

Special City Council Meeting Agenda



Wednesday, November 27, 2019 – 6:00 p.m.
Council Chambers, Guelph City Hall, 1 Carden Street

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Open Meeting

O Canada
Silent Reflection
First Nations Acknowledgement
Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest and General Nature Thereof

Special Council – Public Delegations for Tax Supported Operating Budget and Local Boards and Shared Services Budgets

Delegations:

Shakiba Shayani, Guelph Chamber of Commerce
Helen Fishburn, CMHA Waterloo Wellington
Robert Eilers, Vesterra Property Management Inc.

Correspondence:

Rene Van Acker
Morris Twist
Phyllis Paroshy

Adjournment

Hi Phil and June;

Thank you for listening to my rant yesterday evening about the proposed 9.81 percent increase in the city of Guelph police budget for 2020 over 2019.

I read in on Oct 17 article in the Guelph Mercury Tribune that this proposal comes after increases to that budget of 3.5%, 3.9% and 4.4% in 2017, 2018 and 2019, respectively.

If the 2020 proposal is passed that would mean a total rise of at least 21.6% in the police budget over 4 years (not accounting for compounding). Given that the Canadian inflation rate has hovered around 2% per annum over the past 4 years this increase is truly extraordinary. And the dollar increase of \$4121600.00 (if one assumes 50,000 taxed households in Guelph) would mean a tax increase of over \$80 per household for the 2020 proposed increase alone. In the October 17 article mayor Guthrie says that he "gets the sense community members want this extra police power and are willing to pay for it." His sense is wrong when it comes to me and to people I have talked to about this. I also wonder whether there is in fact a need for this "increase in policing power" as the mayor describes it. Certainly there are issues of petty crime and drug use in the city but it is not clear whether increased police power will address these issues (and Don Drone admits that in the Oct 17 article), and would perhaps other investments better serve solutions to this issues. I would hope that you would consider this increase very carefully and get your own sense of how your constituents feel about this and whether they actually are willing to pay. I strongly encourage you to question this increase in council meetings and if necessary I would be willing to come to a council meeting to ask questions on behalf of what I suspect is a silent (or silenced?) majority of Guelph citizens.

Thank you again for considering my concerns on this.

Rene Van Acker

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The Guelph Police Board, Chair and Police Chief should be ashamed of themselves. They cannot follow simple instructions with respect to their 2020 budget.

City Council has no alternative but to refuse to accept the proposed budget until it is in line with all other departments of the city. Council should not feel bullied by the Police Service.

It is coincidental, in today`s mail there was a solicitation letter from the Guelph Public Library. The Police get an almost new building, plus a spare unused third floor. This is a building that the public did not ask for, nor did they have to fund raise, nor seek private partners.

City Council needs to show leadership on this issue. Otherwise, all other needed services in this city will go wanting because of the irresponsibility of this proposed budget.

Morris Twist

Hi Dominique,

Thank you for getting back to me regarding the proposed condos on Gordon Street. I'm happy the Lowe's condo has fallen through.

As a single senior on a fixed income I read with genuine concern about the City's plan to not only raise taxes but to add to that a tax levy. At a time when many of us are struggling to get by, when whispers of a looming global recession prevail, when the City doesn't know when the Ford government will implement more cuts for municipalities, it is a conundrum to me that the new City mantra is Spend, Spend, Spend!

We know what happens when a family chooses to live beyond its means; why is this any different. I know that Guelph is rapidly growing but is it really necessary to build a main library, a south end rec Centre and fund a transit expansion all at once when essential services like policing need money, the hospital needs money for a provincial shortfall, not to mention moving the locomotive downtown, and the ridiculous decision to restore the drill hall that is collapsing.

As a taxpayer I dread a tax levy and I hold the council responsible if this is imposed on Guelph homeowners.

Regrettably those who can least afford this levy probably won't put their concerns in writing. I think I may be speaking on behalf of many.

It's my hope that council and the mayor will look at the big picture and postpone one of the big projects.

Best Regards,
Phyllis Paroshy