STANDING POLICY COMMITTEE ON

PROTECTION AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

QUESTION PERIOD

Minute No. 762
Councillor Benham questioned if the members of the Standing Policy Committee on Protection and Community Services should be allowed to review, at an in camera meeting, the recent arbitration settlements of both the Winnipeg Fire Paramedic Services and the Winnipeg Police Service, with their respective unions, to which Councillor Steeves replied in the negative.

Councillor Benham further questioned if arbitration settlements are not shared among all Councillors, who will protect the interests of taxpayers in these negotiated settlements when taxpayer dollars are at stake, to which Councillor Steeves advised that the administration along with legal counsel were charged with negotiating arbitration settlements.

Councillor Swandel requested information on the consultation process with the Standing Policy Committee on Protection and Community Services which resulted in Operation Clean Sweep, to which Councillor Steeves replied that there were not any formal discussions with the Standing Policy Committee.

Councillor Swandel questioned if the Chairperson has had any talks with other committee members regarding underlying social factors that are causing higher levels of crime in some parts of the City, to which Councillor Steeves replied that the Poverty Committee report had been discussed at some length at Standing Committee last meeting.

Councillor Swandel questioned what mechanisms might be employed to build community capacity to resolve underlying social issues resulting in higher levels of crime in certain parts of the City to which Councillor Steeves responded that the City can best serve communities through the Winnipeg Police Service and their ability to address criminal activity.

Councillor Wyatt cited budget cost numbers referenced by the Winnipeg Free Press in its article on Operation Clean Sweep, and questioned if they were correct, to which Councillor Steeves replied that inasmuch as it was the Mayor's program, he did not dispute the numbers, but could not take responsibility for them.

Councillor Wyatt questioned when Council would be advised of where the monies would come from to, which Councillor Steeves replied that it would be through the budget process or by an announcement.

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Councillor Wyatt questioned in what divisions within the Winnipeg Police Service are staff resources being reduced in order to provide for Operation Clean Sweep, to which Councillor Steeves replied he would take the question under advisement.

Councillor Magnifico made reference to Council not being able to speak to bargaining units about contract negotiations once discussions have commenced, and questioned why Council could not talk to the bargaining unit before they go to the table in order to provide input on changes to the contract that might be good for the citizens, to which Councillor Steeves responded that Council could proceed in that manner if it chose to do so, but that this might cause other problems, and these should be examined before Council embarks on that strategy.