



SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 38 (RICHMOND)

**COUNCIL/BOARD LIAISON COMMITTEE
PUBLIC MINUTES**

Date: Tuesday, June 14, 2005
9:30 a.m.

Place: 4th Floor Meeting Room
School District Administration Office

Present: Trustee D. Tablotney, Acting Chair
Councillor E. Halsey-Brandt

Absent: Trustee L. McPhail, Chair
Trustee S. Bourque
Councillor D. Dang

Also Present: B. Beairsto, Superintendent of Schools
K. Morris, Secretary Treasurer
D. Semple, Director, Parks Operations
K. Sparrow, Director, Recreation & Cultural
V. Jacques, Manager, Community Recreation Services
K. Littlewood, Recording Secretary

1. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Agenda for the Tuesday, June 14, 2005 meeting was received for information.

2. MINUTES

Minutes of the Tuesday, April 12, 2005 Council/Board Liaison

Committee meeting received the minutes for information.

3. BUSINESS ARISING

Nil

4. NEW BUSINESS

4.1 Kidsvillage: The Education Challenges of Torino 2006

(virtual Olympic Village for young people)

Ms. Sparrow reported this is a promotion through the Torino Olympics. The program is up and running on the website www.kidsvillage.torino2006.it and schools can go online to get more

information. This is an example of the kinds of things we might see in Vancouver.

Mr. Semple mentioned that once the flag goes down in Torino it becomes Vancouver's Olympian so there will be more of these types of initiatives.

4.2 Status of the Mitchell School Site (forwarded from May 2nd 2005 General Purposes Committee Meeting)

Mr. Morris read the previous Board resolutions pertaining to Old Mitchell School. These resolutions were brought to the Council Board Liaison committee on a number of occasions in 1998.

It was anticipated demolishing the structure in 2003. In 1998 a Resolution was passed to review options for the reuse of Mitchell school in consultation with the appropriate committees. No report was ever received by the Council Board Liaison Committee.

Mr. Morris has been approached by Bob Ransford, then a member of the Richmond Heritage Advisory Committee, to restore the building into an office complex. The Board dealt with the issue and directed staff to sell the property. The school district's Continuing Education Department is currently using the site on a year-to-year basis.

Six or seven years ago an architectural firm was hired to look at the cost to restore the building and it would cost approximately \$3.5 million to do so. For that reason the school district would be better off selling since it would get \$1-2 million which would go into the Board's Local Capital Account and not to Victoria.

Mr. Semple asked if the site was one continuous lot or a single lot? Mr. Morris explained it is piecemeal and just over an acre in size. The money collected would accrue to the school district. The potential options for that site were discussed and it was realized that community concern focuses around that corner.

Mr. Semple said there has been discussion about a Community Police Station as well as a Community Library in that area. Mr. Morris indicated that he met with library representatives and the RCMP in 1998 and since that time no further interest has come forward from the City or the community to purchase the property.

Dr. Beirsto said he realized this was an issue for the community because it is an unsightly building and it has a limited life. The District would let it weather in its heritage way because there is no point in painting the

building if it is going to be torn down. In the meantime there are no structural or health reasons why it cannot be used in the short-term.

Continuing Education currently uses it and provides service to the local community through the federally funded ELSA program and it brings the District some net revenue. The District has Board authorization to tear it down. Trustee Tablotney asked where Continuing Education would relocate if that were to happen. Dr. Beirsto explained that if there were a fire order then the District would find another facility for the ELSA contract.

Mr. Morris indicated the cost to pre-paint and paint Old Mitchell is in the order of \$100,000 and the building, with its heritage-style wood shingles, would probably have to be scraped not power washed.

Councillor Halsey-Brandt made the point that if it looks neglected, people treat it as such. The City maintains their buildings so they do not have those problems. Trustee Tablotney commented that she has fielded many complaints from the public about the lack of paint.

Dr. Beirsto has had some discussions within the Fine Arts community to put up murals although this might increase the cost.

Councillor Halsey-Brandt asked if the School Board has discussed the unsightliness of the school. She feels it shows lack of pride in ownership and questions how others can respect that? Trustee Tablotney indicated that it has come up many times.

Councillor Halsey-Brandt asked if there was a more up to date resolution.

Mr. Morris explained that there is a year-to-year contract and since it is federal money it can disappear at any time.

Councillor Halsey-Brandt expressed concern on how the City and School District are going to give this neighborhood pride.

Dr. Beirsto explained that the ELSA program serves the community. Currently there are six classrooms being used. Mr. Morris reported the program is English Language Acquisition for Immigrant Women.

Trustee Tablotney pointed out that at present there is nowhere else to house this program. Dr. Beirsto noted that Sidaway had not been given serious thought to housing the program at this time.

Mr. Morris indicated that there are currently 17 portables on site at Cambie Secondary. Enrolment there is declining because of MacNeill. If Old Mitchell had to be demolished there is the possibility of relocating ELSA to the Cambie site portables. There are two community centres in that area as well as two empty classrooms at McNeely. It was noted that the driveway configuration will be changing in the future at Mitchell which means drivers will not be coming in off #5 Road and instead will come off of Greenland Drive.

Councillor Halsey-Brandt made the suggestion that if the District was making money from ELSA perhaps some of that money could be put back into Old Mitchell. Mr. Morris noted that the net revenue is used in the school district to directly support educational. The money comes out of that budget.

Trustee Tablotney asked if district staff could add this to the next Board agenda or the one in July.

4.3 Eyes and Ears Program

Mr. Semple is currently working with RCMP and outside staff on this pilot program. If there is an incident in the community there are a number of City staff who could observe and report the incident. Teachers and principals should understand what this program is about. More details will be forthcoming. District staff would be another liaison for looking out at playgrounds, drive bys, or theft of vehicles. The idea of the program is not to chase but be “eyes and ears”.

Mr. Morris noted that seven or eight years ago the City came to the District’s Works Yard and wondered how this program differs from City Watch. Mr. Semple explained that someone took that program, made money off it and then abandoned it.

Mr. Morris believed the City of Burnaby is also promoting this program.

Mr. Semple explained the RCMP is putting the finishing touches on this and it would be a program similar to Block Watch or Crime Watch. Because City crews are out all the time it makes sense for them to be involved. They have pride in their community.

5. PROGRAMS

5.1 2010 Physical Activity Challenge

Ms. Sparrow noted that this initiative was endorsed at Council last night and is part of a larger provincial initiative. The Province has identified that they want this a physically active jurisdiction and there are a number of initiatives that are already being worked on such as Action Schools, I

Walk and Get Richmond Moving. Further strategies will be developed on how to achieve these goals. There is a national health survey that the statistics will come from. This is an opportunity for the City and the School District to do more together.

There was discussion around how to get people involved and excited about this initiative. Ms. Sparrow indicated that was one of the biggest challenges along with the need to educate parents on the impact of health and the future of children. For this reason it is important that the health department, the School District and the City work together to develop strategies. Overall, Richmond is seen as a healthy community.

Mr. Jacques indicated a passport idea similar to the one used for the “Get Richmond Moving” program.

5.2 ‘Get Richmond Moving’ Program Launch

Mr. Jacques noted that this is the first program that we have building on fitness activity and it is involved with supporting Action schools. The program launch will be at Westwind Elementary on Sportsday, June 24th. Connected to that program is a family passport that is oriented towards summer. Usually there is a “prize” or “carrot” associated with the program. There is a clear opportunity here to promote healthy food alternatives. Kay Wong and Greg Ponsart are currently working with the City on this.

Trustee Tablotney pointed out that she did not believe Trustees had received an invitation to the program launch at Westwind.

5.3 Asset Building – Staff Training

Mr. Jacques commented this was an opportunity for all those people who have not been getting people to the table to have people work cooperatively.

Councillor Halsey-Brandt feels there is a need to encourage people using planned “carrots” in order to reach the 20% goal. In the lead up to 2010 there should be activity related rewards to encourage people to continue the activity level after the program is completed. Trustee Tablotney gave the Running Room’s 20-minute challenge as an example. They give out hats and cake and get a number of people out for these events. People will come out if an event is promoted.

Mr. Jacques said the healthy behaviour of kids builds on what they are learning in school.

Councillor Halsey-Brandt noted that once these motions are passed at the City or School District, it is important to keep it going and promote it.

The problem becomes how to do that. Ms. Sparrow would take the ideas mentioned back to the City. She noted that all summer staff are being trained to incorporate physical activity into their programs. The goal is to get people active on a daily basis. There needs to be a variety of strategies to help people build healthy behaviour into their lives.

Mr. Semple gave the example at Westwind where parents have come forward to promote a better walking path. The City is looking at adapting the park so it utilizes the space.

Trustee Tablotney asked how much the City was contributing towards that initiative noting that the PAC is committed to raising \$90,000. Mr. Semple said the pathways fall under the Capital Program for Westwind next year and their project is approximately \$200,000 less the \$90,000 PAC funds.

Mr. Jacques displayed a poster for the upcoming Richmond PlayDay on July 23rd at South Arm Community Park, 11:00am-4:00pm noting this as an example of a successful initiative.

Dr. Beirsto discussed the meeting that took place between District Staff and two or three other jurisdictions. The important issue talked about was how to create community wide asset building. There was agreement that asset building was something that has been done in the district for a period of time now. There is a common framework. Last Friday there was a meeting of the school/health liaison group. This central organizing group includes Dr. Lu, the School District, MCFD, the RCMP and the City, all the major funders of children in the community. A strategy the group is inclined towards is a community scorecard. This would be an eight-part structure and would build around that a method of gathering data that includes activity, assets inventory and asset measures. It may be a self-assessment. The idea is to create an index of assets within the Richmond community with a common plan in place. The group has agreed upon an approach that is a philosophical wand that will become a central theme under standing items on this Agenda. It connects to schools because it is a policy framework that deals with nutrition, physical activity, and "Get Richmond Moving". The asset framework is a good structure to meet the goals we have to accomplish. Everyone agreed these meetings were beneficial.

Trustee Tablotney asked if any conferences are planned. Dr. Beirsto said that there have been a number of discussions about this. Mr. Jacques noted that on June 22nd there is an asset building workshop with a blanket invitation for anyone around the Table to attend. The City is in the midst of developing a new strategy and they are working with Greg Ponsart, among others, on this.

Dr. Beairsto offered to forward a notice to Trustees if the City would send him notification electronically.

6. FACILITIES

6.1 City School Land Planning Committee

Mr. Morris met with Mike Redpath, Raul Allueva, Eric Thorleifson, and Christine McGilverly after almost four years of attempting to meet with City representatives regarding planning issues. There was discussion surrounding the Cambie West area. After the discussion it was found there is a need to have more meetings. The District will be preparing the Capital Plan over the summer and in order to do this the District should be informed about what the City plans by way of new residential construction. There is the hope for continuity and that the meetings will carry on, although, regrettably, Mr. Raul Allueva has resigned from the City. In the past the District has been very successful with the Capital program and out of 50 schools, 45 projects have been completed and that all seismically high-risk schools have been upgraded. Mr. Morris feels the City could and should market this when they talk about this community.

Mr. Semple felt that City Centre and the Garden City Lands is where the real hub will be. He noted that Mr. Morris and the City's Planning Department are more involved with each other. Mr. Morris commented that with Mr. Allueva's resignation from the City a representative from the Planning Department is needed to meet with representatives from the City.

Trustee Tablotney mentioned the grass-cutting complaint in local paper. Mr. Semple explained that this has been the worst year for grass growing and he has had crews on overtime. It is about this time of year when the growing slows down. It is also a budget issue. Mr. Morris noted there have been no complaints to the Secretary Treasurer's office this year about the lack of grass-cutting on Board-owned land.

Mr. Semple departed the meeting at 10:30

6.2 OCP Bylaw Preparation Consultation Policy

A copy of the Policy as well as sections 879 and 881 of the Local Government Act were attached to the Agenda. Mr. Morris spoke to Kari Huhtala and indicated that section 881 needed clarification. The Act states that if local government is proposing to "adopt or amend an official community plan for an area that includes the whole or any part of one or more school districts, the local government must consult with the school boards for those school districts". The change in the Local Government Act took place in January 2001 and the City has yet to implement this requirement.

Mr. Jacques reiterated that the City is required to do this every five years. Mr. Morris commented that changes to the Local Government Act in January 2001 now requires the City to consult with the Board when the OCP is established or amended and at least once annually. Councillor Halsey-Brandt said the process has not been as formal as it should be.

Mr. Morris explained that the OCP takes a snapshot of the community at a point in time. Often there are a number of amendments that happen thereafter and he gave the example of the Steveston area.

Councillor Halsey-Brandt noted the same issue with the Garden City Lands. There will be an amendment to the existing OCP. You are not starting from scratch but the original OCP and many amendments.

Mr. Morris asked 'Who is the school board? Is it the 7 trustees who make up the corporate body known under the School Act as the Board of School Trustees or is it District staff?' He indicated that since this change was incorporated in 2001, no formal consultation with 'the Board' has taken place since that time. After speaking to Mr. Alleuva if would appear there has been no consultation with the School Board for five years.

Councillor Halsey-Brandt noted that if the City passed an amendment, the District was notified. She was not sure what the process was when consulting with the Board.

Ms. Sparrow suggested Terry Crowe come to the next Council Board Liaison Meeting as he would be able to speak to this and what the process would be.

Mr. Jacques asked if 'the Board' was consulted in terms of the Cambie plan. Mr. Morris indicated that, to his knowledge, there had been no consultation and Trustee Tablotney mentioned that this has been an issue in the past. The definition of the term 'consultation' needs to be determined.

Dr. Beirsto asked Ms. Sparrow to facilitate a meeting with Mr. Morris and Mr. Crowe in advance of the next meeting.

Mr. Morris will be meeting with a group called City Spaces due to the Land Meeting that was discussed earlier.

Mr. Jacques noted they were consultants on the West Cambie area.

7. INFORMATION/STANDING ITEMS
7.1 School Planning and Construction Schedule

Mr. Morris handed out a copy of the Planning and Construction Schedule. The first item deals with Replacement of Steveston Secondary. The site preparation tenders close on June 28th, construction documents are underway, and preloading will begin at London this summer. The project is to be completed by Summer 2007 and the approximate cost is \$16 million. Mr. Morris noted that London will become as fine a facility as any of the other schools in the District and will have 1,400 students. Because of that there will be greater potential in terms of programs.

The seismic upgrading will go ahead at Brighthouse and Garden City and will continue as funds are available.

At MacNeill the birds will stop nesting on June 15th and preparation will begin on the site.

The playing fields will go in shortly at Richmond Secondary. The drainage, lights and sidewalk around the perimeter are in and the carpet will go down in a few weeks.

Trustee Tablotney asked about the preload at MacNeill. Mr. Morris explained that the trees are logged, the preload is put in place and then drainage, irrigation and seeding take place prior to November. Waiting any longer will delay the process a full year. As well, two of the District owned houses will come down to put in more fields in the hope they will be ready for next spring.

7.2 2010 – City’s Olympic Planning Committee

Ms. Sparrow explained that planning for the Oval is in the schematic design phase for the building and surrounding park site and is slated to be completed and signed off in September. There will be opportunities for public comments over the summer and in early September Council will choose a design. Site preparation and preload is to go ahead early in the fall.

Ms. Sparrow also reported that the Spirit of BC Committee is meeting once a month and the group will be ready to bring forward suggestions in September. The three key areas they are focusing on are: communication in the community, building volunteer capacity in Richmond, and community events and initiatives that this committee can link to the Olympics. It was noted that Glen Kishi sits on this committee. Dr. Beairsto commented that it was possible Mr. Kishi could report to the Board of Trustees in September.

Mr. Morris enquired about the residential development associated with the Oval and the impact on the enrolment of Richmond Secondary School and the timing of those developments. Ms. Sparrow suggested putting this

topic on the school planning committee agenda because there are a number of unknowns. Councillor Halsey-Brandt remarked that Council has yet to deal with the issue. The timing of the development of the site is unknown at this time.

Dr. Beirsto remarked that enrolment in the School District is in decline. Families cannot afford to live here. There are large towers and no children in them. The District and the City have a common interest around ensuring school-aged children come into Richmond. Dr. Beirsto went on to say that if you plan on past experience you get an incorrect outcome. The City is changing rapidly and there is a need to pay attention to emerging trends. It appears that Richmond is turning into an area similar to the West End. Dr. Beirsto wondered if this was a current topic of conversation at the City? Councillor Halsey-Brandt felt this was a Canada wide problem and that it was not a “hot topic” around Council.

Dr. Beirsto cited the long-term effects on the community. Councillor Halsey-Brandt suggested that the people moving into Richmond were used to this type of living. A discussion on population decline Canada-wide ensued.

Mr. Morris noted that he found it helpful to the Board's GIS system laptop to allow access to student demographic information throughout Richmond when attending a Land Planning Committee meeting. It helps to dispell current 'urban myths' regarding Richmond's demographics. In higher density areas there are now fewer numbers of kids and developers like higher density because it means more profit.

Councillor Halsey-Brandt commented that towers are in demand and they are large apartments.

Mr. Jacques said the birthrate nationally is well below two children and unless you can become a destination for families there will be a decline in school districts and he felt the City was conscious of it. Mr. Beirsto noted this was a demographic reality and that people in general tend to operate on past assumptions and experiences. Being aware of that fact will help in planning since you force yourself to face what is NOW happening.

Mr. Morris remarked that you can 'create the future' by how catchment areas are determined since people that are buying look at where the schools are located.

7.3 School Use/PRCS Use

Mr. Semple will speak to Mr. Morris on this matter.

Mr. Morris noted there are about 40,000 bookings by the City and 400 throughout the summer.

Mr. Jacques had a proposal regarding the school use issue and he indicated that the booking system was not working as well as intended. There is a complex system of renting schools for community use and there are some administrative things to improve on. He would like to take the approach to look at school rentals from a facilitating process and streamline that process. Trustee Tablotney asked the nature of the problems.

Mr. Morris indicated that Julie Brown, Operations Manager and Janice Griffiths, Rentals Clerk would look into the problem(s). It was unclear if Mr. Jacques was referring to damage at facilities or the opening of those facilities. This year there was not a problem with damage by community groups. Thompson Community Center was provided with keys and codes to Blair. There are security issues in the schools therefore security will get tighter and the District is looking at technological solutions. Mr. Morris commented that in order to access Board-owned facilities it requires advance planning on the part of the City in order that school district staff can accommodate rental requests. Where there is the lack of planning and only last minute requests it can lead to frustration by all parties.

Dr. Beirsto mentioned the availability of funds for community use of schools and that an announcement is forthcoming from the Ministry. It may mean there is money for childcare facilities. Ms. Sparrow noted that the funds would be distributed through the Union of B.C. Municipalities and information was expected directly from UBCM in September.

It was agreed that the next meeting of the Council/Board Liaison Committee would be held at 9:30 a.m. on Tuesday, October 4, 2005 in the 4th Floor Meeting Room at the school district administration offices.

8. ADJOURNMENT

The June 14, 2005 regular meeting of the Council/Board Liaison Committee was adjourned at 10:45 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

L. McPhail, Chairperson