

Thank you for the opportunity to speak today. As some of you know, I served from 2016 to 2020 on council and was fortunate enough to also serve on council's behalf on the Police Commission and National Police Governance Board. This gave me a unique perspective into policing in Canada and first hand experience in major Canadian cities.

The Regina police service budget is up for debate tonight. And as you know, under the police act your police commission creates and approves the budget and council is given the responsibility to approve or deny the request. This budget is created by representatives that council elects to the board. As you all know, amendments to the police budget must be made by the police commission.

In this years budget the elected representatives on your board has approved a longstanding request to for a supplemental unit, the air support unit. The approved unit has brought together provincial partners as well as SGI to provide funding. This unit was originally discussed all way back in 2017 but provincial budget decisions created challenges for all Saskatchewan municipalities, so it was put on the back burner.

In my tenure, provincial funding was extremely challenging to come across, generally the province took money from cities and left us depreciating assets. Here, they're offering to pay the majority of capital costs. This is a rare opportunity. This opportunity allows you as an employer to provide a significant increase to workplace safety for members and bring public safety to a level much higher than we can currently achieve in our city and surrounding municipalities.

I sat in the same chair as each of you and I know the weight you all bear in the decision making process. The part I always struggled with was the what if's. What if a member was killed in a situation where intel from that plane would have saved them. What if one of your residents, a senior citizen or child who wandered out in the winter could have been found sooner.

All I am asking today is that if you chose to vote no on this budget, that it is not because of the air support unit.

-Joel Murray
Ward 1 resident