



City of Richmond

Report to Council

To: General Purposes Committee
From: Dave Semple
Director of Parks Operations
Re: 2005 Tall Ships Challenge

Date: December 16, 2003
File: -

Staff Recommendation

That the City of Richmond withdraw support for hosting the 2005 Tall Ships Challenge; and that a letter be sent from the Mayor to the American Sail Training Association releasing first right of refusal for hosting this event.

Dave Semple
Director of Parks Operations
(3350)

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Staff Report

Origin

On November 28, 2003 Richmond City Council received a letter from the Richmond Tall Ships Festival Society withdrawing their leadership for hosting the Tall Ships Challenge event in 2005.

On Dec 10, 2003, Richmond City Council resolved that:

"That staff report as quickly as possible on the status of the 'rights of first refusal'."

This report is in response to this request.

Analysis

Staff have reviewed the decision made by the Richmond Tall Ships Festival Society to withdraw their leadership from this event and believe that it would not be feasible for the City to carry on without their support. The conditions set out in the business plan presented by the Society were both ambitious and time-sensitive.

If the City wishes to proceed with pursuing the Tall Ships Challenge 2005 event it would have to look at the finances and conditions that led to the 2002 event, plan the scope, develop a business plan and financial strategy and integrate an additional level request for hosting in both the 2004 and 2005 operating budgets. As the event scheduled is 18 months away, the City would have to commit fully to resourcing the event immediately as the timeline is very tight.

As an alternate, Council may wish to consider the feasibility of hosting large historic maritime vessels coming to the west coast. There would be opportunities to partner with other government agencies and other maritime events such as River Days and Wooden Boat Festivals, continuing the maritime theme which Richmond has gained a reputation. Again, hosting would require a plan and program with appropriate staff resources to produce such activities.

The sister ship to the Nippon Maru, the Kaiwo Maru, one of the largest sailing ships in the world, has committed to visiting Richmond in 2004. This in itself would bring a large crowd out to view the ship and rekindle Richmond's maritime theme. Staff have presented a budget of \$23,000 for Council's consideration and approval to support this visit as a component of Richmond 125 year.

American Sail Training Association

The contract for the 2002 Tall Ships Challenge included a clause giving the City first rights of refusal for the next Tall Ships Challenge. The clause stated, "ASTA hereby grants to the port organizer the right of first refusal for the next Tall Ships Challenge Race series event to be held on the west coast of Canada".

The American Sail Training Association has corresponded with the City urging that a decision be made on 2005 by January 2004. They have stated that they have secured the ports of Victoria, Tacoma and are in negotiation with Anacortes and Port Alberni.

The American Sail Training Association want to have the flexibility to seek further port(s) if Richmond does not want to host the 2005 Tall Ships Challenge®.

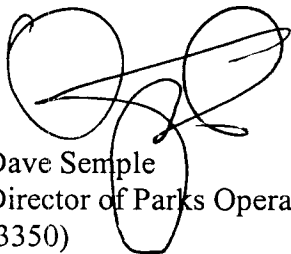
The City of Richmond would have to indicate their interest for 2008 Tall Ships Challenge® in 2005 or sooner. This would be a bid process and Richmond would be assessed against other west coast ports. The first rights of refusal only apply to 2005 Tall Ships Challenge®. It is prudent for Council to release the 2005 rights if we want to be considered for Tall Ships Challenges beyond 2005.

Financial Impact

There is no financial impact if the City does not exercise its first right of refusal. If the City does want to be a host City for the 2005 Tall Ships Challenge®, the fees for 2005 are \$35,000 US plus costs for coordinating and producing the event.

Conclusion

Given the time sensitivity for hosting such an event and withdrawal of community leadership, staff believes that the City of Richmond should withdraw support for hosting the 2005 Tall Ships Challenge® and withdraw our first right of refusal to host the ASTA event.



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