



BOARD COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

JUNE 1, 2026

A Board Committee meeting of the Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation was held on Monday, June 1, 2026 at 6:37 pm in the Boardroom at the Park Board Office, and via videoconference.

PRESENT:

Commissioner Laura Christensen, Chair
Commissioner Brennan Bastyovanszky, Vice-Chair
Commissioner Tom Digby
Commissioner Angela Haer
Commissioner Marie-Claire Howard *
Commissioner Scott Jensen
Commissioner Jas Viridi

GENERAL MANAGER'S OFFICE:

Steve Jackson, General Manager
Jessica Kulchyski, Manager, Executive Office and Board Relations
Carol Lee, Meeting Clerk
Victoria Tyers, Board Support and Meeting Assistant

* *Denotes absence for a portion of the meeting.*

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Chair acknowledged that the meeting is taking place on the traditional territory of the Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh First Nations. We meet on this land respectfully and with honour to each other, the land, and the communities we serve. Commissioners were invited to join the Chair in actions of reconciliation in their deliberations and the decisions they make.

ADOPTION OF MINUTES

1. Board Committee Meeting – May 25, 2026

MOVED by Commissioner Digby

SECONDED by Commissioner Bastyovanszky

THAT the Minutes of the Board Committee meeting on May 25, 2026, be approved.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

In favour: Commissioners Bastyovanszky, Christensen, Digby, Haer, Howard

Absent: Commissioners Jensen, Viridi

COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were received via email or the [Contact Park Board Commissioners](#) web form between May 25, 2026 and 3:00 pm on June 1, 2026:

- Designated Smoking Area at Select Special Events in Summer 2026 – Pilot Program:
 - One in support
 - Three in opposition.

STAFF REPORTS

1. Burrard View Hospice – Vancouver Coastal Health – Lease Agreement Renewal

The Director, Business Services, introduced the item. The Associate Director, Commercial Operations, provided a presentation on the proposed lease agreement renewal for the Burrard View Hospice.

MOVED by Commissioner Jensen
SECONDED by Commissioner Digby

THAT the Board Committee recommend to the Board:

- A. THAT the Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation (“Park Board”) authorize staff to negotiate to the satisfaction of the Park Board’s General Manager, the City of Vancouver’s (the “City”) Director of Legal Services, and the City’s Chief Purchasing Official, and enter into a lease agreement, with Vancouver Coastal Health (“VCH”) for the field house at Burrard View Park for an initial term of ten (10) years, with two additional five (5) year renewals, for a total contract term of twenty (20) years effective September 1, 2026;
- B. THAT the City’s Director of Legal Services, Chief Purchasing Official and Park Board’s General Manager be authorized to execute on behalf of the Park Board the contract contemplated by Recommendation A above; and
- C. THAT no legal rights or obligations will be created by the Park Board’s adoption of Recommendations A and B above unless and until such contract is executed by the authorized signatories of the City as set out in these Recommendations.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

2. Designated Smoking Area at Select Special Events in Summer 2026 – Pilot Program

The Director, Business Services, introduced the item. The Associate Director, Business Services, provided a presentation on the proposed pilot project to establish designated smoking areas at selected events during summer 2026.

Staff responded to questions regarding:

- The rationale for not including cannabis as an allowable product to be consumed in the designated smoking area
- The need to monitor compliance with the Park Board Smoking Regulation Bylaw with the establishment of a designated smoking area.

The Board Committee heard from three speakers, of whom one spoke in favour and two spoke in opposition to the staff recommendation. The speakers responded to questions from the Board Committee.

MOVED by Commissioner Haer
SECONDED by Commissioner Virdi

THAT the Board Committee recommend to the Board:

- A. THAT the Vancouver Park Board approve, as a pilot program, the requirements of the Park Board Smoking Regulation Bylaw not be strictly enforced in relation to the 2026 Great Outdoor Comedy Festival and the 2026 Rosé Disco and Country Club events to allow for the establishment of designated smoking areas at these events; and
- B. THAT Park Board staff will report back to the Board regarding the efficacy of this pilot project no later than March 31, 2027.

CARRIED

In favour: Commissioners Bastyovanszky, Christensen, Haer, Virdi

Opposed: Commissioners Digby, Howard, Jensen

3. Indigenous Community-led Cultural Events – Report Back

The Senior Planner, Arts, Recreation and Culture, introduced the item. The Coordinator, Arts, Recreation and Culture, provided a presentation reporting on Indigenous community-led cultural events between 2022 and 2025 and a request for additional funding from the Corporate Sponsorship Fund.

Staff responded to questions regarding future plans to include funding for Indigenous-led community-led cultural events in the annual operating budget.

MOVED by Commissioner Jensen
SECONDED by Commissioner Virdi

THAT the Board Committee recommend to the Board:

- A. THAT the Vancouver Park Board receive the report on three-year Corporate Sponsorship Fund support for Indigenous community-led cultural events; and

- B. THAT the Park Board approve \$50,000 from the Corporate Sponsorship Fund for 2026 to support staff and services for Indigenous community-led cultural events and initiatives in parks.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

In favour: Commissioners Bastyovanszky, Christensen, Digby, Haer, Jensen, Virdi

Absent: Commissioner Howard

The Board Committee meeting adjourned at 7:49 pm.

* * * * *

Steve Jackson
General Manager

Commissioner Laura Christensen
Chair



REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES

JUNE 1, 2026

A Regular meeting of the Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation was held on Monday, June 1, 2026, at 8:09 pm, in the Boardroom at the Park Board Office, and via videoconference.

PRESENT: Commissioner Tom Digby, Chair
Commissioner Brennan Bastyovanszky, Vice-Chair
Commissioner Laura Christensen
Commissioner Angela Haer
Commissioner Marie-Claire Howard
Commissioner Scott Jensen
Commissioner Jas Virdi

GENERAL MANAGER'S OFFICE: Steve Jackson, General Manager
Jessica Kulchyski, Manager, Executive Office and Board Relations
Carol Lee, Meeting Clerk
Victoria Tyers, Board Support and Meeting Assistant

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Chair acknowledged that the meeting is taking place on the traditional territory of the Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh First Nations. We meet on this land respectfully and with honour to each other, the land, and the communities we serve. Commissioners were invited to join the Chair in actions of reconciliation in their deliberations and the decisions they make.

IN CAMERA MEETING

MOVED by Commissioner Jensen
SECONDED by Commissioner Christensen

THAT the Board will go into meetings prior to the next Regular Board Meeting, which are closed to the public, pursuant to Section 165.2(1) of the *Vancouver Charter*, to discuss matters related to paragraphs:

- (c) labour relations or other employee relations;
- (g) litigation or potential litigation affecting the city;
- (i) the receipt of advice that is subject to solicitor-client privilege, including communications necessary for that purpose;

- (k) negotiations and related discussions respecting the proposed provision of an activity, work or facility that are at their preliminary stages and that, in the view of the Council, could reasonably be expected to harm the interests of the city if they were held in public.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

ADOPTION OF MINUTES

1. Regular Board Meeting – Monday, May 25, 2026

MOVED by Commissioner Jensen
SECONDED by Commissioner Christensen

THAT the Minutes of the Regular Board meeting of May 25, 2026, be approved.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

CHAIR'S REPORT

The Chair highlighted the participation of Commissioners at Park Board events since the previous Board meeting on May 25, 2026:

- Commissioner Christensen attended the opening and tour of the new Beaconsfield Park wetland
- Commissioner Christensen visited several playgrounds around Vancouver, including Cedar Cottage Park and the recently renewed Tatlow Park Playground
- Commissioner Christensen and Haer attended the 20th annual arts and Health Gala Showcase at the Roundhouse Community Centre
- Commissioner Jensen visited Riley Park Farmers Market, False Creek Community Centre, the newly opened Oakridge Park Shopping Centre and Nat Bailey Stadium

COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were received via email or the [Contact Park Board Commissioners](#) web form between May 25, 2026 and 3:00 pm on June 1, 2026 regarding:

- Prohibition and Restriction of Motorized Personal Watercraft in Burrard Inlet:
 - 305 in support
 - 15 opposed
- Think Accessible Play: Advancing Vancouver's Second Destination Inclusive Sensory and All-Abilities Park with a Communication Board Pilot at Queen Elizabeth Park:
 - 43 in support

- Think Free Swim: Carrying on Joe Fortes' Legacy through Universal Access to Basic Swimming Lessons and Expansion of Aquatic Infrastructure as Core Public Safety Policy:
 - 39 in support.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

1. Report of the Board Committee – June 1, 2026

The Board considered the report containing recommendations and actions taken by the Board Committee. Its items of business included:

1. Burrard View Hospice – Vancouver Coastal Health – Lease Agreement Renewal
2. Designated Smoking Area at Select Special Events in Summer 2026 – Pilot Program
3. Indigenous Community-led Cultural Events – Report Back.

MOVED by Commissioner Christensen

SECONDED by Commissioner Jensen

THAT the Board approve the recommendations and actions taken by the Board Committee at its meeting of June 1, 2026, as contained in items 1 through 3.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

STAFF REPORTS

1. General Manager's Report

The General Manager presented the General Manager's Report, highlighting:

- Celebration of 10 years of reconciliation at the Park Board
- National Indigenous history month events
- Hadden Park floating sauna update
- Council consideration of a referral report on the Villages Planning Program focused on enabling Missing Middle housing and strengthening 17 local commercial areas
- Council agenda items related to, or impacting, parks and recreation:
 - Council to receive a report on June 2, 2026, titled "[Vision Zero Safe Mobility Plan](#)", which would advance the City's commitment to Vision Zero and the goal to eliminate all traffic fatalities and serious injuries from our transportation network
 - Council to receive a report on June 2, 2026, titled "[Proposed Amendments to the Election Bylaw](#)", which would align the Election Bylaw with the Province's amendments to the Vancouver Charter, change the processing of mail in ballots, and implement additional Special Voting Opportunities to be incorporated into the 2026 municipal election

- Council to receive a report on June 2, 2026, titled “[2026 Cultural Grants \(Projects, Cultural Spaces, Capacity\) and SRO Upgrading Grant](#)”, which would approve a total of \$2.6M in grants to 118 non-profit organizations to support programs and services for artists, the cultural community, and the public
- Council to receive a report on June 2, 2026, titled “[Auditor General Committee Recommendations Transmittal Report](#)”, which would endorse the ten recommendations of the Auditor General’s Report entitled “Audit of Community Grants”
- Council to receive a report on June 3, 2026, titled “[Downtown Eastside \(DTES\) Plan Implementation Grant Program Allocation 2026](#)”, which would approve a total of \$610,051 to 17 non-profit agencies to provide critical assistance and support community initiatives to benefit marginalized DTES residents
- Council to receive for a report on June 3, 2026, titled “[City of Vancouver UNDRIP Task Force Annual Report](#)”, which would provide an annual update of three interconnected frameworks: the UNDRIP Action Plan, the Reconciliation Framework, and the MMIWG2S+ Response Report
- Council to consider a motion on June 3, 2026, titled “[Pride in Vancouver: Strengthening and Celebrating the Vancouver Pride Festival](#)”, which would approve a one-time grant of up to \$75,000 to the Vancouver Pride Society to assist with costs associated with organizing and delivering Vancouver Pride 2026
- Council to consider a motion on June 3, 2026, titled “[More than Zero: Integrity and Accountability for Staff and Department Changes](#)”, which would direct staff to produce a public written report disclosing all staffing and operational charges made across all City departments between January 2024 and now that relate to meeting budget targets
- Council to consider a motion on June 3, 2026 titled “[Recognizing National Accessibility Week as an Official City of Vancouver Observance](#)” which would direct staff to recognize the week as an official City observance starting in 2026
- Board briefing memos and emails from May 25 to June 1, 2026.

The General Manager was requested to provide additional information regarding Council’s recent announcement of a new pool to be constructed at Sunset Community Centre.

MEMBERS’ MOTIONS

Change in Chair

Commissioner Digby relinquished, and Commissioner Bastyovanszky assumed, the Chair.

1. Prohibition and Restriction of Motorized Personal Watercraft in Burrard Inlet

Commissioner Digby introduced the motion and responded to questions from the Board.

MOVED by Commissioner Digby
SECONDED by Commissioner Jensen

WHEREAS:

1. Vancouver's beaches and waterfront parks support significant recreational swimming and water access, particularly at Sunset Beach and English Bay;
2. English Bay, False Creek, Spanish Banks and Stanley Park waters are increasingly shared by swimmers, paddlers, recreational boating, tourism activity, and marine wildlife including whales;
3. Vancouver's urban waterfront has become significantly more crowded and complex, while recreational marine safety awareness and infrastructure have not kept pace;
4. Sunset Beach and Spanish Banks represent some of the closest points of interaction between swimmers, paddlers, high-speed personal watercraft, and recreational boating traffic within Vancouver's urban waterfront;
5. A recent incident involving a personal high-speed watercraft striking a whale near Stanley Park heightened public concern regarding swimmer safety, marine safety, and marine wildlife protection;
6. Existing marine protection efforts in Vancouver have largely focused on commercial shipping activity and port operations, while comparatively less attention has been given to recreational vessel interactions in heavily used urban swimming areas;
7. Vancouver's marine wildlife and waterfront recreation are important components of the city's tourism economy and international reputation;
8. Responsible marine operators have demonstrated that technologies such as geo-fencing, automatic speed reduction systems, and clearly defined operating boundaries can support improved marine safety outcomes;
9. Abandoned, grounded, or derelict vessels periodically affect Vancouver beaches and nearshore recreational waters, creating environmental, navigational, and public safety concerns; and
10. Authority over marine navigation and vessel regulation primarily rests with the Government of Canada, including Transport Canada and Fisheries and Oceans Canada, together with the Vancouver Fraser Port Authority and Vancouver Police Department Marine Unit.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

- A. THAT The Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation formally adopt a policy position advocating for the prohibition or significant restriction of high-speed recreational motorized personal watercraft, including Jet Skis and Sea Doos,

within Burrard Inlet and adjacent near-shore waters surrounding Vancouver parks and beaches;

- B. Park Board staff be directed to report back on measures available within Park Board jurisdiction to discourage or restrict the launching, staging, and operation of motorized personal watercraft from Park Board-managed facilities, including signage, public education, launch conditions, and potential amendments to relevant policies or permits;
- C. The Chair of the Park Board be directed to advocate to relevant federal and regional authorities, including Transport Canada, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Vancouver Fraser Port Authority, and the Vancouver Police Department Marine Unit, for stronger regulation of motorized personal watercraft activity in Burrard Inlet in order to improve marine wildlife protection, reduce shoreline disturbance, and enhance public safety; and
- D. The Park Board further call upon senior governments and marine regulatory agencies to prioritize Burrard Inlet as an urban marine conservation and stewardship zone, recognizing its growing importance for marine biodiversity, climate resilience, and public ecological education.

DEFEATED

In favour: Commissioner Digby

Opposed: Commissioners Bastyovanszky, Christensen, Haer, Howard, Jensen, Virdi

Change in Chair

Commissioner Bastyovanszky relinquished, and Commissioner Digby assumed, the Chair.

2. Think Accessible Play: Advancing Vancouver's Second Destination Inclusive Sensory and All-Abilities Park with a Communication Board Pilot at Queen Elizabeth Park

Commissioner Virdi introduced the motion and responded to questions from the Board.

Main Motion

MOVED by Commissioner Virdi

SECONDED by Commissioner Haer

WHEREAS:

- 1. Queen Elizabeth Park is Vancouver's highest point and one of the city's premier destination parks, attracting residents and visitors from across the region and internationally;
- 2. Queen Elizabeth Park contains significant citywide amenities, including Bloedel Conservatory, the Quarry Garden, restaurants, event spaces, and extensive walking paths, but does not currently include a destination playground designed to serve children of varying physical, cognitive, and sensory abilities;

3. The Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation has identified accessibility, inclusion, and equitable access to play as important priorities, and is advancing Vancouver's first destination inclusive sensory play space;
4. Queen Elizabeth Park presents an opportunity to establish Vancouver's second destination inclusive sensory all-abilities park within one of Vancouver's most significant civic parks;
5. The Board has approved new destination attractions at Queen Elizabeth Park, including a proposed zipline and tree canopy walk, reinforcing the park's evolving role as a citywide destination and creating an opportunity to advance complementary family-oriented public amenities;
6. VanPlay, through Initiative P.1.3, identifies the design and construction of five additional fully accessible destination play areas throughout the city, in addition to the ongoing integration of accessible play features in parks, reflecting the Park Board's commitment to ensuring parks and recreation spaces welcome everyone and provide equitable access to inclusive experiences for residents of all ages and abilities;
7. The Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation's 2023–2026 Capital Plan includes funding for a new playground at Queen Elizabeth Park, providing an existing capital framework through which this work may be advanced; and
8. Universal communication access is a key component of truly inclusive public space, including for non-verbal individuals, educators, multilingual families, young children, and individuals with diverse communication needs, and can be supported through the use of accessible communication boards and inclusive learning tools in park environments.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

- A. THAT the Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation direct staff to undertake planning and feasibility work, within available funding in the approved 2023–2026 Capital Plan, for the development of Vancouver's second destination sensory all-abilities park at Queen Elizabeth Park;
- B. THAT in undertaking this work, staff be directed to consider how the proposed inclusive sensory all-abilities park may complement existing, approved, and emerging destination amenities within Queen Elizabeth Park, including the proposed zipline and tree canopy walk;
- C. THAT staff be directed to identify and evaluate potential locations within Queen Elizabeth Park, giving preference to sites that:
 - i. Provide convenient access for children, families, and caregivers of varying mobility levels;
 - ii. Are in close proximity to public washroom facilities;
 - iii. Are in close proximity to parking, including accessible parking;

- iv. Minimize impacts on significant horticultural, heritage, and viewscape features; and
 - v. Can support a destination-quality play experience appropriate to the park's citywide role, including consideration of nature-based and context-sensitive design approaches aligned with the park's character;
- D. THAT staff be directed to undertake public and stakeholder engagement to inform both the preferred location and future play features of the proposed sensory all-abilities park, including engagement with families, park users, accessibility advocates, community organizations, and relevant advisory groups;
- E. THAT staff be directed to consider inclusive, destination-quality play features, including but not limited to accessible play components, sensory-rich play experiences, quiet or retreat spaces, accessible surfacing and pathways, inclusive swings, social play elements, and nature-integrated play opportunities appropriate to the Queen Elizabeth Park setting, and to incorporate universal communication access features as part of a pilot approach, including accessible communication boards designed to support non-verbal individuals, educators, multilingual families, and individuals with diverse communication needs;
- F. THAT staff be directed to explore the implementation of accessible communication boards as a pilot initiative within the proposed park, in consultation with relevant experts and organizations including Forever Kind Learning Ltd. and others working in this field, to assess best practices for inclusive communication tools in public parks, including but not limited to Picture Assisted Communication (PAC), American Sign Language (ASL) supports, Braille integration, color-coded learning systems, and interactive communication features designed to foster accessibility and inclusion; and
- G. THAT staff report back to the Board via memo by July 27, 2026, on timelines and preliminary concept directions for both communication boards and inclusive play features for the proposed park, including potential approaches to implementing accessible communication boards as a pilot initiative within Queen Elizabeth Park.

Amendment to the Main Motion

MOVED by Commissioner Jensen
SECONDED by Commissioner Christensen

THAT Items F and G be amended, as follows:

- F. THAT staff be directed to explore the implementation of accessible communication boards as a pilot initiative within the proposed park, in consultation with relevant experts and organizations working in this field, to assess best practices for inclusive communication tools in public parks, including but not limited to Picture Assisted Communication (PAC), American Sign Language (ASL) supports, Braille integration, color-coded learning systems, and interactive communication features designed to foster accessibility and inclusion; and

- G. THAT staff report back to the Board via memo by Q1 2027, on timelines and preliminary concept directions for both communication boards and inclusive play features for the proposed park, including potential approaches to implementing accessible communication boards as a pilot initiative within Queen Elizabeth Park.

CARRIED

In favour: Commissioners Bastyovanszky, Christensen, Digby, Haer, Jensen

Opposed: Commissioners Howard, Viridi

Question on the Main Motion, as Amended

- A. THAT the Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation direct staff to undertake planning and feasibility work, within available funding in the approved 2023–2026 Capital Plan, for the development of Vancouver’s second destination sensory all-abilities park at Queen Elizabeth Park;
- B. THAT in undertaking this work, staff be directed to consider how the proposed inclusive sensory all-abilities park may complement existing, approved, and emerging destination amenities within Queen Elizabeth Park, including the proposed zipline and tree canopy walk;
- C. THAT staff be directed to identify and evaluate potential locations within Queen Elizabeth Park, giving preference to sites that:
- i. Provide convenient access for children, families, and caregivers of varying mobility levels;
 - ii. Are in close proximity to public washroom facilities;
 - iii. Are in close proximity to parking, including accessible parking;
 - iv. Minimize impacts on significant horticultural, heritage, and viewscape features; and
 - v. Can support a destination-quality play experience appropriate to the park’s citywide role, including consideration of nature-based and context-sensitive design approaches aligned with the park’s character;
- D. THAT staff be directed to undertake public and stakeholder engagement to inform both the preferred location and future play features of the proposed sensory all-abilities park, including engagement with families, park users, accessibility advocates, community organizations, and relevant advisory groups;
- E. THAT staff be directed to consider inclusive, destination-quality play features, including but not limited to accessible play components, sensory-rich play experiences, quiet or retreat spaces, accessible surfacing and pathways, inclusive swings, social play elements, and nature-integrated play opportunities appropriate to the Queen Elizabeth Park setting, and to incorporate universal communication access features as part of a pilot approach, including accessible communication boards designed to support non-verbal individuals, educators, multilingual families, and individuals with diverse communication needs;
- F. THAT staff be directed to explore the implementation of accessible communication boards as a pilot initiative within the proposed park, in consultation with relevant experts and organizations working in this field, to assess best practices for

inclusive communication tools in public parks, including but not limited to Picture Assisted Communication (PAC), American Sign Language (ASL) supports, Braille integration, color-coded learning systems, and interactive communication features designed to foster accessibility and inclusion; and

- G. THAT staff report back to the Board via memo by Q1 2027, on timelines and preliminary concept directions for both communication boards and inclusive play features for the proposed park, including potential approaches to implementing accessible communication boards as a pilot initiative within Queen Elizabeth Park.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

3. Think Free Swim: Carrying on Joe Fortes' Legacy through Universal Access to Basic Swimming Lessons and Expansion of Aquatic Infrastructure as Core Public Safety Policy

Commissioner Virdi introduced the motion and responded to questions from the Board.

MOVED by Commissioner Virdi
SECONDED by Commissioner Jensen

WHEREAS:

1. The City of Vancouver is one of Canada's coastal and port cities, with a long-standing economic, cultural, and recreational relationship to the Pacific Ocean and its working waterfront, resulting in widespread and ongoing public exposure to aquatic environments;
2. Drowning remains a leading cause of preventable death among children and youth, and basic swimming ability is a foundational life skill essential to survival, safety, and confidence in aquatic environments;
3. The Lifesaving Society and other public safety authorities emphasize that early-stage swimming instruction, such as floating, treading water, and basic propulsion, provides the greatest reduction in drowning risk;
4. Swimming is not only a safety skill but also an important family and community activity, supporting physical health, social connection, and lifelong recreation across all ages;
5. The legacy of Joe Fortes, widely regarded as Vancouver's first official lifeguard and swimming instructor, reflects a long-standing civic commitment to ensuring residents can safely access and enjoy the city's waters;
6. Access to swimming lessons in Vancouver is constrained by both user fees and limited pool capacity, with affordability pressures disproportionately affecting families with children and newcomers;
7. The Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation currently delivers approximately 1,133 swimming lesson programs annually across introductory levels one through

three, serving approximately 6,498 participants, with associated fee revenues of approximately \$420,590 per year;

8. Past and existing efforts to expand access to swimming instruction have demonstrated that partnerships between the Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation and the Vancouver School Board can provide an effective and equitable model for broad-based delivery of introductory swimming education;
9. Municipal governments routinely invest in universal public safety infrastructure, including fire protection, transportation safety, and parks, without direct user fees, recognizing the shared societal benefit of prevention;
10. The City of Vancouver has historically adopted per-capita service benchmarks, such as parkland targets, to guide long-term infrastructure planning, and a similar approach to aquatic facilities would support equitable access across neighbourhoods;
11. The Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation has directed staff to initiate an update to the VanSplash Aquatics Strategy, with work anticipated to conclude in early 2027, creating an opportunity to incorporate consideration of aquatic facility expansion, service level targets, and access objectives arising from this motion into that planning process prior to subsequent consideration by Council;
12. Other Canadian cities, including Toronto, Calgary, and Edmonton, have expanded free or low-cost access to recreation programming, recognizing its role in public health, safety, and affordability; and
13. Addressing both financial barriers and infrastructure capacity constraints is necessary to ensure universal access to swimming instruction.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

- A. THAT the Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation affirm that basic swimming ability is an essential life skill and that access to introductory swimming instruction should be treated as core public safety goal;
- B. THAT Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation direct staff to work with the City of Vancouver staff to design and implement a program providing free access to the first three levels of swimming lessons (or equivalent beginner stages) for all residents of Vancouver, with priority access for children aged 3 to 12; and
- C. THAT the Board direct staff to support Council's proposed per-capita aquatic infrastructure target (e.g., pools per 10,000 residents or equivalent service metric) to be achieved by 2035, analogous to the City's parkland provision metrics, including:
 - i. Current service levels and geographic distribution;
 - ii. Projected population growth and demand; and

- iii. Recommended targets to ensure equitable access across neighbourhoods.

Amendment to the Main Motion

MOVED by Commissioner Christensen
SECONDED by Commissioner Jensen

THAT Items B and C be amended, as follows:

- B. THAT Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation direct staff to report back with cost, capacity and service level options for a program providing free access to the first three levels of swimming lessons (or equivalent beginner stages) for all residents of Vancouver, with priority access for children aged 3 to 12;

FURTHER THAT the report back clearly indicate the amount of service reductions elsewhere in the Park Board system required by each option; and
- C. THAT the Board reaffirm support for the metric (swims per capita) and targets (5.0 swims per capita) for aquatic infrastructure within VanSplash (Pg.55).

CARRIED

In favour: Commissioners Bastyovanszky, Christensen, Digby, Jensen
Opposed: Commissioners Haer, Howard, Viridi

Point of Order

The Chair ruled that Commissioner Christensen is not permitted to speak a second time on the Main Motion, as amended.

Challenge of the Chair

MOVED by Commissioner Christensen
SECONDED by Commissioner Jensen

THAT the ruling of the Chair be sustained.

DEFEATED

In favour: Commissioners Digby, Haer, Howard, Viridi
Opposed: Commissioners Bastyovanszky, Christensen, Jensen

Question on the Main Motion, as Amended

- A. THAT the Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation affirm that basic swimming ability is an essential life skill and that access to introductory swimming instruction should be treated as core public safety goal;
- B. THAT Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation direct staff to report back with cost, capacity and service level options for a program providing free access to the first three levels of swimming lessons (or equivalent beginner stages) for all residents of Vancouver, with priority access for children aged 3 to 12; and

FURTHER THAT the report back clearly indicate the amount of service reductions elsewhere in the Park Board system required by each option; and

- C. THAT the Board reaffirm support for the metric (swims per capita) and targets (5.0 swims per capita) for aquatic infrastructure within VanSplash (Pg.55).

CARRIED

In favour: Commissioners Bastyovanszky, Christensen, Digby, Jensen, Viridi

Opposed: Commissioner Howard

Abstained: Commissioner Haer

Motion to Suspend the Rules

MOVED by Commissioner Jensen

SECONDED by Commissioner Christensen

THAT the Vancouver Park Board suspends the rules to extend the meeting to the conclusion of the Board meeting.

CARRIED

In favour: Commissioners Bastyovanszky, Digby, Jensen, Haer, Viridi

Opposed: Commissioners Howard, Viridi

4. Beach Safety and Marine Protection

Commissioner Bastyovanszky introduced the motion and responded to questions from the Board.

MOVED by Commissioner Bastyovanszky

SECONDED by Commissioner Jensen

WHEREAS:

1. Vancouver's beaches and waterfront parks support significant recreational swimming and water access, particularly at Sunset Beach and English Bay;
2. English Bay, False Creek, Spanish Banks and Stanley Park waters are increasingly shared by swimmers, paddlers, recreational boating, tourism activity, and marine wildlife including whales;
3. Vancouver's urban waterfront has become significantly more crowded and complex, while recreational marine safety awareness and infrastructure have not kept pace;
4. Sunset Beach and Spanish Banks represent some of the closest points of interaction between swimmers, paddlers, high-speed personal watercraft, and recreational boating traffic within Vancouver's urban waterfront;

5. A recent incident involving a personal high-speed watercraft striking a whale near Stanley Park heightened public concern regarding swimmer safety, marine safety, and marine wildlife protection;
6. Existing marine protection efforts in Vancouver have largely focused on commercial shipping activity and port operations, while comparatively less attention has been given to recreational vessel interactions in heavily used urban swimming areas;
7. Vancouver's marine wildlife and waterfront recreation are important components of the city's tourism economy and international reputation;
8. Responsible marine operators have demonstrated that technologies such as geofencing, automatic speed reduction systems, and clearly defined operating boundaries can support improved marine safety outcomes;
9. Abandoned, grounded, or derelict vessels periodically affect Vancouver beaches and nearshore recreational waters, creating environmental, navigational, and public safety concerns; and
10. Authority over marine navigation and vessel regulation primarily rests with the Government of Canada, including Transport Canada and Fisheries and Oceans Canada, together with the Vancouver Fraser Port Authority and Vancouver Police Department Marine Unit.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

- A. THAT the Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation request that Transport Canada, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, the Vancouver Fraser Port Authority, the Vancouver Police Department Marine Unit, and other relevant agencies review opportunities to improve swimmer safety, recreational marine safety, and marine wildlife protection adjacent to Vancouver beaches and park waters;
- B. THAT the Board advocate for:
 - i. Enhanced swim safety buoys and protected swimming boundary infrastructure adjacent to Vancouver beaches, including Sunset Beach and Spanish Banks as areas of priority;
 - ii. Expanded low-speed or no-wake measures adjacent to heavily used swimming beaches and recreational waterfront areas;
 - iii. clear and standardized public guidance regarding minimum distances from swimming beaches and whales, including consideration of 300m setbacks from swimming beaches and 400m setbacks from whales for high-speed personal watercraft;
 - iv. improved public signage, maps, and awareness information regarding whale protection, swimming areas, low-speed zones, and recreational marine safety at beaches, marinas, seawalls, and vessel launch locations;

- v. review of recreational vessel operator education, certification, and safety awareness measures relating to marine wildlife protection and urban recreational waterways;
 - vi. consideration of whether additional operating conditions, exclusion areas, or restrictions are appropriate for high-speed personal watercraft in heavily used urban recreational waters; and
 - vii. improved interagency coordination, prevention, and timely response regarding abandoned, grounded, or derelict vessels affecting Vancouver beaches and nearshore recreational waters;
- C. THAT the Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation express its willingness to support the placement of marine safety signage, maps, and whale awareness information at appropriate beaches, parks, seawalls, and waterfront access points under Park Board jurisdiction; and
- D. THAT the Chair of the Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation communicate this request to the relevant federal, port, and marine authorities on behalf of the Board.

CARRIED

In favour: Commissioners Bastyovanszky, Christensen, Jensen, Haer

Opposed: Commissioners Digby, Howard, Viridi

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

The Board adjourned at 10:04 pm.

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Steve Jackson
General Manager

Tom Digby
Chair