



Council/School Board Liaison Committee

Date: Tuesday, May 28th, 2002

Place: Anderson Room
Richmond City Hall

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

Also Present: School Trustee Chris Evans
School Trustee Donna Sargent
K. L. Morris, Secretary-Treasurer, School District No. 38 (Richmond)
G. McLean, Manager, Facilities
K. Sparrow, Director, Recreation & Cultural Services
M. Redpath, Manager, Parks Administration & Programs
F. J. Ashton, Executive Assistant, City Clerk's Office

Call to Order: The Chair called the meeting to order at 1:07 p.m.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

1. It was moved and seconded
That the agenda for the meeting of Tuesday, May 28th, 2002, be adopted.
CARRIED

MINUTES

2. It was moved and seconded
That the minutes of the meeting of the Council/School Board Committee held on Tuesday, January 22nd, 2002, be adopted as circulated.

Council/School Board Liaison Committee

Tuesday, May 28th, 2002

Prior to the question on the motion being called, a question was raised by School Trustee Evans about the affiliation status of adult community user groups. In response, information was provided by Mr. Mike Redpath that the various Community Associations, the Community Arts Council and the Gateway Theatre had each been requested to provide to the City, the names of the those groups which used their facilities. He stated that in turn, these groups would be asked to provide updated information on the number of Richmond residents involved in each organization, the number of members, their ages, the organization's primary mandate, and a copy of their respective constitutions.

During the discussion which ensued, advice was given that all community groups and not only affiliated groups were being asked to provide the information. Information was also provided by City and School District staff on deadlines faced by each with respect to the booking of facilities for their own use, prior to facilities being offered for use to private rentals.

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

3. BUSINESS ARISING

3.1 Tall Ships Event - Update (City to provide update)

The Director, Recreation & Cultural Services, Kate Sparrow provided information to the Committee on the status of the plans for the upcoming Tall Ships event, the ceremonies, activities and tours being planned in conjunction with the arrival of the ships.

In response to questions about the role of the School District in the event, advice was given by the Manager, Facilities, Gary McLean, that it was his understanding that the McMath High School grounds would now be used to provide free staff parking only rather than paid parking as initially proposed. During the discussion which ensued, concern was expressed by School District staff about the lack of consultation on the change in plans. A question was raised about whether the provision of free parking at McMath High School was a firm decision, and Ms. Sparrow advised that a further meeting could be held to clarify that issue. Further discussion continued, with Mr. Morris stressing that a decision on the issues of parking and transportation was needed quickly.

The use of school facilities for events relating to the Tall Ships event was then addressed, with advice being given that McMath High School had been booked by the City for summer programs rather than Lord Byng. Further advice was given that at this point in time, approximately 90% of the venues required for the Tall Ships event had been identified.

Council/School Board Liaison Committee

Tuesday, May 28th, 2002

Ms. Sparrow further advised that initially consideration had been given to using local schools for crew activities, however, the number of crews would be less than first anticipated, and as a result, the Steveston Community Centre would now be used. She indicated however that she would seek confirmation of that and advise the School District accordingly.

Discussion continued, during which it was noted that the School District now had the right to use their facilities to generate revenue, and could not afford to provide free parking when revenue was being generated at other sites. At the same time, a question was raised about the feasibility of having a contingency plan in place in the event that specific school sites were required on short notice.

The discussion concluded with Ms. Sparrow indicating that she would take the concerns of the School District to the Tall Ships organizing committee.

4. NEW BUSINESS

4.1 Emergency Services Plan

(Memo: May 9/02)

Project Lead, Emergency Program, Wendy Mah, accompanied by the Manager, Emergency & Environmental Programs, Suzanne Bycraft, provided a short overview of the City's Emergency Services Plan, reviewed the role of the School District in the event of an emergency occurring, and identified areas where further work was required.

Ms. Mah spoke about the availability of volunteers to provide assistance in the event that the emergency plan was activated, and elaborated on material circulated to the Committee. She then addressed the role of the School District to provide emergency services to the student population, during which she explained the process to be followed in the event of a large emergency which affected school children. Ms. Mah noted that City staff had been working with Mary Hamill of the School District to prepare the procedures and would continue to do so to further clarify details of the School District's involvement.

Discussion then ensued among Committee members and staff on the experiences of the City and School District which had transpired as a result of the September 11th, 2001 disaster. During the discussion the request was made that the City be provided with a copy of the School District's policy on emergency situations. It was also noted that if a major catastrophe should occur, the School District could not require staff to remain at the schools to care for the children.

Council/School Board Liaison Committee

Tuesday, May 28th, 2002

Also discussed was the structural integrity of Richmond's schools and whether these structures would be able to withstand an earthquake, it being noted that five of the existing schools were high risk. Addressed also were the steps to be followed in the event of a major breach of the City's dyking system and resulting flood, if such an event occurred during school hours. An explanation was given that the City's Emergency Service Plan addressed the personal needs of individuals and families in the event of an emergency and that flood planning was another issue which was currently being reviewed. It was noted that a breach in the dyke could only occur if an earthquake occurred at high tide.

During the discussion, School District staff indicated their pleasure at being included in the plan and spoke about the need to work together to ensure that there would be people available to volunteer and help in an emergency situation, even if they did not live in Richmond. Advice was also given that the School District's liability insurance would cover use of school buses by the City during an emergency.

A brief discussion ensued on the timing of the submission of the Emergency Services Plan to the School District's Facilities & Planning Committee, and the attendance of City staff at that meeting to make the presentation.

4.2 School Board Operating Budget – Possible Closure of Schools (For discussion)

Mr. Morris reported that a new funding formula had been implemented for school districts, and he then provided examples of the new formula. He advised that the Richmond School District had had a significant shortfall in the amount of revenue provided to the District in the amount of \$12 Million, however that amount had since been reduced to \$8 Million.

Mr. Morris stated that School District staff were currently reviewing the services provided and examining ways to generate additional revenue, and he spoke about the possible closure of certain schools in 2003 due to declining enrolment. Discussion ensued among Committee members on (i) the impact which this action could have on the remaining schools; (ii) the operating problems being experienced by the School District; (iii) the need of the School District to use school facilities in a manner which would generate additional revenue on a long term basis, and (iv) the possibility of discussing with the City in the future, whether any of the School District sites had the potential for rezoning so that that site could be used for a project which would generate additional revenue.

Council/School Board Liaison Committee

Tuesday, May 28th, 2002

During the discussion the comment was made that the School District was concerned about the loss of funds because of its direct effect on the education of the students now and in the future. Concern was also expressed about (i) the possibility that the School District would close a school and then sell the land, and (ii) the rezoning of school sites for other 'market driven' uses because those uses did not pay the same level of taxes as other uses.

Reference was made to the proposed school park site in the South McLennan area, and advice was given that even though the City had acquired the property for the park, the School District might not have the capital funding available to build the school or to install a field.

4.3 Street Racing

(City report: Apr. 3/02/ File No.: 6450-09) (REDMS No. 677521)

Sgt. Ron Hobbs, of the Richmond Detachment of the RCMP Traffic Section, accompanied by the Director, Transportation, Gordon Chan, provided information on a new vehicle impoundment program which had now been initiated. He also provided information on a number of other initiatives which were currently being considered by the Solicitor General, such as 'graded' licencing, restricting the number of youths permitted in motor vehicles, and raising the age at which young drivers could obtain their licences.

Sgt. Hobbs also provided information about a proposed 'Traffic Awareness Week for Young Drivers' which would be held in late Fall. He stated that it was hoped that representatives of ICBC, the City, the RCMP, Provincial Government vehicle inspection officers, students, driving school, and local schools would participate in the event.

Sgt. Hobbs advised that the Richmond RCMP Traffic section was working with ICBC to target drivers who wished to race in the City. He noted that traffic calming measures initiated in specific areas in Richmond had greatly reduced opportunities for street racing, and expressed the hope that enforcement and education would help to reduce problems which had occurred in the past.

Discussion then ensued among Committee members and staff on (i) the attitude of a certain segment of youth drivers; (ii) the 'fast' vehicles being purchased by parents for their teenage drivers; and (iii) the apparent absence of parental guidance or supervision. The suggestion was made during the discussion that education measures should also include the parents. Also addressed was the impact on young drivers of automobile advertising taking place on television, and questions were raised about whether that particular issue should be examined at the provincial level.

Council/School Board Liaison Committee

Tuesday, May 28th, 2002

Reference was made to material available through ICBC for the parents of young drivers. Further discussion ensued on (i) the difficulties in educating parents and getting them to take responsibility for their actions; (ii) the pressures being faced by parents to let their children obtain their drivers licences; (iii) the need to get young people involved in whatever action was being taken to reduce street racing; (iv) whether a racing facility (as had been proposed at the recent street racing forum) would help to resolve the problem; and (v) the need to educate elementary children rather than high school youth about the dangers of street racing.

In concluding the discussion, Mr. Chan commented on the desires of the street racers to have a track on which to race. He also noted that Richmond was seen to be one of the leaders in trying to find a solution to the street racing problem. He also agreed with the suggestion that the 'next generation' be educated about street racing. Mr. Chan advised that City staff would be presenting a report to Council within the next two months or so to further address this matter.

4.4 Appointment of Drug and Alcohol Prevention Coordinator (City to provide update)

The Manager, Division Programs, Community Safety Division, Shawn Issel, advised that she was the lead for the staff working group currently developing the Municipal Drug Strategy for the City.

Reference was made to the appointment of a Drug and Alcohol Prevention Coordinator by RADAT, and a question was raised about the City's involvement. Advice was given that that appointment was not connected to the City's current strategy, and Ms. Issel then left the meeting.

4.5 Richmond Community Needs Assessment 2001 (For discussion)

Discussion ensued among Committee members and staff on such issues as:

- home schooling, the accuracy of the statistics provided in the report; how the consultants obtained their information; and the impact which home schooled students had on community centres to provide physical activity programs
- access to school facilities and whether preferential access was given to specific groups
- the suggestion that the provision of child care and before and after school care should be increased.

Council/School Board Liaison Committee

Tuesday, May 28th, 2002

During the discussion, in response to questions about the status of the report, advice was given that the document would be used to assist the Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services Division in decision making for the next number of years.

4.6 Youth Recreation – Use of Parks at Night (For discussion)

Discussion ensued among Committee members and staff on the availability of summer programs for youth, and information was provided that an expanded 'Night Shift' program would be continuing. In answer to a query about whether the program was being cancelled, Ms. Sparrow stated that she would have to check into that. Further advice was given that both the skateboard and bicycle parks would be available in the evenings.

Reference was made to the current closing time for City parks, and discussion ensued on whether certain areas would be opened for late night activities. Advice was given by Ms. Sparrow during the discussion that a task force had been reviewing late night youth activities and that a report on the subject would be submitted to the City's Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services Committee in June.

5. INFORMATION ITEMS

5.1 School Planning and Construction Schedule (Memo: May 17/02)

Mr. Morris reviewed the current school planning and construction schedule with the Committee, who advised during his review that capital project financing would again be the responsibility of the Ministry of Education.

(Trustees Evans and Sargent left the meeting (3:14 p.m.) and did not return to the open meeting.)

5.2 Grass Cutting/Block Booking Arrangements

Mr. Morris noted that the school year had passed by quickly, and that any problems regarding the use of school facilities by City staff had been resolved satisfactorily.

6. PENDING ITEMS

None.

Council/School Board Liaison Committee

Tuesday, May 28th, 2002

7. FUTURE MEETING DATES

The next meeting of the Council/School Board Liaison Committee is scheduled to be held on at 1:00 p.m., on Tuesday, October 22nd, 2002 at City Hall.

ADJOURNMENT

It was moved and seconded
That the meeting adjourn (3:17 p.m.).

CARRIED

Certified a true and correct copy of the Minutes of the meeting of the Council/School Board Liaison Committee held on Tuesday, May 28th, 2002.

Councillor Harold Steves
Chair

Fran J. Ashton
Executive Assistant