



General Purposes Committee

Date: Monday, March 6th, 2006

Place: Anderson Room
Richmond City Hall

Present: Mayor Malcolm D. Brodie, Chair
Councillor Linda Barnes
Councillor Cynthia Chen
Councillor Evelina Halsey-Brandt
Councillor Sue Halsey-Brandt
Councillor Rob Howard
Councillor Bill McNulty
Councillor Harold Steves

Absent: Councillor Derek Dang

Call to Order: The Chair called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

MINUTES

1. It was moved and seconded
That the minutes of the meeting of the General Purposes Committee held on Monday, February 20th, 2006, be adopted as circulated.

CARRIED

DELEGATION

2. *Teri Nicholas, Family Services of Greater Vancouver, James Musgrave, Senior Manager of the Richmond programs, and Judith Kerr, Director, Counselling, Specialized Intervention & Community Services, to speak about the counselling, support and community education programs provided by Family Services of Greater Vancouver to the citizens of Richmond.* (File No.: 03-1085-20-FSGV1)

Copies of the Family Services of Greater Vancouver 2004-2005 Annual Report, along with a breakdown of funding for the 2005/2006 Richmond services, were provided to members of the Committee, and copies are on file in the City Clerk's Office.

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Ms. Nicholas then referred to the material to explain the breakdown of (i) revenue obtained by Family Services of Greater Vancouver (FSGV), and (ii) funding for the services provided in Richmond. She explained that the FSGV was seeking a larger grant because of the demand for service and the current waiting list for the programs offered by the FSGV. She further advised that FSGV had been working with a reduced revenue and an increased client base. Ms. Nicholas stated that it was important to treat people earlier rather than later because the result would be a reduction in the demand for gated closed programs. She also spoke about the challenges faced by the FSGV to raise funds to make up the difference in revenue.

Mr. Musgrave then commented briefly on the counselling program which was available to Richmond residents, stating that this program was the only ungated general counselling service available in the City, and targeted low income people who could not otherwise afford counselling services. He commented that the wait list was long because of a reduction in revenue and an increase in clients. Mr. Musgrave stated that the FSGV was concerned about the 'things' which could happen to a family waiting for counselling, with the possibility that problems could escalate to the point where a ministry would become involved. He reiterated that an increase in the grant to the FSGV would help the organization to address the wait list issue.

Discussion then ensued among Committee members and the delegation on whether there had been an increase in revenue received from other ministries, and whether funding to provide counselling services had increased. In response to questions, advice was given that (i) the funds received from the City were used to fund ungated open programs in the City; (ii) counselling was not targeted to one specific area, however, the FSGV was hoping to expand the counselling services into other areas as the counsellors continued their training; and (iii) a small portion of the clients who received counselling in Richmond were people who worked in Richmond but lived in Vancouver.

In concluding the presentation, the Chair thanked the delegation for their submission.

Ms. Ahlay Chin, Executive Director, Chinese Mental Wellness Association of Canada, accompanied by C. O. Wong, Board member and Francis Ng, a Richmond resident, provided material to the Committee about the Chinese Mental Wellness Association. She explained that the Association provided services not only to the Chinese population in Richmond but also to all ethnic groups.

Ms. Chin stated that grant monies were needed by the Association to maintain the service to its clients, and to raise awareness of mental health issues amongst the Chinese. She asked that the amount of the grant recommended by City staff be increased to allow the Association to continue providing counselling to the Chinese community.

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Discussion then took place among Committee members and the delegation on:

- the interaction of the Chinese Mental Wellness Association of Canada with the Canadian Mental Health Association
- the need for education to ensure that Chinese clients obtained help earlier to deal with their illness
- whether the Association had approached other agencies, organizations and the federal and provincial ministries to obtain funding, and the difficulties which the Association had encountered
- the number of counsellors currently employed by the Association, and the number of clients who received counselling on a weekly and monthly basis
- the need for improved mental health wellness programs in the country.

During the discussion, Mr. Ng talked about the services offered by the Chinese Mental Wellness Association, and spoke about the need for financial support.

In concluding the discussion, the Chair thanked the delegation for their presentation.

FINANCE & CORPORATE SERVICES DIVISION

3. **RICHMOND COMMUNITY GRANTS 2006**

(Report: Feb. 1/06, File No.: 03-1085-01/2006 – Vol 01) (REDMS No. 1754263, 1739965, 160199)

The Manager, Customer Service, Anne Stevens, advised that the total shown in Part (1) of the staff recommendation included those applications which had been received after the deadline, and that the total funding remaining in the budget was approximately \$43,350.

Cllr. Sue Halsey-Brandt referred to correspondence from the Richmond Nature Park Society, which requested additional funding to complete their signage project. Information was provided that the Nature Park Society had been awarded \$10,000 cash and \$6,000 in-kind for work which was to have been completed by the City's Sign Department. Advice was given that the Nature Park Society mistakenly used the entire amount to hire an outside company to complete the design work for the signs and now did not have sufficient funds to complete the work. As a result of the discussion, staff were requested to provide information on the amount of funds required to have the signs completed by the Sign Department, to Council prior to the March 13th, 2006 Regular Council Meeting.

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Discussion then ensued among Committee members and staff on the rationale for the amounts of grants being recommended for specific organizations. Also commented on was the amount of the grants budget and the need to increase the budget for 2007. Reference was made to Part (2) of the staff recommendation, and the suggestion was made that the Committee should consider an increased amount for next year's grant budget. Reference was also made to the Chinese Mental Wellness Association of Canada, and the suggestion was made that staff should provide assistance to the Association on how to apply for funding from the various agencies and government ministries.

As a result of the discussion, staff were requested to provide information to Council, prior to the March 13th, 2006 Council Meeting on:

- whether any training was provided to the individuals responsible for lighting fireworks at the City's community centres
- whether the amount of \$7,000 being recommended to the Richmond Safe Communities Alliance would be sufficient to implement their new Meth Watch Prevention Program.

At the conclusion of the discussion, the following resolution was then introduced:

It was moved and seconded

(1) That the 2006 City Grant Program support the following:

- (a) That the organizations in the Health, Social and Safety Services category be awarded the recommended grant amount and the cheques disbursed for a total of \$393,950; and,*
- (b) That the organizations in the Cultural Services and Community Events category be awarded the recommended grant amount and the cheques disbursed for a total of \$62,700.*

(2) That a Committee comprised of appropriate staff and City Councillor Evelina Halsey-Brandt, with Councillor Linda Barnes as the alternate, be established to review Policy 3705 to ensure it reflects the needs of the Community.

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

It was moved and seconded

That Part (1) of the main resolution be amended by adding the following after the words 'recommended grant amount', the following "on the understanding that the grants to the following organizations would be increased to the amounts shown:

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- (1) *the Chinese Mental Wellness Association of Canada - \$12,000;*
- (2) *Richmond Safe Communities Alliance - \$ 9,000;*
- (3) *Richmond Poverty Response Committee - \$6,000;*
- (4) *Richmond Women's Resource Centre - \$12,000; and*
- (5) *Multicultural Helping House Society - \$10,000; and*

That the figure shown, "\$393,950", be replaced with the figure "\$409,950".

CARRIED

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

4. **2006 PARCEL TAX ROLL REVIEW PANEL FOR LOCAL AREA SERVICES**

(Report: Feb. 24/06, File No.: 03-0925-09-02/2006-Vol 01) (REDMS No. 1772792, 1772702)

It was moved and seconded

That the meeting of the 2006 Parcel Tax Roll Review Panel be scheduled for Thursday, April 20th , 2006, at 3:55 p.m., in the Anderson Room at Richmond City Hall.

CARRIED

5. **POLICY ON THE ROUTINE RELEASE OF CLOSED RESOLUTIONS AND REPORTS AND IMPLEMENTATION OF A "CONSENT AGENDA"**

(Report: Feb. 21/06, File No.: 01-0105-00/Vol 01) (REDMS No. 1723404, 1770878, 1740698)

Discussion first centred around the proposed policy on the release of closed resolutions and reports, and in response to questions, the Director, City Clerk's Office, David Weber, explained the process which would be followed regarding the release of resolutions and reports to the public, and the timing of such releases.

Also addressed was the issue of whether (i) Council would vote on the terms of release of a particular report or if the decision would be made administratively; (ii) the proposed policy would reduce the number of 'Freedom of Information' requests received by the City; and (iii) a time frame should be attached to the policy to ensure that items had been returned to Council for release in a timely manner. The suggestion was also made that the proposed policy be made effective December 5, 2005.

Discussion continued on the question of implementing a time frame for the release of information to the public, during which information was provided that every quarter, a report would appear on a closed Council agenda providing an update on all outstanding closed items that had not been released publicly. Reference was made to the proposed report, and the request was made that this report include information on the status of the previously considered resolutions, the criteria and anticipated date of release, but not include copies of all reports.

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Discussion then ensued on the proposed implementation of a 'consent agenda'. The comment was made that this type of agenda would make Council Meetings more efficient, however, concerns were raised about items which would be included within this agenda, particularly the receipt of items from a closed Council Meeting, applications for rezoning, and the appointment of citizens to advisory committees. The opinion was expressed that these items should be read out to the public. However, support was given for the proposed 'consent agenda' as it was felt that there now would be sufficient time to deal with the 'big picture' issues and to give Council the opportunity to focus on meaningful policy discussions.

Reference was made to applications for rezoning, and comments were made that area residents would already be aware of a proposed rezoning in their neighbourhood because of signs posted on the property, mail outs and notification of an upcoming public hearing in the local newspaper.

Discussion then took place on how items included in the 'consent agenda' could be read out or summarized, with the suggestion being made that in the case of rezoning applications, the name of the developer, the property address and the proposed zoning district, could be read out at the time the item was announced to the public. The suggestion was made during the discussion that the names of those individuals being appointed to advisory committees should also be announced.

Committee members voiced their support for the proposed 'consent agenda', with comments being made that it was important to recognize that any time a member of Council could request that an item be removed from the 'consent agenda' and placed into the regular agenda in order to have a fuller discussion. Reference was made to the announcement of appointments, and the suggestion was made that a summary of the names and the committees to which they had been appointed, could be read out.

Further discussion ensued on the issue of whether rezoning applications should be included in a 'consent agenda', with concern being expressed that reading out a motion which recommended the adoption of items 6 through 10, did not convey the information which should be made known to the public. The comment was made that basic fundamental information should be summarized and read out as part of the adoption of the 'consent agenda'.

It was moved and seconded

- (1) ***That the policy on the "Routine Release of Closed Resolutions and Reports" (as outlined in the report dated February 21st, 2006 from the Director, City Clerk's Office) be adopted, effective December 5th, 2005, on the basis that all undisclosed matters would be returned to Council no more than three months after initial presentation;***

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- (2) *That Council Procedure Bylaw No. 7560, Amendment Bylaw No. 8042, which introduces new procedural rules around the use of a consent agenda, be introduced and given first, second and third readings; and*
- (3) *That staff proceed with the statutory public notification of this proposed change to the Council Procedure Bylaw.*

CARRIED

6. OVAL ADVISORY COMMITTEES

Councillor Chen asked a number of questions regarding the three Oval advisory committees. In response, information was provided by the Chief Administrative Officer, George Duncan, that (i) the committees reported to Council through a staff report; (ii) staff and Council liaisons had been appointed to all three committees; and (iii) staff were in the process of updating the City web site to include reference to the three Oval advisory committees.

ADJOURNMENT

It was moved and seconded

That the meeting adjourn (5:53 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, March 6th, 2006.

Mayor Malcolm D. Brodie
Chair

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