

**MINUTES OF MEETING  
FINANCE COMMITTEE  
HELD FRIDAY OCTOBER 24, 2003  
8:00 AM TO 12:00 AM**

**PRESENT:**

<b>Commissioner Anita Romaniuk</b>	<b>-Chair</b>
<b>Commissioner Heather Deal</b>	
<b>Commissioner Loretta Woodcock</b>	
<b>Commissioner Suzanne Anton</b>	
<b>Susan Mundick</b>	<b>-General Manager - Board of Parks and Recreation</b>
<b>Anita Ho</b>	<b>-Director of Corporate Services</b>
<b>John Brossard</b>	<b>-Senior Financial Analyst - Corporate Services</b>
<b>Joyce Courtney</b>	<b>-Manager of Communications - Corporate Services</b>
<b>Norman Mills</b>	<b>-Manager of IT – Corporate Services</b>
<b>Ryan Fralic</b>	<b>-Graphics Technician Corporate Services</b>

**1) Approval of Minutes**

The minutes from the Finance Committee held on October 2, 2003 were adopted as circulated.

**2) Park Board Web Site Redesign**

The Park Board Web Site [www.parks.vancouver.bc.ca](http://www.parks.vancouver.bc.ca) is one of the key tools used to communicate with residents, stakeholders and business partners, visitors and the media. Joyce Courtney introduced the redesigned web site with a report to the Finance Committee describing the need for the new web site, scope and size, key improvements, new services and launch.

Norman Mills walked through the new web site in its development stage which is expected to be launched in early 2004. Much effort has been done by staff to ensure that the web site includes information gathered from the public, staff and research of other web sites to create a redesign with the following goals:

- Improve the overall functionality and visual presentation of the website
- Facilitate effective communications and feedback with all audiences
- Encourage brand awareness and support
- Reflect the personality of the organization
- Reach existing customers, make new friends, encourage return visits
- Be user friendly; find popular information in one click – reduce “hunting”
- Update to a clean, contemporary professional style
- Streamline maintenance to ensure information is timely, accurate and consistent
- Make content more relevant, current and interesting

There were lots of positive comments on the redesigned web site. There were several questions asked such as

- How to get to facilities (e.g. playing fields)?
- How to go to memorials (e.g. donations)?
- How to see the revenue generation areas of the Park Board (e.g. restaurants)?
- How to see the list of room rentals?

Norman answered many of these questions in his demonstration and other suggestions will be considered in his current redesign. Norman pointed out that a strong feature of this redesign is that it allows for easy changes and updates so that the web site will evolve with the Park Board.

The Finance committee endorses the web site redesign and as such a board report will be presented at the November 3, 2003 board meeting in which the redesigned website will be introduced.

### **3) 2004 Budget Open House**

The Finance Committee held a public open house on the 2004 Park Board Budget at Riley Park Community Centre October 18, 2003 at 2:30 pm to 5 pm. Anita Ho presented a document that includes minutes of the event and five appendices as follows:

- Appendix 1 – Discussions from breakout groups presented to the panel
- Appendix 2 – Questions and discussion from the public
- Appendix 3 – Summary of the budget questionnaire filled out by the attendees and web site responses
- Appendix 4 – List of Expenditures, attendance and general observations
- Appendix 5 – Activities to raise public awareness and attendance

Anita Ho mentioned that the same type of forum would be presented to staff over the next few weeks. Heather Deal felt this was a success and said the feedback supports the current programs and services. Anita Romaniuk said that this was a good starting point for the Park Board to get the public more involved in the Park Board budget process.

Some suggestions for the future to encourage more resident participation would be not call it a Budget presentation but something like “how the Park Board spends your tax money.”

A copy of the document will be sent to Commissioners. Either the Chair of the Board or the Chair of the Finance Committee will report to the Board the evaluation of October 18, 2003 budget meeting on Nov3 2003 Board Meeting.

### **4) Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act**

Anita Ho introduced a draft board report about the Park Board responsibilities under the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act. The Vancouver Park Board is one of the two organizations that differ from all others in the Province in that they are created under statutes that require their members to be elected “at the same time and in the same manner as Councilors”. The Provincial government did not recognize the difference when the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act was drafted and as a result the Board is not covered by the Act.

The Park Board has been acting in the spirit of the Act since its inception. Working with staff from the City of Vancouver, the Board has responded to requests and complied with the Act.

The Park Board petitioned the Province to recognize the autonomy and independence from the provincial government to add the Board to the act as a local public body. In response to this petition the Province approved an amendment to include the Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation in the definition of “local government body”.

In order to comply with the Act the Board needs to enact a bylaw to comply with section 77 of the Act. The addition to the Park by-laws focuses on the designation of the General Manager as the head of the local public body and enable the Board to authorize the Director of Corporate Services as the FOI Coordinator to perform any duties or exercise any function of the head. Included in the proposed by-law is a fee schedule outlining fees to be paid by an applicant who makes a request under section 5 of the act. These fees are set at the same rates as those set under the act and are consistent with the fees set for the City of Vancouver.

The finance committee will endorse putting this board report forward to the Board. The by-law is prepared by legal services.

#### **5) Delegation: Ethical Purchasing**

<b>William Saunders</b>	<b>– Vancouver and District Labour Council, CLC</b>
<b>Tom Sandborn</b>	<b>- Writer, Fundraiser, Organizer</b>
<b>Roxanne Cave</b>	<b>- Co-Chair, Vancouver fair Trade Coffee Network</b>
<b>Shanti Basso</b>	<b>- Simon Fraser University (“SFU”) No Sweat Campaign</b>

The delegation presented a case for the Vancouver Park Board to consider “ethical purchasing standards” from their vendors. There were various comments from the delegation with the main focus that the Park Board should adopt standard wording in their purchasing documents that requires the suppliers to disclose where goods come from and that the product is purchased ethically from its source. This will put the responsibility with the supplier to ensure that the Park Board knows the origin of their supplies and that they were purchased ethically. The State of Maine was an example of a government organization that is a no sweat jurisdiction. SFU is planning on submitting a no sweat draft policy in December 2003.

There was a general discussion on various issues surrounding a policy of ethical purchasing. For instance, for a \$0.01 more a cup of coffee it can be purchased from a “fair trade” coffee producer. The delegation suggested that the wording in the purchasing agreements be phased in slowly to allow suppliers time to ensure that the Park Board standards are being met.

Anita Ho said that the Park Board is currently researching this issue and working with the City of Vancouver. Staff will prepare a staff briefing to the Finance Committee on ethical purchasing sometime in 2004.

#### **6) Fees and Charges**

Anita Ho presented a Board report on the 2004 fees and charges to the committee. The purpose of this report is to recommend a new fee schedule for 2004 that reflects inflationary, customer feedback and market increases, which is commensurate with the Boards user fees and charges policy.

Working in consultation with the City of Vancouver finance staff, the rate of inflation for 2004 is projected at 2.75%. Staff has reviewed comparative market rates, operating costs and customer feedback and recommend across the board increases of 2.75% with the exception of golf, children's farmyard and miniature railway and pay parking.

The proposal for the golf is to introduce a three-tier price system with Fraserview being the most expensive and Langara the least expensive. Loretta Woodcock wanted more clarification in the report on why one is more expensive than the others and a mention of what the specials are. Anita Ho agreed to clarify the wording in the report.

Prices for the children's farmyard and miniature railway regular and summer admission was suggested to remain unchanged but the rate structure for the Ghost Train and Bright Nights will change. The changed rate would be one adult rate and one discount rate for youth, seniors and children. This would eliminate the family rate, which was creating some confusion when purchased through Ticketmaster (now 50% of purchases). Heather Deal suggested the new rate structure would be more expensive for a family of four. Anita Ho would work with the Stanley Revenue Services to review the pricing policy.

Instead of across the board increase of 2.75% for pay parking, no increases in rates are proposed for 2004 except to increase the maximum summer rate in Stanley Park from \$4 to \$5.

Loretta Woodcock wanted more information in the report on which programs are being subsidized and which programs are doing the subsidizing.

The committee endorsed the fees and charges board report with the aforementioned changes at the November 3, 2003 board meeting.

Meeting Adjourned.