



Community Safety Committee

Date: Tuesday, March 15th, 2005
Place: Anderson Room
Richmond City Hall
Present: Councillor Linda Barnes, Chair
Councillor Derek Dang, Vice-Chair
Councillor Sue Halsey-Brandt
Absent: Councillor Evelina Halsey-Brandt
Councillor Bill McNulty
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 Community Safety Committee held on Tuesday, February 15th, 2005, be adopted as circulated.

CARRIED

NEXT COMMITTEE MEETING DATE

2. The next meeting of the Committee is scheduled to be held on *Tuesday, April 12th, 2005* at 4:00 p.m. in the Anderson Room.

COMMUNITY SAFETY DIVISION

3. **POLICE CHIEF BRIEFING**
(Oral Report) (30 Minutes in duration)

Items for discussion:

(1) *Presentation of Year Two of Five Year Plan* (DVD presentation)

Supt. Ward Clapham spoke briefly about the Detachment's 2003 – 2008 Five Year Plan, and the Richmond – West Fraser Area Strategic Framework.

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A DVD presentation entitled "Richmond RCMP – Marching Forward, Richmond Policing Services Plan 2003-2008 (2004) Year #2" was then shown to Committee. A copy of the DVD and other material circulated on this matter is on file in the City Clerk's Office.

Supt. Clapham then spoke about the action taken by the Detachment with regard to street racing, advising that no deaths had occurred from street racing from 2003 to the present time. He also talked about luggage theft occurring at the Vancouver International Airport, youth violence and youth assault.

Insp. Tony Mahon advised that the Detachment had recently hired a Criminal Analyst, and he talked about the importance of investing in youth today in order to reap rewards in the future. Insp. Mahon also spoke about his strong belief in the DARE program and provided information to the Committee on the graduation ceremonies currently being held with the Grade 5 students who had completed the program.

Information was also provided on the Detachment's work with the City Solicitor to write a bylaw to deal with 'grow ops' and methane labs, and on the work of the Detachment with Richmond Addiction Services and other partners in the City to implement a 'meth watch' program.

Discussion then ensued among Committee members and the RCMP delegation on:

- the status of the marijuana grow op situation in Richmond
- the DARE program
- the reduction in deaths from street racing
- policing today and the importance of partnerships in solving crimes and whether this was a common approach with other police detachments
- the need to improve communication between the RCMP and the community
- the introduction of the 'meth watch' program
- restorative justice and the partnership which the Detachment had with Touchstone Family Association, and the timing of the creation of a Board

During the discussion, the suggestion was made that the DVD presentation be shown at a future Council meeting. *(Following the Committee meeting, it was agreed that the DVD would be shown at the April 12th, 2005 Regular Council Meeting.)*

During the discussion, the Chair referred to the issue of internet pornography, and Supt. Clapham was requested to schedule a time with the Committee to provide a further overview on this subject. Reference was made to the statistics provided during the presentation, and the Chair requested that this information be provided in written form to the Committee.

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Reference was made to the Victim Services Program, and information was given that an update would be made at the Committee's April 12th meeting.

The Chair, in concluding, the presentation, thanked the delegation for an excellent presentation. In response, Supt. Clapham thanked the Committee and Council for supporting the Detachment, advising that Richmond was being viewed as a model to be used by other jurisdictions.

COMMUNITY BYLAWS

4. SOIL MANAGEMENT WITHIN THE AGRICULTURAL LAND RESERVE – RECOMMENDED CITY ACTION

(Report: Jan. 6/05, File No.: 10-6000-03) (REDMS No. 1328066)

The Assistant Manager, Environmental Programs, Margo Daykin, accompanied by the Manager, Community Bylaws, briefly reviewed the report with the Committee.

Discussion then took place among Committee members and staff on:

- the changes in the Provincial legislation which governed the movement of soil in the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) which has eliminated municipal involvement in permitting soil movement activities
- the impact which this change could have on the City's ability to control soil movement
- whether there were many violations occurring and the seriousness of these violations
- how the City would become aware of problems occurring.

It was moved and seconded

- (1) *That the development of a threshold-based Soil Bylaw be endorsed to address soil activity within the Agricultural Land Reserve.*
- (2) *That staff consult with the Richmond Agricultural Advisory Committee in developing the above proposed Soil Bylaw.*

CARRIED

5. FIREWORKS REGULATION CHANGES

(Report: Feb. 15/05, File No.: 12-8060-20-7917-7918) (REDMS No. 1360398, 1429930, 1442758)

Don Pearson briefly reviewed his report with the Committee, during which he advised that the proposed bylaw should be amended to delete the words "and Firecrackers" in the title of Section 1.1 of Part One of the bylaw.

Mr. Pearson stated that staff realized that while adoption of the bylaw would not eliminate or stop fireworks, it made a statement about how the City felt about fireworks, as well as limiting access to fireworks and making enforcement easier. He added that staff were already working on options which would allow fireworks displays to take place at the community level.

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Mr. David Phillips, of Mystical Distributing Company Ltd., explained that his company sold fireworks to local stores which benefited economically from selling fireworks. He then provided information on the tests applied to fireworks during their construction, which had to apply to regulations put in place by the Federal Government. Mr. Phillips stated that illegal fireworks brought in from the United States were not been constructed to Canadian standards. He suggested that if Richmond banned fireworks, the market for American fireworks would increase.

Mr. Phillips also stated that the real problem was Halloween arsonists and that problem would not change if fireworks were banned because there would still be a great demand for firecrackers and bottle rockets. He further stated that vendors would set up stores outside Richmond and that even more illegal fireworks would be sold. Mr. Phillips questioned whether the banning of fireworks would stop fire-related damage from occurring at Halloween, and he provided examples of damage occurring in areas which did not allow the sale of fireworks. He also spoke about statistics provided by staff in relation to fireworks and the damage which occurred on Halloween night, and stated that legal fireworks caused less problems than illegal fireworks.

In response to a question, Mr. Phillips advised that Canadian fireworks regulations were much more stringent than those in the United States.

Mr. Ron Cameron, co-owner of Mystical Distributing Company Ltd., and representing the Canadian Pyrotechnics Council, stated that the purpose of the Council was to promote the safe use of fireworks in Canada. He referred to the proposed bylaw, and stated that a 'common sense' bylaw was required, which among other things:

- would allow fireworks only to be discharged on private property;
- would not allow fireworks to be hand held when discharged; and
- would not allow any person to discharge fireworks which would endanger or create a nuisance to any property.

Mr. John Reilly spoke about the fireworks regulations imposed by the Federal Government, and about the program of thorough testing which had been introduced to ensure that fireworks were certified safe. He further advised that local jurisdictions were allowed to impose laws which did not remove any of the power of the Federal regulations, but allowed the imposition of even greater restrictions at the local level.

Mr. Reilly referred to the memorandum written by Captain Dave Clou and noted that Captain Clou's main concern was the damage from fires on Halloween night. He questioned how much damage was done on Halloween night as compared to the rest of the year.

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Mr. Reilly spoke about the rights of individuals to set off fireworks, and asked whether it was a question of simply banning fireworks or was there an opportunity for education. He then referred to material circulated to the Committee members regarding "Provincial Ban on Fireworks", a copy of which is on file in the City Clerk's Office. Mr. Reilly also spoke about the need to educate children on the dangers of fireworks.

A brief discussion ensued with comments being made by Committee members about the amount of damage and the number of fires which occurred on Halloween night. Questions were raised about the feasibility that an outright ban of fireworks would lead to an increase in the amount of illegal fireworks coming in to Canada and Richmond from the United States. Advice was given in response, that there shouldn't be an increase as those people who wanted to purchase Canadian fireworks would simply purchase them from adjacent municipalities.

Roger Bains, a resident of Richmond, provided information on a large family event which was held every Halloween, and questioned whether his family would still be allowed to light fireworks once the proposed bylaw was in place. He added that he did not believe that a complete ban on lighting fireworks was the answer, as he felt that those individuals who caused trouble on Halloween night would still cause trouble one way or another. Mr. Bains indicated that awareness was the answer.

In response to Mr. Bain's question, advice was given that individual families would not be able to light their own firework displays. Advice was given that regulations require a minimum clear space of 100 feet in all directions and most homes in Richmond did not have this much room. As a result, staff were hoping to expand Halloween events and activities at community centres.

Discussion took place on the feasibility of implementing education programs in local schools, during which advice was given that there was an existing program offered in other jurisdictions, however it was the decision of the School Board as to whether this program would be implemented as part of the school curriculum. Further advice was given that although the available teaching resources could be provided to the teachers, the Fire Department did not have the staffing and financial resources available to visit all the schools.

A local business owner came forward and provided information on the difficulties he had encountered in endeavouring to have suspicious fireworks identified by the RCMP. He also suggested that the regulations should be implemented 'across the board'. The gentleman noted that some fireworks stores stayed in business year round, and that there were many seasonal stores which sold fireworks, some of which were selling fireworks to underage customers.

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In answer to the gentleman's concerns, advice was given that there were many permanent businesses which chose to sell fireworks in addition to their regular merchandise, however most distributors were temporary. Advice was also given that staff had been taking a regulatory approach, however, on Halloween night because of the high number of complaints which were dealt with by the RCMP, the Fire Department and City staff, and the roaming of the individuals causing the complaints, there was not sufficient time to issue tickets to the offenders.

In response to a further question, information was provided that several other jurisdictions, including Surrey, Coquitlam, Port Coquitlam and North Vancouver, were proposing or implementing some form of a partial or total ban.

At the request of the Chair, the Manager, Community Recreation Services, Vern Jacques, provided information on options which were being considered to address the needs of local communities for additional Halloween activities. Questions were raised about whether individual families would be permitted to book community centres for fireworks displays, and Mr. Jacques was requested by the Chair to raise the matter with community centres to consider various models which would incorporate both the larger needs of the community and smaller more neighbourhood-centred proposals.

Discussion continued briefly, with information being provided that the concept of having more community oriented events was to allow events to be spread out over the City rather than having residents concentrated in one area, such as at Minoru Park. The comment was made that consideration had to be given to finding creative ways to maintain firework displays, and at the same time, doing it in a safe way.

It was moved and seconded

That the following bylaws each be introduced and given first, second and third readings:

- (1) Fireworks Regulation Bylaw No. 7917, which prohibits the sale, purchase, possession and discharge of all fireworks by unqualified persons; and*
- (2) Municipal Ticket Information Authorization Bylaw No. 7321, Amendment Bylaw No. 7918, to integrate the changed offences from the new Fireworks Bylaw.*

The question on the motion was not called, as Committee members commented on the proposed fireworks ban. Concern was expressed about the possible increase in illegal fireworks as a result of the ban. However, the comment was made that based on the history of Halloween nights and if the City continued on its present path, the situation in the City would only become worse.

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Reference was made to the education program which was available, and concern was expressed that the Fire Department did not have sufficient resources available to implement the program in local schools. Reference was made to the City's SOS Team and the suggestion was made that this issue should be raised with that committee.

The Chair indicated her support for the proposed fireworks ban, but asked that the Parks Department report to the Committee as soon as possible with a plan to demonstrate how the community would be included. Cllr. Barnes stated that while it was good to work with the community centres, she also wanted to include smaller more localized areas.

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

6. MANAGER'S REPORT

Mr. Pearson advised that he attended a meeting with the Attorney General's Department regarding the bylaw adjudication process, and as a result, it was indicated that the Department was more than willing to move this process to Richmond. He stated that a report would be submitted to Committee on this matter.

The Chair indicated that she had a number of referrals to staff, as follows:

Establishment of Mosquito Control Administration & Coordination Service

It was moved and seconded

That the correspondence from the Greater Vancouver Regional District (dated March 7th, 2005), regarding Establishment of Mosquito Control Administration & Coordination Service, be referred to the Manager, Emergency & Environmental Programs, for review and report to Committee.

CARRIED

Sustainable Communities Initiative – Update from the GVRD

It was moved and seconded

That the proposed GVRD Parks Plan P3 approach be referred to staff for report to the Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services Committee on the possible affects this approach may have on Richmond, given the concerns expressed by residents regarding the use of McDonald Beach as an RV Park, and identify in the report, those regional parks and greenways located in or adjacent to Richmond, which may be affected by this proposal.

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Illegal Dumping

It was moved and seconded

That the issue of illegal dumping be referred to staff to report to Committee on (i) whether the situation was becoming worse; (ii) whether the present situation different in any way from previous situations; (iii) what the trend appeared to be, (iv) whether probable causes had been identified; and (v) if there was a probable cause, what action could the City take to deal with the matter.

CARRIED

Steveston Island

It was moved and seconded

That the correspondence (received from Land Water British Columbia Inc., dated March 7th, 2005), regarding the Steveston Island Memorandum of Understanding, be referred to staff for review and report to the General Purposes Committee, and that representatives of Fisheries and Oceans Canada be invited to attend the meeting at which the report would be considered, for discussions regarding their concerns and how these concerns might be addressed.

CARRIED

ADJOURNMENT

It was moved and seconded

That the meeting adjourn (6:14 p.m.).

CARRIED

Certified a true and correct copy of the Minutes of the meeting of the Community Safety Committee of the Council of the City of Richmond held on Tuesday, March 15th, 2005.

Councillor Linda Barnes
Chair

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