

City Clerk's Office

**Secretariat**  
Patsy Morris  
**Executive Committee**  
City Hall, 10<sup>th</sup> Floor, West  
100 Queen Street West  
Toronto, Ontario M5H 2N2**Tel:** 416-392-9151  
**Fax:** 416-392-1879  
**Email:** [exc@toronto.ca](mailto:exc@toronto.ca)  
**Web:** [www.toronto.ca](http://www.toronto.ca)

Date: November 3, 2009

To: Employee and Labour Relations Committee

From: Executive Committee

Subject: Toronto Water 2010 – 2019 Capital Program - Concerns Identified by the Toronto Civic Employees' Union, Local 416

The Executive Committee on November 2, 2009, amongst other things, referred the communication (November 2, 2009) from Mr. Mark Ferguson, President, Toronto Civic Employees' Union, CUPE Local 416, to the Employee and Labour Relations Committee with a request that the Committee review the concerns outlined in the aforementioned communication and make recommendations related to any health and safety issues raised within this communication.

Background:

The Executive Committee on November 2, 2009, gave consideration to the following:

1. reports from the Budget Committee respecting the Toronto Water 2010-2019 Capital Program; the 2010 Water and Wastewater Service Rate; and the Toronto Water 2010 Operating Budget.
2. a communication (November 2, 2009) from Mr. Mark Ferguson, President, Toronto Civic Employees Union, CUPE Local 416, regarding 2010 Operating Budgets: Solid Waste Management and Water Divisions.

The following persons addressed the Executive Committee:

Mr. Dave Hewitt, Vice-President, Toronto Civic Employees Union, CUPE Local 416  
Ms. Bozena Mathlin, Toronto Civic Employees Union, CUPE Local 416

P. Morris

EX36.22  
EX36.24  
EX36.27  
Attach.





## LOCAL 416

Affiliated with CUPE,  
Canadian Labour Congress

**MARK FERGUSON**  
*President*

**DAVE HEWITT**  
*Vice-President*

**DARIN JACKSON**  
*Secretary-Treasurer*

**JIM INNES**  
*Recording Secretary*

**RON JOHNSON**  
*Chief of Stewards*

**PETER OUELLETTE**  
*Chief of Health & Safety*

**BOZENA MATHLIN**  
*Outside Division Chair*

## Toronto Civic Employees' Union, Local 416

110 Laird Drive  
Toronto, ON M4G 3V3

Tel: 416-968-7721

Fax: 416-968-7829

[www.local416.org](http://www.local416.org)

November 2, 2009

Mayor David Miller  
& Executive Committee Members

### RE: 2010 OPERATING BUDGETS: Solid Waste Management & Water Divisions

#### Introduction

- Like our sister union, CUPE Local 79, Local 416 wants to know what the big rush is. Why would we receive a copy of the proposed operating budget about 5:00 on a Friday afternoon, for consideration by the Budget Committee the next Monday morning? If Council wanted any real consideration from the people who actually provide the service – the members of CUPE Locals 416 and 79 – or from the public, there would be more time for consultation and input. We hope the rest of the budget process will not be the same.
- Our second general point continues on the theme of consultation. We are not living under a rock. We know that times are tough. We know that the City is going to be looking for efficiencies to keep costs down. But we want to tell you that we have the same position now that we had in bargaining – we are more than willing to help you look for efficiencies, but we will not agree that costs savings should be all on the backs of our members. Nor will we agree with gutting the city's services in the next few years while we hope for good times later on. If we all share the objective of protecting public services through these tough times, then City management and City Council needs to take time to consult with its employees through the unions about how to restrain costs.

#### Water Operating Budget

- First we want to address the Water operating budget. There are 3 particular proposals in that budget that we want to comment on.
- The proposal to delete 12 positions is a proposal to go down to one person per shift for the water treatment plants – a proposal that Council turned down in 2004 because it jeopardizes public safety as well as the safety of the workers.
- Right now there are 2 plant technicians in each of the City's water treatment plants on each shift, 24 hours per day, 7 days per week. The proposal to delete 12 of these positions is based on a very shaky assumption that with automation only one person is needed per shift per plant.
- But what if something goes wrong in the plant? What if there's a breakdown in one part of the plant – say after the power goes off as it does more than once a year – and this single operator has to leave the control room to try to manually fix the chemical mix while something else is going wrong?
- What if she or he is injured while trying to fix something, or falls ill, and there's no one else in the water treatment plant?

- Automation doesn't work 100% of the time. There are still issues with it. Some of the equipment still not working properly. For instance, automated chemical switch-overs are not working at all the plants. Some are still done strictly manually.
- In our view it is not safe for the public or for the workers to have only one person on shift in each of the plants. Reducing public safety and employees' safety in that way will save the City only \$1.07 million dollars, or .28% - less than 1/3 of 1% of the operating budget. There has to be a better way.
- If there is only one person scheduled in each plant, whenever another person is needed -- after an extreme weather event, or in case of malfunctioning and emergency repairs, or whatever -- the additional staff have to come in on overtime. Part of the big overtime budget in the division right now is caused by the gapping of plant technician jobs.
- You will see that overtime costs for the Division are projected at \$8.4 million. But in another part of the document the Division says it can save money by increasing gapping \$164,000 to maintain a 3% rate. Cutting back the plant technicians and gapping both result in higher overtime expenses.
- Our union has agreed to sit down with management and take a look at all the schedules for the division in order to reduce overtime -- and if we are doing that to save members' jobs we will, but not if it's a way to reduce members' jobs.
- The other part of the Water operating budget proposal we want to comment on is the proposal to cut back on training. It was unbelievable to us, after seven months at the bargaining table talking about the mutual benefits of training our members almost every week, and the commitments that were made, to open this budget report and see that cut-backs to training for our members is the first cut on the list -- to save \$93,000 -- less than .03% of the operating budget. What that tells us is that the City has no intention of having a succession plan to replace the plant operators -- given that the average age is well over 50 and there almost no other Class 4 plants in the province where the City could poach operators.
- There are better ways to constrain costs in the Water Budget. If overtime costs were cut by even 20%, that would save more money than cutting the plant technician positions and cutting back training.

#### ***Solid Waste Budget***

- We also want to comment on the proposal for the Solid Waste Division 2010 budget proposal.
- The proposal in Solid Waste is to reduce the staff complement by almost 50 positions. It isn't possible for us to have a real discussion in this room with a 5 minute deputation about what the impact of all of these reductions will be and how savings might be better managed. There needs to be real consultation with the union to arrive at that kind of understanding.
- The proposals are to transfer 13 people to MLS, to postpone 7 jobs, create 4 new jobs and delete 30 jobs.
- Fifteen of the deleted jobs are the result of moving to one-person auto-loading garbage trucks.
- Eleven of those jobs are litter pickers' jobs, mostly doing manual collection on walking routes. The analyst's report says that those jobs won't be needed because there will be more automation and better schedules. What it doesn't tell you is that those jobs are often filled by employees on modified duties. The report doesn't tell you if it's more or less expensive to have employees on modified duties doing manual litter collection, or on LTD because the city can't find suitable jobs for them.
- The proposal is to postpone opening the re-use centres. We think that's "robbing Peter to pay Paul". Re-use centres generate revenue, and if we don't open them we will continue to pay to haul the material to landfill. Re-use centres

also provide modified work for our members who are no longer able to do jobs at which they have been injured or become ill.

- We have proposed to the City that efficiencies can be had by creating a corporate budget for workers on accommodation in order to relieve the operating divisions of the cost of offering modified work and accommodation. If that happened, you might see that these jobs are good deals for the City because they offer meaningful work to members who have are injured or become ill, rather than seeing these jobs as expendable.
- We also want to note the irony of adopting a new sustainable energy strategy on the same day you postpone the further roll-out of the green bin program in apartments.
- In our view cutting 50 jobs from the Solid Waste Division will increase the reliance on temporary work, which creates more precarious work in the city, and creates instability in operations that we have been working with management to mitigate.
- We're not denying that the City needs to restrain costs – but it better not all be coming from front line service delivery. What about contracts with outside service providers and consultants? Have you sat down and looked at whether or not contracting-in could save money? How about looking at boondoggles like the P3 contract for the pelletizer down at Ashbridges Bay with its shrinking capacity to process sludge and its increased cost per tonne. What about other revenue generation proposals? Does the Division have a plan to capture the methane at Green Lane for co-generation to offset electricity requirements or sell into the grid? What about the City's other old landfills?
- There are better ways to contain costs than to cut jobs and cut public services.

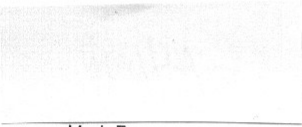
#### **Conclusion**

In conclusion, we just want to remind you that:

- Toronto still has the lowest residential property tax rate out of all 25 municipalities in the GTA.
- Toronto is still reaping the results of downloading and Council's decision to hold to 0% tax increases year-after-year during and after the last recession.
- The province is doing too little too late about downloading. The uploading of social service costs won't have any noticeable impact for several more years – after the City has already suffered through this recession. We can't let the province off the hook.

Local 416 hopes that the rest of the budget process will be much more consultative and much more transparent.

Sincerely,

  
Mark Ferguson  
President  
Toronto Civic Employees'  
Union – CUPE Local 416

dir/cope343