



Community Safety Committee

Date: Tuesday, March 11, 2008
Place: Anderson Room
Richmond City Hall
Present: Councillor Evelina Halsey-Brandt, Chair
Councillor Cynthia Chen, Vice-Chair
Councillor Derek Dang
Councillor Sue Halsey-Brandt
Councillor Rob Howard
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 Community Safety Committee held on Tuesday, February 12, 2008, be adopted as circulated.

CARRIED

NEXT COMMITTEE MEETING DATE

2. *Tuesday, April 15, 2008* (tentative date) at 4:00 p.m. in the Temporary Anderson Room.

CARRIED

DELEGATION

3. *Superintendent Wayne Rideout – Update on Integrated Homicide Investigation Team*

Supt. Rideout advised that the Integrated Homicide Investigation Team (IHIT) has been in operation for almost five years, and that he would: (i) update Committee on the Team's activities and progress, and (ii) answer Committee's questions.

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Supt. Rideout shared the following statistics with Committee:

- since 2003 there have been a total of 20 homicide investigations;
- since 2003 there have been 13 cleared files and 7 files are currently being investigated;
- IHIT statistics indicate a clearance rate of 65%.

He observed that gang slayings and organized crime hits are the most difficult homicide files to solve, and that for other types of homicides IHIT's clearance rates are high.

Supt. Rideout further noted that many of IHIT's investigations lead to charges approved by the Crown Council, and noted that B.C. policing meets a very high evidence standard in order to achieve so many charge-approved cases.

Discussion ensued among Committee, Supt. Rideout and Ward Clapham Officer in Charge, RCMP, Richmond Detachment and the following was noted:

- Richmond has reaped considerable benefit from participating in IHIT; the clearance rate is up considerably over the past ten years, but has slipped somewhat during the past two years due to the increase of gang-related slayings;
- there is difficulty in assessing homicide clearances due to the extended period of time it takes for cases to go through the court system;
- the Richmond RCMP detachment is the first responder to a murder scene and they set up a perimeter and assess the scene; this step is followed by the arrival of the plainclothes section, and after that IHIT attends at the scene;
- gangs comprise full-time criminals who operate in a different manner than criminals who are not gang affiliated; gang members are difficult to apprehend, the cases are complex, and gang members generally do not agree to testify;
- the quality of IHIT investigations and the high standard of accountability involved;
- the necessity for Richmond RCMP to be involved with IHIT in order to achieve success in crime reduction;

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- if Richmond did not participate in IHIT, and had to undertake murder investigations on its own, Richmond RCMP would have to draw resources away from other areas such as community policing;
- the IHIT funding formula is based on population and on criminal code statistics within the communities it serves;
- only if there was a proven business case for an increase in IHIT costs would Richmond's portion of IHIT expenses increase;
- Richmond is receiving more policing services, in terms of dollars spent, than it has invested in the IHIT program;
- through crime analysis Richmond has seen a crime reduction of almost 15%;
- it is not anticipated that there will be any major staff increases for IHIT in the coming years, but it is anticipated that another team of investigators will be created to examine cold cases;
- clearance statistics are updated on a regular basis, and an analyst is dedicated to tracking the clearance statistics on an on-going basis;
- IHIT salary dollars are broken down according to investigations, not the number of months.

Supt. Rideout illustrated the investigative reach of IHIT by stating that four years after the murder of Richmond pawnbroker Sonny Lee, IHIT, working with the Malaysian Police, located the suspect, will soon travel to Belgium, and will escort the suspect to Richmond's Courthouse, where he will be charged with murder.

LAW AND COMMUNITY SAFETY DEPARTMENT

4. **ELECTRICAL & FIRE SAFETY INSPECTION PROGRAM UPDATE** (Report: February 28, 2008, File No.: 09-5140-01) (REDMS No. 2342503)

Discussion took place among Committee and Richmond Fire-Rescue (RFR) Deputy Chief Kim Howell and Acting Fire Chief Ron Beaman and the following was noted:

- the pilot Electrical and Fire Safety Inspection (EFSI) program is a one-year pilot program started in August, 2007;

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- the goal to have the special safety inspection fee of \$3,500 recover the program delivery costs;
- half way through the year, slight changes will be made to the program in order to achieve the cost-recovery goal of the program;
- the inspection fee will remain at \$3,500 and a potential raise in the fee will be addressed at a later date; staff anticipates that at the end of the one-year period a full cost recovery will have been achieved;
- 126 inspections have been conducted to date, at single family dwellings, townhouses and condos where there was evidence of abnormally high power consumption; of these inspections: 64 inspections have turned up evidence of present or past grow activity; 34 7-day repair notices have been issued; 30 "Do Not Occupy" notices have been issued; 25 Hydro disconnections have been requested; and in 68 cases the inspection fee has not been applied;
- only 58 of the 64 homes where grow op evidence was identified were billed the inspection fee because, in a few cases, the homes in question had changed ownership, or the timing of the electrical bill indicated that the new homeowners were not aware of earlier activities in the home;
- no resident would be charged for indiscretions committed by others;
- of the 62 inspections conducted where there was no evidence of a previous grow-op, the EFSI program team was provided with an opportunity to review the high electrical consumption with the occupant/homeowner, to determine if any other safety issues were present in the residence;
- staff will return to Committee in October, 2008 to report on their re-assessment of the program.

Discussion ensued regarding the findings outlined in the report, with the following points being noted:

- of the 68 inspections where the fee was not applied, the reasons to not charge could have included: (i) an error in reading the metres, or (ii) the electrical cords could have been overpowered;

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- during those inspections when evidence of a grow op was not found, other safety-related issues were discovered which enabled the ESPI team to advise the occupants regarding such issues as replacing dead batteries in smoke detectors, or the safe storage of flammable materials;
- there are no plans to expand the ESPI program to include commercial and industrial areas as the City deploys education fire inspectors to those neighbourhoods looking for safety infractions specific to those types of buildings;
- the ESPI team that conducts inspections comprises one full time Fire Inspector, two RCMP officers for security, and an Electrical Inspector;
- representatives of the five other communities in the Lower Mainland that currently conduct similar inspection programs (Coquitlam, Langley Township, Abbotsford, Pitt Meadows and Surrey) meet to communicate and share information regarding details of the program;
- it is believed that as the ESPI program in Richmond and the four other communities become more active, grow operators may move to a community with no ESPI program, or they may move into industrial areas where their activities and hydro consumption is not easily observed.

The Chair stated that the ESPI program is about ensuring electrical safety and the reduction of hazards to City residents. She stressed the need to deliver this message through such communication vehicles as the City's website.

It was moved and seconded

That the success of Richmond's Electrical and Fire Safety Inspection Program be re-assessed in October, 2008 after the one year pilot project is completed.

CARRIED

5. **RICHMOND RCMP CRIME REDUCTION STRATEGY - 2007**

(Report: February 26, 2008, File No.: 09-5350-01) (REDMS No. 2348913)

Supt. Clapham, accompanied by Inspector, Operations Support, Rendell Nasset and Crime Analyst Brenna Britton, advised that:

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- statistical information in the Strategy is based on Richmond's statistics, not on statistics provided by the Province, and that Richmond's statistical analysis is based on all cases having been analyzed;
- 50% of the Strategy concerns managing real crime, and the other 50% concerns managing the perception of crime;
- Richmond's RCMP detachment attempts to get ahead of the crime curve, to be proactive, and to manage problems before they become negative;
- proactive programs include, but are not limited to, Positive Ticketing, sending Officers into Grade 5 classrooms in the schools to speak with students, and the eight-officer bicycle patrol.

Discussion took place and the following points were noted:

- in 2007 the number of car thefts dropped, while the number of break-ins increased, the number of arsons spiked, and, due to the organized crime nature of homicides, solving murders was more difficult;
- between 2006 and 2007 property crimes decreased by 6.4%; residential break-ins were up by 8.5%; business break-ins were down by the same percentage; and the drop in commercial break-ins was a reversal trend;
- a number of factors contributed to the drop of 17.5% in car thefts between 2006 and 2007, and these included: (i) ICBC's BAIT car program; (ii) more immobilizers and clubs used by drivers; and (iii) the RCMP's more targeted approach to prolific offenders;
- to keep closer surveillance on repeat offenders, in 2007 Richmond RCMP initiated the creation of intelligence reports;
- 50% of all crimes are committed by 10% of the population;
- Richmond RCMP identifies, and then focuses on, 'hot spots' which are areas where there is abnormal and repeated criminal activity;
- 80% of break-in are committed by criminals who have drug and alcohol addiction issues;
- Supt. Clapham and the Richmond Detachment (i) are fully committed to Community Policing, (ii) they face labour limitations and limited tax resources and (iii) the Detachment does everything possible to provide Community Policing throughout Richmond;

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- the Block Watch program is active and is promoted through the City's website;
- Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) is responsible for apprehending those who commit drug-related crimes at the Vancouver International Airport (YVR); the CBSA is funded 100% by the Federal Government for this type of law enforcement.

In response to a request, Supt. Clapham advised that the RCMP could explore the idea of separating the YVR criminal drug activity statistics from the City's criminal drug activity statistics.

In relation to the City's Community Police stations, the Chair mentioned that they were initiated in the 1990s, and that a re-evaluation of the Community Policing model was due.

Supt. Clapham advised that he is investigating the issue and exploring Community Policing options. He is: (i) assessing required resources, and (ii) analyzing what is being done in Richmond currently and what needs to change.

In response to a query, Supt. Clapham advised that the Richmond youth who were recently involved in multiple arsons were sent to court and the outcome is that they will proceed through the Restorative Justice program.

In response to a query, Phyllis Carlyle, General Manager, Law & Community Safety responded that the City is: (i) actively enforcing the scrap metal bylaw; (ii) it continues to go unchallenged, and (iii) it is being used by other municipalities as a model.

It was moved and seconded

That the report dated February 26, 2008 regarding the Richmond RCMP Crime Reduction Strategy – 2007 be received for information.

CARRIED

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6. **APPOINTMENT OF BYLAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER STEFFAN ZAMZOW**

(Report: February 14, 2008, File No.: 12-8080-00) (REDMS No. 2344071)

It was moved and seconded

That Steffan Zamzow be appointed as a Bylaw Enforcement Officer, in accordance with Section 36 of the Police Act, and that such appointment be for the term of his employment as a Bylaw Enforcement Officer with the City of Richmond.

CARRIED

7. **ELECTRONIC GATES IN CANADA LINE STATIONS**

(Report: March 6, 2008, File No.: 10-6525-07-04-01/2008-Vol 01) (REDMS No. 2352111)

In answer to queries related to the proposed electronic gates at CanadaLine Stations, Victor Wei, Director, Transportation advised that:

- the timing of the installation of the electronic gates is unknown;
- it is unlikely they will be in place by November, 2009, the month the CanadaLine is scheduled to function;
- hardware procurement and the development of a smart-card electronic system are two elements that need to be in place before the electronic gates are functional;
- TransLink is exploring all the hardware and electronic systems available to ensure that the technology used by the CanadaLine fits with technology already in use in the Lower Mainland;
- to improve safety for operators and passengers the Provincial Transit Plan includes the evaluation of such security investments as closed-circuit cameras at transit stations;
- TransLink has been hiring and training security personnel to work at most Skytrain stations.

In response to a query Mr. Wei advised that he would investigate whether TransLink places any security personnel on the bus system, or if it is limited to the train system.

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The Chair remarked that buses are often the transportation-of-choice for people who suffer with mental illness, and that TransLink bus drivers should receive training to effectively manage this type of passenger. A code system, similar to the system used in hospitals (i.e. code red, code blue) could be established by TransLink whereby a bus driver could alert authorities if an incident takes place.

The Chair requested that staff explore with the Richmond RCMP the status of how the local detachment would be involved in CanadaLine-related security issues.

It was moved and seconded

That the provincial Ministry of Transportation and TransLink be requested to expedite the installation of electronic gates in all Canada Line rapid transit stations to be operational as close as possible to the opening of the Canada Line.

CARRIED

8. FIRE CHIEF BRIEFING

(a) *Respectful Work Place Series Update*

Acting Chief Ron Beaman reported that the series included:

- “How to Deal with Change” – Larry Green provided a discussion forum for RFR personnel on various aspects of change, including how to avoid the pitfalls of change.
- “Insights” – the sessions of this communication tool were delivered by accredited instructors Shawn Issel and Jim Wishlove, and included discussions on how to improve personal and professional communications; feedback on the program from RFR members was positive and appreciative.

(b) *Job Fair*

Acting Fire Chief Beaman, accompanied by Maria Salzl, Manager, Programs Administration, RFR, advised that four firefighters accompanied Ms. Salzl to the February 28, 2008 Annual Career Options Fair at Cambie High School.

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Many potential candidates were identified and provided with career information, including the RFR's colour brochure (on file in the City Clerk's Office).

In response to queries Ms. Salzl advised that:

- RFR would return to Cambie High School for the 2009 Annual Career Options Fair;
- the next career fair she will attend is on March 18, 2008 at Langara College campus; and
- she will evaluate what other career events, such as one at Kwantlen College, are likely to prove valuable in terms of recruitment opportunities.

(c) Diversity Recruitment Update

Ms. Salzl advised that the recruitment process included a February 5, 2008 Open House, attended by 85 people, followed by a February 6, 2008 Open House attended by 59 people.

She advised that before the posting's February 15, 2008 closing date, RFR had received 185 applications, which was down slightly from the number from the year before.

The 185 application breakdown was described to Committee:

- of the 19 females, 15 advanced through the first level of the testing process, eight qualified, and seven were unqualified;
- of the 63 (self-declared) visible minorities, 52 advanced through the first level of the testing process, 39 qualified and 13 were unqualified;
- of the 103 white males, 81 of those advanced through the first level of the testing process.

Of the 185 applicants, 148 will advance through the second level of the testing process scheduled for early March through mid-April, 2008. Interviews with candidates will take place in April and May, 2008.

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(d) *New Acting Deputy Chief of Operations*

Stuart Corrigan was introduced by Acting Fire Chief Beaman as the Acting Deputy Chief of Operations, and announced that Mr. Corrigan would serve in that capacity for six months. Acting Deputy Chief of Operations Corrigan, a long-time Richmond resident, has: (i) served RFR for five years at YVR; (ii) served for four years as a Battalion Chief; (iii) has been in charge of several big fires; (iv) introduced the turnout gear program, and (v) developed and implemented the Technical Rescue program that included Hazmat, Confined Space and High Angle components.

9. RCMP/OIC BRIEFING

Supt. Clapham reported that:

- Richmond Fire-Rescue assisted the RCMP in preparing its officers for the Arson Task Force;
- the Annual 911 Awards event takes place on Wednesday, April 23, 2008 at the River Rock Casino.

10. OTHER ITEMS

Shawn Issel, Manager, Community Safety Policy and Programs advised that at the end of 2007, the Law and Community Safety Department (CSD) had completed its first full year of operation as a consolidated department. She referred Committee to CSD's report entitled "2007 Achievements/2008 Priorities" (a copy is one file in the Clerk's Office), and stated that:

- (i) the report represents a commitment to ongoing accountability;
- (ii) CSD would report annually to Council on the department's activities for the previous year; and

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(iii) CSD would identify priorities for the coming year.

Discussion took place regarding the report and the following was noted:

- the report on Emergency Programs mentioned the May, 2007 Emergency Social Services Exercise, during which a scenario was conducted involving a simulated aircraft crash in Richmond, complete with displaced resident evacuees, and that it seemed remarkable that the “exercise scenario” was followed on October 19, 2007 by the real incident involving a small aircraft that did crash into 8279 Saba Road;
- operational statistics regarding false alarm statistics from 2007 are being updated and will be presented before the end of March, 2008;
- two-thirds of RFR calls involved people suffering from medical issues;
- Community Bylaws will develop revised smoking regulations and will report to Committee after the Province’s revised smoking regulations become effective on March 31, 2008;
- the River Rock Casino has surveillance and internal security, and the RCMP responds to the Casino’s requests for assistance if the detachment receives a call with regard to activities that are suspected of having a criminal nature;
- the RCMP’s three- member Gaming Crime Unit has an annual budget allocation;
- the Community Policing office earmarked for the CanadaLine station near the Casino represents a win/win situation.

11. **MANAGER’S REPORT**

No reports were given.

ADJOURNMENT

It was moved and seconded

That the meeting adjourn (5:44 p.m.).

CARRIED

12.

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Certified a true and correct copy of the Minutes of the meeting of the Community Safety Committee of the Council of the City of Richmond held on Tuesday, March 11, 2008.

Councillor Evelina Halsey-Brandt
Chair

Sheila Johnston
City Clerk's Office