

**For Immediate Release**

Tuesday, June 17, 2014

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**MIDDLETON – Tax rates for 2014/15**

The Residential tax rate has increased by one cent to \$1.79. The Commercial tax rate has also increased by one cent to \$4.27 and the special rate for the Industrial Park remains the same at \$1.86. The sewer rate has increased from \$0.23 to \$0.25. Each of these rates are for every \$100 of property assessment.

To set the tax rates and annual budget for the Town this year, Council had several challenges to overcome. Residential property assessments have increased by over \$50,000, but Commercial assessments have decreased \$15,600. This is municipal government's primary revenue source as allowed by the Municipal Government Act of Nova Scotia.

With increased costs continuing to come forward through housing, corrections, waste management, insurance, fuel, and other essential items involved in managing the Town's operations, budget discussions centered around service levels, programming, staffing levels and tax rates in order to ensure a balanced budget met the needs and expectations of our community. More discussions around these issues will be planned for the fall to ensure future budgets are developed around key priorities for Middleton.

At the April 7, 2014 Council meeting, the 2014/15 General Capital Budget was approved in the amount of \$760,500. The Water Utility Capital Budget for 2014/15 was also approved in the amount of \$74,700. Early approval of the capital budgets allows staff to take advantage of the full construction season and organize any public tender processes for the best value possible.

One of the bigger projects that will take place this summer is the conversion of the Town's overhead street lighting to LED light fixtures. This requirement has been mandated by the Province of Nova Scotia for all municipalities. It is expected to realize significant energy cost savings of over \$30,000 annually with the LED lights. Installation is scheduled during the month of July.

Residents and business owners are encouraged to learn more about the budget process and how decisions are made by their elected Council. Council meetings are held on the first and third Mondays of each month and open to the public to attend and observe.

A complete budget package is available at the Town Office.

**BUDGET HISTORY**

The budget by category for comparison between 2013/14 and 2014/15 budgets is shown below.

Summary of Expense	Budget 2013/14	Budget 2014/15
1. Town Office/Council	\$431,639	\$418,969
2. Police Protection	576,878	594,089
3. Fire Protection	126,774	140,178
3a. Hydrant Rental	114,687	113,225
4. Dog Control/EMO	12,000	12,000
5. Roads & Streets	578,922	569,177
6. Sewers/Garbage/Trees	436,889	399,768
7. Social Services	8,000	1,500
8. Tourism/Planning/Promo	198,010	204,479
9. Recreation Services	344,951	359,160
10. Other Boards/Commissions	117,593	115,595
10a. Debt Payments	328,121	392,925
10b. Capital Projects	9,850	60,600
10c. Education	320,949	331,297
10d. Prior Year Deficit	0	0
<b>Total Expense</b>	<b>\$3,605,263</b>	<b>\$3,712,962</b>

Summary of Revenue	Budget 2013/14	Budget 2014/15
1. Taxes/Grants in Lieu	\$2,277,893	\$2,315,628
2. User Fees/Frontage Chgs	405,757	426,226
3. Taxes/Ind. Park	63,099	63,569
4. NSLC/NSPC/MTT Grnts	142,573	146,286
5. Fire Grant/Soc. S. Pyts.	121,377	98,965
6. Rentals/Rink Contract	110,963	99,939
7. Fines/Fees/Int. Misc.	112,382	137,684
8. Unconditional Grants	337,129	338,662
9. Conditional Grants	34,090	26,000
10. Tfrs own agencies	0	60,003
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$3,605,263</b>	<b>\$3,712,962</b>

<b>Surplus (Deficit )</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
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