

**2004 BUDGET PUBLIC INPUT SESSION
OF THE CITY OF GREATER SUDBURY**

**Garson Arena
100 Church Street, Garson**

**Tuesday, January 20th, 2004
Commencement: 7:30 p.m.
Adjournment: 9:30 p.m.**

Chair

COUNCILLOR TED CALLAGHAN, IN THE CHAIR

Present

Mayor Courtemanche; Councillors Gasparini; Thompson

City Officials

C. Hallsworth, General Manager of Citizen & Leisure Services; D. Nadorozny, General Manager of Economic Development & Planning; C. Matheson, General Manager, Health & Social Services; S. Jonasson, Director of Finance/City Treasurer; C. Mahaffy, Manager of Financial Planning/Policy; R. Henderson, Director of Citizen & Leisure Services; L. Henri, Community Development Officer, Citizen & Leisure Services; R. Ahola, Manager of Municipal Arenas & Community Centres; J. Cappadocia, Assistant Manager of Arenas/Community Services; C. Salazar, Manager of Corporate Strategy & Policy Analyst; A. Haché, Deputy City Clerk; K. Bowschar-Lische, Planning Committee Secretary

C.U.P.E. Local 4705

W. McKinnon, President; M. Brady, Chief Steward

Citizens

23 Citizens

News Media

Sudbury Star

Welcome and
Opening Remarks

Councillor Ted Callaghan welcomed those in the audience and advised the purpose of the meeting was to provide an overview of the budget and an opportunity for the public to comment on the 2004 Budget for the City of Greater Sudbury. He indicated that feedback should be provided using the following:

1. Should those who use a service pay for the service (users fees) and/or should everyone share in the cost (taxes)?
2. What level of municipal service do you expect?
Should any services be reduced or eliminated?
3. Would you support a tax increase to maintain existing service levels?
4. Should the City borrow money and/or implement a special levy to fix roads, repairs, arenas, replace fire trucks, maintain police communications, etc.
5. What service would you like to see improved or added?

Submissions would be heard in the order that they appear on the speaker's list. Councillor Callaghan introduced Councillors and staff who were in attendance.

SLIDE PRESENTATION

Budget04
Towards Tomorrow
Together

C. Hallsworth, General Manager of Citizen & Leisure Services, addressed the audience with an electronic presentation which provided an overview of the 2004 Budget.

Items in the overview included the National/Provincial Scene; financial update; mandatory, limited discretion and greater discretion services; efficiencies and service improvements; competitiveness study and next steps.

Ms. Lara Friedrich

Ms. Friedrich provided a written submission entitled "Spay and Neuter Program Needed Urgently" and requested that money collected from dog and cat licensing be put back into animal care or at least the \$50,000.00 which was saved from the previous year. This money should be spent exclusively on spay and neutering of animals and administered by a neutral group such as the soon to be formed panel on animal care.

Mr. Daniel Gingras

Mr. Gingras provided general comments regarding the City pushing a 13% tax increase and uses fees to get more revenue. He asked Council to look at every budget line and review every position to see if it is necessary. The municipality should concentrate on roads, garbage, water and recreation, etc. Services such as the two municipally run day cares and Pioneer Manor could be managed and operated by other organizations/corporations. He questioned why the City is paying \$5,000.00 per year to Police Service Board Members and \$8,000.00 per year to Greater Sudbury Hydro Utilities Board Members as it is not essential to pay members on Boards. He agrees with the City's need to borrow money to repair roads and invest in recreational facilities which will fight unemployment, but borrowing should only take place after reductions are made.

Ms. Tracy Saarkoski

Ms. Saarkoski, Centre Director for the First Baptist Church Teddy Bear Day Care, provided a written submission dated 2004-01-20 entitled "Request for Budget Enhancement". She outlined the history of the centre which presently has 107 children registered in the program. She requested an extension of the turning lanes which currently exist between the Cedar Green Subdivision and Metcalfe Street on Falconbridge Highway in Garson in front of the Church driveway access and to correct the entrance of the driveway on property owned by the City. She said that prior to amalgamation, Council agreed that they would revisit this issue the next time Falconbridge Highway needed repairs. There are a number of children, families, staff, seniors and buses that utilize the centre who are at risk of a fatality. There have already been 2 serious accidents in this area.

Ms. Joanne Nother

Ms. Nother indicated that she owns her own home in New Sudbury and pays taxes. Since she is in a wheelchair, she uses limited services. She is concerned about the amount of accessible transportation. For example, in the City of Sudbury, Handi-Transit runs from 7:00 a.m. to midnight and in the outlying municipalities from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Some of these hours will not increase until later this year or next year. She indicated that lack of these services puts a lot of strain on people for independence. The population is growing older and accessible transit users are increasing. There are fewer buses, more ridership and people need to get to the City for medical reasons.

Mr. Tom Lloyd

Mr. Lloyd indicated that he did not wish to speak at this time.

Mr. Gilbert Lux

Mr. Lux, Inco pensioner, indicated that user fees should be kept to a minimum as services are necessary to lower income families. He wants to keep the services he currently has but feels that the tax increase should be no more than 8%. He does not believe in borrowing money and that you should buy what you can afford. He would like to see improvement in roads.

Mr. Hank Richer

Mr. Richer recently read a newspaper article which stated there is a 10 minute emergency response time for 83% of the residents. He questioned what happens to the remaining 17%. He questioned why Valley East had to pay special rates for fire service and why everyone is paying for the South End Sewer Tunnel as he does not use it. He also expressed concern regarding paying long distance charges to call within the municipality. He questioned why his electrical service comes from Ontario Hydro instead of Sudbury Hydro which has cheaper rates. He sees many City buses travelling on their route empty and wants to ensure that this is being tracked by someone at the City. He asked whether the City has looked into joining other medium sized cities to lobby Federal and Provincial governments for funding. Mr. Richer was advised of a public input meeting at the Garson Arena on Thursday, January 22, 2004, at 7:00 p.m. regarding the Master Fire Plan.

Mr. Bud Kean

Mr. Kean does not agree that taxes should be increased on top of the 40% increase he got last year. He stated that our roads are in need of repair but wonders how the City can afford to pay the expensive cost of interlocking stone walkways in the downtown.

Mr. Mike Brady

Mr. Brady stated it is not fair to compare Sudbury to cities such as Toronto, Vancouver and Montreal as taxes in those cities will be much higher. Sudbury should be compared to similar sized cities. He recognizes there are extra dollars we need to spend on deteriorated infrastructure, parks not being kept up to standard, etc. He said that we cannot draw people to our community if our buildings and parks are dilapidated. Closing arenas and ski hills is not appropriate. He agrees that if we borrow money, it should be spent wisely.

Mr. Alfred Nicholls

Mr. Nicholls, President, Sudbury Northeast Ratepayers Association, provided a written submission entitled 'City of Greater Sudbury Budget Proposal 2004' dated 2003-12-15. With the election of the Liberal Government in Ontario, they believe this is the right time to correct a mistake made by the previous government. Under Bill 25, the unorganized townships to the northeast were amalgamated in the City of Greater Sudbury. The City now has opportunity to correct this situation and save a very substantial amount of money. Area roads need upgrading and hydro and phone service is not available. The area is isolated from the City and these taxpayers resent the service they receive for tax dollars they pay. He requested the City apply to the Ontario Municipal Board for removal of these previously unorganized townships.

Mr. Wyman McKinnon

Mr. McKinnon, Coniston resident, spoke regarding the 4.5 million dollar contribution needed for OMERS this year. He indicated that when the OMERS contribution holiday started, CUPE cautioned the municipality and its employees to plan for the reintroduction of OMERS contributions. He does not trust nor put faith in the Federal and Provincial governments in receiving additional funding. Roads are in deplorable condition. The road problem did not occur overnight but was created over 10-12 years by a 0 base budget. He said that other municipalities went through incremental increases and that is something we should look at in the future.

Mr. Scott Overton

Mr. Overton addressed his concerns regarding the following issues:

- ▶ it is better to increase the overall tax rate rather than the user fees in most cases
- ▶ could not point to any service that should be eliminated
- ▶ explore more partnerships for delivery of services such as
volunteer organizations, other businesses--but not to divest, only to partner
- ▶ pleased to see a multi-year budget and is in favour of long term rather than short term thinking
- ▶ believes taxes have to be increased but look at providing lower income earners with a lower rate, similar to income taxes
- ▶ if City is going to grow, we need an attractive community not one that is crumbling and we will need to borrow money

He urged Council to look at the Smart Sudbury Project to attract business. Council should look at the long term and not the short term and we and future generations will be better off.

Mr. Ron Black

Mr. Black expressed concerns regarding the tremendous amount of money being spent on consultants fees. The City is hiring a consultant to assist the Mayor and asked if an existing employee could fill the position.

He indicated that we could save money on the blue box program and questioned its cost and whether it would be cheaper to put recyclables in the garbage.

He stated that the City has too many vacant buildings and questioned the cost.

Mr. Daniel Gingras

Mr. Gingras recommended that the City start selling the excess buildings and land they own to generate tax revenues and funds from the sale of these properties could be put into an endowment fund to invest in economic development, transit, etc.

It was noted that revenues from the sale of City properties is placed into a Land Acquisition Fund to maintain existing buildings and the sale of buildings and lands is actively pursued.

Jim Lanzo

Mr. Lanzo believes that Provincial and Federal governments need to be approached for new funds. The new deal will be driven by the larger municipalities and we will need to be on side with them. It is up to the citizens to call our local MPs and MPPs. Every political party has a policy process and suggested the City contact the policy person for each political association if we want a new deal to happen.

WRITTEN SUBMISSIONS

Marc & Darrell Ranger

A written submission dated January 20th, 2004, from Marc and Darrell Ranger requesting that West Bay Road (Capreol) on Lake Wahnapiatae be renamed, that 911 signs be posted at all driveways, that the City plough an additional 3 ½ km of road and that a counter be put on the road to monitor traffic for future road repairs, was submitted at the meeting.

CLOSING REMARKS

Councillor Callaghan expressed his appreciation to all those who provided written or oral submissions. He advised Staff had taken note of all concerns and these matters would be identified through the budget process. He indicated that a summary of all input received would be compiled and reviewed by Council then posted on the City's website.

ATTACHMENTS

The following is a list of attachments submitted at the meeting:

- ▶ Spay and Neuter Program Needed Urgently prepared by Lara Friedrich (Sudbury Animal Advocates)
- ▶ Request for Budget Enhancement prepared by Tracy Saarikoski, Centre Director, First Baptist Church Teddy Bear Day Care, dated 2004-01-20
- ▶ Sudbury Northeast Ratepayers Association
 - City of Greater Sudbury Budget Proposal 2004 prepared by Alfred Nicholls, President, dated 2003-12-15

Adjournment

The public input session adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

Councillor Ted Callaghan

Secretary