



## Ward Meeting Minutes

**Tuesday, April 30, 2024, 6:58 p.m.**

**Current River Community Centre, 450 Dewe Avenue**

**1. Current River Ward Meeting 01-2024**

Chair: Councillor Andrew Foulds

**2. Resource Persons**

Stacey Levanen, Supervisor - Corporate Communications & Community Engagement

Stephanie Reid, Communications Specialist

Lori Wiitala, Council & Committee Clerk

**3. Welcome and Opening Remarks**

The Chair welcomed those in attendance and provided introductory comments. There were approximately 25 people in attendance.

**4. Minutes of Previous Meeting**

Minutes of the Current River Ward meeting held on October 24, 2023, for information.

**5. Corporate Communications**

Supervisor - Corporate Communications & Community Engagement Stacey Levanen and Communications Specialist Stephanie Reid provided the following information relative to Corporate Communications.

Corporate Communications & Community Engagement is part of the City Manager's Office - Strategy & Engagement, and reports to the entire corporation. The department looks after website publication including: social media,

Facebook, Instagram, X (formerly Twitter) and YouTube; The Minutes podcast; advertising through billboards and busses; media relations including local, provincial and national events & public relations; and major projects including the annual budget, Strategic Plan, housing development, committees and public engagement.

The Get Involved website is an online tool used to engage with the community through surveys and questionnaires. The survey has been available for approximately 5 years. Online and hard copies of surveys and questionnaires are available to ensure all citizens have an option to participate.

Change has been recognized due to the Covid-19 pandemic and folks are hesitant to attend in person functions. Get Involved has proven successful focusing on connecting with citizens. In the past a standard phone survey was issued to 500 citizens every 2 years; the new vendor, Zencity, provides targeted outreach to collect data, and it is anonymous/elective to provide personal details. Surveys are cyclical and provided every few months and ask in-the-moment questions based on census data to ensure accurate representation. Each citizens personal device logs the ip address to avoid collection of data from the same individual.

## **6. Ward and City Issues**

The Chair read and responded to the following questions received prior to the meeting.

1. Why is the city going after community centres? We have already lost our mighty mite program because families can't afford it. So our remaining programs like soccer and softball need to absorb more because the city wants money for field use, garbage cans, picnic tables. Not to mention the fields maintenance programs were cut what in half last summer, the little ones couldn't even kick the ball through the six inch grass. This year just once a month cutting? So when they are squeezed out of the affordable sports, then what?

Response from Administration:

The need to review the City's involvement in both Jumbo Gardens and Vale community centres was flagged in the Grant Thornton Program and Service Review (GT PSR) as a potential cost reduction measure (Phase 2 Report June 2020). In response to Report 144-2020, Administration's response to the GT PSR Phase 2 Report, Council directed we undertake further research into

alternative options to meet community's needs, the usage etc. and report back. In 2023, Council supported the decommissioning of Recreation and Culture's operation of the Jumbo Gardens Community Centre and its movement to a third party leased operation. Similarly, a review of the usage of Vale CC indicated that City's usage was low and that majority of community needs could be met through alternative locations such as nearby Kinsmen Youth Centre, etc. Council approved the non-renewal of the lease in 2023 (which was up for renewal in October 2023). The approximate net impact for these two initiatives was \$50K in annual savings to the City.

House league sports fees were added as a partial cost recovery during budget proceedings in 2023 to achieve target levy rates, and are based on this type of use being partially exclusive (i.e. those playing have signed up and registered as opposed to it being fully open to the public).

Picnic table delivery fee charges were also included during budget proceedings in 2023 to achieve target levy rates, and represent the labour involved to deliver table, barricades, and garbage cans to and from a site.

2. Has anyone in the city been contacted about reducing the amount of traffic on the grass in the park by the washrooms just off Arundel and Lyon Blvd. E. It's a nice old tree and the unnecessary driving on the grass, especially over the roots isn't healthy for the fine old white pine, the last of its kind in the area. Much of the driving is on the way to service the washroom which can easily be accessed from Arundel as it used to be.

Response from Administration:

Evergreen washroom will only be open for events this year, parks traffic through the park will be greatly reduced from multiple times a day to maybe once or twice a week. And it will only be a matter of instructing staff to change where they drive.

The Chair responded to the following questions asked during the meeting.

1. Current River Recreation Association (CRRA) received a letter from the City advising that a payment of \$276 is required for 8 picnic tables and garbage can usage through the summer months. The CRRA raised \$10,000 for up-keep of the field, and are volunteering their time and resources for field maintenance, can the City provide any assistance?

Through Get Involved a community engagement relative to community centre usage will be available to complete. It is also recommended that the CRRA provide a deputation to City Council with their requests.

2. Why support the decision for SNO facility when the City is strapped for cash?

A report back from Administration is scheduled for a June Committee of the Whole meetings, to include options for consideration.

3. A constituent asked for a summary of the Huron Housing project.

Ontario Aboriginal Housing Services received \$1,300,000 in funding towards 1040 Huron Avenue to help create 4 units for Indigenous individuals with mental health and addiction issues. The site plan proposes a multi-family complex consisting of two 3-storey apartment buildings containing 12 units per building. Ontario Aboriginal Housing Services (OAHS) will be undertaking construction of 24 units (4 units are Homeless Prevention Program (HPP) funded) with plans to eventually develop 70 housing units in total at the site. The units in the development will meet affordability standards by establishing rents less than 80% of the average market rent, with utilities included.

## **7. Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 8:59 p.m.