

# Paid parking still contentious

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By Rob Gowan

### Council approves budget despite possibility of revisiting \$180,000 issue

The 2014 budget for South Bruce Peninsula has been passed, but there is still an appetite from some around the council table to revisit the issue of paid parking.

Council passed its 2014 budget bylaws Tuesday, but not with unanimous support. Councillors Janice Jackson, Chris Thomas and Matt Standen all voted against the measures because they disagree with council's decision to eliminate paid parking at Sauble Beach.

Councillors Jim Turner, Paul McKenzie, Karen Klages and Marilyn Bowman and Mayor John Close all voted in favour of the budget, with Coun. Jay Kirkland -who in the past was in favour of eliminating paid parking at Sauble - absent.

"I really do owe it to the residents of the municipality to bring it back," Jackson said following Tuesday's meeting. "Like I have been saying all along, town hall has been inundated with responses, negative responses, from the people with respect to losing this revenue."

During budget deliberations late last year, council voted 4-3 to eliminate paid parking at the beach, resulting in lost annual revenue of just under \$180,000.

Council decided to eliminate the \$15 daily fee rather than roll it back to \$5 because the cost to maintain the system would be more than the money projected to be brought in. Council also decided to eliminate paid parking at boat launches in Sauble Beach and Wiarton due to the cost to run the system.

Jackson said she expects to make a recommendation at the next council meeting that the paid parking issue be revisited.

Clerk Angie Cathrae told council Tuesday, that if council wishes to reverse the decision, staff would need to know shortly as there are measures to deal with implementing the system for the upcoming season, such as the hiring of staff, updating software in the parking kiosks and removing signs.

"It has to be done very quickly because we are coming up to the spring already," said Jackson.

McKenzie, who voted against eliminating paid parking, said he decided to vote for the budget because he didn't want to throw out all of council and staff 's work because of a single issue.

"We should bring it up again, have a good discussion and don't hold up the whole process . . . over one item," he said.

"It was made perfectly clear at the table today that it can be brought up. Hopefully it will be brought back up and, after good discussion, we might win this time."

The town's tax supported budget passed Tuesday is just under \$9 million and an overall increase of 2.7% from 2013.

Manager of financial services Michael Humble said it will mean a tax hike of about \$25 on an

average residential property with an assessed value of \$185,500.

Humble said that due to reassessments, the impact on everyone will be different. "We can't quote one number for everybody."