

Hello,

I am writing to you today to once again call for an immediate freeze to the OPS budget.

In previous police board meetings, the point was raised that the majority of Ottawa residents are in fact against a freeze to the police budget. It was suggested that actions from the board should align with the majority voice; however, it must be acknowledged that not all members of our community have the same instance of interaction with police, nor are those interactions comparable in nature. When a racialized individual says that they fear for their and their children's safety should the police continue to take on roles they are sorely unequipped for, such as mental health intervention, this is not the same as a predominately white running group saying that they would need to recruit more volunteers if police presence was cut during race weekend. When an unhoused individual recounts countless instances in which they felt dehumanized in an interaction with an officer, this is not comparable to a shopper in the downtown saying that they were made uncomfortable by the sight of visible poverty. When an individual struggling with addiction is criminalized as opposed to being connected with care options, this cannot be weighed against an insurance company conflating municipal police presence with the prevention of organized crime.

There are several delegates on the docket today who are new faces at these meetings. While it is important to hear all perspectives, it is crucial that the board consider said perspectives proportionately and appropriately. I am asking you to prioritize the voices and concerns of those who have continually and consistently called for a budget freeze citing serious consequences to their safety and well-being above those who are simply made slightly uncomfortable by changes to the status quo.

Your job is to serve and protect, not cater and coddle. I am asking you to do your job.

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