

From: Emma Bider
Sent: November 19, 2021 2:52 PM
Subject: Ottawa Police Services Board meeting written delegation

Writing this, I feel like it's groundhog day. A year ago community groups and concerned citizens were fighting for a freeze of the OPS budget. That didn't happen. But a promise was made that the budget wouldn't increase in 2022. And yet now, OPSB is about to approve a budget increase of 2.86 percent or \$14.7 million.

This feels like a betrayal. To have said you would fight for a freeze and then with nary an excuse let this come to budget talks feels like a tactic to shut people up, to stop our whining so council members can get on with their very important jobs of doing what they believe is good for the community in defiance of what the community is saying. OPSB seems to think "they know what's best" for Ottawa, ignoring the efforts and constant pushback from the people they claim to serve.

\$14.7 million. That's more than has been proposed for cycling infrastructure, for hiring paramedics, for long term care homes and for climate change and resiliency. Yet all those things will make people's lives better in Ottawa and I do not believe more police make people's lives better.

A case in point: a few days ago one of my neighbours had their car stolen. People offered door cam footage, offered condolences, and shared information. The police came and took a statement. Are they going to see if there are prevention methods for this kind of thing? Are they going to create a program to help lift people out of poverty so they don't feel compelled to steal cars? Are they going to support a block-level community safety team, to formalize the help we already provide each other?

No. The police will not do any of these things that would address the systemic underlying causes of car theft. They will take a statement and provide a report for insurance. Important? Sure. Worth \$14.7 million? I really, really don't think so.

I ask the OPSB to consider the promise they made, and consider the damage to community relations if you do not fight this budget increase. There will be no more trust in the board's capacity to make change. Please, do not approve this budget.

Emma Bider