



Date: October 28, 2011

TO: Board Members – Vancouver Park Board
FROM: General Manager – Parks and Recreation
SUBJECT: Aboriginal Cultural Centre and Attraction

RECOMMENDATION

- A. THAT the board authorize staff to enter into discussion and negotiation with the Aboriginal Tourism Association of British Columbia in order to clarify and finalize the terms and conditions for the purposes of creating an Aboriginal cultural centre and attraction located on the grounds of the former Children’s Farmyard.***
- B. THAT staff will report back to the board at a future meeting to seek approval on agreed upon terms and conditions that will form the basis for a formal lease agreement with the Aboriginal Tourism Association of British Columbia.***

BACKGROUND

On September 10th, 2010 the board approved a recommendation to close the Children’s Farmyard in January of 2011. Subsequent to the closure of the farmyard the animals were adopted to various organizations and hobby farms throughout the province and the farmyard employees were provided employment opportunities in other park operations. On September 19th, 2011 the board passed a motion directing staff to seek a qualified party to develop and operate the previous children’s farmyard area as a First Nations cultural and educational experience focusing on raising awareness of the rich history between Stanley Park and the First Nations peoples.

On October 11th a request for proposal was issued seeking responses from interested parties to provide and operate an aboriginal cultural center and attraction on the former site of the Stanley Park Children’s Farmyard. Subsequent to the RFP notification staff received one response from the Aboriginal Tourism Association of British Columbia. There were no other responses received in relation to this RFP.

DISCUSSION

The Aboriginal Tourism Association of British Columbia was formed in 1996 with a mandate to foster the economic advancement and professional development of Aboriginal tourism operators, create a unified Aboriginal tourism industry and provide a collective voice for Aboriginal tourism operators and support and promote understanding and

respect for Aboriginal societies' culture and traditions and assist with the repatriation of heritage of First Nations.

In 2010 and again in 2011 The Aboriginal Tourism Association of British Columbia hosted and operated in partnership with the Park Board, Klahowya Village showcasing the culture and heritage of local Coast Salish Aboriginal peoples. Performers dressed in traditional regalia performed daily ritual dances representing the history and traditions of the local First Nations. Static displays, the storytelling circle, weaving area and a ride on the Spirit Catcher train all highlighted historical and cultural values of our local First Nations peoples.

The Aboriginal cultural centre and attraction that was proposed in the Aboriginal Tourism Association of British Columbia's RFP response will continue to foster and promote the rich history and traditions of our local Coast Salish nations. The proposal site will contain interactive storytelling utilizing technology and flat screen televisions, a carving and smudge area, a weaving area and a fishing display. The site will also house a forty foot teepee for hosting group events and feature a show titled Indian Summer Nights and there is a proposed retail location featuring Aboriginal artisan arts and crafts.

While the proposal received contains a conceptual overview for the use of the site further discussions are required to address terms including maintenance, leasehold improvements and ownership, rent and term in order to form the basis of an agreement for the purposes of creating an Aboriginal cultural centre and attraction.

SUMMARY

The introduction of an Aboriginal cultural and attraction centre will continue to provide a unique perspective of the history and traditions of local Coast Salish nations which can be enjoyed by tourists and residents who visit Stanley Park every year. As the Aboriginal Tourism Association of British Columbia was the only respondent to the RFP, and several items outlined in their response are conceptual in nature and require further clarification, staff is seeking the Board's approval to the recommendation as noted above which would permit continued discussion and negotiation, and will address those items in the response document that require further clarification for the purposes of creating an Aboriginal cultural centre and attraction. Staff will report back to the board to seek approval on the negotiated terms of an agreement with the Aboriginal Tourism Association of British Columbia once that occurs.

Prepared by:
Ken Maguire
Business Services
Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation
Vancouver, BC