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December 15, 2020

MOUNT PEARL ANNOUNCES 2021 BUDGET

Includes decreased residential mil rate, operational savings, and key capital investments

Mount Pearl, NL – Today, the City of Mount Pearl presented its 2021 balanced budget of \$56,110,612. The COVID-19 pandemic has greatly affected residents and businesses, and the 2021 budget aims to support and strengthen the community during this unprecedented time.

“We’ve had to make tough decisions in this budget process to find savings in our operational expenditures while trying to limit the impact to our taxpayers,” said Mayor Dave Aker. “In an effort to support our residents in these challenging times; we have made the decision to reduce the mil rate from 7.4 to 7.1 and there will be no changes to facility fees in 2021.”

With a 4.5% decrease in residential and commercial property values, and an expected decrease in goods and services revenue, the City is projecting taxation and utility revenue to be down by \$3.7 million dollars in 2021. As a result, the City was challenged to determine how to deliver the services they are known for, safely, and at reduced costs.

The 2021 budget includes a \$2.5 million dollar reduction in operational expenditures, with savings found through a combination of temporary changes and long-term operational improvements. Changes include reducing free scheduled bulk garbage to one pick-up annually; temporary management wage freeze and travel ban for 2021; four positions to be eliminated; and decreases in seasonal road, parks, landscaping, and water work in the new year.

The City’s 2021 capital budget will maintain Mount Pearl’s vision to become “a smart city of engaged citizens, leading the way in sustainable growth”, as outlined in the four-year strategic plan, *On the Horizon*. The City will continue to invest in important initiatives like economic development, fleet renewal, asset management, and outdoor recreation activities, including the construction of a splash pad, and the completion of a smart, accessible playground. Next year, major federal and provincial cost-sharing agreements will be renewed with the City, totalling over \$9 million in important road work, including water and sewer upgrades, that is anticipated to begin in Spring of 2021. The City’s total capital budget is \$11.8 million next year.

“Budget 2021 is built on the ambitious goals outlined in our Strategic Plan and the continued support and investment into our seven strategic pillars,” said Councillor Isabelle Fry, Co-Chair of the Corporate Services and Economic Development Committee. “We are building a City that people want to live and work in. We are building the future of Mount Pearl and we are proving that no matter what comes our way, we are taking a balanced and measured approach to reaching our goals.”

By the numbers:

- The total 2021 budget is \$56,110,612.
- The 2021 budget includes a lowered residential mil rate of 7.1, which will result in savings of about \$100 per household, based on a \$286,500 household assessment.
- The 2021 budget includes a \$2.5 million reduction in operational expenditures.
- The total capital budget for 2021 is \$11.8 million.
- There are no changes to commercial property, business tax, water or rates and fees in 2021.

Highlights:

- \$60,000 investment in server upgrades, to prepare for new systems in planning, permitting, asset management, inventory, and purchasing that remove manual processes and increase visibility and internal control mechanisms
- \$350,000 to support and invest in user groups and associations, through operating subsidies for organizations including Admiralty House, the Seniors Independence Group and the Mount Pearl Sport Alliance
- Maintaining a \$65,000 investment in community events
- \$300,000 allocated to begin the implementation of the City Centre Revitalization Plan with a Focus on the Waterford River
- Continued implementation of the Donovan's Business Park Reimagination Plan
- \$35,000 investment in the City's *Make it Better* initiative for process improvement and identifying further operational efficiencies
- \$750,000 committed in the capital budget to build a new splashpad as a component of the outdoor recreation offering
- \$100,000 invested to complete ongoing condition assessments on public infrastructure
- \$2.3 million investment into the fleet renewal plan. This investment ensures the City can maintain service standards in important core services such as snow clearing and field maintenance and helps reduce fleet maintenance costs on vehicles that have passed their service life.
- Through the renewal of major federal and provincial cost-sharing agreements, the City projects over \$9 million in important road work, including water and sewer upgrades
- \$175,000 for continued investment in workplace restoration efforts, including training and development, and employee engagement activity
- \$25,000 investment allocated to the business Façade Improvement Program and continued delivery of the Scaled Tax Program for new businesses in retail, technology and craft sectors

Full details on the budget can be found at www.mountpearl.ca.

To read the Strategic Plan, *On the Horizon*, please visit www.onthehorizon.ca.

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