



Date: February 17, 2014

TO: Board Members - Vancouver Park Board
FROM: General Manager - Parks and Recreation
SUBJECT: Friends For Life Society Lease Renewal

RECOMMENDATION

- A. *THAT the Board approve the renewal of the lease of Weeks House at 1459 Barclay Street to the Vancouver Friends For Life Society for 10 years from March 1, 2015 to February 28, 2025 with a 10 year option to renew from March 1, 2025 to February 28, 2035 based on the terms and conditions outlined in the existing lease.*
- B. *THAT all legal documentation is to be in a form which is satisfactory to the Director of Legal Services for the City of Vancouver and the General Manager of the Park Board.*
- C. *THAT the General Manager be authorized to execute and deliver such documents on behalf of the Board.*
- D. *THAT no legal rights shall arise and no consents, permissions or licenses are granted hereby and none shall arise or be granted hereafter unless and until, all contemplated legal documentation has been executed and delivered by all parties.*

POLICY

The Board approves all use of lands under its jurisdiction.

BACKGROUND

The Weeks House is a former residence at the corner of Nicola Street and Barclay Street in Barclay Heritage Square. It was named after its first inhabitant, George W. Weeks, who opened Vancouver's first Hudson's Bay company store on Cordova Street in 1887. After being purchased by the City the exterior and foundations of this designated heritage building were stabilized by the Board in 1990 at a total cost of approximately \$147,000. The City's Heritage Committee supported the changes.

In 1991 a request for proposals was conducted for a non-profit community service organization to renovate and restore the interior and occupy the Weeks House. The potential occupant would pay all operating expenses and in return the Board would give a lease at a nominal cost. An interested organization was approved in principle by the Board but failed to secure the funds that were required for the renovations.

In 1994 the RFP was issued again and the Vancouver Friends for Life Society, who had outgrown their existing premises in the West End came forward as a potential new tenant for Weeks House. The Society offered to contribute \$225,000 towards the required renovations that included a new elevator, and the conversion of the attic to offices. In the end a total of \$560,000 was either contributed by the Society or their supporters towards the building's restoration.

On January 30, 1995 the Board agreed to lease Weeks House to the Vancouver Friends for Life Society for ten years at \$1.00 per annum with a ten year option to renew. At the request of the Society the Board approved the 10 year option to renew its lease at the February 14, 2005 Board meeting.

DISCUSSION

The Vancouver Friends for Life Society is a registered not-for-profit charitable society operating an innovative wellness centre at the Diamond Centre For Living for people living with serious illnesses such as HIV/AIDS and cancer. Their volunteers provide over 60 different types of complimentary therapies including therapeutic massage, naturopathy and counselling, along with nutritious meals and social support services. Each month nearly 1000 clients access the services and over 70% of those clients live below the poverty line.

The Society has provided evidence of insurance required by the Board. The building is in good condition and has been well maintained by the Society. A recent tour of the facility by the Society's Executive Director was given to staff and there are no outstanding issues with regard to the option to renew the lease for a further 10 years.

The Society has requested a further extension of their lease to consist of an additional 10 year term from March 1, 2015 to February 28, 2025 and a 10 year option to renew.

It is not recommended to change the rent to the Society (\$1.00 per annum) as it is a nominal amount consistent with other non-profit societies and groups that lease our facilities for recreational programs.

SUMMARY

The Vancouver Friends for Life Society carry out a valuable service for the community and have maintained the premises, Weeks House, in good condition during the initial term of their lease. Staff recommend the lease extension as outlined in this report.

Prepared by: Gordon Barber
General Manager's Office
Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation
Vancouver, BC