



General Purposes Committee

Date: Tuesday, April 6, 2010

Place: Anderson Room
Richmond City Hall

Present: Mayor Malcolm D. Brodie, Chair
Councillor Derek Dang
Councillor Evelina Halsey-Brandt
Councillor Greg Halsey-Brandt
Councillor Sue Halsey-Brandt
Councillor Ken Johnston
Councillor Bill McNulty
Councillor Harold Steves

Absent: Councillor Linda Barnes

Call to Order: The Chair called the meeting to order at 4:06 p.m.

MINUTES

It was moved and seconded
That the minutes of the meeting of the General Purposes Committee held on Monday, March 15, 2010, be adopted as circulated.

CARRIED

BUSINESS & FINANCIAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT

- 1. STAFF REFERRAL - J & B INVESTMENT LTD. DOING BUSINESS AS ZODIAC KARAOKE UNIT 55 - 8291 ALEXANDRA ROAD**
(File Ref. No.:) (REDMS No. 2858794)

General Purposes Committee

Tuesday, April 6, 2010

It was moved and seconded

- (1) *That the report from the Chief Licence Inspector dated March 16, 2010, entitled Staff Referral - J & B Investment Ltd. doing business as Zodiac Karaoke Unit 155 - 8291 Alexandra Road be received for information;*
- (2) *That the application by J & B Investment Ltd., doing business as Zodiac Karaoke, for an amendment to increase the hours of liquor service under Liquor Primary License No. 162535 from Monday to Saturday 7:00 p.m. to 2:00 a.m. and Sunday 7:00 p.m. to Midnight to Monday to Sunday 7:00 p.m. to 2:00 a.m., be supported and that a letter be sent to the Liquor Control and Licensing Branch advising that:*
 - (a) *Council recommends the amendment of the increase in liquor service hours as no negative comments have been received from the community and the increase will not have a significant impact on the community;*
 - (b) *Council's comments on the prescribed criteria (set out in section 53 of the Liquor Control and Licensing Regulations) are as follows:*
 - (i) *The potential for additional noise and traffic in the area if the application is approved was considered;*
 - (ii) *The impact on the community if the application is approved was assessed through a community consultation process and considered;*
 - (c) *As the operation of a licensed establishment may affect nearby residents the City gathered the views of the residents as follows:*
 - (i) *Property owners and businesses within a 100 metre radius of the subject property were contacted by letter detailing the application and provided instructions on how community comments or concerns could be submitted;*
 - (ii) *In addition, signage was posted at the subject property and three public notices were published in a local newspaper. This signage and notice provided information on the application and instructions on how community comments or concerns could be submitted;*
 - (d) *Council's comments and recommendations respecting the views of the residents are as follows:*

That based on the number of letters sent and the lack of response received from all public notifications, Council considers that the amendment is acceptable to the majority of the residents in the area and the community.

General Purposes Committee

Tuesday, April 6, 2010

The question on the motion was not called as discussion ensued and in reply to a query from Committee, Glenn McLaughlin, Chief Licence Inspector & Risk Manager, advised that staff have conducted after hours inspections and the applicant has been in compliance.

Alex Yip spoke on behalf of his father, Francis Yip (business owner) and noted that his father is pleased to be working with the RCMP in an effort to be compliant with all City bylaws. Mr. Yip spoke of unruly patrons who do not want to comply with certain bylaws, and noted that staff call the RCMP to demonstrate that there is no tolerance for non-compliance. He advised that his father is seeking extended hours of liquor service on Sundays in an effort to gain business.

The question on the motion was then called and it was **CARRIED** with Cllr. G. Halsey-Brandt opposed.

COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT

2. **SOLAR COMMUNITY APPLICATION**

(File Ref. No.): (REDMS No. 2873040)

It was moved and seconded

- (1) *That a letter from the Mayor, outlining the City of Richmond's intent to become a Solar Community, be sent to the SolarBC Program (SolarBC) in support of the City's application to be selected as a new BC Solar Community; and*
- (2) *That a copy of the Solar Community Application Form be forwarded to Richmond School District No. 38 for information.*

The question on the motion was not called as discussion ensued and in reply to queries from Committee, staff advised that staff are currently working on a solar hot water project for Steveston Community Centre and this project was budgeted through the capital budget process and grants from the Province.

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

CORPORATE SERVICES DEPARTMENT

3. **RICHMOND COUNCIL SUBMISSION TO THE BC LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS TASK FORCE**

(File Ref. No.: 12-8125-01/2010-Vol 01) (REDMS No. 2843426)

General Purposes Committee

Tuesday, April 6, 2010

David Weber, Director, City Clerk's Office, provided background information and noted that the recommendations before Committee were arrived by consensus of the Richmond Council Working Group composed of Mayor Brodie and, Councillors Barnes and G. Halsey-Brandt, however, the Working Group could not reach consensus on one issue: Campaign Financing – Contribution and Expense Limits. He advised that the recommended actions included additional comments on election-related topics not specifically requested by the Local Government Elections Task Force.

Neil Smith, 3780 Pacemore Avenue, spoke in favour of the Working Group's recommendations but was of the opinion that the recommendations could go further. Mr. Smith cited concerns with low voter turnout and voter representation on a city council when, for example, a landslide victory for one political party, forms the majority of a city council. He commented that if the *Local Government Act* were to be amended, municipalities should be granted the option to choose its own voting system and should, for example, be able to implement a system of voting which introduces proportional representation. Also, Mr. Smith spoke of electronic voting and noted that it may help to address low voter turn out.

Discussion ensued and in reply to queries from Committee, Mr. Weber advised that:

- should a vacancy arise in the same year of an election, Council can opt to not have a bi-election and have the position remain vacant;
- currently there is no identification requirement to obtain a ballot;
- if identification requirements were introduced, “vouching” or solemn declarations could be used to accommodate people with no fixed address or people who may not have adequate identification at the voting place; and
- ballots can be counted electronically, however voting by electronic means or casting an electronic ballot is not currently permitted under the *Local Government Act*.

Discussion ensued regarding campaign contribution and expense limits resulting in the following additional motion in relation to the topics put forward by the Elections Task Force for comment:

It was moved and seconded

That the Local Government Elections Task Force be advised that Richmond City Council supports the establishment of limits on election expenses / election campaign spending.

CARRIED

Opposed: Mayor Brodie
Cllrs. Dang
McNulty

General Purposes Committee

Tuesday, April 6, 2010

It was moved and seconded

- (1) *That in response to the January 29, 2010 request for comments on specific election-related topics, the Local Government Elections Task Force be advised that Richmond City Council:*
 - (a) *supports moving toward a four year election cycle for local government elections, provided that the time frame during which a council may decide that a by-election is not to be held is extended;*
 - (b) *does not support the reinstatement of the corporate vote;*
 - (c) *does not support the concept of election campaign expenses being reimbursed from public funding sources;*
 - (d) *supports the implementation of a system of tax benefits for contributors to local government election campaigns, provided that the source of funding for such a system comes from provincial income taxes, as the funding from other taxation sources, such as property taxes, would be impractical as many voters are not property owners; however, if the source of funding cannot come from provincial income taxes, that no tax benefit system be implemented at all;*
 - (e) *supports, in relation to the topic of third party advertising,*
 - (i) *legislative changes that would require all election advertising to include a statement which identifies the sponsor of local election campaign ads, whether sponsored by a candidate, elector organization or by a third party;*
 - (ii) *a change to the term "campaign organizer" to a more understandable term such as "third party advertiser;" and*
 - (iii) *a province-wide public education campaign outlining the responsibilities and obligations of third party advertisers once they become active in local government elections; and*
 - (f) *supports expanded election enforcement provisions, including new powers of investigation and enforcement, and that the provincial chief electoral officer be made responsible for exercising these new powers on behalf of the public in relation to local government elections;*
- (2) *That the following election-related recommendations be submitted to the Local Government Elections Task Force for consideration:*

General Purposes Committee

Tuesday, April 6, 2010

- (a) *That the Provincial Government address the legislated disparity and unequal treatment of independent candidates versus elector organization endorsed candidates with a view to establishing one set of rules for the disposition of surplus election campaign funds that would apply to all;*
- (b) *That electors be required to prove their identity and residential address by presenting identification prior to receiving a ballot at a local government election voting opportunity, provided that solemn declarations or “vouching” could be used to accommodate people of no fixed address or people who may not have adequate identification;*
- (c) *That the signature requirement for local government election advance elector registration be eliminated so that local governments may explore the implementation of on-line and phone-in municipal voter registration mechanisms;*
- (d) *That the Local Government Act provide for the possibility of voting by electronic means and establish the parameters and requirements for an electronic voting system;*
- (e) *That local governments be permitted to establish, by bylaw, whether the non-resident property elector registration process will be available at every voting place or whether it will be available only at the Election Office, provided that such registration opportunity is available at the Election Office during regular office hours, during all advance voting opportunities, and until the close of voting on General Voting Day;*
- (f) *That the apparent discrepancy in the reporting period for election expenses and contributions be addressed and clarified;*
- (g) *That the requirement to record in a campaign financial disclosure the names and addresses of two directors or principals of contributing numbered companies or unincorporated organizations be considered satisfied if the information is otherwise publicly available;*
- (h) *That campaign financial disclosures emphasize the net financial benefits flowing from fund-raisers, with the gross costs (expenses) and gross price of tickets sold (contributions) disclosed in a separate schedule which reports the overall net financial benefit of the fund-raiser as part of the main campaign financing disclosure document; and*

General Purposes Committee

Tuesday, April 6, 2010

- (i) *That the timing for the processing and receipt of mail-in ballots be reviewed with a view to possibly extending or otherwise providing a longer period of time for the receipt of mail-in ballots so that rigid timelines do not pose an undue restriction on the voting opportunity afforded to electors who are away from the municipality and who choose to vote by mail-in ballot.*
- (3) *That prior to the next election, staff bring forward options for a new oath of office.*

CARRIED

Discussion ensued regarding various other election-related topics not included in the recommendations resulting in the following additional motions for submission to the Elections Task Force:

It was moved and seconded

- (2) (j) *That the period between the end of the nomination period and General Voting Day be shortened to 28 days.*

CARRIED

Opposed: Mayor Brodie
Cllrs. Dang
McNulty

It was moved and seconded

- (2) (k) *That the City ask the Provincial government to streamline and clarify the requirements of disclosure documents that must be submitted annually under the Financial Disclosure Act (and that form part of the election nomination documents).*

CARRIED

It was moved and seconded

- (2) (l) *That the campaign financing disclosure requirements regarding in-kind contributions be clarified.*

CARRIED

Opposed: Cllr. E. Halsey-Brandt

In relation to the previous motion on election expenses and election campaign spending, the following additional motion was proposed:

It was moved and seconded

That the Local Government Elections Task Force be advised that Richmond City Council does not support the establishment of:

- (i) *restrictions on who can contribute to election campaigns; and*
- (ii) *limits on the amount that can be contributed by any single source.*

CARRIED

General Purposes Committee

Tuesday, April 6, 2010

ADJOURNMENT

It was moved and seconded

That the meeting adjourn (5:19 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 Tuesday, April 6, 2010.

Mayor Malcolm D. Brodie
Chair

Hanieh Floujeh
Acting Executive Assistant
City Clerk's Office