



MOTION ON NOTICE

Building Inclusive Communities Through Autism Spectrum Disorder Awareness

MOVER: Commissioner Shum

SECONDER: Commissioner Crawford

WHEREAS:

1. The Park Board's mission is to provide, preserve, and advocate for parks and recreation services to benefit all people, communities, and the environment;
2. Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is a neurodevelopmental disorder characterized by impaired social interaction, difficulties with verbal and nonverbal communication, and restricted or repetitive behavior;
3. 1 in 68 children have been identified as having ASD, with boys being 4.5 times more likely (1 in 42) than in girls (1 in 189). According to BC Ministry of Education numbers (January 2016), 7795 students have been diagnosed with autism, and many more students fall under the category of undiagnosed autism;
4. There is no known cure for autism but there is treatment. Scientifically validated forms of intensive early intervention have been shown to help individuals with autism acquire meaningful skills and learning techniques;
5. People living with autism and their families envision a life of full community inclusion and work opportunities the same as their typically developing peers. However, the social communication impairments that impact people with ASD are direct barriers to accessing activities in the community, and gaining and sustaining employment;
6. Training and education for public community oriented staff and personnel is a necessary component of success for people with ASD to gain community inclusion and sustained employment;
7. Training and education will open dialogue, enhance internal communication regarding autism, provide a safer, innovative and collaborative work environment, and attract, engage and retain passionate staff members;
8. The Autism Society of British Columbia (ASBC) is a non-profit, registered charity founded in 1975. ASBC's purpose is to assist and educate, work with families and support workers in their communities impacted by ASD, on early treatment options and deliver programs for continued support throughout adulthood;
9. ASBC has recognized a need to change the way people with ASD are viewed and valued in society, and the need for more inclusive community programming and employment practices;



THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

- A. THAT the Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation direct staff to investigate the development of a training and education program for interacting with persons with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), to be delivered to Park Board staff, management, and Commissioners by fall 2017;
- B. THAT staff work with community organizations such as the Autism Society of British Columbia, Persons with Disabilities Advisory Committee, our Community Partners, and senior levels of government to develop and fund such training; and
- C. THAT staff investigate the implementation of a pilot program by summer 2018 that could include adaptive programs, apprenticeships, and work experience, in partnership with the Autism Society of British Columbia, our community partners, and the BC Provincial Government, with the goal of creating meaningful long-term work opportunities for people with ASD.