



REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF WATERLOO BUDGET COMMITTEE PUBLIC INPUT MINUTES

Wednesday, February 23, 2011
6:25 p.m.
Council Chambers, 2nd Floor
150 Frederick Street, Kitchener

Present were: Chair T. Galloway, L. Armstrong, J. Brewer, *T. Cowan, D. Craig, R. Deutschmann, J. Haalboom, B. Halloran, R. Kelterborn, G. Lorentz, C. Millar, J. Mitchell, K. Seiling, *S. Strickland, and C. Zehr

Members absent: J. Wideman

MOTION TO RECONVENE INTO OPEN SESSION

MOVED by C. Millar

SECONDED by B. Halloran

THAT the meeting reconvene into Open Session.

CARRIED

DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY INTEREST UNDER THE MUNICIPAL CONFLICT OF INTEREST ACT

None declared.

Chair T. Galloway provided opening remarks to the Committee and to those present in the gallery, including an overview of the meeting's agenda.

DELEGATIONS

a) Mary Jane Patterson, Executive Director, and Rachel D'Aguiar, Energy Services Coordinator, REEP Green Solutions

M. Patterson and R. D'Aguiar spoke to a number of REEP programs and services which are aligned with the Region's Strategic Plan and various programs, including:

- Goals and vision of REEP;
- Water stewardship initiatives;
- Rainwater initiatives;
- REEP House for Sustainable Living;
- Air quality improvement;
- Energy efficiency services provided by REEP;
- ecoENERGY retrofit for homes; and
- Success and benefits of REEP initiatives.

The delegation requested the Region's continued support for REEP through the approval of the REEP budget issue paper. The Committee was provided a handout in support of their presentation, which is attached to the original minutes.

b) Tim Sothern and Tricia Siemens, Supportive Housing of Waterloo re: funding request

T. Siemens expressed support for the budget issue paper related to the Homelessness to Housing Stability.

The delegation provided a history of Supportive Housing of Waterloo, including the group's activities and achievements. They related a number of success stories in the group's work, which has yielded a positive response from the community; despite this, the group continues to deal with a highly vulnerable population and would encourage the Region to provide additional support through the 2011 budget.

*T. Cowan entered the meeting at 6:44 p.m.

c) Jason Morris, Kitchener

J. Morris voiced a concern on behalf of himself and his neighbours to exercise greater fiscal restraint in the 2011 budget. He expressed dissatisfaction with spending on non-essential programming, asserting that tax increases are not sustainable. He indicated that a growing number of middle-class residents are discontented with the increases and are considering leaving the Region. He suggested that the Region should differentiate essential programming from non-essential programming, and to communicate proposed budget increases in terms of dollars per \$100,000 of assessed property value. He related that he is not convinced that light rail transit is the correct solution for the Region, citing reasons why comparisons between the Region's proposed rapid transit project and other successful projects are not well made, and offering that expansion of conventional transit on a flat rate equally-shared basis would be a better plan. He noted difficulty in obtaining data on assessments in the Region.

Larry Ryan, Chief Financial Officer, indicated that staff would meet with J. Morris related to issues cited in his delegation.

d) Trudy Beaulne and Michael Hackbusch, Poverty Free Waterloo Region

The delegation provided an overview of Poverty Free Waterloo Region in their presentation to the Committee, speaking in support of budget issues that are related to the social infrastructure of the community, which are identified in their presentation slides. They emphasized the relatively small expenditure of the issues and the various benefits to the community of doing so. They encouraged the Committee to build on existing successes and to support the identified recommended issues and as many as possible of those identified but not recommended.

The presentation is attached to the original minutes.

*S. Strickland left the meeting at 7:05 p.m.

e) Eleanor Grant, Alliance Against Poverty re: funding request

E. Grant circulated a handout to the Committee, which is attached to the original minutes. She provided an overview of the group and its goals, and expressed satisfaction at the Region's attention to poverty reduction while providing an overview of the magnitude of poverty in the Region. She suggested that the uploading of social assistance costs to the province would evoke an obligation to use the budget savings to reduce poverty. She proposed that the Region:

- Undertake to increase affordable housing;

- Address food insecurity and increase the component of more healthful food in hampers;
- Ensure transit service on all routes every day, to not cut off the mobility of those who depend solely on transit;
- Increase affordable access to transit services; and
- Adopt a living wage policy, including calling on the province to raise minimum wages by 75 cents annually.

The Committee confirmed with E. Grant that additional guidance and education for the public regarding donating more healthful food to food banks and hampers would be of benefit.

f) Cindy Jefferson, Child Care Network of Waterloo Region re: child care fee subsidy

C. Jefferson expressed support for child care subsidy funding, noting the benefits to children obtaining quality care through an increase to the fee subsidy budget. She affirmed the importance of quality in child care, and cited child care anecdotes and initiatives in other jurisdictions. She asserted that the current fee subsidy waiting list results in residents having to forgo community-benefitting activities such as attending school and/or retraining.

g) Greg deGroot-Maggetti, Wendy Adema & Cindy MacRae, Mennonite Central Committee Ontario re: Circle of Friends program

The group circulated a booklet on the Circle of Friends program, which is attached to the original minutes.

The delegation indicated their support for the Region's past commitments to poverty reduction, and encouraged the Committee to fund the budget issues outlined by Poverty Free Waterloo Region. They noted that the Circle of Friends program received support through the Homelessness to Housing Stability Strategy, and provided an overview of the program including its aims, activities and success stories. They described the activities of Mennonite Central Committee Ontario.

h) Jennifer Mains and Joe Mancini, Working Centre

The delegation expressed support for the Homelessness to Housing Stability issue paper, as it relates to the STEP Home program. They provided background information on the program, including specific activities, and noting that many in the program receive social assistance. They related the benefits to the community of the program, in addition to those directly assisted. The Committee suggested that the police chief could be invited to the program's meetings to observe the work that is being undertaken.

i) Jennifer Mains, on behalf of Ann Tinker, for the Cambridge Shelter

J. Mains read a statement on behalf of Ann Tinker, citing the success and importance of the Homelessness to Housing Stability Strategy and strongly urging funding for the budget issues paper related to the strategy.

j) Harald Drewitz, Kitchener

H. Drewitz suggested that the budget increases proposed should not account for uploading savings, which does not allow for a suitable comparison of costs and service levels before and after uploading. He noted that taxpayers are under constraint, and that any budget increases

will fall on them. He encouraged the Region to be completely transparent of the costs for services provided by the Region.

k) Tim Mollison, Tri-Cities Transport Action Group

T. Mollison provided background information on the group and its objectives. He spoke to the Regional Transportation Master Plan and suggested that the budget increase for the plan should be introduced at and then maintained at 1.5% annually. He expressed appreciation for the attention of Regional staff for the group's ideas, and suggested that overnight service on the iXpress route should be considered by the Committee, noting the benefits of doing so. He suggested that the cost of placing a stop at King and Victoria Streets be determined and that the stop be implemented for the iXpress by September 2011, as well as suggesting that the Committee ascertain the cost of operating Route 7 service with buses every ten minutes. He related the group's support for fare increases of 25 cents every two years for cash fares and similar increases for other fares, and suggested that existing transit affordability programs be expanded if fares are not to be raised for those who will have difficulty affording an increase.

ADJOURN

MOVED by L. Armstrong

SECONDED by S. Strickland

THAT the meeting adjourn at 8:02 p.m.

CARRIED

COMMITTEE CHAIR, *T. Galloway*

COMMITTEE CLERK, *M. Grivicic*

REEP Green Solutions - Presentation to Regional Council
Budget Public Input Meeting: February 23, 2011
 Mary Jane Patterson, Executive Director
 Rachel D'Aguilar, Energy Services Coordinator
Update February 2011

A number of the Region of Waterloo Strategic Plan goals are met through REEP programs and services.

a) *Protect the quantity and quality of our water sources*¹

- a. **Well Aware** water stewardship program
 - i. Confidential, voluntary, non-regulatory, FREE
 - ii. Test your water at a minimum of 3 times a year
 - iii. Funding: Ontario Ministry of the Environment

Year	Well Aware Visits
2007	44
2008	94
2009	79
2010	50
Total	267

- b. **RAIN** storm water public awareness program – coming in 2011
 - i. Slow it Down, Soak it Up, Keep it Clean
 - ii. Encourage the capture, storage and slow release of rain water
 - iii. Funding: Ontario Trillium Foundation, Earth Day Canada/Sobeys

b) *Develop an integrated environmental promotion and education program*²

- a. **The REEP House for Sustainable Living**
 - i. 100-year-old brick house, renovated to near net-zero energy performance
 - ii. An energy and water showcase of green building options
 - iii. \$25,000 in energy retrofits donated to the Region-owned house next door

c) *Improve air quality in Waterloo Region*³; *Effectively use and manage energy resources; Encourage compact urban form and re-urbanization*

- a. **ecoENERGY Retrofit for Homes** - ending March 31/11

ecoENERGY Results	Initial Evaluations	Follow-up Evaluations	Carbon Reduced (tonnes)	Homeowner Grants	Energy Savings (estimate)	Local Spending (estimate)
2009	2240	1329	4,359	\$3,553,580	\$996,750	\$7,974,000
2010	1217	2057	6,747	\$5,167,015	\$1,142,750	\$12,342,000

- b. **Beyond ecoENERGY:** new services from REEP Green Solutions beginning April 1/11
 - i. Energy evaluations with payback info to show the value of energy upgrades
 - ii. Electricity audits, addressing rising costs and time of use metering

We look forward to further collaboration with Region staff and council in 2011.

¹ Region of Waterloo 2007-2010 Strategic Plan, Focus Area 1, Environmental Sustainability: Protect and Enhance the Environment, Strategic Objective 5.

² As above, Strategic Objective 1.

³ As above, Strategic Objective 2 and 3; Focus Area 2, Strategic Objective 1.

Spring Energy Saving Workshops at REEP House



Sponsored by



www.yncu.com

Green Payback Workshops

Renovating on a budget? What renovations have the biggest financial and environmental payback? Learn from the experts and use REEP's Green Home Planner to move from ideas to action.

Featuring REEP Expertise

Brendan Shaefer, IT Expert, REEP Water Guide
Ben Barclay, REEP House Project Manager
Cheryl Evans, Storm Water Coordinator
Chris Albrecht, REEP Energy Advisor

Tuesdays & Saturdays Feb 22-May 7

Weekdays:

- Feb 22** - Intro to Greening Your Home
- Mar 8** - Insulate to Stay Cool
- Mar 22** - Home Heating and Cooling Solutions
- Apr 5** - Shrink Your Electricity Bill
- Apr 19** - Water Conservation Inside and Out

Weekends:

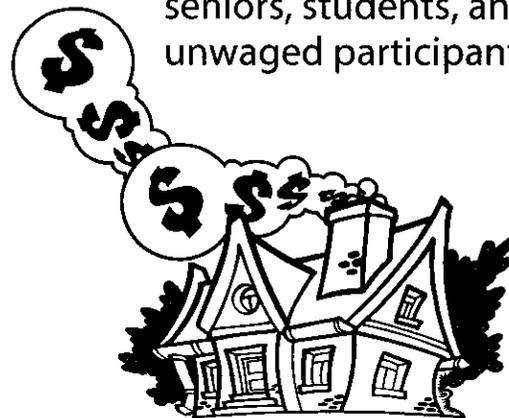
- Mar 26**
 - Intro to Greening Your Home (10am)
 - Insulate to Stay Cool (12:30pm)
 - Home Heating and Cooling Solutions (3pm)
- May 7**
 - Shrink Your Electricity Bill (10am)
 - Water Conservation Inside and Out (1pm)

Times: 7pm-9pm on Tuesdays, 10am-5pm on Saturdays

Location: REEP House, 20 Mill Street, Kitchener, ON

Support REEP House

Workshops are \$20 for waged participants and by donation for seniors, students, and unwaged participants.



Registration Required

www.reepgreen.ca

519-603-0323

Poverty Free Waterloo Region Social Infrastructure Investment

Presentation to
2011 Regional Budget Session
Wednesday February 23, 2011

Poverty Free Waterloo Region Coalition – Founding Members

- Opportunities Waterloo Region
- Social Planning Council Kitchener-Waterloo
- Social Planning Council Cambridge and North Dumfries
- Mennonite Central Committee
- Interfaith Social Assistance Reform Coalition

Social Infrastructure

The system of services, resources and supports from formal to informal that form the social environment and play a key role in providing a safety net to those who for whatever reason, or life circumstance, need an extra lift.

2011 Budget Issues – Staff A List

- Expansion of routes and services for Grand River Transit.
- Increased Cambridge Community Housing Access Centre staffing.
- Maintaining basic benefits for low income and social assistance recipients.
- Increasing the child care fee subsidy.
- Funding for the Christopher's Children's Centre.
- Preventive dental services (topical fluoride treatment) for at-risk children.
- Critical support services to Supportive Housing of Waterloo residents.
- Planning support services for Seniors' services.
- Expanding MobilityPLUS services.
- Funding to develop comprehensive response to poverty in Region.
- One time funding for Community Housing initiatives.

2011 Budget Issues – Staff B List

- Funding to support the Regional Homelessness to Housing Stability Strategy.
- Reduced Fare Transit passes (to support more low income households and help offset a proposed 5% transit fare increase.)
- Enhance the Community Outreach Program and add two more community sites.
- Increasing access to positive parenting and child and family health services.
- Enhancing counseling services for persons in low income.

A and B List Issues

- Support staff statement these are essential/critical enhancements –*2011 Budget Issue Papers Report (Executive Summary, pg 4)*
- Not just *nice to have* service improvement options.
- Essential components of a well functioning social infrastructure.
- Proven through known experience.

Budget Implications

- **A-List:** recommended by staff – total \$3m.
- \$12.54 on average annual tax bill
- **B-List:** not recommended by staff due to expected tax burden – total \$880,000
- \$3.56 on average annual tax bill - 7¢ per week
- **Combined** – \$16.10 on average annual tax bill
– 31 ¢ per week; 5¢ per day

Request

- Approve all of the A-list
- Approve as much of B-list as possible.
- As taxpayers we are prepared to pay the extra cost of the B-list issues.
- We believe others will too!

These strategies respond to or mitigate poverty.

Approval will demonstrate a significant and substantive response by Regional council for a

Poverty Free Waterloo Region

Thank you

INPUT FROM THE ALLIANCE AGAINST POVERTY
FOR THE REGION OF WATERLOO 2011 BUDGET

- * There are 50,000 people in Waterloo Region who live without adequate provision for food, housing, transportation, and other necessities.
- * Addressing this need should be Council's top priority.
- * The moneys which the Region formerly spent on ODSP are now available for poverty reduction measures. There is an obligation there, to reinvest it for this purpose.

PROPOSALS FOR POVERTY REDUCTION MEASURES:

Affordable Housing

- Fund more SHOW buildings. Expand on your good work.
- Bridge marketplace gap between landlords' costs and tenants' ability to pay.

Food Security

- Subsidize food hampers suitable for diabetes, heart disease, etc.
- Subsidize improved nutritional content for charity meals.

Transportation

- Ensure that all Grand River Transit routes are covered on Sundays and holidays.
- Free bus passes for OW. Reduced fare for ODSP.

Living Wage

- Revisit and adopt living wage policy for Region's business transactions.
- Call on Ontario to continue 75 cent annual raises in minimum wage.

* These measures will do more to improve community safety than an expanded police budget would.

* Waterloo Region has been ahead of the curve on important issues in the past. Now our leadership is needed to improve the lives of our one in ten citizens who live with poverty.

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