



Media Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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City of Regina budget: Democracy in action? City Clerk refuses request to address Council

Regina, Saskatchewan – The Saskatchewan Council for Archives and Archivists (SCAA) has been raising concerns about the proposed City of Regina budget which would increase expenditures on communications and innovation consultants while putting at risk core functions of the City Clerk's Office. The average budget increase, across City departments, is 5%, while there is an equivalent cut to the City Clerk's Office (about \$60,000). The City Clerk's Office plays a vital role in the democratic process. Through its records management, freedom of information and archival functions, it provides timely access to authentic and accurate information, both current and historical.

After seeing the proposed city budget, the SCAA prepared a backgrounder about the cuts to the City Clerk's Office, raising concerns about implications in a number of areas. Our brief, to be presented at the Council meeting of April 17th, calls on Council to reconsider the cuts to the City Clerk's Office, contrasting the cuts to this Office with substantial increases in a number of other areas.

However, **the City Clerk has refused to allow the SCAA to appear before City Council**, and referred all correspondence received to a committee responsible for implementing the budget – the Finance and Administration Committee, meeting May 8th. **At this point, the budget will have already been passed by Council.**

Our brief focuses on the city budget as a whole and the City Clerk's budget in particular, and it is therefore very much in order for our brief to be discussed at the special budget meeting on April 17th.

The SCAA is at a loss to understand why our request to appear before Council has been refused. The media release about the 2007 city budget indicates: "To comment on the proposed 2007 budgets, the public can appear as a delegation before Council. To do so, submit a written brief that contains the full text of your presentation to the City Clerk's Office ... by Thursday, April 12 at 1 p.m." These instructions do not indicate that delegations are not allowed to focus only on one department. Indeed, other briefs that have been accepted include requests for increases to spending on the Civic Arts Fund, Tourism Regina, and public transit. Further, the City Clerk's report "Communications Received Related to the 2007 Budget" does not even refer to our brief or related correspondence. By refusing to allow delegations – and any correspondence – to be considered at the special Council meeting on April 17th, and referring all such submissions to a meeting on May 8th, after the budget will have been approved, **the City Clerk has indicated that the public may be permitted to comment on how these budget cuts will be implemented, but not comment on the budget itself.**

- 30 -

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Attachment: SCAA brief to City Council

Additional background: <http://scaa.sk.ca/cityregina.php>