

General Purposes Committee

Date: Tuesday, September 8, 2009

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 4:03 p.m.

MINUTES

It was moved and seconded

That the minutes of the meeting of the General Purposes Committee held on Monday, July 20, 2009 and the minutes of the special meeting of the General Purposes Committee held on Thursday, July 23, 2009 be adopted as circulated.

CARRIED

DELEGATION

1. *Tracy Lakeman and Roman St. Germain of Tourism Richmond – annual presentation regarding financial, sales and market overviews, 2010 Olympic plans and a tourism industry update on the 2% AHT.*

Ms. Tracy Lakeman, Executive Director, introduced Roman St. Germain, Chair of Tourism Richmond (TR). Mr. St. Germain spoke about challenges facing TR and in particular noted that:

General Purposes Committee

Tuesday, September 8, 2009

- (i) H1N1 virus strain, (ii) new visa and passport requirements, and (iii) the economic slump are issues that have directly impacted the local tourism industry;
- these three issues have led to challenges that are larger than those faced by the tourism industry in the aftermath of both the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks in the US, and the SARS medical crisis;
- there has been unprecedented cost cutting throughout the tourism industry;
- (i) the 2010 Winter Olympics and (ii) the Harmonized Sales Tax are two pieces of good news that will bring positive change to tourism;
- as of April 1, 2009 the BC government dissolved Tourism BC and the former Crown Corporation has since been taken back into the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Arts causing concern within the tourism industry;
- the Province extended the end date for collection of the 2% Hotel Tax until June 30, 2011, which will affect TR's agreement with the City, but the extension allows TR, and other destination marketing organizations, the opportunity to explore other forms of funding; and
- TR is: (i) a dynamic entity, (ii) enacting positive changes, (iii) undertaking a re-branding program, and (iv) an extensive business plan.

Ms. Lakeman made a power point presentation to Committee (on file in the City Clerk's Office) and commented on:

- TR's positioning statement is: 'Richmond is a marketplace, a fusion of Asian & Canadian culture past and present, where visitors, travellers and passengers can savour the energy of a West Coast city and a charming seaside village accessible from wherever they are';
- one of TR's business objectives is to generate short and long term tourism revenue, measured by hotel stays and visitor expenditures;
- one of TR's overarching goals is to position Richmond as a Gateway 'destination', not a 'Gateway' to other destinations;
- one of the core markets TR is pursuing is the Meetings, Incentives, Conventions and Events market (MICE); some of TR's other target markets include the 'Local Explorer' and 'Cultural Cascadians';
- monthly surveys of Richmond hotel guests are conducted to collect information regarding the average length of stay, among other statistics, to better help direct TR's advertising decisions;
- TR's new 'campaign website', separate from its corporate website, provides analysis with regard to summer visitor web traffic; on average a visitor to the campaign website views 7 web pages;

General Purposes Committee

Tuesday, September 8, 2009

- TR's revenues are down by 16% for 2009, year to date;
- visitor inquiries are tracked at the Visitor Centres located at Highway 99 (at the Massey Tunnel) and in Steveston;
- membership services offered by TR to their hundreds of members include Olympic training;
- throughout the 2010 Winter Olympic period, TR's goal is to fill every bedroom and hotel room in Richmond; friends and relatives visiting Richmond residents in February/March 2010 can visit and enjoy the O-Zone for an Olympic experience that is unique to Richmond;
- TR's 2009 photo postcard content has attracted over 700 entrants; and
- TR undertakes tried-and-true marketing initiatives, and in addition, TR is committed to exploring and utilizing new marketing initiatives offered by social networks.

Discussion took place among Committee members and the delegation on:

- (i) how to position Richmond as a destination for visitors, (ii) how to encourage them to stay for more than one night and explore the City, and (iii) how to encourage visitors to not think of Richmond as a City to move through on their way to other destinations;
- how to make visitors to the City aware of the diversity and abundance of heritage sites in Richmond;
- how TR can gather and track tourism statistics using hotel stays as well as other sources of information;
- the hotel overnight stays in the post-Olympic months and years; and
- TR's marketing activities to visitors with disabilities, and the emphasis on the message that much of Richmond is accessible for such groups as wheelchair athletes.

A suggestion was made that TR could provide a link on its website to the Richmond Centre For Disability's website.

The Chair thanked the delegation for its report.

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

2. **RICHMOND OLYMPIC OVAL – SPECIAL EVENT TRAFFIC AND PARKING MANAGEMENT PLAN AND PARKING STRATEGY FOR REGULAR OPERATIONS**

(File Ref. No.: 10-6500-01) (REDMS No. 2599806)

General Purposes Committee

Tuesday, September 8, 2009

Victor Wei, Director, Transportation, accompanied by Wayne G. Mercer, Manager, Community Bylaws, gave Committee an overview of the Special Event Traffic and Parking Management Plans (TMPs) and in particular defined the various events in the plan as:

- a low intensity event with attendance under 1000;
- a medium intensity event with attendance between 1000 and 4500; and
- a high intensity event with attendance over 4500.

Mr. Wei explained that special event organizers who rent the Richmond Olympic Oval for their event would be required to: (i) follow one of the three TMPs, depending on the expected attendance level; (ii) would be responsible for the costs and coordination of all traffic control measures required; and (iii) arrange any additional off-site parking when required.

With regard to parking, Mr. Mercer stated that the available on-site parking at the Oval consists of a 450 space parkade beneath the ice surface and is currently free to those with membership to Oval programs, but that the lot would be converted to metered pay parking based on a 'pay-by-space' model, and that drivers would be required to remember the number of their parking space. Oval membership holders who use the fitness centre would not be required to pay for parking on site and would be identified by decals or cards or by another method.

Mr. Mercer added that City staff and Oval staff would develop a close working relationship in order to ensure that coordination takes place regarding on-street pay parking rates and Oval pay parking rates.

Discussion ensued between Committee and staff with regard to:

- hourly parking rates would be consistent with current on-street parking rates, with provisions to set flat fees during special events;
- the availability of the gravel parking lot to the west of the Oval for interim parking until the developer ASPEC preloads the site;
- alternative lots such as the one located near the Canada Post building at the corner of Cambie and River Road to the east of the Oval;
- City staff worked closely with Oval staff to develop the Special Event Traffic Management and Parking Plan for use by the Oval Corporation;
- an amendment to existing on-street regulations that would introduce 25 pay parking spaces on Hollybridge Way between Elmbridge Way and River Road in what is currently a Two Hours Free or Zone One Permit area;
- making River Road one way for the duration of a high intensity event (with more than 4500 people in attendance) is just one option to ease traffic flow; staff would communicate effectively to mitigate if, on the rare occasion, River Road was temporarily one way; and

General Purposes Committee

Tuesday, September 8, 2009

- the creation of a three-hour free parking zone to meet the needs of general dyke trail users who would be closely monitored to avoid abuse of the free parking status.

Concern was expressed with regard to special event organizers who are responsible for following the City's TMPs, that control traffic flow and parking conditions, but who may not abide by the plans.

In response, staff advised that staff can provide guidance to the private organizations that rent the Oval as a third party, but the City cannot be responsible for securing the off-street parking spaces for the third party renter.

Staff further advised that the Oval Corporation would adopt the Special Event Traffic and Parking Management Plan as a formal policy of the Oval and that the Plan would then be an official part of the rental program process, thereby ensuring that all renters do abide by the Plan and take responsibility for all aspects of it.

Staff was directed to submit a memorandum to Council before the Monday, September 14, 2009 Council meeting updating Council regarding the presentation of the Special Event Traffic Management and Parking Plan to the Board of the Oval Corporation.

A comment was made that generic event signs, used in the event of River Road temporarily being one way only, could be adapted to include an explanation about the change in traffic flow, such as "Oval Event" so that communication with the public is clear.

It was moved and seconded

That:

- (1) ***the proposed Richmond Olympic Oval Area Traffic and Parking Management Plan to accommodate future special events to be held at the Richmond Olympic Oval as well as the parking strategy for regular Oval operations, as described in the staff report dated June 19, 2009 from the Director, Transportation, be endorsed;***
- (2) ***that Traffic Bylaw No. 5870, Amendment Bylaw No. 8463, as attached to the staff report dated June 19, 2009 from the Director, Transportation, be introduced and given first, second and third reading; and***
- (3) ***that Parking (Off-Street) Regulation Bylaw No. 7403, Amendment Bylaw No. 8464, as attached to the staff report dated June 19, 2009 from the Director, Transportation, be introduced and given first, second and third reading.***

CARRIED

General Purposes Committee

Tuesday, September 8, 2009

CORPORATE SERVICES DEPARTMENT

3. **AMENDMENT TO COUNCIL POLICY NO. 1312 – PUBLIC HEARINGS – PROCEDURES FOR CONDUCTING**

(File Ref. No.: 01-0105-06-01) (REDMS No. 2711262)

In response to a query, David Weber, Director, City Clerk's Office, advised that Council policies can be set aside temporarily or permanently by a simple majority vote of Council and that the Local Government Act establishes the authority of the Chair to make procedural rules for a Public Hearing.

In response to a further query, Mr. Weber stated that complaints have been received in the past from the public regarding the length of time taken by some speakers at Public Hearings, the most recent being the Garden City Lands Public Hearing.

Discussion ensued regarding:

- whether a change to the policy is needed at this time as most Public Hearings would not require time limits;
- the preference of having Council as a whole decide and establish what the presentation time limit would be at a Public Hearing rather than leaving it to the Chair's discretion alone;
- the reasonableness of a five minute time limit for speakers when past Public Hearings have demonstrated that presentations can take much longer depending on the subjects and the pro or con sentiments of the speaker;
- that the City's procedures and policies do not currently include a time limit for speakers at Public Hearings, although delegations at Council Meetings are limited to five minutes;
- when speaking a second time, some delegations repeat the information they gave during their primary presentation, rather than focusing on new information;
- whether the applicant should be given more time to present the proposal;
- the importance of setting expectations, outlining rules, and advising the public beforehand that there are time limits, instead of occasionally imposing a time limit at the beginning of a Public Hearing;
- whether it is fair or reasonable to have members of the public wait hours, or several nights, for a turn to speak; and

General Purposes Committee

Tuesday, September 8, 2009

- whether a 5 or 10 minute time limit for a primary presentation, followed by a 5 or 3 minute time limit for a secondary presentation would be an adequate amount of time for delegations to express their full opinion.

As a result of the discussion the following **referral** motion was introduced:

It was moved and seconded

That with regard to Policy 1312 (Public Hearings – Procedures for Conducting), staff explore:

- the establishment of a ten minute time limit for applicant presentations and primary presentations, and a further three minutes for secondary presentations on new information only; and*
- limiting, extending or changing with a majority vote of Council, a ten minute time limit for primary presentations and a three minute secondary presentation,*

and report back.

The question on the motion was not called as a suggestion was made that if special circumstances arose with regard to a Public Hearing, the policy could establish a maximum of 30 minutes speaking time for proponents and opponents to an issue.

A further comment was made with regard to the City's notification process and whether it could be used to advise the public in advance of any special procedures that may be in place for a particular Public Hearing.

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

ADJOURNMENT

It was moved and seconded

That the meeting adjourn (6:04 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, September 8, 2009

Mayor Malcolm D. Brodie
Chair

Sheila Johnston
Committee Clerk

General Purposes Committee

Tuesday, September 8, 2009
