

Newsletter – 23 June 2019



Elected representatives fail Ratepayers yet again

1. Most ratepayers in Port Phillip can expect increased rates as a result of the majority of Councillors voting on 19 June to accept a \$4 million increase in rates revenue. Indeed approximately 69% of ratepayers will experience a rate increase higher than the 2.5% rate cap!
2. Some ratepayers will receive a small reduction in their rates but the size of the reduction will be small compared to the massive increases that we have seen over the past 10 years.
3. Of the \$4 million increase in rates revenue \$2.5 million will go to pay wage rises for the Council's 870 employees in a year when the number of employees will reduce by 7 people.
4. We witnessed more examples in the 19th June Council meeting of poor accountability and transparency, mismanagement of assets, back-room deals leading to questionable spending, even sometimes against the advice of Council Officers!
5. Council Officers prepared papers for Councillors which addressed budget submissions from various other groups. However, *they did not have the courage to even respond to our submissions and those of our members!*¹
6. RoPP continues to hold individual Councillors accountable for voting for wasteful spending and poor management of Council assets. The table below shows the Councillors who voted to accept the Budget, thereby increasing rates and the cost of living in our community.

Councillor	Budget
Cost	\$4,000,000
Baxter (Canal ward)	For
Crawford (Canal ward)	For
Gross (Canal ward)	For
Pearl (Gateway ward)	Against
Simic (Gateway ward)	For

¹ <http://www.portphillip.vic.gov.au/14.2%20Report%20Council%20Plan%20and%20Budget.pdf>

Voss (Gateway ward)	Not at the meeting
Bond (Lake ward)	Against
Brand (Lake ward)	For
Copsey (Lake ward)	For

7. For anyone who wants to watch a webcast of Councillors speak to the Budget motion on 19 June you may click on the following link. The discussion is at item 14, at the 1h:22m mark.

<http://webcast.portphillip.vic.gov.au/archive/video19-0619.php>



Councillors treat your municipality as their playground

We heard from a Councillor at 3h:00m into the meeting (see link to webcast above) who justified the Budget rate rises on the basis that our city is the playground of Melbourne and is proud to provide visitors from all over the world free arts, cultural events and festivals in our Municipality. We heard other Councillors say they had a duty to fund arts and cultural events and festivals for everyone in metropolitan Melbourne. This is a good thing for visitors but we would like to remind these Councillor that it's the ratepayers who are making this City a great place for visitors. RoPP asks whether there has been sufficient scrutiny as to the reasonableness of the extent to which ratepayers are funding services to those who are not ratepayers, business owners and residents in Port Phillip. Is it more appropriate that Council

should encourage the free market to provide these additional services using Council assets at a fair market price?

Councillor accountability and election in 2020.

RoPP must ensure that Councillors who consistently vote to increase the rates burden on our community, and moreover to spend large amounts of our rates on non-core services, are not re-elected in October 2020. They have shown that they pay lip service to our concerns about the rising cost of living in our community. These people do not support prudent spending on behalf of the ratepayers of Port Phillip and their actions will be reciprocated.

We don't want budding politicians running our Council. We don't want people who waste ratepayer funds on non-core services, or ideologically driven warriors who have ambitions beyond roads, rates and rubbish. We want people who care about the Community and give back to the community by reducing rates.

We have a RoPP Facebook group

Please join our Ratepayers of Port Phillip Facebook group (see link below) and get involved in our conversation about rates, wasteful spending and mismanagement of assets.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/RoPPh/>

We also suggest that you follow the City of Port Phillip Facebook page (see link) and post comments about how you feel about your rates, wasteful spending and mismanagement of assets.

<https://www.facebook.com/cityofportphillip/>

RoPP community meeting at the St Kilda Sports Club

Thank you to everyone who attended our community meeting on Tuesday 18 June. Thanks for your comments and feedback. We appreciate those of you who have offered to help with letterboxing, social media, fundraising, research, marketing and communications. We will be in contact with you soon.

How can you help us and yourself?

Please pass this email to your friends, neighbours and business owners who are ratepayers or residents in the City of Port Phillip and encourage them to join up. Our subscriber/membership list is private and confidential but you need to be on our list to receive regular Newsletters.

If you would like to be involved in our activities please let us know. We are looking for people to assist with:

- Communications, newsletters;

- Social media and public relations;
- Speak at Council meetings on behalf of RoPP;
- Donate to RoPP.

Your donations help fund our activities such as maintaining the website, printing of materials to promote further memberships, holding meetings and electing new Councillors who support our objectives. Please make your donations to our bank account:

BSB: 063188

Account no.: 10461095

Account name: Ratepayers of Port Phillip

Your support is vital in being able to bring these issues to the attention of fellow ratepayers and to make the necessary changes within the Council to reduce your rates.

For those who are not bored by the details.....

Property valuations are performed by the Valuer General Victoria. The valuations in 2019 have generally moved in the opposite direction from the 2018 year. The following table shows the change in average rates movements (increases/decreases) by suburbs are:

Location	2019/20 average rates movement	2018/19 average rates movement
Fishermans Bend	-6.3%	-2.4%
Port Melbourne	-5.7%	16%
Balaclava	-5.3%	10.1%
St Kilda East	-4.3%	12.8%
Garden City	-3.8%	15.1%
Middle Park	-3.0%	9.7%
Elwood	-2.0%	5.2%
St Kilda	-1.8%	7%
Albert Park	-0.8%	8.9%
South Melbourne	0.1%	3.9%
Ripponlea	0.8%	8.4%
St Kilda West	1.5%	4.7%
Foreshore A (Beaconsfield Pde & Ormond Esp)	1.6%	2.3%
Foreshore B (Marine Pde & Ormond Esp)	2.6%	-0.9%
Windsor	2.8%	6.1%
Beacon Cove	3.8%	8.9%
Melbourne	4.0%	-8.2%

Note, these are preliminary figures.

The average rate rises for detached houses, commercial /retail properties and units in the 2019-20 Financial Year versus last year:

- Detached houses: -2.3% (9% in 2018)
- Commercial/ retail: 5.6% (-2.4% in 2018)
- Units: 6.7% (-3.5% in 2018)

A revaluation of all properties was carried out on 1 January 2019 and will apply to rates assessments from 1 July 2019. This is the first year when revaluations will occur annually. The following table summarises Net Annual Valuations (NAV) changes between 2018 and 2019 by property types.

Property Type	NAV % Change	No. of Assessments
Residential Dwellings	(8.5%)	15,366
Residential Units	(0.1%)	40,377
Investment Flats	(1.2%)	5,660
Other residential	(0.2%)	3,640
Commercial	(1.2%)	5,068
Retail	(1.1%)	1,790
Industrial	(1.2%)	981