

Pilon, Janet

Subject: Defund HPS - Invest in Social Services

From: Danica Evering

Sent: July 21, 2020 9:51 PM

To: Merulla, Sam <Sam.Merulla@hamilton.ca>

Cc: Office of the Mayor <mayor@hamilton.ca>; Farr, Jason <Jason.Farr@hamilton.ca>; clerk@hamilton.ca; Defund HPS and HWDSB Kids Need Help Coalition <hwdsbkidsneedhelp@gmail.com>

Subject: Defund HPS - Invest in Social Services

Councillor Merulla,

My name is Danica Evering and I live in Hamilton, Ontario in Ward 4. A few weeks ago, Black organizers released the [following demands](#) in light of police brutality happening in Canada and in the United States.

I recently moved to your Ward from the downtown, Ward 2. My window used to look out on Tim Hortons, Bay Street at York, and King at Caroline. During the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, I witnessed an ongoing routine of police harassment of houseless people.

One officer outside my window mocked the people sitting there over their PA for not having a place to go home to. I have seen people who cannot afford it be ticketed in the streets, deepening poverty in an already impossible time.

Black and Indigenous people are not safe in cities, including in the city of Hamilton.

The last HPS Board meeting last month was incredibly condescending. Councillor Chad Collin's motions for further research were not in good faith and framed as "educating" us—community members calling for change who they have clearly decided are ignorant. This attitude is disappointing, outdated, and out of touch with thousands of their constituents.

When addressing calls to defund, several councillors have thrown up their hands and stated the HPS determines the budget and they can choose to pay or not, but that is all the power they have. I cannot believe any city who believes in responsible government would relinquish so much control and oversight.

In COVID-19 fallout, we will need to address food insecurity, racism, and more affordable housing. Policing is my highest cost as a taxpayer, and social services are a much more responsible and effective place to put that funding, especially in the coming years.

Here are some more reasons why the police budget needs to be reduced by 20%:

- We spend \$171 million on policing but only \$158 million on social services here in Hamilton.
- There are 675 police officers on the sunshine list. That equates to 36.51% of city employees on the sunshine list employed by the police.
- The percentage of all Hamilton Police on the sunshine list is 61%.
- The percentage of sworn officers on the sunshine list is 79%.
- Average salary of a Constable \$116,527
- Average salary of a Detective Constable is \$123,073
- Average salary of a Sergeant 1st Class is \$135,110
- Average salary of a Sergeant 2nd class is \$122,979
- Policing costs are the highest cost to Hamilton's taxpayers

As a new constituent, I am looking to you to acknowledge these concerns at City Hall. Please join Councillors Nann and Wilson in supporting the demand to defund police and move money to community services.

To you, to all of city council: take these serious concerns seriously.

Danica Evering
Ward 4