

**Recommendation:**

That the Treasurer-2024-23 report, dated November 5, 2024, regarding the 2025 Budget Update – Schedule and Policing Costs be received and that the budget schedule, including the three special meetings in January and the final Draft presentation on March 4, 2025 be approved; and

That Council provide direction to staff whether the budget should be presented at inflation, which is 1.6% in September, including the OPP increases or if the OPP increase should be in addition to inflation.

**Overview:**

***Budget Schedule:***

Council adopted a 2025 budget schedule in June. This schedule was set with the assumption that the Township’s new CAO would be in place in August and then be able to participate in the process. Todd Davis, the new CAO, did not start with the Township until October 21<sup>st</sup>. Therefore, staff are proposing to push the budget process back to allow for sufficient time for Mr. Davis to learn about the organization and participate in the process. The extended timeline will also allow for the Finance Department to finish 2023 year-end and audit.

The following schedule shows the proposed and current schedule for the 2025 Budget:

<b>Council Presentations and Public Meetings</b>		
<b><i>Proposed</i></b>	<b>Current</b>	
<i>December 23</i>	November 22	Issue Budget Document
<i>January 15 @ 10am</i>	November 27 @ 10am	Presentation of first draft to Council – Part 1
<i>January 16 @ 10am</i>	November 28 @ 10am	Presentation of first draft to Council – Part 2  We will split the departments up between these first two presentations. In the past we suggested to Council to wait to ask questions but given we are splitting the departments Council is encouraged to ask questions during these meetings.
<i>January 23 @ 10am</i>	December 11 @ 10am	First Draft Working Session  Staff received feedback after the 2023 Budget process that a longer meeting was required to have in depth conversations on the budget. This meeting will allow Council to bring any questions they have for staff; however, Council is still encouraged to provide the questions prior to the meeting to enable staff to gather information need to answer sufficiently.

<i>February 4 (at start of Council)</i>	January 8 (Special Meeting)	Public Meeting – The Treasurer will make a 15-20-minute presentation summarizing the budget along with highlighting the key changes and projects. The presentation will include any updates to the budget that were made during the first three meetings. The Public will be able to attend and provide any feedback during this time.
<i>February 18 (during Council)</i>	January 21 (during Council)	Budget Deliberation – this meeting will be for Council to deliberate the budget while considering any feedback the public provided during the public meeting.
<i>March 4 (during Council)</i>	February 4 (during Council)	Final Draft and Budget Passage

**2025 OPP Costs:** Township staff received the 2025 annual billing statement from the OPP. The total billing for 2025 is \$1,145,376 which is \$191,305 more than 2024 billing. This represents a 20% increase in annual policing costs from 2024 and will increase the Township's levy by 2.78%.

The Township has not received any communication from the OPP prior to receiving the billing statement and we have not received a detailed breakdown of why the increase is occurring. We can assume it is related to settlements related to collective bargaining agreements and Bill 124 that limited public sector workers' compensation increases to a maximum of one per cent a year for three years and was found to be unconstitutional.

The OPP had scheduled webinars to explain the billing statement for October 25<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> but postponed these meetings at the last minute. Communities across the Province have received increases from 15-35%.

Township staff proposed to provide the 2025 Budget to Council at September CPI which was 1.6%. If staff include the OPP increase in the target, there will be a required 1.18% decrease in other Township costs when there are still rising costs and other identified priorities for the Township to address. Therefore, staff need direction from Council on the target moving forward.

**Conclusion:**

The updated budget will allow Township staff to provide a comprehensive budget to Council. We will update meeting invites for Council and begin advertising the meeting dates if approved by Council.

**Financial Impact:**

N/A

**Service Modernization and Innovation**  
Modernizing, refining and innovating services for residents is essential to effectively meet the needs of our community, enhance our operational efficiency, and ensure we remain adaptable in a rapidly changing world.

**Business Attraction, Expansion, and Retention**  
Business attraction, expansion, and retention is vital for the economic health and sustainability of our Township, such as job creation, tax revenue, investing in innovation, maintaining our quality of life, and supporting community stability.

**Infrastructure Renewal**  
Infrastructure renewal is a critical investment for our Township as it will ensure our adherence to health and safety, economic development, investment attraction, environmental sustainability, quality of life, public confidence, and regional competitiveness.

**Report Approval Details**

Document Title:	2025 Budget Update - Schedule and Policing Costs.docx
Attachments:	
Final Approval Date:	Oct 30, 2024

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:

Martina Chait-Hartwig

Todd Davis