

**Minutes of Meeting of the Board of Parks and Recreation
Services & Budgets Committee Meeting
Held at the Vancouver Park Board Office on
Tuesday, September 21, 2010**

ATTENDEES:

Park Board Commissioners

Loretta Woodcock, Chair
Aaron Jasper, Vice Chair
Constance Barnes

Park Board Staff

Meg Elliott	Acting Director, Corporate Services
Thomas Soulliere	Manager of Recreation Services, Stanley District
Judy Andersen	Acting Manager of Recreation Services, Vancouver East District
Alison Dempsey	Supervisor of Business Services
Harry Jongerden	Garden Director, VanDusen Botanical Garden
Barinder Lalli	Recorder

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm, with the following agenda:

1. Approval of Minutes of July 20, 2010
2. 2011 Fees and Charges
3. 2011 Budget Update
4. Winter Farmers' Market –Riley Park
5. August 2010 Operating Statement Review

1. Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the Services and Budgets Committee held on Tuesday, July 20, 2010 were adopted as circulated.

2. 2011 Fees and Charges

Staff discussed changes to 2011 Fees and Charges and asked the Committee members for direction on these changes. Each year it is necessary to increase fees and charges to balance out inflation. The basic rate of inflation from city hall is 2.75% for monopoly fees and 4% for market fees. Staff propose a 4% average increase in all areas except golf courses, the farmyard and the train.

Other proposed changes are to replace the current looney/tooney sessions at pools to low-cost sessions that would cost 50% of the regular swim rate. It has been twelve years since this rate has been changed.

New proposed fees include a new field users youth fee intended to get better use of the Park Board fields, a 20-40% decrease in the rate non-profit organisations pay, new clarifications for hockey school fees, and discontinuing the year round parking pass rate for seniors at Queen Elizabeth Park as approved last year during the Fees & Charges process.

In making recommendations to the Committee, staff reviewed Park Board fees to ensure they are in line with surrounding jurisdictions. As a result of these comparisons staff are bringing forward a recommendation that the Board consider dropping the age at which children are charged admission into rinks and pools from the current practice of 6 years old to 3 years old.

Discussion

A member of the Committee asked what the visitation rate is for seniors at pools. Staff replied that they would have to look that up.

A member of the Committee commented that removing the looney/tooney sessions would have a hard impact on seniors with limited pensions. Staff replied that there were other options available, such as the Leisure Access Card or unlimited access with the Flexi-pass which costs \$33 a month for seniors.

A member of the Committee asked how many seniors hold year-round parking passes for Queen Elizabeth Park. Staff replied that there were about 20 passes.

A member of the Committee was concerned that dropping the age at which children are charged for admission into pools and rinks by 3 years is quite excessive. Staff replied that the proposed changes are in line with other municipalities, which begin charging children at various ages between 0 to 4, while the children in Vancouver are not charged until age 6.

3. 2011 Budget Update

Staff presented an update on the budget timeline. There has not been much change since it was last shown in July. Basic inflation calculations are complete, but the impact of the Vancouver Services Review (VSR) is still being assessed. On October 19th there will be a good handle on what the preliminary budget will be.

4. Winter Farmers Market –Riley Park

Staff presented a proposal from Your Local Farmers Market Society who proposed a Winter Farmers Market that would take place in the parking lot off Ontario Street adjacent to Nat Bailey Stadium. The parking area is paved and accommodates 60 vehicles.

The proposed Winter Farmers Market would provide an opportunity for vendors to bring their products directly to the Riley Park Community from November 6th 2010 until April 30th 2011. The site would allow for 50-75 pop-up tents and four to ten food vendor carts. An equipment storage pod would be stored on site for the duration of the market and would occupy one stall.

At present time, the proposed parking area is not heavily used during the Nat Bailey off season. This could change when the Hillcrest legacy construction is completed in the Fall of 2011 and the new complex opens.

The location is well served by public transportation and is on a bike route. Street parking is available for vendors and customers. Public washrooms are located across the street at Riley Park Community Centre. Its proximity to Phoenix Gymnastics, Pacific Bowls, Vancouver Racquets Club, Vancouver Curling Club and the new aquatic facility at Hillcrest Park provides a large audience for the market.

The Queen Elizabeth District supports the operation of the Winter Farmers Market at Riley Park in the parking lot off Ontario Street for the period of November 6, 2010 to April 30, 2011. However, it will be necessary to review the parking requirements of the new recreation centre at Hillcrest Park once it opens in the Fall of 2011.

Discussion

A member of the Committee inquired what other locations were looked at for the Winter Farmers Market. Staff replied that that the Farmers Market had looked at a larger lot across the road from the proposed location but it was not paved. Staff are unsure which additional lots were looked at.

A member of the Committee asked whether there are any neighbours in the area that are opposed to the Winter Farmers Market. Staff replied that they do not see that as a potential problem as there was a huge response from the community when the original Farmers Market in the area left.

A member of the Committee inquired whether the Winter Farmers Market would create traffic problems. Staff replied that there have not been any complaints from the traffic generated by the new pool in the area and is therefore doubtful that this would create problems.

5. August 2010 Operating Statement Review

Staff reviewed the August 2010 Operating Statement. The Park Board has generated \$2.2 million dollars more in revenue than last year which is an 8% increase. Expenses have also gone up by \$28 000 from last year. The areas where there has been a decrease in revenue are parking, golf, pitch and putts and concessions. Currently, the increases in revenue being generated are coming from cost-recovery areas rather than from the revenue generators.

Golf saw a big decrease in expenses because the loan payments that were made last year did not need to be made this year. By the end of the year golf transfers will be \$2 million dollars less this year than they were in 2009. One issue that may impact the expense budget is that savings in utilities and city equipment cannot be used to offset over expenditures on payroll, supplies, services or transfers.

Issues that may impact the Board's ability to balance the 2010 operating budget are the introduction of HST, the start up of Hillcrest and Creekside pools, the updated plans for the Bloedel Conservatory and the farmyard, the impacts of the city-wide shared services and Renfrew and Trout Lack facilities closing for renovations.

Discussion

A member of the Committee asked why spending on infrastructure is down. Staff replied that it is because the type of work that was needed last year has not been required this year.

The meeting adjourned at 8:15 pm.

Meg Elliott
Acting Director, Corporate Services

Commissioner Loretta Woodcock
Chair