

Pilon, Janet

Subject: Delegation - June 15 General Issues Committee

From: Evan Gravely

Sent: Thursday, June 11, 2020 9:45 AM

To: clerk@hamilton.ca

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Chair and Members of the General Issues Committee,

I am a resident of Ward 4 and am writing to you with concern over the proportion of funding for Police Services in Hamilton's 2020 operating budget. I am extremely displeased to learn that over \$170 million will be allocated to Police Services, especially now in light of worldwide protests against police violence and the force's link to systemic racist practices and disservice to the LGBTQ+ community.

I firmly believe that public funds would be better spent reducing poverty, which is a root cause of crime. Funding for Police Services should be diverted to initiatives like affordable housing, food security, and other social services that help to make Hamilton a safe and healthy community for all.

I stand in solidarity with Black Lives Matter activists in Hamilton and fully support the following demands:

1. Cancel the scheduled 3.8% increase, and all future increases, to the Hamilton Police Service's budget.
2. Propose and implement a minimum of a 10% budget cut to the 2020 operational budget.
3. Withhold pensions from and don't rehire police officers involved in excessive force cases.
4. Require police officers to be liable for misconduct settlements.
5. Reduce the size of the police force.

I am similarly astounded to learn that Hamilton's poverty rate is 15% for all residents, 20% spend more than half their income on rent, and that 13,000 people used the food bank last year. More policing, with more incidences of police brutality, will not solve these issues. Hamilton doesn't need more police: it needs affordable housing, healthy and affordable food, anti-racist education and advocacy groups, and accessible healthcare.

As the city discusses its operational and development plans, I urge you to prioritize the wellbeing of Hamilton residents by investing in services they need rather than spending nearly a third of the operational budget on Hamilton Police Services. I look to you for your leadership on this issue.

Sincerely,

Evan Gravely
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