



Community Safety Committee

Date: Tuesday, March 14th, 2006

Place: Anderson Room
Richmond City Hall

Present: Councillor Rob Howard, Chair
Councillor Cynthia Chen
Councillor Derek Dang (4:01 p.m.)
Councillor Bill McNulty

Absent: Councillor Linda Barnes
Councillor Evelina Halsey-Brandt
Councillor Sue Halsey-Brandt, Vice-Chair

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 8th, 2006, be adopted as circulated.

CARRIED

NEXT COMMITTEE MEETING DATE

2. The next meeting of the Committee is scheduled to be held on *Tuesday, April 11th, 2006* at 4:00 p.m. in the Anderson Room.

POLICIES / STRATEGIES (0 ITEMS)

Community Safety Committee

Tuesday, March 14th, 2006

DECISIONS / ACTIONS (0 ITEMS)

INFORMATION / AWARENESS (3 ITEMS)

3A. FALSE ALARM REDUCTION STRATEGY

(Report: Feb. 28/06, File No.: 09-5100-01) (REDMS No. 1748807)

(Cllr. Dang entered the meeting – 4:01 p.m.)

Supt. Ward Clapham briefly reviewed his report with the Committee. Discussion then took place among Committee members on:

- whether alarm technology had advanced sufficiently to reduce callouts to deal with false alarms
- the lack of action being taken to force alarm companies to make repairs on, or service, existing installations which were causing the false alarms
- the ultimate consequence of not responding to false alarms, which could be to force alarm companies to use more sophisticated equipment to determine whether an intruder was in an residence.

During the discussion, in answer to questions about the rationale for implementing the 'False Alarm Reduction Strategy', advice was given that the RCMP officers were highly trained individuals who needed to concentrate on crime related issues, instead of having to stop in the middle of an investigation to respond to a call, which for approximately 15% of the time, was a false alarm. Supt. Mahon stated that the Detachment would continue to respond to alarms which had a high probability of requiring police attention.

Further advice was given that the Detachment hoped to implement the new strategy in May of this year, and that discussions were being held with the City's Finance Department about (i) the feasibility of including an insert about this strategy with the property tax notice mail out, and (ii) including a notice on the City web site. Supt. Mahon added that the Detachment would also like to hold a public information meeting to obtain public input on the new strategy.

It was moved and seconded

That the report (dated February 28th, 2006, from the Officer in Charge, RCMP), regarding a False Alarm Reduction Strategy, be received for information.

CARRIED

Community Safety Committee

Tuesday, March 14th, 2006

3B. RESPONSE TO FALSE FIRE ALARMS

(Oral Report)

Deputy Chief Geoff Lake advised that while the Department supported the RCMP Richmond Detachment in its decision, the Fire Department would not be following the same path. He then provided information on the number of false alarms which were received by the Fire Department, and the nature of the calls, i.e. malicious, infestations, etc.

Deputy Chief Lake stated that his department would be monitoring the number of false alarm calls received, to ensure that those individuals who would normally be calling the police did not begin to call the Fire Department.

4. ACCESSING BC HYDRO RECORDS

(Report: Mar. 14/06, File No.: 01-0150-20-BCHY1) (REDMS No. 1763985)

The Manager, Operational Support, Fire Rescue, Sandra Pearson, accompanied by Deputy Chief Lake, advised that a complete report, which would deal with the Surrey grow-op bylaw, would be submitted to the Committee's April 11th, 2006 meeting. Ms. Pearson talked briefly about accessing BC Hydro records through the RCMP and "Freedom of Information" legislation. She added that the more detailed information about the legislation would be provided to the April Committee meeting.

It was moved and seconded

That the report (dated March 14th, 2006, from the Manager, Operational Support, Fire Rescue), regarding Accessing BC Hydro Records, be received for information.

CARRIED

5. ADDITIONAL LEVEL REQUEST – FIRE PREVENTION OFFICER

(Report: Feb. 24/06, File No.: 03-0970-01) (REDMS No. 1769731)

Deputy Chief Lake, in answer to a question, advised that approximately 12,000 occupancy inspections were undertaken each year.

Discussion then took place among Committee members and Deputy Chief Lake on (i) the backlog of inspections; (ii) whether there would be any opportunity to generate revenue for the City to make the fire inspection service worthwhile; and (iii) the review currently being undertaken of the current Fire Department Establishment Bylaw, during which the comment was made that the new bylaw would include a charge for re-inspection.

Reference was made to a suggestion that staff be requested to comment on (i) whether there would be any opportunity to obtain cost recovery; and (ii) whether inspections should be undertaken on public buildings every two years, with a fee attached, and information was provided that staff were already preparing a report on the proposal.

Community Safety Committee

Tuesday, March 14th, 2006

It was moved and seconded

That the report (dated February 24th, 2006, from Deputy Chief Lake), regarding an Additional Level Request – Fire Prevention Officer, be received for information.

CARRIED

6. POLICE CHIEF BRIEFING

(Oral Report)

Insp. Tony Mahon talked briefly about the work of the international crime consultant who had been engaged by the Detachment to undertake a review of its policing services. He advised that the initial findings had been shared with staff, and that following receipt of the final report, a copy would be provided to the City.

Reference was made to concerns expressed in area newspapers about the pairing of a rookie police officer with another rookie officer rather than a more experienced officer, and the tragic outcome. The Chair requested an update, in memo format, on whether the Richmond Detachment followed this practice.

A brief discussion ensued, with information being provided by Insp. Mahon that at the Richmond Detachment, new officers were paired with more senior officers and that it was very unlikely that junior officers would ever be put together.

The Chair referred to the upcoming renewal of the RCMP contract, and staff were requested to provide a timeline for key decisions to be made by the City.

The Chair referred to a provincial initiative being proposed by the MLA for Richmond Steveston regarding mandatory blood testing for private persons who had exposed their bodily fluids to emergency personnel. A brief discussion ensued as a result of which, staff were requested to provide background information on the matter before Committee made a decision on whether to support the proposal.

The Chair referred to correspondence received from Deputy Commissioner Beverley Busson about the Lower Mainland Emergency Response Team and amended cost estimates, and staff were requested to report to the next Committee meeting on the impact of these most recent changes to the City, including budget implications.

Community Safety Committee

Tuesday, March 14th, 2006

The Chair referred to further correspondence received from Deputy Commissioner Busson about the need to increase communications with the RCMP, and staff were requested to respond to the April Committee meeting with a discussion paper regarding the content of this March 7th, 2006 letter, and how further communications could be enhanced.

ADJOURNMENT

It was moved and seconded

That the meeting adjourn (4:39 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, Tuesday, March 14th, 2006.

Councillor Rob Howard
Chair

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