

Pilon, Janet

Subject: 20% Cut to Police Budget

From: Abedar Kamgari

Sent: Thursday, June 11, 2020 9:30 AM

To: clerk@hamilton.ca

Subject: Fwd: 20% Cut to Police Budget

Please see below.

----- Forwarded message -----

Date: Wed, Jun 10, 2020, 10:54 PM

Dear Councillor Collins and Hamilton Police Services Board,

I want to thank you for your move to review a 20% reduction in the HPS budget. However, a 20% reduction is not enough. The overarching goal must be to fully defund the Hamilton Police and work towards abolition, as outlined by the demands and efforts of Black and racialized people in the city. To be clear: I stand with the community in calling for a full defunding of the Hamilton Police and a reallocation of those funds into vital community services such as mental health programs, food security initiatives, and accessible affordable housing.

Councillor Collins, your motion aims only to consider what a reduction of 20% would look like for the Hamilton Police Services and does nothing to address the demands of the community calling for the defunding and demilitarization of the police. Over 3,000 community members have signed on to the demands to defund the Hamilton Police and reallocate those funds into social programs that benefit marginalized and vulnerable communities. This motion is a delaying tactic to distract from the call to reimagine community safety in Hamilton.

The Hamilton Police Services board **should not** be involved in the decisions around how money should be divested and reallocated - the community should determine, based on the needs of vulnerable and marginalized people, where money divested from the HPS should go. The Hamilton Police Services board is simply incapable of engaging with and honestly considering what the community needs.

The “Whereas” statements below are in no way able to fully capture the ways the Hamilton police are funded to continue to oppress and harm Black, Indigenous, racialized and Queer people in the city of Hamilton. The only way forward is to fully defund, demilitarize and abolish the Hamilton Police service board.

I agree with the organizers in our city, and this revised motion they're putting forth:

Motion:

Whereas members of Hamilton City Council and members of the Police Service Board have received correspondence requesting the ‘defunding of the Hamilton Police Service’; and,
Whereas the same correspondence requests the reinvestment of the proposed budget reduction into other City funded services (ie. food security, anti-racism and affordable housing); and
Whereas a budget reduction of 20% would substantially alter the current services provided by

Hamilton Police Service staff;

Whereas the city of Hamilton has claimed a \$23 million dollars deficit due to the COVID pandemic and,

Whereas the city of Hamilton will spend \$171 million dollars on the police budget, but only \$11 million on children's services; and,

Whereas the city of Hamilton will spend \$171 million on the police budget but only \$44.3 million of housing services and,

Whereas the city of Hamilton will spend \$171 million on the police budget but only \$4,804,750 on unhoused people and,

Whereas the Hamilton Police Service CEO has been approved for a \$10,000 raise totalling a \$308,250 salary in 2020 and,

Whereas the city of Hamilton will spend \$31,300 on a pipe band, police choir and chorus but will reduce funding for food for prisoners by 5.97% totalling \$31,500 and,

Whereas the Hamilton police will spend \$78,806 on ammunition and \$61,409 on Tasers, whose sole purpose is to physically harm people while they could be spent on social services. The city and police should not have the power or tools to physically assault residents and should not have access to these weapons or a budget for them.

Whereas the Hamilton police have 17 new full time officers that work to violently oppress those made vulnerable in Hamilton while Ontario Works lost 44 hires to provide support to those same people.

Whereas it is likely that the Hamilton Police Services Board will attempt to show a 20% budget reduction that is in their favour and not in the interest of demilitarization

Therefore, be it resolved that the Hamilton Police Service board will defund and demilitarize the Hamilton Police.

Be it resolved that the Hamilton Police Service Board release a full, line by line, accounting of their dollars to the public instead of deciding where these hypothetical cuts should come from on their own.

Be it further resolved that the city of Hamilton will invest that money into services such as social housing, youth programming, sexual assault services, transit, food security, mental health response teams, and other community based alternatives to policing.

Thank you for your time. I look forward to observing your action on these points.

Best wishes,

Abedar Kamgari, Hamilton Ward 1 Resident