



CITY OF RICHMOND

REPORT TO COMMITTEE


TO: Planning Committee
FROM: Terry Crowe
Manager, Policy Planning
**RE: NEW TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE RICHMOND COMMUNITY SERVICES
ADVISORY COUNCIL (RCSAC)**

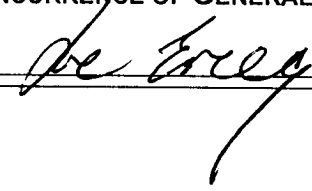
To Planning - Aug. 21/01
DATE: July 16, 2001
FILE: 0100-20 - RCSA1-01

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- (1) rescind its endorsement of the existing Terms of Reference for the Richmond Community Services Advisory Council, and
- (2) endorse the Richmond Community Services Advisory Council's revised Terms of Reference as the basis for the RCSAC's mandate, structure and functioning, as per the Manager, Policy Planning, report dated July 16, 2001.


Terry Crowe
Manager, Policy Planning

FOR ORIGINATING DIVISION USE ONLY
CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER


STAFF REPORT

ORIGIN

The purpose of this report is to request Council's endorsement of the revised Terms of Reference for the Richmond Community Services Advisory Council (RCSAC).

ANALYSIS

1. Background

The RCSAC is a community-based rather than city-established advisory council. It has had a long-standing history in advising City Council and other community stakeholders on community and social policy issues. Because of the diverse nature of its membership and changes at provincial and federal levels affecting how local communities respond to social issues, the RCSAC has determined that revised Terms of Reference are required. Following a lengthy consultation process with its members, the RCSAC tested a new framework for operating over the last year.

2. Review Process

The RCSAC struck a Task Force on Restructuring which included a consultation process with its members. A consultant, Gavin Perryman, was hired to conduct a survey of the members. His report, "Breaking the Logjam" provided several suggestions for refocusing. Using his report, along with feedback from the members at several meetings, a new structure was adopted by the RCSAC (see **Attachment 1**, "Report of the Task Force on Restructuring Richmond Community Services Advisory Committee: Background Information"). Following his report the Task Force prepared draft Terms of Reference which was reviewed and adjusted to reflect members' concerns. The final version is attached in **Attachment 2**.

3. Highlights of Revised Terms of Reference

A. Introduction

- The goal of the RCSAC is to build on the historical strength of the group, which is to bring together a diverse group of government, community and agency representatives who are concerned about community and social issues.
- The RCSAC wishes to continue with its role of advising City Council, as well as other levels of governments and organizations as appropriate.

B. Community Involvement

- The RCSAC is seeking to increase community involvement by opening its membership to citizens who are Richmond residents and who have an interest in social issues. The revised structure allows for the Executive of the RCSAC to recommend up to five community representatives for membership. Selection criteria have been developed to assist with the selection process.
- The RCSAC would also like City Council to continue with its practice of appointing two citizen-at-large members.

C. Meetings

A second significant change is the move away from monthly meetings to hosting 3 - 6 community meetings annually, including Forums and the Annual General Meeting. This idea has been tested out with the Housing Forum and the Poverty Forum. The RCSAC considers that this new approach has been successful in focusing on topics of interest, and in drawing a wide variety of interested individuals and groups.

D. Virtual Network

A third significant change is the introduction of a "Virtual Network", which will allow the exchange of information through fax or e-mail. A newsletter has been prepared and circulated to the members as a first step in this information exchange.

E. Funding

The results of this refocusing and streamlining will result in a reduction in the annual City Grant required for the year 2001/2. The RCSAC anticipates that its annual budget will be reduced. The RCSAC will also seek out other sources of funding for specific projects, as was done for the preparation of the initial Poverty Report, funded by the United Way.

F. Roles

- While most decisions will be made by reaching consensus, voting will be used for governance issues. Each organizational and individual member will be entitled to one vote.
- City roles will be:
 - Two individuals appointed by City Council will constitute two individual memberships and therefore receive one vote each.
 - The Councillor liaison will be entitled to vote as an organizational member representing the City of Richmond.
 - The City Staff liaison participates in an advisory capacity and is not entitled to vote.

4. Options

Option 1: Endorse (Recommended)

It is appropriate for Council to endorse the proposed RCSAC Terms of Reference as they improve the RCSAC's accountability to the community and ability to co-ordinate, and reduce operating costs.

Option 2: Not Approve

There is no City benefit in refusing to endorse the new Terms of Reference.

5. Next Steps

- (1) The RCSAC will be notified of Council's decision.
- (2) Council is to appoint the two City representatives to the RCSAC.
- (3) The RCSAC will adopt the new Terms of Reference at its Annual General Meeting in October 2001.

Once the Terms of Reference are endorsed by Council, staff will bring forward recommendations regarding the appointment of two new city representatives.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

1) Annual RCSAC Grant

- The RCSAC Budget for 2001 is \$9611.00 (\$9,111.00 requested from City, \$500.00 from membership fees) (**Attachment 3**). The City has issued an operating grant of \$9,200.
- In contrast, the City operating grant issued to the RCSAC for 2000 was \$17,520.

2) Project Funding

- In 2001, the City has given the RCSAC \$10,000 of Casino Funds to develop recommendations as a follow-up to the Poverty Report Card.

CONCLUSION

- The RCSAC has revised its structure to improve it's ability to bring together those who are interested in social issues and concerns, and to continue to advise City Council and other key community stakeholders.
- It is in the City's interest to endorse the new RCSAC Terms of Reference.



Lesley Sherlock
Social Planner

LS:cas

REPORT OF THE TASK FORCE ON RESTRUCTURING RICHMOND COMMUNITY SERVICES ADVISORY COUNCIL

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The following summarizes the background information that the Task Force reviewed prior to developing the proposed concept.

- I. **Original Purpose of the Richmond Community Services Advisory Council**
The original purpose of the RCSAC was to bring together those agencies and community representatives who were interested in social policy issues and concerns. The RCSAC has offered opportunities for networking, facilitated the exchange of information and ideas, and introduced new staff and individuals to the key players in the community. And, by acting as: a collective voice for social issues and concerns, the RCSAC has played an important role in advising City Council and other policy making groups.

- II. **Changes in Community Context**
A number of significant changes have occurred in the last few years that have impacted the social and health services delivery system, and the respective roles and responsibilities of government and community agencies.
 - Health regionalization
 - Contract restructuring
 - Budget constraints
 - Declining pool of volunteers

- III. **Steps Taken to Date**
Given these changes, along with the City's request that all advisory committees review their mandates and structure, the RCSAC has taken a number of steps:
 - In 1997, the Policy (PAC) and Interagency (IAC) Committees were consolidated into one group, meeting monthly at 5:30 p.m. The objective was to streamline the discussion and decision making process between the two groups. However, because of this change, the location of the meetings had to shift, and the new scheduled time resulted in fewer staff and community representatives attending.

 - In response to the City's request for Advisory Committees to review their mandates, the RCSAC hired Gavin Perryman to undertake a survey of the members. This survey asked members what they felt would be a useful role for the RCSAC. Gavin's report, *Breaking the Logjam* (November 1999), suggested a number of directions.

REPORT OF THE TASK FORCE ON RESTRUCTURING RICHMOND COMMUNITY SERVICES ADVISORY COUNCIL

Highlights of his findings were:

- That the RCSAC function first and foremost as an information and networking organization
- Offering opportunities to work together through task forces or special projects if there is an issue or topic of concern to several groups
- Being able to hear speakers on a variety of topics
- Offering an avenue to the City, other public bodies and agencies if issues relate to their area of jurisdiction

IV. Benefits of a Revised Concept

- Respects historical strengths and traditions
- Broadens opportunities to bring together a more diverse group with interests in social issues
- Focuses meetings on important topics of interest
- Through a Virtual Network, provides a broad-based communication network to inform members about upcoming events and topics of interest
- Continues to offer opportunities to partner and work with others on special projects
- Offers opportunities to inform and educate others about social issues and concerns
- Retains link to City through citizen appointees
- Recognizes the time constraints of members
- Reduces the City grant required



RCSAC | RICHMOND COMMUNITY SERVICES ADVISORY COUNCIL

Terms of Reference

I. PURPOSE

The concept refocuses the Richmond Community Services Advisory Council (RCSAC) to concentrate on its unique role and strength: to bring together a broad and diverse group of government, community and agency representatives concerned about community and social issues and the well-being of the community.

II. OBJECTIVES

- To advise the City of Richmond on social policies and community planning issues.
- To identify and address emerging community issues by:
 - i. Creating awareness and educating appropriate organizations, government and the community about community issues and concerns.
 - ii. Sharing information and provide networking opportunities for the members.
- To advise other government bodies, both federal and provincial, and organizations as appropriate.
- To support community-based local initiatives
- To undertake such special tasks or projects as may be appropriate throughout the year.

III. MEMBERSHIP

- A diverse, broad membership is desired to broaden involvement, to gain a broader perspective and to renew the energy of the Richmond Community Services Advisory Council.
- Membership categories:
 - Organizations:
 - Agencies and government bodies (\$25)*
 - Any social service agency or government body in Richmond is eligible to join.
 - Individual:
 - Members of the public (\$15)
 - Two individuals may be appointed by City Council.
 - The Steering Committee of the Richmond Community Services Advisory Council may recommend to the membership for approval up to 5 people, based upon pre-approved selection criteria. These community members will be self-nominated. RCSAC members are welcome to invite active community members to apply.

- Federal, provincial and public bodies, as well as the United Way are invited to join the RCSAC.
- Agencies are encouraged to have staff and/or Board representatives or a designated alternate at RCSAC meetings.
- Membership fees support the ability of the RCSAC to function.
- The Steering Committee may waive the membership fee for members based on financial need.
- Only one vote per membership.
- The RCSAC strives for consensus as a model of decision-making. Voting will be used **primarily** for governance issues, ie. change in constitution, financial matters and election of officers.

IV. MEETINGS

- Three to six (3-6) Community Meetings, including Forums and an Annual General Meeting will be held.
 - The forums will centre on a theme with guest speaker(s). Information sharing and business would complete the meetings.
- A Virtual Network will be created to exchange information between meetings. This information, distributed by fax or e-mail, will include regular updates on upcoming events, items of interest, etc.

V. STEERING COMMITTEE

A Steering Committee will plan meetings and oversee operations. This committee will consist of the network's co-chairs (one community/one agency representative), treasurer and representatives from any task forces/special projects. The Steering Committee is open to all other RCSAC members. The Steering Committee will meet 8 – 12 times a year.

VI. TASK FORCES AND COMMITTEES

A number of task forces and committees will be formed to address the specific issues in the community brought to the attention of the RCSAC. These task forces and committees will provide a verbal report to the Steering Committee and a representative from each task force and committee will be a member of the Steering Committee. Task forces and committees may invite non-members of the RCSAC to participate in their work.

VII. LIAISON WITH PUBLIC BODIES

The RCSAC will liaise with municipal, regional, provincial and federal government bodies and other policy-making groups as appropriate.

VIII. REPORTING

The RCSAC will report to the City and other funders on a regular basis. Reporting procedures will include a work plan and budget.

** As our funder, City of Richmond representatives will be exempt from paying membership fees.*

*Approved February 7, 2001
Amendments May 1, 2001*

RICHMOND COMMUNITY SERVICES ADVISORY COUNCIL

BUDGET FOR YEAR 2001

REVENUE

City of Richmond	\$9,111
Membership Dues	\$500
	<hr/>
Total Revenue	\$9,611

EXPENSES

Secretarial Support ¹	\$6,900
Administrative Expenses ²	\$1,411
Meeting Expenses	\$500
Honoraria and Miscellaneous	\$800
	<hr/>
Total Expenses	\$9,611

¹ 25 hours/month @ \$23/hour	\$6,900
² Voice Mail	\$456
Fax Line	\$355
Office Supplies	\$300
Database Updates	\$300
	<hr/>
	\$1,411

The RCSAC will look to other sources of funding for Special Projects/Task Forces.