

INQUIRY OF THE CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

FROM: Councillor Michael Walker

DATE: October 11, 2007

SUBJECT: "FAIR TAXES" Campaign – www.fairtaxes.ca

Dear Mr. Pennachetti,

I am writing to inquire into the Mayor's "*Fair Taxes*" campaign he embarked upon to convince the public and dissenting members of City Council to support his proposal for two new taxes, a 2% land transfer tax and a \$60 vehicle registration tax. Launched on September 13th with an orchestrated rally/press conference in the Mayor's office, the campaign pushes the new taxes with little supporting rationale except a vision of what the new revenue would be spent on. In my opinion, this campaign does not reflect Toronto's tradition of open and balanced democracy.

This "*Fair Taxes*" campaign apparently originated in the Mayor's office and City Council was not involved in its development or approval. Some members of City Council have been delivered information and boxes of printed brochures, while other members have had no communication with the Mayor's office at all regarding this campaign for the new taxes.

Since there is no report on this campaign and the campaign materials are not attributed to anyone, I request current answers to the following questions regarding the "*Fair Taxes*" campaign:

- 1) What was/is the source of the funding for this campaign? What account?
- 2) Was/is there any volunteer time/private funds donated to this campaign? Who are the volunteers? Who are the donors? What are the donations?
- 3) How much did it cost to fund this campaign, from conception (please itemize the costs, including printing)?
- 4) How much is allocated to fund this campaign to its conclusion?
- 5) How much did the website creation cost? Who generated the content of the website? In whose name is the domain name registered, at whose cost?
- 6) Did any City staff and/or Council staff contribute to the generation and execution of this campaign? Who, how many and from what department/division? How many hours has each City staff member devote to this campaign to date?
- 7) Did any City department/division review any draft of this campaign before its commencement? Did City Legal review the final draft to clear any ethical conflicts or content issues, for example? Was any legal opinion regarding this campaign obtained before commencing it?

I ask these questions in the interest of transparency and responsible democratic decision-making. Many residents are concerned with the trend to shutout City Council from making decisions on public policy. Residents are also concerned about the seemingly divisive tactics currently being employed to shape the future of our city.

I look forward to your reply.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael Walker". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "M" and "W".

Michael Walker
Councillor – St. Paul's

Cc// Members of City Council