

DELEGATE Nov. 18, 2024

Good morning. I have lived in ward 4 for 55 years and am a retired business executive. It's my pleasure to be back with you so soon.

In my delegation on Nov 4 I stated in point 7 of areas where cost could be saved and I quote " Slow the forestry program for two years" Later in the meeting Councilor Stolte changed my statement to pause. I emailed asking for a correction to the record, Her response was this email "Good morning Jim, I will listen back to your delegation but I am quite sure you used the word "pause" not "slow". Pause means to halt. Clarity would be helpful. Thank you Shawna. I would like to know if the Councilor sent the email herself or was it crafted by her staff. Two week later, I am still waiting for her promised reply.

Later in the meeting at the break Catherine Baldelli approached me and apologized for not getting me the information requested and said she would get it to me by the end of the week. I followed up on Nov11. On Nov. 15 I got a brief response to some of my questions and a statement that it has been a very busy time here at transit. I asked if Burlington Transit has a business plan going out five years and is it available to the public? The response " Yes. This will be created in 2025." So there will be numbers in the budget, but the plan will come later. I am having trouble understanding this. I understand Oakville is planning to make major changes to their Transit plan, including changes to bus sizes and going back to buying diesel powered units while keeping propose tax increases low. Is there something to be learned here? Conventional busses cost a million dollars to buy. Electric busses somewhat more and their operational cost are greater. Seats used during the operational day is about 15 percent. This needs to substantially improve.

On Nov. 6th I attended a meeting hosted by Councilor Kerns. She presented her views on what was in the proposed budget and specified some areas where she thought it could be improved. She had almost two hours of Dialogue with the citizens who attended examining what was in the budget, what should be modified or taken out and some items that should be put in. In my opinion it was very well done.

She handed out a booklet which I thought was the one the mayor had used in her presentations. ( show the two examples) Examination on the inside show that they are quite different even though the outside is quite similar. I emailed the mayor asking for some clarification. On page 3 it states that the city is expected to grow by 40% over the next 25 years.

I asked for the supporting data. The response from Esther Gibbs, the office of the mayor. "As Mayor Meed Ward did not attend the event last night organized by Ward 2 Councilor, it is best to direct any comments or questions to the ward 2 office copied in this response.

She continues with" In the booklet that you mention is the attached 2025 Budget Overview Report, this is a city of Burlington document that was prepared by the City of Burlington staff, including Finance, Planning and the Communications department. Any source of information quoted therein would be from official City of Burlington documents with careful review by staff. Does the mayor or the mayor's office want me to go to All the departments looking for the answer to a statement she made? It looks like a word salad to me. I received further information from Ms. Gibbs on Nov 12. Informing me I could find the information in the records of committee meetings. There were hundreds of pages and I could not find one mention of 40% growth over the next twenty-five years. Is there a way of her narrowing down the search?

On pages 8 and 9 of the survey results are posted with a commentary that if certain numbers are added you get a number that the Mayor likes. Unfortunately, the addition is adding apples to oranges to get watermelons. We would be better served if we were just presented with facts and let us draw our own conclusions. Do we need more word salads?

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In the first meeting the Mayor hosted I asked what efficiencies she had found as the basis for the new budget as promised on page 3. She was going to look at other measures. What are they? Does this include eliminating waste, fraud and abuse?

I asked again for the list of efficiencies on page 4 of my delegation on Nov, 4.

I ask again for the information.

A new concern. I understand that Council is looking at taking leaf collection out of the budget. Does this mean that you are going to lay off workers, sell equipment and not renew rental contracts? Removing an item from a budget without taking cost out is not a reduction. What will be Halton's response to us for them having to pick up all the bags in a less efficient manner on a more costly truck? Will Halton charge back a million dollars to Burlington for the extra cost and service? Who will pay for the extra million bags that will be required that will just be added to the compost pile? Will someone please explain this to me.

Another concern. Was any consideration given to building small homes for lease, in the Bateman project on city owned land? If not why not?

To the chair. How much time do I have left?

Thank you.

I will use it to listen to the response from Councilor Stolte, Mayor Meed Ward and if appropriate from Catharine Baldelli.

Thank you. Presented by Jim Barnett