

**Minutes of Meeting
Culture and Recreation Committee, Vancouver Park Board
2099 Beach Avenue, Vancouver**

DATE OF MEETING: May 4, 2005

ATTENDEES: Park Board Commissioners
Commissioner Heather Deal
Commissioner Loretta Woodcock

Park Board Staff

Liane McKenna	Director of Queen Elizabeth District
Terry Walton	Manager of Recreation Services, Stanley District
Diane Murphy	Manager of Recreation Services, Queen Elizabeth District
Megan Stuart-Stubbs	Community Arts Programmer
Carol Sogawa	Recreation Services Coordinator
Barbara Joughin	Recorder of Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 7:10 pm.

1. Approval of March 2, 2005 Minutes:

The minutes of the Culture and Recreation Committee meeting of March 2, 2005 and April 6, 2005 were not reviewed.

2. Update on June 18, 2005 Rain or Shine Festival:

Megan Stuart-Stubbs and Terry Walton provided the Committee with an update on the Rain or Shine Festival scheduled to be held in Stanley Park on June 18, 2005. They previewed the different activities that are being planned for the event and talked about the site layout and event programming. The event organizers are advertising it as an all weather event. Umbrella painting workshops will be held in most community centres prior to the event, and there will be an umbrella parade and final celebration featuring umbrella choreography at the end of the day.

Staff asked for feedback and suggestions from the Committee. Commissioner Deal suggested that an on-site "geo cache" might help draw people to the event, and said she was impressed with the organization of the event within such a short timeline.

3. Update on Sea Vancouver Festival

Terry Walton updated the Committee on the Sea Vancouver Festival planned for English Bay and False Creek in July 2005. He told the Committee that the event organizers are planning three public outreach events in the near future, and that traffic management will be very complex and Park Board staff will not recommend Board involvement in the transportation plan. Commissioner Deal commented that in the future, she looks forward to the Board being involved in the process from the beginning.

Staff will bring a report on the Sea Vancouver Festival to the regular Board meeting on May 30, 2005.

4. Leisure Access Program Review:

Diane Murphy and Carol Sogawa gave the Committee a review of the Leisure Access Card Program (LAC) and shared the results of research into access programs delivered by Vancouver's community associations and other cities. The LAC Program was implemented in Vancouver in 1993 as one of the main outcomes of a 1992 policy statement to ensure that citizens of Vancouver have access to basic recreational services regardless of their ability to pay.

Two Leisure Access Card Program pamphlets describe program benefits and services, criteria, and how to apply for both eligible persons and groups. The Park Board provides agency staff cards for Vancouver based organizations whose clients' limited income prevents participation in recreation services. There are currently more than 1000 cards issued to 130 agencies.

The number of cards issued to eligible persons has remained stable for several years, and 16,419 cards were issued in 2004. Gender distribution in 2004 was almost equal at 48.5% male and 51.5% female card holders. Public indoor swimming continues to receive the heaviest card use, with 264,329 visits in 2004 compared to public skating (17,365), outdoor pools (12,142), and pitch and putt (2138 rounds). The total value of the 2004 discount to the Park Board was \$176,697, recorded as revenue.

The Vancouver Park Board has implemented the Safari registration system but is not using swipe cards at this time. Staff noted that the introduction of swipe cards could alter the nature of the current LAC program by placing a limit and removing choice.

Staff told the Committee that the program's interagency benefits are expanding in 2005 to include the HR MacMillan Space Centre and the Maritime Museum, and they will continue to explore the addition of arts and cultural benefits to the program in 2006.

Staff reviewed community association subsidy policies and practices. Overall, most community centres have practices and policies in place, although discounts vary by location, with community centres in Vancouver East District showing a higher level of subsidy and demand. A member of the Committee noted that most people are generally not aware of the difference between Park Board and community association fitness centres, and suggested that this difference be made clearer in the program pamphlets.

Program staff identified key trends and issues, and suggested several program improvements:

- Administrative enhancement – to change procedures to allow seniors to renew their photocards without reapplying annually, and to allow a two year card for families that renew in consecutive years.
- Brochure translation – to meet the demand for better communication of general information.
- Use of consumer price index (2%) applied annually to low-income cut-off figures that are used to determine eligibility – to allow additional applicants to qualify for the LAC.
- Minimum income amount – to indicate range of income level, and income sources

Discussion:

- The group discussed the idea of adding a minimum range to cut-off figures in order to gather information about income sources when income is recorded as zero. A member of the Committee asked if there was another way to gather the information and staff said that the interview process is both effective and confidential.
- Staff told the Committee that approximately 75-80% of all applicants are Chinese speaking and it would be a benefit to the program to translate the brochure. A member of the Committee said she would like to see this as Park Board policy and staff said they are waiting for the City of Vancouver to develop a policy. The group suggested that translation could be made available on the website, and a member of the Committee asked about including Braille.
- A member of the Committee inquired about card use by seniors, and staff reported that the percentage of senior card use was 9% in 2002, 10% in 2003, and 11% in 2004. The group talked about the importance of reaching more seniors and helping them become more aware of the opportunities provided by the LAC program.

Next Steps:

Staff will review the Committee's comments and bring recommendations to improve the program forward to the Board.

5. Next Meeting:

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 pm. The next Culture and Recreation Committee meeting will be on June 1, 2005. Possible agenda items include:

- Cherry Blossom Festival Proposal
- Burrardview Park Dog Offleash Pilot Project
- Oppenheimer Park – MOU with City of Vancouver Community Services