

Jack's Recap

June 15, 2015: Trucks, trucks and more trucks!

If my recollection is accurate the city purchased 6 new trucks last year, with one of them being a one ton for the cemetery and so far this year another 6 new trucks have been added to the city's fleet. I am certain I am light on these numbers but cannot verify them. I can tell you that 3 of them this year are 4x4's while replacing existing 4x2's I have to ask if 12 pickups in our fleet were worn to the point of being in-operative. I know this is 'nickel and diming' the city; However, I know for a fact that when I worked at Kidd our crew truck had to be beyond repair before a purchase order would be approved for a replacement

The engineering department has found more money in the city's budget to replace the equipment yard structure in the east end. A private lot will be purchased at a *cool* \$1.1million to replace a building that would require an investment of \$50,000 to repair. Then the city will spend another \$3.6million to construct two new buildings (and don't forget these are Luc Duval's estimates). Yes, I said TWO new structures! It seems engineering knows that we have three debts that will be paid off next year, so the debt repayment money allocated to these three debts can now be used to purchase a lot and build two new structures. To my recollection, the scope of this project was never discussed during this year's budget deliberations.

Another hot button topic is the repurposing of the vacant Lionel Gauthier School. It seems that most councillors are aware of the need for more apartments in the city, but the sticking point is the number of parking spots allocated per unit. The current By-Law calls for 1.2 spots per unit. The rezoning is asking for this number to be reduced to only 1.0 per unit. Councillors Bamford ,Campbell and Rinaldo point out that the by-law was created for a reason and not following this by-Law would undermine many of our by-laws. The proponent Mr. Peter Beacage assures council that all of his new buildings do not use the 1.2 parking spots formula as required by the present by-law. His assurances seemed to have swayed both the planning director and those councillors initially opposed to the request. If the city doesn't follow its own rules then the public will not as well. In the end the only one to vote against rezoning was Councillor Campbell. This rezoning by-law is for the existing buildings only. The remaining two new buildings proposed will remain as a contentious issue from this point forth.

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