

It goes without saying that the economy is front in centre in everybody's minds these days. The affects of the "economic downturn" are felt around the world, across the country and indeed, on every street and neighbourhood within the Town of Yarmouth.

So, as this council worked with staff in assembling this year's budget, we were mindful of that the environment in which we were creating this budget is quite different than it has been in recent memory. As our federal and provincial governments formulate policies aimed at stimulating the economy and easing the impact of citizens, so too must every municipality and town. We are no exception.

The global response to the economic recession has been to:

- Spend public money to stimulate the economy
- Avoid protectionist tendencies
- Infuse liquidity into the markets

In some ways, the Town of Yarmouth's plans for 2009-10 fiscal plan dovetails with these themes and creates an appropriate plan for these challenging times.

Spending money to stimulate the economy in economic downturns is a Keynesian Economic principle that has been embraced by our federal and provincial governments. Accordingly, these higher levels of governments have created opportunities for municipalities and towns to partner in infrastructure development projects that are "shovel ready" in order to put people to work and at the same time improve our communities and the infrastructure on which we depend. Taking advantage of these opportunities, as well as others, has to be done in a balanced approach that maintains the health of the finances of the Town of Yarmouth.

The Town of Yarmouth has undertaken capital priority setting exercises and has used these priorities to seek funding partnerships successfully. This council has recently received confirmation of approximately \$2.6 Million funding for rebuilding parts of Pleasant Street. Pleasant Street is an important arterial street in the Town that has fallen into disrepair and is in need of upgrading to meet the needs of the future. This important project is in the design phase, and will be tendered for construction next spring. The overall benefit to the Town of Yarmouth includes better water, better storm

water management, better traffic management, better active transportation opportunities and better roadways for our everyday travel.

In the nearer term, the Town of Yarmouth has other projects that are being rolled out much sooner and will have a more immediate benefit to the economy. Specifically, the Town of Yarmouth, in partnership with the Province of Nova Scotia is undertaking specific upgrades to the wastewater treatment plant. These upgrades will improve our ability to lessen the environmental impact of our community's wastewater. Specifically, we will be adding a back-up generator so wastewater continues to be treated during power outages, we will be adding a de-chlorination process to eliminate chlorine being discharged into the harbour along with wastewater effluent and we will be adding a SCADA system that will immediately notify our operators of any system failure or engineered by-pass event, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, thereby reducing impacts on the environment. This project, has received \$340,215 in provincial cost-sharing.

The Town of Yarmouth is also about to undertake a significant revitalization of our Fire Hall. The Fire Hall, which has served the community for over 30 years, is in need of a refresh in systems and finishes. These improvements are being cost-shared with the Province of Nova Scotia through the Emergency Service Provider Fund with a contribution of \$250,000. These renovations will be tendered in the near future and will ensure the serviceability of the Fire Hall for many years to come.

The Town of Yarmouth tendered for the construction of a storm water system improvement on Starrs Road this spring, and the work is near completion. This project not only has improved the management of storm water in this part of Town, but has also resulted in months of work for contractors and sub contractors in our area. This project was made possible by a partnership with the Federal and Provincial governments with funding coming through the Build Canada Fund Fund. In total, the Town of Yarmouth has received \$393,400 commitment for this project.

Globally, there is a concerted effort to ensure borders remain open and countries continue to integrate our economies for mutual benefit. At the municipal level, this is also true. Working with our neighbouring municipalities we all stand to gain. We are too small, too close and too tightly integrated to believe that we can work independently and be successful. I am going to take a few minutes to talk about these partnerships

because it is these partnerships that have led to many services and projects that serve our communities.

One of the most talked-about benefits from our inter-municipal partnerships has to be the re-establishment of scheduled air service at the Yarmouth Airport. Through working with our partners in the Municipalities of Clare, Argyle and the Municipality of Yarmouth we have put in place a governance structure that ensures the future of the airport and has led to a partnership which has brought about the introduction of Starlink's scheduled service. With assistance from the province, we now have twice daily air service to Halifax and Portland, Maine. This transportation link can benefit our economy, our access to services, and our quality of life. It will depend on all three destinations utilizing the service, and we continue to work with Starlink to build the market. In 2009-10 our investment in the airport continues, as do the investment from all of our neighbouring municipal units.

We partner with our neighbouring municipalities in the development of Tourism. Visitors have always played an important roll in the economy of western Nova Scotia. Maximizing the benefits has always been a challenge. Even in the tough times of recent years, we have seen reason to be optimistic. Through our partnerships we have been able to market our area cohesively and consistently through SWSDA and the Yarmouth and Acadian Shores brand. Last year while provincial statistics were showing a softening in the visitor markets, Yarmouth was reporting a modest increase. We continue to support tourism development, and thereby all of our local businesses who serve tourists in our area.

There are many ongoing partnerships that we have with our neighbouring municipalities, many of which the general public is unaware of. However, without these partnerships we could not offer the level of service we presently offer, and quite possibly we would waste resources with competing or duplicate services. Some of the areas we partner with our local municipalities include:

- Health Professional recruitment and retention
- Solid Waste Management
- Waterfront Development
- Heritage Services
- Leisure Services

Emergency Preparedness
Mariner Centre
Yarmouth Airport
Tourism Development
Industrial Development
Festivals and Events
Home Support Services
Fire Services

In addition to these services we work with our neighbouring municipalities when planning for the future. This year we will complete and Active Transportation study for the Town and Municipality of Yarmouth. This initiative will create a concept for an overall network of infrastructure that supports people using non-motorized modes of transportation in their everyday lives.

Another study that is in the development stages is a review of transit options for the entire area, from Weymouth to East Pubnico. When completed, the study will identify transit options for the region as well as costs associated with the options. The benefits of such a system are social, economic and environmental. Until the study is complete, we will not know how feasible a system might be or what the costs would be. But by this time next year we will surely know if expanded transit services will be a reality in our area.

In short, we find ways to leverage the tax dollars of the Town of Yarmouth by working with partners to deliver services and capital projects to our area. In this way we get more done, and we save money. Keeping our partnerships active, productive and mutually beneficial is in the interest of all involved.

Federal banks have the ability to infuse liquidity into the economy by adjusting monetary policy, effectively reducing interest rates. In lay-terms, they can make cash more accessible to people. Local governments have few levers when it comes to affecting the amount of cash citizens keep in their wallet, the most obvious is through the tax rates.

Council, through our budget deliberations has discussed and reviewed our interest rate policies, our low-income exemption by-law, our tax exemption by-law and our tax rates. Council has also considered the fact that virtually every request that we have received has been for MORE service, not less. I

am pleased to present our budget which adds service capacity in the areas of Public Works, Parks, Engineering, and Heritage while at the same time holds firm the EFFECTIVE Commercial tax rate and on the Residential tax rate, reduces the rate by 6 cents, effectively reducing the average tax burden to the homeowner in the Town of Yarmouth to the same dollar value as 2008-09.

The Commercial itself has increased to offset the reduction in the business occupancy assessment. A business owner-occupier will pay the same combined rate for taxes as 08-09. This policy has remained consistent for the past 3 years, and we are able to continue to provide this stability to commercial taxation.

On the residential side, the reduction in the residential tax rate off-sets the average increase in capped property assessment. This translates into 6 cents off the residential rate.

Fellow councillors, I believe this budget delivers a balanced and measured approach to dealing with the paradox of calls for increased services in tough economic times.

The 2009-10 operating budget proposes Operating Revenues of \$16,237,208 against \$16, 209,531 in expenditures for a net balance of \$ 27,677, or 0.17% of gross revenues.

I will now present the various rates and charges for your consideration.

that Council accept a budget in the amount of \$16,237,208, for its general operations for the year ended March 31, 2010, which provides for the following rates:

Residential	\$1.75 per \$100 of Assessment
Commercial Property	\$4.21 per \$100 of Assessment
Resource General	\$1.75 per \$100 of Assessment
Business Occupancy	\$4.21 per \$100 of Assessment
Farmland	\$2.16 per Acre

BID Commercial Property \$0.18 per \$100 Assessment
BID Business Occupancy \$1.06 per \$100 Assessment
Parking Levy \$1.15 per \$100 Assessment

Garbage Collection & Processing

Residential \$155.00 per dwelling unit up to a maximum of 4 (four) dwelling units per building.

Other In excess of 4 (four) dwelling units is deemed Commercial and at the owner's expense. Retail, and other Commercial type operators, is deemed Commercial and at the owner's expense.

Pollution Control Charges (Sewer)

Meter Charge

Commercial Business	\$230.00
Commercial Apartments	\$184.00
Residential	\$151.00

Interest Rate

Interest at the rate of 18% per annum will be charged on delinquent accounts.
Interest at the rate of 0.5% per annum will be paid on overpayments due to assessment appeals.

And that the Chief Administrative Officer be directed to implement the inherent recommendations, administer and control the operating budget, and report to Council as appropriate.