



General Purposes Committee

Date: Wednesday, December 10th, 2003
Place: Anderson Room
Richmond City Hall
Present: Mayor Malcolm D. Brodie, Chair
Councillor Linda Barnes
Councillor Derek Dang
Councillor Evelina Halsey-Brandt
Councillor Sue Halsey-Brandt
Councillor Rob Howard
Councillor Kiichi Kumagai
Councillor Bill McNulty
Absent: 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, December 1st, 2003, be adopted as circulated.

CARRIED

At this point in the meeting, Mayor Brodie relinquished the Chair to Councillor Kiichi Kumagai, Chair of the Finance Select Committee, as Acting Mayor, for the balance of the meeting.

FINANCE & CORPORATE SERVICES DIVISION

2. **2004 OPERATING BUDGET REFERRALS**
(Report: Dec. 3/03, File No.: 0970-01(2004)) (REDMS No. 1101221)

The Director of Finance, Andrew Nazareth, accompanied by the Manager, Budgets & Accounting, Jerry Chong, indicated that they were available to respond to questions.

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The Chair referred to a memorandum from the Chief Administrative Officer, George Duncan, which requested that the Committee deal only with the 'base' or 'same level of service' budget at this meeting, and that consideration of the additional level requests be deferred until such time as Council had confirmed the budget target towards which staff were to work, and had sufficient time to make decisions on the additional level requests. (A copy of the memorandum is on file in the City Clerk's Office.)

Discussion then ensued among Committee members and staff on:

- the proposed reduction in the proposed property tax increase from 4.45% to 3.55% and whether this new figure included any additional level requests
- at what point additional level requests would be dealt with
- the proposed 'Environmental Technician/Coordinator' position and the rationale for including this position in the additional level requests when funding was already available; how funding had been provided; and when approval had been given for this position
- whether the overtime budget for the RCMP would be reduced if four additional officers were approved for the Detachment
- the time required by staff to prepare the Five Year Financial Plan.

During the discussion, the Chair reviewed the efficiencies which had been found which resulted in the reduction of the property tax increase from 4.45% to 3.55%.

Reference was made to the RCMP overtime budget, and staff were requested to provide information on the impact, if any, which the approval of four additional officers, could have on reducing the overtime budget.

The Mayor commented during the discussion that he was not satisfied with the proposed increase of 3.55% and expressed the view that additional efficiencies could be found without reducing the current level of service. As a result, the following **referral** motion was introduced:

It was moved and seconded

That the proposed 2004 Operating Budget be referred to staff to find further realistic efficiencies which total .55%, to reduce the proposed property tax increase from 3.55% to 3%, and at the same time, maintaining the current level of service, without the inclusion of additional level requests.

The question on the motion was not called, as discussion ensued on the impact which such a reduction could have on the 2005 budget and the City's long term financial strategic plan.

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Also discussed were such topics as (i) the financial plan adopted by Council and how additional revenue could be generated in order to meet the annual CPI increase plus 1%; (ii) the City's future economic development and BC Assessment Authority predictions; (iii) whether the proposed figure of 3% was realistic; (iv) whether any additional efficiencies could be achieved, and (v) whether it would be productive for staff to further review department budgets.

The question on the motion was then called, and it was **CARRIED** with Cllrs. Barnes and Sue Halsey-Brandt opposed.

3. **2004 RCMP ADDITIONAL LEVEL REFERRALS**

(Report: Dec. 3/03, File No.: 0970-01(2004)) (REDMS No. 1100895)

Please see Page Two of these minutes for action taken on this matter.

4. **2004 OPERATING BUDGET - ADDITIONAL LEVEL REFERRALS**

(Report: Dec. 3/03, File No.: 0970-01(2004)) (REDMS No. 1101190)

Please see Page Two of these minutes for action taken on this matter.

ADJOURNMENT

It was moved and seconded

That the meeting adjourn (5:06 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 Wednesday, December 10th, 2003.

Councillor Kiichi Kumagai
Acting Mayor

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