



Notes from Budget Information Meeting

January 17, 2018, 2–4 p.m.

Seniors' Activity Centre, Learning Studio

Total Attendees: 17 (8 residents, 9 Councillors/staff)

Q: Was the average assessment change last year 33%?

A: Yes, that was the average increase in 2017. This year (2018), the average assessment change in West Vancouver is much lower, only 1.12%.

Q: Are the colours of each bar in the Twenty Year Life-Cycle Replacement & Maintenance graph representing priority?

A: The bar colours don't represent priority for replacement, they represent assets grouped by area and type of asset, for instance: yellow is for Facilities, red is for Fire & Rescue, etc.

Q: What does the peak in 2020 in the Twenty Year Life-Cycle Replacement & Maintenance graph mean?

A: If we had the funds to do optimal maintenance on our assets, then we would spend those funds in 2020. Unfortunately, we are in the critical maintenance area and trying to climb out, so we will not have enough funding to make the optimal maintenance investment in 2020. We will likely have to postpone some investments and do less on others.

Q: Do you have a third-party study with a graph (similar to the optimal maintenance graph) based on particular DWV assets?

A: We have asset maintenance studies by third parties for some of the assets, such as roads, and we also rely on the District's asset managers, such as the Fleet Manager, to provide information about the condition and anticipated investment requirements for the assets in their areas.

Q: Grants in lieu, would that be the Fisheries?

A: The senior levels of government (i.e. Federal and Provincial) cannot be made to pay taxes to municipalities, because we are a lower order of government. However, they do make payments "in lieu" of taxes on properties that they own.

Q: What is the increase in FTEs this year?

A: You can find the staffing changes on page 20 of the [Proposed Five-Year Financial Plan](#). There were FTE shifts between departments, but only two new FTEs are requested, one in Fire and one in Police.

Q: Interfund administration fees cover direct costs that departments charge to the utilities for providing assistance in billing, etc. They are based on an analysis of the amount of time that is spent in providing these services. Are these charges shifting property taxes onto the utilities?

A: It is appropriate to charge the utility for the actual costs of their operations. The administration charges are based on an analysis of how much administrative support from Human Resources, Facilities, Finance, Payroll, and IT are required to support them. This analysis hadn't been updated for several years, which is why it shows an increase in 2018.

Q: The interfund admin fees have increased by 50%, can you explain that increase?

A: The interfund admin fees hadn't been reviewed in years. We reviewed these fees in 2017 and found that some areas required significant support which was not being charged.

Q: How much do the gross dollars that we are charged from Translink change each year?

A: We don't know how much they will charge us until shortly before the tax rate goes before Council. We receive a mill rate set by Translink, and apply it to the assessment base, and then return the funds to Translink. In effect, the District just acts as collection agent.

Q: In the five year projection of requirements for funds, why are there deficits showing in 2019 and 2020?

A: Those figures represent the difference between the amount of asset maintenance that is required and the amount of funds that we currently have available. An asset levy of 6-7% would erase the deficit, but what will happen in actuality is that maintenance will probably be delayed.

Q: In the 2018 budget, there is a \$5M provisional amount. If that amount was removed, would it erase the deficit?

A: The provisional amount is a net zero amount for any projects that Council may wish to move forward.

Q: When is the budget being presented to Council?

A: A report on the 2018 Operating and Capital Budgets will go to Council on February 19.

Q: Could the Director of Financial Services offer assistance in getting the power lines buried adjacent to Ambleside Waterfront Park?

A: The residents in the area could consider a local area improvement plan and there is a federal program that could be considered for potential funding. We will forward this information to Council for consideration.

Q: How was the budget developed on the capital side? How many projects were submitted versus how many projects were moved forward?

A: All of the capital projects go through the asset management program. We review the critical projects, required projects and projects that are put forward by the community. Because we are limited in the asset management funds we have available, only critical asset maintenance is done at this time. Community-based projects are funded from CAC's (Community Amenity Contributions from developers) if Council supports moving them forward.

Q: There is an expenditure of \$4M in the transportation part of the budget for the beautification of Horseshoe Bay—an extravagant amount of money for a small business area. What is the rationale for spending that sum of money on that area, given the other areas in West Vancouver that need funds?

A: Much of the funding for Horseshoe Bay beautification came from the large development there, and is dedicated to improving that specific area. Council could take the view that the District has other needs and this small area is not the best use of funds. Staff provide advice, but the decisions rest with Council.

Q: When the Fire department requests new equipment, who approves the request?

A: The Fire department has to follow Provincial safety requirements that set standards for how long various pieces of fire equipment can remain in service. These are required to ensure operational continuity and safety. Through the asset management program, the District tries to ensure that we are aware of Fire equipment replacement needs well in advance, so that when the time comes for replacement, this has been planned. That said, all capital requests are approved each year by Council.