From: Seth floyd [redacted]
Sent: Monday, February 5, 2024 10:12 AM
To: Stevenson, Kirsten <Kirsten.Stevenson@hamilton.ca>
Subject: Hamilton Police Services Board Budget

Seth Floyd
[redacted]

I am writing today to formally state that the police budget should be rejected. An increase of 20 million is unprecedented. The police budget has nearly doubled in the past 10 to 15 years, and yet what impact has that had on crime? Police had a budget surplus of around 1M only two to three years ago – and now they suddenly need ~30 million more since then, when they were able to meet the budget?

The police do not need brand new cars every single year. They do not need brand new computers or a brand new constructed building. Every. Year. How is it that they expect that have brand new equipment year over year, when our city's ambulances are rarely replaced. Our healthcare system and EMS system is on its last legs with regard to funding, and in the face of this, the already-spoiled police department requires more money.

Every year, the police chief says these massive raises are "maintenance" budgets and FAILS to justify why such an increase is needed. Last year it was the same thing – increase of 6% / 12M to "maintain", and now only a year later they need another 20M. What exactly needs "10-20M per year" to maintain. That will double the budget in a mere 10 years. The police chief claimed "19 officers will need to go for every 1% budget drop", which implies we have 1900 officers; we have 900.

It is absolutely absurd that "automated license plate readers" are deemed mandatory expenditures but things like body cams are aggressively argued against implementing. I am not advocating for body cams, but at least I can see the purpose they serve in terms of keeping individuals safe, whereas automated license plate readers: what part of "to protect & serve" does that contribute to the public? Further capital expenditures as I said before include "buying and upgrading police vehicles", replacing computers, and "more storage". How can you justify all these brand new "toys" when you have new toys year-in, year-out, and yet every year the police response times and serves are abysmal. Police sit in parking lots, take their time responding to calls, and when they respond they often say "can't do anything".

University of Toronto did a study last year indicating that increasing the police budget does not reduce crime rates in Canadian cities, with Hamilton being a glowing example of this being true. So how can the police justify budget increases when they do not serve a purpose in reducing crime? Crime is reduced by community outreach and preventative measures NOT CONDUCTED BY POLICE. And I am sure the counter is "police have to do non-crime calls, missing persons, protests, and their favourite "and other things" (not defined). Well, police often refuse to deal with any of these "non-crime" calls, refuse to follow-up or take them seriously. And many of them should not fall to the shoulder of police, who are not appropriately trained for these situations, nor do these situations need to involve anyone carrying guns, mace, etc.

Police budgets should only be increasing by the amounts needed to meet salary demands and any legal (police act) mandated increases. Even within these, efficiencies should be investigated as I am dumbfounded how the salary needs of the police department pretty much outpace every other industry.

Police budgets are bloated as-is and do not need to be bloated further. We need police budget reform, and the most recent proposed budget by

the police chief is a disgusting insult to Hamiltonians. We have a healthcare crisis, a housing crisis, a borderline economic crisis, and in response the police chief spits in our face year after year.