



Accelerating Sewer Separation & Overflow Mitigation to Improve Water Quality

Excerpted from Minutes 2019-07-22

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MOVED by Commissioner Coupar
SECONDED by Commissioner Barker

Substitution Motion (recommendation only) MOVED by Commissioner Dumont

Amendment (revising A) MOVED by Commissioner Barker
Amendment (revising A & B) MOVED by Commissioner Coupar
Amendment (adding F) MOVED by Commissioner Coupar

Final motion as amended:

WHEREAS:

1. The mission of the Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation is to provide, preserve, and advocate for parks and recreation services to benefit all people, communities, and the environment;
2. As per the Vancouver Charter, the Park Board has exclusive jurisdiction and control over parkland in the City of Vancouver, including any structures, programs and activities, fees, and improvements that occur within parks, including jurisdiction over the city's public swimming beaches and responsibility for safe swimming;
3. Starting in the 1920s, Park Board Commissioners made it a priority to incrementally acquire beachfront property that was earlier snapped-up for hotel and private residential development, and by the mid-1980s the Board had acquired full waterfront access along English Bay from the Burrard Bridge to Stanley Park and all the waterfront from Spanish Banks to Jericho Beach;
4. On June 10, 2019, the Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation approved a Non-motorized Watercraft Recreation Strategy to encourage more people to explore non-motorized water sports, including canoeing, kite surfing, rowing, dragon boating, outrigger, windsurfing, kayaking, paddle boarding, and small craft sailing, as well as to increase access to the water from the shoreline;
5. On June 29, 2019, Sunset Beach was closed to swimming due to high E.coli levels on the recommendation of Vancouver Coastal Health;
6. The City of Vancouver frequently discharges untreated waste into the city's waterways through combined sewer overflow outlets, including into False Creek which has five overflow outlets, many of which are visible during low tides;
7. According to recent reports, almost 674,000 cubic metres of raw sewage and runoff drained into False Creek at just one of these combined sewer overflow points in 2017;
8. The timeline for completion of the City's combined sewer separation plan, to stop untreated sewage overflows entering the city's waterways, is currently based on the Provincial government's environmental goal to replace all combined sewer systems with separated sewer systems by 2050;
9. The City of Vancouver's Greenest City Action Plan embodies the City's aspirations to be on the leading edge of urban sustainability through a set of measurable and attainable targets that place Vancouver on a path to becoming the greenest city in the world;



10. Metro Vancouver's regional population growth estimates to the year 2050, based on a base population of 2,570,000 in 2016, is anticipated to increase by about 1 million to 3,600,000 by the year 2050, with a corresponding increase in the population of the City of Vancouver and similarly increased discharges of raw sewage into the city's waterways; and
11. Vancouver's waterfront is a treasured asset and a key part of our city's identity locally and internationally – from the seawall to the city's beautiful beaches.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

- A. THAT the Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation call on the City of Vancouver to prioritize infrastructure improvements including but not limited to combined sewer overflows within the context of the 'holistic, coordinated approach to designing and delivering water and sewer infrastructure and services' as outlined in the City of Vancouver's "One Water" strategy, within 10 years – by the year 2029 - in order to make improvements to water quality in Burrard Inlet, False Creek, the Fraser River and other waterways;
- B. THAT the Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation encourage the City of Vancouver to liaise with all relevant levels of government, including Municipal, Regional, Provincial, and Federal, urging these bodies to support a prioritized plan that will substantially improve water quality in Burrard Inlet, False Creek, the Fraser River and other waterways;
- C. THAT the Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation consider immediately expanding the 'Pump Don't Dump' service to boats in and around Heritage Harbour and other relevant locations;
- D. THAT the Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation collaborate with the City of Vancouver Engineering Department to accelerate prioritization of the measures outlined in the City of Vancouver's 'One Water' and 'Citywide Integrated Rainwater Management Plan' (IRMP) with an emphasis on a transition from the traditional 'gray infrastructure' to a more sustainable 'green infrastructure' model;
- E. THAT staff report back to the Board of Parks and Recreation regarding any 'quick-start' interventions that could help support the current policy of "no beach closures due to contamination" and keep the Board informed of the progress regarding water quality improvements as they proceed; and
- F. THAT the Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation formally request that the City of Vancouver – in the interest of public safety and awareness – publicly identify the locations of all sewer outflows into False Creek and other Vancouver waterways that impact Vancouver parks and beaches, and that the City be requested to post public signage to indicate these outflow locations.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY