

McCarthy calls community press conference

Will announce plans for proceeding on slots revenues

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In the wake of Hamilton council's committee of the whole decision Monday to share the Flamboro Slots revenues equally throughout the city, Ward 15 Councillor Margaret McCarthy has called a community press conference prior to Wednesday evening's council meeting, at which politicians are expected to ratify the 2008 municipal budget.

The press conference will take place on April 23 at 4 p.m. at the Waterdown Municipal Office, 163 Dundas Street East. At that time, McCarthy will announce how she plans to proceed on the removal of the slots funding, which has historically been used to mitigate tax increases in Flamborough's Ward 14 and 15.

Since amalgamation in 2001, most of the slots revenues went to retire Flamborough's Borer's Creek debt but the remainder was used to ease its tax burden, which has been consistently higher than other parts of the city. Last year, with the debt having been paid, councillors agreed that just over \$3 million could be used to ease Flamborough's taxes, another \$500,000 was given to Ancaster to reduce its tax burden and \$268,000 was placed in the general levy.

Monday's decision means that Waterdown taxpayers in Ward 15, instead of facing a 5.3 per cent tax hike (the highest in the city) this year, will now be saddled with a 9.8 per cent increase. In rural Flamborough (Ward 14), the loss of the slots money equates to an 8.7 per cent tax increase instead of a 4.2 per cent hike.

City Council meets at 7 p.m. on Wednesday, April 23 in the Albion Room, on the second floor of the Hamilton Convention Centre.

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