

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

**Valley East Citizen Service Centre  
Library, Valley East**

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

Chair

**COUNCILLOR ELDON GAINER, IN THE CHAIR**

Present

Councillors Bradley; Dupuis; Kett; Rivest; Mayor Courtemanche

City Officials

M. Mieto, Chief Administrative Officer; D. Belisle, General Manager of Public Works; D. Wuksinic, General Manager, Corporate Services; T. Beadman, Acting General Manager, Emergency Services; D. Dumontelle, Budget Technician; R. Clouthier, Manager/North Customer Service Centres/Libraries; T. Mowry, City Clerk; C-J Caporale, Council Secretary

News Media

Valley East Today; MCTV

Welcome and  
Opening Remarks

Councillor Gainer welcomed the thirty-one people in attendance to the 2004 Budget Public Input and Information Session and advised the purpose of the meeting was to provide an opportunity for the public to comment, in a public forum, on the 2004 Budget for the City of Greater Sudbury.

Specifically public input is being sought on the following topics:

1. Should those who use a service pay for the service (user 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, repair arenas, replace fire trucks, maintain police communications, etc.?
5. What service would you like to see improved or added?

A "Speakers' List" was available and submissions were heard in the order that they appeared.

Budget04  
Towards Tomorrow  
Together

General Manager of Corporate Services gave an electronic presentation to those present regarding an overview of the Budget such as the National/Provincial scene, Long-Term Financial Plan, update on the City's current status and projections for 2004, explanation of services and the levels of discretion, efficiencies and service improvements implemented, alternatives used for addressing the 2004 Budget and a review of the BMA Competitiveness Study.

Mayor Courtemanche

Mayor Courtemanche welcomed those present. He expressed the hope that this series of public input meetings would serve as a good example of what the residents of the City of Greater Sudbury can anticipate from the new Council.

Ms. Angele Butkevich  
Human League  
Association

Ms. Butkevich, Executive Director, The Human League Association, provided a detailed information package regarding the Breakfast Club for Kids program and the Positive Leisure Activities for Youth Program (PLAY).

Ms. Butkevich advised the Committee that the Breakfast Club feeds 3,000 children in area schools within the City of Greater Sudbury. The PLAY program provides help with registration fees, equipment, and transportation for soccer, piano, etc. for children of families living in a low income situation.

The Human League Association received a portion of their funding from the National Child Benefit (NCB) who will be reducing the funds by 15% for each program and possibly more reductions in the future. Ms. Butkevich, on behalf of the Human League Association, has requested funding in the amount of \$25,000 for the Breakfast Club and \$25,000 for the PLAY Program in order to maintain current funding levels.

The Human League has requested that Council take a close look at the budget, look at the programs and find where the kids and low income families need the biggest help.

Mr. Ron Minogue

Mr. Minogue addressed the Committee with the following items:

- ▶ have FONOM buy single insurance policies for all their members which would drop the premiums and form a larger group
- ▶ refrain from combining the water/wastewater fees with the tax fees
- ▶ why was the surplus of \$1,000,000 from last year used for the construction of the Rock Tunnel?
- ▶ City of Greater Sudbury should refrain from donating funds to the hospital and let the Provincial government step in

Mr. Ron Minogue  
(continued)

- ▶ an increase in the recycling program would reduce the amount of garbage going to the landfill sites
- ▶ before closing the facilities send a survey to all citizens using the facilities asking if they would be willing to pay a user fee instead of closing the facilities
- ▶ why are we still funding the Farmers' Market?
- ▶ sell all surplus lots
- ▶ why has Public Works overspent their roads budget by 25%?
- ▶ have Council meetings on the internet for more citizens participation
- ▶ implement a freeze on hiring
- ▶ promote from within and reduce management
- ▶ reduce the use of City vehicles
- ▶ why are there separate tenders for police vehicles, passenger cars, trucks, etc. ? If these had been combined, there would have been a better price per unit.
- ▶ stop micro-managing local businesses such as store hours, testing cab drivers
- ▶ outline how the City will pay back borrowed money and maintain the infrastructure
- ▶ is Council introducing a surtax on tax bills to increase the funding for Police Services?
- ▶ have Members of Council set the budget

Ms. Agathe Dubé

Ms. Dubé, President, Valley East Rate Payers' Association and is a resident of Joe Lake. Her property assessment has increased by \$29,000 and there are no increases in the services provided such as garbage pick-up. She questioned the Committee about Area Rated Services and the benefits. She asked that the services provided coincides with the user fees that are allocated to their area.

Ms. Dubé stated that all residents of the City of Greater Sudbury contribute to a base amount for Emergency Services and also pay according to the services that are provided locally. If Area Rating does not continue, then will outlying areas have to contribute to the services within the City? Ms. Dubé asked Council to ensure that everyone is well informed about Area Rating. She also would like to know what will happen to her taxes if Area Rating does not continue.

Ms. Dubé also asked the Committee how the City of Greater Sudbury ranks on the BMA study and how this survey was implemented for this year.

Ms. Nancy Lacasse

Ms. Lacasse expressed her concern about the use of City vehicles for personal use among staff and how there would be savings if these vehicles were parked.

The Chair advised Ms. Lacasse that the use of vehicles will be reviewed by Council over the Budget process.

Ms. Aline Bérubé

Ms. Bérubé addressed the Committee as a taxpayer and feels that the increase in user fees is unacceptable. Being a single income family, such increases have made it difficult to make ends meet for her family.

Pensioners are making less money with these increases. She feels that the tipping fees create illegal dumping.

Ms. Bérubé also feels that City employees should not have the use of City owned vehicles for personal use.

Ms. Bérubé feels there is money being wasted in the Public Works Department on road construction and patching.

Ms. Bérubé suggests that Departments with a surplus of money at the end of the year should not have to spend it to keep the same amount for the following year.

Energy costs would be lower if lights in City office buildings were turned off at night and refrain from using Christmas decorations.

Mr. Fern Bérubé

Mr. Bérubé advised the Committee that Council should use common sense. His concerns included the following:

- ▶ the use of consultants for minor issues, such as signage
- ▶ road construction takes too long and funds are wasted
- ▶ the increase of fees for the use of water is not acceptable because the drinking water is unsatisfactory
- ▶ the use of City vehicles for personal use must come to an end

The 'Speakers' List' now complete, the Chair asked if there was anyone present who wished to address the Committee.

Mr. Jean-Marie  
Thériault

Mr. Thériault is a resident of Joe Lake and feels that the user fees do not match the services provided. He advised the Committee that emergency vehicles have a hard time locating the homes on Joe Lake Road because the street lighting is insufficient. The residents must bring their garbage to a large bin because the trucks refuse to traverse Joe Lake Road due to the road conditions.

Mr. John McNeil

Mr. McNeil is a resident of Flake Subdivision and advised the Committee that, as a pensioner, the tax increase will be difficult for him to meet. User fees are good but feels there are too many being implemented. Garbage fees create illegal dumping and Mr. McNeil feels that the public is not aware of what can be left at the roadside. Mr. McNeil feels that the former City of Valley East had better service before the amalgamation such as servicing the roads, draining overflowing ditches and installing culverts.

Mr. Henry LeBouthillier

Mr. LeBouthillier advised the Committee that the employees and Members of Council should have more input regarding the Budget.

Mr. LeBouthillier advised the Committee that the cost of re-opening some facilities such as the ski-hills and Barrydowne Arena would be great due to the fact that a new lift and equipment is required.

It is his opinion that City vehicles should only be used for employees on call and not personal use.

As well, salaries, benefits and bonuses should be clearly identified in the budget.

Mr. John Robert

Mr. Robert advised the Committee of the following:

- ▶ Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC) is owned by the municipalities of Ontario
- ▶ if residents go to the landfill sites more than once per week they will be charged
- ▶ explain the increase in the assessments and the mill rates (which establish the amount of dollars being brought in) and how they are established
- ▶ is the increase of tipping fees used for operational costs or is this money being used elsewhere
- ▶ make the taxpayers aware of how much money is being brought in annually with all new construction (residential, commercial, industrial)
- ▶ agrees with borrowing money for road construction within the City of Greater Sudbury
- ▶ inform the public in advance what roads need to be repaired
- ▶ sell surplus property
- ▶ the 3% increase in fire protection for Valley East is not fair and should be the same for everyone in the City of Greater Sudbury

Mr. Robert stated that Area Rating of Services was not a fair practice. Residents should be asked if they would like to return to the same level and cost of services offered by local municipalities prior to amalgamation.

Mr. Roger Trottier

Mr. Trottier addressed the Committee regarding the following issues:

- ▶ why contract out for garbage collection when the City can save money using their own employees
- ▶ is Area Rating fair when we are paying for fire protection not only for Valley East but also for Rayside-Balfour and Capreol
- ▶ transit services is not a gift; we pay for it
- ▶ delivery of winter control is not the same
- ▶ the BMA Study is comparing Northern Ontario to Southern Ontario and this is not comparable
- ▶ how is the increase of assessment implemented into the budget?
- ▶ when increasing the taxes, increase them 8% instead of 13%

Mr. Don Wright

Mr. Wright advised the Committee that the sidewalk snow-plow should be eliminated and to extend the blades of the snow-plow to include the sidewalk.

Road construction should not include crack filling as this causes the road to deteriorate and there should be a central bin where everyone brings their own garbage and eliminate roadside pick-up.

Mr. Mike Huard

Mr. Huard resides in McCrea Heights and his concerns were as follows:

- ▶ the City should encourage more people, young and old, to move to the north
- ▶ McCrea Heights requires an increase in traffic lights and police service during the day through to the supper hour when traffic is at a peak
- ▶ the wild life is out of control and should be dealt with

Mr. George Perry

Mr. Perry spoke to the Committee regarding the use of City vehicles and that the vehicle numbers and logos should be more visible to the public. He also wanted staff to inform the public what the costs were for the vehicles such as fuel, insurance, etc.

Mr. Robert Kirwan

Mr. Kirwan's concerns were that the City should be marketing the City of Greater Sudbury and encouraging more people to come and reside here. He feels that students and retirees have more revenue and that they should be the target areas. By closing facilities, this will cause people to leave Sudbury, which creates more tax increases for the residents who stay.

Mr. Kirwan stated he was in favour of borrowing by the City provided it was spent in the right places.

Ms. Diane Wayworth

Ms. Wayworth addressed the Committee with the following:

- ▶ water, sewer and road construction should be better co-ordinated so costs are reduced and work is not repeated
- ▶ when the City contracts out, is the money being spent properly and time limits followed?
- ▶ marketing of City of Greater Sudbury for tourism should be increased
- ▶ information booths should have knowledgeable staff working and inform tourists of where all the sites are within the City of Greater Sudbury

Mr. Denis McLeod

Mr. McLeod spoke to the Committee regarding the expenditures for the City of Greater Sudbury.

Mr. McLeod feels that sewer and water should not be classified as a user fee and would like to know what are user fees. He also feels that the City is double-dipping into the tax base whether or not you pay into taxes or user fees. He also stated that instead of having individual user fees, why not take the fees out of the taxation rate?

The Chair then asked those present if they would like to speak a second time.

Mr. Jean-Marie Thériault

Mr. Thériault addressed the Committee regarding road construction and suggested that all construction such as sewer & water repairs and road construction should be co-ordinated together which might save the City 30%.

Mr. Fern Bérubé

Mr. Bérubé was of the opinion that the current level of management in the City, particularly Public Works, is too top heavy.

Mr. John Robert

Mr. Robert addressed the Committee regarding the following:

- ▶ more people would bring in more taxes
- ▶ improve the roads between Valley East and Sudbury especially McCrea Heights area
- ▶ Ward 3 is the only ward that has excess capacity in fully serviced lots in the City. It was his opinion that the City should direct and encourage people and businesses to build in this area.

Mr. Roger Trottier

Mr. Trottier suggested that the City of Greater Sudbury should petition the Provincial government to implement a special tax on containers used by the fast food industry. This tax could then be directed to municipal waste management. It would also encourage recycling of such waste products.

Closing Remarks

The Chair 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.

Attachments

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

- ▶ Information package from The Human League Association

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:35 p.m.

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Councillor Eldon Gainer

Secretary