



PARKS & RECREATION COMMITTEE

Wednesday, November 27, 2013, 5:30 p.m.
Century House

MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Councillor Jonathan Coté	- Chair, City Council Member
Melissa Balfour	- Community Member
Shawna Barkley	- Community Member
Jacqueline Buchanan	- Community Member
John Davies	- Community Member
Ted Garbutt	- Community Member
Andrew Hull	- Community Member
Catherine Ouellet-Martin	- Community Member

REGRETS:

Jonina Campbell	- School Board Representative
-----------------	-------------------------------

STAFF PRESENT:

G. Dean Gibson	- Director Parks, Culture and Recreation
Jennifer Wilson	- Assistant Director, Parks, Culture and Recreation
Robert McCollough	- Manager, Museum & Archives
Jason Haight	- Manager, Business Operations
Diane Perry	- Manager, Community Development
Lauren Blake	- Committee Clerk

The meeting was called to order at 5:33 p.m.

1.0 ADDITIONS / DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA

No additions.

2.0 ADOPTION OF MINUTES

2.1 Adoption of the Minutes of September 25, 2013

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT the Parks and Recreation Committee meeting minutes held on September 25, 2013 be adopted.

CARRIED.

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

3.0 PRESENTATIONS

No items.

4.0 UNFINISHED BUSINESS

No items.

5.0 REPORTS

5.1 Endorsement to Deaccession Artefacts and Archival Material from the New Westminster Museum and Archives– Rob McCollough, Manager, New Westminster Museum & Archives

Rob McCollough, Manager, Museums and Archives, reviewed the process of deaccessioning artefacts and archival material.

Mr. McCollough clarified that items that are to be removed from the collection will be disposed of by one of the following means:

- Placed into the teaching collection for hands-on activities;
- Transferred to other museums;
- Returned back to the original owner;
- Sold through the City auction process, with the proceeds going to the museum budget to acquire new items or;
- Items with little or no value or that have been damaged will be destroyed.

Mr. McCollough and the Committee reviewed the various items on the deaccession list.

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT, in accordance with the New Westminster Museum and Archives Deaccessioning Policy, the Parks and Recreation Committee endorses the disposition of Heritage Materials from the New Westminster Museum and Archives collection as presented and discussed on November 27th 2013.

CARRIED.

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

Procedural note: Mr. McCollough left the meeting at 5:40 p.m.

5.2 Front Counter Civic Payments Services & Library Book Return Services – Director of Parks, Culture & Recreation

Dean Gibson, Director, Parks, Culture and Recreation, and Jason Haight, Manager, Business Operations, provided an overview of the proposed service program. The program will allow community and other civic centres to accept payments to the City, such as taxes, bills and bylaw tickets, as well as provide additional book return locations

other than the Library. Staff has recommended the following locations for receiving City payments:

- Century House;
- Centennial Community Centre and;
- The New Westminster Public Library.

Mr. Gibson noted the Anvil Centre had been considered as a potential location. However, staff will review the Anvil Centre as a location for this service after it has opened and established its core services.

Mr. Gibson reported that the Queensborough Community Centre has already expanded its services to include city payments and library book returns, and has enjoyed success. The community has expressed appreciation for these additional services.

Mr. Gibson noted that the return of library books is a Library Board issue. The Library Board will discuss the issue and provide feedback in early 2014.

Mr. Haight spoke to the financial implications of implementing the service program. Mr. Haight clarified that the identified locations already have the proper hardware system, however add-ons will be required, such as an additional cash register and bill desk. It was noted that the cost of implementing the program would be minor in comparison to the service the City will be providing to the community.

In response to questions from the Committee, staff provided the following information:

- A new station proposed to be created at the library with the proper software, cash register and scanner for processing payments. This station will be in addition to existing stations. The line for payments will be segregated from lines for signing out books, as processing payments is a longer transaction.
- There will be additional staff to help process payments during tax payment period towards the end of June and July.
- Library book drop-off locations will be indoors at high service and visible areas.
- Drop-off boxes will not automatically check books in. The check-in process for returned books will remain the same.
- The additional library drop-off location program will be reviewed to determine if there has been increased damage to books or an increase in the number of missing books.
- It is difficult to anticipate how the program will affect staffing.
- As it will be difficult to anticipate how the payment program will affect staffing at the civic centres, staff noted that the Parks and Recreation department has many auxiliary employees who are available to be scheduled to work a variety of hours. These employees can be utilized to help process payments during busier times of the year.
- Many civic centres have volunteer staff to help process payments. However, it was noted that volunteers will not be able to accept complex payments, such as property taxes.
- The collection of money from civic centres will need to be increased during busy money handling periods, such as tax payment periods.

- The new services will be communicated by the Parks and Recreation department, as well as the Communication department. Methods of communication will include the CityPage, electronic newsletters and display advertisements.

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT the implementation of civic payment services as outlined in November 27, 2013 staff report be recommended to City Council, and

THAT the introduction of library book return services at the proposed facilities be supported in principle, pending consideration by the Library Board.

CARRIED.

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

5.3 Off-Leash Dog Management Survey and Recommendations - Director of Parks, Culture & Recreation

Diane Perry, Manager, Community Development, reported that work with respect to dog off-leash areas has been an ongoing process. As part of that process, a survey regarding off-leash dog areas was conducted. Ms. Perry stated that the objective of the survey was to determine the level of satisfaction with existing off-leash dog areas, including whether the variety of type and size, and if the condition of existing off-leash dog areas are meeting expectations. The survey also enquired what neighbourhoods, if any, require new off-leash dog areas. Ms. Perry reported that she was pleased with the response to the survey, from both dog owners and non-dog owners.

Ms. Perry reported that the survey provided the following information:

- Education regarding existing dog parks is needed, as many community members were unaware of existing parks in their neighbourhoods.
- Existing dog parks should be reviewed and all brought up to a similar standard.
- Survey responders would like a variety of on and off-leash facilities.

In response to questions from the Committee, Ms. Perry provided the following information:

- The new trend for dog parks is to be open for all usage (on and off-leash) with areas that are open all day and every day.
- Dog parks may be off-leash at certain points during the day, depending on activities that are occurring nearby, such as schools or fields that are used by children at various times of the day.
- Advantages to open off-leash areas include providing the dogs with excellent exercise and decreasing competition and confusion between dogs when toys are thrown.
- Staff researched other cities with regards to dog parks and discovered that there will not be a solution for every problem. For example, creating separate dog parks for small and large dogs will require additional enforcement, as well as it may cause difficulty for owners that have multiple, different sized dogs.
- A variety of off-leash area surfaces, such as gravel or grass, has been recommended to accommodate the various preferences among dogs and their owners.

The Committee discussed the recommendations outlined in the report and noted the following:

- There can be inexpensive upgrades for existing dog parks, such as providing benches and water bowls and planting trees.
- Moody Park was suggested as an ideal location for a new off-leash dog area.
- Proper off-leash dog area etiquette and dog owner training should be communicated to dog park users.
- The Committee noted that there are more visually appealing alternatives to chain link fences that can be purchased for approximately the same cost.
- As it is not within the City's responsibility to clean-up dog waste, dog park caretaker groups can be created to help maintain dog area cleanliness.

Ms. Perry reported that there will be consultation with the community when a new dog park is established. Ms. Perry noted that consultation will be helpful as not all individuals that have strong feelings regarding dog parks will have completed the survey.

The Committee discussed non-fenced dog parks and noted the following:

- New Westminster has limited space, and off-leash non-fenced dog parks require large amounts of space.
- It may not be clear where the dog park begins and ends.
- There was concern expressed regarding unlicensed dogs using the park.
- There was concern expressed for individuals with mobility issues, such as seniors and individuals with disabilities.
- Lower Hume Park was identified as an ideal location for a trial off-leash non-fenced dog park.

Ms. Perry reported that any changes made to existing dog parks or any new dog parks will be introduced slowly to address any public apprehension.

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT staff finalize a formal Off Leash Dog Management Plan based on the conclusions and recommendations outlined in the November 27, 2013 staff report for further consideration by the Parks and Recreation Committee and recommendation to City Council.

CARRIED.

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

5.4 Parks, Culture & Recreation Refund Policy & Procedures – Jason Haight, Manager of Business Operations

Mr. Haight reviewed the current policy regarding refunding fees for City services. Mr. Haight noted that as this will be an internal administrative policy and that staff would appreciate input from and the endorsement of the Committee.

Mr. Haight provided an overview of the new policy as outlined in the staff report and also noted the following:

- The Anvil Centre will have its own refund policy.

- Retail sales are excluded from the policy.

The Committee noted that the refund policy chart regarding rentals was unclear.

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT the Committee accept the policy subject to clarification regarding the rental fee refund chart.

CARRIED.

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

**5.5 Westminster Pier Park Timber Wharf Interim Programming Prioritization -
Director of Parks, Culture & Recreation**

Mr. Gibson provided a brief history and overview of the Westminster Pier Park. As the wharf is ageing and will require structural work, the Parks and Recreation department would like to review some interim options to animate the space. Mr. Gibson noted that the wharf is structurally safe for the activities proposed.

Mr. Gibson reviewed the programming themes that have been identified through public consultation processes, and reported the following information:

- The Fraser Walk: a public pathway that runs throughout the space. The Fraser Walk has been designed to mimic the river, both in color and form.
- Social area: would include concrete ping pong and/or chess tables that are able to withstand the outdoor elements and public use.
- Outdoor activity and group fitness space: would include resilient rubber tile flooring and a platform to lead fitness classes.
- Fitness circuit: six stations with workout equipment dispersed along a jogging or walking track. The track has been designed around a full size multi-use sports court, which can also be divided into two half-sized courts.
- Urban beach: an area to rest and relaxation that would contain permanent umbrellas and hammocks.
- Sand volleyball courts: this theme would embellish the pre-existing courts. Suggestions for improvements include using overturned boats as benches, to enhance the maritime environment, as well as provide a seating area for spectators.
- An off-leash dog area: would serve as a dog park for downtown residents.
- A labyrinth: a quiet area for meditation, relaxing and calmness. This area could also include another concrete chess table.
- General landscaping: includes benches, drinking fountains, planters, banners and signage.

In response to questions from the Committee, staff provided the following information:

- There will not be washrooms at the Timber Wharf, as the site is not entirely serviced by water and electrical and Pier Park has full washroom facilities.
- As the activities for the site are interim solutions designed to animate the space, anything that will be located on the site will be designed to be removable for potential reuse

- The north edge of the wharf was noted as being in better condition than the south edge, due to debris coming down the river and impacting the southern edge of the wharf.

Procedural note: Jason Haight left at 8:18 p.m.

Mr. Gibson reviewed the scoring exercise. The Committee was asked to rank the nine program themes on numerous criteria, including:

- Addresses gaps in the provision of recreation across age and interest groups;
- Relates to the river, heritage of New Westminster and nature;
- Balances active and passive uses;
- Is accessible (i.e.: does this activity require equipment or additional costs);
- Supports multi-use;
- Is visually pleasing;
- Does not negatively impact short term opportunities that have a high value to the community (for example, does one activity or area undermine or conflict with another?) and;
- Enables a transition to future long term uses.

The Committee completed the ranking sheet.

Procedural note: Andrew Hull left at 8:33 p.m.

The results were reviewed, including the group total and overall ranking. The priorities of the Committee were noted in the following order:

- A public pathway
- General landscaping
- An urban beach
- An outdoor group fitness area
- A sports activity area
- Fitness circuit and stations
- A labyrinth
- Enhancements to the volleyball area
- Off-leash dog enclosure

As the priorities were established, staff and the Committee discussed the budget. Mr. Gibson noted that the scale and assigned budget of the programming themes can be broken up to accommodate the entire budget. The budget for a programming theme can also be scaled based on its ranked importance.

The Committee concluded that they are committed to finishing the first, or southwestern side of the park, as opposed to finishing the entire park in a halfhearted manner. Based on this conclusion, the Committee noted the following:

- The Fraser walkway should be kept intact, as it was ranked as the top priority.
- Enhancements to the volleyball courts were given priority, as it was noted that this amenity has established users.

- Additional budget can be allocated to the urban beach, as it is at the front of the site.
- By focusing on one area of the site, landscaping costs will decrease.
- A landscape architect will organize the site to be cohesive and visually pleasing.
- The sporting area was not assigned a value, as staff believes concrete barriers can be acquired inexpensively.

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT this report be received for information; and

THAT the interim use programming opportunities for Westminster Pier Park be prioritized and reconciled against available funding as noted in the following table; and

Program Element	Priority	Relative Funding Allotment (\$)
A public pathway	1	23,000
General landscaping	1	100,000
An urban beach	2	95,000
An outdoor group fitness area	3	78,100
A sports activity area	4	1,000
Fitness circuit and stations	5	0
A labyrinth	6	0
Enhancements to the volleyball area	7	0
Off-leash dog enclosure	8	0
TOTAL		\$298,000

THAT the above program elements be recommended to City Council for consideration.

CARRIED.

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

6.0 CORRESPONDENCE

- 6.1 Invitation to November 30, 2013 Gymnastics & Trampoline Open House - Jay Young, Manager, Queen’s Park Arenex.**

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT this correspondence be received

CARRIED.

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

7.0 NEW BUSINESS

8.0 NEXT MEETING

Thursday, January 30, 2014, 5:30 p.m. Century House

9.0 ADJOURNMENT

ON MOTION, the meeting was concluded at 9:10 p.m.

Certified Correct,

Councillor Jonathan Côté
Chair

Lauren Blake
Committee Clerk