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November 19, 2020

Mayor June Caul
Town of Fort Frances
320 Portage Avenue
Fort Frances, ON
P9A 3P9

Re: Proposed Rate Increase to Water and Sewer

Dear Honorable Mayor Caul,

I was informed via CFOB news today that the Town of Fort Frances is proposing an increase to the water and sewer rate. I am sending this letter to you in opposition of this rate increase.

Upon moving to the Town of Fort Frances from the Township of Watten in April of 2018, the bi-monthly water/sewer rate was set at a flat rate of \$169.40. In January 2019, this rate increased to \$175.38 and then again in January 2020 to \$180.10. While these rate increases appear to be minimal, they are cumulative and it is my opinion that the Town of Fort Frances is moving in the wrong direction. I am requesting that Town Council move to a metered water system, which would be more in line with global conservation measures and a more equitable system to lone occupants. It is my understanding that other municipalities in Ontario have a metred water system in place.

This proposed utility increase is in addition to residential property tax hikes. Personally, my taxes increased from \$3,062.56 in 2018 to \$3,097.29 in 2019, and again in 2020 to \$3,197.66.

One other concern in relation to the above, is that, in early March 2020, I was issued a parking ticket at about 3:00 am. Snow removal was not an issue on the day in question; however, I do question the veracity of these actions given I live alone on a quiet street.

I was poised to bring all of the above to your attention when the pandemic hit. Like many others, I travelled to bring my University student home (from Kingston) and upon return, focussed on staying safe and doing my part to be of service in my community. I sincerely appreciate all of the efforts the Town of Fort Frances in keeping the residents safe. In addition, I see the Town crews working tirelessly to keep our community clean and beautiful.

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I would like to take the opportunity to speak in favour of the waterfront development. I attended the virtual sessions earlier this year and feel the time to move forward is now. More consultations are unlikely to yield a consensus. I did complete the surveys with respect to the development as they became available. I believe this is where the tax dollars can be applied to the most benefit for all citizens in the future.

I just became aware of the opportunity to put forward a recommendation, and I understand the deadline is today for the November 23rd Town meeting, so I apologize for the brevity. However, I did feel compelled to voice my opinion in response to this invitation.

Sincerely,

Betty-Anne Johnson