



Community Safety Committee

Date: Tuesday, June 11th, 2002
Place: Anderson Room
Richmond City Hall
Present: Councillor Linda Barnes, Chair
Councillor Bill McNulty, Vice-Chair
Councillor Evelina Halsey-Brandt
Councillor Sue Halsey-Brandt
Councillor Rob Howard (4:10 p.m.)
Councillor Harold Steves (4:03 p.m.)
Mayor Malcolm D. Brodie
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 Thursday, June 6th, 2002, be adopted as circulated.

CARRIED

(Councillor Steves entered the meeting at 4:03 p.m.)

NEXT COMMITTEE MEETING DATE

2. The next regular meeting of the Committee is scheduled for *Tuesday, July 9th, 2002* at 4:00 p.m. in the Anderson Room.

The Chair noted that there would be a special meeting of the Committee on Wednesday, June 12th, 2002 to review the service levels of Community Bylaws and Emergency Programs.

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COMMUNITY SAFETY DIVISION

3. **CREATION OF AN INTEGRATED HOMICIDE TEAM – REPORT TO RCMP MAYORS’ CONSULTATIVE FORUM**

(Report: May 24/02, File No.: 5000-01) (REDMS No. 724454)

The General Manager, Community Safety, Chuck Gale, reported that Pitt Meadows and Maple Ridge had each approved the creation of the proposed team, that North Vancouver District and City, the Township of Langley and the City of Surrey were still considering the proposal, and that Burnaby, White Rock, and the City of Langley had rejected the concept.

In response to questions about why a number of municipalities had said ‘no’ to the proposal, Mr. Gale advised that the funding formula which had been developed in conjunction with the new program would mean that certain communities, which until now had not had a homicide assignment but still received assistance at no cost from RCMP in other jurisdictions when a homicide occurred, would now have to pay for the provision of this service. He stated that in all likelihood the RCMP Mayors’ Consultative Forum would be addressing that issue further.

Mr. Gale further advised that the Solicitor General had indicated that this initiative would not be permitted to fail, and that either cities and municipalities would voluntarily accept the proposal, or the Solicitor General’s Department would make participation mandatory, which was also causing concern for those municipalities which had not had to pay in the past. He stated that the Lower Mainland Policing Advisory Committee would prefer that participation be undertaken in a way ‘which would work for every municipality and city within the Greater Vancouver Regional District (GVRD)’. Mr. Gale further advised that some municipalities were of the view that the homicide team should be funded totally by the Provincial Government.

(Councillor Howard entered the meeting – 4:10 p.m.)

In answer to further questions about acceptance of the program, Mr. Gale advised that if the Consultative Forum voted to approve the project, each municipality within the Lower Mainland would receive a bill for their share of the costs, and each municipality would be obliged to pay, regardless of their individual views. He then briefly reviewed the stages of implementation of the integrated homicide team, explaining that stage one would be an investigation of the detachments policed by the RCMP in the GVRD; in stage two, the geographic area would be extended to include the RCMP jurisdictions within the Lower Mainland; and stage three would result in the inclusion of non-RCMP policed municipalities.

Discussion then ensued among Committee members and staff, during which in response to questions, the following information was provided:

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- multiple teams comprised of a total of 39 investigators would be available to respond to multiple crimes, all of which would be handled on a priority basis, with crimes involving death being given top priority
- once a decision had been reached, the team would be formed with RCMP officers who had successfully applied from throughout BC
- the cost of \$668,000 to the City would not impact the City's budget as the current City resources would be reduced to accommodate this payment; the City would contribute either officers or money to the total value of \$668,000
- the current homicide caseload in Richmond would be transferred to the proposed new team.

It was moved and seconded

- (1) *That the report (dated May 24th, 2002, from the General Manager, Community Safety) to the RCMP Mayors' Consultative Forum regarding the creation of an Integrated Homicide Team be endorsed, and*
- (2) *That the RCMP Detachment's contribution to the Integrated Homicide Team of \$688,000, (annualized basis), be approved on the basis that the funds be found within the current approved funding envelope for the detachment.*

CARRIED

4. **FIRE SERVICES ACT – INSURANCE PREMIUM TAX**

(Report: May 17/02, File No.: 1240-20-01) (REDMS No. 720975)

Fire Chief Jim Hancock indicated that he was available to respond to any questions which the Committee might have. A brief discussion then ensued on this matter, during which the following information was provided:

- a concentrated effort was being made by six or seven municipalities, including Richmond, to have the Provincial Government redirect the insurance premium tax back to the collecting municipality
- this matter had been an issue with municipalities for a period of time, however, the City of Surrey had made the initial steps to address the matter; another possibility was that as part of the new Community Charter, there was a move to transfer some responsibility to the local Fire Chiefs.

The Chair noted that Mr. Geoff Lake, President of Richmond Firefighters Local 1286 was in attendance, and asked whether he wished to make any comments on the matter. In response, Mr. Lake indicated that he did not wish to make a statement, noting that the report was well written.

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It was moved and seconded

- (1) *That the BC Government be requested to redirect the 4% Insurance Premium Tax, less the costs directly incurred by the office of the Fire Commissioner, to the City of Richmond, to offset the costs of providing fire services; and*
- (2) *That a copy of the report (dated May 17th, 2002, from the General Manager, Community Safety) be forwarded to the Lower Mainland Municipal Association and the Union of British Columbia Municipalities, the Association of BC Fire Chiefs, GVRD Fire Chiefs, and the International Association of Fire Fighters, Local 1286, for consideration.*

CARRIED

It was moved and seconded

That the Lower Mainland Municipal Association and the Union of British Columbia Municipalities be requested to lobby the Provincial Government on behalf of the City with regard to the redirection of the 4% Insurance Premium Tax.

CARRIED

5. STATUS OF FIRE INSPECTIONS

(Oral Report)

Chief Fire Prevention Officer Rick Stene reported that as a result of a review of the existing system of Company Fire inspections which compared that system with the Night Inspection program, the inspection system was modified in April of 2001. He advised that a new form was created for use only by firefighters, which made it easier for the firefighters to (i) recognize what they should be checking for, and to (ii) record the results of the inspection.

Mr. Stene further advised that the method of assigning inspections was modified to assign 20 inspections per month for every engine, ladder and rescue vehicle, and to add Saturday to the inspection calendar. He stated that as a result of these changes, approximately 1,000 more inspections were completed in 2001 than in previous years.

Mr. Stene noted that constant changes were being made to the computer system to (i) provide easier access to the firefighters, and (ii) make it easier for Fire Prevention to assign and monitor the results. He stated that the goal for 2002 was to increase the number of inspections by at least 10% over the 2001 total. In closing, Mr. Stene advised that the effectiveness of the changes would be monitored and evaluated and a report made to the Committee at the end of 2002.

A brief discussion ensued, during which appreciation was expressed for the initiative taken to improve the inspection process.

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6. COMMUNITY SAFETY BUILDINGS PROJECT - UPDATE

(Report: May 24/02, File No.: 2052-02) (REDMS No. 724127)

Mr. Gale reviewed the report and recommendation with the Committee, during which he elaborated on his concerns about the issue of the proposed referendum, the complexity of the wording of the referendum question, and how to educate the residents to properly respond to the question.

Discussion ensued among Committee members and staff on this matter, during which, in response to questions, the following information was provided:

- sufficient funds were available to complete the design work for the three proposed new fire halls, however, funds were not currently available to complete construction
- the report to be presented to the Committee on July 9th, 2002 would provide details of funding options
- the design process would be completed, and input obtained from the firefighters on the proposed design, by the Fall of this year

During the discussion, concern was expressed that one of the financing options proposed would be an increase in property tax rates, and staff were urged to consider other options. The suggestion was also made that a decision on the question of holding a referendum should be delayed until presentation of the financing options report to the Committee. Discussion then ensued on whether a delay in considering the referendum issue until the July 9th, 2002 Committee meeting would have an impact on the process, if a decision was made to proceed with a referendum.

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

It was moved and seconded

That the report (dated May 24th, 2002, from the General Manager, Community Safety), regarding the Community Safety Buildings Project – Update, be referred to the July 9th, 2002 meeting of the Community Safety Committee.

CARRIED

7. APPOINTMENT AS BYLAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER

(Report: May 21, 2002, File No.: 0172-09) (REDMS No. 721993)

It was moved and seconded

That Tom Krish be appointed as a Bylaw Enforcement Officer in accordance with Section 36 of the Police Act, and that such appointment be for the term of his employment as Bylaw Enforcement Officer with the City.

CARRIED

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8. VICTIM SERVICE UNIT

(Oral report to provide update and a 15 minute video.)

Insp. Tony Mahon, Operations Support Officer for the Richmond Detachment of the RCMP, introduced Mr. Scott Vallance, Coordinator, Victim/Witness Services, and Glenna Christianson. Insp. Mahon advised that Victim/Witness Services dealt with 900 to 1,000 victims on an annual basis; that the police officer attending an incident would determine whether Victim/Witness Services was required; and that this service was one of the most valuable 'people' programs functioning within the department.

A short video was then presented on the assistance provided by Victim/Witness Services to the victims of such incidents as crime and accidents.

Discussion then ensued among Committee members and the delegation on the Victim/Witness Services program, during which Mr. Vallance provided information on the history of the program from its conception, and explained the purpose of the video which was to make people aware of operation of the program on a daily basis, and to reach out to the corporate community for donations. In response to questions, advice was given the program, currently located at the former City Hall facility, would be relocated to the new Community Safety headquarters building. Information was also provided on (i) the process followed when Victim/Witness Services was contacted and the assistance provided to victims of crime, (ii) how staff coped with the stress of the various situations in which they were placed, and (iii) the number of paid personnel and volunteers in the program.

In concluding the discussion, the Chair asked Mr. Vallance to provide written material regarding the program to her. She also stated that the program offered an invaluable service to victims.

9. MANAGER'S REPORT

Insp. Mahon provided an update to Committee on Marihuana grow operations in the City. A copy of his report is attached as Schedule A and forms part of these minutes. A brief discussion then ensued among Committee members and Insp. Mahon on this matter.

ADJOURNMENT

It was moved and seconded

That the meeting adjourn (5:26 p.m.).

CARRIED

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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, June 11th, 2002.

Councillor Linda Barnes
Chair

Fran J. Ashton
Executive Assistant



City of Richmond

OPERATION GREEN CLEAN



Royal Canadian Mounted Police

Problem: Marihuana grow operations are increasing within the City of Richmond.

Goals: To reduce the number of marihuana grow operations within the City of Richmond and to reduce the supply and demand for marihuana within the City of Richmond.

Enforcement: The creation of a unit dedicated to locating, dismantling and investigating marihuana grow operations and the people associated to them. This unit was created by utilizing five officers from existing detachment resources, coming under the command of the Drug Section NCO i/c. The unit is known as the Green Team.

The City of Richmond are initiating a By-Law, or using a current fine system, that will deem a residence unsafe after a marihuana grow operation has been dismantled in it. This by-law will ensure the house is inspected prior to re-occupancy, thus making it safe for the new, innocent tenants.

Education: South Arm Community Police station has created a comprehensive 1.5 hour seminar. The seminar is designed to reduce the chance of a property owner or landlord has renting to an individual who will start a marihuana grow operation. Information provided covers what a marihuana grow operation is to Residential Tenancy Act information that can assist the property owner of manager.

Prevention: A booklet was created to be given to any interested parties on "How to Spot a Marihuana Grow Operation." This booklet is designed to assist the community in spotting and reporting potential grow operations. The tips from these are then passed on to the Green Team who in turn will investigate. With an increase in educated and aware general public marihuana grow operations can be prevented before too much damage is done.

Residents surrounding a marihuana grow operation are delivered letters and given the opportunity to complete a victim impact statement. This statement is then to be used during the sentencing phase of a trial to show the courts that a marihuana grow operation is not a victimless crime.

Awareness: The external awareness of the campaign has been done through the City of Richmond with the creation of pamphlets and posters advertising the Operation Green Clean program. Stickers have also been provided to all parties that have completed the seminar so that they can apply these to their rental property. These sticker are also able to prevent marihuana grow operations as a prospective tenant may not wish to rent from an educated property owner or tenant.

When the Green Team is dismantling a marihuana grow operation, a sign will be posted outside explaining who the members are, and making the local community aware that there was a marihuana grow operation close to home.

The internal communication is through the Green Team and CoPS, making all units aware of the program, and how to refer property owners and managers to the program.

Treatment: Operation Green Clean has not moved to this level yet.

Rehabilitation: Operation Green Clean has not moved to this level yet.