



## Proposed Budget 2016 – Public Meeting Questions and Answers

November 30 and December 1, 2015

### Jasper Municipal Library

**Q. How is the Library budget split between the Jasper Municipal Library and the Municipality of Jasper, and what is the operating cost of bringing the new library building into service?**

A. The Jasper Municipal Library budget is a stand-alone document separate from the municipal budget; the municipal contribution to the Library operations totals \$170,000 as a grant. This budget is then allocated and managed by the Jasper Municipal Library.

The municipal cost increase related to the new Library and Cultural Centre totals \$141,326 (net cost after revenue), and accounts for 2.06% of the proposed tax increase. This amount covers:

- janitorial costs for the municipal portion of the building;
- building maintenance costs;
- insurance and utilities cost;
- contracted services, and associated materials and supplies; and
- transfer to restricted funds for future maintenance and repairs.

**Q. What is the total construction cost of the new Library and Cultural Centre to date?**

A. The last project budget increase was announced in April 2014, with a total project budget of \$9.4M. There has been \$8.4M expended to date for construction.

### Culture & Recreation

**Q. What is the line item of \$200.00 that goes in and out for the purchase of books?**

A. The museum brings books to the Activity Centre for the public to buy; these transactions are recorded as museum revenue.

### Operations

**Q. Why is the expense for “housing” exceeding revenues, is this a housing subsidy?**

A. The revenues shown in the budget document are only from staff housing rent paid by staff, a small contribution for the AMA building and rent paid by the cottage medical clinic. The expenses listed include these listed buildings, plus the expenses for the other buildings. (As shown in the budget document: staff housing; AMA Building; Cottage Medical Clinic; Log Cabin; River Runners; and the Connaught Washrooms.)

**Q. Is municipal staff housing subsidized?**

- A. No. The Municipality of Jasper operates three staff housing units (condo-duplex style), with the revenues and expenditures as follows for 2016:
- Rent paid by municipal staff for housing = \$46,749.00
  - Expenditures for housing, all costs = \$24,914.00
  - Excess rent collected for 2016 = \$21,835.00 (excess rent money is transferred each year to a restricted fund, which is used for any unplanned housing repair needs or future costs)
  - Housing restricted fund YTD total = \$146,542.81, prior to 2015 transfers going into this fund.

**Q. Why is there a budgeted amount for the AMA building and why do we need it?**

- A. The building is currently used for storage by community groups. In 2015, the exterior aesthetics of the building were improved and we performed minor maintenance inside. The building condition will be assessed through our Asset Management Plan.

**Q. There is \$16,000 for sewer removal at the Public Washrooms on Connaught; can we not connect to main lines to save money?**

- A. Yes, this cost is to pump sewage from the Connaught Drive Public Washrooms. There are currently no sewer lines in that area to connect into. The facility is scheduled to connect to a proposed municipal sewage line that would be required for new developments in the area (i.e. a new hostel).

**Q. The Operations Department is proposing a Payables/Stores Clerk and additional Manager position. Why does the department need its own payables clerk?**

- A. Operations has the highest volume of purchases for equipment, parts and supplies. Invoices are split and coded to a variety of cost centres, which takes up a significant amount of the Managers' time. The timeliness and flow of information between suppliers, Operations and Finance is a daily challenge. We need this position to allow Managers to focus their time and energy on routine maintenance, proactive maintenance and capital projects.

## **Community and Family Services**

**Q. What are the fees attached to Childcare Services subsidies?**

- A. The Government of Alberta recognizes that there are costs associated with helping families file documentation to obtain provincial childcare subsidies. The Municipality receives a financial compensation from the province to that effect.

**Q. What's the cost of providing Community Dinners?**

- A. The total program budget is \$9,000, offset by \$7,000 in donations, for a net operating cost of \$2,000, which is used to purchase supplies.

## **Protective Services**

**Q. Are fire inspections for businesses required by law?**

- A. Protective Services is required by law to have a Quality Management Plan, which includes fire inspection requirements.

- Q. Can you elaborate on custodial wages in light of the minimum wage rising in coming years?**  
A. Custodial services are contracted with an annual increase based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI). We are in year one of a five year contract.

## **Finance & Administration**

- Q. Why is the Council travel and subsistence budget combined in one pot?**  
A. At Council's request, the individual Council travel and subsistence budgets were combined into one single budget for 2016 and reduced by \$9,000 to reflect 2015 trends.
- Q. Why is there a decrease in wages (and contracted services) for Administration and Finance?**  
A. The decrease in wages is a result of new staff coming on board and starting at lower positions on the wage grids (Director of Finance and Administration, Utilities Clerk and Receptionist positions). The budget for contracted services was also reduced from past years.
- Q. What department takes up most of the Finance and Administration's payables clerk work?**  
A. Operations takes up most of the payables portion of this position.
- Q. What is included in contracted services?**  
A. Asset Management consultants for the Administration building and contracted building maintenance that can't be performed in-house (by the Operations department).
- Q. Why is there an increase in legal fees?**  
A. To reflect 2015 trends.
- Q. What does the \$8,000 in Professional Development pay for?**  
A. Financial software training and professional development for all staff.
- Q. What do Administrative Costs cover and how did you arrive to that amount?**  
A. The proposed amount reflects 2015 trends, and provides for the purchase of business cards, cleaning supplies, office supplies (pens, paper clips, folders, etc.)
- Q. Will the Evergreens Foundation requisition be reduced once the Edson facility is built?**  
A. The requisition is likely to decrease in the future, but other capital projects may drive the cost up again. Basic operating costs for the Foundation will remain constant, but the capital project costs (building new facilities) is the main driver for increases.