COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WINNIPEG
Tuesday, March 23, 2004

The Council met at 9:40 a.m.

The Clerk advised the Speaker that a quorum was present.

The Speaker called the meeting to order.

The opening prayer was read by Councillor Steek.

ROLL CALL

Clerk: Mr. Speaker Councillor O'Shaughnessy, His Worship Mayor Murray, Councillors Eadie, Angus, Clement, De Smedt, Gerbasi, Lubosch, Pagtakhan, Smith, Steek, Steeves, Thomas, Wyatt and Lazarenko.

Special Meeting Notice

Pursuant to Section 79(1) of The City of Winnipeg Charter, I am directed by His Worship Mayor Murray to arrange a Special Meeting of Council on Tuesday, March 23, 2004, at 9:30 a.m., to consider the Preliminary 2004 – 2006 Operating Budget.

Marc Lemoine,
Deputy City Clerk.

Move onto delegations. Our first delegation this morning and the most appropriate first user of our new elevator, we have Theresa Ducharme.

DELEGATIONS

Ms Theresa Ducharme: I would like to thank councillors for installing this new elevator so I can be part and present in the same level as all citizens.

I, Theresa Ducharme on behalf of People in Equal Participation Inc., wish to support our Fire Chief, Wes Shoemaker in the amalgamation of the Firefighters and Paramedics. Why must we send out a fire truck, ambulance and police cruiser to every emergency? The amalgamation would be the most safe and efficient solution for the following reasons.

The amalgamation would allow for a prospective future for the City of Winnipeg's safety and medical services. Having firemen trained as paramedics would bring more peace of mind in emergencies for fire solutions where paramedic assistance is also required. The amalgamation will ensure that there are firemen trained as professional paramedics as well as basic paramedics.

Winnipeg has multi home care clients who require more services and paramedics who serve us well, although there is a lack of them. More trained paramedics would give us greater confidence in emergency situations in the community, feeling reassured that emergency solutions would be looked after without worrying about a shortage of emergency medical services.

I, myself have experienced three fires in my home where the fire trucks came, put out the fire and the ambulance service had to take me to the hospital on a stretcher, leaving my wheelchair and life support at home. Every time a fire truck would show up, they wanted to decide who's going to take Mrs. Ducharme because she's attached to her wheelchair. At the same time, it caused me more confusion and more stress, and there's more more and more of us in the community, that we also have to be included in emergency situations. You can't forget us on the street, off the street or in the house where there's a fire or even in a public building.

I definitely on behalf of P.E.P. would agree to have firefighters trained as professional and this is exactly what's happening right now. They're being trained in Brandon and they are coming out as paramedics.

As long as we wait to recycle the whole system or review the whole system, it will take us a long time, so we might as well put them into our budget and do it now, and have everybody reassured that we're all being taken care of equally, and not wait for the emergency to arise and say, why didn't we do it then.

I agree 100% that on behalf of People in Equal Participation Inc. that the amalgamation would be the most safest

and assuring amalgamation that we could possibly do.

I'd like to be invited to one of your homes and possibly ignite a fire so we can reassure that I'll be taken care of equally as everyone of the councillors. How do you like that. Who's going to have me over for a cup of tea.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you.

Do you have any questions of Mrs. Ducharme?

Next delegation will be Nick Ternette, also on the clause before us today.

Mr. Nick Ternette: Mr. Speaker, Mayor Murray, members of City Council. What is it about city council that is so obsessed with a tax freeze or decrease in property taxes. Any hint or suggestion that the citizens of Winnipeg would accept any property tax increase whatsoever just to maintain services seems to be frowned upon beyond belief in this chamber.

Do you think that we are so stupid to think that the City can continue to maintain the level of services without increasing taxes? Hugh Mackenzie from the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives suggested that a tax freeze in this year's 2004 operating budget is irresponsible, and I agree. While the service cuts in the past seven years have been subtle, they are cumulative in their overall effect, so there's no recognition that the cost of inflation is between one percent to two percent each year over the last seven years, and therefore it would cost significantly more than seven years ago to raise the service levels to what they were then, never mind what is required for the City to function properly today.

Many delegations came to EPC and to various sub committees and pointed out significant shortfalls to maintaining the basic services of the City of Winnipeg. For example, $100,000 was needed at least for library books. $100,000 was needed for larviciding helicopter. $300,000 for road maintenance and asphalt overlays. $240,000 for boulevard maintenance. $459,000 for paramedics. $400,000 was required for Christmas lights. And $600,000 for the expansion upgrades in transit and especially handi-transit.

You balanced this year's budget without a property tax increase, in spite of originally a $40 million shortfall. Some of this was due as you yourself have indicated the inflationary wage increases, but $22 million relates to service cuts. And don't for a minute think that the public buys your argument that those cut services weren't approved in the first place and as such are not service cuts.

Another $4 million was transferred from the capital budget and another $4 million was taken from the reserve funds for the operating budget in order for the operating budget to be balanced.

Lo and behold, instead of a slight tax increase of two to three percent increase in tax to cover deficits and increase services for the citizens of Winnipeg, you decided to impose a user fee. A fine for those who don't pay their property taxes on time. Conspicuously I think avoiding a tax increase and applying user fees instead to reinstate some of the cuts that I've mentioned previously.

Originally $2.6 million have been cut from road maintenance and asphalt overlays. We now have EPC recommending $300,000 be put back for that particular project. But Public Works had requested at least $500,000 just to maintain the infrastructure as is, not in terms of it continuing to crumble.

$100,000 had been cut from the mosquito larviciding helicopter. My God, as I said, before at EPC last year for the first time the City finally got its act together by developing a great larviciding program which resulted in the least number of mosquitoes ever experienced in Winnipeg for years.

Now I am glad, and I will give credit where credit is due, that EPC was wise enough to reinstate the $100,000 for larviciding helicopter so that we don't have to go back to fogging again this year.

However, there is no new funding in the budget for wading pools, weed control, tree pruning, firefighters, police officers and Christmas lights. Now you might not think that Christmas lights are very important, but Winnipeg is known as the Christmas light capital of North America. It's pretty prestigious and the honour brings in tourism and is positive socially as well.

Last but not least and this is what I want to emphasize today again, there is no funding put in the budget for transit. There seems to be a contradiction in the way this council is dealing with the transit crisis. On the one hand the Federal Government is going to put in $50 million to develop a rapid transit bus service in this city, and we all applaud this supposedly, but as I said, I have a critique about it, I believe a light railway transit system is by far the better way to go. Yet on the other hand, we're cutting $600,000 from the transit budget. Nobody is saying a peep about it. It makes no sense to me.

These two transportation services have enough difficulties keeping up with passengers nickel and dimed to death over the past decade. Handi-transit provides services to 2,000 people with disabilities daily, and it's going to increase. It's going to increase. In order to maintain the system, the City had to inject $1.5 million in the last three years. Separate from the budget. With the aging population and the number of people with disabilities participating in our mainstream society, can you just see that with a $600,000 cut that within six months Handi-transit will be here asking for an additional half a million dollars just to maintain the service as it is. You can't continue functioning that way.

Finally, the most controversial budget is not in the 2004 one, it is the issue of the pay-as-you-throw garbage which is part of the new deal budget. If it was part of the new deal budget which the budget is not, might be viable to debate. I'm concerned about it, no one is in favour of it. With this new garbage fee there will be as I said, no more free garbage, instead the solid waste management will be turned into a self-funding utility for $16 million per year. What's worse in the innercity 6,500 autobins are going to be taxed surcharged on their property tax bill. Which again, all I can say, is another tax on the poor. I can't find anyone in the City at the present time in favour of this proposal.

I feel as CUPE 500 President Mike Davidson has said, without a tax increase, and we're talking about a slight tax increase, Winnipeggers will have to deal with overgrown boulevards, unpruned trees, and other unacceptable service cuts in spite of increased user fees to cover some of the deficits that you've already experienced. I don't think this budget is good enough for the citizens of Winnipeg. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you. Questions if you would. Councillor Smith.

Councillor Smith: Mr. Ternette you pointed out a lot of things wrong with the budget. If you were a councillor would you support the budget or would you vote against it?

Mr. Ternette: Mr. Speaker, I understand I've been around politics, city hall politics since 1971, so I understand the practicality of your situation. On principles I would vote against it obviously because I just don't think it's a budget that is adequate to meet the needs of the citizens of Winnipeg. I think the citizens of Winnipeg if you look at the opinion polls and others have indicated that they do not object to paying slightly increased property taxes in order to cover the services. The school boards continue to increase their rates every year, they've never had a tax freeze or a decrease in their things. They average four to five percent increases every year for the last six or seven years, and people grumble. I think councillors have a right to grumble. It shouldn't be on their property tax bill, but this isn't accepted. I haven't seen thousands of citizens rushing into the chambers of school board meetings and demanding that they start cutting their school board taxes. There is no big pressure on that, citizens are prepared to accept that they need to have adequate schools, then I don't see why council can't

increase property taxes somewhat in order to maintain the services as is, because otherwise we will continue to have a deficit in the kind of services that citizens of Winnipeg deserve.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you.

Before we get on with the main clause before us, I have been remiss in not bringing forward a motion moved by the Mayor.

Motion
Moved by His Worship Mayor Murray
Seconded by Councillor Eadie

That Councillor Vandal be granted a leave of absence from today's meeting due to a family matter.

Mr. Speaker: All in favour? Contrary? Carried.

Move onto the Report of the Executive Policy Committee of March 17, 2004.

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE
DATED MARCH 17, 2004

Item No. 1 – 2004 – 2006 Operating Budget
File FE(2004)

Mayor Murray: Mr. Speaker I think one of the things that's probably very frustrating for both our city staff and people on city council is, trying to get accurate information out. I'll just start where my friend Nick Ternette left off.

He said, the City transit budget was cut by $600,000. In fact the City's grant to transit in the budget that I think we're about to pass, is going up exactly $4.7 million over last year. That's a very substantial increase. That's much over the rate of inflation. That money is going into bus parts, bus purchases, salaries. It's not buying us new services, but it's a major reinvestment in the replacement of buses and the maintenance of existing services and improvement in service.

We actually even got an increase in our provincial transit grant for the first time in a long time. It's gone up $11,560. I don't think that's an inflationary increase but it's a beginning. We take our hope in small amounts.

I think it also points out the challenge that in the case of transit, we have to improve our ridership. We have to improve our response time. We've got to get our transit system at least into the last century, not in this, we're one of the only cities running a bus only system with no rapid transit at all. People don't want to ride a system, we've been told by transit that Councillor De Smedt's report en route to a brighter future, I can't remember the exact name, talked about the idea we've got to find ways to reduce our major commute transit lines down to less than 30 minutes. If we can't do that, we'll be running empty buses. And if we run empty buses we'll be adding another $4 million or $5 million in property tax subsidies. There is a cost to not having rapid transit. You can see it in nearly $5 million increase in property tax subsidies in transit.

We need to do things to improve the service. We need not to come up with our own nifty ideas on transit, but to listen to our transit department that for 30 years has been trying to get us caught up to Calgary and Edmonton and Vancouver and every other major city in Western Canada of our size. And get the buses running full, get the fare box price lowered, because if you have more people riding on it you share the pain, there's huge pressure on the fare box when those buses are running empty.

That's just a start. I want to take up another issue. Larviciding. The $100,000 was not a cut Mr. Speaker. We weren't ever planning on rolling back five cents of the massive increase in larviciding, and quite frankly I don't think we need to be lectured to about the importance of larviciding. It took great pain when you're freezing taxes to introduce many new programs. There we had an $800,000 grant to the Province, but they pay a very small share of the total cost, a significant one but we're on the hook, and we're on the hook for increasing costs. This $100,000 is new money. It's for

additional helicopter services, it's not to debate whether or not we have the same number of helicopters last year, this is $100,000 in more capacity because we tried it last year, we think it was successful, we know that the weather was on our side but we certainly know that this was a big factor in there. We're adding new services back there.

The other issue that has come up was you can't do all things. There's $100,000 in new library materials. I want to congratulate Councillor Smith here because it was really him and he came to me many times and said look, he went to the committee and put motions through saying, we've got to put some money in. Now we couldn't put all the library board wanted but we think this is a good down payment on increased investments. And Councillor Smith and his friends on the Library Board pointed out that we've been losing capacity there because the budget hasn't been cut but it hasn't gone up which means that inflation has been eating away at our library books.

CUPE, Councillor Pagtakhan, Councillor Lazarenko and Councillor O'Shaughnessy came to us and said, if you actually think you're serious about reducing boulevard mowing in this city, we're going to bury you up in a boulevard in the North End. All you have to do is lie down in about two weeks the grass will cover it.

Our staff pointed out that we're burning out equipment because the grass was too high. And that was a sensible thing. When you introduce a budget and you don't have the money, we started practicing aligning our expenditures to our revenues instead of aligning our revenues to our expenditures. I think that's been the hallmark of this council.

Those group of councillors came together and said, fix it. So it's fixed. Boulevard mowing is back in the budget. We won't be having this unkempt, shoddy looking city.

The other thing, thin bituminous overlay, we've added a million dollars. We did reduce it, but we've increased our residential street infrastructure budget. That's gone up every single year, we've added millions more for street repair. Could we do all the TBO work we wanted to do this year? No, and quite frankly the department has told us, put more into reconstruction and resurfacing and TBO will not be such a big issue. We sort of used thin bituminous overlay almost as wallpaper Mr. Speaker to cover up things that should have really been repaired. I think now that we're spending millions more in our repair budget this year, we can afford to stretch that out.

There is never enough and I'll come to what the solution is because as the Canada West Foundation two weeks ago put out a report to fix our infrastructure adequately would be for the average Western Canadian city over 100,000 people would be a 50% property tax increase to do what the engineers say need to be done. I don't think that's a realistic scenario on the backs of property taxes.

St. Boniface Museum, Councillor Vandal and others raised this. Councillor Wyatt raised the issue of that. We couldn't do all the money that they wanted, but Councillor Angus came up with a rather interesting solution. He said, put $100,000 into it, divide it, and St. Boniface has the largest problems it's a more serious museum, it's open more. We also wanted to help Transcona out, so it's not all that people asked for but it's a good start and we think it's a reasonable solution to that.

One of the biggest stresses we have on our workforce and in response and our greatest concerns has to be paramedics. There is an additional $460,000 going into the paramedic service. I just want to again put on the record Mr. Speaker, how proud I am of the extraordinary leadership that the professional paramedics association of Winnipeg has taken. When I become mayor they hadn't had a contract for five years. With these additional 12 paramedics in the last five years, we will have doubled the number of paramedics we have. Having said that, that's not enough. I think this is a down payment if I could use that word on our commitment to the Paramedic

Association, and to improving medical response times with an aging population this is going to be a more serious challenge for us as time goes on. We've all had loved ones some of us personally have had to rely on their services. My mother's been taken in paramedic service, she's lived in Montreal. She raved about how well she was cared for. Really an extraordinary group of folks.

We know we need three more units. We know that we're going through a redeployment exercise. We know we have some capacity on the fire side. We have to do that. We have to get caught up again with other cities. Amalgamation as Ms Ducharme points out is a very important thing. We have to protect the professionalism of the paramedics.

They've stood alone in some senses as a union and being the advocates for amalgamation. I hope that this council will continue to support them and to ensure that our paramedics are protected and well cared for and their profession is respected. I want to thank them because they've been very reasonable. We're already in discussions with the Province to try and extend and come to an agreement on matching funds. Premier Doer I know has been very good about matching dollars. The agreement we had with the Province was groundbreaking. I think within the next few months we should have a solution that will be satisfactory to our paramedics and also our firefighters.

You don't do this challenge without extraordinary management team. I've said I think that this is the best city council in the country because no one holds a candle to you as far as records of success on reinvestment in infrastructure. We stopped borrowing money a few years ago, we were only putting $42 million, we're at about $57 million now, our goal was $61 million. We were trying to get there this year, we weren't able to.

I want to thank Annitta Stenning and Bob Gannon and our entire senior management team for just working tirelessly to try and make this work.

I am always amazed at the time that Joanne Ferrier puts in, she's in here weekends, days. I know she meets with many of you. She's never turned away an opportunity to help people. She does great work and with Ramona and Betty, we've been very blessed with an extraordinary team.

I don't normally single people out Mr. Speaker, but the reason we've been able to make these reinvestments we've got a very smart guy in the tax branch. I hope someone will put this on his personnel file. Bob Weselowski Was sent out by our team to try and come up with a solution of where could $1 million come from that would be positive. And how could we put all these things back in that councillors had legitimately raised on behalf of their constituents with the problems that the budget had fallen short from its initial draft. Bob went out and he found that our tax penalties were the lowest in Canada. Even with this increase we're caught up to Saskatoon and Regina, we still have dramatically lower tax penalties, compared to the larger Western Canadian cities, Calgary and Edmonton. That's allowed it without any harm. It actually is responsible to pay your taxes on time as we know. We think this is a good thing. It'll actually help us with some other financial problems.

I want to thank members of EPC. I want to particularly thank my friend Bill Clement who's just done soldier service for us over the years. I can tell you how much time he's in my office, and how much time I'm in his office.

I also want to thank Gord Steeves, John Angus for some of the work they've done over the years on raising the infrastructure budget.

People have said, why not raise property taxes this year a couple of percent. Winnipeggers can handle that. The problem is Mr. Speaker the only choice we have, we could borrow money but our credit rating agencies have said look, you've just cut your debt in half, you're still at 17% of your revenues down from about 22% going to debt servicing. You can't really go out and borrow money

credibly until you're under 11%. I think the Province's debt ratio for example is 7%, and they're not exactly at the low end of debt amongst provinces, they've done very well. They have concerns about their capacity.

We could defer maintenance more Mr. Speaker. But 40 years of that got us into the problems we've got. How we ever retrieved backlanes in the future I'm not sure. I fully agree with my friend Councillor Smith on that. We're not there yet.

Quite simply, raising property taxes is happening this year. Fifty-five percent of the property tax bill goes to the other users of the taxes are going up. They're not going up by one or two percent Mr. Speaker, they're not going up by inflation., they're going up about two and in some years three times the rates of inflation.

Our municipal levy now is below the national average and in the lower third, still ahead of most western cities, our overall property tax burden on the school side continues to be one of the highest in the country.

It's not an adequate solution. And to actually fix things that is not a practical source of revenue. Every one who's looked at this has said, cities need a new deal.

I'm tired, and I think many of you are of extricating ourselves from difficult budget situations, from not being able to raise property taxes because the school boards before you're even tabling your budget, are already announced increases at twice the rate of inflation.

I think we're tired of going through every single city account to find little savings here and there. I'm hoping that we have only one priority for the next year, and that's getting the new deal with the Federal and Provincial Governments so we don't have to perpetuate this absolute budget that's held together with shoestrings and band aids, we can do so much better for our citizens. I do agree with my friend Mr. Ternette, that citizens in Winnipeg do deserve a better budget than this, but I think they've got the best they can with what we've got. I think we should be proud of the efforts we've made. Again, thanks to all of you on Council for your tremendously hard work.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you. Councillor Wyatt introducing motions one and two as amendments to the main clause.

Motion No. 1
Moved by Councillor Wyatt,
Seconded by Councillor De Smedt,

That Recommendation No. 2 be amended by deleting $300,000 from the Street Party Budget, and redirecting those funds to the Outdoor Wading Pools and Swimming Pool Budgets to keep them open till the end of August.

Motion No. 2
Moved by Councillor Wyatt,
Seconded by Councillor De Smedt,

That Recommendation No. 2.3 be changed to:

St. Boniface Museum
$60,000
Transcona Historical Museum
$30,000
Seven Oaks Museum
$10,000

Total
$100,000

Councillor Wyatt: Thank you. I move to speak to Motion No. 1 first and foremost. I think it's very clear that this is not a major item but it's an important item to those who are affected.

It's one of these subjects of course which we never hear much about until the issue happens. The motion calls for $300,000 to be deleted from the street party budget, and $300,000 to be put into the outdoor wading pools and swimming pools budgets to keep them open until the end of August.

It's one of these issues that you don't have people coming in delegation to the

standing committees. As a matter of fact, I thought it would have been a great day when that day arrives when instead of firefighters or other groups or community groups having to come in and plead whether it be the museums or the libraries, plead for money that it would be nice instead to have the department heads to come and plead for more money for consultants and professional fees, and street parties. It seems that we have things the wrong way around here at City Hall Mr. Speaker these days.

We know that we had a problem last year with regards to our wading pools. We know that we had an issue with regards to them being closed early. Largely it had to do with the weather. The Standing Committee on Protection and Community Services is moving in the direction of setting up a sinking fund thanks to the recommendation of my colleague Councillor Angus so that in the future that any savings occurred because of weather, bad weather, would go into the sinking fund and go towards wading pools.

In the meantime though, wading pools some 94 of them close early before the end of the summer. One only has to go Mr. Speaker to certain parts of the City. I know for example I've seen a wading pool in the middle of summer located I believe it's in Councillor Pagtakhan's ward off of Isabella there near Bunzy's Carwash, Rossbrook House. That wading pool is packed with children, packed with kids. Young children playing. These are children Mr. Speaker who in their circumstances don't have the option to go to a cottage, who don't have the option even to go to a beach. They're in the City 12 months of the year, and they're in the City here in the summer when it's hot, and we know how hot Winnipeg can get in the summertime. We have strong winters and we have strong summers.

This is a motion that speaks to that. It speaks to the fact that we should recognize that the children of our city many of them don't have a choice and would like, like any other child, to have an opportunity to have recreation and recreation in the summertime. Wading pools are an excellent program that the City provides. It's a basic program I would argue that the City provides to its citizens. It's not a luxury.

In my ward amongst other wards, there are many individuals who also do not have the option or the opportunity to go out of the City. Many of them are single mothers with children who use our wading pools. I have three wading pools in my ward, and they are actively used. Used summer long and enjoyed by the young people and by their families.

We ran into the situation last year where we had to scramble, and let's be blunt, it was newspaper headlines, newspapers loved it, and it made us look foolish with regards to having to struggle to find a few extra dollars when we know there's extra dollars there to do this sort of thing. I think at the end of the day we came up with $84,000 to keep strategic wading pools open until the end of August. This motion would keep wading pools open until the end of August, period.

We know that this can be done Mr. Speaker. We know this is possible. I picked out the street party budget just because it happened to match what it would take to keep the wading pools open. If someone else has a better recommendation where we can get the $300,000, I'd be happy to hear it. If you have that recommendation, please bring it forward, put it in a motion, and I would support it wholeheartedly.

The $300,000 Mr. Speaker of wading pools is something reasonable, it's something that I think we should support.

The museum issue Mr. Speaker was very clear. I think Seven Oaks was left out of the process. Transcona Historical Museum was requesting $40,000, they're being allocated $20,000. I thank EPC for their generosity but in reality they were asking for $40,000, so this motion calls for $30,000, it's still not what they're asking. It's a bit of a saw off I suppose. St. Boniface Museum was asking $80,000, and in this case they're getting $60,000. It's fair all around. It's a more balanced resolution than what's coming out of EPC I would argue.

Let us put some money towards wading pools today Mr. Speaker. Let us say, that in this huge budget of $700 million nearly of crimped spending, that we can find $300,000 towards wading pools. The children of our city, the children of poor families and of working families of our city who don't have the option to travel outside the City, I think would appreciate this. I think it would be marked as a council that has a heart, a council that has a conscience, and a council which is prepared to say right today, this is a priority to us, we think it's important.

I realize that there's an element here of, well in politics you'll always have that element, the element of ego. The element that this is our budget and we must stand by it and defend it. We must not back down, and we must not give any leeway. I would first of all like to congratulate EPC for recognizing this time in this budget process some changes to their budget process which we've been raising all along, the issues of the libraries. The issues of the TBO. The issues of the insect control. The issues of the museums. I think something was missed when they did that last go round at their EPC meeting, something was missed, this was missed. This is a huge oversight in my mind.

The wading pools issues is a huge oversight. It's easy for many of us who can travel outside the City and have the luxury of being able to go to a cottage or go to a beach, it's easy for us to ignore this. I don't think Mr. Speaker, it shows the kind of leadership that I know we are capable of, and that we should find in ourselves today to bring forward and support Motion No. 1 and Motion No. 2. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you. We'll now start a speakers list. Councillor De Smedt is next.

Point of Order

Councillor Angus: On a point of order. I recognize from historical significance we don't want to go into committee of the whole, we generally vote that down which allows back and forth dialogue. I would respectfully request an opportunity to speak on individual motions that do come forward, and then reserve the right to speak to the clause as well. I hope that Council would acquiesce to that.

Mr. Speaker: First time councillors on his or her feet to speak to this clause, will be soon to be speaking to the clause and any motions forward at that time. Any motions that might come afterward, of course would allow the people to speak again to that specific motion.

Another particular problem we have here is, Councillor Lazarenko has brought forward what is a third amendment to the clause. By our own procedure by-law, we're only allowed to accept two amendments to any given clause at one time. Although it is past practice on budget to allow considerably more than two amendments. Will someone move suspension of the rules so that we could…The Mayor's moved suspension of the rules to allow Council to consider more than two amendments to the clause before us at one time. All in favour? Contrary? Carried.

Councillor Angus: Mr. Speaker just on the point of discussion to be faced with a number of different motions, four or five shall we say for example, and being forced to make comments on all those in the limited 8 minutes that we have, causes me to want to speak first get it out of the way so I'd be able to jump up again as motions flow through. I'm not sure that there shouldn't be some special opportunity perhaps a limited time of 5 minutes to speak just to the amendments and then the regular 8 minutes to the clause. I put that as a suggestion.

Mr. Speaker: While I personally feel 8 minutes is more than sufficient to deal with anything before us, your point is well taken.

We have a procedure to do that, and it is called committee of the whole. If someone wants to move we go into committee of the whole, of course this body will entertain that motion. Councillor Steek.

Councillor Steek: I would like to make that motion that we go into committee of the whole. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: All in favour? Contrary? Recorded vote please.

A RECORDED VOTE was taken the result being as follows:

Yeas

Councillors Angus, De Smedt, Lubosch, Smith, Steek, Wyatt.

Nays

His Worship Mayor Murray, Councillors Eadie, Clement, Gerbasi, Pagtakhan, Steeves, Thomas, Lazarenko, Mr. Speaker Councillor O'Shaughnessy.

City Clerk: The vote Mr. Speaker, Yeas 6, Nays 9.

Mr. Speaker: Motion is defeated.

We do have Motion No. 3 before us, moved by Councillor Lazarenko. The floor would be yours next to introduce your motion.

Motion No. 3
Moved by Councillor Lazarenko,
Seconded by Councillor Wyatt,

THAT Recommendation No. 9 be deleted as it does not relate to the current budget.

Councillor Lazarenko: Thank you. My motion is a very short one. Recommendation No. 9, I'm asking that it be deleted as it does not relate to the current budget. I'll tell you the reason why.

We're getting ourselves into massive confusion. As I had voted against going into the committee as a whole, we have past practice that we get confused on the end. We debate and debate issues. Then we find out that we're back to square one.

Mr. Speaker, on this clause that's before us and Item No. 9 actually does not belong in here. We're talking about a process that is to take place for the year 2005. Directions are being given to the Administration from this council. We're dealing with the budget process here today, a budget we have to approve.

To have this in place, causes confusion. It's disappointing, very disappointing Mr. Speaker to have this put on here to talk about the issue of user fees for garbage pickup.

You know what happened before, the citizens of Winnipeg rejected this completely. Why go back into this? You have to have a format, you have to have a business plan in place that is going to give you some reason why we should be going into user fees.

When they talk about the issue of garbage that's going out to the landfill site and find out we've got garbage coming from five different municipalities because we're short of garbage. We lost too much revenue because of the stupidity that we're going high with our tipping fees from $40 went down to $22.50 for the commercial. We were tipping ourselves out of business.

To introduce something like this that's caused massive confusion the last time, to put this back on here again, no way. This is wrong Mr. Speaker. This does not belong in here. This would have to come through the process through the Public Works Committee, to the Executive Policy Committee and then proceed. But to have council decide on something that does not fall within their mandate when you're talking about the budget process that we're dealing here with today. We don't have anything.

We don't know what the cost would be, what we'll be getting in revenue. How could you have this included in this budget. To slip this in-between there.

Mr. Speaker, I have been fighting this thing time and time again. I will not cease until we get off this high horse of no common sense.
Last week I went to the landfill site Mr. Speaker. I had a false tip. Harry should have know better. After all these years to take something by the wayside, to go to

the dump because there was something like five semi trailer loads of recyclables were dumped at the landfill site. I went there one of the reporters came with me. I was chased by the foreman, I was chased by the manager of the Brady Landfill Site. I don't know why they were so protective like a hornet's nest. You disturb it. I had come to find that there was no such thing. I got taken. Big time. I tell you it was fun. I had my bloody shoes so dirty it took me a week to wash them, I had my car so full of mud. The area that I went into, it seems to be funny but I mean this was not funny. I was so furious that I would have screamed but I didn't. Even some of the reporters were laughing at this. These are the things that happen.

Why did this happen? I don't know. Is this maybe a game plan being played because we want to introduce the user fees to such a point as to say, there is too much garbage going into the landfill site? If that's the case, give me a reason why. With this No. 9 does not give this explanation why are we getting garbage from all the other municipalities. It doesn't make no damn sense at all.

When you are dealing with something to say, this is what we want to do because the user fee people accept this, they have to pay per bag. Winnipeg is not ready for that Mr. Speaker, 100 years or so we've had the garbage pick up by the City.

Is this a method that is being used now maybe to privatize the remaining garbage that the City of Winnipeg picks up as city-owned like with the autobins? Is this a move to go into that direction to start going with the user fees? The Administration Mr. Speaker will be faced with a problem. How are they going to be introducing this? Are they going to go to the community? I have already been told by some people that have about 7,000 autobins that they will march on City Hall so strong because it is environmentally safe. When you have user fees to be introduced, how will the so called g-man or g-person be involved going to search a bag of garbage, to search through there like what they did in Kenora. Even now we have our city employees and I'm sure the private sector is doing the same thing, there's a fear amongst garbage people that pick up the bags, they don't know what's in there. There could be a needle, it could be a needle that just got HIV. It's a serious health problem that they have, a concern. They have to wear special kind of mitts. Are you going to have people climbing into the bins to see whose garbage is there? What if somebody picks up a bag from somewhere else and hauls it over and dumps it somewhere else to play a game. That person is going to be charged. Under what enforcement under our legal system the laws, can we introduce to find someone because the garbage bag does not belong or prove that it belongs to that person.

These are the things that have to be straightened out. These are the things that should be dealt with in such a way, we should have seminars Mr. Speaker to deal with user fees, any proposal that is coming for cost recovery, we should have seminars that we deal with the Administration, we deal with our legal services, we get information from other cities but not to come back on this again, back on the road of confusion like we did the last time, pounced on user fees, we're going to do this, and if not we will take the bins away. Well do it. I challenge anybody, do it. Remove those bins after we paid about $10 million capital to buy the equipment, to buy the bins. One councillor had said, well we'll give the bins or sell the bins to the apartment block users. They've got their own now. Well we'll sell it to another city that will be using the bins because they'll be going into that system. Doesn't make any sense at all Mr. Speaker.

I've asked council and I've said this at the Public Works Committee, let's take a different approach. Let's take an approach. We've been going for a zero tax increase in the City of Winnipeg. But boy wait until the chickens come home to roost. In about another five years you'll see what will happen when we'll be faced maybe with a 10% increase in taxes because we'll be put into such a crunch. I've gone along with this. I've said this to the Mayor, if you present a budget, Mr.

Speaker I have to thank Annitta Stenning, the Administration for their efforts, their research for finding additional monies to help us in the concern that some councillors had especially I was one with the boulevard maintenance. I have to thank Annitta Stenning, the Administration. Also Mr. Speaker, I have to thank the Executive Policy Committee especially Councillor Bill Clement, Chair of Fiscal Issues. Bill was very knowledgeable on this and he had provided me with a lot of concerns that I had. Bill was not one I cannot talk to you or to say he did. I am pleased with that.

I want to support this budget today Mr. Speaker. On clause No. 9, there are some other amendments that are here but clause No. 9 is a key issue that I'm asking Council to delete this for today's budget debate, delete that and that should be going into the proper format into the Standing Committee of Public Works, and then onto the Executive Policy Committee and then to the Administration to consult and prepare a report or whatever is required. This in itself is not giving any directions at all. Just to take a look to have a revenue neutral basis that is with corresponding reduction in property taxes. That's all it tells you, it tells you nothing. The key is to introduce. Once the Administration is given this mandate they will proceed to come with a report to charge $1.00 or $1.50 or $2 a bag because they'll have no alternative, they have to come back with that. They will not come back and say, we're recommending that there be no fees. They can't do it, because council already has given them the direction here today, if this motion goes through, Item No. 9. It says, on a full cost recovery.

The question Mr. Speaker I've said before, does this mean privatization? Does it mean more user fees and gradually it will have to be privatized because the City will not be in that business anymore? These are the issues that are so crucial, so important. We had unions that appeared as a delegation before EPC, CUPE appeared also had a concern about user fees. This in itself is in the wrong place Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you. There being no further amendments, I'll start a speakers list. Councillor De Smedt followed by Councillors Smith and Angus.

Councillor De Smedt: Thank you Mr. Speaker. Sort of caught out by the wicked principles of our organizational by-law here. I would have thought we could have gone into committee of the whole today to really discuss the issues one by one and be able to respond to each other. It is regrettable that we choose not to do that. That's part of the frustration that many of us have here with the council proceedings. Every council meeting really should go into a committee of the whole. I don't think we would abuse that privilege, I think it would introduce a measure of fairness.

Having said that, some of the motions may appear to be introducing mischief or the amendments that are being introduced, and I hope that is not taken in that particular light. I will speak in favour of the motion that Councillor Wyatt has introduced, the amendment to put more money into wading pools.

We all know if we have a great summer which we're going to have, that come the middle of August we are going to extend the wading pool hours, we know that. I don't know why we play this little tango year after year of under funding that particular budget line knowing full well if the year is right that we'll fund it. Should it be $300,000 or $87,000 as for last year, that is an interesting issue, and I would have expected that the Committee on Protection and Community Services would have articulated that discussion point, and made some decisions and recommendations accordingly. It's disappointing to me to find out that the scripting of this whole budget takes into account these notions that we will expect to fund it anyway, and it goes on and on in other areas.

Now that I do have to talk about the whole budget as a result of our particular organizational procedures let me go in sequence to what I think this budget is all about.

I do compliment the Mayor and the Administration for bringing in a zero based budget. In this particular case we know what the consumer our taxpayers saying out there, no new taxes. The Province has heard that. On the other hand, where ought the money to be going in a matter of priority, and it ought to be towards infrastructure. Throughout the period of last fall from September right through to January, what was the issue, the new deal, the infrastructure is collapsing and we have to do something about it. We continue to undermine our investment in the infrastructure. I acknowledge that we've gone from some $43 million up to $56 million and we're going to end up with $61 million on internal financing which has been a great process by the Administration to take accounting principles in mind and to invest in our future, reduce the debt. On the other hand, we had the opportunity this year to continue on that process. We've reduced $4.4 million from the capital budget as it's contained in the clause ahead of you. The fact of the matter is, it seems most of those items we could have probably done without anyway. There are other major infrastructure issues that we can deal with it and the rehabilitation of streets, and the Mayor has acknowledged that.

My question is, have we done enough to extricate all the potential overhead that are within the various departments.

There was discussion informally amongst ourselves, but it never went anywhere. Can we look at the travel and education budget? Can we look at what contingencies are really there? Can we look at the consultant fees? And extricate more money out of this budget for this particular year until we get into the newer deal year which is suppose to be in '05, in which we hope we can get some contributions from two other levels of government to help us with our infrastructure deficit. No we didn't do that. We continued to script a little bit here and a little bit there.

Is it a good budget? Not a bad budget. Am I going to support it? No because I don't think frankly we've gone far enough. I think we could have extricated more savings and put it into infrastructure items.

As I look through what has happened during the process of January through to last week, the mandate of EPC is to bring forth a budget. They did that. In fact, they really had a final budget presented to us when we went into informal session to discuss the matters that we're facing this year the challenges for '04 and potentially for '05 and '06.

There were no considerations taken by other members of Council around how we could make some adjustments at that time. They continued on with a script. And the script carried on into the tango of the EPC hearing delegations last week. Lo and behold, there was some important issues that came forward. We had to consider them. Lo and behold through the magic of our administration, and I commend them for that, they generate some more revenue. I'm told that a particular recommendation on adjusting the charges in the reserve account in which we can I think if I can use the proper terminology, making an adjustment to the investment management fee policy on reserve accounts of which the taxpayers have already paid into reserve accounts with the knowledge that we want to build them up for a specific reason, we're now going to tap into them. To the tune of probably half a million dollars. Magically that appeared. I don't recall us discussing that at all during the seminars, that we were going to have more money available so we can give advice to our colleagues on EPC and the Mayor of where we would go. Lo and behold through the creativity of one of the financial staff, we can increase the penalty on tax arrears. That just didn't happen last week. That's been around for awhile. We didn't hear anything about it.

In fact, that probably was going to be planned for '05 and '06. My suggestion is, it would have been nice for us to have known that we had a little bit more elasticity there, and that we could have had some discussions on where we would like to see the money go.

The irony of this is, it's been scripted folks. It was scripted to the point where when we get delegations that we can appear to hear and be sensitive to the issues that were presented to us in getting some more money for TBO, a little bit more money for libraries. Some for museums. Lo and behold a delegation from the St. Boniface Museum and I have nothing against the St. Boniface Museum, they do wonderful work over there, that they needed more money. You know, that particular account had been covered off anyway for years. It just happened to be nice to have a delegation to get attention to this matter, and then we'll find it creatively through the increasing tax in arrears on tax accounts.

I call this a scripted budget. It would really have been nice if 16 of us could have sat around and had the opportunity know where the extra funding would have come from. In fact maybe the penalty on tax arrears should go up to 2.25%. Maybe we should have generated $1.8 million. Where is the report that tells us what the sensibility of this is, and I'm sure it's right. We've been told on the margins here that Calgary has a 7% initial penalty fee on tax arrears. Of course we have to be careful because you don't want to upset your capture rate. We already have a 96% compliance stream on tax arrears, so if you drive it up too high maybe we upset that to some degree, and we won't get the revenue. An interesting little game.

In any event, I guess what I'm trying to say is, that we have had some opportunity to get more money. We didn't know anything about it. We should have had an opportunity to generate more savings from within the existing budget.

I can't support recommendation No. 6, that the full benefit of the GST go to the tax supported budget. We've talked about this in our seminar. That money should go towards infrastructure. The Federal Government shouldn't be giving this largess to us and say, oh put it into your operating account. Sure I can maybe wordsmith that some of this is going in our cash capital budget but the fact of the matter is, we've reduced our capital budget. If we get some largess, we should be putting it back into the capital budget, not for new projects, but for what we expected to spend it on. That's what's wrong.

Moreover, part of that GST rebate, $2 million of that comes from the Water and Waste Department. We're taxing the taxpayer on their water and sewer rates and redirecting it to the operating account to stay with the utility. That's what's wrong with this particular item.

I can't support No. 9. I'm in favour of Councillor Lazarenko. We have not yet made a decision to go to full cost recovery on a waste pick up system. We're going to enter discussions with the Province for single sustaining assessment authority, that's fine, I'd like to know how much it's going to cost the taxpayer before we get there.

These items, nine, ten and eleven do not have to be in this particular budget today. They should have been left out. EPC has the authority to go on anyway and ask the Administration for certain reports. I'm confused why we need to have these particular items here today.

And the last important item Mr. Speaker as I sit down is, the Mayor and EPC have to take a leadership role to challenge the Province on paramedic funding. This is not a shared service item, it's a core service responsibility of health care. Secondly, the school taxes, the enemy Mr. Mayor, we have room for taxation. It's the school tax, don't we get it, let's get rid of it. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you. Councillor Smith has asked to be stood down. Councillor Angus.

Councillor Angus: Thank you Mr. Speaker. I'm disappointed that Council would not allow some leeway to separate some of the motions to allow some brief discussion on them. I think that the Secretariat Committee should look at that procedure for special occasions of this nature. We don't necessarily have to go into the arguing back and forth as a committee of a whole. I feel that taking all my eight minutes to argue three motions

and the complications of the budget is a little onerous for some people, not necessarily for me.

Mr. Speaker, on the motion that is put forward by Councillor Wyatt, I can't support it, but I'm sympathetic to what he is suggesting. I suggested to Executive Policy Committee through the Standing Committee that they establish a sinking fund or a trust fund if you like similar to what we have for snow reserves. That you take $25,000, $35,000, $50,000 of whatever it happens to be Mr. Speaker and put it into a pot that the Administration can use if in fact it's sunnier for longer days than they anticipated. If it rains for a whole bunch of days then don't take that money and scoop it off for some sort of a block party or some sort of a trip somewhere, put it into this sinking fund and let the Administration manage it as they go through. Now the only time you can set up these sinking funds is at budget time. Once again next year we're going to have to be looking at that.

Arbitrarily saying $300,000 to keep those pools open is maybe a good thing maybe not a good thing. I can't support it this time. I'd like EPC to take some leadership and direct that.

I wanted on the St. Boniface Museum issue, and I don't see anything in the budget that says look, let's put aside some money and let's ask those people to get together in an association and figure out a formula that would help us fund these things at a reasonable level. Let them paint their own picture with their own canvass, and their own set of paints. We all know they need money. Arbitrarily if somebody stands up and argues loud enough then the St. Boniface Museum happens to get $60,000 or $70,000, good cause. Transcona happens to get $30,000. What about Harry's and what about Jae's and what about other museums that are out there. There needs to be a policy Mr. Speaker that suggests how we're going to address these things.

I agree with my friend Councillor De Smedt, that we are not making the right arguments here on this particular budget. We are not arguing sufficiently or strongly enough against the Province. We should be cutting some of these programs that they are not funding, that they are offloading on us. The Police as an example, they stand up and take a huge amount of credit on a regular basis for funding 40 police officers. They give us $2 million. They're really only funding about 18 police officers because with inflation the cost of having those police officers is well in excess of $3 million. There's no acknowledgement or notification in here. We are and we've just got into a new agreement of funding the ambulance service, and that's fine. I appreciate that it's a giant stride forward from what we have done in the past.

Mr. Speaker, the property taxpayers should not be subsidizing the health care system through the Province of Manitoba in order to deliver a service of social nature of that type. We should be saying, simply no to that particular thing. Now that's going to cost us a bundle of money. If you want to find some money, do it. It's there, it's all right there Mr. Speaker.

I agree with the GST sleight of hand. Mr. Speaker, I have no idea how this council can with any creditability stand up go to the general public and say, trust me, give me a new deal, give me dedicated revenues and I promise you I will put them into this particular thing. If it's going to be a liquor tax, you're going to put it into police services. Good for you. If it's going to be a hotel tax you're going to put it into tourism. Good for you. And if it's going to be the GST and you want to put it into infrastructure, well why aren't you doing it. Why aren't you doing it? The very first test that we've got in this council we have caved and buckled into saying, gosh. Now what if the Feds had not come through? Would we be standing here saying, there is a 2% increase? My buddy here will be, and he did a good job, and always has Mr. Speaker, I have no qualms about any of the work that EPC does.

The facts are, if the Federal Government had said, wait until the budget, we wouldn't even have known until today what was going to be there. Would we be dealing a $7 million increase onto the

property taxpayer? I doubt it Mr. Speaker, we would have found it.

What troubles me Mr. Speaker is that the opposition in this chamber is right. EPC sits and holds a million dollars in their pockets. Well if we had a million dollars, how on earth are we going to determine where's the best place to invest that. When do we get a chance to go back and say to councillors, look councillors trim your own fat a little bit, cut into your particular ward communication allowance for example, groan groan, hearsay. Pots on Councillor Angus for even suggesting that.

Mr. Speaker, year after year after year, we go to the Administration and we say, tighten your belts, give up something so that we can look good to the general public, and we never ever go back to ourselves and say, what can we give up. We very very seldom do that Mr. Speaker.

When I look at the deteriorating aspects of this city, the absolute disappointment that I feel as to the lack of positive progressive step towards infrastructure which I was promised over and over again that this was going to be the top priority of this city, we were going to be delivering on infrastructure Mr. Speaker. That has not come forward and not happened. We have again sort of cut back in all sorts of areas. I know that we're doing the best we can. I understand that. My people are starting to say to me, wait a minute, this is gone beyond ridiculous Mr. Speaker. They're saying to me, Councillor Angus what is going on with our streets? They are in the worst shape we have ever seen. The boulevards are in the worst shape we have ever seen. The trees are growing out of control. You cannot spend money Mr. Speaker to maintain the quality of life.

You want to know why people don't want to move to Winnipeg, don't want to live here, it's not because we don't have an exciting downtown, it's because we have a city that's going to crud. We're afraid to reinvest in it. You cannot afford to not reinvest into items that are important to the quality of life. You simply have got to do it Mr. Speaker or otherwise you're going to end up as a ghost town. If you go to other communities they are spending the money, they are making the investments, they are improving the quality of life Mr. Speaker in a judicious fiscally responsible forward progressive plan. They are not bowing to the mantra of hold the line on property taxes which by itself is an absolute sleight of hand. As Councillor De Smedt says, we get $7 million back from the Federal Government, it should be going part of it anyway from the water utility should be going to reduce those water, or going from the money that's going to clean up the river or some dedicated thing of that nature from that utility. But to scoop it into the great ubiquitous of the general funding for the City of Winnipeg is an absolute betrayal of the difficulties we're having with infrastructure.

Nobody here has the magic answer of course, and we've got to sort of put more pressure on the Province and I hope that EPC is going to do that. I don't see any action plans in this particular budget that are going to help us drive that particular stake along.

Mr. Speaker, in the budget as a whole I'm not going to be supporting it principally because of clause six. I am going to ask that the clauses be divided on the particular motion by EPC so that we can independently vote on them. Some of the things in there are absolutely necessary and should continue on. The school board issue is one but it's out of our jurisdiction Mr. Speaker, we can't handle it. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you. Councillor Gerbasi.

Councillor Gerbasi: Thank you Mr. Speaker. According to my signature analysis in the Free Press, I am influenced by emotional appeals. But even so Councillor Wyatt didn't quite get to me today with his talk about the wading pools. In fact I think my blood sugar has just gone up a little bit.
The fact is, we're already there. Council already wants to keep wading pools open. I'm just getting tired of these speeches as if only the member from Transcona cares

about these things. That's my opening thought.

We are certainly looking at the wading pool funding mechanism that Councillor Angus has suggested at the Standing Committee which is why I keep getting berated that I'm not using the Standing Committee for policy, that's what we're doing. That's why it wasn't added into the budget is that we're going to be doing it there.

If we could find a way to add it in that would be great because we're already there and the wading pools are going to be open. My point is really, is that this is really a non issue. I don't think it's really necessary to support that motion. I'm quite confident we'll be setting up a mechanism to deal with this well before the summer. I certainly hope that that's where this goes, and that's the job of the Standing Committee and their members to see that that happens.

Safety continues to be a priority for our city and over the years in the last five years we've shifted a lot of resources that we do have, the limited resources we do have to those areas which makes it hard, and the pressure continues on some other areas which is why we've added in some things such as libraries, we've added a bit more to mosquitoes. I think most of council is quite supportive of that and that's what we've heard and listened to in this process.

The paramedic issue I think we've done the right thing. We identified in the budget process that there was a clear shortage in the advanced life support area. We've responded to that. I would like to thank the Province for considering supporting us with the 50/50 funding agreement on that.

As Councillor Angus said, it is much better than what we've had before our agreement with the Province on ambulance. We keep asking for agreements that grow as the costs grow, and that's what this agreement does. That's very significant for us. We don't have that kind of agreement in a number of other areas such as transit, that's what we were hoping for, and that's what we're asking for so when we do get what we ask for from the Province I think we owe them the respect of appreciating it. Although there are certainly some valid points raised that we could always use more.

The mosquito larviciding efforts last year were a huge success. The public perception that was created by the concern about that the draft budget, that we were somehow reducing that effort, it wasn't true, but that public perception was raised. I think we've clearly addressed that by adding even an additional $100,000 because there was clearly a commitment from this council to continue the successful larviciding efforts that we had last year.

In terms of the garbage issue. If you look at the wording of the clause it's preliminary, it's going to be looked at for next year. It's going to direct the staff to consider it. I don't think you can be anymore indecisive. There'll be plenty of opportunity for this council to continue to be completely indecisive when it comes to user pay garbage. I don't think anyone needs to be concerned if that clause is left in there.

I think the talk of this process being scripted, I think there were things in here that were clearly not scripted. I think the paramedics sitting in the audience today probably don't feel they've witnessed something scripted. I think they probably feel somewhat empowered that they came forward to us with their concerns and they were heard.

Frankly I think it's been a good process and a pretty good public process. It is certainly far from perfect and it's never what we want it to be. I'm pretty comfortable that we've listened, we've made a number of changes concerns of councillors such as boulevard maintenance and so on that are a concern to all of us in our areas are extremely important.

In terms of the other motions. The museums I wanted to touch on. I prefer to stick to what EPC recommends on the museums because St. Boniface really has to have that $80,000 that we put in there I

believe because of their particular unique situation. They are a unique museum and all museums aren't cookie cutter museums and they have different needs and there's reasons why we went with that, that's my view on that. We do need a policy on museums. We need to do things differently because right now we do do it in a parochial kind of way where it's referred to as Councillor Wyatt's museum or Councillor Eadie's museum, well it's not, it's not belonging to the area councillor. These are museums that are part of our whole city. We're not really dealing with it that way. We do need to do things differently with museums, Right now we have to finish this budget and we have to deal with the problems that are facing us immediately.

I'd like to thank councillors for their participation. We did have a lot of extra informal sessions and time that we spent on this budget. I know personally I worked pretty hard on this budget, I don't think it's always been appreciated. We've had a lot of time. I believe we've had about 10 hours of discussion on the Standing Policy Committee on this budget. I think that's good. I think we had lots of opportunity to ask whatever questions people had, and to have the input that people want. I think that's fair. I think we should acknowledge those kinds of things when we do those things. I think we should acknowledge that we are dealing with a situation where we don't have enough money as usual and we have to make some tough decisions. I think we've made some pretty good decisions. I'm comfortable in supporting this budget. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you. Councillor Steeves.

Councillor Steeves: Thank you Mr. Speaker. I will speak first to the motions that have been tabled, Motions No. 1, 2 and 3. I don't plan on supporting any of the motions. I'll speak to them briefly in turn.

With respect to the wading pools in Councillor Wyatt's motion, I completely concur with the idea that wading pools should be kept open. We managed to muddle through it on a yearly basis. Councillor Angus may be exactly correct in that there might be a better way to do this. As Chair of Public Works I will do what I can to undertake to try and solidify this process so that we don't keep going through this on a year to year to year basis.

It is a source of some frustration. I do agree with Councillor Wyatt when he says, there are a lot of people in our communities that are worried about the idea that we would be closing some of these facilities. Because he's quite correct when he says there are members of our community who do not have the luxury of going to lakes, going to beaches to spend the day. These are more important things than we sometimes think. It's correct I think that we do need a better way to deal with this. I don't know if this is necessarily the motion to do it.

With respect to the second motion. I'm not exactly sure what's behind this one. I received no background at all. If consultation and discussion is one of the things that we're talking about in the context of the Executive Policy Committee, I guess it's probably fair to shoot back with where was the consultation discussion on this one. Not only have I not been approached about this particular issue, the motion itself offers no background as to why, what, wherefore, or what's behind this motion. I'm not exactly sure why I would be supporting that with all comments aside.

I was disappointed in my good good friend Councillor Lazarenko's discussion with respect to recommendation No. 9 being deleted from the report. I think we're going to have to be dealing with the issue of our solid waste collection in one way or another. I don't think it's unreasonable to be asking our administration to come forward with a report. I don't know that we have the perfect garbage collection system right now. I think it's probably feasible that we would look at a review of that system to see if we're doing everything perfectly. And if maybe just maybe there might be a way of improving the current system. I

would suggest that there's probably several ways that we could improve the current system.

I have to confess to a little bit of personal disappointment when I hear one of my colleagues on council stand up and say, "we're short of garbage". That is not the head space that we should be in as a city council, and I'd look for us to be trying to go the other way.

It's become pretty clear Mr. Speaker that this is a watershed budget. I think some of the frustration you've been seeing around the table today, has been due to the fact that I think perhaps some of us around the table thought we might have a few more items on the table in terms of revenue sources, in terms of where we might be going to discuss this morning. I guess that's not going to happen. This budget is going to be passed sort on the old rules. I guess personally I'm hoping that for next time we're going to be having some new rules and maybe some new parameters in which to pass our next budget.

There has been some real benefits I think accomplished over the course of the past several years, and I can't take any credit for that, or I can only take some of the credit for that as I have not been on Council for the past seven years. I would like to commend Council again as I do every year for the leadership and the guidance that they've provided over the course of the past six or seven years in terms of getting a reign on the property taxes. I was one of the citizens of this city who felt at the time at least, that property taxes were getting out of hand. I thought that Winnipeggers were being taxed too highly and I thought it was becoming a bit of a problem. When Councillor Angus says potentially quite rightly, that people are concerned about the City of Winnipeg and the amount of service that we're providing, perhaps that is entirely correct, but I think if we were to turn the clock back I think we could probably say that the converse was happening, people felt that they were over taxed.

I have to say, that as I attended many of the new deal meetings, there were certainly people saying that we have to increase services, and we should maybe increase services. There was no shortage of people who are continuing to suggest that we need more efficiencies. We should be doing more and more and more efficiently.

I don't know that I necessarily agree with everything that was said, but there's no doubt there does exist in the community some will to tighten our belts at least and to make sure we as an organization are doing some things more efficiently.

It should be said though I think the results of what we have tried to do over the course of the last few years have born some fruit. The philosophy of course is that, as we reduce the expenditures as a level of government that should free up more resources for reinvestment in our community, that's a classic philosophy that exists and one that I think has tried to be followed by the City of Winnipeg over the course of the last several years.

I guess there's varying degrees of appreciation of that, and there might be some difference of opinion as to whether or not we've been successful of that.

It should be noted I guess, and as a citizen again of this community, there's been some really positive things that have been realized and they have to be mentioned, and I'm talking about things like the declining debt ratio that we face every year. That is improving, it's providing more revenue for us to spend every year. Our credit rating has gone up which I think all of us would agree is a good thing for this community.

The business community who has seemed very supportive over the course of the last several years with respect to our budgets, seems to be responding in kind. It's a bit anecdotal but to me it seems that the housing market in the City of Winnipeg has over the course of the last few years never been stronger. If you look again at the projects that exist in the community for some of the businesses to get involved in, things like

the Arena, the $130 million. Things like the Kenaston Underpass at over $40 million. The rapid transit corridor at a like amount. The Floodway which is going to come in at $250 million to $600 million. The Human Rights Museum at $350 million. Some of the bridges that have been constructed in the community at over $100 million. That's a lot of money that is going into our community for people to have a chance at. That's a lot of revenue for people to have a chance at. I think it's probably incumbent upon us to recognize it to a certain extent the process that this Council embarked on a few years ago has to at least a certain extent worked. If we've cut back our spending in order to free up some money for the community at-large, it would appear that it has to a certain extent worked.

That should probably be acknowledged. I guess like a lot of people have stated today, the route we're going down in terms of tax freeze and tax cuts is to a large extent probably not sustainable.

I look at my own committee on Public Works, some of the things that we're going through with transit where we can't seem to service to an adequate amount the people we need to service. It's getting worse, and we were always forced with fare increases.

The Waste Department is looking at efficiencies to try and accomplish the same thing. The Public Works Department, you've heard many discussions about boulevards and streets. We just can't seem to get there.

The Water Department of course is faced with capital expenditures that we can't even seem to come close to at this stage. Although we have some planning, we're going to have to really radically change things if we indeed hope to get there.

The question becomes, and I guess I would extend this invitation to my council colleagues, where do we go from here? What are we going to do? What is going to be our next step as a council, because we have some serious decisions to make. We've been talking a lot about infrastructure shortfalls and where we want to go from here. There seems to be at least to some degree around this table a consensus that infrastructure wise we are short. Infrastructure wise at council we have to do more. The question becomes, what are we going to do? What are we going to do as we go through?

Do people around this table agree that we have an infrastructure shortfall to a level of $180 million? If you don't agree with that, let us know. Tell us where you think the level is of infrastructure shortfall or tell us that you think there is no infrastructure shortfall. If you think there is an infrastructure shortfall, we should talk a little bit I guess as we go through the next budget process as to where that money is going to come from. If we agree as a council there's an infrastructure shortfall we should have a frank discussion about how we're going to fund that infrastructure shortfall. Does anybody here at this council table seriously think we're going to fund $180 million a year extra through property taxes? Does anyone here think that that's going to happen? If not, how are we going to do that? I don't say this Mr. Speaker abrasively or to affront anybody, but I would appreciate all of us getting together on this and providing some helpful suggestions.

We have the luxury of not being a party system here around City Council. People can come forward with their own ideas at any time and offer that sort of advice. Right now we're a little bit short of ideas and we're going to have to address this.

Finally Mr. Speaker, a message to our provincial government with respect to the school taxes. One thing we have heard not only at the council table, but through our citizens is that the school tax issue is causing a great deal of grief in our community. We are facing huge levels of school tax increases, and it has become a very very big problem. Personally, I do not blame the school boards. I would note that the Provincial Government does seem to be in position now where both opposition parties that exist in the Legislature have come forward publicly in the last two successive election campaigns and stated their willingness to

go with the route of removing the school tax from the property tax bill. That would be a positive move I would suggest.

I look forward to working with my colleagues to get the '05 and '06 budgets on the table as we move through this process. Thank you.

(Councillor Eadie in the Chair)

Mr. Acting Deputy Speaker: We've had another amendment tabled.

Motion No. 4
Moved by Councillor Angus,
Seconded by Councillor De Smedt

BE IT RESOLVED that Recommendation No. 9 be amended by removing the words "to be implemented in 2005" and substituting the phrase "be considered by Council for future implementation".

Councillor Angus did you wish to introduce the amendment?

Councillor Angus: Very briefly Mr. Speaker.

As everybody knows I've been through this particular battle, I am in the camp that thinks that we have to move to some sort of a user fee. The fact is, if we stand here right now and pass this and says that it's going to be implemented in 2005, we don't necessarily ever have to see it again. It will roll out without us knowing what the heck the program is or anything of that nature.

All this says, is bring back a report. Council will vote on it. If Harry wants to support it or make amendments he'll have the opportunity etc. That's the reason for it Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Acting Deputy Speaker: The amendment has been introduced.

Councillor O'Shaughnessy.

Councillor O'Shaughnessy: Thank you Mr. Speaker. Before I get started, might I be allowed to ask Councillor Angus if his amendment reads to be considered for future implementation or for possible future implementation?

Councillor Angus: I'll accept that as a friendly amendment Mr. Speaker. That was my intention. If Council says, don't do it, we're not going to do it.

Councillor O'Shaughnessy: Mr. Speaker if I might be allowed to ask a few questions as well as make a few observations.

First question is. We're into a multi year budgeting process, I don't recall having been told why the reason for clause one which is having the 2005 and 2006 current budgets referred back to committee and not brought before us. I don't know this. I would appreciate learning about it.

A question also on point number six, recommendation number six, that the full, are we talking about the full 7% GST rebate, or are we talking only about the new 3.5%? We were getting 3.5% of GST rebate since the GST was introduced. I didn't know that that 3.5% went into general revenue. I thought we budgeted that way and those monies stayed within the departments. This seems to say that the full 7% going to general revenue, would this mean we were taking a 3.5% that was budgeted differently by all departments, and now yanking it away from them? Or, has the 3.5% always gone into general revenue? This is millions of dollars and could have an effect. So I ask this question out of all ignorance and in all seriousness.

On number seven. This supposedly minute income which isn't listed telling us how much it is, will this income be listed against the departments to offset their expenditures so that we will reduce our subsidy in budgeting of this department? It doesn't say it in any way. I am maybe a little sceptical in my 30 years here, that's why I ask it.

I concur with Motion No. 4, although I hate amendments on the floor and on the fly. Number 4 because I've been true to this position since it first came up and

abhor the idea of buy the bag charges for refuse removal. I will support No. 4.

Number 3, to delete it I think would be wrong obviously. I think number 4 is a much better alternative than 3. The fact that the study is being publicly asked for by EPC rather than just ordered, I think is excellent.

I also will not be supporting Motion No. 2 because I don't know whether this is a better way to spend the money or not. I don't know that $60,000, $30,000 and $10,000 is better than the $80,000, $20,000 that was recommended by EPC. They studied it at least, and this is just laid before me on the floor of Council. Really not knowing which is better, I will stick with the EPC recommendation on that.

As for No. 1, I would really really really like to support this. I would like to have it ensured that our wading pools will stay open until Labour Day, or at least until the end of August.

It says street party budget. I think it's the festivals budget because we don't have a strict street party budget anymore. I think this $300,000 is partly going to fund the Juno's, so I've been led to believe. I really don't want to oppose this. But I would like the Mayor in summing up to assure me and all members of Council that our wading pools will be kept open through the end of August or better still through the Labour Day weekend so I can with clear conscience not support this amendment, to vote against the keeping open of the wading pools would be very very difficult. On the other hand, to blindly take the money and end up that we can't do our part to funding the Juno's would be silly. The simple way out would be if the Mayor could assure us that the pools are going to stay open and I would sincerely hope that this would happen.

To sum up, I would like to thank very much Executive Policy Committee for all the hard work they've done. I think they should indeed be commended. I know what it is to go through. They have balanced the budget without having to go deeper into the taxpayers pockets. We can argue all we want about the problem being really the way the Province of Manitoba finances schools, but that's small consolation to the person who has to dip into their pocket every June 30 to pay that total tax bill. I think we're being under the circumstances as responsible as we possibly can be, not cutting the general service levels to the citizens of Winnipeg, improving them in small ways as we can and still hopefully allowing them to live within their limited budgets without us using the excuse of blaming someone else to dig deeper on them.

I'd like to use quarter of this little bit of time I have left to go on with a personal bugaboo. It is budget related that I will be bringing a motion forward on at a later date. That is, that all additional revenues that come into departments during the year, simple things as the $1,600 for city legal costs that is in every development, every rezoning we do. And all other forms of revenues that all these charges go right into general revenue. That departments don't use any of these additional revenues to increase their expenses because they don't have to come back here. This is something that may sound trivial but it's not.

That no additional expenditures be aloud without council or some form of committee approval. That all under expenditures, everything that comes in under the budgeted purchase price, all those monies go directly into general revenue not be left within the department for any other purpose. That all overruns anything that comes in more than it was on the item, not the category, budgeted for, get council or at least some committee approval first. That there be no transfers allowed in the financial system in the City of Winnipeg between items without at least a committee or council approval. And transfers would be looked at by items not categories. There's a phenomenal amount of transfer that goes along in the City of Winnipeg. I'm not saying it's wrong, but for it to happen without direct political oversight or at least notification I think is wrong.

The items I'm talking about based on 30 years around here, are tens of millions of dollars a year. Just to notify Council this

will have a big budgeted effect which is the excuse I had for being able to mention it here, but I will bring forward a motion, not to implement this, but to have it studied in the very near future. Thank you.

Mr. Acting Deputy Speaker: Any further debate on the clause? Councillor Lazarenko on the main clause.

Councillor Lazarenko: Thank you Mr. Speaker. Speaking to the clause and to some of the amendments.

It just shows you on a motion that I moved, Item No. 9 to be deleted in its entirety. There's a motion now that's been presented Motion No. 4, implementation not to take place in 2004, but 2005, and be considered by Council for possible future implementation.

Council members are beginning to understand that this does not belong on the floor of council No. 9. My motion is for complete deletion. EPC does have the authority to tell the Administration to proceed, come in with a report whatever they feel, and they can do that.

Council in its wisdom on No. 9, this would be an immediate, it would not even have to come back to council, this would be for a report back, it does not say for it to come back to Council. Now it's saying here to be considered by Council on the amendment that Councillor Angus has moved.

Mr. Speaker, on the issue of the budget that's before us. I had asked the Mayor if he would be willing to withdraw No. 9, he'll get my support on the budget. I'm beginning to waiver whether I should or not, I can tell you, it seems like the vote will be made either 6 or 7 opposed to the budget proposal, as what I've heard some of the speeches being made. That may be wise to do. Send a message, loud and clear. Listen to those who are not on EPC. I'm hesitating whether I should do that or not. It's disappointing when you try and do something and you find that things are going smoothly and then all of a sudden a monkey wrench is thrown in there.

The recommended changes, number one, libraries, insect control has been introduced and it's there. Number two, the Public Works be increased as follows two cycles of boulevard maintenance. Last year I had made a threat that I was going to put on the Internet all the photos I've taken in the innercity boulevards, the grass is about two feet high, shopping carts where some of the City-owned lots were higher, the grass was higher than the carts themselves. I held back. I said I will do it again, now we're gone back to increase the two cycles on the boulevard maintenance.

The fire/paramedics. The one thing that I'm kind of disappointed but I understand I was talking to our Chief Administrative Officer, they said they can correct the Fire Department concerns that if need be they can. If they have the authority that they can go and address the issue. They asked for eight additional firefighter positions to be posted.

Police, also I was told that the police matter can be dealt with. We have a problem with the question of police. We have now the highest criminal element of incidents happening in Winnipeg. We have pot growing plants in suburban areas of the City of Winnipeg, not the innercity, but suburban areas. What was happening that $200,000 homes are growing marijuana plants. How can we just sit back and ignore the issue. We have the highest rate of prostitution, the criminal element, drugs, Hells Angels once they establish a chapter here in Winnipeg we're told by the Police, that we're all be faced with a criminal increase.

I was going by yesterday down McKenzie an area that was flourishing with prostitutes. Had a petition signed by people in the area that I presented to the Police 400 signatures. I saw yesterday Mr. Speaker a beautiful pickup truck brand new with an old fart in the truck could hardly drive, had a young 18 or 17 year old prostitute, he let her off from his vehicle and he went on home. I guess to see his wife and say I was out shopping. Mr. Speaker this is what the hell is happening in Winnipeg now. Not only

the younger element but you have old people who have been retired maybe for 20 years. Still has the urge to get some satisfaction. There's nothing wrong with that.

The one thing is how is this satisfaction being completed with and with whom.

(Councillor O'Shaughnessy in the Chair)

Mr. Speaker: Councillor Lazarenko I've stopped your clock. It's gone just about far enough, and I don't know how this is directly budget related, the City budget that is. Could you please keep it a little closer to the topic at hand.

Councillor Lazarenko: I said to receive some satisfaction I didn't specifically say what kind of satisfaction. I said, that person is going out. He's telling his wife he's gone out shopping. That was satisfactory to him.

Mr. Speaker, these are the issues that we're faced with. Calls that keep coming in to us, people want Winnipeg to change for the better.

I said before, when you are cutting down on the budget to have zero zero zero each and every year, all that will have to come home sooner or later. We will be faced with a dilemma. When Mayor Glen Murray decides to leave, whoever takes over may be faced with one king size headache. How do you remedy the problem like we're faced with the infrastructure work that we did not do for a number of years, that's what some of the administrators were telling us.

Mr. Speaker, on the garbage. Recyclables that I have been trying to voice my opinion, I've been trying to tell Council for a number of years now, we're losing our efforts of proper recycling in the City of Winnipeg. We have residue, over 3,000 metre tonnes goes to the landfill site. Recyclables that people had put out for recycling. That issue Mr. Speaker would have to be addressed to the satisfaction of the people are saying, why am I recycling when all of this is going down to the landfill site because some cases there's no demand like for paper and plastic, glass. Tons and tons of glass are going to the landfill site, why? When I spoke to the Environmental Department of the Province of Manitoba said, there's no need to put glass into the landfill site, it can be recycled. How is it they build up North. They had said they need 3,000 pounds of glass to make one house with energy efficient windows. Now it's all going to the landfill site. What the manager of the refuse department told me at Brady Landfill, they're using it to build roads at the dump. Roads made out of glass. God I don't see why, for who. For the trucks that will be driving there to haul more garbage.

The budget that's before us it will be interesting to see how are we going to deal with the amendments.

Councillor Angus' amendment, I will not be supporting, I'm sorry John. I can't support it because that would mean that I'd be waiving myself to even consider user fees for garbage pickup. That in itself I don't think Winnipeg is ready and we should not be. Quit fooling the unions and the employees of the City of Winnipeg because no doubt privatization is on the next agenda.

Autobins, when they were introduced back in 1992, introduced in 1990 rather and implemented in 1992. Autobins are the most efficient as far as the number of fuel is being burnt for picking up one vehicle will do what three trucks will be able to do presently. It's environmental friendly. There's no stray cats or dogs in the areas where the bins are now. Providing those bins Mr. Speaker that are in place now that the Administration I'm talking to the Administration now use enforcement on the illegal dumping that's coming into the autobins from people outside of the areas where the bins are implemented. We've caught people coming in from outside from suburban areas coming even as far as outside of the City of Winnipeg because we were in the business of picking up every piece of garbage, chesterfields, chairs, and broken tables, cupboards, we were hauling it out to the landfill site for nothing. We were doing them a favour. We were classed

as the City of Winnipeg that will take garbage from outside. This is why the program is not working the way that it should Mr. Speaker.

I've said this before when the autobins were implemented, we have a by-law that's in place, the Solid Waste By-law that addresses the issue of autobins. No enforcement is being used. No person is being charged from the beginning they worked. All of a sudden it's not. Is this a trend to say the people should hate autobins? We don't want the autobins? So we agree with what you want to do? Implement the user fees and slowly fade out the autobins? Is this what the direction that the Administration is being told to go into so that the general public will get fed up and frustrated with the way the system of garbage pickup is being done in Winnipeg.

They have this implemented in Kenora user fees, they found that they had 3,000 metric tonnes of garbage missing in one year. They wanted to know what happened. It was all over the country side.

Mr. Speaker: Councillor Angus you have a fifth amendment. Would you plead you fifth please.

Motion No. 5
Moved by Councillor Angus,
Seconded by Councillor Steek,

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Recommendation No. 6 be amended by adding to the end of the recommendation "and that the entire amount of the GST rebate be identified on an annual basis and reported to Council at budget time".

Councillor Angus: Thank you Mr. Speaker. It would have been a lot easier for you to give me three or four minutes to speak on the amendments that concern separate from the clause.

Mr. Speaker: I will make sure that you stick directly to topic.

Councillor Angus: I will. What this particular motion does, it simply says listen, let's take the amount of money we're getting in GST and record how much is coming in.

Mr. Speaker, this is directly in relation to a number of items that the City has undertaken in terms of trying to get money for their budgets that are sometimes speculative, speculative revenue streams. The police photo radar as an example is one that we say, we're going to balance our budget on the backs of all the money that's coming in from photo radar then in fact it's only half of that.

We have this tax penalty that's going to raise us a million dollars and it's good thinking, but if everybody pays their taxes on time Mr. Speaker, that becomes a shrinking revenue.

What I'd like to do is specifically identify the GST money that comes so that next year at Council or the year after future councils, we'll be able to say wait a minute, shouldn't this money be dedicated to a specific service core service that is required. That's the intent Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: I know there are other people wishing to speak but I have none listed. Are there any other speakers? Councillor Lubosch.

Councillor Lubosch: Thank you Mr. Speaker. It's unfortunate that a number of us around here didn't see fit enough to give this meeting our full attention and to devote a few hours of our time to debate the fate of our city over the next year and how we're going to spend somewhere in the order of $693 million of the money we collected from them. I agree with Councillor Angus that we should have taken some time to debate the five motions and that number may grow by the time we're done, in addition to the five page script that we have in front of us.

Mr. Speaker, this special council meeting is a fait accompli. It's been well rehearsed by the Mayor and EPC, and it will pass somewhere between eight or nine votes and fail by roughly six or seven against. There will be some more theatre

and some more posturing here today, but the outcome will be relatively the same. In the immortal words of Mick Jagger my colleague from Mynarski, will not get no satisfaction.

Mr. Speaker, there is no new investment in this budget. It's nothing but bailer twine and duck tape to hold the City together for another year while we press on to try and get the new deal from the other levels of government who are trickling crumbs off the tabletops in order to keep us from grumbling too loudly.

The first player in today's theatre talked about public transit and the importance of the rapid transit, and how that's going to save our city. I don't disagree that rapid transit is very important. But I think we have to be very careful when we talk about new resources going towards public transit. Sure it's to replace buses and to provide maintenance, that sounds sensible enough. And the Province is increasing their contribution by a generous $11,000 a year. What you didn't hear Mr. Speaker, and you have to read between the lines, or perhaps look at the lines that were provided by the Winnipeg Transit 2004 budget review on March 1. What you didn't read in those first lines Mr. Speaker, is that bus parts have increased dramatically by about $1.2 million in 2004. Our heritage transit bus replacement reserve provides that each bus is replaced on an 18 year cycle. Mr. Speaker, that means that most buses are on the road today are almost as old as my classic Volkswagen Jetta which is going to achieve its 20th birthday this year.

There's nothing innovative about that Mr. Speaker. Handi-transit demands are growing by leaps and bounds. Our city is becoming older and becoming more dependent. Yet we're unable to meet that demand. The additional requests for riser continue to put a strain on our additional resources on our existing resources.

What you also didn't hear Mr. Speaker, is where the additional transit funding for this maintenance and bus replacement and all the other ancillary cost of transit are coming from. It's coming courtesy of your transit users. It's their nickel. A five cent increase this year in January. Another five cent increase in January 2005 and 2006, for a total of $0.15, way out of step with inflation. Maybe it's competitive with Toronto, maybe it's competitive with Vancouver, but we aren't Toronto and we aren't Vancouver. Our needs are a little different than those cities. It will apply to both full and reduced fares Mr. Speaker.

This is not very innovative and not very creative, and all the while the rider ship plummets. I use that as only one example.

Now let's look at our five page $692,933,952.00 script. Five pages to determine the fate of the City over the next year and how we're going to spend the hard earned money that the Winnipeg ratepayers are generously providing us and trusting us with.

It's not all bad. But it's not all good. The new Chair of Public Works challenged us to determine whether or not there really is an infrastructure deficit of $180 million a year. Some say, our total infrastructure deficit is a billion in total. How the heck are we going to patch this with $300,000 a year in additional thin bituminous overlay?

The fire and paramedic increase of nearly half a million dollars. Well it's awfully important. Is it going to make the grade? No. The Chief is going to come back to you and he's going to tell you that he needs more. And putting the increases on the backs of the people who ride the ambulances, the people who need them is not going to solve our problem for us. That's not sustainable.

The tax penalty by-law, well that's really good, but that should have come to a council seminar so we could all have an opportunity to decide how an additional million dollars should be spent. Or perhaps as one of the other members said, maybe that should be even more money. Maybe there should be $2 million. We don't know because again the lines were rehearsed and they're being delivered today for the first time. Unfortunately there isn't even a report to accompany whether or not these charges

are in fact competitive. Maybe they're still too low.

Number six, the GST rebate debate. Absolutely we should have committed that to new infrastructure or the infrastructure that we're deferring. The infrastructure that we're deferring in clause five, the $4,092,000 million we could have covered that off. Mr. Mayor I give you the courtesy of the floor when you speak I appreciate the same.

Then Mr. Speaker there's the investment management policy for reserve funds. An innovative idea but no accompanying report and ultimately is it sound financial management? I hope so, but from this five page script Mr. Speaker, I guess if I support it I'll have to take it on faith.

Then there's number nine. This script Mr. Speaker is new initiatives and old baggage. This debate unless there's something marketedly different about user pay garbage, the last time it was for environmental reasons, now it's a revenue neutral way to look at innovatively picking up solid waste and taking it to the dump.

Mr. Speaker without an accompanying report without a debate, this looks like more of the same old same old. I can't support it on that basis.

The broken school tax promises that the Province has led us to believe will be solved in their next mandate. Beats me why we do their work. Perhaps the only single positive initiative in this entire document is that we continue to hammer away at those folks on Broadway and get them to do the work that they've been offloading onto us for many many years.

Mr. Speaker, I'm very concerned when we cut the debate short. I'm not getting anymore time than I deserve. You used your time up Councillor Steeves.

The fact is, we will pass this today with repeatedly, and we will go back to our offices and we will continue to feel the calls from those folks who notice that things are not the same as they may have been a year or two ago. Some people will be satisfied. But for the most part I think we all know in our hearts that people don't move to Winnipeg because they make careful analysis of the taxes and careful analysis of the investment management fees and those sorts of things, they move to our city because of the impression that it makes. And the impression that it leaves. I'm very very concerned Mr. Speaker that our city is no longer making the positive impression that it was ten years ago or even five years ago.

For that reason reluctantly, I can't pass this omnibus motion. I may be able to pass parts of it if somebody's prepared to break it out into separate clauses. There are some things in here that may deserve consideration. Unfortunately this entire package is not acceptable.

As for the five motions or now there are six motions that have been tabled, one is a possibility, two is a no, three is okay, four is okay, five is okay and I haven't had the opportunity to read six.

With that I'll close my remarks Mr. Speaker. I'll say again, regretfully that we really should have given ourselves more time to debate this matter and how we're going to spend the $693 million over the next year. I'm disappointed in this council. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: Councillor Wyatt has asked leave of Council to withdraw Motion No. 1 which requires consent of Council as it is in your purview, and to replace it with Motion No. 6. Is that agreed? Motion six cannot be put before council because it is the same subject matter as one until one is withdrawn. It is up to Council to allow one to be withdrawn.

Point of order Mr. Mayor.

(Point of Order)

Mayor Murray: Mr. Speaker, I don't even mind taking No. 6 as a friendly amendment because effectively in the budget that is already covered off.

Mr. Speaker: Will Council consent to the withdrawal of Motion No. 1 by its mover? Agreed.

Now he wishes to put before us Motion No. 6.

Mayor Murray: I'm prepared to accept Motion No. 6 as a friendly amendment. I think we've covered it off.

Mr. Speaker: I don't think you have that power Mr. Mayor. This would have a change, and all of EPC would have to agree to it and they're not meeting here to do.

Councillor Wyatt explain the difference only.

Motion No. 6
Moved by Councillor Wyatt,
Seconded by Councillor Lazarenko,

THAT the administration be directed to find alternative methods within the 2004 budget to fund Winnipeg's wading and outdoor pools to keep them open until the end of August.

Councillor Wyatt: I appreciate accepting it as a friendly amendment Your Worship and we'll have to vote on it and that's fine I appreciate that.

This is simply to ensure that we keep the funds there. If there's rainy days with the issue with regards to what Councillor Angus indicated is quite right, the sinking fund once established will be a source of revenue for wading pools. As it stands right now in the budget, wading pools in some cases are only budgeted up until the middle of August to the third week of August, and resources are not there. This will definitely address that concern and keep them open until the end of August. I appreciate the Mayor's support on that. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you. Are there any other speakers on the budget and amendments? Councillor Steek.

Councillor Steek: Thank you Mr. Speaker. A budget is always about priorities. The priority of the Mayor and EPC was clearly to bring forward a budget that had a zero increase relative to municipal portion for the citizens of Winnipeg, and they have realized that.

Tomorrow I'll be bringing forward a motion at Council relative to the process the way we conduct ourselves during the budgetary process.

The Mayor and EPC under the Charter are clearly charged with delivering the budget, we all know and respect that. When the document was dropped on the 14th though, it was a fait accompli basically. We should from a budgetary process point of view have the opportunity for all of Council to hear from the directors of their departments what their needs are. We have not had that as an opportunity. We have piecemeal things happen after the document has been dropped. Why is that important?

Well it's important for a number of reasons because of the fact that we want to hear first hand when somebody brings forward a request for additional personnel or additional funding in a department, why they warrant it. Right now in most instances you hear and see a slick slide presentation at a standing committee meeting but the document is already done. That's the motion that's coming tomorrow.

Let me speak to the clause just for a moment here. Interesting and fascinating clause really quite a patchwork event the way this zero budget was realized.

Clause five takes $4 million from infrastructure in the capital budget. Clause six moves in $7 million of GST money. I agree with Councillor Angus it was new found money, although it was put into this budget for the future we should know without equivocation what the amount is and have the opportunity to use it as a dedicated revenue stream.

Clause seven. This was fascinating. I wonder how many people around this table read this document and can speak to the intricacies of this clause or know what it means. I certainly was one who

couldn't. So I phoned the Administration and I got a report as to what it meant.

The fascinating thing about this, is if you read it, there's absolutely no reference to a dollar amount in there. It could be $100,000, it could be $2 million you're passing it and you don't know. Why would you get a report that is a shift of revenue that has no dollar amount targeted. There's no reference here.

When I phoned administration and asked about it I was told, our best guesstimate is $500,000. Well what's that about? Really what that is, is a reduction of interest going into those accounts, it keeps them artificially low. There comes a time this is a report we've asked from the Administration, when are reserves ample? We've never had that come back.

Clause nine I would never support. This is one of the most rancorous debates we've ever had in this place. Fascinatingly we're bringing it back.

Revenue neutral. Anybody who believes that this is going to be revenue neutral is sleeping. This isn't about revenue neutrality, you don't go and shake up a whole department and the tax situation surrounding it with the idea of getting an equal amount of money, you want more. We know the myriad of problems that surrounded this. We know the ranker debate we've had. Why would we go into this one with all the other issues that this city council is facing. I would never support this clause.

Number eleven is a fascinating one. I'm surprised that nobody else has brought it up. But read it carefully. This is the new deal clause. Read it. The City negotiate with the Province for equitable cost sharing of services and/or the authority to introduce alternative sources of revenue. Re new taxation. We went through the new deal for a million and a quarter dollars of public consultation what did we hear? No new taxes. That's what this is about. You know what, if you get a dedicated revenue stream on the gasoline tax which is something we're already paying, okay. But that's what this is. This is new revenue stream.

What supports the fact of my interpretation? Well take a look at the document and see how it was patched together. If there was such a commitment to infrastructure and dedicated revenue streams for infrastructure, why wasn't the GST automatically dropped into the document. The answer is, because it was easy.

Every budget I said has priorities. Let me tell you what my priorities were. I made them very clear throughout the entirety of the budgetary debate.

Emergency services. Police. Fire. Ambulance. I want to see a change in the budgetary process because of what happened with police. We had ultimately a separate seminar with the Police Chief and we heard him say point blank, we need 25 new officers.

I had a fascinating thing happen to me after it was over. I have no problem saying this. Five years ago Gail Stephens came to me and said, why do you always support police? I had the same thing happen in this case without referencing the administrative personnel. Why do you always support police? Because the emergency services are the cornerstone of the City. And don't give me that stuff about you know, they get $2.6 million, that's an arbitrated increase. And why do we drag them into arbitration every year and cause the ranker that goes with it? We gave them $100,000 at one time money, but we didn't give them $880,000 for the new officers this year that we need.

How do I know we need them? Not just because I listened to the Chief, how many of you have talked to the officers? They don't just automatically come up to you and say we need additional resources. Read the papers. Read what's happening in the City. The massive influx of crack cocaine. The fact that they're baffling the gangs. The fact that they've got an arson squad that's fulltime. The fact that they've got a vice squad. The fact that they do seasonal work. Last year we heard there was no problem down in the Exchange it was safe. Take a look at the overtime budget to go in

there to make sure it was safe. $1.6 million in this year's document for police overtime and it was turned down. The Chief was asked, how do you come up with that? He said point blank, it's an art not a science we just know it's going to happen. Seeing this police overtime coming into this budget and it's not budgeted in here. Why wasn't it put in?

Fire. Eight officers, $400,000 turned down flat. They went to every committee meeting, they didn't come here today and they phoned and said, what for? Well guess what. You know what the rationale for turning it down was? The Chief didn't support it. Well ironically and I applaud the people from the paramedics union, paramedics came. EPC decided it's okay we're going to find the resources for additional paramedics, support it.

The problem with the rationale that the Chief didn't support it in Fire, but the Chief supported it in police, and he wasn't given any kind of consideration on it.

You're going to be adding these officers in the future. They should have been in this budget.

The question always is, based on the document in front of you, how are you adding these officers in? I ask some very basic questions things that we didn't have at that time, $5 million in consultant fees, $4.4 million for new computers. Cut each one of those budgets by less than 10% and you've paid for police.

There are ways and means of finding the money if you make it a priority. The additional officers was not a priority of EPC and we stood in a meeting and we heard point blank, that when we had a $40 million deficit and we reduced it to $22 million "we took all the fulltime equivalence off the board". I asked members of EPC, did you talk with the Chief, did you hear his proposal? You know what the answer was? No, but we heard from the CAO that this is a good balanced budget. That's another reason we need a police commission in this place. So the police can come forward in an unfettered manner and make the representations to this council and what they need in the way of a budget.

I asked a number of members of EPC, do you know what the 25 officers were for? And I was told point blank, no I don't. Well damn it all you should know. Just the way we should all know. When we had the meeting with the Chief, nobody from EPC was there other than Jenny Gerbasi because it's her committee. Those are critical issues.

Efficiencies. I got a motion coming forward tomorrow to Council to find funding. You know what we need to do Mr. Speaker. We need independent operational audits of our departments on an afford as we can basis. Public Works. Community Services. Property and Development. If we're so effective and efficient, let an independent third party tell us that. There's money to be found in the system. That's one place I agree with EPC on. There's money in the system to be found.

Finally Councillor Steeves talks about, do you believe there's an infrastructure deficit. Yes I do. The one thing I'm on the same page as with the Mayor, yeah I think it has to come from other levels of government. I think it will be coming in some form. But there isn't a panacea to cure it all instantly. Issues like keeping the wading pools open, we go and ask for a report on wading pools, it says we need half a million dollars to keep them open in the middle of September, but nobody asked for that. We asked to the end of August. If you take a look at the report from last year, it was $87,000 in additional appropriations. How can we be talking about keeping wading pools open here. It was in the budget.

The Mayor asked for this regularly, I'm asking for a half a minute to sum up. To simply say this Mr. Speaker. I can't believe we didn't go into council as a whole for something as important as a debate like this. $695 million, total budget is $1.4 billion and we're told we can say everything we want in 8 minutes or start bringing forward a rash of amendments. God, the public deserves better. I dare say everybody around this

table have shared some things they haven't heard before. You may or may not agree with them but you have an opportunity to refute them in an open forum.

My last commentary. I'm dismayed that we don't have something in here for fire and police. I hear about an infrastructure deficit. There's a safety deficit. Mark it well.

Mr. Speaker: Councillor Smith.

Councillor Smith: Mr. Speaker, there are a number of things about this budget that concern me. For example, tree pruning. We're pruning our trees now every, I can't get an exact figure, it changes from whomever you talk to, but we're in the 23, 26, that range of tree pruning cycle. In other words these trees should be pruned every 8 years, and we're pruning them approximately every 26 years.

For the actual resources we have in these trees, we're short-changing them. It's not good for the trees, and it's not good for our neighbourhoods. It makes our neighbourhoods darker, and more conducive to crime. I'm very concerned that with the budget doesn't deal with that.

Wading pools. Last year when this wading pool question came up, I phoned my fellow committee members and took them over to see Gerald Mirecki. And said look it, we need to keep some wading pools open. We opened some. I think the wading pools should be open 'til the end of August. Last year we had the hottest summer in 80 years and if I hadn't stepped in and got the committee together, it would of in effect, wading pools would have been closed and kids would have really suffered in the heat. It seems to me that wading pools are a non issue. Everyone should support them to the end of August.

Let's talk about the waste removal. Everyone talks about, some talk about it in environmental terms, some talk about it as a revenue source. The fact is, this is a health issue. If I don't pay my power bill, and I shut my power off, it doesn't effect my next door neighbour. Or if I don't pay my water bill and I get water shut off, it doesn't effect my next door neighbour. The fact is, waste in the streets in the back lanes, do effect the whole neighbourhood. It's a health question.

You know, years and years ago and I guess some people want to get back to that, in early times in England they threw the garbage out the window. Now maybe that might be the answer that this Mayor will come up with. I don't think it's appropriate to go ahead and have a user fee for garbage when it's a health issue and it effects the whole city. Even visitors they come to part of the City and they see a mess, they're going to be concerned. This a city as a whole we should be proud of and we should make sure that garbage is picked up and not on a user pay basis.

Now there are some good things about this budget. Let me tell you this. Since coming back to Council this is the first budget where I think EPC has listened to the standing committees.

I have been very strong about libraries. I sent an e-mail to Rick Walker the Manager of Libraries. Rick I need some info. I'd like to know how many years we have been at the bottom of the pack of Canadian cities in funding materials for our library. He couldn't find. This would be a research project because it's so many years that we've been at the bottom of the pack. But I have got a listing from 1990 to 2002.

In 1990, we ranked 27th, in other words, 26 other Canadian cities supported material budgets for their library better than we. 1991, 29 of 38. 1992 ranked 27th. 1993 ranked 26th. 1994 ranked 29th. 1995 ranked 30th. 1996 ranked 26th. 1997 ranked 30th. 1998 ranked 26th. 1999 ranked 22nd. We were 22nd, we'd come up. 2000, 25th, we fell to 25th. 2001, 24th, and 2002, 34th. Thirty-three cities better in funding their libraries than we have. I know that people have taken surveys and people have said they're satisfied with the library service. The fact is they don't know any different. They haven't had the sort of libraries that are in

other cities, that are funded as well. I was supportive of increasing it considerably. And we haven't got that.

Actually this budget raises it from 34th to 33rd. One notch, I was hoping it would move up a lot more.

There are things in the budget that are good. The increased support for paramedics. All in all, I'm going to be supporting this budget. I would appreciate if we were voting on each item, each part of the clause separately. If we are that will be great.

Let me tell you this. This is not an ideal budget. It's certainly better than what the draft budget was and it's certainly better than we've had in recent years.

Mr. Speaker: It would be moved by Councillor Eadie that we take it as 12 o'clock. All in favour? Contrary? Carried. We're adjourned to 1:30 p.m.

Council recessed at 11:55 a.m.

After recess

Council reconvened at 1:40 p.m.

Mr. Speaker: Councillor Wyatt speaking to the motion and to amendments other than those he has brought forward.

Councillor Wyatt: Thank you. I found a lot of the debate today very interesting Mr. Speaker. I think there is definitely a growing realization that we are coming to a point where we're going to have to sooner or later meet the issue with regards to property taxes head on, and have to cross that bridge. It's becoming more and more hollow to be able to say that we're delivering a zero percent property tax budget when we know the problems that we're facing and the challenges we're facing.

The roads and the infrastructure are not getting any better they're getting worse. There's a lot of talk of calls for the new deal. Even if we look at the new deal and what it could potentially bring, for example, taking the $60 million today we spend now on basic regional streets and roads and infrastructure of tax supported, we add to that $50 million from let's say a gas tax, we're at $110 million, we're still a way short of the $180 million that we're even calling for.

The challenge we have is not just to maintain the infrastructure we have today but to somehow put together a strategy to deal with the massive $1 billion infrastructure deficit that we as a city now face. It's a huge challenge. We have to realistically start to ask ourselves, is it right or is it conscionable to be able to come forward and present a budget when we know these problems are here and they're not going away and we're not really beginning to address them.

We can rely and we can continually state that we're going to be relying on new deal money for that. Again, having said that, unless the Province comes forward and says, we're going to give you a share of the PST and/or the Federal Government comes forward and says, we're going to give you a share of the GST, as I mentioned those revenues are not close to the $180 million we need to just to maintain what we have today. That's the reality. I have a feeling that when the Province comes forward if they do include something of their PST they'll do it on a cost neutral basis to them. They'll include their grants and everything, it will probably be a better formula for us because it will be based on getting revenues that are not static like grants instead of tied to PST performance or a better provincial municipal tax sharing program than we have right now.

Nevertheless, this is an issue that's not going to go away. I've heard it now from my colleagues on the council floor today, and I think it's clear that we're now probably in the last year being able to stand up and say this mantra of this tax freeze, tax freeze, or tax cut, tax cut, if we are not to begin to address the infrastructure problem.

I frankly believe that our infrastructure should be and putting money back towards tax supported should have been part of this budget process. It should

have been part of this budget coming forward.

For example, we know that a 2% property tax increase would raise $7.6 million. We know that 1% increase in the business tax would raise $6.1 million for almost a $14 million increase in revenue. $14 million that would have went a long way for example towards regional streets. I'm on that page, more and more on that page because I don't see the light at the end of the tunnel to be quite frank. The only light I see at the end of the tunnel is the light coming out of massive sink holes that are appearing in our streets. I went out and had a look at the sink hole that was way out which appeared on Wellington Avenue, and it was so large that I thought there was going to be a family from China come up from the middle of it. It was so huge, it sunk to the bottom of the road and took everything with it.

This is going to get worse and worse and worse Mr. Speaker, it's not going to get any better. It's going to get worse than what we have right now unfortunately because we're not doing anything about it.

I've looked through various ways we can save money. We could have saved money through the street party budget. We could have saved $217,000 in my opinion by cutting travel expenses by 50%. I believe we could have saved 50% by cutting the EPC Secretariat budget in half. By saving $416,000. I believe we could have saved half a million dollars by cutting professional consulting services by a mere 10%. I think we could have reduced our corporate departments, corporate communications budget, promotional budget, protocol, public relations budget, government affairs budget, new initiatives budget. We could have saved $378,000 in my view. We could have shaved off a little bit of money not very much, 10% off of the Environment Committee, the Safety Committee, the Winnipeg Float, the Economic Development Other Cities Budget, Hosting Agency Budget, Citizens Equity Committee and so by a mere 10%. We could have saved $52,000. We could have saved today, $1.8 million almost $1.9 million that we could have applied to TBO for example. Or we could have applied it to backlanes for example. Or we could have applied it to sidewalks. Or a combination of all three. We could have looked at having a property tax increase that could have put $14 million into our streets.

I think the reality is, that we're heading in that direction. I think we have a one year window here. I think in one years time, we're going to be talking in terms of property tax increase. The reality is, we cannot continue to go around and say, we have the lowest taxes east of the Saskatchewan/Manitoba border now, the lowest taxes, yet our roads are crumbling and falling apart. Our sidewalks are heaving. Our waterlines, our sewer lines are collapsing. It rings hollow, and it's ringing hollow more and more as we move on every year after year with this mantra of zero percent zero percent zero percent.

We all like zero percent, and nobody wants to have to pay higher taxes. At the same time Mr. Speaker there comes a point where our fiscal prudence if you want to call it that, it starts to become fiscal mismanagement. Sooner or later investment and we've heard this where the investment will go where it's most competitive and most effective to go. Well investment will start to go where they know they've got roads they can drive on. Investment will start to grow where they know they've got infrastructure that will hold out and not collapse on them. If we cannot sustain the infrastructure of our city it starts to put in peril the very city we love and know itself. People start to question why would they want to be here. Why would they want to do business here. Why would they want to visit here when we have infrastructure that's crumbling like this.

I had friends from out of town last summer come to this city from Toronto and they were shocked to see the state of our infrastructure. Shocked. These are folks who used to be from Manitoba. So they had a bit of perspective.

My friends, we cannot continue to hide behind the mantra of zero percent, zero

percent, zero percent. Indeed we must have the courage to lead and to say to the citizens that look, we have to go this route. This is something we have to look at and be reasonable of. I think the people of this city would be far more accepting Mr. Speaker of that avenue of that option, than to sneak through hidden taxes and I call them hidden because they're new taxes that we don't know how much they're going to mean to people, a hidden tax like the garbage bag tax. Because nobody at the end of the day knows how that's going to impact them until they actually have to go out and buy these tags. The people who are going to be the hardest hit by it I will predict will be young families, young families with children, and with babies. They'll be the hardest hit.

Or another hidden tax if you want to call it this, an assessment department tax. That's what this budget calls for, the 2005 calls for. Who's going to pay for the assessment department, it's not going to be the Province. It's going to be a line item on the tax bill, on the water bill, however it's going to be paid for, and it's going to be another tax, a tax through the backdoor. But a tax nonetheless. I would argue a tax not based on equality, not based on ability to pay, but a tax on user pay which hits everybody equally and unequally. No matter who you are and no matter how much you make, and no matter what your status is in society.

Mr. Speaker, I believe we founded this city on principles of equality and generosity. I think the reality is kicking in. I think the citizens of the City ironically are much further ahead on this issue than council is. They understand and they know that the roads and the collapsing of the roads are tied to the way we handle our dollars, and the way we set our fiscal policy, and they're starting to ask why is this not being made a priority.

I admire and I congratulate the Mayor for his work on finding new dollars through the new deal. I fear that those new dollars for the new deal will still come up short, far short. Instead of talking about a tripartite program where we're spending money on new infrastructure, maybe what we should be talking about, is a tripartite program over four or five years where we're talking $50 million or $100 million over four or five years to take a massive cut out of the infrastructure deficit that exists today. That would be $33 million a year from each level of government over five years, we could knock half of the infrastructure. Why is that not being discussed? Why is that not on the table? Why are we not raising that? That is what EPC should be talking about, that is what the Premier should be talking about. And if the Premier is not talking about and the Federal Government is not talking about, it's our obligation to be pounding the table on that.

Too often we allow projects which are these massive projects which indeed something of course the Mayor wanted and others wanted with regards to Kenaston and the light rapid transit to take a precedent.

I fear now Mr. Speaker that the time is running out, as the time is running out for me to speak here, that the time is running out on our ability to be able to address this problem. Every year we wait, the problem gets worse. The longer we wait, the worse it will get. I would encourage us to be aware that I think this is the last window this year with regards to having this debate of zero zero zero zero when we know everything is collapsing around us. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you. Councillor Steeves on amendment Nos. 4, 5 and 6.

Councillor Steeves: Thank you. I'll speak only to the amendments as they were tabled after I had spoken.

Specifically with respect to, I won't be near my 8 minutes. With respect to the GST rebate Motion No. 5, I have every intention of supporting that, that seems perfectly reasonable. I would suggest however that's probably information that probably already exists.

With respect to the wading pools Motion No. 6 and No. 4, specifically the wading pools and the garbage, I'm pleased as the Chair of Public Works to support in whatever way that I can the spirit and

intent of Motion No. 6. I already stated that prior. I'll accept that as a friendly amendment.

With respect to the consideration of the Council for the possible future implementation of garbage fees, I think that's reasonable as well.

With respect to wading pools and garbage, I don't know who still has a chance to speak and who will be speaking, but if people do take advantage of their remaining time to say a few words, I would remind people that we still are waiting for some answers on what direction we should be taking as city councillors here this afternoon.

There's been a lot of talk about this budget, whether or not it will or will not be accepted. I'm still not certain from the people who have stated they won't be supporting the budget, what they would support in terms of a tax increase. I'd be interested in an amount. I'd be interested in a percentage amount of tax increase that they would support. I would like to hear from these councillors who won't be supporting the budget what type of tax increase you would be prepared to advocate. Because we haven't heard that. Frankly without that information it becomes really very difficult to make decisions on things like wading pools. And things like garbage that have been proposed as motions whereby we want more money for wading pools assumedly, we're not interested in the administrative report that might be coming forward with respect to streamlining or make it more efficient, our garbage service, these are the things that might not interest us as a council but yet people do seem to be saying that we want to be spending more money yet no one has come forward and said, exactly how much of a tax increase they want. I think it's perfectly reasonable those of us who are going to be supporting this budget, and those of us who are going to be coming forward to the rest of our council colleagues and saying, here's our budget, it calls for a tax freeze. This is what I'm proposing. What are you proposing? What are you proposing in terms of tax increases. Just so we can get all of our cards on the table, everybody can understand.

There's been a lot of talk perhaps about how closed mouth this process has been, how people can't get the information they require. Information has been given, a budget has been handed over that calls for something to happen. I've not heard any of the detractors say, I'll support a 3% or a 4% or a 5% or an 8% tax increase. That has not been said.

We've had a list of things that have come forward by some folks that could be cut that might be cut. Yet they're offset by things that should be spent.

I think the citizens of the City of Winnipeg if they're being in some way short-changed by this budget process, deserve Mr. Speaker the upfront mention by the councillors who are not going to support this budget, the percentage increase of taxes that they would support.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you Councillor Steeves. Councillor Thomas.

Councillor Thomas: Thank you. This is a good budget. I worked hard, all of EPC has worked very hard. The Administration has worked extremely hard to get here today.

Everyone had the opportunity to work on this budget. Consultation took place with everyone who came before the document was released. Every effort was made to accommodate each concern brought forward both before and after the release day. But it seems that there are some that would throw stones regardless. Could you please look at what is there.

There is a zero percent increase. Staffing has not only been maintained but actually increased. Service enhancements have occurred within the fire/paramedics, public works, libraries to mention a few.

Is that everything? No. It cannot be. We do need a new deal in order to make significant headway on our infrastructure deficit and deal with the increasing service demands. I am proud of every line and I stand behind the group effort

that brought us here today. I intend to support this budget without the last minute amendments.

I really get my dander up when people use words like unconscionable to describe this. And to suggest that property tax increases are the way to go. I am not in that camp. That is fiscal mismanagement. We cannot tax people out of their homes.

Property taxes are not very fair to the individuals who live there. Your property taxes are at a certain level, like say you retire and your income drops in half. Does your property tax drop with that? No it does not. Let's say one of the people is deceased and your income halves again. Do your property taxes reflect that? No it does not. That is why I feel property taxes are not a very fair way to collect taxes at all. I'm very uncomfortable about the amount of emphasis placed on property tax income. This is why we need a new deal.

For today, this budget is a good balance between providing service and being good fiscal managers. Therefore, I will support it. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you. Councillor Eadie.

Councillor Eadie: Mr. Speaker, it's only necessary I think to speak once on this, and that's all I've intended to do, and that's usually my habit in these meetings. I think I can say all I have to say within the 8 to 10 minutes that's allotted to me on this budget or other issues.

I, of course have no difficulty in supporting the budget that's been presented to Council today. Again, it is a balanced budget, I think it's now our 135th or something like that. We're not raising property taxes this year again. Even though there are some that might advocate that we should be raising taxes. We are showing once again as difficult as it is that we are able to provide a quality level of service to our people and we're not raising taxes to do it. The day may come when we're not going to be able to sustain that much longer unless phase two or the new deal process comes into place. But at least for this fiscal year we're able to provide our citizens with a quality level of service in all areas of our municipal government, and we're not raising property taxes to provide that service.

Of course every budget has to have its priorities. Again there's priorities in this budget on public safety and other things.

I thought it was interesting to note four or five weeks ago when we tabled the estimate at least from one or two members in this chamber that there were many priorities. Every day brought a new priority. You might remember this Mr. Speaker. One day according to one or two members the priority we have to mow more grass, that's the most important priority we have today, we should be mowing grass more often. Well that was that day. Then the next day the priority was, we have to do more TBOs. That's the biggest priority of our city today. More TBOs. Grass mowing was forgotten because that was yesterday.

The day after that we had to add more firefighters. God, there's nothing more important than adding more firefighters. That ought to be our priority today. Grass mowing and TBOs went to the back of the road because today it was firefighters.

The next day there was more police officers needed. There can't be anything more important for our government to provide then more police officers. That's the big priority of our city today. Firefighters and grass mowing and TBOs they weren't priorities anymore because that was yesterday's news. It goes on.

Operational audits as if this is something new. We have to do operational audits, I heard it referenced this morning before the lunch break. Operational audits, what an amazing thing like they've never been done before.

Let me put on the record Mr. Speaker in the last ten years we have done 48 operational audits, running through 13 departments of city government, 48

operational audits Mr. Speaker. Done by our independent city auditor and/or our external auditors. They've all produced reports and we've acted our administration or council has acted on those reports to provide better and more efficient government and making sure that the dollars that the taxpayers provide us are as well spent as we can possibly do it. I understand tomorrow we're going to wait with baited breath because somebody has just decided that operational audits are now number one priority. All the other ones I mentioned earlier because they were spoken of yesterday are no longer the priority.

It just amazes me to no end how some people get away with that Mr. Speaker. How some people really don't pay much attention. Those who perhaps in the press gallery who ought to pay a little more attention to the inconsistency and the priority of day, everything is a priority depending on the day of the week that it happens.

Somebody complained about the GST rebate going into general revenues. I don't have any problem with that Mr. Speaker because that's how they were paid. We pay our GST tab out of general revenues and then wait for the Government of Canada to send us a rebate cheque based on the new policy that was announced about a month ago. It's out of general revenues, it comes back to general revenues and then its dispersed in whatever way the budgetary process decides that it should be done. Is that difficult? I don't think so.

Somebody complained about a scripted budget. I should hope to hell Mr. Speaker it would be a scripted budget. Otherwise if we came in with absolutely no script whatsoever, we'd have a blizzard of these wing nut motions that have landed on our desk since 9:30 this morning, scribbled in hand, words being changed because nobody's thought them out. That's the opposite of having sort of scripted process here, is having that kind of chaos. Well I don't want to be a part of that kind of chaos. I'd rather at least have a document that people can get their heads around and make a decision yea or nay on the contents of it. That's what a budget is for. Every government budgets the same way. You can call it scripted if you want, I don't have any objection to the term, that's the way you provide good government, at least having your budget organized and you present a detailed package to the decision-makers who will eventually vote on it. To me that's a positive thing not a negative.

We're very lucky as a city Mr. Speaker. As I said at the beginning, we're again for the umpteenth year in the row we're not raising property taxes. Imagine being the City of Toronto today who started off this fiscal year with a $344 million budgetary deficit. And they're not going to finish their budget for another 30 days, imagine being in the shoes of members of Toronto City Council today who've got to dig themselves out of that hole. They're looking at a minimum 3% property tax increase and perhaps more to dig themselves out of a $344 million hole.

Cities like Calgary and Edmonton, both passing 5% tax increases, cities that allegedly get tons of revenues, they get the revenues from gasoline tax and all of that sort of thing, they have to pass each city council has to pass this year a 5% tax increase on their residents just to keep up with their budgetary pressures.

Aren't we lucky that we're able to come to this fiscal year and propose no tax increase again. How did that happen? It didn't happen because of perhaps the council seminar that I attended a month ago which was less than productive. It happened because a group of councillors got down to work and tried to maintain our essential services as a city government, and try to provide those services to the people at a reasonable cost without raising their taxes. That's how it happened. That somebody said, we should we have the courage to lead, well there's the courage to lead Mr. Speaker. That didn't happen by magic, that didn't happen by just sitting back hoping that something good is going to fall out of the sky and we'll have all our problems fixed. It happened because it took a lot of hard work to make it happen. Not only on a part of some members of council but on

the part of our administration. It was a difficult process. Every budget is a difficult process. This one certainly wasn't any easier than many others that I've been a part of in nearly 24 years in this place. But at the end of the day we are passing a balanced budget and a budget that says, we're not going to raise property taxes this year.

It was interesting that the Free Press ran an editorial just at the beginning of this month about our budgetary process. Back sliders at City Hall they entitled it. They criticized the so called opposition councillors for coming forward with all sorts of grandstanding and grandiose ideas but not really coming forward with alternatives. Trying to pass on all kinds of costs to the taxpayer when we're trying to deal with a zero tax increased budget and as well try to prepare ourselves for the new deal process that we're going to be getting to very shortly. They were called backsliders. What an apt description Mr. Speaker.

It's easy to complain and easy to be critical and to try and get the 10 or 15 second sound byte but don't sit down and do any work, and don't try to be constructive and don't try to work with everyone else and see what we can come up with a budget that the public will buy into. That's exactly what has happened. The Free Press actually got it right for once. There was chatter and he's not a friend of City Hall I'll tell you that. That particular individual.

Mr. Speaker, somebody said, why should we be looking at the solid waste thing or the user pay thing and looking ahead, I know there's an amendment to change the words, I suppose I can accept that. Somebody said, why should we be bothering looking ahead and seeing if the Province will agree putting in words here to deal with a single assessment authority for the Province, and to talk with the Province about the equitable cost-sharing of services and other things. Why Mr. Speaker? Because the Province doesn't want to talk to us unless they have an indication that council is actually approved going forward on these things. We're dealing with the Provincial Government, it hasn't made very many bold decisions in nearly five years in office, and they're not going to make very many more bold ones in the future from the looks of things.

We have to go forward Mr. Speaker and maybe take some bold recommendations to them to see if they'll actually land on some.

A single assessment authority for Manitoba, long overdue. We're the only municipality in this province that does its own assessment but like everyone of the other municipalities, all of the rules and regulations come from the Manitoba Assessment Act. The rules are the same everywhere.

Yes, there should be a single assessment authority. And yes we should be discussing with the Province the ways and means of broadening the Provincial Municipal tax sharing regulations so that not only this city council but other municipal governments in Manitoba can be more autonomous and can take the measures that they feel they have to take in order to raise the revenues that are needed to provide good municipal government these days. I don't have any problem in supporting those kind of things because we have to discuss those issues with the Province. As I said Mr. Speaker, they're shy of discussing them unless they've seen that Council wants to support them.

Mr. Speaker, I've run my time. I'm simply saying, I am supporting the budget. I won't be supporting very many of the amendments.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you. Councillor De Smedt on amendments four, five and six.

Councillor De Smedt: Very briefly. I understood really that there was a friendly amendment regarding six to be put onto one. Did that get concurred in?

Mr. Speaker: One was withdrawn, six replaces it.

Councillor De Smedt: I think six is fairly innovative. We're just going to ask the Administration to give us a report to see if

we can find a way to hang onto the wading pools.

We do know that we find a way when we have an extraordinarily good summer at the end of the season to keep the wading pools open. We find a way to do it. It makes sense that we have a report. Again, I'm only disappointed that we didn't have that built into the budget. We should probably logically do that.

It's part of the scripting as I guess I'm calling the issues of what's been happening here with the development of this particular budget.

In terms of budget five, the entire amount of the rebate, the GST rebate which can be identified on an annual expense and reported to council as a budget item at budget time, I would agree with.

We certainly need to get this GST bugaboo sorted out. I do find it a bit offensive that we glibly quickly put the money into operating and we continue to ignore in discussion, I hope that the Chair of Fiscal Issues or the Mayor in summation will tell me why the water and sewer rates will be maintained, why are we putting extra money into water and sewer utility if in fact $2 million of the GST rebate should go to them. The taxpayer is paying twice.

If we want to charge the taxpayer twice, let's admit it, and put it up front and saying hi, folks we were going to charge you an extra….

Mr. Speaker: Councillor De Smedt you're going beyond the intent and spirit of number five, it is the entire amount of the rebate be identified in an annual report to Council.

Councillor De Smedt: What are we going to do with it Mr. Speaker?

Mr. Speaker: That is not part of this amendment.

Councillor De Smedt: I don't want to have a debate with you Mr. Speaker, except to say, why would we even bring this here if we're not going to discuss what we're going to do with the rebate.

However, I think I've made my points. Thank you for the latitude.

Mr. Speaker: And done it well.

Councillor De Smedt: You could have done it even a little sooner.

On number four, I do think I need to again reflect on the amendment. I think really this has to come back to Council and we have it included in there. The way it reads now, I can't support it. It has to come back to Council.

I don't know why on earth we would want to get into the big GST debate one more time.

Mr. Speaker: There is a change to that wording at the end it says, to be considered by Council for possible future implementation. One word has been added to make it clear that this is not an approval of that.

Councillor De Smedt: It's interesting. I do agree with others that have spoken already about why are we going through the great big garbage debate again in a formal way without us sitting down in seminar and looking at the options. Please remember that when we say this is a wash, the $16 million is a wash to the City but it isn't a wash to the residential taxpayer. The residential taxpayer will be paying per bag to cover off the total cost of that 4% rebate which includes commercial property taxpayers as well.

Please remember that. It ain't a wash the way it's been described. The residential property owner will be paying more than he ought to under the system we have today. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you Councillor. Councillor Clement.

Councillor Clement: Thank you Mr. Speaker for letting me go near the end. I've been making a few notes and I thought that I would comment on a few

things to try and bring some clarity to the odd thing that's been raised this morning.

Earlier this morning, Councillor De Smedt talked about this tax arrear issue which was the initiative report brought forward call it what you want where the money came from for the changes at the end.

I heard a couple of different comments about it being money that was stowed away for a rainy day or for this day I guess if you want to call it.

The bottom line is, and I can tell you unequivocally that when we met for the last time to kind of structure a document which was last Tuesday morning, that there were a number of issues that I had heard, I had councillors walk into my office, I heard other comments that came out of standing committees that either I read in the paper or saw in various e-mails that type of thing. I actually created a list and we dealt with that list and a few other things. Once we had established that there were issues totalling about $954,000 or thereabouts that had to be funded in some fashion or other, I looked down the table at by financial gurus and said, what's your best recommendation. At which point that report surfaced for the first time. I didn't know anybody had been working on it. I didn't know it existed. That was the first time that I even heard that we were looking at initiatives like that. I applaud them for bringing something like that forward because it allowed us to do that without tweaking other things which might not have been as much fun.

There was nothing that was pulled out of the sky as such because there was no discussion about it whatsoever.

This issue about wading pools. There is no issue there. We don't like when things happen like they did last fall, and frankly in the 20 years I've been here I think it's happened three or four times. All that happened last summer was it didn't rain much. When it doesn't rain you run out of the days that are budgeted because typically you get a few days of rain, when it rains the people are sent home, they get a day added onto the length of the wading pool time and usually it runs out in the last week of August or thereabouts, that's typical. When it gets really hot like it did last summer, and in fact you don't get any rain, you run out of money.

I can tell you, I wasn't thrilled with how that came out last year. I didn't like that it wound up in the paper. It shouldn't have been there, and we've done things now to remedy that that won't happen. In fact there's a report being looked at now that as a result of recommendation from Councillor Angus that deals with a reserve that could be dealt with in a number of ways and that report simply hasn't come back yet. But it will.

The long and the short of it was, that deal got done and I can tell you I wasn't thrilled to deal with it. I was at the airport with the Mayor when I actually raised the issue, I don't even think he'd seen it in the paper yet, we made a phone call and solved it. We shouldn't have to do that. Everybody openly admits that. The process wasn't great, it's being fixed. You don't have to put $300,000 in the budget to fix it. You don't have to put anything in the budget to fix it because they're dealing with it, and if the report comes in fact even to fix it last year was less than $100,000, you can deal with that through an extra allocation if you have to. There's no way we're going to close wading pools if it's hot in August. Nobody's ever done it. Let's start dealing with some real issues.

The GST rebate. Councillor Eadie's already said, we pay it, we get it back, it's a rebate. I don't know how that means we're taxing somebody twice, I'm not sure how that goes. I can also tell you that when we went through all the debate over the new deal, the GST rebate was not part of the new deal discussion ever. Getting a piece of the GST was part of the new deal discussion but not the GST rebate. It actually only happened because there was some sort of a problem in Toronto with their transit system and I think they were going to be suing the Feds and it rolled out of that because the Feds knew they were going to lose and they wound up having to pay everybody. That's what really happened. Toronto got $81 million we got $7 million

and Toronto still had a 3% tax increase by the way.

Someone mentioned this morning that this is well rehearsed. If it's been rehearsed, I don't know where it's been rehearsed other than last Wednesday morning or Tuesday morning whenever we brought this thing back. We certainly went through the numbers and we understand them. I think calling it rehearsed is a bit of a stretch.

Waving this document in front of me Mr. Speaker and telling me that this is a five page document and the citizens of this city deserve better, is a bit of a silly statement from wherever it came, I don't recall if you said it fine.

The bottom line is that there's two books here, there's 467 pages, 467 pages Mr. Speaker. It's not five, you have to deal with something here today, you can't deal with 467 pages in four or five hours unless you've gone to the various meetings and picked out the things you want to talk about. That's what this is. It's just a concise four or five pages of what's actually real here today. That's all that's about. I take some umbrage with that. We don't want to spend a lot of time on that either.

As far as the process goes, I heard about that earlier today. I'm not thrilled with the process either. I didn't agree with all of the things that were in the CUFF report a few years ago that got implemented frankly. That wasn't my document. But it got implemented by this Council in a democratic fashion so we live with what's in it. If you want to change the process, make a motion on the floor of Council to change the budget process. There's no point complaining about it when you're in the middle of the process because that doesn't solve anything. We've got a whole year until next time. You want to change the process, then make a motion at the next council meeting, not today, this is a budget meeting. Council meets tomorrow. You want to talk about the process, you want to have a debate about it, be my guest I don't care. I don't think that the process is perfect but it's what we have right now. It is what it is.

I took some time and tried to involve people in a little different way and I've had people thank me for that. That was good. I was glad to try and bring people into it a little earlier and I did my best with that.

I'm not really thrilled with all of these motions Mr. Speaker frankly, I think we should be looking at that too. I think the motion should be typed and I think the motion should be here a day or two ahead of walking into a meeting like this so that you can prepare for them. That way they wouldn't have to get redone because the wording hasn't been all thought out.

I don't really have a lot of trouble with number four to be honest with you because number four really states what we were intending in the first place as far as I'm concerned. That's a whole different ball game.

The thing that I'd like to key on though Mr. Speaker, I've got 30 seconds I'll do it quick. This is the seventh straight budget that's either zero or minus two. Seventh straight. It's also the eighth of a last nine years. There isn't a city in Canada that even remotely comes close to that. When this whole process started, we were seventeenth out of eighteen cities that are considered in these discussions. We're now virtually tied for fifth.

The problem is, the percentage of our revenue stream that is used for debt reduction servicing those types of things, is still too high as compared to other cities, and our bond rating people covers that. That's why we have to try and continue on this process.

It's my view, that the and I'll quote my good friend Bob Gannon, "the elasticity of our government is getting near the end of its stretch". That I can assure everybody here.

We collectively are running out of tricks. We can do a few little things here and there, we can tweak this and we can tweak that, you can find a million here and a couple of million there, but there aren't a whole bunch of millions to be

found. That's one of the problems. The bottom line is, is that we need a better revenue deal. I don't know what that package is going to look like, but frankly it's not helpful Mr. Speaker when you're trying to do that which will solve many of the problems that we are talking about today by sniping at whatever the package might be. That's not helpful. If you don't like the package then offer a suggestion to amend it. When we go forward the next time if we're not collected and we've got people sniping some colleagues are sniping at other colleagues, I mean the Province isn't really going to look at that too strongly. The Feds are going to have some difficulty as well. That one I'm afraid we're going to have to get a little bit more collective on because otherwise it's not going to happen. I'm not interested in new taxes, that's not my thing.

The bottom line is, we require a bigger piece of the pie Mr. Speaker, and we have to get it. And if we don't get it, I can absolutely assure everybody in this chamber even the ones that aren't listening even those that aren't are making most of the motions. The bottom line Mr. Speaker is, I can guarantee you there aren't anymore zeros coming in the near future without a new revenue deal. I just don't believe that it's possible to continue it, and I would urge everybody before they snipe at whatever the new package might be and hopefully it will be a collective we that puts forward a package because if we're sniping at each other over whatever that package is going to be, we're never going to get one. Without it, the types of things that are being discussed here today aren't going to disappear Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you. We'll now sum up on the amendments and the main motion in reverse order to which they were made. Under Rule 36 each person has five minutes to close debate. As expressed in Rule 44 there will be no extensions to these time limits.

First on Motion No. 6, Councillor Wyatt.

Councillor Wyatt: Thank you Mr. Speaker. I will keep my comments short. There seems to be some confusion on the wading pool issue, and I just want to clarify it.

There's no doubt in my mind, I sit on the Committee on Protection and Community Services and what has been indicated to at least the Standing Committee and to myself is that there is a cost with regards to keeping wading pools open. I'm quoting now the administrative report that came to the Standing Committee recently which basically said, "this is now our administration extension to the wading pool, outdoor pool operation from August 20 to September 6", which is not what we're calling for here, we're calling until the end of August. Their report was August 20 – September 6, 2004 which includes the September long weekend would require an increase of $546,110 over the existing preliminary 2004 budget for the current wading pool outdoor operation.

Mr. Speaker it's clear that right now our department does not have the resources to operate wading pools, not just to September 6 but to the end of August. I want to be very clear on this. August 20 to the end of August, approximately 10 or 11 days, is what Motion No. 6 is saying.

I want to thank the Chair of the Standing Committee on Public Works for seeing it as a friendly amendment. I want to thank the Mayor as well for seeing it as a friendly amendment. The Administration will have to find some dollars to keep these wading pools open, there's no doubt about it. I think it's definitely a step in the right direction. I think it will go a long way addressing a lot of the concerns of communities which are voiceless. They're the people out there who do not come to City Hall and speak, they're the individuals who do not maybe know the process or the avenues to obtain it. They're individuals who simply live in our communities, pay their taxes, many of them survive from day to day. Something like wading pools is a service that is truly appreciated by these individuals and their families. I think by making this adjustment to this friendly amendment, and I thank again the Mayor and EPC,

also I hope that all of Council will support this to add this to the budget.

We will be sending a positive message that communities count no matter if it's a community like River Heights or Tuxedo or community in our innercity or downtown or where have you. We are a city of many communities, individuals who have means and individuals who don't have means. I think we are recognizing that fact. What happened last year was a shame. I think by making this commitment today we ensure that that will not occur again. And that that safeguard is there that wading pools will remain open until the end of August. Whether it rains or whether it pours or whether it's sunny and hot, the wading pools will remain open until the end of August. That Mr. Speaker is a step in the right direction. I'd like to thank councillors who have spoken in favour of this, and I encourage us to vote in favour it. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you. On Motion No. 5, Councillor Angus did you wish to close.

Councillor Angus: Thank you Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the opportunity to five minutes on each of these, is that what you said.

Mr. Speaker: Only on Motion No. 5 first.

Councillor Angus: It's the GST rebate, I'm not naïve enough to suggest that anybody on this council particularly the illustrious seven, the magnificent seven some would call, would want to vote to remove the GST and put it into a separate pot when it could be reapplied to infrastructure funding.

I will note Mr. Speaker that that might not be a bad idea that GST money because the infrastructure budget for public works alone, never mind water and waste building a new treatment water treatment plant, but public works has gone from $60 million down to less than $40 million and this budget takes another $4 million out of the capital works budget Mr. Speaker. If you think as the former Chair of Public Works I'm concerned about that, yes I am.

Now I know that $15 million of the $60 million last year was for the Provencher Bridge, and I understand that. Mr. Speaker, this motion allows us to identify the GST money. If we are successful and negotiated a new deal and if we do identify that type of money, and if we want to be able to go back to the Province and pound the table about another 7% coming from PST from them, then we should have that information available to us.

Council in the future, next year and the years after and those years after I'm no longer here should be reminded they've got this GST. They should know where that money is being spent and what it's going for. I don't believe that this motion should be anything of any serious concern that simply says to the Administration, pull out the amount of GST that's refunded to the City of Winnipeg and identify it separately. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: Councillor Angus on Motion No. 4, closing debate.

Councillor Angus: Thank you Mr. Speaker. Next year I'm going to have to think about them the day before and type them up of course for those people who can't read my writing.

Mr. Speaker the whole garbage debate is a very serious one and a very important one, and it did divide this council and divided opinions and people took aim at ridiculous assumptions that were not founded, have not been founded. Whether this thing will work or not work, it's not a matter of simply saying in a one line in a budget, that we are going to implement it. It's as simple as that Mr. Speaker.

If we are going to implement it we have to have some sort of a plan. I like the concept of reducing the amount of money that people pay on their property taxes correspondingly to the amount of money that's going to be put onto the bag a tag or whatever system we decide to adopt. That seems fair and reasonable to me.

Identifying the costs of per bag Mr. Speaker, is going to be entirely different.

That report should contain information Mr. Speaker that says, listen, we're going to have an independent quasi utility board that is going to review on a three year basis the amount of money we're charging per bag versus the amount of money it costs us to collect those bags. That information that system that price tag should be done at arms length from Council and we should be bound by that over a three period. Because Mr. Speaker not I, not the taxpayers and nobody in this council wants to see it become a revenue generating amount of money that's simply going to go back into the big hole of revenue.

If we're going to be charging for garbage, if we're going to be having that system, and if we're going to reduce the amount of property taxes that's a good thing. But then we have to be satisfied that the price per bag is accurately reflected. Not that there's going to be a residual building up some place that we can suddenly pull it out to use for whatever particular projects is the fancy of the day.

Mr. Speaker, by removing the to be implemented in 2005 and moving to be considered by Council with your friendly amendment for possible implementation is the reasonable thing, because this is going to have to have some elements to get by at this particular table. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you. Councillor Lazarenko your motion No. 3 is no longer in order as there already has been a request to vote on each of these clauses one by one. So your motion that we do not vote for clause No. 9 that it be deleted, is no longer necessary because it will be voted on separately in any case. Which would be the same as the vote on your motion. There's no need to deal with that, and I hope you see why.

On Motion No. 2, Councillor Wyatt.

Councillor Wyatt: I think it's self-explanatory Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: On the clause, Mr. Mayor.

Mayor Murray: Thanks very much. I'm just going to start with one really simple statement which is, and I think Councillor Clement summed it up. We can't go forward on essentially the level of property tax dependency we have right now. The gap between what needs to be done in this city, and what we're capable of doing is widening every year. Councillor Steek said, other cities are doing it. I will tell you Mr. Speaker, most people are looking to Winnipeg for solutions not other places.

When I talked to the Mayor of Calgary who I'm meeting with at the end of this week, they have a huge problem. They have 5% property tax increases and they cannot meet the infrastructure demands of capacity. $344 million budget shortfall in Toronto, $200 million a kilometre of subway. They have huge challenge with their public transportation system. Their radial street system is congested. They can't even maintain levels of basic infrastructure that they had in last year's budget.

Montreal competes with Winnipeg for having some of the oldest infrastructure. Even after amalgamation they've had huge demands and the gaps are significant.

The Canadian Civil Society of Engineers Mr. Speaker calls this a $57 billion problem in Canadian cities growing by $3 billion a year. Our share of that $57 billion is about $2 billion. $55 billion are distributed over the other two dozen cities.

No, this is not a Winnipeg problem, and arguably. I know Councillor Angus just pointed out that we have $20 million less in public works capital expenditures this year. That's right. When we built the Kenaston Underpass in the next few years there'll be a whole lot more. I think about $40 million. When Councillor Thomas who's been fighting for the Redwood Bridge will throw that in at the same time, that budget will go up again. All of us understand that the Public Works budget is driven by large capital projects, the repair and replacement of the Redwood Bridge, the construction of much needed transportation infrastructure in southwest Winnipeg.

What happened with our capital budget? $173 million last year, $205 million this year. That's $32 million. Because we're putting more into pipes, a lot more into pipes, and because we don't happen to be replacing a major bridge this year, somehow that doesn't count apparently in someone's map. That's a $32 million increase. It's not enough.

We have doubled the number of paramedics in the last five years. Let me say that again. We have doubled the number of paramedics in the last five years. Is it enough? No. Last year and we held onto them, 21 new police officers. If you look at the staffing lines on there, you'll see that we stay at over 1,220 police officers next year. We added eight firefighters last year in addition to those 21 police officers.

This year are we reducing any of those? No, we have two full classes of police. It's not $900,000 because we do a three year budget so everyone knows what the annual costs are. The Province knows because 40 officers are now about $4 million, it's about $1 million for just 10 officers if you do it over a year. Which is why we do multi year budgeting so we know that what seems to be politically low hanging fruit comes with a cost and you need the sustainability.

Is a 33% increase in police and fire/paramedic budget enough? No it's not. Quite frankly we'd be comfortable with 40 or 50 more police officers at this point.

Transportation. Infrastructure announcements. We have a plan, it's called Plan Winnipeg. You'll notice the Kenaston Underpass, the Sterling Lyon Extension. The rapid transit corridor. Most of the other stuff that's in here is being done on time. This is a 20 year plan we're actually ahead of the game right now.

Council passed a plan. I still hear councillors saying, why are we spending money on Kenaston, that's a south end thing. Why aren't we building the Chief Peguis Trail? Because someone during the Plan Winnipeg debate decided that the Chief Peguis Trail wasn't a priority and had it removed. Sort of hard to come back now and say, whoops, maybe we'd like to put it back in. Having said that, it makes immense sense to do it, and yes we have to find the money to do it.

It's $188 million a year. If that is unfathomable to people, it's $738 million for water and sewage treatment and that great gift we got from the Federal and Provincial Governments as important as it is, is 10% of the total project cost. $70 million a year is what it's going to cost us in sewage and treatment. And Councillor Angus is right, we have an infrastructure crisis.

Some things do bother me. Some people say that the budget isn't transparent. Page 172, do you know that Richard Kachur has $2,200 for luncheons and receptions, $250 for meal expense. I don't think you can get much more specific. If anyone has any less questions that doesn't know where it is.

I just want to leave you with one last thought. Library books on the best libraries in the world, the best bridges in the world. I just gave Gail Asper one on the best museums in the world.

Councillor Lubosch I don't agree with you. Winnipeggers are feeling better about their city. They're getting more in infrastructure. They have a new entertainment complex, they have a new downtown library. They've got one of the best community colleges. They have one of the most beautiful bridges which is leading to one of the most spectacular museums ever built in the world. And we're doing that with small leverage dollars. We are doing that through public and private partnerships. Is it enough? No. Our new deal is going to be rolling out in the next few weeks, it's just a discussion paper. There's nothing we can pass on the floor of City Council to solve this problem. The only people who can fix it is the Federal and Provincial Governments. All our efforts now have to be to be doing a lot more than a $7 million GST rebate. We need the deal that every other group of cities have it.

I have one more priority left in my mandate after 15 years here. To deliver the new deal so no other mayor, no other city council, and more importantly, no other group of citizens in Canada in Canadian cities have to be under funded and over taxed. Seven percent tax share is unacceptable in Canada, no other group of citizens in the world quite frankly that I can find, get such a cheap share of the deal. Yes, I agree with the Prime Minister, and I did spend an evening with him. We spent the entire evening talking about how we make this work…

Mr. Speaker: Thank you Mr. Mayor. We'll vote on the amendments in reverse order in which they were put before us.

Recorded votes have been asked for on all. First of all on Motion No. 6 by Councillor Wyatt regarding wading pools. All in favour please rise.

A RECORDED VOTE was taken the result being as follows:

Yeas

His Worship Mayor Murray, Councillors De Smedt, Gerbasi, Lubosch, Pagtakhan, Smith, Steek, Steeves, Wyatt, Lazarenko, Mr. Speaker Councillor O'Shaughnessy.

Nays

Councillors Eadie, Angus, Clement, Thomas.

City Clerk: The vote Mr. Speaker, Yeas 11, Nays 4.

Mr. Speaker: It's passed.

Amendment No. 5 moved by Councillor Angus regarding a report on the annual GST totals. All in favour please rise.

A RECORDED VOTE was taken the result being as follows:

Yeas

Councillors Eadie, Angus, De Smedt, Gerbasi, Lubosch, Pagtakhan, Smith, Steek, Steeves, Wyatt, Lazarenko, Mr. Speaker Councillor O'Shaughnessy.

Nays

His Worship Mayor Murray, Councillors Clement, Thomas.

City Clerk: The vote Mr. Speaker Yeas 12, Nays 3.

Mr. Speaker: The amendment is carried.

Motion No. 4 Moved by Councillor Angus. All in favour please rise.

A RECORDED VOTE was taken the result being as follows:

Yeas

Councillors Eadie, Angus, Clement, De Smedt, Lubosch, Pagtakhan, Smith, Steek, Steeves, Wyatt, Lazarenko, Mr. Speaker Councillor O'Shaughnessy.

Nays

His Worship Mayor Murray, Councillors Gerbasi, Thomas.

City Clerk: The vote Mr. Speaker, Yeas 12, Nays 3.

Mr. Speaker: The amendment is carried. Motion No. 2 moved by Councillor Wyatt regarding museums. All in favour please rise.

A RECORDED VOTE was taken the result being as follows:

Yeas

Councillors Wyatt, Lazarenko.

Nays

His Worship Mayor Murray, Councillors Eadie, Angus, Clement, De Smedt, Gerbasi, Lubosch, Pagtakhan, Smith, Steek, Steeves, Thomas, Mr. Speaker Councillor O'Shaughnessy.

City Clerk: The vote Mr. Speaker, Yeas 2, Nays 13.

Mr. Speaker: Motion is defeated. Just due to the nature of the way they are I think we'll have to vote on the 12 clauses

also in reverse order, as the first one is to adopt what EPC put forward. I think we should have the amendments first.

I'll have to go with 11, 10, 9. Also request for recorded votes. I'll start with 11. All in favour of point number 11 in clause 1, please rise.

A RECORDED VOTE was taken the result being as follows:

Yeas

His Worship Mayor Murray, Councillors Eadie, Angus, Clement, Gerbasi, Lubosch, Pagtakhan, Smith, Steeves, Thomas, Wyatt, Lazarenko, Mr. Speaker Councillor O'Shaughnessy.

Nays

Councillors De Smedt, Steek.

City Clerk: The vote Mr. Speaker, Yeas 13, Nays 2.

Mr. Speaker: Item No. 11 is carried. Item 10 regarding assessment. All in favour please rise.

A RECORDED VOTE was taken the result being as follows:

Yeas

His Worship Mayor Murray, Councillors Eadie, Angus, Clement, De Smedt, Gerbasi, Lubosch, Pagtakhan, Smith, Steek, Steeves, Thomas, Wyatt, Lazarenko, Mr. Speaker Councillor O'Shaughnessy.

Mr. Speaker: Unanimous. On clause 9, as amended. All in favour please rise.

A RECORDED VOTE was taken the result being as follows:

Yeas

His Worship Mayor Murray, Councillors Eadie, Angus, Clement, De Smedt, Gerbasi, Lubosch, Pagtakhan, Steeves, Thomas, Mr. Speaker Councillor O'Shaughnessy.

Nays

Councillors Smith, Steek, Wyatt, Lazarenko.

City Clerk: The vote Mr. Speaker, Yeas 11, Nays 4.

Mr. Speaker: Item No. 9 is carried. Item 8 regarding transfer fees and charges. All in favour please rise.

A RECORDED VOTE was taken the result being as follows:

Yeas

His Worship Mayor Murray, Councillors Eadie, Angus, Clement, Gerbasi, Pagtakhan, Smith, Steeves, Thomas, Mr. Speaker Councillor O'Shaughnessy.

Nays

Councillors De Smedt, Lubosch, Steek, Wyatt, Lazarenko.

City Clerk: The vote Mr. Speaker, Yeas 10, Nays 5.

Mr. Speaker: It's carried. Item No. 7. All in favour please rise.

A RECORDED VOTE was taken the result being as follows:

Yeas

His Worship Mayor Murray, Councillors Eadie, Angus, Clement, Gerbasi, Pagtakhan, Smith, Steeves, Thomas, Wyatt, Lazarenko, Mr. Speaker Councillor O'Shaughnessy.

Nays

Councillors De Smedt, Lubosch, Steek.

City Clerk: The vote Mr. Speaker, Yeas 12, Nays 3.

Mr. Speaker: Item No. 7 is carried. Item No. 6 on the GST rebate. All in favour please rise.

A RECORDED VOTE was taken the result being as follows:

Yeas

His Worship Mayor Murray, Councillors Eadie, Clement, Gerbasi, Pagtakhan, Smith, Steeves, Thomas, Lazarenko, Mr. Speaker Councillor O'Shaughnessy.

Nays

Councillors Angus, De Smedt, Lubosch, Steek, Wyatt.

City Clerk: The vote Mr. Speaker, Yeas 10, Nays 5.

Mr. Speaker: It's carried. Item No. 5, all in favour please rise.

A RECORDED VOTE was taken the result being as follows:

Yeas

His Worship Mayor Murray, Councillors Eadie, Angus, Clement, Gerbasi, Pagtakhan, Smith, Steeves, Thomas, Lazarenko, Mr. Speaker Councillor O'Shaughnessy.

Nays

Councillors De Smedt, Lubosch, Steek, Wyatt.

City Clerk: The vote Mr. Speaker, Yeas 11, Nays 4.

Mr. Speaker: Item No. 5 is carried. Item No. 4, business tax rate for 2004. All in favour please rise.

A RECORDED VOTE was taken the result being as follows:

Yeas

His Worship Mayor Murray, Councillors Eadie, Angus, Clement, Gerbasi, Lubosch, Pagtakhan, Smith, Steek, Steeves, Thomas, Lazarenko, Mr. Speaker Councillor O'Shaughnessy.

Nays

Councillors De Smedt, Wyatt.

City Clerk: The vote Mr. Speaker, Yeas 13, Nays 2.

Mr. Speaker: Item No. 4 is carried.

Item No. 3. All in favour please rise.

A RECORDED VOTE was taken the result being as follows:

Yeas

His Worship Mayor Murray, Councillors Eadie, Angus, Clement, Gerbasi, Pagtakhan, Smith, Steek, Steeves, Thomas, Lazarenko, Mr. Speaker Councillor O'Shaughnessy.

Nays

Councillors De Smedt, Lubosch, Wyatt.

City Clerk: The vote Mr. Speaker, Yeas 12, Nays 3.

Mr. Speaker: Item No. 3 is carried. Item No. 2, all in favour please rise.

A RECORDED VOTE was taken the result being as follows:

Yeas

His Worship Mayor Murray, Councillors Eadie, Angus, Clement, De Smedt, Gerbasi, Pagtakhan, Smith, Steek, Steeves, Thomas, Wyatt, Lazarenko, Mr. Speaker Councillor O'Shaughnessy.

Nays

Councillor Lubosch.

City Clerk: The vote Mr. Speaker, Yeas 14, Nays 1.

Mr. Speaker: Item No. 2 is carried. Item No. 1. All in favour please rise.

A RECORDED VOTE was taken the result being as follows:

Yeas

His Worship Mayor Murray, Councillors Eadie, Angus, Clement, Gerbasi, Pagtakhan, Smith, Steeves, Thomas, Lazarenko, Mr. Speaker Councillor O'Shaughnessy.

Nays

Councillors De Smedt, Lubosch, Steek, Wyatt.

City Clerk: The vote Mr. Speaker, Yeas 11, Nays 4.

Mr. Speaker: The item is carried. Finally on Item No. 12. All in favour? Contrary? Carried.

By-laws.

EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE CONSIDERATION OF BY-LAWS

Mayor Murray: I just want to thank Council for I think healthy budget process and some good ideas and changes. And the changes by-laws are, By-laws numbered 51/2004, 52/2004 and 53/2004, be read a first time.

Mr. Speaker: All in favour? Contrary? Carried.

Clerk: By-laws numbered 51/2004, 52/2004 and 53/2004.

Mayor Murray: I'll move that by-laws numbered 51/2004, 52/2004 and 53/2004, be read a second time.

Mr. Speaker: All in favour? Contrary? Carried.

Clerk: By-laws numbered 51/2004, 52/2004 and 53/2004.

Mayor Murray: I'll move that the rule be suspended and by-laws numbered 51/2004, 52/2004 and 53/2004, be read a third time, and that the same be passed and ordered to be signed and sealed.

Mr. Speaker: All in favour? Contrary? Carried.

Councillor Wyatt moves adjournment. Roll Call.

ROLL CALL

Clerk: Mr. Speaker Councillor O'Shaughnessy, His Worship Mayor Murray, Councillors Eadie, Angus, Clement, De Smedt, Gerbasi, Lubosch, Pagtakhan, Smith, Steek, Steeves, Thomas, Wyatt and Lazarenko.

COUNCIL ADJOURNED AT 2:51 P.M.

COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WINNIPEG
Tuesday, March 23, 2004
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