

Councillor Margaret McCarthy  
Opening Remarks  
May 7, 2008  
Community Meeting  
North Wentworth Arena

RE: Removal of Flamboro Slot Revenue

Thank you very much all of you for attending tonight's tax meeting:

The reason we are here is that there are some unavoidable facts that need to be identified.

Flamborough has been hit the hardest since amalgamation with taxes, we have seen the biggest increases than all the outlying areas since 2000.

Our tax contribution to the City of Hamilton, has virtually doubled since 2000 where 6.3 % of the population contributed \$28 Million to the City.

Now in 2008 with a population of 8.5% we are contributing a whopping \$54 Million to the City. Almost double since amalgamation, and in my view we have very little to show for it.

But it was the callus disregard displayed to this entire community that enraged me when the slot revenue was pulled at the eleventh and a half hour. After having over \$3.1 Million dollars placed in the budget to be used against our tax increases, Council by majority voted to take the casino money away, and that resulted in a 10% tax hike for the community.

In one year alone Flamborough who in 2002 made up only 7% of the population of the entire city contributed 42% of the new tax dollars to Hamilton. We have been paying more than our fair share, and this extra 10% tax increase can in no way be considered fair.

The Spectator and others want to deflect this as a personality issue.... it is not.

Back to the facts: The Regional Reports recommended "Area Rating" along with a 2% decrease to outlying areas in a report on amalgamation, we all know how wrong the 2% decrease has been for us. Area Rating can be permanently kept in place with respect to service levels (provided cost differential can be substantiated, (under bill 25 tax budget document 2001) and our service levels can be substantiated, and, it is critical to us that area rating be maintained, without it we would face an extra 10% increase in taxation.

The projects that are spoken of in terms of benefit to our community have long been anticipated and have been funded from Flamborough's reserves, along with development charges.

You will hear a lot of things tonight, but most of us will have our own experiences to draw from, the fact of the matter is our taxes have virtually doubled since amalgamation, and it is my view that we have had precious little to show for it.

Tonight we will get a City overview by Joe Rinaldo our head of finance, I ask you to be kind, Joe is here in an untenable situation, I ask you to remember that it was Joe who build in the \$3.1 million

dollars into the budget in the first place in order to help mitigate any drastic increase, only to have it pulled at the last minute by Council.

After Joe speaks I am introducing a resident of our community Janice Downton who has done research on how the community could move forward from this point on, and what options might be available to us for a challenge on our current situation.

I also want you to know that I respect each and every one of your frustrations, I feel them too, and certainly the press has had a field day with mine, don't let them do it to you. I ask for your patience in order that we move forward by putting our heads together to seek solutions that result in real change and better circumstances for us.

And with that I present - Joe Rinaldo.

Margaret McCarthy  
Flamborough Councillor, Ward 15