

5.9 per cent ceiling increase on Town portion of next year's tax hike

Council provides budget direction to staff to maintain services and build reserves

Any Town tax increase next year must be below 5.9 per cent according to instructions Town Council gave staff on Monday night following a briefing on the 2013 preliminary operating and capital budgets, and the 2014-2022 capital forecast.

The 5.9 per cent increase includes direction to bring in a base budget increase not exceeding 2.6 per cent, plus 1.2 per cent dedicated to the Fire Services Levy, 0.9 per cent dedicated to the Special Infrastructure Levy, 0.7 per cent dedicated to the Library Operating Levy, and 0.5 per cent dedicated to the Arena Levy.

When the Town's (5.9 per cent) Region's (3.3 per cent) and School Board's (zero per cent) tax increases are combined, the expected overall property tax increase would be 3.3 per cent. The increase

works out to \$986 per \$100,000, or \$3,944 for a residential property assessed at \$400,000.

The proposed tax increase is the second lowest when compared to those of surrounding and similarly sized municipalities – Milton, with its rapid growth and casino revenue – has the lowest. The spending plan recommended would maintain base service levels and focus on increasing the contributions to reserves to address specific areas of need and underfunding.

Ed DeSousa, the Town's Treasurer and Director of Corporate Services said the "challenges and opportunities" for next year's operating budget include limited assessment growth, compensation (contractual agreements, benefits), replenishing reserves and continuation of various special levies to assist with Fire Services, infrastructure replacement and Library operations. Introduction of the Arena Levy for the previously-approved arena program.

Mayor Rick Bonnette said that the proposed 5.9

per cent increase ceiling is a "lot better" than in past years, but they won't get a clear picture of budget demands until they deal with staff and councillors' wish lists, which are presented as decision packages review by the CAO, department heads and budget committee – all councillors and the mayor – and could result in "significant increases."

Regional/Ward Two Councillor Jane Fogal said if ratepayers ask why the budget increase is above the rate of inflation, or their income, they should say that the inflation rate is based on a different basket of goods, and that they are not increasing staff salaries. Fogal said she was "surprised and disappointed" that the arena levy has more than doubled to 0.5 per cent, or \$150,000, a \$90,000 increase.

Department heads will now prepare base budgets, which include all costs necessary to continue the existing operation of the department, and separately, costs associated with growth. Except for the Fire Department, the

TOWN OF HALTON HILLS 2013 PRELIMINARY OPERATING BUDGET (per \$100,000 of residential assessment)

	2012 Final Budget	2013 Preliminary Budget	\$ Change	% Change
Town	\$362	\$384	\$22	5.9%
Region *	\$371	\$381	\$10	2.7%
Education **	\$221	\$221	\$0	0.0%
Total	\$954	\$986	\$32	3.3%

Notes:

* Regional estimates with Region services at 2% and Police at 4% for a combined estimate of 2.7%

** Education rates not available at this time

budget will not contain any staffing increases (full time, contract or part time) or changes to the status of existing employees, unless it is cost neutral and specifically related to growth.

Capital budget

DeSousa said the Town continues to face pressures including depleted reserve balances – being

rebuilt with a long-range plan – and limited current operating funding. Until reserves are replenished, staff will ensure priorities are met through a corporate ranking process. He said the proposed \$19.5-million capital budget is "fairly aggressive."

Both budgets will be reviewed by Budget Committee with public

delegations on the capital budget at the November 14 Budget Committee meeting. Public delegations on the operating budget will be at the January 14 Budget Committee meeting.

Budget documents are available for viewing at the library, through the Corporate Services department and on the Town's website.

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AUCTION SALE

SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 8, 2012

AT 10:00 A.M.

FOR
Patricia Hauk and the late Horst Hauk
12909 Fifth Line, Limehouse,
½ mile south of Hwy. #7, east of Acton

TRACTORS & CRAWLER: Ford 2910 diesel, 707 hrs, remote, AC 170 gas 5484 hrs, remotes, front weights, new brakes, AC 655 Crawler loader diesel, 794 hrs.

EQUIPMENT: 7' Farm King 3 ph blade, Danuser post hole auger(14"), Pronovost 4' 6" x 6" tandem dump wagon, 7'x12' dump trailer elec. brakes, 18' 6" x 6' 6" tri-axle flat bed trailer, M.K. Martin 3 PH 6' rotary mower, McKee 6' 6" double auger snow blower, pull type V blower 4 sec diamond harrows, elec. Club golf cart, new batteries in '11, Craftsman 9 PH 21" rear tine roto-tiller, rototiller, Yamaha Big Bear 350 4 wd ATV(needs carb. work), Roper 12 hp lawn tractor, Yamaha 440, 2 Ski doo 377 (parts), Rainbow 2 snowmobile trailer galv. 18 hp B&S 2 cyl. Champion 196 cc motor (new in box), Delta 6 jointer, Delta RC51 18" planner 3 phase, Linde 295A welder Hobart 239C 180 wire fed welder, w/stand, welding cart, Timber tuff chainsaw sharpener, Mac, Craftsman, Homelite chainsaws, Super winch (new in box), sanders, elec. drills, #8 nibbler, belt sander, mitre saw (new in box) steel tool boxes, Sears 12" band saw, Sears 10" table saw, old fiberglass boat, Brintman smoker(new), barrel stove, cook stove, New Mac wood/oil furnace, forklift tines, (4) 5' x 10' 3/16 steel sheets, Campbell Husefeld 60 gal. 6.5 hp compressor, can't hook, used band saw blades, 3 ½ hp Honda w/water pump, many other items too numerous to list, quantity of scrap metal.

CAR: 1979 Lincoln Town car Ltd. Edition, Cartier Baby blue/navy top, 5048 orig. miles, stored for 20 years, Florida car, excellent.

LUMBER: Rough cut hardwood 1" by various widths in cherry, black walnut, maple, ash, oak, dried 10 years, Black walnut logs, 10' hydro poles, railway ties.

HOUSEHOLD/ANTIQUES: Kenmore 22 upright freezer (new) old highchairs, harness makers bench, oil lamps, old radios, 1 gal. Glass churn, pine carpenters box, model boat frame, Milton Dairy milk bottle, Credit Valley pop bottle (Georgetown).

NEIGHBOURS CONSIGNMENT: JD 1050 Tractor 4 wd w/JD45 loader 1246 hrs, JD No8 backhoe w/18" bucket, JD 676 3PH 6' 5" snow blower, JD 506 rotary mower, JD 12" posthole auger, Wallenstien WX310 3PH wood splitter, Bush hog 3PH 5' disk, Ford 930 5' finishing mower, Case 48" front mount blower, Kubota 4' tiller, Kubota 5' hydraulic blade, Sears 10 hp lawn tractor, Alkota pressure washer, 10' single axle tilt bed trailer, Pallet racking.

Note: Horst operated a small sawmill. All lumber is what he had cut and stored.

TERMS: Cash or cheque with proper I.D. Owner, Auctioneer or Staff are not responsible for loss or accident. All verbal announcements take precedence over written material.

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