

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

DATE OF MEETING: June 15, 2005

ATTENDEES: Park Board Commissioners
Commissioner Heather Deal
Commissioner Lyndsay Poaps
Commissioner Loretta Woodcock

Park Board Staff

Liane McKenna	Director of Queen Elizabeth District
Lori MacKay	Director of Vancouver East District
Terry Walton	Manager of Recreation Services, Stanley District
Greg Eng	Manager Recreation Services, Vancouver East District
Ron Caswell	Manager of Operations, Vancouver East District
Bill Manning	Manager of Operations, Queen Elizabeth District
Barbara Joughin	Recorder of Minutes

Delegations

Linda Poole	Vancouver Cherry Blossom Festival Society
Doug Mundy	Burrard View Community Association
Tim Searcy	Burrard View Community Association
Suzanne Taylor	Burrard View Community Association
Don Williams	Burrard View Community Association
Dan Tetrault	Carnegie Centre
Ethel Whitty	Carnegie Centre

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

1. Approval of Minutes:

The minutes of the Culture and Recreation Committee meeting of March 2, 2005, May 4, 2005, and May 18, 2005 were approved as presented. The minutes of April 6, 2005 were not reviewed.

2. Cherry Blossom Festival Proposal:

Linda Poole, president of the Vancouver Cherry Blossom Festival Society, gave a presentation on the festival proposed for March 25-26, 2006 and March 24-25, 2007. The mission of the festival is to “organize and launch a distinctly unique, annual cherry blossom festival for the city of Vancouver”, and the festival organizers are seeking a home in one of Vancouver’s parks. The festival will be developed in two phases. In year one, it will build awareness and appreciation for the city’s cherry trees and brand the festival by introducing the Japanese tradition of Hanami flower viewing and a two week restaurant promotion. In 2007, the festival organizers would like to locate expanded festival programming in Queen Elizabeth Park, using the Plaza and parking lot, the Celebration Pavilion, and the Conservatory. Attendance is projected to 5000 in 2006 and 10,000 in 2007.

Terry Walton told the Committee that in principle, staff supports holding the event at this site but noted that construction is incomplete and there is no process for the Board to tentatively approve events. This event will be charged special event fees based on 2007 rates and additionally charged for staff time. The event organizers are asking for the use of most of the Plaza and the parking lot, and there will need to be a transportation plan to manage traffic, which might include using a shuttle from Nat Bailey.

The Committee addressed several of the delegation's expectations in the event outline and advised her that there are processes that need to be followed for placing art and planting trees in parks.

Next Steps:

The Committee said that giving a focus to the beauty of cherry blossoms is an exciting idea and encouraged the delegation to work toward special event status for 2007, noting that staff approval for informal park use is sufficient for 2006. The event coordinator wants to announce a location for the 2007 festival at a media launch before the March 2006 festival. Staff advised that an application for a gated special event could be submitted to the Board prior to this if it was fully developed by that time, and encouraged the delegation to keep working with staff to develop the event.

3. Burrard View Park Dog Offleash Pilot Project

Lori MacKay introduced a creative community approach to the issue of off leash dogs in parks, and asked the Committee to endorse a dog offleash pilot project in Burrard View Park. Ron Caswell described the features of Burrard View Park, located at Wall and McGill Streets, and gave a history of the park's offleash dog usage. An informal neighbourhood agreement for managing offleash dogs was reached in 1999, but the Park Board received two petitions from the community in the spring of 2005 requesting that dogs be leashed in the park.

Tim Searcy told the Committee that while local residents recognize the need for offleash dog areas, every park in neighbourhood is used as an offleash area, and there is a need to ensure that humans have spaces without dogs to enjoy. He circulated a petition because informal self policing was not effective and there was an inequitable distribution of available parkland. Realizing that the issue could divide the community, staff proposed the development of an official community-based pilot program to increase awareness and promote responsible dog ownership. The proposal is conditional on:

1. A willingness in the neighbourhood to try this approach and broad community support and participation in the development and implementation of the program
2. A community organization to sponsor and operate the pilot program, participate in the evaluation, act as a liaison with staff and be called upon when dog related issues come up at the park.

This proposal was presented to the Burrard View Community Association on April 28, 2005 and was approved by the membership. A steering committee was formed to define the trial program, choose elements for inclusion, and develop an implementation plan. Park Board staff believe

that a community-based solution offers a model that has advantages not presently included in the Board's current offleash policy, and will provide support to develop and implement the program and oversee the evaluation.

Ron Caswell introduced members of the steering committee, and they presented elements of the trial program to the Committee:

- Doug Mundy said the pilot project will address inequitable distribution of space and clarify boundaries between different uses in the park. He described details of the project and requested the Board's support with evaluation, signage, landscaping, and community relations techniques. Next steps for the group include choosing an option and undertaking community outreach.
- Suzanne Tayler talked about different indicators that could be included in a survey to measure park user satisfaction and quantify cleanliness and crime reduction. The survey could be distributed via the community and applied through focus groups. She said the group has a \$400 grant for education, a community hot dog day, and a park clean up event.
- Don Williams said the neighbourhood needs a community-based solution, and he supports the trial program because it has an education focus.

Members of the Committee commended the group for their innovation and willingness to work together, and said this was a very impressive way to educate the Vancouver public on dog decorum and will send a message across the city.

Next Steps:

- Staff will provide the Park Board report on dog use in parks to the steering committee.
- Commissioner Poaps moved that the Culture and Recreation Committee endorse the Burrard View Park Dog Offleash pilot project, it was seconded by Commissioner Deal, and all were in favour.
- The pilot project will be completed in December 2005, evaluated in January 2006, and reported back to the Board in early 2006.

4. Oppenheimer Park – MOU with City of Vancouver Community Services:

Lori MacKay presented information about the development of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that will formalize how the Vancouver Park Board and Community Services work together in Oppenheimer Park. Greg Eng described the park's amenities and said the Park Board's current role is to permit special events, maintain the grounds and buildings, and facilitate potential park partnerships. He said the MOU would clarify each department's roles and establish a framework for collaboration, and invited the Committee's feedback.

Delegations:

- Ethel Whitty said Carnegie Centre provides year-round programming in Oppenheimer Park, a heavily used inner city park. She said the MOU will formalize how the Park Board and Community Services solve problems and work together in the park.
- Dan Tetrault told the Committee that informal, accessible programs are offered in the park, with a lot of collaborative programming with local groups. Programs are focused on a core

group of park users, but program staff are now addressing other users' needs so all residents feel welcome at the park.

Staff advised the Committee that while the Park Board and Community Services are the signing parties in the MOU, decision-making protocols will clarify the overall approach for other informal partners including the Vancouver Police Department.

A member of the Committee questioned how park redevelopment would occur and said that landscaping to reduce crime should not remove all the beauty from the park. Staff said that preparing a joint capital plan submission for upgrading the fieldhouse helped build relationships. The park design process will continue to involve the community in a positive opportunity to work together to determine park elements, and balance diverse, appropriate use by existing and emerging communities.

Next Steps:

Staff will report to the Park Board and City Council that the Culture and Recreation Committee has received information on the MOU for Oppenheimer Park and provided feedback.

5. Special Event at Lumberman's Arch:

Terry Walton informed the Committee that an anonymous donor is funding a concert by the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra in Stanley Park on August 7, 2005. The event requires a three day presence at the Lumberman's Arch site, and staff will prepare a traffic and parking management plan that will mitigate the loss of the parking lot for three days. Attendance is projected to 8000, and staff noted that there is a desire to make this an annual event in one of our parks.

6. Next Meeting:

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 pm. The next Culture and Recreation Committee meeting will be on July 6, 2005. Possible agenda items include:

- Update – Rink Twinning
- Musqueam Ecology Society presentation