

**MINUTES OF MEETING
OF THE BOARD OF PARKS AND RECREATION
HELD AT THE PARK BOARD OFFICE
ON MONDAY, JANUARY 28, 2008**

PRESENT:	Chair	- Korina Houghton
	Vice Chair	- Ian Robertson
	Commissioners	- Allan De Genova
		- Spencer Herbert
		- Heather Holden
		- Loretta Woodcock
		- Martin Zlotnik
	General Manager	- Susan Mundick
	Director of Planning and Operations	- Piet Rutgers
	Director of Queen Elizabeth District	- Lori MacKay
	Director of Stanley District	- Peter Kuran
	Manager of Communications	- Joyce Courtney
	Recorder	- Julie Casanova

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Board held on Monday, January 14, 2008 were adopted as circulated.

CHAIR'S REPORT

The Chair reported on the presentation of the Cultural Harmony Awards and ceremonial tree planting at the Harmony Grove; the recognition of the Seniors' Knitting Group from Trout Lake Community Centre and the Active Communities Awards to Killarney, West Point Grey and Marpole-Oakridge Community Centre arts and culture staff team.

City Council Report

Council will be receiving a report on the Consulting Contract for Development of Hastings Park Master Signage Plan. Council's Planning and Environment Committee will be discussing a report on the Northeast False Creek High Level Review and BC Place Stadium Work Request, the City Services and Budgets Committee will be receiving a report on the Southeast False Creek Area Update on the Salt Building Restoration and Re-Use, including Recommendation to Raise the Building.

COMMITTEE REPORT

Commissioner Robertson was elected as Vice Chair of the Committee. The Committee discussed the World Championship Triathlon Event, Cherry Blossom Festival; received a presentation on EcoDensity by Brent Toderian, Director of Planning and an update on the Hollow Tree in Stanley Park.

Adjustment to Agenda Items

Board members agreed to adjust the agenda to move the discussions on the Motion before the report on the Queen Elizabeth Park – Observation Tower Public Process report.

MOTION

Moved by Commissioner Holden,

Whereas the success of any organization is dependent on employee engagement, which is the intellectual and emotional connection that an employee has for his or her job, organization, manager, and co-workers that in turn causes that employee to apply additional effort to his or her work;

Whereas employee engagement is driven by organizational factors such as (1) the degree to which the employee feels trusted, (2) the day-to-day content and routine of the employee's job, (3) how well the employee understands the organization's goals and how he or she helps reach the goal, (4) opportunities for career growth and development, (5) relationship with one's manager, etc.;

Whereas an engaged workforce will provide superior public service to taxpayers;

Whereas it has been at least ten years since the last employee survey was conducted;

Whereas the Vancouver Public Library is currently acting on their recent comprehensive employee engagement survey, which can inform the Vancouver Park Board process;

Whereas an externally administered, confidential and anonymous survey is essential in gathering feedback on how to improve the functioning of the Vancouver Park Board;

Whereas the Board values continual improvement in governance, management and operation of the Vancouver Park Board;

Therefore be it resolved that staff report back by Spring 2008 with a proposal for a full Vancouver Park Board employee engagement survey to be conducted in 2008 including a budget, survey timeline, and follow-up actions.

Paul Faoro, President, CUPE Local 15 appeared before the Board and stated that he was aware that the Library Board conducted a similar survey which cost a considerable sum of money. The Vancouver Park Board has more employees than the Library, therefore the cost will be considerably higher. With the possibility of a budget adjustment it would be better to put the money into providing service rather than conduct a survey. Should the Board go ahead with the survey, the Union would like to be part of the process.

Board members discussed the motion and a member of the Board expressed concern with the cost and looks forward to receiving a budget for the survey.

The motion was put forward and it was Carried Unanimously.

STAFF REPORTS

Queen Elizabeth Park – Observation Tower Public Process

Board members received copies of a staff report dated January 16, 2008 for the Board's consideration of A and B.

Moved by Commissioner Robertson,

THAT the Board not endorse the concept of a privately developed and operated observation tower in Queen Elizabeth Park.

Staff reviewed the location plan and structures proposed for Queen Elizabeth Park presented to the Board at its meeting on May 28, 2007. A public review process was conducted and a large percentage of the respondents did not support the proposal of an observation tower, however, the issue of the restoration of the view was considered to be important. Should the Board not consider the proposal for the observation tower, the restoration of the city designated view corridor through a tree management program could be considered.

The following delegations requested to speak to the Board:

1. Richard Henriquez
2. John Norton
3. Jennifer West
4. Art Cowie
5. Ned Jacobs
6. Ron Kornfeld
7. Eleanor Hadley
8. Federick Jacobson
9. Corinne Sanderson
10. Isabel Minty
11. Norman Dooley
12. Barouj Gumuchian
13. Allan Buium, Riley Park South Cambie City Plan Vision
14. Brent Hedin
15. Amy Tang
16. Roger Artis
17. Ellen Hockin
18. Harvey Desroches
19. Rob Cardinal
20. Jeremy McCall, Vancouver Natural History Society
21. David Sorin
22. Paul Faoro, CUPE Local 15
23. Owen Cameron
24. Susan Chapman, Dunbar Residents Association
25. Paul Larocque
26. Lisa Schwabe
27. Renee Ron
28. Diane Hambrook

The following is a summary of comments provided by the foregoing delegations:

- asked Board to approve Consideration A;
- although Park Board's vision was to restore the views, nothing was done;
- the tower will increase attendance to the park and the Bloedel Conservatory;
- the tower will have year-round usage and provide additional Tai Chi space;
- even though the project will be privately funded it will be owned by the Park Board;
- the proposed tower will bring in additional revenue to the Board;
- chose to live in Riley Park area because of QE Park;
- QE Park is a gem in the city, even though tourism is important, the Board should also consider the needs of the people who live here;

- there is no need for a panoramic view, views are still available in the park;
- maintain the park as it is for the younger generation;
- opposed to the observation tower, it is a good idea, but does not belong in QE Park;
- the structure will spoil the attractive plaza;
- would like to see a business plan that guarantees that this is a money maker;
- there are many days with no view because of rain in Vancouver;
- parking is already a problem;
- attendance at the park and Bloedel have dropped due to the many construction projects in the area;
- suggest a small lookout platform built from wood from Stanley Park;
- the lookout could be supported by donations and will not be intrusive;
- support a modest structure in keeping with the harmony and nature of the park;
- majority of residents in Vancouver do not support the tower proposal;
- creating commercialization in the park;
- such proposals on public land is unlawful;
- why should the community suffer for tourists?
- the Board was elected to protect the park and not give it away to investors;
- do not use public park for private profit;
- views are possible to achieve by walking around the park;
- maintain public access to parks for liveability;
- do not destroy the quality of life;
- level of use of park will rise again once the construction is over;
- there are private sectors in different parts of Vancouver offering views of the city;
- consider different affordable alternatives to restore the view;
- the Tai Chi contributed substantially for the landscaping however, the protected areas have been reduced;
- the tower will provide the much needed protected area for the Tai Chi group;
- support the concept of the observation tower, urge the Board to go to RFP;
- a process should be established to flush out the concerns;
- the tower will be welcomed by many residents and visitors;
- the park belongs to the citizens of Vancouver, and the Board should not sell it to the highest bidder;
- the tacky amusement park structure does not belong in QE Park;
- the citizens have gone through a lot of trouble to let you know their feelings, please respect their views and choose consideration B;
- green space in a neighbourhood is important, not appropriate to allow more commercialization in park;
- QE Park is a great asset to the city, it is the place to find peace and quiet;

- Bloedel, the restaurant and the sculptures fits the landscape not the tower;
- the Quarry Garden is unique, QE Park is about gardens and pathways;
- concerned about the birds and the lights on the tower;
- keep QE Park in its natural state, view is only a small aspect of this park;
- the tower is profit-driven, if the Board is looking for more revenue, maybe they should consider increasing parking fees or charge a fee to tourists visiting the park;
- there are number of failed private/public partnerships;
- Park Board should focus on preserving parks and community centres;
- tourists would like to see the panoramic view of the city;
- the tower will be an iconic structure, a project of this type will bring people to the park;
- there is no capital cost to the Board, it is a good idea and will boost revenue;
- special event coordinators are always looking for new venues;
- the tower at QE Park will be a good venue and provide numerous opportunities for the tourism industry.

Board members thanked the delegations for providing their input. A member of the Board proposed an amendment to address the issue of restoring some of the views in Queen Elizabeth Park.

Moved by Commissioner Robertson,

THAT staff report back by the Spring of 2008 on various tree management options with the goal of restoring views from the Queen Elizabeth Park Plaza.

Board members discussed the amendment motion and a member of the Board stated that although she supports private investment, the tower is outside the core activity of the Park Board. A member of the Board stated that people are passionate about parks and the Board's need to preserve green spaces.

The amendment motion was put forward and it was Carried Unanimously.

A vote was taken on the main motion as amended and it was Carried Unanimously.

Enquiries, Other Matters and New Business

A member of the Board enquired about the status of the Mount Pleasant Child Care report.

A member of the Board requested information on how art is maintained at facilities and if this was included in the Facilities Maintenance Budget.

An enquiry was received on whether the Kensington Community Centre will be used as a venue during the Olympics. The General Manager advised the Board that any community facilities that are being considered for use during the Olympics are being discussed directly with staff and the Association at the community centre. If an Association has not been contacted there is no interest at this time in the facility.

The meeting adjourned at 10:00 p.m.

Susan Mundick
General Manager

Commissioner Korina Houghton
Chair