

Date: May 6, 1996

SUBJECT: THE VANCOUVER MUSEUM SUNDAY AFTERNOON 1996 CONCERT

INFORMATION REPORT

BACKGROUND

In 1993 the Vancouver Museum approached the Vancouver Park Board for approval to conduct up to four fund raising concerts on Sunday afternoons over the summer on Vanier Park. They have since held three concerts, two in 1994 and one in 1995. The Park Board permits the concerts to the Vancouver Museum who has contracted CBO to produce the concerts. The Museum Concerts are sponsored by the President of Community Box Office and Executive Producer of Sunflower Concerts. The sponsor stages the concert and guarantees the Museum a specific return. The concerts have been held on Vanier park between the Marine Boat Launch parking lot and the Archives and Museum buildings (Appendix A). Each year the stage has been set up in a different location within this area.

Located on the Park during the same period of time is Bard on the Beach. Bard and the Children's Festival share a tent that is set up in May and comes down in September. In its six year history, the Bard tent has always been in a somewhat different location on the Park and, with the exception of one year, it has always been in proximity to the Museum building in order to minimize its impact on the Park. In the first year (1993) that Bard and the Festival went together on a tent they set it up out on the Park adjacent to the seawall. This site did not work well for Bard on a long term basis and they were required to return in 1994 to the proximity of the Museum building (Appendix B).

Each Fall as the next year's Special Event Calendar is prepared for Board approval the focus is on date and location. In November, 1995, the Museum Director requested approval for up to four concerts, this year on Saturdays and on the same site adjacent to the Archives. In December the Museum requested approval on two specific artists and a date for one concert which staff confirmed. This letter of confirmation also mentioned the need to review site set up, particularly with respect to the siting of the stage and the need to communicate with the other major stakeholders on site, Bard and the Children's Festival. By January 30, 1996, the Museum had requested and received Board confirmation for two specific dates in June and August, both Sunday afternoons.

In the meantime, the Children's Festival and Bard had made a request to move their tent somewhat south east of their 1995 site. The reason the Children's Festival gave for the move was to accommodate a better overall site plan for the Festival; and, for Bard, a better site entrance for the public. In addition, the Bard likes to locate and angle the tent somewhat differently each year in order to give the audience a different perspective through the backdrop. (The tent is designed with a backdrop which lifts up for the play. The resulting view of the mountains or Westend buildings becomes a part of the staging for the

play.) There is also a desire to choose the view through the backdrop as it best relates to the particular plays of the season.

On January 31, 1996, Board staff and the site coordinators for the three events met on site to discuss their respective site plans and the overlap between the two site requests. The reason staff were so disposed to review the Bard/Festival request was the opportunity it provided for a better recovery of the grass on last year's tent site. The other consideration was that the Festival and the Bard are a long term set up, the concert is one, maybe four afternoons.

After much study and further on site meetings staff proposed that if the Museum concert were to locate the stage on the Boat Launch parking lot and move it further southeast there would still be enough room for the 5,000 approved maximum concert audience. This proposal also required Bard to shift the big tent as far northeast as possible and re position their auxiliary tents.

Staff do acknowledge that this proposal somewhat reduced the concert site in terms of the size in previous years but believe that the square footage was sufficient and the site lines for the stage, still acceptable, although compromised. This proposal was not agreeable to the Executive Producer of the concert. Another on site meeting with Board and Museum staff and the Executive Producer was arranged April 9, to review alternatives. At this time staff believed they had reached some agreement to move the concert away from the building out onto the park. The stage was to be located near the flagpole off the north end of the Boat Launch parking lot (Appendix C). The Executive Producer, however, still had some objections to the proposal and approached the Board with her concerns.

At this time the organizers are only considering one concert, Sunday August 11, 1996.

DISCUSSION

The issue appears to be that the Bard/Festival tent was given approval to move and that this move impacted on the site used for the Museum Concert for the last three years. The other issue is, of course, the increased cost to redesign the site lay out. In addition, the Executive Producer still appears to have a problem with the proposed new site arrangements with respect to the location of the Bard tent and the location of fencing on the east side of the concert site.

Since the request last week by the Concert Executive Producer to appear before the Board more on site meetings have been held. Staff met with the new Museum Director and then met the Bard Director in order to reach some understanding and compromise.

With respect to the site, the location of the Bard tent does not appear to interfere with the site lines of the stage. The proposed location of the fencing on the east side of the site does not appear to negatively affect the concert site. The Museum has agreed to cover the \$1500 cost for the site redesign and to negotiate with the other two events

organizers to share this expense. By the end of the day on Friday, May 3, this information was provided by the Museum Director in writing to the Concert Executive Producer.

Board staff, the Museum, Bard, and the Festival have given this matter considerable amounts of time. The above described compromise seems workable. The Museum is very anxious to preserve these concerts and fund raising arrangements, however, the Concert Producer is also considering another site in another municipality for this concert. The only other solution appears to be to require Bard and the Festival to set up in the same location as last year. This will undoubtedly then require a complete re sodding of this tent site. The Festival would likely have difficulty complying with such a requirement at this date given that they must begin their set up within a week.

In anticipation of 1997, staff will ensure that the three events be reviewed in terms of site immediately following the finish of the 1996 Bard season and with these three organizers, their respective 1997 event site footprints will be established.

CONCLUSION

No other action by the Board at this time seems reasonable given the pending set up for the Children's Festival.

Prepared by:
Recreation Division
Vancouver Board of Parks & Recreation

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