

## PUBLIC PARTICIPATION MEETING COMMENTS

### 3.1 Public Participation Meeting – 2021 Budget Update

- J. Fontana – downtown resident – speaking with respect to the extraordinary times we are in and noting that a tax increase of 3.8% is highly irresponsible; requesting a tax freeze; noting that small business needs support, and this is not the time to raise taxes.
- A.M. Valastro – 123 John Street – speaking about the necessary revisions to the tree by-law, and the consensus that was presented at the first public participation meeting; this is not a big strain on the budget; noting the need to have additional by-law enforcement and move away from road-widening projects; and indicating frustration that staff and Council have not upheld the wishes of residents; focus on basics.
- M. Latino – lives in north-east part of town; call to leaders to act with a moral courage; noting the frustrations of citizens, a few months into summer – unprecedented number of Londoners coming together – Black Lives Matter; suggesting that the budget doesn't reflect trust in the community and the budget assumes that the police should be enhancing the lives of marginalized communities; cops are trusted. Basic reading of budget reveals this – call on leaders to act with a moral courage to trust communities to find solutions and requesting that Council align the budget to this, not police.
- A. Kane – BLM London – noting that there is a point in history, where there is a need to end the police; defund the police; police violence on black and indigenous lives; need to have actionable changes to defend us, not by funding the police; the purpose of divesting London police and creating alternatives – unarmed mediation teams, non-criminal incidents, mental health ambulances, unarmed traffic enforcement, etc.; noting that the safest communities have the most resources, not police; need to end police brutality, just like slavery and segregation.
- G. Harper – on behalf of BLM – defund the police; move budget to other areas – shift priorities; police training is not conducive to many of the calls that they have; shift funding to social services – better use of funds; understand the limitations of the police – paperwork should not be the focus of their time; more police does not solve crime; move funding to other sectors to reduce need; increase police does not make all of us safe and experts have written extensively about this matter; need not be another black youth growing up in a white society.
- D. Turris – speaking in favour of the business case for film – and in support of the proposed business cases before the committee; sharing their background and experience; noting that London has opportunity to participate in the film and television and that this would be an economic boost – creates opportunities in the community; have the training at Fanshawe and Western – then graduates leave, the establishment of the film office will keep them in London.
- J. Windatt – speaking in support of the film industry business case, and the amendment from Councillors van Holst and Squire; noting that they are a business owner, and event organizer; with pandemic all events were cancelled, now working in media; unprecedented hardship to own business and economy; media-based entertainment is in every home; industry has reacted quickly to COVID protocols; this would bring jobs and production \$ into local economy; facilitate a future for graduating students; great things are possible with initiative.

- Caller #1 – S. Franke – ward 11 resident – suggesting that emissions continue to rise, notwithstanding initial drop at the beginning of the pandemic; requesting funding allocations to climate change; noting the August update – screening to apply to future transportation projects; suggest that all projects go through this and a public screening process; make available to the public prior to any funding – the climate screening tool; noting cost mitigation opportunities that would also save money; suggesting that this is not a business as usual year; every budget requires evaluation through the screening tool, with a report to Council prior to any budget allocation.
- Caller #2 – A. Tucker – 280 Queens Avenue – submitted some information about sustainable development – in terms of an island; raising several questions related to the Core Area Action Plan and the associated funding for this; questioning the need.

Caller #3 – N. Evans – Congress of Black Woman – noting that they are alarmed by the wellness checks that have gone wrong; the organization understands the importance of policing, however it must be noted that the police are not equipped to manage the volume mental health emergencies; need to examine the possibility of redirecting funding to better trained response teams; suggesting the need to hire more black and indigenous officers; increase funding to social services; redirect funding into black community projects and away from the police budget.

- Caller #4 – A. van der Voort – speaking in support of growing the film sector in London; suggesting that Council plan ahead to support this industry; there a number of resources existing already in London; support the film industry here in London.
- Caller #5 – R. Carver, Associate Dean, School of Contemporary Media Fanshawe College Faculty of Creative Industries – speaking in support of the film industry in London; noting their work with staff on the business case, and now is the time for this in London; Fanshawe is a key participant; without it, will mean that London is under-represented; suggesting that there is spin off industry – including costuming, hoteling, etc.; there is anticipate a surge in demand, during and after COVID.
- Caller #6 – M. Amadasun – Argyle resident; noting their personal experience with systemic racism; discrimination and systemic racism exists, we all have a part to play – speaking in support of defunding the police by no less than 15%; the police do not keep us safe; doubling support of housing, long-term care, public service support; suggesting training to be made available to all government employees about unconscious bias; training needs to be from those communities who are being discriminated against; need more representation in the workforce, and this would minimize or reduce discrimination; funding and investment in the black community – give tools and access for various systems, so that all voices are at the table.
- Caller #7 – second paragraph in the budget – confirmed commitment – this needs to be followed-up by defunding the police budget; be that change – reallocate funding to addiction services, housing and recovery services.
- Caller #8 – S. Lewkowitz – this option is an important equity option in the process; speaking on behalf of the Urban League; support the call from Black Lives Matter, solidarity needs to be backed up with action; open the discussion on the police budget; suggesting that the pandemic has not affected everyone equally; the anti-racism lens is a good first step – but we require a full equity lens – make this a priority; only way to make this happen; historic investments – vital

that investments continue, austerity is detrimental; need to invest in services that support all people; asking for an additional budget public participation meeting, following the debate, and the establishment of Council priorities.

- Caller #9 – M. McIntosh – Londoner since 1978 – proud to be a Londoner, Black London Network – faith-based network; first-hand experience of black Londoners and black organizations; put investment into black organizations that support the community and anti-oppression racism; community grant program to support anti-black and all racism forms; money is a barrier, access funding comes with many barriers; common systemic barrier is the criteria to qualify for funding; requires that partnership is necessary to access funding opportunities; community grant process – extend anti-racism funding across multi-year budgets; demonstration of sustained commitment, but finding additional funding for additional anti-black racism initiatives; noting that action is required and the multi-year budget needs to support black-led organizations.
- Caller #10 – K. Web – resident of London – stating a land acknowledgement and urging Council to start meetings with an indigenous land acknowledgement; police is 18%, which is very high – this needs to be cut in half and allocated to social services, housing community services.
- Caller #11 – D. Day – resident – London police service is 18% of budget vs 2-3% for housing; increasing housing will reduce needs in other areas, including hospitalization; noting that people of colour are disproportionately negatively affected.
- Caller #12 – M. Metcalf - Vice President External Affairs University Students' Council – speaking in support of transit funding; advocating for some policy change related to accessible and reliable transit; noting decrease in service time is disproportionality affecting marginalized communities; restore services to 100%, for the safety of students; suggesting COVID has not affected every Londoner the same; speaking against the delay on the implementation of the green bin.
- Caller #13 – M. Moussa – requesting the removal \$13 million – for the consultation for new city hall; removal, not deferral – new city hall needs to come off the table, and allow the rate-payers to comment; money should be spent on infrastructure; doesn't like multi-year budgets; city hall consultants cost is excessive and needs to be removed.
- Caller #14 – D. Aboud – speaking in support of the business case for the film industry; noting this is a growing opportunity, including for job creation; attraction of crews, money from production companies, a great deal that can be taken in by the City of London; graduates from London's 2 great film schools leave the City – job creation is for all walks of life; strongly urge the funding of an office and believes that London can be successful in this realm.