

6TH REPORT OF THE
STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND POLICY COMMITTEE
(2013 BUDGET PUBLIC PARTICIPATION MEETING #2)

Meeting held on February 13, 2013, commencing at 4:07 PM, in the Council Chambers, Second Floor, London City Hall.

PRESENT: Mayor J.F. Fontana (Chair), Councillors B. Polhill, W.J. Armstrong, J.B. Swan, S. Orser, J.L. Baechler, N. Branscombe, M. Brown, P. Hubert, D.G. Henderson, P. Van Meerbergen, D.T. Brown, H.L. Usher, J.P. Bryant and S. White and L. Rowe (Secretary).

ALSO PRESENT: A. Zuidema, J. Braam, I. Collins, A. Dunbar, M. Hayward, C. Saunders, J. Senese, J. Stanford, L. Stevens and B. Westlake-Power.

I. DISCLOSURES OF PECUNIARY INTEREST

1. a) That it **BE NOTED** that Councillor M. Brown disclosed a pecuniary interest in those matters pertaining to Lorne Avenue Public School and Sherwood Forest Public School by indicating that he is employed by the Thames Valley District School Board.
- b) That it **BE NOTED** that Councillor W.J. Armstrong disclosed a pecuniary interest in those matters pertaining to residential rental licensing by indicating that he owns rental properties.

II. CONSENT ITEMS

None.

III. SCHEDULED ITEMS

2. 2013 Budget - Public Participation Meeting

Recommendation: That the following presentations **BE RECEIVED**:

- a) The attached presentation from Sue Wilson, Multi Faith Social Action Coalition of London, emphasizing the need for equity and fairness and access to basic resources for all residents in setting the annual Budget.
- b) The attached presentation from Janice Howell, Member - Advisory Committee on the Environment, seeking due consideration of environmental responsibility and the legacy of decisions that are made in setting the annual Budget, including items such as climate change, a stormwater strategy, public transit, housing, forestation, Hire One, accessibility, gas tax utilization, accessing green funding, etc.
- c) The attached presentation from John Casselman, London, Ontario, speaking in support of a zero percent tax increase.
- d) The attached presentation from Mary Lou Ambrogio, Forest City Institute, reminding Council Members to get serious about fiscal prudence and getting to zero.
- e) A verbal delegation from Candace Stewardson, Youth Services, King's University College, emphasizing the need to ensure the necessary infrastructure is in place for the disadvantaged as the community is only as strong as its weakest player; suggesting that eliminating neighbourhood amenities, such as splash pads, is not conducive to ensuring a strong community, and nor is increased user fees for recreational facilities and programs; and stating that there is a need to ensure funding of non-profits as it is those organizations that assist the community's most vulnerable.

- f) The attached presentation from Courtney Vaughn and Sydney Bergeron, Transit/Environment, King's University College, expressing concern with budget cuts in the area of transportation as they have a direct impact on the livability of the community; suggesting a need for a better and smarter cycling infrastructure as there would be associated environmental and fiscal benefits to the community, as has been proven within various communities, such as Portland, Oregon; noting the Thames Valley Parkway Trail System is good, but still requires improvement; and noting that a safer cycling culture and infrastructure would improve air quality, traffic congestion and the health and safety of cyclists.
- g) A verbal delegation from Daniel Hammond and Kayla LeBlanc, Social Housing, King's University College, providing statistical data with respect to affordable housing; stressing the importance of investing in a housing strategy now; citing statistics from the City of Toronto which support the benefits of housing people rather than having them end up in the Court system; emphasizing the need for a healthy and reliable reserve fund to support affordable housing and the need to maintain the City's ongoing investment in affordable housing, including contributions to the reserve fund.
- h) The attached presentation from Susan Toth, London, Ontario, emphasizing the importance of investing back into the community, which will also have the positive effect of retaining youth and immigrants in London due to quality of life considerations.
- i) A verbal delegation from Ross Graham, London, Ontario, indicating the need to shift thinking around cycling, walking and taking the bus as these can be very affordable options if the City is designed to support that infrastructure; stating he does not support the cuts associated with Business Cases 32, 45 and 51 and asking Council to take bold steps towards a connected city.
- j) A verbal delegation from Joe Hoffer, London Property Management Association, speaking against the proposed residential licensing fee increases; suggesting the licensing program is dysfunctional and that the associated numbers should be reviewed; and providing the attached data in that regard.
- k) A verbal delegation from Patti Dalton, London and District Labour Council, acknowledging that budgets are difficult as they have a profound social and economic effect; challenging the false promise of a 0% increase; noting that cuts to reserve funds are not the answer, nor is deferral, rather taxes are necessary; and emphasizing the need to seriously study alternatives to avoid austerity cuts and pinning the burden on social programs.
- l) The attached presentation from Sarah Merritt, Manager, Old East Village BIA expressing appreciation for the 2014 Budget placeholder for Lorne Avenue Public School; expressing the Old East Village's desire to continue its partnership with the City of London; and noting the next phase for the BIA is local economic development.
- m) The attached presentation from Jennifer Diplock, President, Old East Village Community Association and representing Old East Village BIA, London InterCommunity Health Centre and Lorne Avenue Public School, School Council; noting that she is speaking on behalf of the Lorne Avenue collaborative; expressing excitement about the Lorne Avenue project, which will continue to support past investments in the area; noting that schools are a logical choice for this purpose and Lorne Avenue Public School is a logical location.
- n) A verbal delegation from Graham McGeorge, London, Ontario, emphasizing the need to "pay the rent" and social costs will escalate if we can't pay the rent; asking that Ontario Works recipients not be victimized by impeding their ability to pay the rent as if they are able to continue to pay the rent they will continue their other spending to

stimulate the economy; noting that Electromotive Diesel left the City as they couldn't meet the wage and benefits demands, and relocated where they were able to hire workers for half the cost; indicating that rather than having this situation occur again, if workers can only expect to be paid half of what they were paid, that adjustment should be made for everyone across the City.

- o) A verbal delegation from Michael Wickett, London, Ontario, indicating he bikes 2 to 4 times per week and is able to make do with just one vehicle for his family; noting that cycling is healthy and environmentally friendly, but there are holes in the bikeway system and fixing these holes is important for safety and to promote usage; and stating that the present situation is unsafe so Business Case 32 should not be endorsed.
- p) A verbal delegation from Muriel Abbott, Public Health Nurse, stating that citizens' strengths and assets need to be capitalized upon; noting that health is determined by neighbourhood (e.g. income, employment, early childhood development, etc.); noting that implementation of the Neighbourhood Hub Initiative would support the Municipal Council's Strategic Plan and speaking in general support of neighbourhood hubs.
- q) A verbal delegation from Erica Zarins, Public Health Nurse, speaking to Business Cases 46 and 48 related to the Library; noting that the Library is one of the most important partnerships with the Middlesex-London Health Unit in assisting people with accessing important health information; also noting that the Library provides an opportunity for connectivity for seniors and for the vulnerable population.
- r) A verbal delegation from Melanie Elms, Public Health Nurse, stressing the importance of availability of rent-geared-to-income and the sense of security and safety that is achieved by maintaining funding levels; stressing the need for increased stability and investment in neighbourhoods; indicating that it is important to invest in children by providing programs that might otherwise be unaffordable; noting that summer recreation programs also provide employment for older youth; and expressing support for increases in taxes to support community health and wellbeing.
- s) A verbal delegation from Dr. Maria vanHarten, Dental Consultant, indicating she moved from Brampton to London as she heard London was a great place to live; stating everyone wants affordable opportunities to get active and the public is expecting more discussion on the repurposing of arenas; suggesting that if some facilities are closed it will mean that more and more after school activities will only be available for those that can afford them, which would threaten London's image as being good for ALL families and the City's ability to achieve the goals within its Strategic Plan.
- t) The attached presentation from Janette MacDonald, Executive Director, Downtown London, noting the distinction between the Downtown Business Association and MainStreet; indicating that information will be provided as to the amount of money that has been leveraged from the City's investment, which will demonstrate that the City's continued investment remains valid; and advising they will not be seeking more than the 2013 Budget amount that is being recommended by the Strategic Priorities and Policy Committee.
- u) A verbal delegation from Mohamud Mohamud, African Community Council, indicating that London is a nice place and the African Community Council is trying to build upon that through programs to support the unique needs of African newcomers and connect them to support services and role models; noting that their program would reach 15 to 30 year olds in order to build capacity for employment and provide for a smooth transition to the workforce through one-on-one assistance, which would also serve to lower the crime rate.

- v) A verbal delegation from Brian Tansy, Amalgamated Transit Union Local 741, indicating the importance of public transit to the City; noting that students rely on affordable transportation; indicating there is a need for more buses and routes; stating that public transportation benefits air quality and economic development.
- w) A verbal delegation from Peter Bergmanis, London Health Coalition, raising concerns about contracting out the management of the Dearness Home as it could create problems by subjugating the needs of residents by profit; suggesting that Extencicare, while international, has a more restrictive model of resource access, including the rationing of supplies and limiting staff call-ins; and requesting that the Municipal Council not let cost cutting negatively affect the people component.
- x) A verbal delegation from Abe Oudshoorn, London Ontario, indicating there are many opinions through all spectrums across this City, including our Federal and Provincial representation and asking that everyone's voice be heard.
- y) A verbal delegation from Barb Whitney, Chair, Political Action, speaking in support of maintaining funding for the Housing Reserve Fund; noting that access to safe and affordable housing is central to quality of life; noting that the Committee's recommendation to maintain funding is compassionate and prudent and that the cost to society would be greater if permanent homes were not found.
- z) A verbal delegation from Wendy Pinkerton-Knelsen, London & District Injured Workers Group, indicating that responsibility for injured workers is being downloaded to municipalities; noting that WSIB has become a Board of denial, leaving workers out of income, shelter, health care, etc.; suggesting that injured workers no longer supported by WSIB (thousands in one year) will fall into Ontario Works, which places a burden on municipalities; indicating that there is fear of reprisal for injured workers and that the associated human suffering is incalculable.
- aa) The attached presentation from Randy Warden, Executive Director, London Celebrates Canada, noting their funding request in the 2013 Budget and that their organization exists in response to the Municipal Council's request.
- ab) The attached presentation from Anne-Marie Sanchez, Research & Development Associate, Centre for Organizational Effectiveness, providing an overview of findings from a constituency survey.
- ac) The attached presentation from Jacqueline Thompson, LIFE*SPIN, outlining the services they provide and the budget issues critical to the persons they serve.
- ad) A verbal delegation from Tabitha Robinson, Student, Human Services Foundation Program, Fanshawe College, speaking to Business Cases 3 and 4 and indicating that the Capital Grant Program aids non-profits that might not otherwise be able to operate and that their existence is critical to many in the community.
- ae) A verbal delegation from Sean Quigley, Emerging Leaders, encouraging Municipal Council to place funding in the 2013 Budget to permit some of the proposals that came forward during the "Investment and Economic Prosperity Proposal Assessment Process" to be undertaken in 2013 and noting that the City of London would be providing the wrong message to the community by not providing funding.
- af) The attached presentation from A. Harrington speaking in support of a tax freeze.

- ag) A verbal delegation from Darren Jones, noting that support will be sought for the repurposing of Sherwood Forest Public School in the 2014 Budget as the community is working diligently towards repurposing the site through a number of projects.
- ah) A verbal delegation from Glen Hadley, London Middlesex Housing Corporation (LMHC) Board, pointing out that the LMHC has done a good job of controlling expenses and reaffirming the need for a subsidy increase.
- ai) A verbal delegation from Gary Brown, 99 Ridout Street, thanking the Municipal Council and staff for this year's Budget process; noting the process has been the largest public engagement endeavour for a budget and the associated documentation is the best so far; suggesting it was odd to see energy management funding removed as it is always best to invest now for future savings and requesting clarification regarding the amount of the 2012 surplus.
- aj) A verbal delegation from Jeremy Burns indicating the importance of maintaining reserve funds as there could be a budget bomb down the road if they are not maintained.
- ak) The attached staff report from Director of Financial Planning and Policy and the attached presentation from R. Wilcox, Business Planning Process Manager, with respect to public input on the 2013 Budget.

IV. ITEMS FOR DIRECTION

- 3. The attached communication dated January 29, 2013 from J. Schlemmer, Director, M. Laliberte, Staff Lawyer and S. Dickson, Staff Lawyer, Neighbourhood Legal Services **BE RECEIVED**.
- 4. The attached communication dated January 29, 2013 from K. and W. Dow **BE RECEIVED**.
- 5. The attached communication dated January 28, 2013 from B. Brock **BE RECEIVED**.
- 6. The attached communication dated January 31, 2013 from D. Abdi, Chair, London Multicultural Community Association with respect to the Immigrant Incubation Centre **BE RECEIVED**.
- 7. The attached communication from G. Macartney, CEO, London Chamber of Commerce with respect to the City budget priorities balanced with the need for growth **BE RECEIVED**.
- 8. The attached communication dated February 11, 2013 from J. Kennedy, President, London Development Institute with respect to the City of London 2013 draft budget **BE RECEIVED**.

V. DEFERRED MATTERS/ADDITIONAL BUSINESS

None.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:28 PM.