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**From:** [Dirk and Mari](#)

**To:** [Henderson, Dale](#) ; [jfontana@london.ca](#) ; [phubert@london.ca](#) ; [nbransco@london.ca](#) ; [jbryant@london.ca](#) ; [lrowe@london.ca](#)

**Cc:** [Orser, Stephen](#)

**Sent:** Monday, September 12, 2011 9:20 PM

**Subject:** Finance and Administration Committee

To: The Chair and other members of the Finance Committee,

I have inquired several times to various council members as well as the mayor's office regarding a fee that city hall charges to change the name(s) on property tax rolls upon transfer of property. This is being called an "Ownership Change Fee". I received my tax bill and paid it in full on June 2, 2011 and on June 12, 2011 received a statement asking for the above fee.

Upon contacting staff regarding this fee I was told it was something that council brought in as a by-law a few years ago. I asked the reasoning for the fee and there was no explanation given. I contacted my ward councilor on the matter who forwarded my concerns to the by-law department as well as the tax department. The by-law department said they couldn't find any such by-law and the tax department gave me a copy of By-law A-40 which is a by-law that council approves to increase various fees the city charges for services it provides.

After requesting further documentation as to the introduction of the fee which would outline its purpose and reason for establishing it, I was told that there wasn't any. Upon learning of this I asked that the charge be removed from my property as it was not justified and therefore not able to be enforced. The response given to me was that I either pay the said fee or risk interest penalties. I do not feel that a threat is the proper way to address a citizen's concerns and offered that if an explanation for the fee was provided I would pay it and donate double to a local charity. I have so far been ignored.

I ask the committee and its members to look into the above said fee and please provide me with my requested answers as I cannot see any reasoning in charging \$38 to have staff take 15 seconds to change a name in the computer in order to make sure the tax bill gets to the proper owner, which is something staff is already paid to do.

This is a fee that is charged on a tax and is not a service provided or asked for. My conclusion (so far) is that it is nothing more than a tax grab designed to fill up city coffers and I ask that as a law-abiding, tax paying citizen to be informed otherwise or the outstanding fee be removed or marked as paid and this matter put to rest.

Regards,

Dirk Vandenberg