

**THE TWENTIETH MEETING OF THE PRIORITIES COMMITTEE
OF THE CITY OF GREATER SUDBURY**

**Council Chamber
Tom Davies Square**

**Wednesday, January 12, 2005
Commencement: 7:07 p.m.**

Chair

COUNCILLOR CALDARELLI, IN THE CHAIR

Present

Councillors Berthiaume; Bradley; Callaghan; Craig; Dupuis; Gainer; Gasparini; Kett; Reynolds; Rivest; Thompson; Mayor Courtemanche (A 7:10 pm)

City Officials

M. Mieto, Chief Administrative Officer; R. Henderson, Acting General Manager of Community Development; B. Lautenbach, Acting General Manager of Growth & Development; A. Stephen, General Manager of Infrastructure & Emergency Services; S. Jonasson, Acting CFO/Treasurer; R. Swiddle, City Solicitor/Director of Legal Services; G. Clausen, Director of Engineering Services; G. Lamothe, Manager of Corporate Communications & French Language Services; C. Mahaffy, Manager of Financial Planning & Policy; P. Demers, Community Relations and Policy Advisor; T. Mowry, City Clerk; F. Bortolussi, Planning Committee Secretary; CJ Caporale, Council Secretary

News Media

Sudbury Star; MCTV; CIGM; Channel 10 News; Le Voyageur

Declarations of
Pecuniary Interest

None declared.

PUBLIC HEARING - WATER AND WASTEWATER POLICY AND CHARGES

Item 2
Introductory Remarks

The Chair opened the meeting welcoming the twenty-five (25) people in attendance and advised that the public meeting was being held in accordance with the Municipal Act and Ontario Regulation 244/02 in order to receive public input on the proposed water and wastewater rate increases for 2005.

She stated that in accordance with the City's Water and Wastewater Rates Policy, these rates must be sufficient to recover the costs of providing water and wastewater services. The estimated rates to ensure these services are self-sustaining have been established for 2005.

She advised that notice was hereby given that the City of Greater Sudbury intends to pass a by-law on January 13, 2005 increasing the water rates and related water charges by 7.7% over the 2004 rates; and charging 116% (effectively a 8.7% increase) of the water bill for wastewater services.

Item 2
Introductory Remarks
(continued)

The Chair then stated that any person in attendance would be provided an opportunity to make representation after Items 3 and 4 on the Agenda.

Item 3
Presentation - 2005
Water/Wastewater
Rates and Charges

An electronic presentation was presented to the Committee by Mr. Oscar Poloni, Partner, KPMG, Mr. Armand Therrien, Manager, R.V. Anderson Associates Limited and Mr. Tom Eyre, P.Eng., Management Consultant, R.V. Anderson Associates Limited. The presentation outlined the following:

- Why water rates have increased since 2001.
- How the City of Greater Sudbury compares to other municipalities.
- How water rates are projected to change in the future.

Item 4
Public Notification
Procedures for Public
Meetings

Report dated 2005-01-07, with attachments, from the Executive Director of Administrative Support Services regarding Public Notification Procedures for Public Meeting - 2005 Water/Wastewater Rates was received for information only.

Public Hearing
W/WW Rates &
Charges

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

Mr. Ron McDonald
Spokesperson,
Greater Sudbury
Municipal Watch

Mr. McDonald stated that it was important for Council to propose a plan of action that would follow through with a critical examination of how the City intends to address longstanding and serious losses of water in the system.

He stated that a 1999 Ontario Water Works Association report recorded an escapement of 44% in the Sudbury water system, which is paid for by consumers, and feels taxpayers are entitled to know what the City intends to do regarding this matter.

Mr. McDonald advised that young families with low incomes or seniors on a fixed income cannot afford to support these large increases. He stated that ratepayers are "confounded by the double-edged sword" whereby if they conserve water to reduce consumption, they are faced with higher rates to achieve budget projections.

He advised that "Council must review the water and wastewater systems to attain cost reductions and improved efficiencies through new technological processes and equipment".

Mr. McDonald also stated that the merging of City departments with Greater Sudbury Utilities, such as Human Resources, should be reconsidered.

Mr. James Waddell
Citizen

Mr. Waddell stated that his concerns address all utilities and associated rate increases. It was his opinion that all governments are in the service charge business rather than the service delivery business.

He stated that Council must find where the true costs are. He also stated that 4% of the rate increase is related to administration costs which is a variable that must be looked at to find savings.

Mr. Waddell suggested to the Committee to look at tendering the buying of products, such as chlorine, or sharing costs with other municipalities and buy products by bulk.

Mr. Robert Renaud
Citizen

Mr. Renaud stated that he owns an apartment building in Copper Cliff and that his water and wastewater bills have doubled but cannot raise his rents to reflect these increases due to government regulations.

He suggested that the City install flow meters in homes to monitor what is being released into the sewer system and charge individual homes accordingly.

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

Mr. José Blanco

Mr. Blanco commended Council for adopting the Capital Asset Management Program. He addressed cost savings, the increases in expenditures, the mandated increases, monitoring of water flowing from homes, and how the cost on unit bases are misleading.

Mr. Simon Nickson

Mr. Nickson stated that in 2002 he and his family moved from Montreal and is currently a homeowner in Sudbury. He noted that his first year in Sudbury they paid an additional \$556 on their water bill for the watering of sod, whereby, they learned very quickly to conserve water. He stated that their water bill in Sudbury is more than three times the charges they paid in Montreal.

What he does not understand is why taxpayers are paying for water that is not going into the system, such as the watering of lawns.

He asked if staff has looked at efficiencies to reduce costs and lower rates and stated that taxpayers are being priced out of their homes.

There were no other persons present to address the Committee.

List of Attachments

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

1. Letter dated 2005-01-10 from Mr. Claude Lalonde
2. Letter dated 2005-01-10 from Mr. Simon Nickson and Ms. Kim LaCoste
3. Email dated 2005-01-10 from Mr. Frederick Breaks and Ms. Terra Larsen
4. Email dated 2005-01-11 from Mr. Bill Hedderson
5. Letter dated 2005-01-11 from Greater Sudbury Municipal Watch
6. Editorial entitled "Public or Private Water Management? Cutting the Gordian Knot" submitted by Mr. James Waddell

There being no further requests to address this matter, the Public Hearing concerning this matter was closed and the Priorities Committee meeting resumed in order to discuss and vote on the recommendation.

Item 5 Public Awareness Campaign

Report dated 2005-01-06 from the Executive Director of Administrative Support Services regarding Public Awareness Campaign: 2005 Water and Wastewater Rates was received for information only.

The following recommendation was presented:

Bradley: That By-Law 2005-24F, "BEING A BY-LAW OF THE CITY OF GREATER SUDBURY TO ESTABLISH A WATER AND WASTEWATER POLICY AND WATER AND WASTEWATER RATES AND CHARGES" be enacted by Council.

The Committee discussed the issue of efficiencies and cost savings, the conservation of water when this forces rate increases, and developing a process to look at ways to decrease rates and also look at why rates are increasing.

The Director of Engineering Services was asked to verify what the percentage was regarding the escapement of water from the system.

With the concurrence of the Committee, the General Manager of Infrastructure & Emergency Services was directed to report back to the Priorities Committee with a report outlining a plan of action to address cost reductions and efficiencies regarding the water and wastewater systems.

Item 5
Public Awareness
Campaign
(continued)

RECOMMENDATION 2005-01: Moved by Councillor Bradley:

That By-Law 2005-24F, "BEING A BY-LAW OF THE CITY OF GREATER SUDBURY TO ESTABLISH A WATER AND WASTEWATER POLICY AND WATER AND WASTEWATER RATES AND CHARGES" be enacted by Council.

CARRIED

PRESENTATIONS/DELEGATIONS

Item 6
Moving to a Four Year
Term of Council

Councillor Doug Craig, AMO Board Representative gave an electronic presentation entitled "*Moving to a Four Year Term of Council*" which was received for direction only.

Councillor Craig briefly outlined the background information, what questions were addressed in a survey sent to 108 municipalities across the Province, and the advantages and disadvantages of a four-year term.

Proceed Past
10:00 p.m.

2005-02 Berthiaume: THAT we proceed past the hour of 10:00 p.m.

CARRIED

Item 6
Moving to a Four Year
Term of Council
(continued)

The following are the three (3) options provided by AMO:

- "a) Recommend moving to a 4 year term; keep the November date; that this effective date for starting a 4 year term be after the November 2006 election (i.e. the first 4 year term being 2006-2010);
- b) Recommend moving to a 4 year term; keep the November date, but extend the current term to November 2007.
- c) Status quo."

A consensus on which option to endorse was not received.

Adjournment

RECOMMENDATION 2005-03: Moved by Councillor Berthiaume:

THAT this meeting does now adjourn. Time: 10:09 p.m.

CARRIED

Councillor Caldarelli, Chair

Thom Mowry, City Clerk