

# Jack's Recap

June 22: Hiring Freeze! Did I hear Hiring Freeze????!!

I won't go through all 24 items on the agenda (many of the items had no tabled resolutions brought forward). So, I will concentrate on the most contentious items. If you want to call yourself a leader then you must lead by example. I don't have an exact number, but this Mayor has come down from the pulpit so many times I have lost count. Last night was no exception as the Mayor relinquished his chair to deputy mayor Rinaldo . He presented no less than 11 items, from off road vehicles using the city streets to the proper disposal of pet manure in our garbage and even a referendum on the ward system. After each item was thoroughly presented a discussion ensued and then the Mayor without properly being recognized answered most of the questions brought up during the discussion. This really seemed to irk councillor Dubeau who after being recognized said "I have been biting my tongue" it seems the rules of governance don't apply to our Mayor, even our CAO Joe Torlone interrupted a few times without being properly recognized.

In all my years of faithfully viewing these meetings I have never witnessed such 'free for alls.' The Mayor proposed a referendum on the ward system but later withdrew it because of lack of positive feedback. Councillor Campbell stated that this council was elected to make decisions not to vote for referendums, this turned into a rather heated exchange between both the Mayor and the councillor. The Mayor should have polled his councillors to see what their appetite would be on certain subjects.

Hiring freeze? Where have I heard this before? Councillor Dubeau proposed a "hiring freeze." Councillors Marks and Rinaldo both spoke against this. Whether intentional or accidental, all of Councillor Rinaldo's remarks were not heard she did not turn on her microphone. Nonetheless all seem to agree that this should not be discussed until after the core services review is completed in late August. Councillor Dubeau is asking for a concensus vote tonight and will formally introduce the motion next meeting. I must admit feeling a bit dismayed by the lack of will power of this council to curb some of the spending in this city. Council as a whole wants to send a letter of protest to Canada Post who will be doing away with home delivery, not by laying off thousands of letter carriers but through attrition. If a large company as with many other companies can do this to save money, then why could we not adopt a similar strategy to save taxpayers dollars?

Councillor Campbell presented the waste water and secondary sewer plant audit. Councillor Campbell is of the feeling that no one from the city is taking ownership of this audit. Presently, Deloitte is losing valuable opportunities to conclude its audit because most of the sub-contractors are now leaving. CAO Joe Torlone assured Councillor Campbell that despite the two week delay the city's staff is fully onboard and will cooperate completely with the audit. The audit company of Deloitte will be placed on

next week's agenda. Another contentious issue to come... Councillor Rinaldo is completely confused and admits as much as to the subject of this audit. She again does not fail to remind councillor Campbell that she was there during the debates and that he is a rookie councillor. A consensus vote was taken and passed unanimously to have the audit firm attend the next meeting.

Road funding was another hot button topic with an estimated \$50 million dollar cost to properly repair our major thoroughfare. The Mayor proposed that we start setting aside \$1 million annually to be used for road repairs. Councillor Campbell reminded council that the \$40 million debenture taken out for the waste water debacle will be due soon and the payments will have to be made not ignored. I have to ask out loud where could the city find millions of dollars to help with road repairs or debenture payments? Would the fact that we are the only city in the core services review comparatives that own and operate a LTCF be the answer ?

I don't know how you all feel about a first responder department doing away with psychological testing prior to hiring a candidate. This is normal practice in most industries today. And as councillor Grzela says it only takes one candidate to fall through the cracks for the city to be in real trouble. The consensus was that psychological testing should continue. Emergency personnel should be counted on to be stable people who are capable of working under very harsh and stressful conditions.

This meeting lasted just over 4 hours with over 24 items to cover, so to give you a synopsis in just a few paragraphs is extremely difficult. As is my usual I recommend that you view the meeting for yourself at [Timmins.ca](http://Timmins.ca)

That's a rap on this week's recap!