



To: Richmond City Council **Date:** June 11th, 2003
From: Councillor Linda Barnes **File:** 1810-01
Chair, Community Safety Committee
**Re: EMERGENCY SOCIAL SERVICES/VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT
COORDINATOR**

The Community Safety Committee, at its meeting held on June 10th, 2003, considered the attached report, and recommends as follows:

Committee Recommendation

NONE. (Defeated on a tied vote)

Councillor Linda Barnes, Chair
Community Safety Committee

Attach.

VARIANCE

Please note that staff recommended the following:

- (1) That the position of Emergency Social Services/Volunteer Management Coordinator be created, and
- (2) That program funding for 2003, in the amount of \$42,500, be approved from the 2003 Council Provision Account.

Staff Report

Origin

At their March 3, 2003 special meeting, Council directed staff to report to the Community Safety Committee on the detailed job functions of the proposed Emergency Social Services/Volunteer Management Coordination position. Staff were also asked to comment on those volunteer coordinator positions which are already in existence.

Analysis

The duties and responsibilities of the proposed Emergency Social Services/Volunteer Management Coordinator is provided in detail in Attachment 1. The key responsibilities are summarized below:

Operational Responsibilities

- Completion and implementation of the Emergency Social Services Plan, including developing procedures and training City staff to be able to activate and operate a Community Centre as a reception centre in emergency situations.
- Coordinate, on an on-going basis, the program established to assist residents with food, clothing, and lodging in situations where they are displaced from their homes due to fires or other emergencies.
- In an activation event, report to the Emergency Operations Centre and set up, manage and coordinate all activities undertaken at Community Centres/Reception Centres relating to providing for the personal needs of individuals (food, clothing, shelter, etc.) and re-uniting families.

Volunteer Management Responsibilities

- Recruit, train and manage a volunteer base for the Emergency Program on an on-going basis.
- Develop a volunteer management pilot program for the Community Safety Division to maximize volunteer involvement in divisional initiatives. This program would provide, among other things, a central registry mechanism -- complete with a listing of volunteer opportunities available, volunteer information, interview and screening, basic training, etc.
- Evaluate the merits of the Community Safety Division volunteer management pilot program for potential expansion on a corporate wide basis. If successful, work collaboratively with other divisions in the City to develop a corporate model.

These responsibilities would be implemented over a 3 phase program:

- Phase 1 – completion and implementation of the Emergency Social Services Plan.
- Phase 2 – development of a Volunteer Management pilot for the Division.

- Phase 3 – evaluate the Divisional pilot program and establish a collaborative work team to develop a corporate Volunteer Management Model.

On the issue of volunteer coordinator positions currently in existence, the City currently has a number of volunteers in various areas. For example, the RCMP has Victim Services, Block Watch, and Community Policing volunteers; Parks, Recreation & Culture has Partners for Beautification and Association volunteers; Emergency Programs has Emergency Response and Presentation volunteers. In addition, there are a number of Council appointed advisory committees and task forces. Each of the divisions work with the volunteers to provide the program specific training and information, work assignments and follow-up activities. There are also agencies such as Volunteer Richmond who work to develop various aspects of volunteerism in the community.

This multi-faceted approach lends itself to a central coordination model to gain synergies and maximize volunteerism within the community. In pursuing the central coordination approach, we must recognize that there are varying needs for volunteer management throughout the City. For example, the report on the renewal of Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services has identified the need for volunteer management and support for parks, recreation and cultural services, where there are a significant number of volunteers required. Some potential areas where synergies may exist include: the development of corporate volunteer policies, the development of a corporate volunteer database, delivery of common volunteer training, recognition events, etc.

The development of a corporate model would not remove the need for those departments and divisions with volunteers to provide volunteer management programs specific to those areas. Rather, it would create a more coordinated approach to volunteer management and reduce the amount of time spent in the areas of recruitment, screening, recognition, retention, common training, evaluation, etc. – and other tasks which are common across all areas and could reasonably be centralized. The Emergency Social Services/Volunteer Management Coordinator would partner with other divisions to help develop this corporate-wide approach to volunteer management, in conjunction with partner agencies (as per Phase 3, noted above).

Questions have been posed regarding the role of Volunteer Richmond, and whether or not the proposed position is a duplication of their role. The proposed position is not a duplication of the services provided by Volunteer Richmond ... it is complimentary. Volunteer Richmond provides capacity building for the volunteer sector, and connects volunteers to areas of interest within the community. The services provided by Volunteer Richmond are outlined in more detail in Attachment 2.

Financial Impact

Based on an estimated 7 month term in 2003, the funding requirement in 2003 is \$42,500. Due to the on-going nature of the work, full program funding for subsequent years will be addressed as part of the Community Safety Division program review and adjustment process.

There may be other funding requirements associated with advancing this program to a corporate model that are not known at this time. Our expectation is that any costs associated with Phase 2

would be accommodated within existing budgets. Phase 3 may require additional costs, and these costs will be identified through the budget process and/or as part of the evaluation of the divisional pilot program – Phase 2. To help offset costs and seek additional funding dollars, staff are working to seek out available grant opportunities. We have worked closely with Volunteer Richmond in this process, and have developed the attached proposal (Attachment 2). It is our intent to submit this joint proposal to the federal government if and when an announcement is made concerning the availability of federal grants.

Conclusion

The City has developed an Emergency Social Services plan that cannot be implemented without a dedicated resource. This aspect of the work would represent a first priority for the proposed Emergency Social Services/Volunteer Management Coordinator, and is necessary to ensure the City meets its obligations under provincial legislation in this regard.

The volunteer management component of the Emergency Social Service program will be developed and later piloted on a divisional and, then potentially, on a corporate wide basis. The goal of this approach is twofold -- to maximize volunteer involvement to help reduce the financial impact of program demand growth, and to further enhance community connections to contribute toward overall liveability objectives for the City of Richmond.



Suzanne Bycraft
Manager, Emergency & Environmental Programs

SJB:

**Volunteer Management Coordinator – Emergency Programs
Duties and Responsibilities**

General

The Volunteer Management Coordinator is responsible for managing and maintaining the City’s Emergency Social Services (ESS) Plan and Program and for undertaking the lead response role during an activation event. The development of a well-trained and active volunteer base to assist in response efforts and in on-going aspects of the ESS Program is a significant aspect of this position.

The Volunteer Management Coordinator is responsible for developing a Volunteer Management Model to centralize common tasks associated with managing volunteers, including such things as recruitment strategies, designation of volunteer opportunities, orientation and screening, evaluation, recognition, etc. This model will be developed initially on a divisional basis, and later expanded to a corporate-wide model to encompass all City of Richmond volunteers.

Duties

<p>Emergency Response</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A member of the City’s Emergency Control Group, this position is available on a 24/7 basis to respond to emergency incidents where residents have been displaced from their homes due to an emergency or disaster. ▪ Assumes overall responsibility to manage the City’s response in providing ESS services to residents, including establishing and managing reception centres, including overseeing the set up, staffing and operation of same. ▪ Coordinates with local suppliers for the provision of food, shelter, clothing, transportation and other personal needs of displaced residents. ▪ Attends the scene of emergency incidents to provide first hand assistance to evacuated persons. ▪ Activates volunteers to assist with emergency placement and provision activities for displaced residents. Manages same. ▪ Undertakes follow-up, as required, to coordinate supplier payments, and refers residents in need of additional assistance to appropriate agencies. ▪ Liaises with appropriate government agencies, i.e. Provincial Emergency Program, on issues related to ESS Services.
<p>Volunteer Management</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develops and maintains a volunteer group to assist in ESS response efforts, and trains, exercises, engages and manages same. ▪ Works with other departments and divisions to collaboratively develop a corporate volunteer management model to centralize common tasks which may include: recruitment, interviewing, screening, training, volunteer evaluation and recognition activities. Liaises and facilitates discussions with appropriate City staff to ensure a successful model is developed. ▪ Liaises with other agencies involved in volunteerism to develop suitable partnerships designed to enhance volunteerism in the City of Richmond.

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Emergency Social Services Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Undertakes completion of the ESS Plan, including the development of appropriate procedures required for activation and response.▪ Maintains and updates the ESS Plan to ensure the information remains relevant and current.▪ Develops and coordinates training activities for staff with roles as identified in the ESS Plan.▪ Liaises with other jurisdictions, including local and provincial governments, regarding a comprehensive approach to Emergency Social Services.▪ Actively seeks partnerships through suppliers, agencies, etc. to ensure a comprehensive inventory is maintained, and an efficient and organized approach to ESS services is readily available in the City of Richmond.
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**VOLUNTEER RICHMOND INFORMATION SERVICES
AND THE CITY OF RICHMOND
VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT PROGRAM PROPOSAL**

Background

Volunteers are a vital part of the community. The time they volunteer contributes to all facets of community life including vibrancy, pride, beauty and safety. According to the 2000 National Survey of Giving, Volunteering and Participating, a volunteer gives, on average, 162 hours during the year, which, at BC's minimum wage of \$8 an hour, equates to \$1,296 a year per volunteer. Given this and the current number of volunteers involved with the City (5,575), the value of the volunteer work contributed by community volunteers is approximately \$7.2 million a year.

The City has many programs with which residents may get involved by volunteering their time and expertise. These programs are spread throughout the organization in several areas such as the RCMP (675 volunteers), Emergency Programs (200 volunteers), Environmental Programs (on demand) and Parks, Recreation and Culture (4700 volunteers).

Currently, if a volunteer wishes to sign up for two City programs, the individual typically needs to go through two different processes. There is little to no sharing of information between the programs. Volunteers have expressed frustration that they often have to speak with two or three different people, who ask exactly the same information, to sign on for a program.

Volunteer Richmond Information Services is a non-profit community organization dedicated to bringing people and services together through community information and volunteerism. Serving the community for 30 years, Volunteer Richmond works with over 300 community agencies and associations. The agency focuses on four core competencies around volunteerism:

- capacity building
- connecting
- promoting and
- convening

Volunteer Richmond is well established as a provider of capacity building programs for the voluntary sector.

The City's Emergency Program currently contracts Volunteer Richmond to screen potential volunteers. This working relationship has been valuable to both organizations: the Emergency Program is provided with screened, qualified volunteers and Volunteer Richmond is able to connect and match volunteers to a program of interest. Both organizations believe that this working relationship could be expanded to provide better service to the community.

Knowing that productive and effective volunteers need committed support in all areas of volunteer management – recruitment, training, engagement, evaluation, retention and recognition

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– the City and Volunteer Richmond propose to work together to develop a Volunteer Management Program.

Intent of Program

The intent is to develop a volunteer management program for the City which will:

- provide better customer service to residents who wish to volunteer,
- gain efficiencies through centralization of tasks,
- engage a larger portion of the community in voluntary activities, and
- utilize the existing expertise in community organizations to assist with this program.

Better customer service – With the development of this program, residents will be able to go to one location and receive information on all possible volunteer positions, sign up in multiple areas and be screened all at once.

Centralization of tasks – The many tasks that go into supporting and engaging the volunteers will be centralized. Some of the areas where efficiencies will be gained are: records management, recruitment, screening, recognition, retention, training and evaluation. With these tasks being centralized, this will allow departments to concentrate on matching positions to qualified volunteers and offering a quality program to the community.

Engaging the community – Better knowledge of the opportunities and a streamlined process will encourage the community to become involved in programs. This in turn will foster a better awareness and connection between the community and the City.

Existing expertise – Volunteer Richmond is a community resource whose aim is to bring services and people together through volunteerism. This organization is experienced in volunteer management and will provide expert guidance and direction for this program. By utilizing the expertise which exists in the community, the City does not have to devote extra resources to train a facilitator for this program.

Greater volunteer satisfaction – Volunteers will receive challenging assignments, timely recognition and proper training, which will result in greater volunteer satisfaction. This in turn will encourage further volunteer involvement in the community.

Overall, the program will enable residents to go through one process to enroll in any volunteer program in the City and encourage more residents to become involved in the activities in their community.

Project Scope

Phase 1 – Program Development and Pilot

Combining the resources of Volunteer Richmond Information Services and the City, a project team will be established. The goal of this team will be to develop a volunteer management program and implement a pilot for the City's Emergency Program.

The volunteer management program scope will entail:

- establishing performance measures
- standardizing volunteer management
- identifying areas of volunteer need
- defining job descriptions/roles/responsibilities within the various departments
- developing appropriate orientation sessions
- establishing a recruitment strategy
- establishing an interview and screening strategy
- establishing appropriate training opportunities
- establishing volunteer evaluation criteria and
- developing volunteer recognition events

In addition to the above, the project team will be responsible for:

- implementing a pilot,
- evaluating the pilot, and
- modifying or refining the program based on the pilot results.

Phase 2 – Divisional Application

Once the program has been refined, the program would expand to include volunteers from other areas of the Community Safety Division:

- RCMP – community policing volunteers, block watch, citizens crime watch, victim services, etc.
- Environmental Programs – outreach

Phase 3 – Corporate Application

After evaluation of the divisional application of the volunteer management program, the program would be reviewed and modified to accommodate a corporate implementation of this program.

Proposed Costs

Phase 1 – Program Development and Pilot

Costs would be initially incurred for a project team to develop the overall program, and implement a pilot.

Estimated \$200,000 one time development cost.

Phase 2 – Divisional Application

Phase 3 – Corporate Application

During these two phases, dedicated staff would continue to oversee this program with cost savings being realized in the following areas:

- staff time – the total staff time dedicated to administering multiple volunteer programs would be reduced as tasks are centralized. This centralized process would allow staff to focus on the goals and operation of the program rather than time-consuming administrative tasks
- advertising – the advertising budget for all the volunteer programs could be combined for larger campaigns (recruitment, recognition, orientation, etc.), which will have the potential to attract more volunteers or determine new areas of need in the community
- print materials – all print materials (forms, brochures, manuals, etc.) could be streamlined and produced in larger quantities, enabling us to take advantage of quantity discounts

- program costs – similar training courses or orientations and recognition events for the different programs could be combined into a few well attended sessions resulting in overall cost savings

Estimated savings of \$25,000 annually.

Outcomes

With a small investment in this program, the community will see dividends far into the future in the form of:

- increased community programs and services,
- better community involvement,
- improved community safety, and
- greater community awareness and spirit.

Implementation

Phase 1 – Program Development and Pilot

Current – Est. end of 2003

The City's Emergency Program and Volunteer Richmond will continue, with their limited resources, to evolve the current working model into a rudimentary volunteer management program. Once funding is secured, the City and Volunteer Richmond will proceed with the full development of a program and a pilot.

Phase 2 – Divisional Application

Est. 2004

After evaluating the pilot, the program will be refined and adopted to be implemented divisionally.

Phase 3 – Corporate Application

Est. 2005

Once the program has been adopted on a divisional basis, the program will be reviewed, revised and implemented corporately.

Summary

The City of Richmond and Volunteer Richmond look forward to securing necessary funding to advance the concept of an integrated Volunteer Management Program. The program developed for Richmond could serve as a model to other communities interested in advancing and expanding their services through volunteerism.