
From: Glenn Gibson [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, February 2, 2024 10:13 AM
To: Stevenson, Kirsten <Kirsten.Stevenson@hamilton.ca>
Subject: Recommendations on Police Budget

Ms. Stevenson,

In response to your call for written submissions on the police budget, I'd like to address some concerns regarding the current process and potential future outcomes.

The composition of the board, with two seemingly new members, has generated considerable discussion about this year's budget submission. It appears that these new members have expressed reservations, particularly questioning the adequacy of the time allocated for due diligence by the Finance Committee. While I'm not entirely convinced that their critique is unfounded, I believe it's essential to consider whether more time for due diligence was indeed necessary.

One key issue in this process revolves around the transparency of the debate on budget numbers. When discussions occur within the public domain, the media's involvement can magnify the impact, potentially giving the public the impression that the entire board is dysfunctional. This has the potential to lead to negative press and an unproductive working environment.

Failure to address this process issue may result in an increased frequency of 5-2 votes at the board table, further exacerbating the negative publicity surrounding the board's decisions. It is imperative to find a resolution to this matter to foster a more collaborative and effective decision-making environment.

While expressing these concerns, I want to emphasize my full support for Hamilton Police Services. The significant portion of the budget (88%) allocated to human resources, particularly tied to union contracts, limits the scope of debate on this aspect. However, I have no doubts that the board and management have explored strategic moves to optimize resource allocation. More attention might be paid to talking about a longer-term strategy for the deployment of sworn officers versus lower-cost civilian employees.

In conclusion, despite the ongoing challenges, Hamilton Police Services remains an excellent police force. I am inclined to support the budget, but with a renewed focus on fostering board harmony and emphasizing the importance of getting the process right. By addressing these concerns, we can strive for a more cohesive board and envision positive outcomes for the community we serve.

Glenn

