



MINUTES

GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

Date: Monday, April 2nd, 2001
Place: Anderson Room
Richmond City Hall
Present: Mayor Greg Halsey-Brandt, Chair
Councillor Linda Barnes
Councillor Malcolm Brodie
Councillor Derek Dang
Councillor Lyn Greenhill
Councillor Kiichi Kumagai
Councillor Ken Johnston
Councillor Bill McNulty
Absent: Councillor Harold Steves
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, 2001, be adopted as circulated.

CARRIED

MAYOR GREG HALSEY-BRANDT

2. **TASK FORCE ON DRUGS AND CRIME ONE YEAR WORK PLAN**
(Report: Mar. 13/01, File No.: 0100-20-DCR11) (REDMS No. 310324, 293115)

Mayor Halsey-Brandt reviewed his report with the Committee, during which he circulated copies of correspondence received from the Richmond Asia Pacific Business Association (dated March 30th, 2001, from Tony T. K. Lau, President). A copy of this correspondence is on file in the City Clerk's Office.

It was moved and seconded

That:

- (1) *the Draft One Year Work Plan for an interagency drugs and crime strategy for the City (attached to the report dated March 27th, 2001, from Mayor Halsey-Brandt), be received for information; and*

- (2) ***the proposed strategy and draft one year work plan be referred to the General Manager of Community Safety Division for a report to the General Purposes Committee with a program impact statement and recommendations.***

Prior to the question being called, the Mayor confirmed that additional funding resources would be pursued.

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

3. **TRAFFIC FINE REVENUE**

(Report: Mar. 28/01, File No.: 1087-04-01) (REDMS No. 329631)

Mayor Halsey-Brandt briefly reviewed his report.

It was moved and seconded

That the Mayor, on behalf of Council, write to the Minister of Municipal Affairs, requesting a restoration of the Traffic Fine Revenue Sharing Program to the same level of financial contribution as in the year 2000.

Prior to the question being called, discussion ensued on whether (i) traffic revenue had actually declined, or (ii) the cost of Provincial policing costs had increased and this increase was being deducted from the traffic fine revenue prior to dispersing the balance to local governments. The suggestion was also made during the discussion that statistics from the local detachment of the RCMP and ICBC on the reduction of accidents in Richmond be included in the correspondence.

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

COMMUNITY SAFETY DIVISION

4. **“CAT” BYLAW AMENDMENTS TO EXISTING ANIMAL, BIRD AND BEEKEEPING BYLAW NO. 7137**

(Report: Mar. 19/01, File No.: 8060-20-7211/7212) (REDMS No. 275808, 313153, 280069)

The Manager, Community Bylaws, Sandra Tokarczyk, briefly reviewed the report with the Committee. In response to questions about the requirement to spay or neuter cats, she advised that the statement was intended to encourage responsible pet ownership with cat owners. Ms. Tokarczyk added that this did not mean that additional inspectors would be required to enforce this requirement, but instead, would be dealt with when a cat was brought into a shelter.

June Humphreys, of Richmond Homeless Cats, voiced support for the proposed bylaw. She indicated that the cost of spaying or neutering a cat was approximately \$30 to \$40 and that assistance was available for individuals who could not afford to have their cats spayed or neutered. Ms. Humphreys suggested that the amount of the penalty should be higher to provide further incentive to cat owners to have their pets spayed or neutered to help reduce the number of feral or unwanted cats in Richmond.

A brief discussion ensued among Committee members and staff on the proposed 3 year duration for a cat breeding permit. Advice was given that the proposed requirements had been based on the bylaw adopted by Coquitlam. Discussion ensued on the requirement to suitably identify cats and safety concerns about the use of collars; viable alternatives, such as placing tattoos or microchips on cats, and how cats which had these markings would be identified .

Concern was expressed about the cost to the City of administering the bylaw. In response, information was provided by Brian Nelson of the SPCA that those municipalities which had adopted cat control bylaws would not be charged for enforcement of the requirements of the bylaw. He added that additional officers would not be sent out, and that enforcement would occur when cats arrived the SPCA shelters. Mr. Nelson added that the cost of keeping cats at shelters would not be passed onto the City. He then provided information on a pilot program which the SPCA was initiating to insert a microchip in any cat brought into or put up for adoption at a shelter, and he spoke about the claim and adoption rates for cats.

Reference was made to the reduction in the song bird population, and advice was given that this was due to feral cats. Ms. Humphreys referred to the statistics provided by Mr. Nelson and stated that while the SPCA was doing a good job, their statistics did not include the large feral cat population which existed.

The Mayor referred to the statistics provided by Mr. Nelson and asked that this information be provided to Council at the April 9th, 2001 regular meeting.

It was moved and seconded

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

- (1) ***Bylaw No. 7211, which amends the Animal, Bird and Beekeeping Bylaw No. 7137, by adding several new "cat" subsections; and***
- (2) ***Bylaw No. 7212, which amends the Municipal Ticket Information Authorization Bylaw No. 7139, to allow for the enforcement, and penalties, in connection with cat infractions.***

CARRIED

FINANCE & CORPORATE SERVICES DIVISION

5. **DRAFT 5 YEAR FINANCIAL PLAN (2001 – 2005)**

(Report: Mar. 26/01, File No.: 0985-01) (REDMS No. 325188)

The Director, Finance, Danley Yip, reviewed the report with the Committee.

A lengthy discussion then ensued among Committee members and staff on the proposed plan, and in particular on such issues as:

- the projected 6% annual increase in maintenance costs for parks
- the rationale for the inclusion of 2 additional staff positions and the hiring of a consultant in the 2002 Emergency & Environmental Programs

- assumptions that the parking meter revenue would be an estimated \$1 Million commencing in 2002; and that the revenue generated by false alarms would be \$102,000
- the public perception that the proposal plan represented a 'wish list' of what the City intended to do
- whether or not the casino gaming revenue should be included as a source of revenue for the year 2002
- the rationale for the proposed 6.27% increase in property taxes for 2002 and a decrease in subsequent years
- whether the 5 year financial plan now being considered should be amended to reflect 'same level of service', which could be changed later, rather than including possible increases at this time
- the figures used by staff to determine growth assumptions for the years 2002 to 2005 with respect to property taxes and future expenses.

Concern was expressed during the discussion about the fact that the Committee was being asked to consider (i) the use of parking meters as a potential revenue source; (ii) an increase in the 2002 property tax rate to 6.27%; and (iii) the hiring of additional staff, without being given the opportunity to discuss these proposals first.

Concern was also voiced about the lack of input by Council into the proposed plan. Discussion ensued on whether (i) the plan should be referred to a special meeting of the Committee for discussion in greater detail, or (ii) there was sufficient time to make amendments to the plan prior to the April 5th meeting.

Discussion also take place on the advisability of including the \$1.7 Million in gaming revenue in the 2002 budget to reduce the amount of the property tax increase from 6.27% to 4.5% approximately, with comments being made that the Committee had to consider realistic figures for the 5 year plan and that the proposed 6.27% increase for 2002 was unacceptable.

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

It was moved and seconded

That the proposed 5 Year Financial Plan (2001-2005) be amended to include in 2002, \$1.7 Million in gaming revenue; that this amended plan be presented for input from the public consultation meeting on Thursday April 5, 2001, and that staff report to the General Purposes Committee with a draft bylaw on April 17th, 2001.

Prior to the question on the motion being called, discussion continued on whether the proposed financial plan should be amended to (i) include gaming revenue in the 2002 budget, or (ii) indicate 'same level of service'. It was noted during the discussion that amending the plan to reflect the same level of service would not result in a significant reduction to the proposed budget and would not have the same impact as including the gaming revenue.

The question on the motion was then called, and it was **CARRIED**. with Councillor Greenhill opposed.

It was moved and seconded

That the proposed 2002 to 2005 Financial Plan be referred to the Finance Select Committee for review at the earliest opportunity.

CARRIED

ADJOURNMENT

It was moved and seconded

That the meeting adjourn (5:50 p.m.).

CARRIED

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, 2001.

Mayor Greg Halsey-Brandt
Chair

Fran J. Ashton
Executive Assistant