

**MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING
OF THE BOARD OF PARKS AND RECREATION
HELD IN THE PARK BOARD OFFICE
ON FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 08, 1996, AT 5:30 P.M.**

PRESENT:	Chair	- David Chesman
Vice Chair	- Alan Fetherstonhaugh	
	Commissioners	- Malcolm Ashford
		- Allan DeGenova
		- Tim Louis
		- Donna Morgan
		- Duncan Wilson
	General Manager	- Vic Kondrosky
	A/Director of Recreation	- Joslin Kobylka
	Arts and Multiculturalism	- Susan Gordon
	Manager - Public Affairs	- Terri Clark
	Recording Secretary	- Julie Chiu

AIDS MONUMENT IN STANLEY PARK

The Chair explained that this special meeting was called to revisit a decision made on Monday, November 4, 1996 with respect to the AIDS memorial project and specifically a decision made to approve its location in Stanley Park. He advised that when this meeting was scheduled it was stated that there would be no public delegations. He then read a draft motion for the Board's consideration, as follows:

- WHEREAS the public has expressed concern with the Board's Monday, November 4, 1996 approval of locating the AIDS Memorial Project in Stanley Park;
- AND WHEREAS it now appears that there was insufficient public knowledge of, and input to, the proposal;

BE IT RESOLVED:

- a. THAT the Board re-affirm its continued and unequivocal support for the AIDS Memorial Project; and,
- b. THAT the Board set aside its approval of the siting of the AIDS monument in Stanley Park; and,
- c. THAT the Board direct its staff to work with the project to locate all available and appropriate locations for the monument and to develop a

process for effective public review and consideration of such locations prior to the Board's further consideration of this matter.

The Chair indicated the reason for this motion arose because there were approximately 8 delegations at the November 4th meeting when the Board approved the siting of the AIDS memorial in Stanley Park and a slight majority spoke in favour of the monument in Stanley Park. The Board had received no telephone or written communication expressing disapproval of the project and therefore made its decision based on the best information available at that time. By Wednesday evening it became apparent that the public had concerns about the issue that the public were not sufficiently informed or given an opportunity to be involved in the decision and, in particular, were concerned with the siting of the memorial in Stanley Park. A decision was then made by the Chair to call a special meeting to correct this situation based on input from staff that the public mood was as it appeared to be on BCTV's unscientific poll.

The motion, as quoted by the Chair, was then moved by Commissioner Wilson, seconded by Commissioner DeGenova.

Commissioner Wilson stated that he supported the motion in response to the concern expressed by some citizens in relation to this project. A request for more public input is valid and the siting in Stanley Park is a concern of many. He noted that most of the calls he received were in support of the memorial or were opposed to the monument siting in Stanley Park. There have also been calls expressing a different view, based on intolerance and bigotry. For those who say that AIDS is a self-inflicted disease, he asked that they remember that Canada has become the most diverse and tolerant country on the face of the globe and we must learn to celebrate our differences and not despise them. He then read the passage of poetry by George Santayana that is to be inscribed on the monument and stated that it is what brought the Board together on this issue. He asked that this be read into the minutes of the meeting, as follows:

"With you a part of me hath passed away,

For in the peopled forest of my mind

A tree made leafless by this wintry wind

Shall never don again its green array.

...Another, if I would, I could not find,

And I am grown much older in a day.

But yet I treasure in my memory

Your gift of charity and young heart's ease,

And the dear honour of your amity,

For these once mine, my life is rich with these

And I scarce know which part may greater be, -

What I keep of you, or you rob from me."

Commissioner Wilson stated that with these thoughts he would support the motion to set aside the approval of the AIDS monument for Stanley Park, to undergo a full public review process which he believed would result in the successful approval by a future Board of this monument at some location.

Commissioner Louis stated that whenever the Board meets it should be open to hear from public delegations and he had already indicated this to the Chair. He referred to delegations at the November 4th meeting and noted that some were opposed on principled grounds, not motivated by bigotry or prejudice. Their concern was regarding siting the monument in Stanley Park. He was concerned, however, with the other contingent of delegations and sending the wrong message to the public if the Board rescinded the motion. He felt that a decision should be made with much thought and not just be a reactive one motivated only by the BCTV poll and the large number of calls received by the Board members. He was in agreement with the motion and noted that paragraph one reaffirms the Board' s support for the AIDS memorial project but he questioned if it was necessary to set aside the approval based on the other two parts of the motion. He suggested substituting "review" for "set aside" and to re-order the paragraphs so that paragraph 2 comes after paragraph 3.

Commissioner Ashford stated that, as the only Commissioner to vote against this at the November 4th meeting, his opposition was due to the Stanley Park location. He received 200 telephone calls regarding this issue and they were mainly concerned about the location of Stanley Park and were not homophobic. He stated that he would support the motion before the Board but if the motion passes as worded or if it is changed to something else he wanted to make it clear that, in his opinion, this is not a rescinding motion in terms of legislative procedure. He explained that it means the Board is not changing the decision that was made on Monday night but is simply re-examining it. He added that there is still a possibility after the public process that this memorial could still end up in Stanley Park but this decision will be made by the new Board. The spirit of the third paragraph in the motion looks at all available locations and he supports the effective public review process included as this is what was drastically lacking when it first came to the Board. His personal opinion still is that Stanley Park is not the right place for this memorial or any other memorials of this kind, however, if the public review indicates that the majority of the public support the Stanley Park location then that location is worthy of consideration.

Commissioner DeGenova stated that he received over 90 calls from people who were not against the project but were opposed to having the monument in Stanley Park. Their comments were that other locations should have been considered and they wanted to have greater public input. He added that he was in support of the motion on the table.

Commissioner Morgan stated that the last 48 hours have been the most interesting in her term as a Park Board Commissioner. She also received a

number of calls and feels that the main issue is the lack of education as to what the project looks like and exactly where it is going to be sited. She agreed that the Board cannot overlook the significant number of phone calls that BCTV received and the opposition to the project. She felt that these callers were not opposing the project as described on Monday night but were opposing the project as described on BCTV which likened the memorial to an imposing structure like the Vietnam wall. Through media interviews done the last few days, the tone of the phone calls have changed and the ones recently received are more balanced. She felt that a number of the people calling have genuine concerns about development in Stanley Park. However, the Board has had a series of motions at the Board which have dealt with things in Stanley Park which have had much more physical significance to the Park than this memorial will have, such as paved pathways, Aquarium expansion, corporate sponsorship introduced into the park. None of those has brought about as much opposition as this project. There are many memorials and historical monuments in the park already. Stanley Park is a natural park but this monument won't disturb that. Many people support the memorial in a better location for the community but no matter where it goes there will be opposition to this project. She feels that the Board should not be reactive but must stiffen their resolve as there will continue to be stigma surrounding AIDS.

Moved by Commissioner Morgan,

- THAT the motion be amended by replacing the words "set aside" with the word "review", and move the second paragraph to the third paragraph so the review comes after the public process.

Commissioner Ashford stated that he would support this amendment.

The Chair stated that he would vote against the amendment as he felt that the Board is very close on this issue and are not pandering to bigotry elements. It is important for the Board to recognize that the original decision was made without the appropriate public process. Therefore he preferred that the public understands that the Board is setting the decision aside to leave the question open and through the public process determine which places are available and what might be the most appropriate location for this memorial. He stated that the majority of the public want the motion set aside as they want input and he felt that "review" was not strong enough. He added that they cannot bind a future Board who will have to make the decision.

Commissioner Ashford stated that he concurred with this explanation by the Chair and was now opposed to the amendment.

DEFEATED

(Commissioners Ashford, Chesman, DeGenova, Fetherstonhaugh and Wilson contrary).

Moved by Commissioner Morgan,

- THAT paragraph 2 be moved to become paragraph 3 and put "that the Board set aside its approval of the siting of the AIDS monument in Stanley Park until after the public process is complete."

The Chair suggested a friendly amendment that would change the words "until after the public process is complete" to "pending and subject to the public process described below". Commissioner Morgan agreed to this wording and to leaving the paragraphs as they are.

The amendment now reads as follows:

- THAT the Board set aside its approval of the siting of the AIDS monument in Stanley Park, pending and subject to the completion of the public process described below.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

At this point the Board agreed to a five minute break requested by Commissioner Morgan.

Commissioner Morgan stated her difficulty is with the term "set aside". This is not the same as rescind but sounds like the Board is changing its mind before having the public process. She wants the public process first and was concerned about a message being sent that the Board is changing its mind because of the phone calls received the last few days.

The Chair explained that by "setting aside" the Board is saying that it has made a decision but some things have happened since the decision which indicates that the process leading to the decision was inadequate. Therefore the Board will set aside that decision to engage in a process that the Board will be content with, at the end of which, and subject to that process, the next Board will make a decision.

Commissioner Louis noted that Commissioner Morgan illustrated the different approaches that the Park Board has embarked on in a number of other things done in Stanley Park. In this instance the Board may be perceived by the public as doing something special or different and giving into a negative (bigoted) element. He explained that he and Commissioner Morgan were not opposed to a process that reviews the different sites for this monument and they are not opposed to revisiting that decision after the process is completed. They are uncomfortable with the review taking place in advance of the public process.

The Chair noted that the motion was changed to make a decision contingent on the public process.

Moved by Commissioner Louis,

- THAT the motion be amended so that the second paragraph says that the review take place and, if necessary, set aside approval until after the process outlined in the third paragraph.

DEFEATED

(Commissioners Ashford, Chesman, DeGenova, Fetherstonhaugh and Wilson contrary).

The main motion, as amended, was put as follows:

- WHEREAS the public has expressed concern with the Board' s Monday, November 4, 1996 approval of locating the AIDS Memorial Project in Stanley Park;
- AND WHEREAS it now appears that there was insufficient public knowledge of, and input to, the proposal;

BE IT RESOLVED:

- a. THAT the Board re-affirm its continued and unequivocal support for the AIDS Memorial Project; and,
- b. THAT the Board set aside its approval of the siting of the AIDS monument in Stanley Park, pending and subject to the completion of the public process described below:
- c. THAT the Board direct its staff to work with the project to locate all available and appropriate locations for the monument and to develop a process for effective public review and consideration of such locations prior to the Board' s further consideration of this matter.

CARRIED

(Commissioners Louis and Morgan contrary)
