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HOURS: Mon - Wed 10am - 6pm • Thur - Fri 10am - 8pm • Saturday 9am - 6pm • Sunday 11am - 5pm

NEWS

## Regional council briefed on upcoming tax increase

*Projected tax increase sits at 1.9 per cent*

KATHRYN BOYLE  
kboyle@theifp.ca

Regional taxes are on the road to a 1.9-per-cent increase for 2018.

During a council information session on Nov. 15, staff were briefed by commissioner of finance and regional treasurer Mark Scinocca on the upcoming tax increase.

Scinocca explained a number of things went into the increase, and more information will be provided during the committee meetings next month.

For 2018, Scinocca explained the region is still focusing on strengthening and continuing existing

components, including maintaining the service level, a priority on the strategic action plan, holding on to the AAA credit rating, keeping the tax rate at or below the rate of inflation, financing growth, asset management plans, and organizational sustainability.

Scinocca then went into budget highlights and noted several items: a 9.9-per-cent increase in paramedic services, an 8.5-per-cent increase in planning and a 3.3-per-cent increase in road operations.

For paramedic services, \$1.8 million is needed to address the increasing calls and to maintain the current levels of service.

For road operations, \$1.7 million is needed to address the rising state of repair needs based on a pub-

lic works assessment, as well as roads maintenance activities. Planning services will receive \$1 million to provide funding for Greenland property securements.

Milton Coun. Mike Cluett asked why some items, such as housing and children services, saw as much as a 10-per-cent decrease.

Scinocca replied that information would be supplied in the upcoming committee meetings.

The next meetings take place as follows:

Health and social services - **Dec. 5**

Planning and public works - **Dec. 6**

Administration and finance - **Dec. 7**

The budget will show up for council approval on **Dec. 13**.

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