

**MINUTES OF MEETING
OF THE BOARD OF PARKS AND RECREATION
HELD AT THE PARK BOARD OFFICE
ON TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 2009**

PRESENT:	Chair	- Raj Hundal
	Vice Chair	- Loretta Woodcock
	Commissioners	- Constance Barnes
		- Sarah Blyth
		- Aaron Jasper
		- Ian Robertson
		- Peter Kuran
	Acting General Manager	- Liane McKenna
	Director of Vancouver East District	- Philip Josephs
	Co-Acting Director of Stanley District	- Thomas Soulliere
	Co-Acting Director of Stanley District	- Piet Rutgers
	Director, Planning and Operations	- Terry Walton
	Manager of Recreation Services, Vancouver East District	
	Acting Director of Queen Elizabeth District	- Diane Murphy
	Manager of Communications	- Joyce Courtney
	Recorder	- Hart Nijjar

Commissioner Mackinnon was absent.

STAFF REPORT

2010 Budget Initiatives

The Board received a staff report dated November 10, 2009 recommending that the Board approve the proposed 2010 budget initiatives as outlined in this report.

Staff provided the Board with information on proposed service adjustments to the Park Board operating budget to address the \$2.8 million budget reduction target allocated by the City. These initiatives were developed to support Council's direction to confine property tax increase and balance the operating budget. Once Council approves the 2010 operating budget in December, staff will begin to implement the service adjustments approved by the Board.

The following delegations requested to speak with the Board:

1. Paul Faoro, CUPE Local 15
2. Mavis Hnidy
3. Mike Jackson, CUPE Local 1004
4. Ron Corbett, Champlain Heights Community Centre Association
5. Emma Sutherland, Red Fox Program
6. Jeff Malmgren, Co-Chair, Vancouver Active Community Network

7. Terri Clark
8. Keith Jacobson, President, Killarney Community Centre Association
9. Eric Harms, Association Presidents Group
10. Gail Uthoff, Renfrew Park Community Centre Association
11. Thomas Hobbs
12. Christopher Richardson
13. Tim Ames, Grandview Community Association
14. Steve Bouchard, Ray-Cam Co-operative Centre
15. Barb Wilkins
16. Alan Zeller
17. Brad Tamplin, President, Kensington Community Association
18. Marion Waterston, President, Riley Park Community Association

The following is a summary of comments provided by the foregoing delegations:

- There has been a lack of consultation with Park Board partners and the consultation that did occur was poor
- The Park Board must stand up for parks and recreation in Vancouver and demand proper funding from Council
- There has been minimal discussion at the City level regarding budget cuts to the Park Board
- The proposed cuts will remove core programming
- There are too many managers and supervisors in the Park Board system and the organizational structure should be re-examined and streamlined
- The Board can not vote in favour of the proposed budget cuts as the report is not detailed enough and it is unclear which specific staff will be impacted
- There has been a lack of revenue from the Bloedel Conservatory, but this has largely been due to external circumstances such as lack of parking due to construction, and service interruption due to the civic strike
- The Bloedel Conservatory is a unique attraction in Vancouver and provides an opportunity for everyone to visit a tropical environment
- Outside funders should be approached to examine the possibility of keeping the Conservatory open
- Cuts to maintenance will decrease the aesthetic appeal of parks
- Streamlining sanitation services is a cost-effective solution to address the budget gap
- Closure of the Farmyard will decrease the number of visitors to Stanley Park
- Reduction in street tree placement is contrary to the City's green initiatives
- There has been no information provided on cost over runs
- The district separation structure should be re-examined
- The Champlain Heights Community Centre Association before and after school care program is at capacity with a large waiting list, indicating demand for the program
- This program is a necessity for the community

- The program provided to the Association by the Park Board to run this program completes many other tasks in the community centre and the loss of this position would create serious staffing issues
- The Association can not afford to take over operation of the program
- Funding for the Active Communities program can not be reduced as it helps facilitate core mandates of the Park Board
- The Red Fox Program increases active fitness levels of various vulnerable populations
- The program has won numerous awards and creates positive role models for Aboriginal youth
- The loss of this program would be detrimental
- The programs provided by Active Communities are a result of gaps identified in current community programs, so to ask that they be absorbed by the community is not logical
- The Active Adventure Passport is a very successful program and has grown in numbers
- It is an invaluable program for the City of Vancouver
- Horticulture is a pillar of the Park Board and cuts to Queen Elizabeth, Bloedel Conservatory, and Sunset Nursery go against this
- There is a rich history behind these areas and they have provided important services to the City
- These three areas provide an alternative activity for those who are not physically active
- Vancouverites are demanding more recreation and the community can not become more active with these cuts
- Community centres are accessible to all citizens and cuts to them will impact the most vulnerable
- Funding for community centres has not kept pace with densification
- Cutting recreation opportunities is a false economy and investment in youth today will have exponential benefits in the future
- It is acknowledged that the Park Board faces a difficult decision in determining where budget cuts should occur, but creative solutions must be found rather than relying solely on cutting programs and staff
- Cuts to community centre staff can not be recovered by the associations and will negatively impact all citizens of Vancouver
- The Bloedel Conservatory is meaningful to many citizens and is a tourist attraction
- The plants in the Conservatory have no future without the existence of the Conservatory
- Assessment of the impact of staff cuts due to the closure of the Farmyard are not accurate
- Most animals from the Farmyard are not candidates for adoption due to old age and poor health

Moved by Commissioner Jasper,

THAT the Board receive this report for information.

Board members discussed the report. A Board member asked staff to clarify the cost of finding a private operator for the Conservatory and the Farmyard. Staff estimated the cost would be minimal, although that option has not been considered in detail at this point in time. A member of the Board acknowledged the importance of many of the programs that have been proposed to be reduced. A member of the Board observed the Park Board is facing one of the largest budget reductions compared to other City departments. The Board expressed frustration with the short time line available to pass the proposed 2010 budget initiatives and thanked the delegations for their presentations.

Moved by Commissioner Jasper,

THAT the Board approve the proposed 2010 budget initiatives as outlined in this report.

The Board concluded that more time was needed by the Board and the public to consider the proposed budget initiatives and a member of the Board suggested that the item be deferred to a future special meeting.

Moved by Commissioner Jasper,

THAT the staff report on the 2010 operating budget update be deferred to a future special meeting.

- Carried Unanimously

Enquiries, Other Matters and New Business

A member of the Board requested a staff report regarding Empire Stadium.

The meeting adjourned at 9:32 pm.

Peter Kuran
Acting General Manager

Commissioner Raj Hundal
Chair