

Excerpt from City of Brockville – Budget Guidelines 2015

The City should create a Water and Environmental Services Advisory Board reporting to Council. The mandate of this Advisory Board would be to study, review and recommend to Council matters related to the operation and capital planning for Water and Wastewater. Opportunities for marketing water availability and low cost as an attractor for business should be included in planning. This Advisory Board should report on:

- **Water Rate Structure**
- **Operational and Capital Budgets for the Water /Wastewater and Environmental Services**
- Long Term Capital and Infrastructure Planning**
- **Sustainability and Environmental Requirements**

Rationale

The water rate structure is based on an unsustainable model. It is outdated, murky and is arbitrary. This needs to be addressed or the water users will experience a shock to their bills, because of the existing rate structure dependence on large users and the fire protection charge levied on certain ratepayers.

The City, by default, is running a water utility and the present structure of Council dealing with the utilities issues as if it were just another department does not provide for proper planning and oversight. There is a difference between a customer of a utility where they are buying or consuming a service, and a taxpayer who is paying taxes on their property based on its assessed value. It is important that there be proper oversight to ensure that water customers are not paying from the Water Budget for items that the taxpayer should be paying for.

The water budget is capital intensive and is heavily influenced by Provincial standards and requirements. It is important that there is long term planning to ensure that the capital projects are evaluated against risk and sustainability considerations.

The Water Advisory Board should produce Reports to Council every year on the status of the system and on the Capital Plan.