

CITY OF HAMILTON

MOTION

Council: December 11, 2024

MOVED BY COUNCILLOR M. SPADAFORA

SECONDED BY COUNCILLOR

Hiring Freeze For Non-Essential Positions & Job Vacancy Report - REVISED

WHEREAS Council recently declared an Affordability Crisis in the City of Hamilton;

WHEREAS the City of Hamilton has approved two of the highest annual tax increases (a combined 11.2%) since the City’s amalgamation in the year 2000;

WHEREAS the record tax increases passed in 2023 and 2024 added a historic level of new FTE positions, including 242.01 FTE in 2023 and 196.07 FTE in 2024;

WHEREAS salaries, wages and benefits make up the bulk of the City’s operating budget;

WHEREAS the continued addition of new staff and enhanced services are financially unsustainable for renters, homeowners, and small and medium sized businesses;

WHEREAS, when factoring in the use of City reserves to offset larger property tax increases, overall budgeted increases in spending from 2020 through 2024 were 4.6%, 7.4%, 11.3%, 10.9%, and 11.2%, respectively;

WHEREAS, since 2012, when factoring in compounded property tax increases, including the proposed 6.9% property tax increase in 2025, property taxes have increased by 50%, while inflation between 2012 and 2024 was 32.41%;

WHEREAS City of Hamilton Finance Department staff project a 6.9% property tax increase in 2025, which will be yet again subsidized by reserves;

WHEREAS, using the concept of reserves to subsidize in-year property tax increases does not accurately reflect the actual property tax increase and is neither financially sustainable nor fiscally responsible;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

- (a) That staff be directed to report back through a Communication Update on or before January 15, 2025 with:
 - (i) a comprehensive job vacancy report detailing the number and corresponding budgetary value of budgeted yet unfilled City of Hamilton staff positions; and
 - (ii) information and options related to optimize the staffing process, including strategies to ensure resources are allocated effectively and efficiently to meet the City's priorities and service delivery goals, including investigating the implementation of a hiring freeze.