

Report to the City of Toronto Budget Committee

Regarding city budget 2011 and continued funding of Federation of Metro Tenants Associations

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This is to accompany my deputation to the city budget committee for 2011.

My subject is the Federation of Metro Tenants Associations (FMTA) in particular, and the way money is given out to community groups in general.

As I will make clear in my oral deputation, and I think a few other people will also make clear, this group must go. It has become a complete abuse of power and public money, and a cause of criminal activity in order to silence whistleblowers. People have been pleading for a forensic audit of this group for more than a decade.

They have been protected because first, they are a sacred cow to left politicians. It is amazing what people who want to think of themselves as 'left' or 'progressive' will do if are told that this is a 'good' organization to be protected. Legal aid lawyers in particular have violated professional ethics to protect this bunch of thugs.

plenty of information

Some victims of FMTA have put together a good web page about it. It contains all the information anyone could ever need about them:

1) Their history, and why they degenerated from something that did protect tenants interests into something that serves only to suppress tenants.

2) Ample evidence of the way they talk with each other, and they way they slander those on their enemies list, the consistent language and method over ten years.

3) Exactly who protects them and why. Why the landlord lobby, except for some groups of small landlords, have no objection to FMTA and its funding by the city. Logically, they should be howling about it. FMTA is the perfect suppression system for the city's tenants, the 'troublesome class'.

4) The way key people in the city 'housing, shelter, and support' department cover their misdeeds, building an almost perfect wall around them during the Miller years. They also created a near flawless 'funding by stealth' system which funnels about half a million dollars a year to them. This is called the 'tenant defense subcommittee'. It is a great way of implicating as many city councillors as possible in FMTA's misdeeds, strengthening the

protection network.

5) How this secret funding system works, bypassing the community grants process. The tenant defense sub committee is created for the sole purpose of funding FMTA.

First, FMTA gets an untendered contract to run a 'tenant hotline', dispensing legal advice to tenants. The people staffing this hotline are totally untrained and unqualified. Their advice is often wrong and likely to get people evicted. A much better service is run by the provincial landlord and tenant board.

Second, it gets a large sum of money for a 'tenant defense fund'. This fund is to help tenants to pay for lawyers to combat illegal rent increases. The FMTA does not have any costs in administering it because that is done by the city staff. But if there is any money left over from the fund each year, the FMTA gets to keep it. So it is in FMTA's interest to discourage tenants from applying for the grant. Most of these funds disappear into the FMTA money sucking black hole.

Third, there are other, smaller ways by which the city bureaucrats steer funds to FMTA. It is impossible to find them all. Often FMTA gets paid an exorbitant sum to produce something like a tenant survival guide which is really only a slight update of an old one. A few years ago it received money to put its membership lists in order and never did it.

Fourth, FMTA collects a lot of money in membership fees. Everything is done by the city bureaucracy and the legal aid system to steer people to FMTA, which has nothing whatever to offer them but will pressure them to pay membership fees.

The cunning of this system is that nothing ever has to go to a council vote where it can be questioned.

6) The viciousness which FMTA and its protectors will resort to in order to silence criticism and prevent any possible alternative 'voice of tenants'. They have connections on the extreme left and the extreme right to further their campaigns of slander and intimidation.

FMTA has worked to destroy a business someone has created in order to partly fund a useful service he has been providing for years to tenants all over Ontario. They have been trying to force him to turn this work over to them.

FMTA, with help from legal aid Ontario and the corrupt Toronto police, railroaded a member of their board who demanded

proper accounting for funds and whom they could not intimidate. He spent several weeks in jail and is still trying to get justice done.

One ex employee of FMTA has now won a law suit against them. A number of legal actions by victims of FMTA are likely to begin soon, which could impact the city of Toronto.

What needs to be done, short term

The new administration at city hall has cut \$100 000 from the tenant defense fund. This implies we are not going to get real action about FMTA until the 2012 budget year. Meanwhile, FMTA's terrorizing of its 'enemies' intensifies.

They are also seeking new sources of funding from the legal aid system and possibly some other odd organizations. Their sugar daddies at Shelter, Housing, and Support have vowed to defend them to the end and are said to have a strategy.

One of the people now involved with FMTA in Toronto was running a federated group in Ottawa a decade ago. When he thought it was going to lose its funding he emptied the groups's bank accounts into his own pockets, stripped the office bare, and moved to Toronto.

We are aware that the new administration is very busy, but somebody must take this in hand. Someone at the city legal department has to get a court order, go into the FMTA offices, lock them and seize the bank accounts.

Then a full forensic audit must be done into where all this money has gone all the way back to 1998. The people who have been on that board must be made to understand that they are responsible for all that money.

The extravagant pension paid to Dan MacIntyre must be examined.

We are confident that if there is a real investigation, not some nonsense, criminal charges for fraud will result. And, that some city bureaucrats will and should lose their jobs.

At the very least, we need everything going to FMTA voted on in council, so we can see who supports them.

In the longer term

Once the initial dust has settled and waste and fraud rooted out, there must be a change to the whole culture at city hall, regarding community grants and awards of contracts for social services. These must be firewalled against political influence.

I am a socialist by conviction. However, I have found to my disgust that the 'left' affiliated councillors are the big cause of the problem. Public funds to support community work and provide community services must be used for that purpose. They must not be used to provide an income for political cadres, and to build political networks.

A culture needs to be developed that volunteer people doing community work should be paid stipends, not used as free labor. However, there should be no 'experts' and nobody should be making a living just off community work.

As well, city bureaucrats should not be trying to create a fake 'voice of tenants' or voice for any other group, which they control and will tell them what they want said. There are concerns that these bureaucrats have another pet 'voice of tenants' waiting in the wings if FMTA goes down. It would likely be this ACORN group.

If you want a voice for tenants, then create a tenant's advisory council. Find a way to elect real tenants from the community and pay them a stipend to give a tenant perspective on city policies.

links

FMTA wins the first annual golden screw awards!

<http://www.causepimps.ca/golden-screw/goldenscrew.html>

Here is a special page illustrating the connection between FMTA and OCAP

<http://www.torontotenantsassociations.ca/citycouncilprimer.pdf>

Here is one of their attempts at a financial statement. It seems they think they can never be brought to account.

[http://www.torontotenantsassociations.ca/the most brazen corruption.pdf](http://www.torontotenantsassociations.ca/the_most_brazen_corruption.pdf)

The rogues gallery. A similar gallery will be opened of all councillors who vote for FMTA funding, when an open vote is finally held.

<http://www.torontotenantsassociations.ca/gallery.html>