



PARKS & RECREATION COMMITTEE

Wednesday, June 19, 2019, 6:00 p.m.
Queen's Park Arena – Power Play Room

MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT:

John Davies	- Alternate Chair/Community Member
Shawna Barkley	- Community Member
Gary Holisko	- Community Member
Andrew Hull	- Community Member
Tonianne Mynen	- Community Member
Maryam Naser	- SD40 Representative
Sydney Sullivan	- Community Member

MEMBER REGRETS:

Councillor Chinu Das	- Co-Chair, City Council Member
Councillor Jaimie McEvoy	- Co-Chair, City Council Member
Deanna Tan	- Community Member

STAFF PRESENT:

Dean Gibson	- Director of Parks and Recreation
Steve Kellock	- Sr. Manager of Recreation Services & Facilities
Jay Young	- Manager, Recreation Facilities
Shelly Schnee	- Recreation Program Coordinator
Carilyn Cook	- Committee Clerk

The meeting commenced at 6:00 p.m. with Committee members touring the new Queen's Park Washroom and Concession Building and arriving at the meeting room at 6:28 p.m.

1.0 FACILITY TOUR

1.1 Tour of Queen's Park Washroom/Concession Building – Jay Young, Manager, Recreation Services (oral report)

Mr. Young provided a tour of the new Queen's Park washroom and concession building reminding members that the Committee was instrumental in encouraging the design of the building, leading to the establishment of the City's first universal public washroom. Committee members were informed that the new concession space now serves scoop ice cream and healthier menu options which has resulted in a 90% increase in revenue over the opening weeks. The new building also includes program storage space which is used by Playground Services and replaces the Play Leader Shack that was formerly in Queen's Park.

2.0 ADDITIONS / DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA

2.1 Additions/Deletions to the Agenda

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT the Agenda for the Parks and Recreation Committee meeting scheduled June 19, 2019 be adopted as circulated.

CARRIED.

All members of the Committee present voted in favour of the motion.

3.0 ADOPTION OF MINUTES

3.1 Adoption of the Minutes of April 24, 2019

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT the Minutes of the Parks and Recreation Committee meeting held April 24, 2019 be adopted as circulated.

CARRIED.

All members of the Committee present voted in favour of the motion.

4.0 PRESENTATIONS

4.1 Seniors and Youth Meeting in the Middle Initiative – Shelly Schnee, Recreation Program Coordinator – Senior Services

Ms. Schnee began her presentation on the Initiative which includes a multitude of intergenerational leadership projects.

In response to questions, staff advised:

- Each of the five projects included 10 to 20 participants for each workshop;
- The technology project resulted in a New Horizons technology grant for Century House; and,
- The Initiative was promoted via the City's website, Century House's Clarion magazine, New Westminster Secondary School, an article in the New Westminster Record, and by word of mouth.

4.2 Commit to Kids Child Protection Initiative Update – Steve Kellock, Sr. Manager of Recreation Services & Facilities (oral report)

Mr. Kellock commenced with his report, an update to the September 27, 2018 presentation to the Committee, reminding Committee members that the program goal is to reduce the risk of kids being exploited and educating staff on what to

look for with respect to child exploitation. He shared that the City is now halfway through the program with staff training having been conducted and policy development underway. Next steps include a public facing campaign to begin in July, with a review of the draft policies by this Committee, the Library Board, and Council being undertaken in the fall.

In response to questions, staff advised:

- A facilitator provided two hour, in-person training for staff, and staff members unable to attend the session have received the training through a webinar session. Staff receive a certificate once their training is complete;
- Staff are trained to intercept an issue as it is happening; however, it is noted that the posters alone can serve as a deterrent as people know their actions may be observed;
- The poster text for New Westminster will be different than what is on the presentation slides and posters will be tailored to the site where they will be displayed (i.e. library, pool);
- The higher representation of males on the posters is an accurate reflection of statistics which show that, in the 90th percentile, it is men who may negatively interact with youth;
- Staff have a clear reporting structure for abuse and understand that odd behaviour also needs to be addressed. Frontline staff are being trained and given framework as to what their roles are in these scenarios;
- The first step that staff would take during an intervention would be to introduce themselves to the person displaying negative/exploitive behaviour to make them aware that they have been noticed. Supervisors will assist younger staff with discretionary measures; and,
- The initiative came about, in part, from advice received from Councillor McEvoy and the understanding that a new, larger facility would provide more opportunity for inappropriate behaviour that may not occur in a smaller venue.

The Committee expressed gratitude for the City's undertaking of the program and with staff receiving training to deal with exploitive behaviour towards children.

4.3 Parks and Recreation Fees and Charges Bylaw No. 6673, 2001 Amendments – Dean Gibson, Director of Parks and Recreation

Mr. Gibson commenced with his report and reminded Committee members that the general practice is to adjust fees on a yearly basis in order to avoid large increases all at once. He advised that the key drivers with respect to fee increases included the labour component (e.g. increases in the collective agreements), the cost of energy to run the buildings, and keeping in line with neighbouring municipalities, sharing that if New Westminster's fees are too low, residents may

not be able to participate in activities as they be displaced by people attending from other cities.

Committee members were advised of a new category for special events, which was previously outside of the Parks and Recreation portfolio, and that the City will also be moving away from each facility being distinct and individual, keeping things consistent at all City venues (e.g. patrons would pay the same at each venue across various programming services).

Mr. Gibson shared that staff are looking to expand the Loonie fee to a Toonie fee across all skating programs, swimming on weekday afternoons, and all the time at the outdoor pools throughout the summer. He advised that quality of experience for users at the Loonie events is lessened due to the high volume of people attending the sessions, so increasing the fee to a Toonie for all drop in sessions will result in the City coming in about even monetarily but spreading out the demand across all public sessions, resulting in a higher quality of experience for clients. The current rate for the outdoor pools for children would go from \$1.80 to \$2.00; however, the adult fee would go from \$2.65 to \$2.00. Staff have investigated the net financial impact between the two and it is not significant.

In response to questions, staff advised:

- Free weekend outdoor pool swims started following the closure of the Kiwanis pool and it had been observed that weekend swims see lower attendance during the summer months;
- It is proposed that the outdoor pools move away from aged-based admission;
- Initiatives provide lower cost access to programs for those who need it. As well, the *Get Active Program* provides free access to kids over the summer and discount admission the rest of the year;
- Lineups now often occur at the outdoor pools on weekends as the facilities routinely reach capacity. This occurs more at Moody Park Pool than at Hume Park Pool;
- The high volume of visitors at the pools also affects the filtration systems with respect to sunscreen, etc.; however, closure for water quality only happens occasionally;
- Historical data regarding affordability with the move to a Toonie fee is available but not reliable. It is fair to speculate that reduced cost will increase attendance;
- The increase would be on a trial basis and assessed in one year to determine how it is working for both the City and patrons as the goal is to remove as many barriers to participation as possible; and,

- A customer's experience at the City's recreational facilities includes not only the number of people in the space, but staff's ability to maintain the facility to an appropriate public standard.

Discussion ensued, and the Committee provided the following comments:

- Saturday evenings could also be included as Toonie swims;
- Some families may not be able to afford a 100% increase in the fees (from \$1 to \$2);
- While there is a low-income program to assist those who may struggle with an increased fee, some may be too embarrassed to ask for that type of assistance;
- An increase to \$1.50 may be more reasonable and affordable;
- If the increase goes into effect at all facilities, it may significantly impact lower income families;
- The City could increase the fee to \$2 and also offer a free event at each venue so there are options to attend either;
- Free swimming could be offered at all of the pools in the morning with a fee-based swim offered in the afternoon;
- The motion should include that this will be reviewed in a year's time;
- Skating and swimming need to be addressed independently;
- All weekend swims could be Loonie swims; and,
- Eliminating the free swim may reduce the number of kids going to the pools on their own.

The following motions were passed:

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT the Parks and Recreation Committee recommend amending the proposed 2020 Parks and Recreation Fees and Charges rates for public swimming admission rates for indoor swimming to incorporate:

- *A \$2 general admissions rate for weekday afternoon swim sessions and explore opportunities to introduce a \$2 admission swim one time each weekend; and,*
- *Retention of \$1 admission swims on Sundays.*

CARRIED

All members of the Committee present voted in favour of the motion.

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT the Parks and Recreation Committee recommend amending the proposed 2020 Parks and Recreation Fees and Charges rates for public swimming admission rates for outdoor swimming to incorporate:

- *A \$2 general admission rate for all users, seven days per week; and,*

- *Explore opportunities to retain free swimming admission periods on weekends taking into account using fees to help manage periods of peak demand.*

CARRIED

All members of the Committee present voted in favour of the motion.

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT the Parks and Recreation Committee endorse the 2020 Parks and Recreation Fees and Charges Bylaw changes as amended and presented in Attachment “A” to the June 19, 2019 staff report and recommend adoption to City Council, and report back on the impact and outcomes of the \$2 admission programs in a year’s time.

CARRIED

All members of the Committee present voted in favour of the motion.

5.0 UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There were no items.

6.0 REPORTS

There were no items.

7.0 CORRESPONDENCE

There were no items.

8.0 NEW BUSINESS

8.1 Brow of the Hill Park Space Acquisition – Gary Holisko, Committee Member

Mr. Holisko shared that there is an empty lot located on Cornwall Street that neighbours would like the City to purchase and turn into a park as the area is lacking in greenspace.

Procedural note: Maryam Naser and Andrew Hull left the meeting at 8:43 p.m.

Mr. Gibson confirmed that at the June 10th Council meeting, a number of Brow of Hill residents requested that the City consider purchasing the lot at 1009 Cornwall Street for the purpose creating a park and providing much needed greenspace for the area. Mr. Gibson shared that Council received the thoughtful input from residents; however, there is no additional information to be shared at this time. He

advised that typically property acquisition matters are discussed in closed Council meetings as it involves negotiations with other parties.

Mr. Gibson acknowledged that the City is growing at a higher rate than it is acquiring park space and, while the purchase of the lot would be a significant investment by the City, it would increase the City's greenspace in an area where it is needed. As many major land development project opportunities for greenspace (e.g. Victoria Hill, etc.) are behind us, small lot acquisition may be a good opportunity. This is an active issue and will be revisited in the future.

In response to a question, Mr. Gibson advised that while parklets are beneficial, they do not provide the same overall utility as a park.

A Committee member suggested that with respect to heritage houses being moved from one site to another, perhaps incentive could be provided to the owner/developer to free up some of the land to be used as greenspace.

9.0 NEXT MEETING

Thursday, September 19, 2019, 6:00 pm. Location: To be determined

10.0 ADJOURNMENT

ON MOTION, the Parks and Recreation Committee meeting was adjourned at 8:56 p.m.

CARRIED.

Certified correct,

Original Signed

**John Davies, Committee Member
Chair**

Original Signed

**Carilyn Cook
Committee Clerk**