

Political Accountability for Property Taxes in Tiny Township

1. The Municipal Component

During the years covered by this report, municipal Councils in Ontario were elected for three-year terms. Starting with the election of November 2006, the incoming Council (Mayor Peggy Breckenridge, Deputy Mayor George Lawrence, and Councillors André Claire, George Cornell, and Nigel Warren) will serve for four years.

Tiny's 2004, 2005 and 2006 Budgets were the responsibility of Mayor Robert Klug, Deputy Mayor Pierre-Paul Maurice, and Councillors Peggy Breckenridge, Ray Millar and Rob Panasiuk.

The Budgets of 2001, 2002 and 2003 were passed by Mayor Klug, Deputy Mayor Gordon Salisbury, and Councillors Bob Buchkowsky, Frank Hughes, and Pierre-Paul Maurice.

The Budgets of 1998, 1999 and 2000 were the responsibility of Mayor Anthony Lancia, Deputy Mayor Patricia O'Driscoll, and Councillors Frank Hughes, Gary Posey and Gordon Salisbury.

The Budgets of 1995, 1996 and 1997 were passed by Mayor Lancia, Deputy Mayor Doug Taylor, and Councillors Evelyn Klym, Susan Kronschnabl and Ron Clément (the latter was replaced partway through his term of office by Fern Maurice).

2. The County Component

After their election, the Mayor and Deputy Mayor of each municipality in Simcoe County (with the exception of the cities of Barrie and Orillia and the First Nations communities of Rama and Christian Island) automatically become members of the County Council as well, 32 in all. At meetings of County Council, informal votes are taken on the basis of one municipality, one vote; however, formal, recorded votes at County Council are weighted: each municipality is entitled to three votes for the first 5,000 names on its Voters List and one vote for every 2,000 additional names.

3. The Education Component

Prior to 1998, the Education levy was set in each municipality to recover the funding requirements set by the local School Boards. In that year the province took over responsibility for education funding, and set a uniform residential education tax rate. As part of each reassessment since 1998, this rate has been reset to offset the impact of

reassessment on property values. For example, the province-wide rate in 2006 is 0.264%, down from the 2005 rate of 0.296%. Business education tax rates are not uniform, due to historical assessment inequities and pre-1998 School Board decisions. The province is reducing these rates over time, targeting the reductions to municipalities with above-average rates on a case-by-case basis.

Education property taxes are not expected to cover the full cost of education: although they will raise over \$ 6 billion this year across the province, the remaining approximately \$ 11 billion in costs for elementary and secondary education is funded through grants from the province.