



Finance Select Committee

- Date: Tuesday, November 25th, 2003
- Place: Anderson Room
Richmond City Hall
- Present: Councillor Kiichi Kumagai, Chair
Councillor Harold Steves, Vice-Chair
Councillor Evelina Halsey-Brandt
Councillor Rob Howard
Councillor Bill McNulty
Mayor Malcolm D. Brodie
- Also Present: Councillor Linda Barnes
Councillor Derek Dang
Councillor Sue Halsey-Brandt
- Call to Order: The Chair called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

A brief discussion ensued on the timing of the next Finance Select Committee meeting to discuss the proposed 2004 operating budget. As a result, it was agreed that a meeting of the Committee would be held at 4:00 p.m., on Wednesday, December 10th, 2003, in the Anderson Room.

MINUTES

1. It was moved and seconded
That the minutes of the meeting of the Finance Select Committee held on Tuesday, November 18th, 2003, be adopted as circulated.
CARRIED
2. **2004 BUDGET – ADDITIONAL LEVELS**
(Material distributed previously.)

Supt. Ward Clapham, accompanied by Insp. Tony Mahon and Acting NCO Keith Bramhill, advised that the additional level requests represented a combination of 'catch-up' and preparing for the future.

1.

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Reference was made to the request for a "CPIC Clerk Municipal" position, and advice was given that the number of municipal employees had not increased for a number of years, and that the Detachment could not continue to do more with less.

Reference was made to the request for an additional six officers, and advice was given that this request had been carried forward from 2002. Supt. Clapham further advised that the request for an additional five officers would allow the Detachment to plan for (i) the future as part of its Five Year Planning strategy, (ii) for the growth of the City, and (iii) to maintain its current service delivery levels.

Considerable discussion then ensued among Committee members, the delegation and staff on the following issues related to the RCMP additional level requests:

- what the Detachment's top priority in the additional level requests would be as compared to the ranking by TAG (advice was given that the Detachment's top priority would be their request for an additional six officers)
- whether there would be any decrease in the amount of overtime for the Detachment as a result of the relocation of IHIT officers to the regional jurisdiction
- whether the proposed increase of six officers would help to reduce the overtime budget for the Detachment
- the rationale for overtime occurring within the Detachment
- the total number of officers being sought by the Detachment (advice was given that the Detachment was seeking approval for eleven additional officers; and that the increase for five officers was based on the City's increase in population)
- whether any funding had been included in the operating budget for the additional officers
- the increase in the number of 'grow ops' within the City and the minimal fines being passed on to the offenders
- the importance of community safety within the City; the desire of Council to try and accommodate the requests of the RCMP, and how this could be accomplished
- the ratio of new officers to experienced officers, and whether the Detachment was still considered to be a training ground
- whether the City was required to pay for the services of police officers called in from other municipalities to provide assistance when requested

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- possible scenarios which were being considered by staff with respect to a number of the RCMP additional level requests
- whether funds could be found within existing budget levels to provide funding for the additional six officers, such as reducing the amount of overtime budgeted for the coming year, and the impact which this could have on the Detachment.

Discussion continued on the scenarios proposed by staff to provide funding for the additional six officers requested by the RCMP, and the need for the RCMP and staff to work together to find creative solutions. During the discussion, the suggestion was made that the RCMP additional level requests be referred to the December 1st, 2003 General Purposes Committee meeting for discussion in conjunction with the report from the Chief Administrative Officer regarding the restructuring of the Community Safety Division. As a result, the following **referral** motion was introduced:

It was moved and seconded

That the RCMP additional level requests be referred to the December 1st, 2003 meeting of the General Purposes Committee.

CARRIED

The Committee then reviewed the remaining additional level requests with staff.

City Clerk Richard McKenna came forward and provided a brief overview of his request for an increase in the "Annual Election Reserve Contribution". He explained that an amount of \$34,059 was required in 2004 and 2005 to reach the proposed 2005 election budget of \$68,120. Mr. McKenna advised that included within the requested amount was a figure of \$15,000 for election software upgrade. He explained that without the upgrade, the electronic voting equipment would no longer function.

As a result of the brief discussion which ensued on this request, the following motion was introduced:

It was moved and seconded

That the amount of \$34,059 be transferred to the proposed 2004 operating budget.

CARRIED

The Manager, Development Applications, Joe Erceg, provided information on the Production Centre's request for a new copier to replace the existing Kodak machine. He noted that as of December 31st, 2003, the supplier would no longer be able to service this equipment. In response to questions, advice was given that the proposed lease agreement included the cost of toner cartridges and maintenance expenses.

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At this point in the meeting, the request was made that no further decisions be made until all of the additional level requests had been reviewed.

Deputy Geoff Lake, with reference to the request for funding to provide maintenance to the "Water & High Angle Rope Rescue Equipment", advised that a total of 48 firefighters had been trained in water and high angle rope rescues (12 firefighters per shift); and that the requested \$28,730 would provide on-going maintenance of the equipment and replacement as it became worn.

During the discussion which ensued on this request, questions were raised about the feasibility of establishing a reserve account (similar to the vehicle replacement reserve account).

Reference was made to the request of the Fire Department for funding to pay for "EMS College Licencing Fees and a Medical Advisory Committee Fee", and information was provided by Deputy Chief Lake. During the discussion which took place, questions were raised about (i) whether this should be part of the Firefighter's Collective Agreement; and (ii) why the individual firefighters were not paying for the fees. The Chair asked that this information be provided to the December 10th Committee meeting.

Discussion continued on the request, during which information was provided that the result would be that firefighters would be able to increase their training in order to be the first responder to medical emergencies. Deputy Chief Lake advised that fire departments were required to obtain licences to practice anywhere within British Columbia, and without that licence, fire departments would not be able to respond to medical emergencies.

The Director of Finance, Andrew Nazareth, provided information on the request of the Roads Department for "Asphalt Rehab Catch Up". During his review, Mr. Nazareth stated that a mechanism had to be found to handle requests such as these. Discussion ensued on this matter, during which advice was given that staff were reviewing the funding of all equipment reserve accounts. As well, advice was given that the Alternative Revenue Team was considering ways to lobby the Federal and Provincial Governments for a return of a portion of the fuel tax to local municipalities.

Discussion continued, with it being noted that a way had to be found to increase the reserves to accommodate the additional level request. Questions were raised about why TAG had rejected the request, and in response, advice was given by the Chief Administrative Officer, George Duncan, that the request had been denied because the City could not afford it.

(Cllr. Sue Halsey-Brandt left the meeting at 7:30 p.m.)

Mr. Nazareth then provided information on the request of the Fire Department for a "0.5 FTE Information Technology Staff". At this point, Deputy Chief Lake advised that the matter had been addressed with the IT staff and was no longer an issue.

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Reference was made to the request for “Additional Overtime Funding for Bylaw Investigation”, and information was provided by Mr. Nazareth that the funding was required to allow the Bylaw Enforcement Officers to better perform their duties after hours.

(Cllr. Sue Halsey-Brandt returned to the meeting - 7:33 p.m.)

During the discussion which ensued, questions were raised about the feasibility of using ‘flex hours’. In response, information was provided that the Union could be approached about the use of ‘flex hours’ to reduce the overtime. Further information was provided that TAG was of the view that these hours could be achieved within the department without the need for overtime.

As a result of the discussion, the Chair asked that the following information be provided to the December 10th Committee meeting: (i) whether the request could be accommodated within the current operating budget; (ii) whether there was any additional revenue to offset costs; and (iii) clarification on the comment in the report.

Reference was made to the additional level requests for funding for the “Disability Resource Centre”, the “Richmond Therapeutic Equestrian Society”, and the “Seniors Wellness Program”. Discussion ensued on how funding had been provided in the past for these requests; and whether casino revenue should be used to fund community projects rather than placing all of this revenue into the capital budget.

During the discussion on the use of casino revenue and the decision of Council that this revenue would be deposited into the City’s reserve accounts as part of the City’s Long Term Financial Strategy, staff were requested to provide copies of those reports which dealt with the first casino being established in ‘Richmond. Staff were also requested to provide copies of the report which dealt with the provision of funding to the Disability Resource Centre, and to clarify how funding to the Centre was provided in the past. The Chair directed that these reports should be presented to the upcoming December 10th meeting.

Reference was made to the request for funding for an “Environmental Technician/Coordinator”, and the Chair asked that this request be reflected within Mr. Duncan’s report on the reorganization of the Community Safety Division. The Chair also directed that information be provided on (i) why TAG had not approved the request; (ii) why the request was included in each subsequent year’s budget as an additional request, and (iii) what the risk would be if the position was not approved.

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The Manager, Policy Planning, Terry Crowe, provided the rationale for his Department's request for funding for the "Air Photo and Remote Sensing Program". A question was asked about why TAG rejected the request, and the Chair asked that this information be provided to the December 10th Committee meeting.

Mr. Crowe also spoke about the request for funding to contribute to the "Child Care Statutory Reserve Fund", as a result of which, information was requested for the December 10th meeting on the amount collected and the amount which had been promised to this fund.

Discussion continued briefly on the additional level requests, as a result of which, it was directed that all of the requests would be referred to the December 10th Committee meeting as part of the discussion on the proposed 2004 Operating Budget.

Staff were also directed, as part of the operating budget referral, to examine the feasibility of funding the \$316,000 grants program from casino revenue. Discussion ensued briefly on this proposal, during which it was noted that a statutory reserve fund should be created for community projects.

ADJOURNMENT

It was moved and seconded

That the meeting adjourn (7:58 p.m.).

CARRIED

Certified a true and correct copy of the Minutes of the meeting of the Finance Select Committee of the Council of the City of Richmond held on Tuesday, November 25th, 2003.

Councillor Kiichi Kumagai
Chair

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