



COUNCIL/SCHOOL BOARD LIAISON COMMITTEE

MINUTES

Date: Wednesday, March 15th, 2000

Time: 1:00 p.m.

Place: W. H. Anderson Committee Room
Richmond City Hall

Present: Councillor Lyn Greenhill, Chair
Councillor Harold Steves
Trustee Sandra Bourque
Trustee Chris Evans

Also Present: Mr. David McLellan, General Manager, Urban Development (1:05 p.m.)
Mr. Dave Semple, Director, Parks
Mr. B. Fraser, Deputy Secretary-Treasurer
Mr. G. McLean, Manager of Facilities
Mrs. F. Ashton, Executive Assistant

The Chair called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

1. **ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

It was MOVED and SECONDED

That the agenda for the meeting of Wednesday, March 15th, 2000, be adopted, with the addition of the following item to the agenda under 'New Business':

(a) Thompson Community Association.

CARRIED

2. **ADOPTION OF MINUTES**

It was MOVED and SECONDED

That the minutes of the meeting of the Council/School Board Liaison Committee held on Wednesday, January 19th, 2000, be adopted as circulated.

CARRIED

3. **BUSINESS ARISING**

None.

4. **NEW BUSINESS**

4.1 Palmer Field House Access
(Memo: Mar. 8/00; File No.: 2325-20-025)

Deputy Secretary-Treasurer Bruce Fraser addressed this matter, indicating that the District wished to know how the City intended to use School District property land to access and egress the school parking lot. He indicated that part of the District's concern was the question of whether this access provision was being dealt with on an informal or formal basis.

Reference was made by the Chair to a land exchange for the subject property, and advice was given that the exchange had been registered and the field house was now located on City property.

Further advice was given by the Director, Parks Dave Semple that the exchange of property to the City was for the field house only, and that access points would be decided based on informal discussions with School District staff. He stated that the obvious entrance to the field house would come through the Palmer/Garden City School site. Mr. Semple added that there had never been an intention to establish a formal driveway to the field house.

School Board Trustee Sandra Bourque stated that it was the District's understanding that the City would be placing a caretaker in the field house and would be requesting 2 parking spaces, which would mean that that person would have to have regular access. She stated that if that was the case, the District would prefer to have a more formal agreement. Trustee Bourque noted that the District and the City had had a good co-operative relationship with respect to community use of fields and school facilities. However, she expressed concern that this co-operation did not seem to reach the Planning Department level and because of this, the District would like to have a more formal arrangement which existed with the City as a whole. In response to a question from the Chair, Trustee Bourque clarified that these formal agreements would apply to all future projects which involved the District and the City.

A lengthy discussion ensued on this request, during which it was noted by Mr. Semple that the City had not entered into formal agreements for similar projects in the past, and he suggested that this proposal should be investigated by staff. Questions were raised about whether it was reasonable to expect this Committee to deal with the subsequent report on this issue, rather than forwarding the matter directly to Council and the Board. The suggestion was made that the report could be considered by this Committee if problems arose. The comment was made that in all likelihood, the City would be faced with major hurdles to overcome to comply with the School District request. As a result of the discussion, the following **referral** motion was introduced:

It was moved and seconded

That staff investigate the proposal of entering into a formal agreement between the City and the School Board for the provision of access to the Palmer/Garden City field house.

The question on the motion was not called, as discussion continued on the District's request. Advice was given by Trustee Bourque that the District would like to receive a written proposal from the City to which the District could then respond, and it was this written proposal which she intended to be the more formal agreement.

In response, Mr. Semple advised that in the past, City staff forwarded a letter to Secretary-Treasurer Ken Morris, outlining the City's intentions with regard to a particular site. He questioned whether the District now wished to have a report to Council, rather than dealing with the request for access at the administrative level. Discussion ensued on this issue, during which School District and City methods of negotiating for specific matters were reviewed.

The suggestion was made by Trustee Evans during the discussion that a formal letter should be forwarded to Mr. Morris, which could then be reviewed and addressed by the Board if problems arose with the request. The Chair clarified that the School District only wished to have a letter from staff to Mr. Morris outlining the City's intentions with respect to access to the Palmer/Garden City School field house, and this was confirmed by Trustee Bourque. As a result, the above **referral** motion was **WITHDRAWN**.

Discussion continued, during which Trustee Evans noted that the Board could not make a decision until it was advised of the action to be taken. She stated that up until now, the District had not received any correspondence from the City on the action proposed for the Palmer/Garden City School field house site. She added that the Board would need to make a decision on how access would be provided.

Comments were made by Mr. Fraser about the desires of the City to treat the School Board like any other developer, and a brief discussion ensued between the Chair and Mr. Fraser on this matter. During the discussion, the Chair questioned how the City and School District could work together in the future if proposals had to be submitted to the Council and the School Board levels for approval, and she expressed regret that the District had come to that conclusion. In response, Trustee Evans indicated that the District would take the Chair's comments under advisement.

4.2 Sports Council Interest in the McLennan North Park Design

The General Manager, Urban Development David McLellan advised that a series of reports had recently been printed in the *Vancouver Sun* about the Sports Council wanting to have a play field in the McLennan North area. He stated that the City had made it quite clear that it intended to create a passive park with more formal gardens, rather than any form of sports facility, in the McLennan park site. Mr. McLellan advised that the City had been working with the Sports Council about the feasibility of establishing a 'pay for play' facility on City-owned property on Triangle Road. He suggested that if the Sports Council was interested in having a field in the McLennan area, and the School District felt that it had a need for such a field, then perhaps the School District could work with the Sports Council on this project.

Trustee Bourque referred to correspondence which had been received by the District from the Sports Council about (i) the lack of field space for the new McLennan school, and (ii) the fact that there would only be a gymnasium and a half provided as part of the school facility. She indicated that the School District had responded to the Sports Council, indicating that the District had an acquisition plan in place to acquire a total of 30 acres, and that the District intended to acquire the needed land as it became available at a reasonable cost. Trustee Bourque added that the response to the Sports Council had indicated that an agreement had been entered into in 1991 between the School District and the City, which indicated that the City and the School Board would agree to provide matched space for playing fields for all new schools. She stated that once the School District had acquired all the land it intended to acquire, there would then be sufficient space for the new school.

Trustee Bourque indicated that the School District understood that the City has in the process of preparing the park design for the area, and she suggested that the Sports Council should contact the City about the need for playing fields in the proposed park.

Questions were raised about the purpose of the agreement referred to by Trustee Bourque, and whether it applied to the provision of playing fields or to the acquisition of land. Advice was given by Trustee Bourque that she understood the agreement referred to the provision of playing fields.

Discussion continued, during which the Chair stated that Mr. Morris should be advised that the City was working with the Sports Council on the feasibility of developing the City-owned property located adjacent to the Riverport complex.

Reference was made to the agreement referred to by Trustee Bourque, and the fact that the City proposed to develop the McLennan park in a passive manner, and it was agreed that a copy of the agreement would be obtained and placed on the agenda for discussion at the next meeting of the Council/School Board Liaison Committee.

Discussion continued on (i) the aim of the Sports Council to have playing fields constructed in the McLennan North park and the mandate of the School District to educate students, (ii) whether the School District and the Sports Council could work together to resolve the issue of the lack of adequate playing fields at the new school, and (iii) the lack of commitment on the part of the Ministry of Education to agree to fund the acquisition of properties needed for these fields.

During the discussion, Trustee Bourque commented that a discussion on this particular issue would have to be held at the Board level, because the District had more critical issues to deal with than the provision of playing fields, which she felt were abundant throughout Richmond.

4.3 Nations in Bloom – Implications of Win

Mr. McLellan indicated that he had had this matter placed on the agenda to ensure that the Trustees were aware of the criteria which had been established for the Nations in Bloom contest, as it was not 'just a beauty contest'. He then provided information on the various components which comprised the judging of the City's entry, such as (i) the environmentally sensitive practices which the City had implemented; (ii) heritage management; (iii) the involvement of community volunteers; (iv) how the City was planning for the future; and (v) enhancement of the landscaping within the City.

Mr. McLellan explained that the implications of the win were important because of the City's hope to obtain even more co-operation throughout the community to assist with the many programs which had been implemented in recent years, as it was important to maintain or enhance existing standards. He added that the City had allocated additional funding to the Parks Department for some of the programs for which the department had control, to maintain the standards which had been set.

Reference was made by the Chair to the many requests received from parent advisory committees who wanted to beautify the gardens of their respective schools. The Chair questioned how the District wished the City to deal with these requests because of the fact that (i) the District had no funds available for this beautification, and (ii) the problems which could result with the District's CUPE union. Trustee Bourque indicated that the parent advisory committees should be directed to contact the school and the School Board with their requests.

A lengthy discussion ensued on this particular issue, during which information was provided on the process taken by the City to obtain the co-operation of its CUPE union local with respect to the tasks and projects performed by community volunteers; the boundaries which were in place which respect to joint City/School park sites to ensure that only the grass surrounding schools was mowed by City staff, and the partnership agreements which the City had with community organizations to maintain specific areas. Information was also provided by Trustee Bourque and School District staff on the difficulties which arose when parent advisory committees attempted to beautify school gardens. As a result of the discussion it was agreed that any requests received by the City from parent advisory committees would be directed to the principal of the affected school and to the Secretary-Treasurer.

4.4 Off-Street Parking Bylaw
(City Memo: Feb. 4/00; File No.: 8060-20); REDMS 134617)

The Chair noted that a number of jointly operated facilities, such as West Richmond, Hamilton and Cambie Community Centres, would be included in the City's proposed off-street parking bylaw.

In response to questions, advice was given that the purpose of the proposed bylaw was to enforce regulations in specified areas, designated by posted signs, and would not impact on school staff. Further advice was given that problems were occurring for the most part during the week, when conflicts arose between school students and community facility users, and that school principals would be consulted prior to any action being taken.

4.5 Drainage Issues on School/Park Sites

Mr. Fraser reported that the School District was receiving a number of complaints about the poor drainage on some of the park sites. Mr. Semple reported that the poor drainage in the parks was a result of an infrastructure problem caused by the collapse of the agricultural drainage tile which had been used in previous years to provide drainage. He advised that steps were being taken to correct the problem and that as funds became available, priority would be given to those actively used school/park sites which had non-sand cell fields, as these were the fields which had the most drainage problems. Mr. Semple stressed however that this was a joint City/School District problem.

Mr. Fraser noted that the District had a list of sites which had the worst drainage, and the suggestion was made that School District and City staff should compare lists to ensure that the two bodies were operating on the same level.

4.6 Thompson Community Association
(Memo: Mar. 8/00; File No.: 0060-20-TCCE1)

Reference was made to the correspondence (dated February 8^h, 2000 from Ms. Julie Halfnights, President of the Thompson Community Association), which requested the use of two rooms within Burnett School for after-school use. The Chair indicated that the Association was not seeking preferential treatment, but only asking for two rooms in which to hold programs, as an acknowledgement of the many occasions which the Association had allowed the staff at the school to use the community centre facilities.

Considerable discussion ensued on this request, during which concerns were expressed about the proposed arrangement and the impression that could be created as Burnett School became more self-sufficient in the future. The Chair advised that the Association understood that the District did not want multi-booking to take place and that the Association would be obtaining access to the school that the public at large would not have; however, the Association was of the view that it was entitled to make use of some space, on a small scale.

Trustee Bourque explained that the correspondence from the Association had been written because the joint use operating agreements were with the City as a whole and not written for specific schools, and because the overall booking was completed through the block-booking program. She stated that for these reasons, the School District wished to enter into an agreement with the Thompson Community Association for the use of the two requested rooms.

Reference was then made to recommendation contained in the memorandum (dated March 4th, 2000 from K. Morris, Secretary-Treasurer to the District Management Committee), and in particular to the clause in the proposed agreement which asked that the Association agree to waive the notice provision with regard to the giving of '.....a minimum of 7 days notice in the event that cancellation is necessary in order to allow the school programming flexibility'. Discussion ensued on this requirement, during which Trustee Bourque expressed a reluctance about dealing with this issue, or agreeing to the recommendation, without the matter first being presented to the School Board.

The Chair noted that in most cases, a minimum of a week or more was required to contact participants to advise them of the cancellation of the program, and the Association was of the view that less than 7 days did not provide sufficient time to do this.

Questions were then raised about how the School Board would be dealing with this issue and the concerns of the Committee about the requirement for 7 days notice to be given. Advice was given by Mr. Fraser that although the District Management Committee had reviewed the proposed agreement, and supported the recommendation, the fact that the School Board would not be meeting until April provided an opportunity to change the agreement to reflect these concerns.

Discussion continued briefly on the issue of block-booking, and the need for consistency to be maintained with the existing joint operating agreements.

5. **INFORMATION ITEMS**

None.

6. **PENDING ITEMS**

None.

7. **FUTURE MEETING**

It was agreed that the next meeting of the Council/School Board Liaison Committee would be held at **1:00 p.m. on Wednesday, April 19th, 2000** in the W. H. Anderson Room, Richmond City Hall.

8. **ADJOURNMENT**

It was MOVED and SECONDED

*That the regular meeting of the Council/School Board Liaison Committee
be adjourned (2:10 p.m.).*

CARRIED

Certified a true and correct copy of
the Minutes of the Council/School
Board Liaison Committee held on
Wednesday, March 15th, 2000.

Councillor Lyn Greenhill
Chair

Fran J. Ashton
Executive Assistant

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