General Purposes Committee

Date: Monday, December 3rd, 2001

Place: Anderson Room
Richmond City Hall

Present: Mayor Malcolm Brodie, Chair
Councillor Linda Barnes
Councillor Lyn Greenhill
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.

MINUTES

1. It was moved and seconded
That the minutes of the meeting of the General Purposes Committee held on Monday, November 19th, 2001, be adopted as circulated.

CARRIED

URBAN DEVELOPMENT DIVISION

2. **PROPOSED LATE NIGHT (RAVE) PARTY LOCATION – 8811 RIVER ROAD (BRIDGEPOINT MARKET)**
(Report: Nov. 26/01, File No.: 5350-06/8060-20-7202) (REDMS No. 566622, 263047)

The Manager, Zoning, Alan Clark, reviewed the proposed recommendation with the Committee. Discussion ensued among Committee members and staff on the application, during which the following information and comments were provided:

- sound tests were taken in and around the exterior of the building, as well the exterior of the building which faced Vancouver; the readings from the tests fell within the required parameters without having the benefit of an actual 'rave' event being held
- the report now being considered only addressed whether the site was an acceptable location for 'rave' events, including whether the building code requirements could be met for assembly type events
- three issues had to be addressed, (i) whether the building could meet building code requirements in the future; (ii) whether approval should be given for an event to be held December 31st, when the City bylaw only allows rave events to be held on the first three Saturdays of each month; and (iii) whether the proposed site was a suitable location for rave events
- the applicant was proposing to bring in trailer washroom facilities to accommodate the large number of people expected to attend the event
- the owner of the building was required to carry liability insurance with the City named as a third party to that insurance; the owner could be charged for the cost of any additional RCMP officers called out to work at the event
- if the application was approved, the RCMP would have to relocate resources and special tactical teams put on alert; a contingency plan would be put into place and prioritization of the most serious events occurring, if any, may be required.

(During the discussion on this matter, the request was made that in the event that the application was denied and resubmitted after having complied with City requirements, that a map be provided of Vancouver which provided sound measurements at specific points, based on sound emanating from the subject property.)

Questions were raised about whether there was sufficient time to amend the bylaw to allow the River Road site as a rave event location, and information was provided that the bylaw amendment could be introduced at the December 10th Council Meeting and adopted at a Special Council Meeting. However because not all requirements had been complied with, staff were recommending that the application be denied.

Discussion also centred around the provision of security and whether there would be sufficient police resources to not only police this rave event but also to deal with any other situation which might arise. Inspector Tonia Enger, Operations Officer, for the Richmond Detachment of the RCMP, provided information and responded to questions about the police resources which would be available on the evening of December 31st, 2001.

Discussion then ensued among Committee members, staff and the RCMP on the cost of providing RCMP officers to attend the rave event and who would be responsible for paying these fees, and whether the fees charged were sufficient to cover the costs of the RCMP.

Mr. Riel Roussopoulos of Undernet Services Ltd., of 651 Keatley Avenue, Vancouver, addressed the Committee on his proposal. A copy of his submission is attached as Schedule A and forms part of these minutes.

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

- irregardless of any decision made by the Committee on the rave application, Mr. Roussopoulos intended to hold a party at 8811 River Road
- five trailers would be placed on the site, for a total of 25 additional washrooms
- a Fire Marshall would be hired, as well as police resources; Mr. Roussopoulos had offered to pay the difference in terms of police costs for the event, and had budgeted for 12 officers; as well, he would also pay for any tactical teams required at the event
- a bonded security company with a good performance record would be providing personnel at the event; as well, consideration was being given to employing first aid personnel
- if the music was turned off at 2:00 a.m., the participants would quickly leave; however, Mr. Roussopoulos suggested that the impact on the community would be higher than if the bands were allowed to continue playing until morning.

During the discussion with the applicant, concern was expressed about the fact that the application did not comply with the requirements of the City's bylaw. Reference was also made to correspondence received from the owner of the Riverside Banquet Hall Ltd., which expressed concern that consideration was being given to the application now being considered when his company had applied for permission to hold a rave event on December 31st, 2001 and was denied because the date did not fall within the dates established for rave events.

Discussion continued with Mr. Roussopoulos on the issue of (i) security at the event; (ii) the number of tickets sold for the event to date; (iii) how many participants were actually expected to attend the event; (iv) his long term plans for the site; and (v) those areas surrounding 8811 River Road which could be impacted by the sound emanating from the rave event.

Mr. Ken O'Rooney, representing Bridgepoint Developments, questioned whether if the application was denied, there would be a one year period before the applicant could re-apply. Information was provided that staff were recommending that the application be denied, however, the application could be re-submitted as soon as all requirements had been met.

Mr. O'Rooney advised, in response to questions, that the long term objective of the building owners was to have activities take place at the site and that the current economic situation dictated that rave events would fall within that goal. He confirmed that the position of the company was, and would continue to be, that any function held in the building had to meet all City regulations.

It was moved and seconded

(1) That the application to have 8811 River Road considered as an approved location to hold Late Night (Rave) Events, BE DENIED.

(2) That when satisfactory resolution to the problems are resolved, the applicant be advised to make a new application to the City.

The question on the motion was not called, as Committee members spoke on the merits of supporting or denying the application. (During the discussion, the request was made that a comprehensive report be provided following the December 31st, 2001 rave party, as to how the event was handled by the RCMP.) As a result of the discussion, the request was made that the recommendations be dealt with separately.

The question on Part (1) of the recommendation was then called, and it was **CARRIED** with Cllrs. Barnes and McNulty opposed.

The question on Part (2) of the recommendation was then called, and it was **CARRIED** with Cllrs. Kumagai and Steves opposed.

FINANCE & CORPORATE SERVICES DIVISION

3. EMPLOYEE PERSONAL COMPUTER PURCHASE PLAN

(Report: Nov. 21/01, File No.: 0620-01) (REDMS No. 562304)

It was moved and seconded

That an Employee Personal Computer Purchase Plan be approved, that would have the City finance the purchase of computer hardware, computer software and communication equipment with the following restrictions:

(1) The City will assist the employee by providing the necessary funds to accommodate the purchase.

(2) The employee is allowed to upgrade existing computer and communications equipment or to purchase computer and communications hardware configuration and related software.

(3) The employee using City funding must sign an interest bearing promissory note with the City. The applicable interest rate to be set, at time of purchase, is to reflect the City's prior 12-month average short-term investment return rate.

(4) The employee once signing the promissory note is committed to the full debt repayment through payroll deduction.

(5) The payroll deduction repayment will commence with the first pay period immediately following proof of purchase, and be completed no longer than 52 pay periods later. Any subsequent purchases made prior to the final repayment of the first purchase must be paid for in full no later than the final repayment date of the first purchase. Any debt outstanding may be paid in full by an employee prior to the last payment date without penalty.

The question on the motion was not called, as the General Manager, Finance & Corporate Services, Jim Bruce, in response to questions, advised that:

- any employee who was participating in the program at the time that that person left the employ of the City was required to pay for the equipment before they left
- there was no impact to the City because the plan was handled as a 'receivable' – the participating employee was billed for the equipment and paid the City back through payroll deductions; interest costs were included in the promissory note signed by the employee
- any computer equipment purchase made by a participating employee subsequent to the initial purchase, must be repaid no later than the retirement date of the initial purchase.

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

4. **BUSINESS LICENCE FEE INCREASE**
(Report: November 29/01, File No.: 8060-20-7315) (REDMS No. 569500, 569535)

It was moved and seconded
That Bylaw No. 7315 which adjusts business licence fees effective January 1, 2002, and amends Business Licence Bylaw No. 6901, be introduced and given first, second and third readings.

The question on the motion was not called, as discussion ensued on a proposal being put forward by staff which require that business licence fees purchased during the year, rather than being pro-rated to December 31st, would be renewed for a full year, even if that year was from July of one year to July of the next year. Advice was given that staff were currently reviewing the proposal and that a report would be submitted in the future on the feasibility of implementing such a process.

Questions were raised about the impact which this requirement would have on those vendors who required a one day licence, such as those who participated in the Steveston Salmon Festival. Discussion ensued on this issue, advice being given that the City was not permitted to issue a temporary licence; however, if Council wished, it would be possible to create a special category.

Reference was made to the 'Night Market' and the impact which the new requirements, if and when adopted, would have on the vendors. Advice was given that the vendors would be required to obtain business licences which would be in effect for one year from the time of issuance.

In response to further questions, advice was given that compared to other jurisdictions, the business licence fees charged by Richmond were generally mid-range, however, specific categories were dramatically over or under.

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

5. **2002 UTILITY BUDGETS AND RATE BYLAWS**
(Report: November 29/01, File No.: 0970-01) (REDMS No. 553667, 555526, 555523, 557123, 555517)

The General Manager, Finance & Corporate Services, Jim Bruce, spoke briefly on the report. He made reference to the 'Water' section of the report and to the City's contribution to 'rate stabilization', and advised that the Greater Vancouver Regional District (GVRD) Board had chosen not to proceed with this process. Mr. Bruce stated that the City should continue to make contributions through the budget to a rate stabilization account as a means of reducing the impact of dramatic water rate increases in the future.

Discussion ensued on the matter, during which the suggestion was made that a clear explanation be given to the public, otherwise there could be many people believing that the City was 'taking money' unnecessarily, when in fact, the stabilization process would be saving the City money in the future. Advice was given during the discussion that staff would prepare a chart for presentation to the December 10th, 2001 Council Meeting to provide a comparison of the impact if rate stabilization was not implemented. Cllr. Kumagai further advised that he had requested GVRD staff to provide information on the City's proportionate share to obtain a better idea on the funds the City would have to collect.

Reference was made to the inclusion of funding for a ditch water quality study and pollution clean-up costs for contamination events, and advice was given by the Manager, Environmental Programs, Suzanne Bycraft, that funding was being requested because (i) of the incident which occurred on Palmberg Road as a result of construction, and (ii) Department of Fisheries staff were continually stopping the City's ditch cleaning crews from doing their work because of possible damage to water courses.

It was moved and seconded

That:

(1) the 2002 Utility Expenditure Budgets (as presented in the report dated November 29, 2001 from the Managers of Water, Sewer & Environmental Programs) be approved as the basis for establishing the 2002 Utility Rates.

(2) the following bylaws, which bring into effect the above 2002 Utility Rates, be introduced and given first, second and third readings:

(a) City of Richmond Waterworks and Water Rates Bylaw No. 5637, Amendment Bylaw No. 7302 (2002);

(b) City of Richmond Sanitary Sewer Rates Bylaw No. 5681, Amendment Bylaw No. 7301 (2002); and

(c) Solid Waste and Recycling Regulation Bylaw 6803, Amendment Bylaw No. 7300 (2002).

CARRIED

CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

6. COMMUNITY CHARTER PROCESS

(Report: Nov. 23/01, File No.: 0035-02) (REDMS No. 558379)

Chief Administrative Officer George Duncan advised that he was available to answer any questions which the Committee might have. A lengthy discussion then ensued among Committee members and staff on the Community Charter process, during which concern was expressed about the difficulties in implementing a process when the actual report was not yet available for review.

Concern was also voiced about the 'tone' of the proposed recommendation, and the comment was made that Richmond should be more forceful in indicating that municipalities should have direct input over and above that of the UBCM. Discussion took place on this issue, during which Mr. Duncan spoke about the need for a united effort and about the problems faced by the larger and smaller municipalities.

Questions were raised about the wording of the proposed recommendation, especially with the use of the word 'input' and the suggestion was made that the word 'feedback' be inserted. Information was also provided by Cllr. Greenhill and Mr. Duncan on the meeting held on this date in Coquitlam regarding the Community Charter process.

(Cllr. Sue Halsey-Brandt left the meeting at 6:26 p.m. and did not return.)

Discussion continued briefly among Committee members and staff on the logistics of trying to establish a process for the Community Charter without the benefit of having the document in front of them. As a result of the discussion, the following **amended** recommendation was introduced:

It was moved and seconded
That a letter from the Mayor, on behalf of Richmond Council, be forwarded to the Minister of State for Community Charter, the Community Charter Council, and the executive of the Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM), recommending adoption of an inclusive process which will facilitate meaningful input and direction by cities and municipalities into the Community Charter development process, and future legislative change which will impact on local government.

CARRIED

7. **COMMUNITY CHARTER CONTENT (DISCUSSION PAPER)**
(Report: Nov. 7/01, File No.: 0035-02) (REDMS No. 558342)

Mr. Duncan briefly reviewed the report with the Committee.

Discussion took place among Committee members and staff on the content of the proposed charter, during which concern was expressed about such issues as (i) the role of the Mayor and Council; (ii) tax exemptions; (iii) referenda; and (iv) the lack of a charter document to review prior to establishing the process. Further discussion ensued on this particular issue, and as a result of the discussion, the following **referral** motion was introduced:

It was moved and seconded
That the report (dated November 7th, 2001, from the Chief Administrative Officer) regarding the Community Charter Content (Discussion Paper), be referred to staff for a report to the General Purposes Committee on Monday, December 17th, 2001.

CARRIED

ADJOURNMENT

It was moved and seconded
That the meeting adjourn (6:49 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, December 3rd, 2001.

Mayor Malcolm Brodie
Chair

Fran J. Ashton
Executive Assistant

Council Address – BridgePoint

I am a business man, a family man and an event promoter. I throw really good parties. They are successful, well organized, involve lots of people and make a lot of local people and companies (including ones in Richmond) money.

What I'm not good at is the politics. If I've pissed anyone off during this process I'd like to apologize now, as that was never my intention.

I am trying to start a business and I'm putting everything I have on the line trying to make it work. I did not do this on a whim, I met with city officials before applying in order to ensure that this was something that would be looked at favorably.

Everyone agreed, BridgePoint is an ideal place to have public functions. Weddings, Concerts, Trade Shows, Corporate Presentations and yes, even Raves.

This is a very big project, one that takes a lot of resources and effort to pull off. We are not Marriott Catering or Westin Resorts and we do not have unlimited resources to throw at this. We need a night like New Years Eve to help get this project off the ground, without it, there will be no project, and most likely my company will be no more either.

Without raves, particularly the big ones like New Years Eve, Canada Day and Halloween, this type of expo center is financially doomed, as your own reports have shown. There is a reason Trade and Expo centers are partially funded by the Government, the spin off economic benefits to the community. Our secret weapon is the money that we can generate from Raves to make all the other uses possible, and their subsequent beneficial economic spin off.

We are Problem Solvers, Not Problem Creators
On Thursday November 28th, we met with the city building department and Alan Clarke, where we discussed the issue of capacity. We resolved that the capacity would be revised based on a revised plan which included the addition of "crowd pleasers" or washrooms in trailer buildings to account for the lack of toilet facilities.

We are not here to create problems for the city, we are here to do business and all we are asking is that you give us that opportunity.

I encourage you to see this application as a positive step forward for business in Richmond. By returning this highly visible building to active use and encouraging growth in the economy by including Richmond in the list of cities that can accommodate major trade shows and public events.

Without your support this will not happen.