



Disability Resource Centre

160-5726 Minoru Blvd.
Richmond, B.C., V6X 2A9

*Supporting The Independent
Living Movement*

Tel: (604) 232-2404
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February 11, 2004


Mr. Richard McKenna
City Clerk, City of Richmond
6911 No. 3 Road
Richmond, BC V6Y 2C1

Dear Mr. McKenna,

The Disability Resource Centre - Richmond requests an appearance as a delegation to the General Purposes Committee on February 16, 2004. We are requesting this meeting to discuss with the committee our current funding shortfall.

Included with this request is our report.

Respectfully,


James Sullivan
Executive Director

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February 10, 2004

To: City Council – Richmond, BC
From: Disability Resource Centre - Richmond
Re: Financial Assistance

Our Request

The Disability Resource Centre - Richmond is requesting funding from the City of Richmond in the amount of \$70,000.00. The Centre has been caught short as it was mistakenly thinking the monies reserved by the City Council during the two-year study would again be forthcoming in January of 2004. Budgets and cash flows were unfortunately based on this misconception and our expenses are such the Disability Resource Centre – Richmond, runs out of money by the end of February. We do need the assistance of the city in this matter.

The Disability Resource Centre – Richmond, is now fully aware the budget for this is not due for completion before May of this year. What we are sincerely requesting is an exception be made in this and money for the Centre be approved by the end of February 2004. It is honestly hoped the value of the services rendered by the Centre to the disabled, their families, and friends has been made known to City Council and much of the community.

Our Partnership with Diversity Services and The Services of the Centre

During the last six months of 2003 and since the last report to council in June of 2003 the Centre and the Diversity Services Department of the city have continued to work together on several projects. For our summer children's program Diversity Services assisted the Centre in locating a space for the program at no cost to the Centre. This made the program possible. The Centre received a small grant from the Vancouver Sun Children's Foundation to cover the cost of supplies for the program. The Centre chose to cover the cost of the leaders out of our program money, in part from the money from the City of Richmond.

2003 was the third year of children summer program. In the previous two years, the program was greatly successful and well received. Nonetheless, due to space limitation (we had the program at DRC); we could only accepted approximately 20 children, into

A Program of the Richmond Committee on Disability

separate morning and afternoon sessions according to their age group. The downside of this arrangement was most parents would like their children to have full day program as transportation was always a problem, and secondly full interaction of participating children was hindered as they did not have the chance to meet children out of their age group, and finally volunteer coordination and scheduling was more difficult.

We had 35 children participating in the summer program; their age group was between 6 and 16. There were 19 boys and 16 girls. About 70% of children participated total 6 weeks, others' participation varied from 2 weeks to 5 weeks. Some children came Monday through Thursday, some joined 2 or 3 days each week.

The disabilities of the children who participated were very diverse – developmental delay, cerebral palsy, ADHD, brittle bone syndrome, fetal alcohol syndrome, autism, hearing impairment, Down syndrome, Asperger syndrome, aplexia, learning disability, William syndrome, epilepsy, dyslexia.

We had also accepted two typical children in the program this time; they are siblings to two of the children who required familiar companion in the group.

Diversity Services approached the Centre for input on the restructuring of the Community Centres relationship with the City and the debate that entailed. We were included in this project from the beginning and when requested to make a presentation before the committee looking into the changes, we were happy to work with Diversity Services. A survey was submitted to several groups and programs serving the recreational needs of people with disabilities in Richmond. There was excellent response and we brought the results of the findings to the committee. Groups responding to the survey and represented by the Disability Resource Centre – Richmond in front of the committee included BC Blind Sports, BC Wheelchair Sports, Pathways Clubhouse for people with mental health issues, the Developmental Disabilities Association, Special Olympics, the Richmond Therapeutic Equestrian Society and the recreation opportunities provided by the Centre itself.

In 2003 we partnered with Volunteer Richmond in the annual "Volunteers are Stars" gala dinner. Because the night of the dinner fell on December 3 also the United Nations Day of the Disabled and Canada's national Day of Independent Living, it was decided a joint program would be best. It was an opportunity to present to a wider audience the importance of volunteering and volunteerism in the lives of people with disabilities. It was also an occasion to feature how people with disabilities were contributing to their communities through volunteering. The Centre and the committee organizing the dinner was lucky to invite and have Michael Harcourt accept the honour of guest speaker for the evening. The people attending that night will never forget the experience. Mr. Harcourt's address was deeply moving. Not only did he speak of his own challenges since his accident but of challenges faced by all of us with disabilities and the real need of the Independent Living philosophy for people with disabilities. The gala was a success, some commented it was the best so far and this was due to the partnership of four of

Richmond's non-profits, Volunteer Richmond and the Disability Resource Centre – Richmond, Touchstone Family Association and Rosewood Manor.

During 2003 we held a “Graduated Life Skills” program to assist people with developmental delays in working toward greater independent or semi-independent lives. Participants were taught basic street safety, communication skills, appropriate personal conduct, and basic academic skills. This was a very successful program. Parents and participants alike felt real strides were made in their lives. This program was made possible in part by the money from the City of Richmond.

The computer training classes offered by the Centre include Basic Computers, Word 1&2, Excel, Internet, and Advanced Microsoft Office for consumers looking for employment skills. These classes are full every semester and most have a waiting list. Class size is limited to between 3 and 6. Classes have a supportive and professional atmosphere. Participants are treated with respect. This type of class offered nowhere else in Richmond. It is offered in part because of the funding from the City of Richmond.

In 2003 the Centre began to offer a new study, Office Assistants Training. (OATS) This program gives consumers the prospect of learning filing, telephone etiquette, public reception and various other office skills that a lack of exposure has kept from them. Some of the techniques learned may be taken for granted by some of us. However, without the opportunity this program provides many of the consumers would never have that chance to learn. Again, a program funded in part by the City of Richmond.

We hope this give you all some idea of the importance of the funds you the City gives to the Centre. We work to join with the City in building bridges, providing educational and recreational activities for members of the Richmond community.



Disability Resource Centre

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richmondsrc@shaw.ca

Fax Message

To: Mr. Richard McKenna Fax: 604-278-5139

From: James Sullivan Date: February 11, 2004

Re: General Purposes Comm Pages: 5 including cover

CC: _____

Memo

