



General Purposes Committee

- Date: Monday, February 16th, 2004
- Place: Anderson Room
Richmond City Hall
- Present: Mayor Malcolm D. Brodie, Chair
Councillor Linda Barnes (5:52 p.m.)
Councillor Derek Dang
Councillor Evelina Halsey-Brandt
Councillor Rob Howard (6:43 p.m.)
Councillor Kiichi Kumagai
Councillor Bill McNulty
Councillor Harold Steves
- Absent: Councillor Sue Halsey-Brandt
- Call to Order: The Chair called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

The Chair reviewed the agenda, noting that Item No. 2 - Meeting Provincial Requirements – Proposed Relocation Of The Great Canadian Casino, had been dealt with at the special meeting of the General Purposes Committee held earlier in the afternoon, and therefore, was withdrawn from the agenda for this meeting. He advised that the order of the agenda would be varied to deal with:

- (1) the delegations;
 - (2) the 2004 Grant Program report;
 - (3) the Community Safety Building Replacement – Sea Island Fire Hall report; and
 - (4) Sister City Selection Update report,
- in that order.

The Chair also noted that the report dealing with the “Why Not” Initiative, was only to be received for information. As a result, the following motion was introduced:

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It was moved and seconded

That the report (dated February 2nd, 2004, from the General Manager, Urban Development), regarding the current status of the "Why Not" Initiative, be deleted from the agenda.

CARRIED

DELEGATIONS

1. (1) ***Kenneth B. and Victoria A. Pettifer, of 3149 West 28th Avenue, Vancouver, regarding the Utility Tax for property at 7311 No. 5 Road.***
(File No.: 0930-01) (REDMS No. 1121440)

Mr. Kenneth Pettifer, accompanied by his wife Victoria, advised that they owned the property at 7311 No. 5 Road. He stated that he was asking the City to reverse the fee which had been assessed as a result of the late payment of the utility taxes. Mr. Pettifer explained that he had had a heart attack which required surgery and that his wife was disabled with MS. He stated that he managed to pay the bill through the mail, but was unaware that the cheque had arrived five days late until receiving a notice from the City in November that a late fee had been charged against the property.

Mr. Pettifer advised that he paid the charge but asked that because of his serious illness and the fact that his wife was unable to pay bills due to her illness, that the fee be waived. He noted that he had mailed the cheque to the City on March 20th, 2003, and had dated the cheque for March 27th, which he thought would have been sufficient time for the cheque to be delivered to the City.

In response to questions, staff advised that 150 to 200 appeals were received every year, with many reasons including illness as to why the appeal should be granted, being given.

The Chair, in concluding the discussion, stated that the City received many requests each year to waive penalties and that to waive the fee paid by Mr. Pettifer could set a precedent which would open the door to further requests.

- (2) ***Sylvia Gwozd, Chair, Sister City Committee, and Anne Stevens, regarding Item No. 6.*** (File No.: 0100-20-SCITI-01) (REDMS No. 1119149, 1119851)

Ms. Gwozd introduced Rueben Chan and Jay Hsieh, members of the China Sub-Committee, to the Committee. Also introduced were Donald Buie, Kevin Jhong and Alexander Kostjuk, members of the Sister City Committee.

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Ms. Gwozd explained that as a result of discussion with Council in December of 2001 about the possibility of twinning with a city in China, criteria was developed and approved in 2002 to determine what the Sister City Committee would like to see in a relationship. She stated that since that time the Committee had been reviewing cities which had asked to have sister city relationships with Richmond, and that as a result of discussions, had made the decision to focus on the Shanghai area. Ms. Gwozd that this area had a number of common interests, including geography.

Mr. Chan used a map to explain the location of possible cities, noting that China was almost the same size as Canada. He then reviewed the process on how a potential site was found.

Mr. Hsieh noted that China was becoming a 'major player' in the world; that Richmond was the gateway to China for BC and Canada, as well as being the entrance for China to Canada, and that many Richmond residents had emigrated from the Shanghai area. He then spoke about Yangzhou City, noting that their weather was similar to Richmond; that the city was famous for its cultural diversity and economic activities; that the city had a well developed railroad and other amenities; and that education was very important. Mr. Hsieh further advised that Yangzhou City had established sister city relationships with nine other cities throughout the world and was interested in developing a relationship with Richmond.

Ms. Gwozd continued the presentation, advising that the Sister City Committee was not necessarily advocating the selection of Yangzhou City, and she then reviewed the list of cities which had expressed an interest in twinning with Richmond. During her review, she stated that if the recommendation contained in the staff report was adopted, it would to have friendships with more than one city.

During the discussion which ensued on this matter, staff were asked to provide Committee members with copies of the responses received from the business community on this matter.

In response to questions, Ms. Gwozd advised that the Committee would report by 2006 with an update on this matter.

The Chair thanked the delegation for their presentation, and they then left the meeting.

- (3) ***James Sullivan, representing the Disability Resource Centre, regarding funding for the Centre.*** (File No.: 1085-20-RCDI)

(Councillor Barnes entered the meeting – 5:52 p.m.)

Mr. Sullivan read a prepared statement to the Committee regarding the relationship of the Disability Resource Centre with the City. A copy of this statement is on file in the City Clerk's Office.

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Discussion then ensued among Committee members and Mr. Sullivan, and in response to questions the following information was provided:

- City staff had advised those parties responsible for the financial management of the Centre at the beginning of the year that funding would not be available, however those individuals had been of the view that funding would be forthcoming; and on the basis of that information, the cash flow for the Centre was set based on funding being obtained in January; the lack of funding had now put the Centre in jeopardy
- representatives of the Centre had spoken to City staff on the matter, however, staff advised that the budget would not be approved until the latter part of May
- the Centre was seeking \$70,000 because of the cash flow and bills which needed to be paid; the \$70,000 would provide funding for the Centre until revenue from other sources was received; if the request was not approved, the Centre would have to close its doors in mid-March and remain closed for approximately six to eight weeks
- expenses for the Centre were approximately \$26,000 per month.

During the discussion it was noted that although the City's operating budget would not be approved until a later date, it could be possible to fund a grant to the Centre through the Casino Revenue Account without impact to the operating budget. Information was provided that the Casino Revenue Account currently had a balance of approximately \$800,000 in unallocated funding.

Reference was made to a report which was to have been written on the feasibility of including funding for the Disability Resource Centre in the operating budget. In response, advice was given that the report in question had been submitted to Council in September of 2003; and that the recommendations adopted had directed that \$70,000 be included in the additional level requests for 2004. It was noted that the request remained on the list of additional level requests. Further advice was given that there was no commitment made to provide funding to the Centre by a certain date.

A question was raised as to the rationale for placing the funding request in the additional levels rather than the operating budget. Reference was also made to the use of unallocated casino funds, and the suggestion was made that approximately \$500,000 of this revenue should be set aside and used to fund these particular types of grants rather than from the annual operating budget.

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Discussion ensued on this proposal, and on whether (i) the intent had been to place the request for funding in the operating budget rather than using the grants account; and (ii) funding was available from the Casino Revenue Account.

In response to further questions, Mr. Sullivan advised that the Centre's other funding sources were not in doubt, and that the problem was a cash flow issue. He further advised that programs could not be adjusted and that the only alternative would be close the Centre for six to eight weeks. Mr. Sullivan confirmed, in response to further questions, that this was a one time request.

The Mayor expressed concern about the proposal to use unallocated casino revenue to fund the request, and made the comment that the matter should be referred to staff to work with the Centre to review their cash flow issue so that adjustments could be made.

It was moved and seconded

That an amount of \$70,000 from unallocated casino revenue be given as a grant to the Disability Resource Centre.

The question on the motion was not called, as a brief discussion ensued on the motion. Comments were made that this action would not be precedent setting as funding had been provided to the Women's Resource Centre a number of months ago; that the services offered by the Centre were valuable to the disabled in Richmond and should not cease for any length of time; and that funding for the Centre should be included in the City's base level operating budget.

Concern was expressed by the Mayor about the position in which the City was being placed, and commented that the resolution made a mockery of the City's budget process. He stated that City staff should be working with the Centre to determine if financial adjustments could be made.

The question on the motion was then called, and it was **CARRIED** with Mayor Brodie opposed.

URBAN DEVELOPMENT DIVISION

2. **MEETING PROVINCIAL REQUIREMENTS – PROPOSED RELOCATION OF THE GREAT CANADIAN CASINO**
(Report: Jan. 29/04, File No.: 8060-20-7484) (REDMS No. 1118425)

Please see Page 1 of these minutes for action taken on this matter.

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FINANCE & CORPORATE SERVICES DIVISION

5. 2004 GRANT PROGRAM

(Report: Jan. 23/04, File No.: 1085-01) (REDMS No. 1116875)

It was moved and seconded

That the report (dated January 23rd, 2004, from the Manager, Customer Services), regarding the 2004 Grant Program, be referred to staff to:

- (1) provide an analysis of the late application received from RADAT;*
- (2) address the Steveston Community Society's request for \$40,000 to fund a float for the City's 125 Year Anniversary celebrations;*
- (3) provide a detailed analysis of why particular grants were being approved, i.e. approving additional staff members who had not been previously hired;*
- (4) review the grant applications and provide more detailed information on each application as to why the request was being approved or denied;*
- (5) provide information as to why the Enoch Youth Outreach Society application was listed as being in Category 2 when the Society had never received a grant in previous years;*
- (6) review the services offered by both the Enoch Youth Outreach Society and the Richmond Youth Service Agency to determine if there was a duplication;*
- (7) provide an explanation as to why the Sea Island Community Centre Association was receiving only \$500 when the Association had requested \$2,000; and*
- (8) provide justification for some of the projects being proposed as part of the City's 125 Year Anniversary celebrations.*

CARRIED

COMMUNITY SAFETY DIVISION

4. COMMUNITY SAFETY BUILDING REPLACEMENT – SEA ISLAND FIRE HALL

(Report: Jan. 22/04, File No.: 2050-02-F4) (REDMS No. 1111528)

Fire Chief Jim Hancock, accompanied by the Manager, Facility Planning & Construction, David Smith, were present to speak to the matter.

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It was moved and seconded

That the replacement of the Sea Island Fire Hall proceed as Option 3 at a revised project cost of \$2,875,000.

The question on the motion was not called, as discussion ensued on the three options put forward by staff, and the rationale for selecting Option 3 over Option 1 which would have provided a larger facility. Advice was given during the discussion that Option 3 would provide the City with a facility which met the basic requirements of the Fire Department at this time, and provided an option in the future for expansion.

Discussion continued, with information being provided that Option 3, with an environmentally sustainable building would cost an additional \$500,000. Concern was expressed about the economies being taken with the construction of the fire hall and the opinion was expressed that the original concept should be constructed.

As a result of the discussion, the following **referral** motion was introduced:

It was moved and seconded

That the report (dated January 22nd, 2004, from the Fire Chief), regarding the Community Safety Building Replacement – Sea Island Fire Hall, be referred to staff for clarification and additional information on the three options.

Prior to the question on the motion being called, staff were directed to:

- (1) present a high-quality fire hall facility with appropriate community space, which would meet the long term needs of the Department, as well as providing an environmentally sustainable building as this facility would be setting the standard for future fire hall construction;
- (2) provide information on the cost of construction of such a facility as described in (1) above;
- (3) provide additional information on Option 1, along with photographs of the design concept;
- (4) provide information on why, with respect to Option 1, (i) the lifecycle of the proposed structure was reduced from 75 years for Options 2 and 3; (ii) the proposed structure was not environmentally sustainable; and (iii) Maintenance and Lifecycle costs were not optimized; and
- (5) whether the design for the Sea Island Fire Hall was to be used in the construction of the Hamilton and Bridgeport fire halls.

The question on the motion was then called, and it was **CARRIED**.

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6. **SISTER CITY SELECTION UPDATE**
(Report: Feb. 2/04, File No.: 0135-04-01) (REDMS No. 1121984)

It was moved and seconded

- (1) *That the Sister City Committee's selection of a city in the Shanghai area be approved;*
- (2) *That the Sister City Committee identify and report on those cities which would be compatible with Richmond as a future friendship and possibly Sister City relationship.*

Prior to the question on the motion being called, staff were asked to undertake a benefits analysis of each of the cities being considered in comparison to Richmond in terms of the short and long implications, as there was an expectation that the City would twin with a city in China. As well, staff were requested to provide a chronology of future friendship and possible sister city relationships, and the criteria which would be used to establish these relationships.

The question on the motion was then called, and it was **CARRIED**.

It was moved and seconded

That following be added as Part (3) to the resolution adopted regarding the "Sister City Selection Update", "That staff comment on the future timing of a report to Committee, and provide the criteria for the different relationships, including friendship and sister city."

CARRIED

URBAN DEVELOPMENT DIVISION

7. **"WHY NOT" INITIATIVE – REPORT ON PROGRESS**
(Report: Feb. 2/04, File No.: 0340-20-UDEV1) (REDMS No. 1111485, 1120782, 1119019)

Please see Page 2 of these minutes for action taken on this matter.

ADJOURNMENT

It was moved and seconded

That the meeting adjourn (6:47 p.m.).

CARRIED

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Certified a true and correct copy of the Minutes of the meeting of the General Purposes Committee of the Council of the City of Richmond held on Monday, February 16th, 2004.

Mayor Malcolm D. Brodie
Chair

Fran J. Ashton
Executive Assistant, City Clerk's Office