

## Councillors split on proposed pay freeze

JANUARY 26, 2009

Watch for the usual chest-beating and finger-pointing over a possible pay freeze for politicians when Toronto City Council meets tomorrow for its first session of 2009.

Leading the charge to axe a pending cost-of-living increase is Councillor **Case Ootes** (Ward 29, Toronto-Danforth), who wants a debate as soon as possible. But even Councillor **Karen Stintz** (Ward 16, Eglinton-Lawrence), who backs his call, doubts they can pull in the necessary votes (30 of 45 council members) for a full-blown debate this week.

Given the daily chronicle of bleak economic news, Mr. Ootes says "it's an important symbolic action to freeze our salaries for at least the next year." With the city and its two civic unions about to negotiate a new contract this year, both Mr. Ootes and Ms. Stintz see a freeze as a signal of restraint for all city workers.

Other councillors have little patience for what they see as a headline-grabbling gesture worth a paltry \$90,000 in savings.

### Print Edition - Section Front



[Enlarge Image](#)

### More National Stories

- Are the Tamil Tigers being declawed in Toronto?
- IMF's forecast at odds with Ottawa's
- Soldier's mother endorses fine for MD
- Budget erases funding for key science agency
- Security costs rise five-fold to \$1-billion

- Go to the National section



"Pure grandstanding," huffs councillor **Howard Moscoe** (Ward 15, Eglinton-Lawrence), noting councillors already can opt to donate their raise to the city.

Under current rules, Toronto councillors are set to receive a cost-of-living hike in 2009 tied to the average inflation rate for 2008, or 2.3 per cent, according to Statistics Canada.

Toronto pols currently earn \$96,805 (compared to \$120,000 for Mississauga councillors who also serve on Peel Region council). Mayor **David Miller** earns \$163,040 (while Mississauga Mayor **Hazel McCallion** gets \$179,700, including her Peel pay).

Last month, Mr. Miller said he would forgo any cost-of-living raise this year.

Without a Toronto council debate, the pay freeze would be punted to the mayor's executive committee (and its procedural waste bin).

### **HELP WANTED (A LOT)**

As the gloom of an economic downturn settles in, the city is counting on two new agencies (urged by the mayor's blue-ribbon fiscal panel) to boost Toronto fortunes at home and abroad.

Mayor **David Miller** is playing a lead role in recruiting private-sector players to the boards of Build Toronto (to unlock the value of underused city land) and Invest Toronto (to lure quality-job businesses from afar).

With advice from business allies, the mayor is sifting through resumés from prospective board members. Last week, the city advertised for Invest Toronto's first chief executive, seeking walk-on-water credentials.

The new agencies, with Mr. Miller as chairman of both in the first year, are expected to be up and running by April, says council's economic development committee chairman **Kyle Rae**.

He is optimistic the new agencies can add much-needed economic sizzle, even this year. "We need to be out there and active," he says. "We're working very hard."

But councillor **Karen Stintz** doubts Mr. Miller is moving fast enough to secure some recession-fighting wins this year.

### **BOARD BEEFS UP**

The Toronto Board of Trade, which holds its annual shindig tonight, recently beefed up its operations with two top hires. **Richard Joy**, a former government relations/lobbyist and ex-Ontario Liberal political aide to then-municipal affairs minister **John Gerretsen**, is the board's new vice-president of policy and government relations. Former Toronto Life city hall scribe **Philip Preville** is director of public affairs.

*Got a tip? E-mail us at [insidecity@globeandmail.com](mailto:insidecity@globeandmail.com)*

globeandmail.com and The Globe and Mail are divisions of CTVglobemedia Publishing Inc., 444 Front St. W., Toronto, ON Canada M5V 2S9  
Phillip Crawley, Publisher