

Agenda

Strategic Priorities and Policy Committee

1st Special Meeting of the Strategic Priorities and Policy Committee

December 7, 2020, 4:00 PM

Virtual Meeting - during the COVID-19 Emergency

City Hall is open to the public, with reduced capacity and physical distancing requirements.

Meetings can be viewed via live-streaming on YouTube and the City website.

Members

Mayor E. Holder (Chair), Councillors M. van Holst, S. Lewis, M. Salih, J. Helmer, M. Cassidy, P. Squire, J. Morgan, S. Lehman, A. Hopkins, P. Van Meerbergen, S. Turner, E. Peloza, A. Kayabaga, S. Hillier

The City of London is committed to making every effort to provide alternate formats and communication supports for Council, Standing or Advisory Committee meetings and information, upon request. To make a request for any City service, please contact accessibility@london.ca or 519-661-2489 ext. 2425. To make a request specific to this meeting, please contact SPPC@london.ca

Pages

1. Disclosures of Pecuniary Interest

2. Consent

3. Scheduled Items

3.1. Public Participation Meeting - Not to be heard before 4:00 PM - 2021 Budget

a. Submission - C. Butler

2

4. Items for Direction

5. Deferred Matters/Additional Business

6. Adjournment

From: butler.chris

Date: November 29, 2020 at 3:01:25 PM EST

To: "Saunders, Cathy" <csaunder@london.ca>

Subject: [EXTERNAL] SPPC 2021 Budget Meeting - Public Input - Chris Butler - Added Agenda

Cathy – Please post this as added Agenda for the Dec 7 – SPPC Budget Meeting as I’m not comfortable attending in a City Hall Conference Room .

Mayor Holder / Budget Chief Morgan / Councillor’s >> Please consider this public input for your review and recommendations for consideration / action going forward for the Dec 10 – 11 Budget Meetings.

My Current Status >> Fixed Income Senior , homeowner current paying 15 % of my pre-tax income for City of London taxes and applauded at the double inflation annual increases for now the 6th year in a row. This is un-sustainable going forward .

Budget Review Conclusions

- The proposed “ savings “ to date offered up by Finance Team (4.4 % to 3.8 %) are welcome but are really just time shifting planned 2021 tax increases to 2022 , and offer little concrete hope .
- It’s clear to me and many , that if the City of LDN continues to recommend 2.9 % to 3.0 % tax (double BOC inflation) annual increases in the Operating Budget just to cover “ existing services “ ; then this 2021 and all budgets going forward are not sustainable when combined with the often welcome 1.0 % new program spending that this City needs . (Affordable Housing etc)
- Continuing on this path is already and will continue to erode the publics confidence that our fairly new 4 year Budget Planning process has the flexibility under C- 19 type challenges to offer up hope for rate payers and our already decimated commercial sector. This is not a “ drive by budget year “ folks.

Recommendations 2021 and Going Forward – For review / consideration / action – Dec 9 – 10 MTGS

1. REDUCE & challenge the City of London’s targeted increase from 3 % to 2.0 % to sustain “ existing services “ . The Assessment Value Increases offered up later in Q1 - 2021 by our CFO can be prioritized to cover of any pressure points at the CFO’s discretion.
2. Increase the annual target for the City of London’s contribution to the Annual Service Improvements Program (eg – Continuous Improvements) from the minor \$1.2 Million per year to at least \$2.4 Million starting in 2021 . The target has not changed in 5 – 6 years and offers up an opportunity for London to harness the commitment , innovation and ownership our front line employees have shown while working remotely during our C- 19 shared crisis with out the red tape. Empower this now and it will not stop.
3. Eliminate any ratepayer funded budgeted inflows into the “ Special Projects & New Initiatives Reserve Fund “ (discretionary fund) for 2021 and probably 2022. You already have \$156 M to \$162 Million in this fund and trust me that plenty of “ discretionary “ liquidity compared to me.
4. Apply the annual \$1.0 M to 2.0 Million in surplus Operation Budget Funding directly to offset our rate payer 2021 tax deduction opposed to “ paying down debt “ per the by-law. Both 2020 – 21 budget years should be consider C – 19 exceptions and treated with some outside the box solutions for taxpayers. (Were still eating kraft dinner & hotdogs with many in the community) .
5. Fund the CIP program – \$\$\$ grants for development fees & brown soil clean up waived and transferred to taxpayers to fund so that they be funded “ **perpetually** “ from the Assessment Value Growth Fund . Growth pays for growth RIGHT ? At the moment I pay for this growth at about \$1.6 M - \$2.0 Million a year at can’t afford to fund developers any more in the ever expanding CIP zones. . I get that the CIP Programs can promote growth (good metrics hard to come by) but covering off funding from the AVGFund makes this a perfect circle , IF and only IF the CIP program remains viable.

BUDGET PROCESS – Fix This Please ASAP

- Change the current by-law requiring Council to select and vote individually on any “ Service Reductions “ to met our ever increasing financial budget challenges back to one of general direction to the City Manager and CFO on the percentage reduction % required. This is the norm almost all Canadian Cities with only Calgary (broke) and London as exceptions . This by – law “ CHECKMATES “ council before they get started and consensus is shifted to you not on the City Amin.
- Going forward , we need a paradigm shift in what the Assessment Value Growth Fund targets for payouts. There isn’t a successful business or organization I know that takes it’s “ NEW REVENUE “ from growth and rewards those parts of the organization that have delivered the

same services in the same way with little or no measurable innovation and expects to survive going forward.

THXS – Chris Butler – 863 Waterloo St > Looking for 8 Brave Votes to Start the Process.