TO: Members of Council
FROM: Dana Earle, Deputy City Clerk
DATE: Tuesday, January 12, 2021
SUBJECT: Additional Information
Committee of the Whole – Special Session (2021 Capital and Operating Budget) – January 14, 2021

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE – SPECIAL SESSION

Additional Information

1. Correspondence from Ms. S. Williamson, Email Coordinator – Poverty Free Thunder Bay, dated January 9, 2021 requesting to provide a deputation relative to the 2021 Capital and Operating Budget.

2. Correspondence from Dr. I. Puchalski, received January 11, 2021 providing a written deputation relative to the 2021 Capital and Operating Budget.
c/o 73 Cumberland St N Suite 101  
Thunder Bay, ON P7A 4L8  
povertyfreetb@gmail.com

Date: January 9 2021

To: Office of the City Clerk, City of Thunder Bay
    OfficeoftheCityClerk@thunderbay.ca

Subject: Request to speak before Council at for Pre-budget deputation meeting

Poverty Free Thunder Bay requests the opportunity to make a pre-budget deputation by video conference on January 14, 2021.

Sincerely

Sara Williamson, email coordinator

for Poverty Free Thunder Bay
DEPUTATION to THUNDER BAY CITY COUNCIL .. for Budget Considerations

June 4th/2020 I sent a letter to Thunder Bay City Council re: Infrastructure & Road Maintenance wherein I addressed 5/five long time, safety related concerns for residents in my neighbourhood. Having never received a response, I sent another but shorter letter on Sept.20th, with a copy of the July 4th letter, after a few shovels of earth/sand that would be & was washed away the first heavy rainfall, had been put down as if a solution to the road problems I had highlighted.

On November 12th/20 I was pleased to receive a very detailed letter from Rick Harms, Project Engineer, not only addressing the concerns I had identified, but also providing additional information to help me understand the history & processes that have impacted this location.

Thank you for this opportunity to submit a Deputation for Council's Budget consideration ... which I would prefer to do in person ... but due to unchangeable prior commitments, I cannot.

While Mr. Harms pointed out, there had been significant widening of Valley Street 2011/2014 from the expressway to where it bends left and becomes Pioneer Street, this part of the roads was never the problem. The issues pertain to the non-sensical 2 blocks of Valley that is separated once the main road turns west, as well as several of the nearby streets i.e. Toivo, Skyline etc.

Mr. Harms explained that because this location was under the Township of McIntyre prior to amalgamation with Thunder Bay in 1970, road standards for the township still apply here. As such, there are no plans to change/improve an intersection that is barely 20 feet wide, with badly broken edges on both sides that make the functional safe area, much smaller. 

??? So ... 50 years after amalgamation, outdated regulations still apply here .. & .. even though property taxes here are double for a similar lot size in Westfort or Green Acres, this area is not entitled to the same quality of paved roads. Instead, here at the end of the city, our roads still only need to accommodate as if a 'rural cross-section' ... more suitable for a horse & buggy !!

1) * The road width where Toivo & Valley intersect measures 20-22 feet depending how one measures because the edges on both sides, before & after the ditch, are badly broken & unsafe. Considering that most mid-size autos are about 6 feet wide, there is only room for one car at a time to pass through this intersection & anyone walking or biking also wait to pass through.

2) ** The widest part of this section of Valley is just prior to where it intersects with Skyline ... roughly 30 feet ..but again depending on how measured, because the pavement edges/margins on both sides are VERY irregular, uneven & broken. There is barely enough quality pavement for two cars to pass one another, which forces young & old citizens of this residential area, to travel more centrally on the road ... until a car comes along when pedestrians, children biking or skate boarding, parents pushing baby carriages, people walking their dogs ... move onto lawns, often tripping on the broken pavement edges, until the cars have gone & they can resume their activity. (Toivo is the same, with Sherwood & Masters only slightly better.) Last summer I spoke with many residents about the '3rd world quality' of our roads & all agreed it needed to be addressed ASAP, but none wanted curbs or sidewalks which would increase taxes.
3) *** Valley Street from Toivo to Skyline, is SO rough and uneven, that travelling over 15-18 kms causes my vehicle to 'bottom out'. Going slow in residential areas is essential, but this seems a bit excessive. When school buses go by, I can see tiny heads bobbing around enough to give them whiplash!!

4) **** During summer months Jumbo Gardens is typically very busy with youth soccer and other family activities but, there is a HUGE parking problem here. Since parking is not allowed on Pioneer Street, cars are left on Jameson, Toivo & Valley. Although Jameson does have a curb and sidewalk (where the other streets noted do not) ... NONE of them are wide enough to accommodate parking on both sides, which is what happens. Not only does through traffic have to weave in & out of parked cars, but more importantly so do pedestrians and young people on bikes, which I trust you will appreciate is dangerous.

Rick Harms in his letter to me, advised that the City had looked into parking issues related to Jumbo Gardens and it was felt that such short-term parking and inconvenience was 'acceptable'. So be it ... but may I suggest then that signage is installed instructing that only unilateral parking is allowed and which side that is to be. It won't hurt anyone to walk a little farther down Toivo, Valley or Jameson to park, so residents trying to enjoy their neighbourhood can be 'out & about'. Unilateral parking would also be helpful during winter, when snow banks take up some roadway.

5) ***** Lastly and of lesser concern perhaps, is that the sewer manhole in the middle of the Skyline intersection at Valley, sits at the highest point of the pavement!! Obviously not consistent with proper engineering, or conducive to efficient drainage. When I said 'of lesser concern', that was only because people in this area have learned to negotiate this annual serious ice hazard when going for their mail, by walking along the edges of the snow banks at the side of the road. There have been serious injuries from falls, in this large & annual area of ice.

Mr. Harms provided a number to call to address such ice concerns, but that would be daily calls. Perhaps improvements to the pavement, would raise the road more to the level of the sewer??

For the past 10 years, I have lived at my current address on Valley directly across from Skyline, and I have not seen ANY improvements to the roads at this, the edge of the city of Thunder Bay. When significant & much needed repairs were done last summer on Dawson & Red River Roads, I had hoped that efforts would expand to these few adjacent streets .. but no.

Perhaps in not-too-distant future .. this area could be upgraded to Thunder Bay City standards??

Thank you for your time reading this deputation and considering the issues & requests therein.

Dr. Ione Puchalski
igp
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