EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE

QUESTION PERIOD

Minute No. 22
Councillor Gillingham referred to a Sustainable Taxation and Revenue resolution recently passed at the Association of Manitoba Municipalities meeting in Brandon and inquired if the Mayor supported the resolution to retool the traditional property-based taxation model to include alternate revenue sources and additional tax sharing agreements, to create a sustainable tax model and revenue sources and, if so, what role the City of Winnipeg would play to lobby the Province for this new revenue funding model.

His Worship Mayor Bowman confirmed that he supported the resolution and would like to go further than what the resolution called for, since he had campaigned on leading a discussion with stakeholders to secure provincial support for a new modern funding model that would replace property taxes, with one that focused on economic growth so that revenues would grow with the economy.

Councillor Gerbasi inquired if they would consider completely eliminating reliance on property tax revenue or look to just reduce reliance on property tax revenue, since one of the benefits of a property tax base was that it was stable / always there and then new revenue sources could build on that when they need to balance the budget.

His Worship Mayor Bowman replied that the important point was discussion of big picture things in order to make the change. He added that they required a funding model that was reflective of modern cities and the current revenue model was not sustainable, did not protect core services and did not enable growth out of the massive inherited infrastructure deficit. His Worship Mayor Bowman stated that Council balanced the first budget and would balance the next budget and suggested that it was sound fiscal management on the part of previous Councils, as well as the current one, to voluntarily impose a debt ceiling.

Councillor Gerbasi advised that the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) was working hard on a strategy to deal with the financial stability of cities and asked His Worship to comment on the approach that they would work on with all levels of government.

His Worship Mayor Bowman indicated that he has had good discussion with new Members of Parliament and would continue to work collaboratively with both senior levels of government. He noted that FCM had much to offer, did great work on a number of policy fronts and dialogue would continue with FCM and other local stakeholders such as the Winnipeg and Manitoba Chambers of Commerce, CUPE and Manitoba Heavy Construction.

Executive Policy Committee – Question Period (continued):

Councillor Mayes inquired if the Mayor was aware that Shelly Glover, a former Member of Parliament, was returning to work for the Winnipeg police force, which was a credit to Shelly and the Winnipeg Police Service and inquired what role was foreseen for Madam Glover and if various conflict of interest guidelines might pertain.

His Worship deferred the question to Councillor Gillingham, Chair of the Police Board, and also extended a thank you to Shelly Glover for her outstanding commitment to build a stronger Winnipeg and Canada and welcomed her back to the Winnipeg Police Service.

Councillor Gillingham replied that the Police Board did not have a role over the operational decision of the Police Service and echoed the comments that it was a boon for the Service to have someone with such experience return. He further stated that he looked forward to wherever it was determined that Shelly would land within the Service to work. His Worship Mayor Bowman concluded by asking all Members of Council to reach out and welcome Shelly back and advised that she would be working as a Patrol Sargent.