EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE

QUESTION PERIOD

Minute No. 447
Councillor Smith questioned why the names of the 200 Winnipeggers invited to the publicly funded Winnipeg Summit were being kept a secret.

His Worship Mayor Katz replied that if the Councillor wanted to see a list of the delegates that would be attending, he has that opportunity. His Worship then shared some specific information about the attendees based on representation and further advised that 227 delegates had been invited, 24 were unable to attend, leaving 203 delegates attending. His Worship advised that the administration would make the list available to the Councillor.

Councillor Gerbasi referenced the City Summit and stated that there were 58 statements from which invited delegates were asked to choose four as priorities. She noted that this was not available to the general public. Councillor Gerbasi questioned if the 58 statements were supposed to represent an unbiased range of issues that all Winnipeggers might have thoughts on, why was the topic of rapid transit not mentioned in any of them. She further stated that there was some mention of transit, but nothing about rapid transit.

His Worship noted that there had been pre-Summit events at which the issue of transit was brought up.

Councillor Gerbasi asked why could a waiver not be arranged to make the names of the attendees public.

His Worship replied that if an organization had representation it did not make a difference which board member was representing that organization. He further stated that every Councillor had been invited and would have the opportunity to see who is there.

Councillor Gerbasi questioned why the people she represents, or any of the citizens of Winnipeg, could not be provided with the names of people attending the Summit and also have the topics being decided on and prioritized made public on the website.

His Worship noted that there was no way to get input from Winnipeg's population of approximately 700,000 people, so input was being sought from organizations individuals that represented large groups.

Councillor Benham made reference to recent statements made by Vita Health and other major businesses in the St. Boniface Industrial Park, that if the hog slaughter house moved in, they would be moving out of that park and quite likely out of Winnipeg. He questioned why the Mayor was spending millions of dollars on creating jobs for migrant workers while driving out high tech, high paying jobs already filled by Winnipeggers.

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His Worship replied that there had not been any cash outlay and that the economic package put forward by the City of Winnipeg was for land that no one was using.

Councillor Benham questioned why should the City of Winnipeg provide any economic development incentives for something that was going to provide low tech, low paying jobs for migrant workers while driving out high tech, high paying jobs.

His Worship noted that someone was saying that they may or may not leave a certain area. He stated that there were businesses there that he believed would stay. He further stated that some of the same businesses that were there today got economic incentive packages as well. His Worship advised that he would like to think that we live in a city, a province, a country that treats everybody fairly and objectively. He noted there was a process that was being followed and that we should not discriminate against any individual or any entity.

Councillor Benham noted that City Council and residents of Winnipeg had only seven calendar days notice of the matter and questioned if the Mayor would commit to supporting Councillor Gerbasi's motion to rescind Council support for the hog slaughterhouse and hold proper public hearings, to which His Worship stated that he was always happy to hear from all of Council as well as any delegations that appear before Council.

Councillor Wyatt questioned if the City initiated the Olywest process or did the Province contact the City, to which His Worship replied that the project was negotiated with all three parties at the table - the Province, the City and representatives of Olywest.

Councillor Wyatt stated that Councillor Magnifico had indicated that he was going to change his support on the Olywest deal and wanted confirmation of this, to which His Worship replied that he was not of aware of that.

Councillor Wyatt questioned when Council would know whether the Premier contacted the Mayor or the Mayor contacted the Premier regarding the beginning of negotiations of the hog plant issue, to which His Worship replied before the week was over.

Councillor Thomas referenced a recent public ceremony where the City's Olympic athletes were honoured and questioned if the comments made by the Mayor at the ceremony were appropriate.

His Worship responded that it was unfortunate that one or two people decided to put the focus on something other than honouring the Olympians.

Councillor Lazarenko referenced misinformation provided on important issues and requested the Mayor to speak with the Chief Administrative Officer to ensure that Council gets its information before it gets carried away as happened with the Olywest matter, to which His Worship replied in the affirmative.

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Councillor Lazarenko made reference to the serious problem of overfilling autobins and requested that the administration start enforcing the Unsightly/Untidy By-law to clean up the problems associated with the autobins, to which His Worship replied that he would take the initiative to speak with the administration.

Councillor Swandel asked to be provided with a list of the business in the St. Boniface Industrial Park, identifying what their zoning was, whether they required environmental licensing and whether they had received economic development packages from either the City or the Province, to which His Worship replied that he would endeavour to do that.

Councillor Wyatt questioned why due diligence and scrutiny was not conducted or requested by the Planning, Property and Development Department prior to Council approving a decision on the Olywest matter in November, to which His Worship replied that the City had its economic development representative working on the matter.

Councillor Wyatt noted that only an onsite analysis was done according to the Planning, Property and Development Department and questioned why a detailed planning analysis of the neighbourhood was not done.

His Worship stated that the Clean Environment Commission process would provide for people to make representation and if the proponent was granted a license, it was because they have met the stringent regulations. He further stated that if they were not granted a license, then nothing would proceed.

Councillor Wyatt noted that since the City was the off site service provider with respect to sewage handling, should the City should not also be one of the proponents at the Clean Environment Commission hearing, to which His Worship replied that he believed the City would be there because anyone in the Chamber had the opportunity to appear as a delegation.