

January 8, 1996

SUBJECT: PAY TENNIS

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT the Board continue the Pay Tennis concession at Stanley Park in 1996 on the six west courts and implement alternatives to pay tennis at Kitsilano that will effectively mitigate Park Board and community concerns about players who sometimes monopolize courts.

POLICY:

THAT the Board allow a variety of tennis activities including lesson programs, tournaments, tennis clubs and pay tennis on Park Board courts.

THAT the Board annually evaluate the operation of pay tennis concession (e.g., hours of operation, season of play etc.).

THAT the Board investigate additional pay tennis concessions.

- 1994 Tennis Policy

BACKGROUND

A pay tennis concession has been in operation from May to September in Stanley Park, since the early 1980's. Originally instituted to maximize court usage and to more equitably distribute playing time during prime hours, the concession has proven successful despite some initial resistance.

Pay tennis operations were reviewed as an integral part of the Board's 1994 Tennis Policy Review. Player opinions were wide ranging on this subject. Players in favour of pay tennis appreciated the ability to reserve courts, particularly at prime time. Those with work commitments, childcare etc. enjoyed a more effective, scheduled use of their leisure time and the ability to play for a period longer than the 30 minutes permitted under normal conditions of play.

Those opposed to pay tennis objected primarily on the grounds that it would decrease the number of non pay courts. A general consensus was reached suggesting that no more than 50% of the courts at any one location would become pay courts.

As a result of this Tennis Policy Review the Board adopted the policies (as outlined above) made in the 1994 Vancouver Park Board Tennis Policy Report.

As part of the 1994 Budget Management Plan, the Board approved an increase of three pay tennis courts at Stanley Park and an expansion of pay tennis operations to both Kitsilano Beach and Queen Elizabeth

courts. Implementation of pay tennis at Queen Elizabeth was delayed because of the poor court surface conditions. The Board is unable to proceed with court renovations until the GVRD does the required seismic upgrading of the reservoir which lies under the courts. The GVRD has scheduled this work to begin somewhere between 1998 and 2001. Pay tennis at Queen Elizabeth is therefore on hold.

In 1994 the Board was not able to operate any pay tennis because the Stanley Park pay tennis courts were being resurfaced. In 1995, Professional Tennis Services Limited, under a contract with the Board, operated pay tennis concessions at both Kitsilano Beach (five courts) and Stanley Park (9 courts, an increase from the 6 previously established courts). Actual revenues at both locations turned out to be below staff projections.

	PROJECTED REVENUE	ACTUAL REVENUE	EXPENSES	NET
Stanley Park (9 courts)	16,900	11,100	0	11,100
Kitsilano	6,200	1,900	2,700	-800
		13,000		10,300

DISCUSSION

Stanley Park:

The concessionaire experienced some negative feedback from public court players with respect to the additional three courts. The fact that the three new pay courts were entirely separate and some distance from the original six courts proved to be problematic in terms of monitoring bookings.

Revenues (11,100) from the nine Stanley Park pay courts were actually below the established 12,000 generated from six courts in the years prior to 1994. This was probably due in large part to the break in service in 1994 when there was no pay tennis at all. However, it would seem to indicate that demand for pay tennis at Stanley Park can be adequately met by operating only six courts.

Kitsilano:

The pay tennis situation at five of ten courts at Kitsilano Beach presented a different set of problems. Last summer the operation of a pay tennis concession in this location caused considerable controversy. Delegations of players opposed to the proposal appeared before the Board. The concessionaire and his staff reported continual harassment both verbal and, in one instance, physical. The public who used the pay tennis courts were also harassed. Both the concession trailer and the

practice wall were vandalized on more than one occasion.

Revenue fell far short of projections, due, at least in part, to the aforementioned problems. Revenue at Kits total approximately \$1,900. There were also costs associated with the concession operation which included installation of electrical lines, signage, trailer rental fees and vandalism repairs. The total situation resulted in a net loss of approximately \$800 in 1995.

The problems of last summer would seem to demonstrate just how serious this problem has become. In addition there have been a number of different people who have reported to staff and Board members that they have had difficulty getting a court at Kitsilano and felt intimidated by the other players. They go elsewhere to play.

The most straight forward way of managing this problem would be to establish a prime time pay tennis reservation system to ensure access and convenience for the public at large. However, at this time, staff will examine, with some of the local tennis community, the potential of alternative ways to resolve this issue including some discussion with the Kitsilano Community Centre about lessons, tournaments and league play. But, failing a successful resolution of this problem over the summer, staff will revisit this matter with the Board in the Fall of 1996.

Budget:

These conclusions and the inability to proceed with pay tennis at the Queen Elizabeth courts mean that the \$27,000 identified as new revenue in the 1994 Budget Management Plan cannot be achieved through pay tennis.

Staff will be addressing this matter in a future report and identifying other strategies for meeting this requirement in conjunction with other budget considerations.

CONCLUSION

Operation of the six original pay tennis courts in Stanley Park would appear to meet market demand in this area. It is important for the Board to ensure equitable access to all of its facilities and provide services where possible to convenience the public in their pursuit of leisure activity.

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