a staff report approving the Streetlighting Special Area Levy, providing for an increase of \$9.08 annually on a typical home assessed at \$291,000, and endorsed the Consolidated Stormwater Management Improvement Levy of \$165,000 for 2010, which translates to \$0.67 annually on a typical home assessed at \$291,000.

## **SUBSIDY FOR TRANSIT**

The Public Works Advisory Committee endorsed a staff report authorizing a chit system for seniors and students using either regular taxicabs or para-transit taxicabs for trips within Niagara-on-the-Lake. The program would be open to all owners of taxicabs licensed to carry on business within the Town.

The staff recommendation came about as a result of Niagara Classic Cabs advising they would be discontinuing their Community Shuttle service effective at the end of March 2010. The Town originally subsidized the service as a viability test. The initial subsidy was established at \$5,000, and increased in 2008 to \$10,000.

The staff report recommended rather than providing a subsidy to any one taxi company, the Town should subsidize the rider directly. The report recommended issuing coupons/tokens on a first come, first served basis. Based on an estimated 5,000 trips and a budget of \$10,000, the Town would provide a subsidy of \$2.00 per trip. As an example, a book of 20 coupons could be purchased from the Town for \$20.00, having a face value of \$60.00. The Town would reimburse the taxi company upon remittance to the Town. The company would accept only one coupon per ride/one-way trip.

The Town would make a registration form available for riders and would require basic registration information and supporting documentation, such as a senior's card, student card, or Niagara Specialized Transit ID. Further information will be made available through local advertisements and on the Town's website.

### **COUNCIL SUMMARY – FEBRUARY 22, 2010**

Lord Mayor Gary Burroughs opened the meeting and reviewed several recent area events, including a meeting of Regional Niagara Mayors, a Business Educational Breakfast with over 800 in attendance, a Bi-National Mayors meeting, and the launch of the 200<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the War of 1812 website by the Niagara Historical Society.

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

Council reviewed the recommendations of the Municipal Heritage Committee (MHC) and modified a recommendation with regard to 'Heritage Homes of Niagara' signs and their application to non-designated historical homes. Council also modified MHC's direction regarding alterations to the Royal George Theatre and provided for the work to continue.

Under New Business, a motion was endorsed directing for a summary of legal costs for 2009 and 2010 to be prepared for review during the 2010 Budget deliberations.

The next Council meeting is scheduled for March 22, 2010, with regular business starting at 7:00 p.m. This Newsletter, as well as information on meeting schedules and deputation procedures, is available on the Town's website at [www.notl.org](http://www.notl.org). Further questions may also be directed to the Town 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**