



MOTION on NOTICE

Submitted at the Regular Board meeting held on September 16, 2025

Affirming the Park Board's Commitment to Transgender Lives and Rights

SUBMITTED BY: Commissioner Digby

WHEREAS

1. The Vancouver Park Board has a long history of celebrating Vancouver's 2SLGBTQIA+ community including transgender, gender diverse and Two-Spirit (TGD2S) people, and addressing specific needs and opportunities within these communities;
2. The City of Vancouver created its first TGD2S Action Plan in 2016 and has completed many of the "early actions" contained in that plan. The City is currently renewing the TGD2S action plan with a stronger focus on making sure TGD2S communities feel safe and included. Public consultation has concluded on the renewed plan, and a draft report is anticipated in November 2025.
3. By in-camera decision dated May 12, 2025, the Park Board approved hosting a Harry Potter™ event in Stanley Park, with that event being currently scheduled to open in November 2025, which approval may not have had a robust reputational assessment at that time about its impact on the TGD2S community;
4. The original author of the Harry Potter book series, JK Rowling, has since at least 2018, taken notorious public positions, and committed funding to political and legal causes which are openly hostile to full acceptance and rights of TGD2S people in our communities, some of which actions directly impacted Vancouver itself. To avoid platforming the views of JK Rowling, specific actions taken by her have been circulated by Commissioner Digby to all Commissioners for their individual assessment.
5. It is understood that JK Rowling will financially profit from the Harry Potter™ event being hosted by the Park Board;
6. The views of JK Rowling are part of a hostile public discourse that targets TGD2S people, seeking limits on their access to economic opportunities, healthcare, censorship in education on perspectives relevant to them, and limitations on access to public spaces and services (including bathrooms and changerooms).



- i. The impact and scale of damage from this hostile public discourse is known to cause anxiety, depression and lead to acts of suicide by TGD2S individuals.
 - ii. This hostile public discourse is deeply disturbing to TGD2S individuals, families, friends and communities.
7. This hostile public discourse of which JK Rowling is engaged is deeply inconsistent with the values of the Vancouver Park Board including our long standing policy to create safe and welcoming spaces for everyone.
8. The pain caused to an important part of our community by the decision to host the Harry Potter™ event in Stanley Park opening in November 2025 has called into question the reputation of the Park Board regarding, specifically, its commitment to the TGD2S, and more generally, whether it intends to profit from events which are associated with the targeting of any of our diverse equity seeking groups in Vancouver.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED

- A. THAT the Vancouver Park Board reiterates that it unequivocally supports the lives and rights of transgender, gender diverse and Two-Spirit (TGD2S) people, it will continue to celebrate and honour them and their communities, and it will continue to support their specific needs and opportunities in the Vancouver parks and recreation system;
- B. THAT the Vancouver Park Board recognizes that transphobia sets a precedent to the reduction in human rights that affects all of us;
- C. The Vancouver Park Board directs staff to report back on contract options to ensure that the Harry Potter™ event runs for one season only;
- D. THAT the Vancouver Park Board directs staff to separately report back on actions the Park Board can take to address the pain caused to TGD2S people and their communities by hosting the Harry Potter™ event, including:
 - i. Actions to increase TGD2S inclusion and safety according to the renewed TGD2S Action Plan anticipated for November 2025;
 - ii. Recognition of the Trans Day of Remembrance on November 20, 2025
 - iii. Spaces, place-making and events to celebrate and honour TGD2S people and communities;



- E. THAT the Vancouver Park Board acknowledges that it failed in its policy commitment to consult with the 2SLGBTQ+ Committee in advance of hosting the Harry Potter™ event, a failure which would likely have identified the reputational concerns of hosting the event; and
- F. THAT the Vancouver Park Board directs staff in the business services group to, in the future, conduct deeper investigations into the reputational aspects of potential hosted events, and to present a fulsome account of such risks to Commissioners at the time approval is requested.
 - i. Requests for confidential approval by potential suppliers shall be viewed with extreme skepticism going forward.