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MEDIA RELEASE

2016 Town of Minto Budget Deliberations

Town of Minto Council held its second budget meeting Tuesday January 19th. The focus of afternoon and evening discussion was a \$7.42 million dollar capital budget. The net impact of the budget as it stands, blended with projected County and projected Education rate, is expected to be in the range of 3% on the average residential ratepayer in a home valued at \$208,000. Accounting for growth and stabilization the Town's budget increase is 4.9% up from 3% when operating budget was reviewed November 24th, 2015

The increase is attributed to adding \$100,000 tax supported dollars to the capital plan to support current grant applications. There is \$500,000 of 2016 property tax dollars directed to the \$7.42 million capital plan. The balance is funded by \$760,000 of new borrowing, \$1.56 million in grants, just over \$1 million of reserves and revenue, \$2.3 million unspent 2015 capital and other revenues.

The Town applied for Connecting Link Funding for engineering design only for full reconstruction Clifford Elora Street Park to West Heritage Street (\$400,000), and moved to second stage in Small Communities Fund and the Ontario Community Investment Fund grant applications for Brunswick Street Pumping Station/street reconstruction Palmerston (\$2.5 million), and Jane/Inkerman Street reconstruction Palmerston (\$1.6 million).

Mayor Bridge noted "we have moved to the second stage in two grant applications when many municipalities in our area had not. To receive that money we need to provide our share. It is important the Town take advantage of these opportunities and take care of our infrastructure according to plans."

A public open house is set for Tuesday March 15th at 5:00pm at the Town office.

Between 2011 and 2015 Minto completed \$20 million in capital work over four years. Over \$21 million of work is needed from 2016 to 2020 to meet Town Asset Management goals. Other major 2016 projects include finishing Harriston Elora Street William to Arthur Street reconstruction \$945,000, two blocks of Ann Street Clifford \$430,000, finishing James Street Palmerston \$658,000 and resurfacing the last half of 6th Line of Minto \$283,000. Minto Fire's purchase of a 2004 used aerial and 2016 tanker cost a combined \$555,000. The Town's water and sewer utility truck will cost \$90,000 less trade. There are funds for facility repairs in all three urban areas and new entrance signage for Clifford and Palmerston.

In the November budget session, Council was informed water and sewer revenue dropped below projections since water meters were installed. Early in 2016 Council will reconsider rates to make sure the total cost of water and sewer services is paid for by users. Finance Chair Mary Lou Colwell noted “many people have responded to metered water and sewer rates and by conserving have much lower bills than the old flat rate. The challenge is to keep fair rates and ensure there is enough revenue to pay for the system.”

The public open house on March 15th starts at 5:00pm and ends at 6:30pm in the Council Chambers, Town Office, 5941 Highway 89, Harriston. Members of Council, the C.A.O. Clerk and Department Heads will be available at this come and go event. Any member of the public may attend to discuss the budget proposal.

The budget summary reports and presentations to Council, of budget meeting minutes, and video recordings of the meetings are available on the Town website at www.town.minto.on.ca. The budget meeting files can be reviewed in the Town office during regular hours between 8:30am and 5:00pm.

The 2016 budget theme is “stay the infrastructure course”. Subject to public input, Council is expected to consider final budget approval at its next meeting following the open house.

For further information contact

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