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At an unusually inconclusive Tuesday meeting of Mayor Rob Ford's executive committee, Ford and his allies deferred decisions on housing, on deeming paramedics essential workers, and on selling 10 per cent of Toronto Hydro.

Ford announced late Monday that he would take another month to vote on a proposal to sell 675 stand-alone Toronto Community Housing Corp. houses. Ford said he wants to give the TCHC time to report on how the estimated \$222 million in sale proceeds would be used for repairs of other buildings, how the rent-geared-to-income units would be replaced, and how displaced residents would be relocated.

The deferral gives Ford more time to try to muster a council majority. He suffered significant defeats at last week's budget meeting, and several critical swing voters have expressed concerns about the TCHC proposal.

Tenants who attended the meeting felt vindicated by Ford's decision.

"I think it proves that we've been right all along," said Doris Power, whose east-end home would be sold. "They don't have the facts, they don't have the figures, they don't have a plan. Their only strategy has been sell, sell, sell."

The committee also deferred a surprise proposal from Ford's budget chief,



Paramedics listen to depositions as they present their case to be declared an essential service before the city's executive committee on Tuesday.

RICHARD LAUTENS/TORONTO

Councillor Mike Del Grande, to take \$16 million in affordable housing funding away from downtown's Regent Park and instead spend it project in the North York ward of Councillor Giorgio Mammoliti.

Del Grande said he was trying to promote fairness between downtown and the oft-overlooked suburbs. But the councillor whose ward includes Regent Park, Pam McConnell, was furious, and some executive members appeared perplexed.

Dozens of paramedics attended the meeting in support of a proposal to ask the provincial government to make emergency medical services a full-fledged "essential service" and grant them contract arbitration. The committee asked for a report on the advantages and disadvantages of the proposal.

The committee put off a decision on the proposed Toronto Hydro sale for the second time in less than three months. This time, it asked for a report on the impact of the Ontario Energy Board's recent decision to turn down Hydro's request for a rate hike.

"I think that this recent OEB decision doesn't put us in a position right now, at all, to assess the value of the company," said centrist Councillor Josh Colle, who sits on the Hydro board. "I had concerns about the way in which we were pursuing it as it was, but until that's settled, to me, you just can't proceed right now."