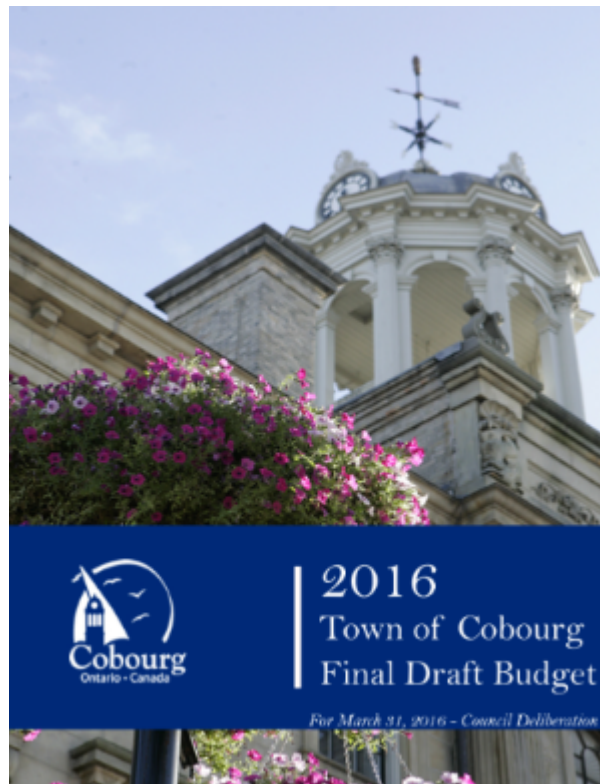




## It's been hot this Summer, but your CTA has been working for you

The Cobourg Taxpayers Association is enjoying the weather while staying on top of key issues here in town including:

- **Requesting a Semi-Annual Budget Report from Council**
- **Follow up to Live Streaming of all Council Meetings**
- **CTA intervenes in Lakefront Utilities Electricity Rate Increase**
- **CTA sends letter to Cobourg Police Services Board**



## **CTA Requests a Semi-Annual Budget Report**

Since, we are now halfway through the year, it is important that the citizens of Cobourg know the current status of the town's budget; i.e. are we on track, over or under budget for each department? If we are over, what steps are being taken to make adjustments for the remainder of the year? CTA sent a letter to council to ask. Link can be found here:

[First Half 2016 Town Spending](#)



## **Live Streaming of Council and Committee of the Whole meetings to start September 2016.**

Good news! It has been approved by council and will start on Sept. 12.

97% of our supporters rated this as extremely important. The CTA considers this a major victory for accountability and transparency of Council.

The CTA sent many letters and emails to all Council members stressing the importance of live streaming all meetings of Council. Currently only Cogeco subscribers have access to Council meetings. There is still concern about how long meetings will be archived for. We will continue to monitor this issue for you.

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### **The CTA applied to the Ontario Energy Board to be an official intervenor and we were accepted!**

There are two major components to your bill for electricity: the charge for the actual power used and the charge for getting the power to your home. Every four years the local distribution companies, Lakefront Utilities for Cobourg residents, decides how much they want to spend and who should pay – residential or business users. These spending plans are submitted to the Ontario Energy Board (OEB) which then decides which expenses are justified and sets the amounts that Lakefront is allowed to charge.

The allowed expenses are things like replacements for aging power poles and other distribution equipment, salaries and pensions for the workers, compensation for utility executives and Lakefront's Board of Directors and a profit for the Town of Cobourg who is the owner of Lakefront Utilities. Taken together, Lakefront plans to raise the distribution charges by more than 10%. This is in addition to huge increases in the cost of power that have been mandated by the Province!

To assist the OEB in deciding if the proposed spending plans are reasonable, intervenors can question Lakefront's plans and Lakefront must formally address their concerns. As a first for Cobourg, the CTA applied to the OEB to be an official intervenor and we were accepted. Since Lakefront must answer our questions this gives us a window into their largely secret operations.

A team of CTA supporters read the approximately 3000 pages of Lakefront's submission to the OEB and submitted approximately 30 questions about the effect of executive compensation, payments to board members, loans between

the Town of Cobourg and Lakefront, inconsistencies in Lakefront's plans and other areas. For the details, our questions together with Lakefront's huge submission is on the CTA website at <http://www.cobourgtaxpayers.ca>

Take a look if you are curious how much Lakefront workers are paid, loans at twice the normal interest rates, payments to the Board of Directors and many other items. There are no answers yet but we're looking forward to the next hearing which is in August. Stay tuned!



## **CTA recommendations for cost-savings for the Cobourg Police Services Board**

The CTA recently provided input & suggestions to the Cobourg Police Services Board (CPSB) and Police Chief Kai Liu - including:

The current CPSB Annual Report and Business Plan include very little content re. saving money and reducing costs;

CTA recommends that these documents show a real focus on and specific examples of cost-saving actions, decisions and plans.

- The Business Plan should clarify how much CPSB income comes from the 'criminal background check' business, and who decides how that income is used.
- The Annual Report or business plan should detail what the CPSB and Council are doing to pressure Ontario to reform the police and fire arbitration system that results in Police pay, benefits and security far superior to the private sector - which 'everyone', including our Mayor, agrees is unsustainable.
- The recent CPSB video focusses on community involvement. CTA thinks it or another video should focus on crime handling, processing and prevention.

Several of the new video's examples of community involvement could be done by lower paid professionals or no-cost volunteers; ***what is being done about that?***



## Formation of the Northumberland Taxpayers Coalition

A new county-wide taxpayers' group has formed. The new group is made up of the Brighton Citizen Group, the Cobourg Taxpayers Association, the Citizens' Council of Hamilton Township, Cramahe Community Association and the Port Hope Ratepayers Association. Its' purpose is to tackle the County Budget (and process) and to bring the watchful eyes (and voices) of taxpayers to County Council meetings. Stay tuned.



**PLEASE DONATE TO THE CTA**

The CTA is completely volunteer run with no paid staff, no funding from government or special interests. Donations will be used to pay for Freedom of Information requests, our website and other expenses to help everyone enjoy our Feel Good Town with less government waste and lower taxes.

Cheques are also welcomed and can be sent to:  
Cobourg Taxpayers Association  
24 Pebble Beach Dr.  
Cobourg ON K9A 2C5

**Contact us at: [info@cobourgtaxpayers.ca](mailto:info@cobourgtaxpayers.ca)**

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