



General Purposes Committee

Date: Monday, April 2nd, 2007

Place: Anderson Room
Richmond City Hall

Present: Mayor Malcolm D. Brodie, Chair
Councillor Linda Barnes
Councillor Cynthia Chen
Councillor Derek Dang (4:02 p.m.)
Councillor Sue Halsey-Brandt
Councillor Bill McNulty
Councillor Harold Steves

Absent: Councillor Evelina Halsey-Brandt
Councillor Rob Howard

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, March 19th, 2007, be adopted as circulated.

CARRIED

PARKS, RECREATION & CULTURAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT

2. **2007 – 2012 MAJOR EVENTS PLAN FOR RICHMOND “CATCH THE EXCITEMENT”**

(Report – Mar. 27 07, File No. 11-7400-01; nr 05-1810-01) (REDMS No. 2088004)

(Cllr. Dang entered the meeting – 4:02 p.m.)

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The Director, Public Works and Parks, Dave Semple, accompanied by the Manager, Sports & Community, Eric Stepura, gave a PowerPoint presentation relating to the 2007 – 2012 Major Events Plan, a copy of which is on file in the City Clerk's Office.

Following the conclusion of the presentation, discussion ensued among Committee members and staff on:

- Richmond's image, and what that would entail for the future
- the need to include the Seniors Games and disabled activities as possible events
- the need to have open discussions with such groups as the Sports Council, the Heritage Council and the disabled about potential events
- whether staff were being short-sighted in having only one person 'at the top'; whether a larger budget was required
- the need to eliminate the word 'temporary' in Recommendation No. 2
- the need for the importance and need for volunteers and increased community involvement as the years progress
- the status of funding for the proposal
- the need for a calendar of those events which were to be held each year to ensure that the City's resources were not stretched to the limit
- the under-utilization of a number of tourist attractions within the City, including the Britannia Heritage Shipyard and the Board Walk, and the feasibility of creating gateways to specific areas of the City
- the need for coordination of events to ensure that an overlap did not occur
- the need to promote Richmond as being the most accessible city in Canada as part of the implementation plan; and including in the plan, how a proposed event would relate to the City's goals and themes
- the need to complete the development of the waterfront as part of the major events strategy
- the feasibility of having a Tall Ships event in 2008
- the possible inclusion of such events as the table tennis championships in the strategy
- whether the proposed cost for 2007 of \$100,000 for the establishment of the Civic Events Office and the hiring of a Civic Events Development Officer in 2007 was based on a full year or half a year.

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During the discussion, reference was made to the five themes which were being proposed, and advice was given that staff would be working with the community on the suggested themes, and that events would evolve as the Major Events Plan was developed.

Reference was made to a 2011 Tall Ships event and the comment was made that applications should be submitted by the City for this event now rather than later.

As a result of the discussion, the following **amended** motion was introduced:

It was moved and seconded

- (1) *That the Vision and 2007-2012 Major Events Plan (as attached to the report dated March 27th, 2007, from the Director – Parks & Public Works Operations), be approved;*
- (2) *That staff establish a Civic Events Office and hire a Civic Events Development Officer in 2007 at a cost of up to \$100,000 with funds from Council Provision or 2006 year end surplus;*
- (3) *That ongoing funding for this be considered from either the 2008 additional levels during the budget process or the 2007 year end surplus;*
- (4) *That a fund in the amount of \$125,000 be considered from the 2006 year end surplus for the development of a Major Events Implementation Plan.*

CARRIED

3. SISTER CITY INITIATIVES FOR 2007

(Report: Mar. 6 07, File No. 01-0135-04-01) (REDMS No. 2088064, 2087988)

Ms. Sylvia Gwozd, Chair of the Sister City Committee, accompanied by Mr. Benny Yung, Vice Chair of the China Sub-committee, introduced the following members of the Committee who were in attendance this afternoon: Mel Goodwin, Ben Branscome, Priscilla Bollo, Wei Liu, Donalda Bui and Joe Guzman.

Ms. Gwozd then spoke about the activities of the Sister City Committee, noting that the Committee had met with many different organizations and worked to establish new networks and connections within the business and cultural community. She then reviewed with the General Purposes Committee, the events being proposed – two trips to China to investigate the list of approved candidate cities; and the celebration of the 40th anniversary of the Pierrefonds/Richmond sister city relationship. Information was provided during the review that an invitation had been issued to members of Council to participate in the 40th anniversary celebrations.

Ms. Gwozd advised that many sectors within the community were finding it very important to do business with China, and she spoke about the visit to the City of a delegation from Qingdao.

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Mr. Yung spoke further on the importance of establishing a relationship with China, stating that this appeared to be future for Richmond, and he suggested that the City make every effort to capitalize on this opportunity.

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

- the number of people who would comprise the fact-finding trip to China, and the timing of this trip (information was provided that if a member of Council wished to participate in the trip, the cost would be covered by the sponsor for the trip)
- those cities in China which would comprise the fact-finding trip and the criteria which was used to make this determination; the number of cities which could be recommended to the City for 'Friendship City' status
- whether local schools were involved at this stage
- the types of gifts to be exchanged as part of the various celebrations to take place (the Sister City Committee was requested to consider Richmond artists when selecting gifts)
- the difference between a 'friendship city' and a 'sister city'.

During the discussion, reference was made to the matrix which had been developed to show the support required by the City and the Sister City Committee, and the Sister Committee was commended for creating this useful tool.

Discussion continued, with information being provided that if Council approved the trips to China, the Sister City Committee would be visiting Wakayama, Japan to prepare for an exchange visit in 2008 as part of the 35th anniversary sister city celebrations. A request was made during the discussion that Council be advised of the names of the cities which would be visited as part of the fact-finding trip, once a decision had been made on this matter.

Information was also provided by staff that if adopted, Recommendation Nos. 1 and 3 would require a staff person to participate in the trip to assist in any analysis and research review which might be required. Staff were then requested to provide information on the amount of funds which would be required prior to the upcoming Council meeting on April 10th, 2007.

It was moved and seconded

- (1) *That an investigative trip to China be approved, and that a City of Richmond delegation be supported, comprised of members of the Richmond Sister City Committee in Spring 2007, with funding to come from Sister City 'sponsorship funds';*
- (2) *That the Sister City Committee report on their investigative trip, with recommendations for friendship cities for Council consideration;*

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- (3) *That upon confirmation of selected cities, a delegation of the Richmond Sister City Committee and Richmond City Council be approved to travel to China in late 2007 with funding of up to \$20,000 to come from Council Contingency;*
- (4) *That Councillor Rob Howard and two Richmond Sister City Committee members be appointed to visit Pierrefonds in celebration of the Sister City 40th anniversary on June 24th, 2007 with funding of \$6,400 to come from Council Contingency; and*
- (5) *That a City of Richmond delegation be supported, comprised of members of the Richmond Sister City Committee to visit Wakayama City in preparation for an exchange visit in 2008, with funding to come from Sister City 'sponsorship funds', in conjunction with the investigative trip to China; and*
- (6) *That the Matrix which outlines the support required by the City and the Sister City Committee (Attachment 3 to the report dated March 26th, 2007, from the Manager, Recreation Services), be adopted.*

CARRIED

The Chair announced that the meeting would now recess (5:32 p.m.), until after the conclusion of the discussion at the closed General Purposes Committee meeting on the item relating to Item No. 4 on the open agenda.

The open General Purposes Committee reconvened at 6:49 p.m., with all members of the Committee present except Councillors Evelina Halsey-Brandt and Howard.

CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

4. OVAL LANDS DEVELOPMENT REVENUE ALLOCATIONS – A STRATEGIC POLICY-BASED APPROACH TO ALLOCATING PROCEEDS OF SALE – THE ESTABLISHMENT OF COMMUNITY LEGACY FUNDS

(Report: Mar. 30, 2007 File No. 03-1075-14) (REDMS No. 2136945)

Ms. Aileen Cormack, a member of the Seniors Advisory Committee, expressed her pleasure at the fact that the need for seniors housing had been recognized. She voiced the hope that the \$4 Million proposed for a Seniors Housing Fund, along with the existing funding, would provide seniors housing by 2010. Ms. Cormack further advised that she did not want to see these funds revert back to general revenue; as well, she indicated that she did not want to see these funds being allocated to development costs.

In responding to a comment made by Ms. Cormack, advice was given that the funds could only be used for capital and not administrative costs.

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Mr. Peter Mitchell commented on the lack of parkland in the City Centre and suggested that the high price received by the City for the sale of the Oval lands was a result of not only the location of the property on the waterfront but also the development of the new City Centre Area Plan which was currently underway. He stated that for these reasons, a portion of the funds should remain in the City Centre to fund the construction of new libraries and community centres, items which he noted had not been included as potential community legacy projects.

Mr. Mitchell also commented on the possible abatement of property taxes for the next four years. He then referred to the proposal to include affordable housing on the Oval property, stating that the property in question was worth \$8 Million an acre, and that the City should allow a developer to purchase the property which had been set aside for affordable housing. Mr. Mitchell further stated that the funds from the sale of this land could be used to purchase less expensive land in the West Cambie area for affordable housing at a better value for the amount spent.

Discussion then ensued among Committee members and Chief Administrative Officer George Duncan on the proposed Community Legacy Funds and sub-funds, including the concept and intention of the legacy sub-funds: the use of the interest generated from the principle amount to acquire property to support a particular need (i.e. social housing); the replacement of Oval development land acre for acre; the proposed assessment in approximately four years of the Community Legacy funds and whether these funds would end at that time or be expanded; the proposed 1% reduction in property taxes for four years; and the ability of the City to borrow funds from the Community Legacy fund and the repayment of these funds plus interest.

Reference was made to the suggestion by Mr. Mitchell that the City sell that portion of the site which had been assigned to affordable housing to the developer, and acquire property in a less expensive area for affordable housing, and discussion ensued among Committee members and staff on the philosophy of this proposal. A comment was made during the discussion that supporting the concept that all affordable housing should be located in the least expensive area would not be in accordance with the City's current development criteria.

Discussion continued, with comments being made that rather than dividing the revenue into sub-funds, the entire amount should be placed into a land replacement fund and that the sub-funds be used as guidelines for future projects. A request was also made during the discussion that Council, in mid to late 2008, be provided with a detailed report on (i) the amount of interest which had been generated, and (ii) the amount of money which had been spent.

As a result of the discussion, the following resolution was introduced:

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It was moved and seconded

- (1) *That the balance of the sale proceeds which are available beyond what is required for Oval construction be placed into a Land Replacement Fund to establish a Community Land Bank on the basis that the City would only accrue interest until December 31st, 2007, and that after that the funds would be utilized on the basis that the areas identified in the staff report would be non-exclusive guidelines;*
- (2) *That after December 31st, 2007, interest may be used on projects including the cost of planning, physical assessments, seismic assessments, project feasibility research, project planning, functional space programming, design concepts, geo-technical testing, cost estimating and preliminary design;*
- (3) *That the principal of the funds, along with the interest, could be used to acquire appreciating assets at any time, which would include a minimum of 19 acres of new land to replace the Oval lands;*
- (4) *That the City can borrow for the principal amount of a project against the Fund on the basis that the monies would be repaid with interest at a minimum one-quarter of 1% above the average rate of return realized on the Fund during the previous year;*
- (5) *That amounts designated for the Special Capital Projects and Major Initiatives Fund may be used as later approved for specific capital projects, up to the sum of \$21 Million;*
- (6) *That an amount of 1% of civic taxes would be placed into reserves, in any year for four years, commencing in 2008; and*
- (7) *That this structure would be reviewed effective after no more than four years with status reports at least every six months.*

CARRIED

ADJOURNMENT

It was moved and seconded

That the meeting adjourn (7:32 p.m.).

CARRIED

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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, April 2nd, 2007.

Mayor Malcolm D. Brodie
Chair

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