



General Purposes Committee

Date: Monday, November 7th, 2005
Place: Anderson Room
Richmond City Hall
Present: Mayor Malcolm D. Brodie, Chair
Councillor Linda Barnes
Councillor Derek Dang – 4:07 p.m.
Councillor Evelina Halsey-Brandt
Councillor Sue Halsey-Brandt
Councillor Rob Howard
Councillor Kiichi Kumagai
Councillor Bill McNulty
Councillor Harold Steves
Call to Order: The Chair called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

It was moved and seconded
That the following matters be added to the agenda as additional items:
(1) *Update Bulletin – Lower Mainland Treaty Advisory Committee;*
(2) *Tracking of Referrals; and*
(3) *Secondary Suites.*

CARRIED

MINUTES

1. It was moved and seconded
That the minutes of the meeting of the General Purposes Committee held on Monday, October 3rd, 2005, be adopted as circulated.

CARRIED

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COUNCILLOR EVELINA HALSEY-BRANDT

2. **INVITATIONS TO COUNCIL TO ATTEND FUND-RAISING EVENTS FOR NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS**

(Report: November 2, 2005, File No.: 01-0105-00) (REDMS No. 112951)

Councillor Evelina Halsey-Brandt briefly reviewed the current policy, during which she stated that previously, the cost for each individual member of Council to purchase a ticket to attend a fund-raising event had been attributed to each Councillor's personnel expense account. She noted, however, that the process had changed and that the City was now purchasing tables for events; Councillors were being asked if they wished to attend the event in question, and if so, the number of tickets they would require. Cllr. Halsey-Brandt also noted that staff were often asked to fill any vacant seats if there were an insufficient number Councillors attending an event. She also commented on the situation as it related to non-profit organizations and the City Grants budget.

Cllr. Evelina Halsey-Brandt voiced concern about the inconsistencies in the application of the policy and the lack of public accountability. She indicated that she would like staff to review the present policy, which she felt was no longer appropriate, and to bring forward various options which would result in a consistent policy with the expenses of attending an event being attributed to the expense accounts of the Councillors who attended that event.

(Cllr. Dang entered the meeting – 4:07 p.m.)

Discussion ensued among Committee members and staff on:

- how staff tracked the cost of attendees at fund-raising events through a 'public relations' program subsequent to the charging of this cost against the Council Contingency Account
- whether the City should be responsible for paying for the attendance of Councillors (i) who were expected to attend a function on behalf of the City, or (ii) who attend an advisory committee's fund-raising activities as the Council representative to that committee, and the need to clarify this issue
- whether the one-third portion of a Councillor's stipend set aside as an allowance for expenses should be used to pay for the cost of tickets required to attend a function
- the need to clarify which organizations and events had tables purchased by the City and those which did not
- the inconsistencies created by the purchasing of City tables for those non-profit organizations holding fund-raising events, as compared to those non-profit organizations which do not hold such events

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- whether staff should be deciding on when a Councillor should be attending an event
- the purchase of tables by the City at particular functions, whether the purchase of these tables amounted to a subsidy to the organization in question, and whether these organizations should be applying for a grant from the City Grants budget.

It was moved and seconded

That staff review Policy 1004 and present various alternatives for Council to discuss and decide on a new or amended policy, and that the following issues be addressed:

- *the criteria for the City purchasing tables and the decision making process;*
- *the matter of charging the expenses for attending events to individual Councillors and their personal expenses account;*
- *emphasizing the role of the Council representative to an advisory committee or other organization; and*
- *the issue of whether tickets purchased for an event also included one's spouse.*

CARRIED

URBAN DEVELOPMENT DIVISION

3. **DISPLAY OF RELIGIOUS SYMBOLS AT CITY HALL POLICY**

(Report: Oct. 28/05, File No.: 11-7400-00) (REDMS No. 1678488, 113102, 1678378, 222575)

Discussion ensued briefly among Committee members and the Manager, Policy Planning, Terry Crowe, regarding the proposed policy. In response to questions, information was provided that the religious organization would request a particular period of time for their event, and that the timeframe would be flexible. As well, the organization applying for permission to display a religious symbol would provide information on the height and size of the proposed display, and staff would review that information in relation to the proposed location.

Questions were raised about what constituted a 'religious organization', and as a result of discussion on this matter, the suggestion was made that Part 2 of the proposed policy be amended to insert the words "*widely embraced by the community*" after the words "religious symbols". The comment was also made that the Council Chambers and the Anderson Room should not be used for the display of religious symbols as these facilities were the rooms in which Council did its work.

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Ms. Annie McKitrick, a member of the Intercultural Advisory Committee, spoke in support of the proposed policy. She stated that it was important that other cultures represented in the City felt that there was a place for them at City Hall. She added that by allowing the policy to come forward, the City would be making a statement that all cultures and faiths were important.

Ms. McKitrick stressed the importance of using the display of religious symbols as an educational tool, and stated that if a Menorah was to be displayed at City Hall, then it was important to explain to the public, the meaning of the display. She also talked about the lack of a unanimous recommendation on the part of the Intercultural Advisory Committee relating to the proposed policy. In response to questions, Ms. McKitrick spoke further about the concerns of some members of the Intercultural Advisory Committee who felt that the proposed policy could be divisive.

Rabbi Baitelman, a Director of Lubavitch of Richmond, spoke in agreement with the requirement for an educational message as part of the religious display. He noted that his organization was not asking that symbols for all Jewish holidays be on display at City Hall. In speaking about the celebration of Chanukah and the placement of a Menorah at City Hall, Rabbi Baitelman stated that the educational component would be an important part of the display.

It was moved and seconded

That:

- (1) *Policy 2013, "Religious Symbols – Site for Placement" (Attachment 2 to the report dated October 28th, 2005, from the Manager, Policy Planning), be rescinded, and*
- (2) *The proposed policy "Placement of Religious Symbols at City Hall" (Attachment 3 to the report dated October 28th, 2005, from the Manager, Policy Planning), be adopted, provided that:*
 - (a) *the Council Chambers and the Anderson Room were excluded from the list of potential display locations;*
 - (b) *Part 2 of the proposed policy was amended to insert the words "widely embraced by the community" after the words "religious symbols";*
 - (c) *the policy was amended to insert a clause which indicated that the displays would not exceed one month in duration; and*
 - (d) *the policy was amended to insert the table of examples of possible religious symbols (as provided in the dated October 28th, 2005, from the Manager, Policy Planning).*
- (3) *That staff provide a report in six months' time on the effectiveness of the "Placement of Religious Symbols at City Hall".*

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The question on the motion was not called, as Council members expressed their views regarding the proposed policy.

The suggestion was made during the discussion that for 2006, an all encompassing display of religious groups, artefacts and educational material be put on display at City Hall. As well, a suggestion was made that religious events be recognized in November and December of each year, culminating with the 'Winter Wonderland' display.

Staff were also requested to consider inclusiveness and accessibility to the religious displays to provide maximum exposure, and to determine the feasibility of having more than one religious display in City Hall at the same time.

The request was made that staff undertake a review of the effectiveness of the policy after six month's time, and the Chair directed that the recommendations now being considered would be amended to add this suggestion as Part (3).

Concern was expressed during the discussion that the City Hall was not an appropriate location for the display of religious symbols, and the suggestion was made that the matter should be referred to the Intercultural Advisory Committee to ensure that all religious organizations in the City were made aware of the policy.

The question on the motion was then called, and it was **CARRIED** with Cllr. Barnes opposed.

A brief discussion ensued, with staff being requested to publish the new policy on both the City Notice Board and City web site to alert the public that there will be religious symbols, and accompanying educational components, displayed at City Hall.

It was moved and seconded

That the Intercultural Advisory Committee conduct information forums for all religious organizations in Richmond to ensure a full participation and the education of the new City policy.

DEFEATED

OPPOSED: Mayor Brodie
Cllr. S. Halsey-Brandt
Howard
Kumagai
McNulty

It was moved and seconded

That staff consult with the Intercultural Advisory Committee as to how to include all religious groups in the City within the framework of the new policy.

CARRIED

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PARKS, RECREATION & CULTURAL SERVICES DIVISION

4. **HERITAGE HOUSE – 7011 ASH STREET**

(Report: Nov. 1/05, File No.: 06-2025-20-012) (REDMS No. 1674290)

It was moved and seconded

That staff implement option one (as detailed in the report dated November 1st, 2005 from the Director, Parks & Public Works Operations) for the relocation of the Heritage House at 7011 Ash Street to Garden City Community Park for use as a caretaker's residence.

The question on the motion was not called, as information was provided that the house was in pristine condition and that future maintenance should not be an issue. Discussion continued briefly about using the heritage house to provide a caretaker's suite at the Garden City Community Park, with comments being made that a caretaker would help to (i) ensure the safety of young people in the park, and to (ii) deal with any vandalism issues or other problems in the park as they arose.

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

CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

5. **PUBLIC HEALTH PROTECTION BYLAW NO. 6989, AMENDMENT BYLAW NO. 7990 (NOISE EXEMPTIONS)**

(Report: Oct. 17/05, File No.: 12-8060-20-7990) (REDMS No. 1644101, 1680594)

It was moved and seconded

That Public Health Protection Bylaw No. 6989, Amendment Bylaw No. 7990, relating to noise exemptions, be introduced and given first, second and third readings.

CARRIED

6. **UPDATE BULLETIN – LOWER MAINLAND TREATY ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

Cllr. Barnes, as Council's representative to the Lower Mainland Treaty Advisory Committee (LMTAC), provided all members of the Committee with copies of the November issue of the LMTAC Update Bulletin, and she asked for input from Committee members on the content of the bulletin.

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7. TRACKING OF COUNCIL REFERRALS

Councillor Sue Halsey-Brandt requested that three times a year, that Council be provided with copies of those referrals which required further action. She expressed concern that some referrals 'could be disappearing' because staff were becoming overburdened by their workload.

Discussion ensued on this request, with information being provided that a City database was used to track the referrals. Advice was given that the resulting document would be several pages in length and the suggestion was made that the information be provided in a binder in the Councillor's Office.

As a result of the discussion, it was agreed that staff would begin to provide regular updates to Council in January of 2006.

8. SECONDARY SUITES

Councillor Kumagai questioned the status of a referral to staff regarding the City's secondary suite policy, i.e. that secondary suites were allowed as long as the unit was not self-contained and locked off from the remainder of the house. He then talked about the new relaxed regulations issued by the BC Provincial Government, and a new program implemented by the Central Mortgage & Housing Corporation (CMHC), which had made funding available for individuals who wish to incorporate secondary suites into their homes.

The General Manager, Urban Development, Joe Erceg, accompanied by the Manager, Building Approvals, John Irving, advised that staff were currently preparing the report on the referral and hoped to have the matter before the Planning Committee by December, 2005 or January of 2006.

Information was provided that applications had been made to CMHC for funding, and questions were raised about whether the City could take a 'two-pronged' approach to amend the current Zoning & Development Bylaw and consider new criteria which would allow private secondary suites in the City.

Discussion took place briefly on whether the CMHC would approve applications for those Richmond residents who were interested in incorporating private secondary suites into their homes, if the City indicated that it was interested in amending the Zoning & Development Bylaw to permit such suites. Also commented on was the fact that the issues of taxation, and sewer and utility payments would have to be addressed, as well as parking.

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ADJOURNMENT

It was moved and seconded

That the meeting adjourn (5:56 p.m.).

CARRIED

Certified a true and correct copy of the Minutes of the meeting of the General Purposes Committee of the Council of the City of Richmond held on Monday, November 7th, 2005.

Mayor Malcolm D. Brodie
Chair

Fran J. Ashton
Executive Assistant, City Clerk's Office