



Canadian Union of Public Employees

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- Recreation Workers Part-Time
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Toronto Community Housing Corporation

SERVING OUR MEMBERS SINCE 1942

September 24, 2013

Mayor Rob Ford, Chair and Members of the Executive Committee
10th Floor, West Tower
City Hall
100 Queen Street West
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2

Dear Mayor Ford and Members of the Executive Committee:

RE: EX34.3 – 2014 Service Level Review

City Manager’s Office, Office of the Deputy City Manager/Chief Financial Officer, City Clerk’s Office, Legal Services

The Service Level Review process has been budget-driven, not an informative review of community service level needs. The result has often been service level reports containing contradictory information or glaring omissions that get in the way of giving Councillors and Committees a full understanding of what is happening in the Divisions.

At bottom, the review exposes the fact that services are being reduced as Divisions are asked to do more with less this year and next year. Throughout the process, Division after Division has identified understaffing as a major problem in maintaining service levels. Although City Councillors approve staffing complements during the budget deliberations, the number of vacant positions continues to grow and positions remain unfilled, year over year.

This trend has continued with the Service Level Reviews being presented to the Executive Committee today.

City Clerk’s Office

Local 79 concurs with the Vision of the City Clerk’s Office, which envisions “a city in which all are fully engaged in and open and accessible local government.” We are also starkly aware of the gap between the resources the City Clerk’s Office has and the demands placed upon it, thus making this vision less likely to be achieved.

According to the Service Level Review, of the total 2013 approved operating positions – 392.75 – there were 30.75 permanent and temporary positions unfilled as of August 2013.

Like most of the Divisions various committees have been examining, the City Clerk’s Office needs more resources – human resources.

According to the Service Level Review the top challenge or priority is the “availability of experienced and knowledgeable staff to undertake democratic renewal of elections”. This is a fundamentally important service and integral to a functioning democracy.

The Office is quite clear that a major challenge it faces in 2014 is to “continue core service delivery in the face of increasing work load demands”.

According to the Review challenges abound in the City Clerk's Office:

- There is a "Need to show the public that the City Clerk's Office processes are open, accountable, transparent and accessible" and a major "challenge in order to accomplish this in the face of growth and increasing diversity of population with reduced resources".
- The office is "Keeping pace with changing technology and increasing public expectations for open accessible information available on-demand while coping with already reduced resources".

The Conclusion summarizes the situation: "Current staffing and budget resources are limited and barely sufficient to manage growing demand and diversity of Toronto's population".

Legal Services

Staffing is also a problem in Legal Services. The Service Level Review shows 294 approved positions in 2013 but the actual number of positions for 2012 was 274 – 20 positions remained unfilled.

The Service Level Review for the Deputy City Manager's Office recommended "hiring more internal legal staff to reduce reliance on external litigation".

Providing more legal services in-house sounds like a good idea. There would appear to be 20 vacant positions in Legal Services; will these vacancies be filled and the staffing complement increased in order to bring more services in-house?

Deputy City Manager (DCM) and Chief Financial Officer (CFO)

The Service Level Review notes that there are 125 approved positions (94 Operating and 31 Capital) in 2013, but again provides no information about how many people are actually at work, providing services here. The Offices of the DCM and CFO are responsible for Finance & Administration, Corporate Finance and Financial Planning. These are major portfolios, but without complete information how can the Committee determine whether the staffing levels are adequate?

Challenges for the DCM & CFO's Offices are heavy and complex – "completing work on closing the funding gap in the City's operating budget while addressing growing demands for service expansion and escalating costs to deliver current service levels". That's quite a challenge in a flat-lined budget context.

But this brings us to another contradiction. The DCM & CFO propose 'continuing to monetize City assets' to generate funding. Monetizing can mean many things, but too often it has meant selling off assets belonging to all Torontonians as a band-aide solution to longer-term problems.

If there is a gap between revenue and service-levels, and the Deputy City Manager wants to pursue service-based budgeting (as Local 79 thinks the City should) then it is irresponsible to advocate monetizing City assets while also adding to budget pressures by reducing revenue streams such as the Municipal Land Transfer Tax (MLTT) and residential property taxes. A 10 per cent reduction is proposed in the case of MLTT and \$6 million in lost revenue is anticipated from a 0.25% reduction to the residential property tax increase.

City Manager's Office

In 2012 there were 422.2 approved positions in the City Manager's Office, but the actual number of positions at the end of the year was 375.3, leaving 47 vacant positions (11.1%). The Service Level Review notes the

approved staffing level at the City Manager's Office for 2013 is 424.5 but gives no indication of what the actual staffing level is.

At the Budget Committee earlier this month, the City Manager commented on the fact that there were over 2,500 vacant positions by June 2013, and that the cuts in the Human Resources department in the past were too deep. In order to maintain or increase staffing levels the HR department needs adequate staffing as well.

Hiring across Divisions has been hindered by the lack of staff and there appears to be a contradiction in projected Service levels. A major challenge for Human resources is the fact that although recruiting activity has increased by 50% since 2010, the staff available to actually perform employment services has decreased by 20% since 2009!

The bottom line is that there needs to be a lot of hiring here at the City.

Conclusions

To conclude, I want to reiterate Local 79's support for service-level-driven budgeting. But as we come to the end of the Service Level Reviews in preparation for the 2014 budget process I can't help but observe that the Offices chiefly responsible for public engagement and the budget consultation processes have very little to say about how public input is ensured. More concerning, the Reports before you have failed to ensure that across the board, the Service Level Review process has been based on consistent, clear numbers that demonstrate trends across time, whether Divisions are staffed adequately to meet service demands, and **actual figures** for 2013.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'T. Maguire', written in a cursive style.

Tim Maguire
President