

Ottawatermobiles, nice to have but not a necessity: city council

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By Ryan Lux

City council decided Wednesday to cancel its order for two mobile water units to provide city drinking water instead of bottled water at local festivals and sporting events.

Council had approved the \$200,000 purchase in its 2010 budget but voted 12-8 to cancel the deal unless corporate sponsors stepped in to foot the bill.

The purchase was part of Ottawa's \$1.1-million drinking water promotion program, which is a result of declining drinking water consumption and a citywide survey that indicates only 53 per cent of residents drink tap water and only 41.6 per cent feel comfortable drinking from outdoor public fountains.

Orleans Ward Coun. Bob Monette tabled the motion which called for the cancellation mobile water initiative and to use the savings to pay down the city's debt. However, council decided to keep its options open if a corporate sponsor comes forward.

Somerset Ward Coun. Diane Holmes voted against cancelling the initiative.

Council also deferred the decision to alter its water rate structure to include a base fee to address falling revenues and growing infrastructure costs for at least two years.