

Pilon, Janet

Subject: Hamilton police

From: Gary Capon

Sent: Monday, June 15, 2020 7:38 PM

To: clerk@hamilton.ca

Cc: gary Capon

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As a Hamilton home owner, I am writing to you to express concern that during COVID-19, police budgets should NOT be prioritized over firefighters, paramedics, libraries, transit, parks or public housing.

I am asking that The Police Services Board prioritize the expansion of **community-led health and safety initiatives** over future financial investment into the Hamilton Police Service.

In the face of cyclical police violence happening throughout North America right now, we need to commit ourselves to change, rather than excessive police service budgets.

An increased police presence does not keep us safe, rather it directly threatens the lives of our most vulnerable communities.

Instead of investing in policing, our city must prioritize alternatives like education, increased mental health services, housing initiatives, harm reduction services, accessible rehabilitation, social workers, conflict resolution services, transformative justice, and other vital community-based support systems.

Our city can lead the way in defining public safety through community not cops.

I am asking you to create a better future for all residents of Hamilton and set an example for other cities, by divesting from policing and investing in services. The Hamilton police budget should be defunded by at least 10% as has been proposed in Toronto. We don't need studies, we need change! The Hamilton police were already taking 17% of property taxes in 2019, if we do not act quickly this problem could continue to escalate and Hamilton could find itself in the same situation as Toronto where 24% of property taxes go to the Toronto police at the expense of community services.

Given visible minorities constitute almost 20% of the population of Hamilton, THERE SHOULD BE AT LEAST ONE VISIBLE MINORITY ON THE POLICE BOARD.

Furthermore, we just received our property tax bill with an approximately 5% increase over 2019, people are struggling with reduced income as a result of COVID-19. The 4% Police Budget increase for 2020 should be immediately defunded, property taxes should be reduced and/or the money allocated to essential community services.

Sincerely

Gary Capon