

HOW MUCH ARE WE TAXPAYERS SPENDING TO CONVINCING OURSELVES TO VOTE NO ?

By: Kerry Morris - March 24, 2015



Mayors spending \$6M on Yes campaign in transit tax vote

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Lower Mainland Mayors have embarked on what has become the most expensive media failure in TransLink's history, known to all as the Mayor's Council - TransLink 'Plebiscite'. Mayors have committed to spend millions of taxpayer dollars in an attempt to convince residents to pay even more tax. How much have they approved for this campaign? Good question, but for some time the answer has been evasive. However, Langley Township Mayor Jack Froese has made it official. The Answer: \$6,000,000!

Taxpayers should take some time to understand what six million dollars actually represents.

To some this expenditure of six million dollars represents a waste of money which, once spent, can never be recovered. It's simply gone, no matter whether the 'Plebiscite' passes or fails. The money is simply not recoverable! To others like me, it represents everything that is wrong with TransLink, and in particular, the excessively bad management we have come to associate with the TransLink governance model.

Social media lit up Monday night with claims Langley Township Mayor Jack Froese had told the audience of a telephone town hall that Translink has transferred \$1.2 million to the 'Yes' campaign.

Today, Froese says that's not true in an interview with CKNW, but in doing so, he revealed the correct figure.

"We have up to \$6 million that has been authorized to spend on the campaign."

The media have repeatedly asked the mayors how much they're spending on their campaign, but they've said they would only reveal that after the vote results are in.

To yet others, it represents something even more dear. It represents buses! We are spending six million dollars which could otherwise go toward purchasing much needed buses for our region.

How many buses? Good question. Today, a Compressed Natural Gas ('CNG') powered bus goes for \$485,000 each. A standard diesel powered bus goes for \$410,000. Assuming we would buy one, the other or a mix of both, we would get between a low of 12.3 new CNG buses to a high of 14.6 diesel powered buses. But with TransLink's decision to spend \$6,000,000 on convincing us to give them even more than the \$1,000,000,000 of tax money we already do give them, they have squandered enough money to buy all these new buses. **Why would anyone waste that kind of money? Simple. It's not coming out of their own pockets! It's coming out of yours!**

He said diesels are still the most flexible type of bus that can be deployed anywhere in the region.

CNG buses cost more – about \$485,000 each compared to \$410,000 for a new diesel.

They also require specialized CNG fueling stations, which are to be built in Surrey and Richmond so future natural gas buses can run there as well.

Corrigan said TransLink is betting natural gas will continue to be the cheaper fuel in the future, when that's not certain.



