



General Purposes Committee

Date: Monday, June 20, 2011

Place: Anderson Room
Richmond City Hall

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

Call to Order: The Chair called the meeting to order at 4:10 p.m.

AGENDA ADDITION

It was moved and seconded
That the matter of E-Comm role during the riots in Vancouver be added to the agenda as Item No. 6.

CARRIED

MINUTES

It was moved and seconded
That the minutes of the meeting of the General Purposes Committee held on Monday, June 6, 2011, be adopted as circulated.

CARRIED

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CORPORATE SERVICES DEPARTMENT

1. **APPOINTMENT OF CHIEF ELECTION OFFICER AND DEPUTY CHIEF ELECTION OFFICER FOR THE 2011 GENERAL LOCAL AND SCHOOL ELECTION**

(File Ref. No. 12-8125-60-01/Vol 01) (REDMS No.3218577)

That David Weber be appointed as Chief Election Officer, and that Gail Johnson be appointed Deputy Chief Election Officer, for the 2011 General Local and School Election.

CARRIED

2. **2011 CIVIC ELECTION UPDATE AND BYLAW AMENDMENT**

(File Ref. No. 12-8160-20-8778/Vol 01) (REDMS No.3212349, 3228541, 2450679, 3225069)

It was moved and seconded

That Civic Election Administration and Procedure Bylaw No. 7244, Amendment Bylaw No. 8778, be introduced and given first, second and third readings.

The question on the motion was not called, as a brief discussion took place about the 'Vote Anywhere' Initiative and the hours of operation for proposed voting places including Lansdowne Mall and Aberdeen Centre. The Director, City Clerk's, Office, David Weber, noted that both Lansdowne Mall and Aberdeen Centre have indicated a willingness to leave their doors open from 8:00 a.m., to 8:00 p.m., for voters, and that the polling stations in the malls would be accessible to the public even if the rest of the shops were closed.

In answer to a question about internet voting, Mr. Weber advised that the Province would be likely giving consideration to internet voting for the 2014 election, as there was not adequate time to make the necessary legislative amendments and other preparations for the 2011 election.

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

3. **DETERMINING ELECTION RESULTS WHERE A TIE VOTE EXISTS AFTER A JUDICIAL RECOUNT**

(File Ref. No. 12-8125-60-01/Vol 01) (REDMS No.3214869, 3218594)

A discussion took place among Committee members and Mr. Weber about:

- the responsibility of the Board of Education to pass their own bylaw on the matter of determining election results when a tie vote exists;
- that runoff elections must be conducted in the manner that is equivalent to the original election with the same voting opportunities;
- that a runoff election would be between all the candidates who were not successful in the original election;

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- concerns related to the costs of approximately \$250,000 associated with having a runoff election on the same scale as the original election;
- concerns that the determination by lot method is not a democratic process; and
- the possibility of establishing legislation that allows runoff elections to take place just between the candidates that were tied.

It was moved and seconded

That Civic Election Administration and Procedure Bylaw No. 7244, Amendment Bylaw No. 8770, be introduced and given first, second and third readings.

CARRIED

OPPOSED: Cllrs. E. Halsey-Brandt
S. Halsey-Brandt

It was moved and seconded

That a letter be written to the Minister of Community, Sport and Cultural Development and the local MLAs in support of the following legislative amendments:

- (1) *that in the event of a tie vote following a judicial recount in a municipal election, that a runoff election on a reduced scale be permitted; and*
- (2) *that a runoff election be between only the candidates who received the same number of votes.*

CARRIED

It was moved and seconded

That a resolution on the matter be forwarded to the UBCM consistent with the wording of the letter to be written to the Minister of Community, Sport and Cultural Development and the local MLAs.

CARRIED

4. **THE OATH OF OFFICE – RESPONSE TO COUNCIL REFERRAL**

(File Ref. No. 12-8060-20-8779/Vol 01) (REDMS No.3225409, 3225402)

A discussion ensued about the various options presented in the staff report for wording of the Oath of Office. Committee members expressed their opinions on their preferences, and as a result:

It was moved and seconded

- (1) *That the staff report titled “The Oath of Office – Response to Council Referral,” dated May 30, 2011 from the Director, City Clerk’s Office, be received for information;*

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- (2) *That Civic Election Administration and Procedure Bylaw No. 7244, Amendment Bylaw No. 8779, be introduced and given first, second and third readings, with the Oath of Office worded as presented in Option 2 with additional wording from Option 1 of the staff report, to read as follows:*

I,[name of person elected or appointed]....., do [swear]/[solemnly affirm] that:

- *I will perform the duties of the office of [Mayor]/[Councillor] faithfully and with integrity and will not allow any private interest to influence my conduct in public matters;*
 - *I will abide by the statutes, bylaws and policies that govern the City and will promote openness, accountability, and responsible leadership; and*
 - *I will dedicate myself at all times to acting in the best interests of the residents of the City of Richmond.*
- (3) *That the option to take the Oath of Allegiance in conjunction with the Oath of Office continue to be provided to incoming Council members.*

CARRIED

BUSINESS AND FINANCIAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT

5. CITY CENTRE AREA TRANSITIONAL TAX EXEMPTION BYLAW NO. 8776

(File Ref. No. 12-8060-20-8776) (REDMS No. 3228251)

Andrew Nazareth, General Manager, Business and Financial Services, joined by Ivy Wong, Manager, Revenue, briefly reviewed his report and the criteria and conditions that must be met in order to qualify for the tax exemption. Mr. Nazareth noted that the tax exemptions were only available over the next five years, and were not for the purpose of attracting new tenants, rather the focus was on retaining existing business and jobs in the City Centre Area.

A discussion ensued about:

- How the City would recover some of the costs associated with the tax exemption, including the possibility of having to distribute the tax burden to others within the same property classifications, or shifting it to other property classifications;
- the anticipated new growth from City Centre Area properties, particularly properties around the Oval and in the Firbridge area;
- the advertising requirements in connection with the City Centre Area Transitional Tax Exemption Bylaw No. 8776;

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- concerns about how to communicate with property owners who reside outside of the country, as well as all the tenants that will be affected, including the feasibility of hand delivering notices to business licence holders; and
- and the drop in the mill rate since 2005.

Staff were also directed to provide a map of the area eligible for the City Centre Area Transitional Tax Exemption prior to next Regular Council Meeting, scheduled to take place on Monday, June 27, 2011.

It was moved and seconded

- (1) *That the City Centre Area Transitional Tax Exemption Bylaw No. 8776 be introduced and given first, second and third readings and that staff provide public notice in accordance with Sections 94 and 227 of the Community Charter; and*
- (2) *That staff advise Council in due course about the method used to provide the notice to the owners and as many tenants as possible.*

CARRIED

6. E-COMM DURING THE RIOTS

Councillor Bill McNulty, provided an oral report on the role of E-Comm during the riots in Vancouver on June 15, 2011. He noted that E-Comm's staff responded in a calm and professional manner while dealing with approximately four times the normal volume of 911 calls. Councillor McNulty also noted that E-Comm's radio system performed without any issues, and easily coped with the enormous increase in radio traffic.

It was moved and seconded

That the oral report regarding E-comm's role during the Vancouver riots be received for information.

CARRIED

ADJOURNMENT

It was moved and seconded

That the meeting adjourn (5:04 p.m.).

CARRIED

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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, Monday, June 20, 2011.

Mayor Malcolm D. Brodie
Chair

Shanan Dhaliwal
Executive Assistant
City Clerk's Office