



General Purposes Committee

Date: Monday, February 17th, 2003
Place: Council Chambers
Richmond City Hall
Present: Mayor Malcolm D. Brodie, Chair
Councillor Linda Barnes
Councillor Derek Dang
Councillor Evelina Halsey-Brandt
Councillor Sue Halsey-Brandt
Councillor Rob Howard
Councillor Kiichi Kumagai
Councillor Bill McNulty
Councillor Harold Steves
Call to Order: The Chair called the meeting to order at 5:19 p.m.

MINUTES

1. It was moved and seconded
That the minutes of the meeting of the General Purposes Committee held on Monday, February 3rd, 2003, be adopted as circulated.

CARRIED

It was moved and seconded
That the order of the agenda be varied to deal with Item No. 3 at this time.

CARRIED

PARKS, RECREATION & CULTURAL SERVICES DIVISION

3. **PARKS, RECREATION AND CULTURAL SERVICE DELIVERY SYSTEM**

(Report: Feb. 11/03, File No.: 0340-20-CSER1) (REDMS No. 961860, 943632)

The General Manager, Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services, Cathy Volkering Carlile, accompanied by the Director, Recreation & Cultural Services, Kate Sparrow, and the Director of Parks Operations, Dave Semple, reviewed the report with the Committee.

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Discussion then ensued among Committee members and staff on such issues as:

- the purpose of the proposed new service delivery model
- whether a cost benefit analysis had been undertaken, and if not, at what point in the process would such an analysis be completed
- the impact of adopting the recommendations now before the Committee, and whether adoption of Recommendation No. 1 would preclude input and participation from the existing partners and the community in redefining their roles within the new system
- the process which would be followed subsequent to the adoption of the 'Guiding Principles'
- the need to ensure that a thorough discussion took place not only with the current partners, but also with the broader stakeholders in the community
- the need to ensure the creation of focus groups to address those issues which were identified by the public during the initial open houses as being important to them
- potential results of the new service delivery model, such as allowing Richmond residents to purchase a pass which would give them access to all recreational facilities located in the City
- the role which recreation played in the community at the present time and what could be done to improve this service for the future.

Ms. Julie Halfnights, of 5184 Sapphire Place, spoke to the Committee on the City's proposal to change its method of delivery of recreation services to the community. In recognition of the short amount of time available at this meeting, Ms. Halfnights shortened her submission, however, the entire presentation is attached as Schedule A and forms part of these minutes.

Discussion then ensued among Committee members and Ms. Halfnights on Recommendation 2, during which Ms. Halfnights expressed the belief that City staff were of the opinion that the current model was broken and could not be fixed. She suggested that a comparison should be made with other municipalities to determine how those agencies provided recreational services to their residents. During the discussion Ms. Halfnights talked about the improvements which had been made at the Thompson Community Centre in response to the needs of that particular community. She also responded to questions from Committee members on (i) whether she would be willing to assist with the development of a new model if the decision was made that the current system was no longer practical, (ii) the ethnic composition of the Board of Directors for the Thompson Community Centre; and (iii) the proposed 'Guiding Principles'.

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Mr. Bob Ransford expressed the belief that the current system was not 'broken' but simply required redefinition. He suggested that instead of adopting Recommendation 2, that the Committee should simply adopt the 'guiding principles' as proposed in Recommendation 1, and proceed from there. Mr. Ransford voiced the opinion that allowing sixty days for community input was a little ambitious and suggested that a broader discussion should be held with the community as a whole.

Mr. Ransford stated that staff should determine why the needs of the community were not being met and suggested that a consultation plan should be prepared which would involve the entire community. In response to questions, Mr. Ransford stated that a determination was needed on how far the City wanted to expand the parameters of recreation in the City.

It was moved and seconded

That the meeting of the General Purposes Committee be recessed and reconvene at 5:30 p.m., in the Council Chambers, on Wednesday, February 19th, 2003.

CARRIED

The General Purposes Committee meeting reconvened at 5:32 p.m. on Wednesday, February 19th, 2003, with all members of the Committee present except Councillor Kiichi Kumagai. Councillor Sue Halsey-Brandt entered the meeting at 5:50 p.m.

The General Manager, Parks, Recreation & Culture, Cathy Volkering Carlile, provided Committee members with a copy of the revised time frame for the feedback process, and she reviewed this outline with the Committee. A copy of this time frame is on file in the City Clerk's Office.

Discussion ensued among Committee members and Ms. Carlile on such issues as the future of the revenue currently in the hands of the community associations, during which the Mayor stated that that money was the property of the associations and that the City had no intention of requesting the associations to turn this revenue over to the City. During the discussion, the request was made that when City staff reported to Council with the results of the feedback from the community, that (i) a breakdown of the cost of implementation of the new delivery model be provided; (ii) that the report include recommendations on how staff would address the comments that the current model was not working; and (iii) how the City could best serve Richmond residents with recreation programs.

Mr. Greg Robertson, of #156 – 7471 Minoru Boulevard, former President of the South Arm Community Association, reported that the Executive was prepared to support the proposed principles as presented. He stated that the Association viewed the new model as a partnership and indicated that they looked forward to developing and improving the system.

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Mr. Robertson also advised that the Association felt that two months was not sufficient time to obtain input from the community, and that the amended timeline would provide more time to obtain this information.

Mr. Robertson also stated that the Association was of the view that the current system was 'not broken', and he commented that it was not always the fault of City staff or associations for the problems which had occurred regarding the delivery of recreation services. He expressed concern that City staff were recommending the cancellation of the current system without any discussion and without a replacement model in place. Mr. Robertson commented further that overall, the current system did work and should only be changed to address existing problems.

Discussion ensued between Councillor Evelina Halsey-Brandt and Mr. Robertson, during which he advised in response to questions, that if the City could find a better system which the Association felt was workable, the Association would support that new system. However, he added that the current system functioned through the use of a large volunteer network and that he was not sure that future plans included the use of volunteers in a centralized system. Mr. Robertson added that full consultation was required and questioned how Council could adopt a new delivery model without knowing what it was.

(Cllr. Sue Halsey-Brandt entered the meeting at 5:50 p.m.)

Mr. Hans Havas, President, accompanied by member Richard Scott, of the West Richmond Community Association, spoke about the programs offered at the facility, during which he noted that his Association was one of the first to sign a working agreement with the City. He also noted that a great deal of work had gone into the preparation of the documents now being reviewed by the City's community associations and other recreation organizations, and he expressed support for the extended timeline to allow City staff and the community to work together. Mr. Havas advised that people were concerned about the future of their jobs, and that his Association had a great working relationship with their staff and did not want to change that. He noted that some change was necessary but did not believe that the system was 'broken'. Mr. Havas stated that his Association was prepared to sit down with City staff to find a positive solution which would provide better service; however he noted that each area was different and that no programs were the same.

Mr. Scott spoke further on the documents now being considered, and stated that a legitimate process should be in place with full input from all of the City partnerships. He added that there had to be opportunities given to understand the concerns outlined in the report and to determine where these concerns were common, and he questioned whether the proposed solution was the right one.

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Discussion ensued among Committee members and the delegation on whether the current service delivery model was working to meet the needs of Richmond residents, during which Mr. Havas indicated that the West Richmond Community Association was more than willing to sit down to work with City staff, but could not agree with the service delivery model now being proposed.

Reference was made to problems which had occurred in the past, and Mr. Havas voiced the opinion that these problems had been resolved, that his association was still working together and had a good working relationship with the City. He stated that if people worked together and not as individuals, unity would result.

Mr. Phil Brown, of 10851 Roseland Gate, a volunteer at the Thompson Community Association, expressed concern about the impact of adoption of the proposed model on the future of volunteers. He questioned who would be responsible for the repairs to tables, chairs and other equipment if the City assumed control of the operation of the community centres. He also questioned the future of exercise equipment purchased by individual community associations for use in their facilities.

Mr. Brown also referred to statements made previously about problems with the current system, and questioned why City staff had not contacted the associations to address these issues. He also spoke about the differences between the various community associations, noting that some associations generated more revenue than some of the smaller organizations. In concluding his statements, Mr. Brown noted that volunteers had to enjoy what they were doing and had to be rewarded in some way through self-satisfaction or in recognition of a job well done.

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

It was moved and seconded

- (1) ***That the Guiding Principles for the Service Delivery System be adopted;***
- (2) ***That staff seek community feedback on the Community Involvement Model, Planning Framework and Proposed Service Delivery System (as outlined in the report dated February 11th, 2003, from the General Manager, Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services), through the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Master Plan process, and report to Council in June, 2003.***

The question on the motion was not called, as Committee members spoke in support of the proposed resolution. During the discussion on this recommendation, Mayor Brodie clarified that the intent of the resolution was to measure the 'status quo' against the model being proposed by staff.

Committee members also stressed the importance of having the community involved to ensure that the end result was the best model possible to deliver recreation services to the community as a whole.

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

The Chair directed that the meeting would take a short recess and reconvene in the Anderson Room (6:46 p.m.).

The General Purposes Committee meeting reconvened at 6:55 p.m., in the Anderson Room, with all members of the Committee except Councillor Kumagai in attendance.

FINANCE & CORPORATE SERVICES DIVISION

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2. **2003 OPERATING BUDGET REFERRALS II**

(Report: Feb. 13/03, File No.: 0970-01-2003) (REDMS No. 951055, 954809)

Discussion ensued among Committee members, the General Manager, Finance & Corporate Services, Jim Bruce, the Director of Finance, Andrew Nazareth, and other staff members, on the appendices attached to the report, namely:

- the request for a full-time Plumbing/Gas Inspector; Building Inspector and Plans Processing Clerk
- Noise Bylaw enforcement
- the Wooden Boat Festival and related events
- the Youth Outreach Program
- the Parking Program
- the Intercultural Advisory Committee
- the Volunteer Management Co-ordinator
- RCMP staffing levels, and
- the Confined Space Rescue Program.

(Councillor Dang left the meeting at 7:50 p.m. and did not return.)

Also reviewed by the Committee and staff, was the 'Priority Listing of Additional Level Items'. As a result of the discussion, the following motions were introduced:

It was moved and seconded

That the report (dated February 13th, 2003, from the Director, Finance), regarding the 2003 Operating Budget Referrals II, be received for information.

CARRIED

It was moved and seconded

That the 2003 Operating Budget "Final Draft", be approved as the basis for preparing the 5 Year Financial Plan (2003 – 2007).

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The question on the motion was not called, as the following **amendments** were introduced:

It was moved and seconded

That Ranking No. 3 on the Priority Listing of Additional Level Items – Audio/Video Equipment Maintenance, be referred to staff for a breakdown of the proposed maintenance costs.

DEFEATED

OPPOSED: Mayor Brodie
Cllr. Barnes
E. Halsey-Brandt
S. Halsey-Brandt
Howard
Steves

It was moved and seconded

That Ranking No. 3 on the Priority Listing of Additional Level Items – Audio/Video Equipment Maintenance, be reduced to \$54,500.

CARRIED

OPPOSED: Cllr. Barnes
E. Halsey-Brandt
McNulty

It was moved and seconded

That with respect to Ranking No. 4 - 'Confined Space Rescue Program:

- (1) the designation of \$60,000 in the capital budget, with funding to be provided from the 2002 surplus; and*
- (2) the inclusion of \$6,000 in the operating budget as an additional level.*

CARRIED

It was moved and seconded

That staff continue negotiations with Richmond Health Services regarding the provision of noise bylaw enforcement through that agency.

CARRIED

It was moved and seconded

That the three personnel positions proposed within Ranking Nos. 7, 8 and 9 – Plumbing/Gas Inspector; Building Inspector; and Plan Processing Clerk, respectively, be temporary fulltime, fixed term, positions.

DEFEATED

OPPOSED: Cllr. Barnes
E. Halsey-Brandt
S. Halsey-Brandt
Steves

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It was moved and seconded

That the Crime Analyst position be approved, with funding to be provided from the anticipated \$700,000 surplus which is included in the existing 2003 RCMP budget allocation, and that the RCMP be authorized to fill the position.

CARRIED

It was moved and seconded

That the RCMP request to fund 6 additional officers from the anticipated 2003 surplus not be authorized until a full report on the Police Services 5 Year Plan has been considered by the Community Safety Committee and subsequently approved by Council.

CARRIED

It was moved and seconded

That Ranking No. 15 – Volunteer Management Coordination – Emergency Program, be included in the additional levels for 2003.

The question on the motion was not called, as the following **sub-amendment** was introduced:

It was moved and seconded

That the main motion be amended by adding the following, “as well as the contract position to work with staff on the coordination of the Wooden Boat Festival Program and sponsorships.”

DEFEATED

OPPOSED: Mayor Brodie
Cllr. E. Halsey-Brandt
S. Halsey-Brandt
Howard
McNulty

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

(Cllr. Steves left the meeting at 9:25 p.m., and did not return.)

It was moved and seconded

That the operational efficiencies identified by staff, totalling \$200,000, be incorporated into the budget to reduce the overall tax increase.

CARRIED

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It was moved and seconded

That \$200,000 be taken from the 2003 Casino revenue account to reduce the tax increase, and allocated to the Minor Capital Construction Program.

CARRIED

OPPOSED: Cllr. McNulty

It was moved and seconded

That the \$500,000 of remaining casino revenue be reallocated to the Council Provision Account.

CARRIED

The question on the main motion, as amended was then called, and it was **CARRIED** with Councillor McNulty opposed.

ACTING CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

4. COUNCIL TERM PRIORITIES

(Report: Feb. 11/03, File No.: 0105-07) (REDMS No. 961817)

The Chair directed that due to the lateness of the meeting, that this item would be deleted from the agenda.

The Chair advised that the Committee meeting would recess for 15 minutes (9:33 p.m.).

The General Purposes Committee meeting reconvened at 9:49 p.m. with Mayor Brodie, and Cllrs. Barnes, E. Halsey-Brandt, Howard and McNulty present.

URBAN DEVELOPMENT DIVISION

5. CHANGES TO THE LIQUOR CONTROL AND LICENCING ACT

(Report: Feb. 3/03, File No.: 8275-05) (REDMS No. 956366, 961560)

It was moved and seconded

That staff prepare the necessary Policy and Bylaw changes to bring into effect Option A – No extensions to 4:00 a.m. permitted (as outlined in the report from Manager of Zoning, dated February 3rd, 2003.)

CARRIED

6. FEASIBILITY OF REQUIRING HOMEOWNERS' WHO RENT THEIR DWELLINGS TO OBTAIN BUSINESS LICENCES

It was moved and seconded

That staff investigate the feasibility of requiring those owners who rent out their rental properties in Richmond to obtain business licences in order to operate.

CARRIED

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7. PRIVATIZATION OF THE BC LIQUOR DISTRIBUTION BRANCH

Mr. Kevan Parks, representing the BCGEU, circulated additional material to the Committee, and spoke about the pending closure of BC Liquor stores. (A copy of the material provided by Mr. Parks is on file in the City Clerks' Office.) Mr. Parks spoke at length about the impact of these closures on BC communities, stating that privatization would result in more liquor retail outlets in communities, which would result in more alcohol consumption, which would lead to adverse health effects, as well as increased drunk driving, suicides, etc.

A brief discussion ensued among Committee members and the delegation on the material submitted by Mr. Parks and on the fourteen applications made to open retail liquor outlets in the City.

(Councillor McNulty left the meeting at 10:04 p.m.)

Discussion continued briefly on the matter of privatization of BC liquor distribution centres.

The Chair thanked Mr. Parks for his presentation.

ADJOURNMENT

It was moved and seconded

That the meeting adjourn (10:09 p.m.).

CARRIED

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 17th, 2003 and Wednesday, February 19th, 2003.

Mayor Malcolm D. Brodie
Chair

Fran J. Ashton
Executive Assistant

February 17, 2003

Presentation to : General Purposes Committee of Richmond City Council

By: Julie Halfnights, 5184 Sapphire Place, V7C 4Z9

I am here on my own behalf, where usually I have come as the representative of Thompson Community Association. I bring to the table many years of experience as a Board member and former president at Thompson plus my professional experience as a Parks, Recreation and Culture employee in Delta. I have a pretty good overall knowledge of Richmond recreation service delivery but my day to day experience is limited to Thompson. I am aware that some believe that some or many of the concerns that sparked this report do not exist at Thompson.

Two of the three recommendations are quite acceptable. The first is great – something we have been waiting for a long time. The third is fine, we always want to know how to improve or adjust in order to meet emergent and under-served needs. It is the second recommendation that I am here about. The bulk of the document outlines realities and challenges as perceived by City management and supervisory staff and as gleaned from the reports of previous years. Most of what is presented is well-known and easy for me to agree with. There is a certain amount of missed and incorrect information and I would be happy to detail most of it at some in some other venue.

I am here to rebut the conclusion reached by the author. I have read and re-read this document over the weekend, spoken to presidents and to Councillors and I cannot figure why we must forsake a system that has served so well. It is true that a number of critical issues need to be addressed, but to forsake our City's community partnerships without even trying to establish a dialogue with those involved is foolish, at best.

This system is not broken. The service provided in Richmond is still at or near the top of the scale in the lower mainland – we are still the envy of most. The cost to taxpayers for our services is in the mid-range of lower mainland municipalities and the opportunities per capita is still at the top, as it was when we conducted the Leisure Services Task Force four years ago. Some tough decisions are needed:

- to define roles, rights and responsibilities of the City and of Associations
- communication guidelines and constructs for city-wide decision-making
- level of assistance for facility-based City staff to support volunteers, elicit input from the under-served and facilitate customer service expectations

- clear direction for program planning in specific areas to avoid overlap and maximize knowledge.

I fully support all of these; I have been looking forward to their resolution for years – to allow my fellow volunteers and me to concentrate our efforts where they will be the most useful.

In addition to questions about how we got to the need for a city-controlled model, I have the following concerns:

- a. The model, framework and proposed service delivery system presuppose that the current model cannot be adjusted. Many of the areas targeted for change or increased service are ones that have been identified and requested by Associations for many years
- b. The report suggests that volunteers will continue to commit time and energy to some areas (sports, youth, festivals, seniors) without reference or an understanding of why people currently volunteer for such activities
- c. There are no costs estimated for implementation or ongoing operation although these will be very significant
- d. There is no real evaluation of the philosophy behind the current system; the two major components are the issue of providing community recreation services to an identified community (arts, heritage, sports or physical location) and the ability of a given community to provide the best knowledge and the most likely solutions to their needs
- e. The report suggests that no progress has been made in addressing concerns identified in the needs assessment; in fact, increased cooperation on the issues of human resource policy, benefits and wages (all Associations banded together on for a city-wide health benefits package for full-time employees, effective February 1), volunteer recruitment, on city-wide association recognition, understanding and promotion and between seniors coordinators for seniors service provision, are all underway

I am not sure how Council can support Recommendation #2 given the lack of alternatives. Before the City jumps into another set of community consultation to develop a new model, wouldn't it make sense to be direct staff and consultant resources to:

- a. better understand and describe the current model and identify possible remedies for the parts that do not work
- b. draft a set of two or three potential alternative models, and the implementation costs of each
- c. cost these alternatives for comparison to the current system

Concerns about "A Report on the Renewal of Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services in Richmond":

- a. Where is City Centre in all this? I see no notion of redirecting or developing a response to City Centre area needs while this has previously been recognized as the greatest area of need for additional services
- b. Does not recognize the scope and value of time devoted by volunteers to financial & human resource issues, maintenance, clean-up, programming, evaluation, marketing & promotion and research
- c. Overstates the involvement of City staff in Association provided services and understates Community Association contributions
- d. Does not address implementation costs of such a system – 750 new City employees at once and the clerical impact of 750 new employee PeopleSoft payroll inputs each week at facilities
- e. Does not address the cost implications of CUPE employment of current Association staff – while some wages will remain the same, many will increase by 35% and more
- f. Does not address the takeover of all facility equipment, currently a totally Association concern – maintenance is often a volunteer job – will this become a part of the BSW's work, a Civic Properties concern, other?
- g. Fails to acknowledge that there has been almost no "sanctioned" volunteer development, recruitment and recognition for ten years, hence the lack of emergent volunteers to take on leadership roles should be no surprise
- h. Fails to acknowledge that Associations have been asking for clear roles and responsibilities and a city-wide decision-making and communication protocol for at least four years – response by Staff has been deferred
- i. Does not address any transition of services from Association to City and assumes that volunteers will continue to perform current duties until January 2004 at which time the takeover will be complete

Fitness Centres

One of the issues staff has brought up is that of city-wide fitness centre use. Current practice is that passes are non-transferable, similarly priced from facility to facility (except for Watermania which costs approximately 33% more) with a variety of policies related to age and pass types. See Pages 38 & 84 of the Spring Leisure Guide for price and pass details. City staff would like to see a unified approach. The table below outlines current service levels.

Name	Coordinator	Staffed?	Amenity level*	Control
Cambie	Full time	40 hrs/wk	Almost full	ERCA
South Arm	Full time	All hours	Full	SACA
Steveston	Part time	Partial	Limited	SCS
Thompson	Full time	All hours	Full	TCA
Watermania	Full time	Partial	Full	City (CUPE)
West Rmd	Part time	Partial	Limited	WRCA

* equipment selection, adequate space

Staffing, equipment selection and amenity space at facilities vary widely. The fully staffed facilities at South Arm and Thompson allow participation by those with serious medical conditions, special needs and concerns about safety. These facilities also allow youth use. Thompson is the most heavily used facility, it attracts users from 13 to over 80, of every ethnic background, from beginners and rehab patients to elite athletes. The atmosphere is one of safety, support and friendship between patrons (regular early patrons held a 80th birthday party for a participant last week), fostered by a caring and dedicated staff.

Coordinators of the fitness centres meet regularly to work together on mutual concerns such as pricing, maintenance planning, training and policies; the City's Wellness Coordinator attends these meetings and brings City issues to the table. I am only aware of two fitness issues upon which the coordinators/Associations have refused to acquiesce to City requests. The first was a proposal to go to a city-wide maintenance contract that would have doubled the costs at Thompson and elsewhere, the second was to charge (\$40) for introductory fitness orientations (currently free for all purchasing a pass). Coordination of wage rates for instructors has been an issue but this is being resolved through a city-wide Association/City staff committee. Thompson offered complementary entrance to both West Richmond and South Arm pass holders when they were closed for maintenance over the past couple of years.

Only two other cities in the lower mainland have a unified or city-wide fitness pass system; these are North Van and Delta. All others set fees according to

amenities. The associations could consider an upgrade pass that would allow multi-facility access.

Association-provided services have allowed centres to access staff at a lower cost than CUPE-equivalent positions (\$12-14/hr vs \$17.70/hr for weight room attendants and 40 hr/wk for full-time staff vs 35 hr/wk for CUPE) and have enabled access to provincial casino funds for equipment upgrades and additions. In-house partnerships with local merchants have resulted in prizing for events such as last week's Aerobics Bash for the Heart Foundation.

Thompson provides an increased level of service to fitness with early morning openings; the additional City staff required for the two hours/day is paid for by the Association. This service has proven very popular.

City-wide decision-making is the polar opposite of the model of recreation service delivery that Richmond residents know now. While many good decisions can be made efficiently and effectively from a centrally-based system, it is so much easier to forget the end result. Two examples of recent "City-wide decision-making" gone wrong are:

#1 Summer program leader hiring.

Hundreds of young people apply for summer jobs with the Associations. Additional hundreds apply to volunteer, knowing that this is a good "entry point" for future summer employment. Many of these young people are already volunteers in their neighbourhood community centres. A few years ago, City staff determined that it would be more efficient to take all resumes in at one facility. The other plus was that one centre that felt it had "stale" summer staff would be able to inject new life into their program. The idea was to concentrate the inevitable counter staff time spent with prospective applicants; accumulate all applications in one place in preparation for a one or two day "blitz" to choose leaders. The other point was to find the best people, assign them a site and avoid previous year's concerns with competent young staff being offered jobs at multiple facilities.

Applications came in to all facilities anyway, as many applicants did not have the time or transportation to get to the designated centre; others were applying with the assistance or encouragement of youth coordinators and other staff at specific sites. When it came to the "blitz" day arrived, the pile was sorted by staff (who may not have had any contact with or knowledge of previous summer volunteers at their facility) and the candidates were ranked and assigned positions.

Younger staff and even some volunteers were caught in a difficult position; they had a job (or volunteer position) and that was good but now they were going to a place where they knew no one and nothing about programs or their supervisory staff. Many now had transportation challenges. As the summer progressed, the front desk and supervisory staff had huge challenges – with the staff assigned willy-nilly, the experienced young people from the previous year and volunteering throughout the year, the people who usually knew where things were and how things were done, those who oriented everyone else, were not there. On-site staff spent far more time supporting summer staff than ever previously. Relationships between neighbourhood program participants who knew leaders from previous years were broken and opportunities for young volunteers to begin work in a place they knew were gone.

City supervisory staff at the centre that argued for this idea said the year was a huge success and extolled the virtues of "mixing up" staff. Several young staff did not return to work in our centres after this. Youth Coordinators were so upset that they insisted on significant input to the hiring process the next year.

The central "blitz" is still done, but many community centres now consult with the Youth Coordinator and significant staff from previous years, to ensure staff return and volunteers are placed where they want, as much as possible.

#2 Richmond Youth Basketball League

The league began and ran with significant support from youth coordinators at the five "large" sites. The league "commissioner" moved from facility to facility as sponsorship (i.e. bookkeeping, phone line, clerical support) of the league moved annually in its formative first years. The youth coordinators found this was taking too much time away from their primary function so the league was "taken" to Steveston and a commissioner put in charge of all aspects. In a move to balance teams and without input from or communication to community centres, the decision was made to assign players to teams irrespective of where they lived. Children who had always played at Thompson and were old enough to walk to and from practice ended up wherever they were "drafted". Massive phone campaigns to change team rosters while keeping them balanced entailed. The commissioner returned to neighbourhood-based teams this year (although some problems of balancing still exist). The whole point of Community Associations and community centres is to foster a feeling of belonging, to assist in children learning new skills (such as walking to practice on their own) and to meet needs in the community where the people live.