



General Purposes Committee

- Date: Wednesday, March 6th, 2002
- Place: Anderson Room
Richmond City Hall
- Present: Mayor Malcolm D. Brodie, Chair
Councillor Linda Barnes
Councillor Lyn Greenhill
Councillor Evelina Halsey-Brandt
Councillor Rob Howard
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 5:35 p.m., and read aloud an opening statement regarding delegations.

CORPORATE PROGRAMS AND SERVICE LEVEL REVIEWS

1. **INTRODUCTORY REMARKS**

The General Manager, Finance & Corporate Services, Jim Bruce, explained that the purpose of the meeting was to provide clarification on the City's corporate programs and the levels of those services to residents. In response to questions, he provided clarification on some of the terminology used in the material provided to the Committee. Advice was also given that Page 25 required an amendment to delete Item 321, Administrative Support to the Mayor, as that amount had been included in Item 320, Support to the Mayor. (A copy of the complete documentation provided to the Committee is on file in the City Clerk's Office.)

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2. COMMUNITY SAFETY DIVISION

The General Manager, Community Safety, Chuck Gale, along with the appropriate staff, responded to questions from Committee members on:

- issues relating to the YVR, including the delivery of emergency response services for YVR; four YVR Watches – response as per General Duty Watches only on Sea Island; the YVR contract; and the RCMP/YVR contract
- issues relating to the RCMP, including Police Telecoms – Operational support unit to police functions and public; and Custodial Guards – securing prisoners requiring short term incarceration
- the rationale for the \$3 Million increase in the Department budget for 2002
- issues relating to the RCMP Dog Squad and whether any of the costs for the squad were shared with the YVR
- issues relating to the Fire-Rescue Department, including the budget for the Department and whether any discussion had been held on the feasibility of reducing the number of fire halls currently in existence, at the same time maintaining a satisfactory response time for emergencies; response times for fire-rescue personnel based on specific medical emergencies; the ‘first responder’ program;
- issues relating to the RCMP contract with respect to secondments to specific events and the payment of costs associated with these events
- the net cost for the Community Police Stations, and how this cost was determined
- the responsibilities and duties of the School Liaison Officers; whether there was any cost recovery from the Ministry of Education for this program
- the status of the Emergency Social Services Coordinator position.

3. PARKS, RECREATION & CULTURAL SERVICES DIVISION

The General Manager, Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services, Cathy Volkering Carlile, along with the appropriate staff, responded to questions from Committee members on:

- how funding was provided to the Gateway Theatre and to the Library; and the employers of the staff working for those two organizations; who would be responsible for the cost of bargaining for those employees
- the relationship of the community centres with the City

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- the function of the Minoru Aquatics and Arenas model
- the functions of the Parks Department with respect to pruning trees and the time spent by works crews to do this work; the response time to complaints made by the public
- how the standards were set to determine when mowing, pruning, etc., would occur
- the costs associated with the operation of the outdoor pools
- the rationale for the varying numbers of employees at the community centre facilities
- how a determination was made on whether gang mowing, ride on mowing or hand mowing would be undertaken; the costs associated with mowing by any method
- pest management and weed control
- the cost of dealing with graffiti and other vandalism in park facilities
- the cost of maintaining the City's trail system and in specific areas, the dyke on which the trail had been constructed
- the costs associated with Custodial and building maintenance
- the costs associated with Planning/Design
- the costs associated with Special Needs
- the costs associated with Youth Services, and how funding was provided for the Youth Coordinators
- the Steveston Community Centre, and in particular, the number of employees and the number of volunteers
- the number of fulltime equivalent positions which existed within the parks maintenance program, and the types of jobs which those employees undertook
- the costs associated with the operation of the Cultural Centre.

4. ENGINEERING & PUBLIC WORKS DIVISION

The General Manager, Engineering & Public Works, Jeff Day, along with the appropriate staff, responded to questions from Committee members on:

- why the proposed 2002 budget for the department was lower than the 2001 budget
- the feasibility of introducing revenue enhancements

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- the costs associated with vehicle insurance, and whether any consideration had been given to self insuring of City vehicles and facilities
- the costs associated with janitorial services
- the costs associated with security services
- the costs associated with street cleaning and the removal of leaves from City streets
- the costs associated with asphalt rehabilitation and asphalt road maintenance
- the costs associated with storm sewer screen maintenance
- the costs associated with storm sewer canal and ditch cleaning
- the timing of the various maintenance programs and the impact to the City of 'stretching' certain programs
- the life span of the City's underground infrastructure based on Richmond's soil conditions; and the types of materials which were available which could extend that life span

It was moved and seconded

That the meeting adjourn (7:27 p.m.) and reconvene at 4:00 p.m., on Thursday, March 7th, 2002, in the Council Chambers, Richmond City Hall.

CARRIED

The General Purposes Committee reconvened at 4:05 p.m., on Thursday, March 4th, 2002, with the Mayor and all members of the Committee present with the exception of Councillor Evelina Halsey-Brandt. The Chair read aloud an opening statement regarding delegations.

5. URBAN DEVELOPMENT DIVISION

The General Manager, Urban Development, David McLellan, spoke about the budget for the along with the appropriate staff, responded to questions from Committee members on:

- positions within the staff complement for the Urban Development Division, and the level of service provided by the Division
- the growth pattern for the Division over the past five years, and the impact which this pattern had had on the Division
- the functions associated with Urban Development Records Maintenance and whether the current level of service could be maintained

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- the issue of social planning and whether the current level of service offered to the public can be maintained
- whether the projects included within the various Program Groups were necessary
- the staff and expenditures which comprised Item No. 192 – Policy Planning Management, Administrative Support and Advisory Committee Operating Budgets

6. FINANCE & CORPORATE SERVICES DIVISION

The General Manager, Finance & Corporate Services, along with the appropriate staff, responded to questions from Committee members on:

- the rationale for increases in the 2002 budgets of Finance & Strategic Planning; Human Resources; and Information Technology
- the size of the Finance Department as compared to finance departments in other similarly sized municipalities
- the growth patterns of the staff complement of the Division over the past few years and the level of service being provided
- the purpose of ‘comfort letters’ and the fees charged for providing this service
- the use of technology by the City, and the resulting impact, over the past two years
- the rationale for providing RCMP tech support
- the costs associated with the additional MSP payments downloaded from the Provincial Government
- the accuracy of revenue estimates made by staff each year
- the purpose of the Fiscal component of a budget, and the rationale for the difference between the 2001 budget and the proposed 2002 budget
- the impact to the City of the additional downloading of expenditures from the Provincial Government, and whether there was a fund available to accommodate any further additional expenses
- the function of the Transfer To Reserves component of the budget
- the costs associated with Economic Development Projects
- the advisability of employing a fulltime Economic Development Officer and whether this position would result in the generation of additional revenue for the City
- the rationale for the Chamber of Commerce fee for service agreement
- the costs associated with Outside Legal Counsel

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- with respect to Human Resources, 'in-sourcing' and whether there would be an impact to the budget for this department as a result of the City assuming responsibilities formerly handled by the GVRD
- the costs associated with the General Local & School Elections & By-Elections.

7. COUNCIL & CORPORATE ADMINISTRATION

The Chief Administrative Officer, George Duncan, responded to questions from Committee members on:

- the costs associated with Administrative Support to Councillors
- the costs associated with Support to the Mayor
- the costs associated with Interpretation & General Translation Services
- the costs associated with External Communications
- the costs associated with attendance at FCM, UBCM, LMMA, etc.
- the costs associated with Memberships at FCM, UBCM, and various other organizations, and the benefits of membership in these organizations.

Questions were raised about the function of the Recycling Depot, and the Manager, Emergency & Environmental Programs, Suzanne Bycraft provided information, and responded to questions, on not only the establishment of the depot and the services which were provided through this facility, but also garbage disposal; the Drop-off Depot Yard Waste Program, and the rationale for charging a user fee at the Recycling Depot. She also responded to questions relating to:

- the costs associated with the Litter Collection Services for City parks, roadsides and bus stops.
- the costs associated with operating the Recycling Depot, and the impact which might result if that facility was not in operation.

8. ADDITIONAL LEVEL REVIEW

At the request of the Chair, Mr. Bruce reviewed the list of additional level projects submitted to the Committee at a previous meeting of the General Purposes Committee. Staff then responded to questions on:

- the impact which could result from the elimination of the Emergency Social Services Co-ordinator position and delaying of the implementation of the Emergency Social Services Plan for a certain period of time

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- the costs associated with the Occupational Health & Safety Coordinator position
- the impact of not proceeding with computer software and equipment upgrades
- the impact of delaying the payment of the E-Comm levy for a period of time
- with respect to the Fire-Rescue turnout gear, whether the entire amount of \$57,000 would be required in 2002 to replace this equipment
- with respect to the installation of mobile workstations in RCMP vehicles, the rationale for including this request as an additional level when this was a 3-4 year leasing replacement cycle; how many RCMP vehicles had these units; and whether the cost was recoverable from the RCMP.

As a result of the discussion, it was directed that the Community Safety Committee, at its March 12th, 2002 meeting, would review police servicing levels.

Discussion then ensued among Committee members and staff on various issues, including:

- the RCMP budget, cost sharing between the City and the RCMP, and the direction being taken by the RCMP with respect to policing
- the revenue generated by casino gaming establishments in neighbouring jurisdictions; the use of 2002 casino gaming revenue to reduce the proposed property tax requisition and the impact that this use could have on the 2002 budget and future budgets; the likelihood, if any, of the Provincial Government changing the current rules and regulations for casino operations thereby affecting future gaming revenues
- whether the 3% increase in the budget for the provision of fire and police services related only to contractual salary obligations
- whether or not Committee members could support a proposed property tax increase of 5.48%; and whether the only way to reduce this rate was through the reduction or elimination in the provision of services
- the timing of staff level reviews, i.e. whether they were conducted on an annual, semi-annual basis or over a longer period of time; whether the staff complement had increased; and the process followed to review vacant positions.

As a result of the discussion, the following motions were introduced:

It was moved and seconded

That \$1 Million of the 2002 Casino Gaming Revenue be used to reduce the 2002 tax requisition.

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It was moved and seconded

That staff review as soon as possible, the recovery of fees and fees for service opportunities, such as from the YVR, the RCMP, and other user fees, to form part of the 2002 budget if possible, with any additional revenue going to surplus.

At this point in the meeting, a Point of Order was called as Councillor Greenhill expressed concern that there were two motions on the floor at the same time. However, the Chair ruled that the Committee was considering both motions.

Discussion ensued among Committee members, on direction to staff on specific issues relating to the budget. During the discussion, it was noted that there were already two motions on the floor, and as a result both motions were **WITHDRAWN**.

It was moved and seconded

That:

- (1) *That \$1.2 Million of the 2002 Casino Gaming Revenue be used to reduce the 2002 tax requisition.*
- (2) *That staff review as soon as possible, the recovery of fees and fees for service opportunities, and other user fees, to form part of the 2002 budget if possible, with any additional revenue going to surplus.*
- (3) *That the approved additional levels (as identified in the proposed 2002 Operating budget) be reviewed as soon as possible.*
- (4) *That staff review and look for efficiencies which do not have an impact on staff levels, and which could be delayed or deleted from the 2002 budget, or postponed until 2003.*

Discussion continued on each of the proposed recommendations, as a result of which, Part (1) was **WITHDRAWN**. The request was also made that each of the remaining recommendations be dealt with separately.

The question on Part (2) was then called, and it was **CARRIED**.

The question on Part (3) was called, and it was **CARRIED** with Cllrs. Barnes, Greenhill and Kumagai opposed.

The question on Part (4) was called, and it was **DEFEATED ON A TIED VOTE** with Cllrs. Barnes, Greenhill, S. Halsey-Brandt and Howard opposed.

A brief discussion ensued on the timing of the report to Committee, and it was agreed that staff would report to the March 18th, 2002 meeting of the General Purposes Committee.

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ADJOURNMENT

It was moved and seconded

That the meeting adjourn (7:34 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 Wednesday, March 6th, 2002 and on Thursday, March 7th, 2002.

Mayor Malcolm D. Brodie
Chair

Fran J. Ashton
Executive Assistant