



Committee of the Whole Excerpts
July 8, 2025

MUNICIPAL BUDGET PROCESS EXCERPT

In recent years, budget deliberations have required multiple sessions, placing significant demands on staff and Council time and limiting opportunities for public engagement. Budgets have also been presented later in the spring, creating added pressure. Given growing community needs, inflation, and increasing infrastructure demands, it was important to gather public input. To improve the 2026- 2027 budget process, resident engagement sessions during the month of October and a follow-up workshop with Council were being recommended. This will allow Council to provide clear direction for a draft budget, enabling its presentation by March 1, 2026.

The recommended motion was that Committee of the Whole recommend that ...

COUNCIL DIRECT STAFF TO HOLD PUBLIC PARTICIPATION/FEEDBACK MEETINGS REGARDING THE 2026/2027 BUDGET DURING THE MONTH OF OCTOBER 2025.

COUNCIL DIRECT STAFF TO PREPARE TO HOST A BUDGET WORKSHOP WITH COUNCIL FOLLOWING THE PUBLIC PARTICIPATION/FEEDBACK MEETINGS TO GET INITIAL DIRECTIONS FROM COUNCIL ON THE DRAFT BUDGET FOR 2026/2027.

COUNCIL DIRECT STAFF TO PRESENT THE DRAFT 2026/2027 MUNICIPAL BUDGETS TO COUNCIL NO LATER THAN MARCH 1, 2026.



WEST HANTS REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY REPORT

Information ☐	Recommendation ☒	Decision Request ☐	Councillor Activity ☐
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To: West Hants Regional Municipality Council

Submitted by: Mayor Abraham Zebian

Date: July 8, 2025

Subject: West Hants 2026/2027 Budget Process

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

Municipal Government Act

RECOMMENDATION or DECISION REQUEST

Committee of the Whole recommends ...

Council direct staff to hold public participation/feedback meetings regarding the 2026/2027 budget during the month of October 2025.

Council direct staff to prepare to host a budget workshop with council following the public participation/feedback meetings to get initial directions from council on the draft budget for 2026/2027.

Council direct staff to present the draft 2026/2027 Municipal budgets to Council no later than March 1, 2026.

BACKGROUND

Council holds budget deliberations yearly. The past number of years has seen council have many sessions of deliberations before it has passed the municipal budgets. These sessions create excessive demands on staff and council time. These sessions also do not allow for proper public engagement, if any, on the draft budget being considered. The draft budgets have also been presented later in the spring which puts additional pressures on Staff and council.

Property ☐	Public Opinion ☐	Environment ☐	Social ☐	Economic ☐	Councillor Activity ☐
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DISCUSSION

First, I want to recognize the vast amount of time, effort, and work that staff and volunteer service providers put in to create and prepare draft budgets for council consideration. The budgets are complex and difficult to create trying to address the demands of a growing community and providing the best value for every tax dollar.

With inflationary pressures increasing, a growing list of capital infrastructure work, and projects that the public are expressing a want for, it is important staff and council provide a proper forum and opportunity to receive direct feedback from residents on the next budget. That feedback, along with day-to-day conversations councillors have within the region, will better allow council and staff discuss initial direction on the 2026/2027 draft budget. These meetings with residents and follow up workshop with staff and council should be completed no later than November 30, 2025. This will give council an opportunity to give clear direction for a draft budget to staff allowing for the proper time to present the draft budget by March 1, 2026.

NEXT STEPS

TBD

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There will be costs with the approval of the recommended motions.

ALTERNATIVES

Council can decide not to approve the recommendations.

Council can give alternative direction.

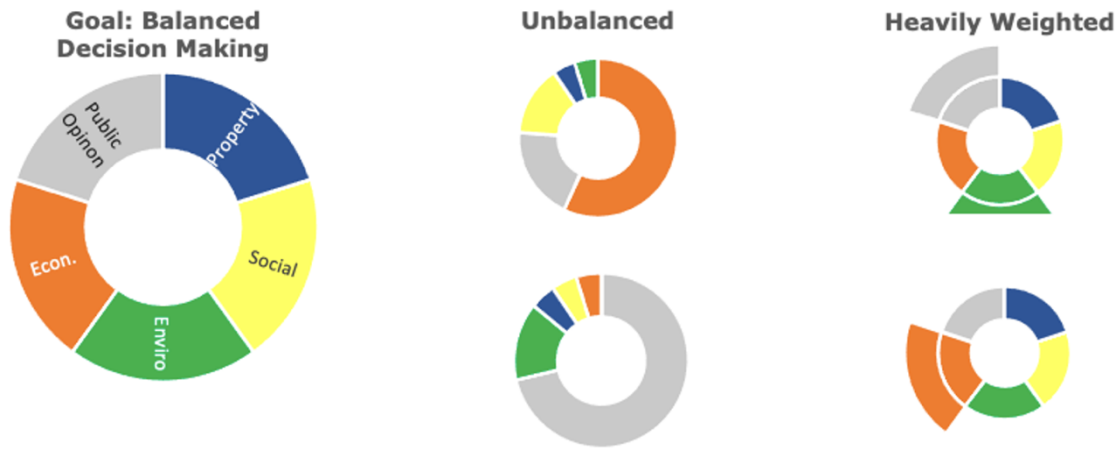
ATTACHMENTS

None.

CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER REVIEW

Pending CAO review and comments

Council has been provided with a reference taken from the Meeting and Committee Procedural Policy , Appendix C “Decision Making by Council and Committee of the Whole” as a reminder of the principles highlighted for good decision making.



Report Prepared by: _____
Abraham Zebian, Mayor

Report Reviewed by: _____
(Name and Title)

Report Approved by: _____
(Name and Title)