



CITY OF VANCOUVER

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Date: April 18, 2007
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RTS No.: 6714
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Meeting Date: April 19, 2007

TO: Vancouver City Council
FROM: Chief Constable
SUBJECT: Estimate of the Policing Cost for the 2007 Stanley Cup Playoffs

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Mayor on behalf of Council, write to Premier Gordon Campbell and the Solicitor General to request that the Province fully fund the police deployment for the 2007 Stanley Cup Playoffs.

CHIEF CONSTABLE'S COMMENTS:

The Chief Constable notes that the funding for policing the playoffs cannot be included in the annual budget as insufficient information is available at the time of preparing the budget.

Past extended playoff runs by teams in Edmonton and Calgary have required significant deployments and expenses to maintain safety.

CITY MANAGER'S COMMENTS:

The City Manager notes that a successful playoff run by the Vancouver Canucks brings benefits to the entire Province of British Columbia and therefore, it is appropriate for the Province to cover the extraordinary cost of the event.

Therefore, the City Manager RECOMMENDS Council approve Recommendation A.

POLICY:

There is no applicable Council policy.

SUMMARY:

The cost for policing the spontaneous celebrations that result from Stanley Cup playoff games has a significant impact on the VPD budget as these events are not budgeted.

PURPOSE:

The City of Vancouver is host to a vast number of events each year. People from throughout the lower mainland are drawn to the City to experience the variety of entertainment available at these events.

A number of these celebrations can be categorized as regional and province-wide events rather than civic in that the majority of the people attending are residents of other parts of the lower mainland rather than Vancouver. The citizens of Vancouver represent only 27% of the population of the Census Metropolitan Area (CMA). Yet this relatively smaller proportion of residents is obligated to pay for the policing of large regional events without the financial assistance of other municipalities in the CMA. The VPD has begun planning the policing response for a series of events that will draw people from throughout the region to the City.

The Vancouver Canucks appear to be poised for a playoff run. A consequence of a successful local sports franchise is that large numbers of fans gather together and celebrate wins or commiserate losses during the playoffs. Vancouver witnessed this going back as far as 1994 and up to and including 2004, the last year the Canucks were in the playoffs. Lower Mainland residents gravitate to Robson Street in Vancouver and a visible police presence is required to assure the safety and security of these citizens.

Other Canadian jurisdictions have had similar issues during the Stanley Cup playoffs. Both Calgary in 2004 and Edmonton in 2006 had major problems with celebratory crowds in their downtown entertainment districts after playoff games (wins and losses). Both cities deployed enormous police resources into the area of these celebrations and were able to maintain reasonable control of the situation. A major difference between these two cities and Vancouver is that the people in the crowds were primarily residents of the policing jurisdiction rather than regional residents as is the Vancouver situation. For example, Calgary Police serves 93% of their CMA, and Edmonton Police serves 69% of their CMA.

Operational deployment to manage the crowds must be at a level that ensures the safety of the public and VPD members. The cost for policing any playoff run cannot be anticipated in

the yearly operational budget because it would be speculative at the time of budget development. However, by the use of reports from the 2002 - 2003 seasons as well as referring to the 1994 "Riot Review Report", the need for crowd management can be forecast.

BACKGROUND:

Crowds gathering to show support for local sports teams are not a new phenomenon, this has been occurring for decades. However there have been significant changes in the nature of these crowds, specifically an unfortunate change in the attitude of the people who join in the crowds.

The local experience really began in the playoff run of 1994 when the Canucks were able to win their way to the Stanley Cup final. In the first two rounds of the playoffs the celebrations were relatively short, loud and harmless. As the playoffs progressed the crowds became larger and more vociferous. During the Stanley Cup final people came from throughout the Lower Mainland to gather on Robson Street.

After the Canucks' loss in game 7 of the final, a very large crowd gathered on Robson Street. A number of minor events occurred that escalated the hostile feelings in this large group. These hostile feelings were fed by criminals and hooligans who were present to cause mischief and mayhem, not to cheer for their team. Many fights, assaults, and acts of vandalism occurred and the crowd dynamic changed. The 1994 Stanley Cup Riot ensued with significant property theft and damage, and numerous injuries occurring.

This event was reviewed and studied and a number of reports were issued. Many recommendations were made. One of the principal recommendations was that a highly visible and active police presence be dedicated in the area of this type of event prior to the crowd gathering. The belief is that a large visible police presence is a deterrent to those members of the crowd that attend to cause problems¹.

During the 2004 playoff run the Calgary Police Service deployed their members in a manner similar to what the VPD has done in past years and is proposing this year. Calgary deployed significant numbers of police officers increasing in size each round. The peak deployment was approximately 350 members during the Stanley Cup finals. Calgary was unable to provide a total cost for this deployment, but advises that the Crowd Control Unit (CCU) component of the deployment cost \$1.2M. They estimate that their total cost was likely double that amount given the number of members deployed.

In 2006 Edmonton also followed this deployment model and peaked at about 300 members for the finals. Their total cost was \$2.1M.

Vancouver's last experience with the playoffs came in 2004. That year the Canucks were eliminated in round two. It was noted that the crowd gathering downtown during round two was larger in 2004 than the downtown crowd late in round three of 1994. The phenomenon of gathering in one location to celebrate or commiserate seemed to have grown significantly in the interim. This problem is now exacerbated for games on Fridays or Saturdays when the bars and nightclubs downtown have the later closings. The VPD's most recent experiences in

¹ For details see 'BC Police Commission Report on the Riot' and the VPD Riot Review Report

the downtown entertainment district with street disorder problems such as public drunkenness, hooliganism, random violence, and alcohol and drug intoxication means that the policing challenges are greater than have ever been experienced.

With the history of hockey playoff crowd behaviour, and building on the experience of both Calgary and Edmonton, it is clear that the VPD must deploy police resources to provide safety and security to those citizens that attend to celebrate responsibly while dealing swiftly with those who are intent on causing problems.

DISCUSSION:

This estimated cost for policing the 2006/2007 hockey playoffs is based on the 2006 rate of pay for members at a straight overtime rate. The 2007 salary rate for members is still being negotiated. The 2006 overtime rates are:

Constables (100% rate)	\$67.08 per hour
Sergeants (125% rate)	\$83.84 per hour
Inspector (160% rate)	\$107.32 per hour

The estimate is based on the assumption that each series will go the maximum seven games. All costs are based on a 5 hour shift; hockey games are normally 3 hours in duration. One factor that would influence shift length would be if the games took place on a Friday or Saturday when premises in the Downtown entertainment district remain open late. Fan reaction will be monitored on a game by game basis and may necessitate an increase in the deployment levels.

The deployment levels for round 3 and 4 are designed to ensure that there is a visible police presence in the downtown core prior to and during the arrival of celebratory fans. In 1994, an estimated 70,000 descended on Robson and Granville Streets and the immediate area after each game.

The numbers of police officers assigned to GM Place for home games will be increased for playoff games. This expense is cost recoverable and it is NOT included in this estimate. GM Place management do not consider it their responsibility to pay for policing away from their facility.

ROUND 1

GAME #'S	MINIMUM COST PER GAME	MAXIMUM COST PER GAME
1, 2 & 3	\$19,916.80	\$30,730.20
4, 5, 6 & 7	\$30,730.20	\$37,705.80
7 Game TOTAL	\$182,671.20	\$243,013.80

ROUND 2

GAME #'S	MINIMUM COST PER GAME	MAXIMUM COST PER GAME
1, 2 & 3	\$27,292.40	\$37,705.80
4, 5, 6 & 7	\$37,705.80	\$56,184.10
7 Game TOTAL	\$232,700.40	\$337,853.80

ROUND 3

GAME #'S	MINIMUM COST PER GAME	MAXIMUM COST PER GAME
1, 2 & 3	\$37,705.80	\$56,184.10
4, 5, 6 & 7	\$56,184.10	\$99,004.50
7 Game TOTAL	\$337,853.80	\$564,570.30

STANLEY CUP FINALS

GAME #'S	MINIMUM COST PER GAME	MAXIMUM COST PER GAME
1, 2 & 3	\$57,684.10	\$99,004.50
4, 5, 6 & 7	\$149,004.50	\$149,004.50
7 Game TOTAL	\$769,070.30	\$992,036.00

The estimated minimum cost for the projected deployment is \$1,522,295.70 with the maximum deployment cost estimated to be \$2,137,473.90.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

The 2007 Police Budget does not include funding to cover the estimated costs. Therefore, if the Province does not provide funding there is no identified source of funding.

SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

The purpose of this extraordinary police deployment is to ensure the safety and security of the participants of these celebrations as well as the general public safety of all citizens.

CONCLUSION:

This proposed deployment plan can be described as the VPD's minimum recommended deployment. The deployment in the later rounds, despite still being the minimum recommended, is very close to the maximum possible deployment. In order to deploy more resources we would need to strip a number of support units of personnel which would

effectively shut the units down. This would involve premiums due to short-notice shift adjustments. Many of the proposed squads would be staffed through mandatory callouts.

Given that the attendees to this somewhat spontaneous event come primarily from other parts of the Lower Mainland it would seem appropriate that the cost for policing the event should be shared. Council may wish to make a request to the Provincial Government for financial support for this deployment.

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