



PARKS & RECREATION COMMITTEE

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

MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT:

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

REGRETS:

Jacqueline Buchanan	- Community Member
Jonina Campbell	- School Board Representative

STAFF PRESENT:

G. Dean Gibson	- Director Parks, Culture and Recreation
Jennifer Wilson	- Assistant Director, Parks, Culture and Recreation
Jason Haight	- Manager of Business Operations
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 November 27, 2013

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT the minutes of November 27, 2013 be amended by:

- Correcting the term "site" to "Timber Wharf" on page six; and
- Correcting the first reference to "south" on page seven to "north"

AND THAT the minutes be adopted as amended.

CARRIED.

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

3.0 PRESENTATIONS

3.1 Bird Atlas – Rob Butler

Mr. Rob Butler, provided a presentation regarding his work on creating a bird atlas for New Westminster. Mr. Butler reported that this will be the first urban atlas for Canada, and the second urban atlas for a North American city. Data collected regarding birds in urban locations can be used for city planning, supporting sustainable forestry, and provide information regarding a region's ecological health. Mr. Butler reported that New Westminster has been a top location for birds to live, and that birding has become a popular hobby in the city.

Mr. Butler noted that the City of Vancouver hosts celebrations during the migration period, and the celebrations provide a boost to the tourism sector. A bird conference will be held in Vancouver in 2018, and Mr. Butler spoke to the possibility of New Westminster attracting bird-watchers during that event.

Mr. Butler reviewed the various birds that live in the New Westminster, noting that they are mostly urban species. Mr. Butler provided suggestions regarding methods to increase the variety and number of bird species in New Westminster, and noted the following information:

- Birds are attracted to large coniferous trees, berry shrubs, freshwater and large tracts of land.
- Additional understory could be provided at Queen's Park. This can be achieved by including more shrubbery as part of a planting plan.
- The City can promote the growth of vegetation and restore marsh lands.
- The Port Royal foreshore area was cited as a good example of attracting bird species through the restoration of the native river edge habitat.

In response to questions from the Committee, Mr. Butler provided the following information:

- If the City provides birds with nests and habitats, the birds will remain in the city.
- When developing large projects, such as the Sapperton Green, birds could be attracted to the area by planting native plant species.

The Vancouver policy regarding building and landscaping, with respect to bird health, was cited as being a comprehensive policy that New Westminster could review for inspiration. The Committee requested that the Vancouver policy be forwarded to the Committee for review.

Procedural note: Mr. Butler left the meeting at 6:00 p.m.

3.2 Tennis Operation Proposal - Dimitri Penchev, Royal City Tennis Society

Mr. Dimitri Penchev, Royal City Tennis Society, provided a presentation regarding a potential partnership between the Royal City Tennis Society, Metro Vancouver and the City of New Westminster with respect to rehabilitating and operating tennis courts located at Westburnco Park.

Procedural note: Andrew Hull arrived at 6:06 p.m.

Mr. Penchev reported that tennis has been growing in popularity in Canada, and that tennis clubs have experienced membership increases between 35 and 50%, mostly for recreational use. Mr. Penchev would like to provide the community with a tennis Society that combines affordability, as tennis is a technical sport which requires education, with free access to courts.

Mr. Dean Gibson, Director, Parks, Recreation and Culture provided the following information regarding Westburnco Park:

- The park is located on top of a water reservoir that is owned by Metro Vancouver, and New Westminster has an agreement to use the surface area as a park space.
- The park was reconfigured approximately nine years ago with respect to seismic activity, and has not had additional work since.
- Permanent structures may not be located on top of the reservoir.

Mr. Penchev provided an illustration of potential plans to rehabilitate the courts that are currently located at Westburnco Park. Mr. Penchev suggested the following improvements be made to the park:

- Provide surface area improvements, including power washing and cleaning;
- Provide additional fencing along the courts
- Draw new lines to create courts five through seven;
- Refresh lines for existing courts one through four;
- Provide water and electrical service for the site; and
- Provide chemical toilets.

Mr. Penchev provided an example schedule for the seven courts, to demonstrate how the courts could operate as part of a partnership between the City and the Royal City Tennis Society. It was suggested that courts one through four could be limited to the Society's, and courts five through seven could be open for public use. Mr. Penchev noted that the courts could also allow the City to operate various tennis events, such as festivals, competitions and tournaments.

In response to questions from the Committee, Mr. Penchev provided the following information:

- Courts five through seven require the drawing of new lines, power washing and detailed cleaning. No cost estimate has been provided for this service.

- The Royal City Tennis Society would provide and operate a variety of tennis programs, mostly recreational.
- Mr. Penchev noted that parking should not be an issue at the site as the courts have only a small number of person “turn-overs” in any given hour (unlike team sports such as soccer).
- Lighting for the site has not been considered at this point due to restrictions from Metro Vancouver.
- The Society would be responsible for the upkeep of the courts, including repainting the courts as needed and cleaning. The Society is currently negotiating how the funds for the upkeep will be provided.
- All of the Society’s tennis coaches are members of the Tennis Professionals Association, and have insurance of two million dollars. If a Society coach is not present, the courts will operate like other courts in the city.

The Committee expressed reservations with respect to developing the location exclusively for tennis. Committee members noted that children have used the open, flat surface to learn how to ride a bike. The Committee suggested that the proposal begin with the use of four courts, and if it is determined that there is a need for additional courts, the City could develop the additional courts.

Mr. Gibson noted that as the site is not owned by the City, the project will require additional investigation. Staff will also investigate the questions and comments provided by the Committee. Councillor Coté suggested that the presenter and staff investigate developing a budget, highlight the community benefit of the plan and program the courts to maximize their use.

Procedural note: Mr. Penchev left the meeting at 6:46 p.m.

3.3 Western Canadian Swim Championships Update – Hilary Knowles, Canada Games Pool

Ms. Hilary Knowles, Manager, Aquatic Services, Canada Games Pool, reported that Canada Games Pool will be hosting the Western Canadian championships from February 11-16, 2014. This will be a qualifying competition for between four and five hundred swimmers, aged 16 and under. The event will be hosted in partnership with Hyack Swim club and Tourism Burnaby.

Ms. Knowles reported that the Canada Games Pool has hosted high level events approximately once every ten years. During events such as this, Canada Games Pool staff remains mindful of the public, providing extended passes to customers, and maintaining the hours of the fitness centre.

Ms. Knowles invited the Committee to attend the event.

In response to questions from the Committee, Ms. Knowles noted that Swim Canada has set the admission fee for the event. Committee Member Andrew Hull reported that the admission fee will be between five and ten dollars. Mr. Hull

noted that there are nine members of the Hyack Swim club participating in the event.

Ms. Knowles reported that Skills Canada has booked Canada Games Pool for the 1st Annual Skills Canada BC Provincial Cardboard Boat Championship. The event provides New Westminster high school students with an opportunity to create boats from cardboard and duct tape. There will be approximately 100 participants in the competition. Ms. Knowles noted that Skills Canada is an organization that develops and promotes vocational training. Ms. Knowles will provide Mr. Gibson with further information regarding the competition to provide to the Committee.

4.0 UNFINISHED BUSINESS

4.1 Dog Off-Leash Management Plan – Director of Parks, Culture & Recreation

Ms. Diane Perry, Manager, Community Development, provided an update regarding the Dog Off-Leash Management Plan. Ms. Perry reviewed the updated report, and noted the following information:

- The provision, location and management plans have been updated;
- The guidelines regarding dog parks has been updated;
- Ms. Perry reviewed the outline of the recommendations found on page four of the report.

The Committee suggested that the plan include signage at dog parks regarding licencing, in order to increase rates of compliance.

MOVED AND SECONDED

THAT 2014 Dog Off-Leash Management Plan be endorsed and forwarded to City Council for consideration.

CARRIED.

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

5.0 REPORTS

5.1 Parks Regulation Bylaw Amendment Proposal - Director of Parks, Culture & Recreation

Mr. Gibson introduced the report, noting that the bylaw has been in place for a considerable period of time and requires minor updates regarding delegation of authority, administrative needs and general updates or additions due to new activities or services.

Mr. Jason Haight, Manager, Business Operations, reviewed the updates that have been made to the bylaw.

Speaking to paragraph 20, Mr. Haight reported that the updated fine of \$500 is consistent with fines imposed by other municipalities.

Mr. Haight noted that a new bylaw number and date will be assigned to address paragraphs 21 and 22 that have been added to the bylaw. Mr. Haight also clarified that with respect to paragraph 21, “dispute” refers to individuals disputing the terms and conditions of the bylaw.

Discussion ensued, and the Committee provided the following comments:

- The Committee suggested using gender neutral language throughout the bylaw.
- The terms “park” and “vehicle” have been defined under paragraph two, and should be capitalized throughout the bylaw.
- The wording of paragraph six was noted as awkward, and the Committee suggested changing the word “play” to “undertake”.
- The Committee noted the wording of paragraph eight was awkward, and suggested moving the phrase “first had and obtained” to after “permission”.
- Regarding paragraph nine, the Committee requested that the point clarify if dogs are only allowed in off-leash areas.
- The Committee expressed concern regarding paragraph 22, and the age requiring parental supervision being listed as 12 and under. However, staff noted that increasing the age may cause additional challenges as related to the many programs offered by the Parks, Culture & Recreation Department and community organizations within parks.

Staff noted that the parks bylaw is largely enforced on a complaint or “as needed” basis as the City has limited resources to aggressively enforce the various provisions of the bylaw. Some of the changes proposed will bring the bylaw more into alignment with long standing administrative practises of the Department.

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT the Parks and Recreation Committee endorse the proposed amendments to the Parks Regulation Bylaw No. 3646, 1959 with consideration for the Committee’s comments and forward to Council for consideration.

CARRIED.

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

5.2 2014/15 Draft Committee Meeting Schedule - Director of Parks, Culture & Recreation

The Committee discussed the proposed meeting schedule for the 2014 term. The Committee noted that the meeting date for June occurs on the last day of school, and that the meeting date for September occurs during the Union of British Columbia Municipalities conference. The Committee changed the June 26 date to Wednesday, June 18, and the September 25 date to Wednesday, September 24.

Councillor Coté suggested that the Committee tour the various City parks when the weather improves. It was suggested that the tour occur in June, to allow for a tour of Anvil Centre.

6.0 CORRESPONDENCE

No items.

7.0 NEW BUSINESS

8.0 NEXT MEETING

Thursday, February 27, 2014, 5:30 p.m. Century House

9.0 ADJOURNMENT

ON MOTION, the meeting was concluded at 7:51 p.m.

Certified Correct,

Councillor Jonathan Coté
Chair

Lauren Blake
Committee Clerk