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From: Heather Alexander [REDACTED]

Sent: Thursday, October 26, 2023 12:15 PM

To: Mailbox, Clerks <Clerks@burlington.ca>

Subject: CSSRA budget meeting on October 30, 2023, item number 4.2

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CSSRA budget meeting, October 30, 2023, item number 4.2 Hello,

Since I am unable to attend in person or by Zoom, please accept my written submission.

I moved to Burlington 3 years ago. I did vote for Marianne Meed Ward and Paul Sharman. But, I am disappointed in their ability to practice fiscal restraint.

Spending just under \$40M for the Skyway Arena is alarming. Yes, the arena did require renovation. But, surely there was a fiscally prudent choice.

Today's reality is that people are struggling. Keeping a roof over our heads and feeding ourselves is a daily challenge. The City of Burlington's salaries and wages appear to have insulated you from the reality that citizens face on a daily basis. Salaries and wages must be reviewed and scaled back.

I was unable to participate in the 2023 Budget Survey and the 2023 Community Survey. In my opinion, both surveys require an additional category: "other, please explain". An example is question #5 in the Community Survey which I would have answered as follows:

" NO property tax increase and maintain current services. In 2023, you collected 7.52%. In my opinion, the 7.52% is broken down as follows: 2.5% allocated for each year: 2023, 24 & 25. The balance of .02% towards 2026."

I have to practice fiscal restraint. Such as not using the air conditioner, only buying nutritious foods, walking instead of driving. I have to distinguish between needs and wants. City Council must recognize that property tax revenue is not limitless. Just as I must recognize that my personal funds are not limitless.

I recognize that City Council can justify their spending. I have a couple of emails from the Mayor's office attesting to that fact.

You will also say that I have not given concrete examples of where spending should be cut. But, it is unrealistic to expect me to have the knowledge that is required to run the City of Burlington in a fiscally prudent manner.

But, I will give you an example of wasteful spending: Proposed sidewalks on sections of Bromley Road, Linwood Cr and Maureen Ct are scheduled for 2024. Sidewalks are not required. This area, like many areas in Burlington, has a natural beauty which sidewalks do not enhance. Sidewalks require ongoing maintenance such as repair of concrete, snow clearing and then in the Spring the city repairs the damage done to the grass from the snow clearing. So adding sidewalks has generated 3 other ongoing projects. This is a waste of property tax money. I resent this waste of my money!

In preparing for this meeting, I found that the City's website is best described as "a maze". I would have given up if it wasn't for the fact that the projected property tax increase negatively impacts my future!!!

I have a major concern that the Mayor is able to use "strong powers". These powers are "autocratic" and have no place in our democracy. I hope that the Mayor remains strong and does not take us down an autocratic path. That is a path I do not wish to travel!

Thank you for your time.

Heather Alexander



Sent from my iPhone