

Transcript:

I'll start again. This is the meeting for the arm of Springfield special meeting to discuss our 2025 financial plan. Today's date is April the 29th at 2025 and the time is exactly 6pm. I'm Mayor Patrick Taron for the arm of Springfield. All council is present. To my right, the sending orders are Glenn Fuel, Andy Kozinski, Mark Miller and Melinda Warren. If I can get an adoption of the agenda there, a mover and a seconder please. Melinda and Glenn. Any additions from council at all? I see none. If I can get a mover or those in support of the adoption of the agenda. Andy? That would be unanimous and is therefore passed. We'll get into 4.1, that's adoption of the 2025 financial plan. Can I get a mover and a seconder for that as well please? Melinda and Patrick? Here's all the council of the arm of Springfield adopt the 2025 financial plan consisting of budget, two, a capital budget, three, an estimate of operating revenue and expenditures for the following fiscal year and four, a five-year capital expenditure program. Thank you. Questions? Councillor Miller? No, that's same. No, we can't hear. Just a couple of comments and questions. I'm going to go to the first one to the CEO or CFO. Under section 304 subsection one, no later than May 15th of each year, this is the municipal act, after adopting its operating budget for the year, council must by by-laws set a rate of taxation. So I assume that in the next coming meetings we're going to have a by-law to adopt the financial plan. Yeah, we pass a financial plan by resolution and then that becomes schedule A to the by-law for the taxation. Thank you for that clarity. A few concerns I have I wanted to share with council with this particular proposed 2025 financial plan. I noted at least one resident got back to me. Actually, there's a couple of them or a few that had input questions to our council. But as you know, we don't have question period, we don't have delegations and we really have no mechanism for the public to engage with us. But this one individual, as you know, it's in our agenda kind of hidden from the public. But this one individual did submit comments to the CEO and express that those comments be, how can I say publicly known? So I'm just wondering when people submit comments, because again, we've eliminated question period, we don't really have delegations to this special meeting. So there's no opportunity for the public to engage with us at all. But yet this individual took the effort to

do I think a two or three page exposition or series of questions for the financial plan. But yet when they submitted them online, this individual had the understanding that they would be posted publicly for people to share his concerns or maybe even respond to them. But I think you know who I'm referring to. I'm not sure if that individual wants me to say that their name. But I'm just wondering when people submit comments, wasn't that supposed to be the mechanism where the public still has the opportunity to publicly have their concerns shared with the community? In other words, are we just now relying on Oak Bank, Rant and Rave for the community to engage with us? This seems to be really the only mechanism. I'm kind of frustrated at that because people are now calling me and saying, Mark, other than you expressing our concerns at these meetings, there's no ability for the public to engage with not only the bureaucracy, but with council in general. And so for some council members, they feel it's gone on deaf ears. In other words, they share those concerns with council representatives, but they don't bring them up. They don't share them and they don't respond to them. And so they feel very frustrated. They feel that the only mechanism now, the only mechanism they have now are two things. One, to institute recall legislation, which of course won't happen very quickly. And the second is to vote differently at the next election in October of 2026. So it's unfortunate we've come to this situation where the public really is relegated to the backwoods. And so my next point is with the provincial reassessment this year in 2025, we have an addition of \$2 million to our kitty. And so we've taken upon us to find ways to spend that \$2 million. And, you know, I came to council here wanting to sharpen my pencil as much as I could, not to cut indiscriminately, but to save taxpayers dollars on discretionary items. In other words, things that are not necessarily for the clear benefit of the rate payers of our community. And I've tried to do that. But like in any democracy, if they don't flow with the rest of those who vote for those things, they end up in the dungeon and don't get passed. So I would suggest, I would suggest that, you know, with this proposed budget, I personally have seen that I'm going to have an 18% increase in my municipal taxes, 18%. And I don't have the biggest house in our municipality. I guarantee you that. My neighbor across the street has a house worth at least five times mine. And they're going to go

ballistic if their rate increases 18%. Now, I know that's not the average, but some people are going to have 20%. Some are going to have 2%. Some are going to have 8%. They're going to wonder and ask us the question, where are we spending this money? Why is we got \$2 million extra because of the reassessment, but yet we're spending that like, I want to be cautious when I say, but we're spending it just because we have it. And so we've got some very important and critical projects coming forward, as we all know. And we have to address those. So I would like our council to set a goal of reducing expenditures going forward, not increasing them just because we have an influx of \$2 million because next year we're not going to have that \$2 million extra kitty. And if our expenses keep rising the way they are, people are stretched to the limit. We saw it in the election yesterday. Affordability and cost of living is the top priority for all political parties, whether they really address it or not. That's another issue. But we have to on the grassroots here in the municipality, realize that people don't have an endless credit card to spend money with. I'm not going to go on a rant here, but anyway, you kind of get the just of where I'm going. Thank you. Thank you, Councillor Miller. I just want to remind people in the audience that there's no recording allowed. I understand that. Thank you. Any other questions from council? Councillor Kaczynski? Yes, thank you. I would like to point out, Councillor Miller, that it's not \$2 million, but it's \$3.2 million we're going to receive from that 18% increase by reassessment of our houses. 3.3, Councillor Kaczynski. 3.3? Okay. That's even better. That's even better, yes. So I will echo your comments and your concern that we have to be really frugal with our money right now. Because not going to happen all the time that we're going to get that reassessment because province have to realize that people only have so much money to spend. And the gravy train is going to be over shortly. So that's my concern and my input. Thank you. Thank you very much, Councillor Kaczynski. Any other questions or comments from council? I'd just like to kind of clarify or summarize everything that as the chair allows me this opportunity to do so. The mechanisms for this budget were totally complied with there. We did have our planning hearing or the public hearing there last week, I believe, there and all the questions were answered. I know who you were talking to and I don't know whether you mentioned his name

or not. I'm not sure whether I can or not, but I won't. And those questions were answered by me on the record there. So they're like, I think they were referred to as flags or something like that. So I answered all those questions there. And the questions were answered by or the answers were provided by administration that weren't answered at the time of the hearing itself there. So I do understand the situation that both councillors were talking about, because Kaczynski and Miller and we, I totally understand the, you know, I don't know that an RM is as strong position as ourselves. We have very good financial position there and it shows in the progress, the steps that we're taking, but we don't take it furiously. We went through each one of these, as you know, through our committee of the holes and working groups there. We went detail by detail, line by line and saved where we can and, you know, the wants as opposed to the needs were all, we were all, they're all weighed. So we rely quite heavily on our directors for their budgets. We give them something at the beginning of the year and for the, everybody does the exceptional job with that money and they know it's the taxpayers money. It's most of them are the taxpayers within the arm of Springfield themselves. So the increase as Councillor Miller has stated, I forget what Councillor Miller was saying for his increase there, whether you said it or not, I'm not sure. But mine went up 21%. Of course, I'm going to be paying a price for that. My neighbours, we've had discussions about that. And, you know, unfortunately, that's out of our control with the assessment year being this year. Yes, we got a pretty good amount of money. We got a pretty good amount of money two years ago. I think we got 2.2 million two years ago. Things change and so on like that. So we were able to reduce our excuse me, our mill rate by 3.1 per six, excuse me, reduce it 3.16. So it's not going to help a lot of the taxpayers there. And that's on average a 17% increase within the arm of Springfield. Some might even pay a little bit less there, but it's going as high as 21%. And that would be myself and my neighbours around me there. So I do understand the concerns from Councillors Miller and Kaczynski there. And just to reiterate there, everybody does have an input into this, the budget, and that was expressed quite eloquently by several people there that came up to us last week, as well as time goes on there. Everybody has a chance to discuss this through delegations and questions

through their Councillors, myself, and I answer every question there. But that's all I have to say to summarize all that. Any other questions from Council at all? Deputy Mayor? Yeah, I'd just like to say that we did a really good job in working through this budget. And like I said, I said it time before that we went through this budget and reduced the mill rate once, went back the second time and even became lower the second time. And again, all administration put their hearts into this to make it work. And I agree that all administration and staff that are involved in the budget take it seriously with every resident's dollar. And they do the best they can and costs are going up wherever we look. And we know that and we're doing the best we can. So this budget to me is a good budget and we've got to plan for the future and that's what we're doing because these costs and everything is not going down, they keep going up. Thank you. Thank you. Councillor Miller? Thank you, Mr. Mayor. It's good we have a council because we have different points of view. I wouldn't necessarily agree with the deputy mayor in this particular situation. I think we can do better. I think it ain't or a 17% average increase if the public knew that they would go ballistic. They would not be embracing us. In fact, they would be very upset and they would be saying you ought to look line by line one more time, one sober second thought because despite costs going up and we can use that excuse, everybody seems to. But in all due reality, Manitobans aren't getting paid that much more and we're getting squeezed right to the, you know, the nines. And so I think there is improvement to make and I cannot support this budget proposed as it is because I think we can use the excuse that the people had an opportunity for a public open house. But again, if we put up the information very clearly that it was going to lead to a 17% increase I think you'd have this room packed and packed and packed because people are fed up and aren't going to put up with this anymore. And we'll see it in October of 26. Thank you, Councillor. If there's any other questions, I see none. We can read the resolution. We can vote on it. Yes, please. Do you resolve the Council of the Armed Springfield adopt the 2025 financial plan consisting of one, an operating budget, two, a capital budget, three, an estimate of operating revenue and expenditures for the following fiscal year and four, a five-year capital expenditure program. With a show of hands first, those in support. That will be Councillor Warren,

Deputy Mayor Fuehl and Mayor Tarion. Those opposed. Councillors Miller and Kaczynski. So passed. Unless there's any other questions from Council. I see none. Then proposed to adjourn. Can I get a mover and a seconder to adjourn? Councillor Melinda and Melinda Warren and Deputy Mayor Fuehl. And at 6, 17 p.m. the meeting is adjourned. Thank you very much, people, for attending in the audience and online and the Council.

Summary (T5):

the arm of Springfield will adopt the 2025 financial plan in 2025 . it would be unanimously passed, but it's not a mechanism for the public to engage with the public . a reassessment of \$2 million in 2026 is a way to save taxpayers money . but if the public is relegated to the backwoods, they're going to have 8% .

councillor Kaczynski says it's not \$2 million, but \$3.2 million we're going to receive from that 18% increase by reassessment of our houses . he says he's concerned that we have to be really frugal with our money right now . councillors say they're not going to be able to get a budget that's up 21% in the arm of Springfield .

if there's any other questions, I see none. we can vote on the resolution . the council of the Armed Springfield adopts the 2025 financial plan . it's good we have a council because we have different points of view . if the public knew that they would go ballistic, they would not be embracing us . in all due reality, Manitobans aren't getting paid that much more .

Evaluation Metrics:

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