

B.6

Council Member's Motion

6. Prioritizing Public Safety

Submitted by: Councillor De Genova

WHEREAS

1. Violent crime has increased in the City of Vancouver at an alarming rate in recent years despite many people working from home, and many businesses, restaurants, bars, retail outlets and public spaces being closed to the public during COVID19. This is in addition to a severe decline in tourist activity as per health guidelines and requirements;
2. The Vancouver Police Department (VPD) has released statistics citing that each day, on average, there are more than four reported unprovoked and random stranger attacks on victims in the City of Vancouver. Example, the violent stabbing of a twenty-five-year-old man in January 2022 at a Downtown coffee shop left him in hospital with life-threatening injuries;
3. The media have reported incidents of brutal and violent assaults to people who live, work in or are visiting Vancouver;
4. A motion brought forward in October 2020 to have a Special Council meeting was amended. The resolution no longer included a special meeting of the Council where the public could speak to City Council about the current state of public safety and violent crime in the City of Vancouver;
5. A motion titled 'Public Safety: Evaluating and Addressing Any Impacts of City of Vancouver Actions on Neighbourhood Safety' passed in October 2021, and although work on this motion is underway, a roundtable discussion with businesses hosted by the City of Vancouver took place in December 2021. This roundtable discussion included the VPD and a memo to Council including a list of recommendations, concerns and suggestions from businesses that have been affected by violent shoplifting and property crime;
6. The actions of City Councils and municipal governments in cities including Seattle, San Francisco and Los Angeles have perpetuated violent crime street disorder. Ultimately, this has resulted in negative ramifications on the safety and wellbeing of these cities, including impact on their economy and tourism;
7. Presentations at many Vancouver City Council meetings have included people who have shared their stories and concerns about public safety;

8. Businesses are dealing with the burdens of violent shoplifting, broken doors and windows, and associated trauma on their employees. This has also resulted in a decline in business;
9. Bringing back a defeated motion to Council is permissible after 365 days and is addressed in section 8.14 of the procedure bylaw and states:

(c) if the motion is made more than 365 days after the motion was defeated, or in a new Council term, the motion may be made by any Council member, regardless of how they voted or whether they voted in the first instance.

10. Everyone deserves to feel safe in the City of Vancouver.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED

- A. THAT Council direct staff to organize a Special Meeting of Council, with a focus on hearing presentations from residents, businesses and community delegations and understanding concerns related to public safety and violent crime citywide.
- B. THAT Council direct staff to:
 - i. Invite executive staff from the following city departments, agencies, and provincial ministries, to participate in this Special Council meeting with a presentation, including but not limited to:
 - The City of Vancouver
 - Homeless Outreach Team and Social Policy
 - Streets and Sanitation
 - The Vancouver Police Department and Vancouver Police Board members
 - The Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation
 - Vancouver Coastal Health
 - BC Housing
 - Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions
 - BC Prosecution Service
 - ii. Schedule this Special Council meeting on a weekday evening in May 2022, advertised to the public, including on social media.
- C. THAT Council direct staff, to request the Vancouver Police Department work together with them to develop an action plan and report back to Council no later than June 2022 with information and recommendations to address and mitigate public safety concerns and issues.

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REFERENCES

1. Motion: Sustaining Public Safety as a Core Service in the City of Vancouver
City of Vancouver
<https://council.vancouver.ca/20201007/documents/pspc14.pdf>

Meeting Minutes:
<https://council.vancouver.ca/20201007/documents/pspc20201007min.pdf>
2. Motion: Public Safety: Evaluating and Addressing Any Impacts of City of Vancouver Actions on Neighbourhood Safety
City of Vancouver
<https://council.vancouver.ca/20211005/documents/spec11.pdf>

Meeting Minutes:
<https://council.vancouver.ca/20211005/documents/spec20211005min.pdf>
3. Procedure Bylaw-City of Vancouver
<https://bylaws.vancouver.ca/12577c.PDF>
4. More than four people attacked per day in Vancouver as 'stranger assaults' on the rise, police say
CTV BC
<https://bc.ctvnews.ca/more-than-4-people-attacked-per-day-in-vancouver-as-stranger-assaults-on-the-rise-police-say-1.56320>
5. Man Suffers life-threatening stab wounds after random attack in Vancouver coffee shop
Global News BC
<https://globalnews.ca/news/8534708/coffee-shop-stabbing-vancouver/>
[Man suffers life-threatening stab wounds after random attack in Vancouver coffee shop - BC | Globalnews.ca](https://globalnews.ca/news/8534708/man-suffers-life-threatening-stab-wounds-after-random-attack-in-vancouver-coffee-shop-bc/)
6. MEMO: CMO - Memo to Mayor & Council - Business Roundtable on Property Crime - RTS 14744.pdf
City of Vancouver
<https://vancouver.ca/files/cov/12-16-2021-council-memo-council-memo-business-roundtable-on-property-crime.pdf>
7. VPD Investigates random assault at Downtown SkyTrain Station
Vancouver Police Department
<https://vpd.ca/news/2022/03/18/vpd-investigates-random-assault-at-downtown-skytrain-station/>
8. VPD makes arrest after woman stabbed with a hypodermic needle
Vancouver Police Department
<https://vpd.ca/news/2022/03/10/vpd-makes-arrest-after-woman-stabbed-with-hypodermic-needle-2/>

9. VPD Seeks witnesses, victims to violent attacks
Vancouver Police Department
<https://vpd.ca/news/2022/02/27/vpd-seeks-witnesses-victims-to-violent-attacks/>
10. VPD re-arrests woman for second stranger attack in four days
Vancouver Police Department
<https://vpd.ca/news/2022/02/06/vpd-re-arrests-woman-for-second-stranger-attack-in-four-days/>
11. VPD arrests suspect in NYE Stranger Attack
Vancouver Police Department
<https://vpd.ca/news/2022/01/25/vpd-arrests-suspect-in-nye-stranger-attack/>