

Selling out

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Editor:

Recently, there has been a lot of coverage in the newspapers and on television concerning how high municipal wages are driving the cost of tax increases. One therefore wonders why, yet again, this Mayor and Council have sold out Quesnel's taxpayers.

The new contract for Byron Johnson shows that the City Manager has been re-hired at \$140,000 per year, with a \$10,000 signing bonus, \$10,000 relocation costs and \$50,000 relocation loan at prime for one year.

However, what is worse is that Mayor and Council have agreed to an increase of \$5,000 on Feb. 1, 2013, and a further \$5,000 on Aug. 1, 2013, which works out to 3.5 per cent and 3.4 per cent. They well know that the CUPE contract expires June 7, 2013. Already Council gave themselves in the last year a higher per cent raise than that provided for in the current collective agreement. The optics are terrible. It is going to be hard to justify why, if they can afford this for the highest paid employee, the same kind of percentage increase should not therefore be provided to every employee (including the mostly underpaid exempt staff). Yet, truly, the City cannot afford this type of increase without significant cuts. Why should the taxpayers have to make do with cuts, when they themselves are unlikely to see increases in this type of range? Why on earth should the City be providing the services of our local banks, without even making a profit?

How can this kind of expenditure can be justified? Surely most City taxpayers cannot be happy with this type of fiscal management.

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