STANDING POLICY COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

QUESTION PERIOD

Minute No. 594
Councillor Gilroy asked when Council could expect a review of the upcoming budget.

Councillor Morantz advised that the Budget Working Group has been immersed in budget discussions for the better part of the year and that more information on public consultations would be coming within weeks.

Councillor Wyatt advised that a tough budget year is coming and asked if the average Winnipeg Jets fan was aware that the Entertainment Tax collected on their tickets was being returned to True North Sports and Entertainment Ltd and partly to the 17th richest man in Canada.

Councillor Morantz advised that he could not answer the question as to whether or not the Jets fan knew, but believed it was a long term contractual arrangement between the City and True North Sports and Entertainment Ltd back in the day and not a kick back to the 17th richest man in Canada. He suggested that Councillor Wyatt canvas Jets fans as they enter the MTS Centre and report back to Council.

Councillor Wyatt asked if the Federal Government refunding their GST collected at Jets and Moose games back to the professional NHL team.

Councillor Morantz took the question under advisement and advised he would report back to Council on the matter.

Councillor Wyatt advised that over $8 million was being refunded to professional sport teams at a time when the City was experiencing tough financial times and asked if it was time for review of this matter.

Councillor Morantz replied that if it was a matter of contractual obligation, then the City would honour that. Furthermore, it would be difficult to alter the term of the contract until it came to an end.

Councillor Eadie asked if the Chair could ask the Legal Services Department to examine the contractual agreement between The City of Winnipeg and True North Sports and Entertainment Ltd.

Councillor Morantz advised that he would ask for additional information on the contract.

Councillor Eadie asked if the Finance Chair had provided any support to the Point Douglas Ward Councillor to do some sort of budget presentation to that community.

Standing Policy Committee on Finance - Question Period (continued):

Councillor Morantz advised that he had not assisted with the Point Douglas presentation, but that he would be open to going out to any public meeting to talk about the budget.

Councillor Eadie persisted and asked if there was any assistance provided, yes or no.

Councillor Morantz advised he was not asked for any support, but stated that if he were to be asked, the answer would be yes.