

Over budget bids disappointing for council

Shelburne Council received a report from Town Engineer Jamie Witherspoon of WSP at last week's July 13th Council meeting providing updates on the bids for the Well No. 7 Project: Contract No. 1 ? the Well House and upgrades to existing Well 5/6. Witherspoon also reported on Contract No. 2 ? the Transmission Main. WSP had been hoping for a bid on the Well House of under a million dollars, however, the ?highest scoring bid? came in at a disappointing \$1,360,000 plus HST putting it over the budget Council had been expecting according to WSP estimates.

Concerning the contract for the Transmission Main, Witherspoon said the project had ?run into some environmental challenges that limited work.? He said the schedule would be delayed by approximately one month. Costs to date for the project are \$2,086,547. Witherspoon's report noted that the ?original intent? for Contract No. 1 was ?work limited to Well 7/8 site with wireless connection to Well 5/6.? He told Council the ?water business was seeing fewer contractors? and those were ?limiting their geographical range? on projects they accepted. He reported that despite WSP attempts to entice more bidders, only two were received. ?Realistically, we expected a more competitive bidding market,? said Witherspoon.

The WSP representative confessed to Council, ?To be blunt, it is not what I would have like to have seen and not what I talked to you about last time I was here.?

Witherspoon suggested to Council, that 12 per cent over engineering estimates was ?not astronomical for this type of project.? He also admitted that initial WSP calculations ?may have been too aggressive.?

The WSP engineer laid out the options for Council to ?re-tender the project with a revised scope? or ?award the tender and make some design revisions to reduce scope.? However, the engineer warned Council that ?in terms of cutbacks for savings?I don't think there are many savings to be found.?

The Mayor's comments noted Council's disappointment, but underlined, ?I do not want workers at risk to save a few dollars.?

Councillor Randy Chambers stated that there was ?no time to re-tender, and no time to stop the project now?there is not much to consider.?

Councillor Wade Mills asked the CAO, ?What is our budget solution??

Town CAO and Clerk John Telfer replied, ?It will have to be raised from reserves somehow.?

Referring to the bid, Telfer made it clear to the engineer, ?the figures for purchasing mechanical equipment need to be reviewed.?

Council resolved to receive the July 8th WSP report regarding the new Well 7 pumphouse and upgrades to Well 5/6 and award the contract to Wellington Construction Contractors Inc. to an upset limit of \$1,360,000 excluding taxes, as recommended.

Council further instructed WSP Engineering to work with CAO John Telfer to ?reduce costs where savings can be found.?

By Marni Walsh