



ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Report Date: November 3, 2014
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Meeting Date: November 25, 2014

TO: Vancouver City Council

FROM: General Manager of Community Services

SUBJECT: Authorization to Receive Operating and Staffing Funds from BC Housing for the Evelyne Saller Centre and the Gathering Place

RECOMMENDATION

- A. THAT Council approve the continued receipt of annual funding from the British Columbia Housing Management Commission ("BC Housing") to provide services operated at the Evelyne Saller Centre and the Gathering Place.
- B. THAT the Director of Legal Services in consultation with the General Manager of Community Services be authorized to execute support services agreements with BC Housing effective immediately, for a period of three years with an option to mutually agree to extend for two further twelve month periods (12) month periods. Such agreements customarily include an indemnification by the City in favour of BC Housing and the province.

REPORT SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to request Council acceptance of annual funding from the BC Housing, and authorize the Director of Legal Services to execute support services agreements with BC Housing to secure such funding. Council previously authorized the Director of Legal Services to execute similar agreements between the City and BC Housing for the periods 2001 to 2006, 2006 through 2012, and 2012 through 2014.

COUNCIL AUTHORITY/PREVIOUS DECISIONS

Annual funding has been provided to the City by BC Housing for the Evelyne Saller Centre since 1976 and for the Gathering Place since 1996.

The last approval was in May 2012. Council approved, on consent, the continued receipt of annual funding from BC Housing to provide health and food services at the Evelyne Saller Centre and health services at the Gathering Place.

CITY MANAGER'S/GENERAL MANAGER'S COMMENTS

The City Manager and the General Manager of Community Services RECOMMENDS approval of A and B.

REPORT

Background/Context

The province of British Columbia (through BC Housing) funds a portion of the services provided by the Evelyne Saller Centre and the Gathering Place on behalf of the residents of the Downtown Eastside ("DTES") and the Downtown South who are socially and economically marginalized. Typically, people who receive services from the two Centres are on income assistance or pensions and/or low income/no income and live in SRO's in the community or are homeless (shelter or street). Services are provided to a varied demographic of youth, adults, seniors, couples and families, who are all in need of essential services.

The Evelyne Saller Centre is located at 320 Alexander Street and is open 365 days per year. The Evelyne Saller Centre offers: food services, with over 300,000 meals per year; health hygiene services, providing showers laundry and delousing; and recreation programming.

The Gathering Place, located at 609 Helmcken Street is open 365 days per year. The Gathering Place offers: food services; health/hygiene services, providing showers, laundry and delousing; recreation programming; and educational services in partnership with the Vancouver School Board.

Annual funding has been provided by the province through BC Housing to the Evelyne Saller Centre since 1976 and to the Gathering Place since 1996. In 2014 the BC Housing approved budget for the Evelyne Saller Centre was \$2,010,120; for the Gathering Place it was \$191,928.

Strategic Analysis

Food services provided at the Evelyne Saller Centre are a critical part of the food security network in the DTES. Health and hygiene services provided at the Evelyne Saller Centre and the Gathering Place, in the Downtown South, are critical to the health of the low income and homeless populations in the DTES and Downtown South, respectively.

Implications/Related Issues/Risk (if applicable)

Financial

In the proposed agreement, BC Housing agrees to provide an annual budget that is determined each year to include annual adjustments. The Evelyne Saller Centre also generates revenue from food sales; in 2014 the budget included \$420,000 revenue from food sales.

The proposed Provincial (BCH) agreement provides financial supports for the following:

- 100% of the operating and staffing costs for food and health/hygiene services; and 50% of the administration costs for the Evelyne Saller Centre. The province's contribution was \$2,010,120 and the City's contribution, for programming related to this contract, was \$500,521 for the 2014 fiscal year.
- 100% of the operating and staffing costs for the health/hygiene services provided at Gathering Place. The province's contribution of \$191,928 for the 2014 fiscal year fully funded this program.

The City's portion of funds to operate the two centres is approved as part of the City's annual budget.

Human Resources/Labour Relations

The City staff at the two centres are members of CUPE 15, with the exception of the food services at the Evelyne Saller Centre who are contracted to Aramark Canada Ltd. by the City, with the approval of BC Housing. The City's contract with Aramark is for a term of 3 years, commencing February 1, 2014 and expiring January 31, 2017. The Aramark workers in the food services are members of Unite Here Local 40.

Legal

Law and Risk Management have reviewed the contracts and concur with this recommendation, noting that the agreements do require the City to indemnify BC Housing and the province for claims and costs arising from the City's act or omission of the City related to the City's operation and management of the centres.

Other

BC Housing funding enables the provision of essential services, food and health/hygiene, to low income residents and the homeless in the downtown core.

CONCLUSION

By offering reliable daily supports, seven days per week, the Evelyne Saller Centre and Gathering Place contribute to the well-being and stability of the poorest residents in the DTES and Downtown South. With Council's acceptance of this report, the Director of Legal Services will be authorized to execute the support services agreements with BC Housing, and ensure the continued provision of services.

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