



March 5, 2014

Minutes of the Area Rating Open House of the Corporation of the Municipality of Port Hope held on Wednesday, March 5, 2014 at 2:00 p.m. at the Canton Municipal Office, 5325 County Rd 10, Port Hope, Ontario.

Present: Mayor L. Thompson, Deputy Mayor J. Gilmer, Councillor R. Austin, Councillor G. Burns, Councillor D. Turck, Councillor M. Ellis

Staff: C. Cannon, Chief Administrative Officer
D. Baxter, Director of Finance
D. Sherwood, Tax and Revenue Coordinator
D. Kripp, Finance Clerk

Members of the Public: There were approximately 96 members in attendance.

1. INTRODUCTION

Mayor Linda Thompson welcomed citizens to the open house and introduced the facilitator Nigel Bellchamber.

Mr. Bellchamber introduced himself providing an overview of credentials and how the process works, explaining that David Baxter, Director of Finance, would provide a presentation and afterwards the floor would be opened up to the audience to ask questions or provide comments.

2. STAFF PRESENTATION

David Baxter provided an overview of his presentation.

3. QUESTIONS AND/OR COMMENTS

Mark Probert – 3864 Hwy 2

Wishes that Council members and staff would speak the truth to enable the community to trust the Council members and staff.

Caroline Thornton – Elizabethville

Caroline noted that if a special service “could” be area rated, than it “should” be area rated and inquired on the timelines of when decisions would be made.

Scott Crooks – Ward 2

Scott indicated that finances were not included in the original presentations and why they were included on the current presentation.

Mr. Smith – Ward 2

Mr. Smith inquired about the timeline to have the audited financials posted on the municipal website. Further, Mr. Scott inquired if the Municipality could assess each ward by what they have spent.

Pat Toms – Ward 2

Pat commented that in Hope Township, there was never a common or special services, it was good service with low taxes. Residents are not receiving any more service and believes the Municipality should stop spending.

Christine C. Rowland – Ward 2

Christine commented that the original survey that was brought forward included 29 services, however the report only included 17 services. She inquired as to why some services were compiled together and why resident’s had to indicate which ward they were from.

Bill Murray – Gardenhill

Bill inquired as to what has prompted the change to a new way of taxation and if comparative numbers were available for the services received pre-amalgamation.

Steve Lucas – 5751 6th Line, Knoxville

Steve inquired if there was a shortfall in funds for policing and fire honourium then why is the Municipality building a brand new structure.

Bill Bickle – Canton

Bill commented that residents need a justification for moving away from the original tax allocation and for moving \$1 million from one Ward to another. Bill inquired why the community cannot review all 29 services and what was incorrect about the amalgamation formula.

Kevin Brady – 3723 7th Line

Kevin commented that if we knew exactly what was being spent in each Ward for all uses then there would be no need for this discussion as each Ward would pay their own share. The Municipality should be able to track costs to charge to the appropriate ward.

Donna Marie Abrams – Property in Ward 1 and Ward 2

Donna commented that the increase affects everyone. Donna inquired what was included in the water fees (i.e. staff, maintenance, etc.). Donna commented that as a Ward 1 resident, the bus is available for her to be transported around the Municipality but as a Ward 2 resident, she has to drive into town to use the transit, this proposed the question if travel costs will be taken into consideration. Donna believes that the basis is around availability. Donna inquired about cemeteries within Ward 1 and Ward 2.

Ron Bates – 4016 Pelmo Park, Ward 2

Ron commented that when the two townships were transitioning into amalgamation, residents were promised that the Municipality would reduce staff, save money and obtain better service. Now staff have increased and services have decreased. He indicated that there is an urban and rural divide and it is because the two Wards think and spend differently.

Dean Ross – 1283 6th Line

Dean commented that during the ice storm, his road was not touched for several days. Further, with the Welcome Fire Station closing, his house insurance will increase over \$500/year. Dean voiced his concerns regarding the dry hydrants.

Andy Choate – 3944 Larose Circle, Ward 2

Andy commented that he is a firm believer of pay by use (user fees), recognizing there needs to be stable funding for these services (JBSC, TPRC) to make them sustainable. Andy recognized that PIL's are a source of revenue but wanted clarification regarding how they work.

Pat Toms – Ward 2

Pat inquired about the OPP monies that are given back to the Municipality.

Bill Bickle – Canton

Bill stated that previously "Option 10" was introduced and noted that if this was fully implemented, 20% of the Municipal Tax Levy would be allocated to

Ward 2. Bill commented that assessments in Ward 1 and Ward 2 are different as well as the averages between the values. Further, Bill inquired about the justification for deviating away from the “amalgamation formula” and where the financial data is located.

Caroline Thornton – Elizabethville

Caroline commented that many residents did not understand the survey and that those who responded only accounts for 7% of the population. She inquired about the 93% of the population and their opinion and why it is being ignored.

Harrison Marshal

Harrison commented that it is difficult to obtain a building permit.

Nigel Bellchamber closed the session, thanking the audience for participating and encouraged participants to complete and submit the comment sheets.

Adjourn 4:01 p.m.