

# Surplus off-limits for police

## Balancing the books.

Budget chief says leftover cash from 2012 must go to capital repairs

Toronto police have been issued a stern warning not to try tapping into surplus funds to balance their 2013 operating budget.

The police service is projected to have as much as \$8 million left over from 2012, but under city policy such extra funds are to be shifted to the capital budget for repairs to city assets.

To cap the police budget at \$927.8 million, the Toronto Police Services Board wants Chief Bill Blair to find an additional \$6.7 million in savings. Some suggest the surplus could fill that gap.

But the city's budget chief says the term "surplus" is a misnomer because the city has a large and growing debt and a repair backlog running into hundreds of millions of dollars for roads, parks and other assets.

"The debt is going to increase," the city's budget chief, Coun. Mike Del Grande, said at the end of public hearings on the proposed \$9.4-billion city budget for 2013 — of which policing represents the largest single item.

The current debt is "\$2.9 billion net, excluding (Toronto) Community Housing," Del Grande said. "It was at \$2.6 billion."

Coun. James Pasternak said his ward has many seniors living on fixed incomes who can't afford a tax in-

### Debate

## Reaction to budget

As two days of public hearings ended, some councillors were saying the city is falling behind, while supporters of the proposed budget say it maintains and in some cases enhances services despite holding the residential property tax increase to 1.95 per cent.

People are willing to pay more, argued Coun. Janet Davis, an active critic of the budgeting practices of Mayor Rob Ford's administration.

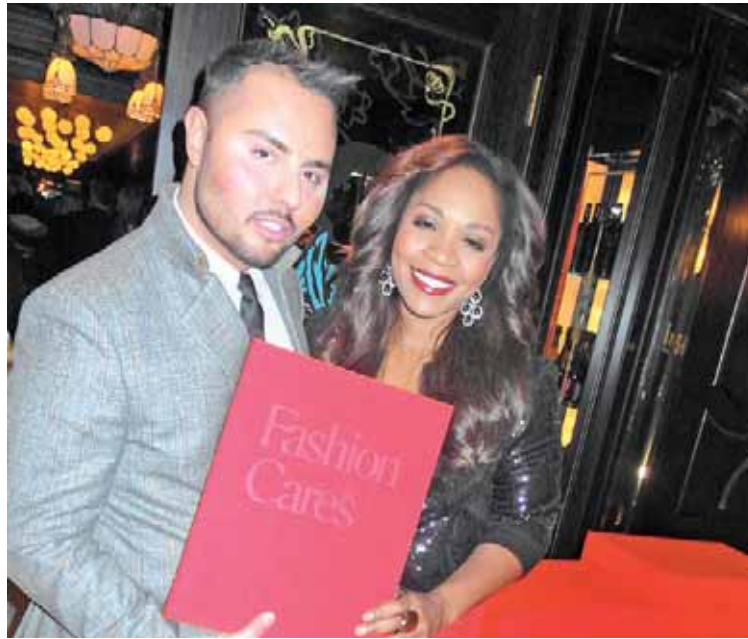
"I had a budget consultation every year since I was elected, and the people in my ward said to me: 'I want a great city and I'm prepared to pay more,'" Davis told the budget committee.

"Our (residential) taxes are lower than any municipality in the GTA," Davis added. "I don't want to hear any longer that we can't afford the city we want."

Her claim was immediately rejected by Coun. Doug Ford, who was elected, along with his brother, on a platform of cutting taxes.

crease of more than 1.95 per cent, which works out to \$48 on an average home assessed at \$474,366.

In the case of police, Blair has warned that holding the line will mean reducing offi-



## Divine launch

John-Paul Ricchio, entertainment chair for Fashion Cares 25, and singer Divine Brown were among the celebrities at the Fashion Cares book launch at La Societe Bistro on Bloor Street Tuesday. Proceeds from the sale of the book benefit the AIDS Committee of Toronto and The Elton John AIDS Foundation.

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# Ikea monkey OK without pseudo-mom: Sanctuary

The baby monkey found wandering outside a Toronto Ikea store this weekend was so attached to his owner he'd have panic attacks whenever she was out of sight, a woman who considered him part of her family said Tuesday.

Yasmin Nakhuda said she's concerned about the tiny primate's well-being and is consulting a lawyer to see if she can regain custody of the "pet" she called Darwin.

However, the head of the monkey sanctuary Darwin was sent to on Monday said the mischievous simian was adjusting well to his new home.

"He's not mourning his human mother at all," said Sherri Delaney of the Story Book Farm Primate Sanctuary in Sunder-



Yasmin Nakhuda FACEBOOK

land, about 100 kilometres northeast of Toronto.

"He is not showing signs of stress — signs of stress might appear in the form of his hiding or huddled in a ball, whimpering," she said during a media interview Tuesday.

"He's not doing that. He's

happy."

Delaney said she intends to call Nakhuda and update her on Darwin's condition once she gets "five minutes" of free time. But Delaney vowed the sanctuary would fight any potential legal challenges over Darwin.

Nakhuda said she initially tried to return the monkey to the breeder who supplied him, but changed her mind after hearing his heartbroken cries.

After that, she said the monkey was near her at all times, including while she slept and showered.

"At the beginning, I was told that was the best for him because generally, monkeys live off the back of the mom," she said. "He always had to be within my view." THE CANADIAN PRESS

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