EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE

QUESTION PERIOD

Minute No. 145
Councillor Gerbasi referenced a newspaper article regarding the railroad line to Shoal Lake that services Winnipeg's water supply and requested that a Council Seminar be scheduled so that Water and Waste Department officials could be present to brief all members of Council.

His Worship Mayor Katz replied that Council would not be dealing with such an issue until the administration had completed their due diligence and provided all available options. His Worship further stated that at such time the information does become available from the administration, he would make Council aware of it.

Councillor Gerbasi questioned if His Worship would be willing to have a seminar, not to come up with options, but for Councillors to understand what the rail line was for, what it did and what some of the issues were around the existing situation.

His Worship stated that it would be more prudent to let the department do its work and then come back with the information and what, if any, options may exist.

Councillor Gerbasi requested assurance that there would be a reasonable amount of time between receiving some kind of report and making a decision on the matter.

His Worship advised that he would make sure that as much time as possible would be given to all Councillors to review the matter.

Councillor Smith questioned if His Worship would be releasing the DBF Limited Lease Agreement on the Charleswood Bridge, so Councillors could evaluate that public private partnership and how it went, before considering similar future projects.

His Worship noted that every P3 (Public Private Partnership) was different and that you would have to assess every single P3 on its own merit.

Councillor Smith questioned if it would not be easier for Council to evaluate future public private partnerships by looking at the contract that exists, and thus see if there were things that could be altered or changed so that future contracts would be more beneficial to the City of Winnipeg.

His Worship stated that not many people were familiar with P3s and that there are many different forms of P3s. He further stated that Council will have the opportunity to examine any P3 being looked at in the future and debate and judge each on its merits.

Executive Policy Committee - Question Period (continued)

Councillor Smith again requested a copy of the Lease Agreement to which His Worship replied that if the Councillor wanted a copy, he could ask the administration for one.

Councillor Steeves referenced the issue of a swing set that was purchased for Kelvin Community Centre and questioned who actually paid for it, to which His Worship replied that the monies came out of the Mayor's budget.

Councillor Vandal cited the David Asper stadium proposal and requested what the status was on negotiations between the three levels of government and on the feasibility of the Asper proposal for the stadium.

His Worship stated that negotiations are taking place between Mr. Asper and the Winnipeg Football Club, and that neither the Mayor nor Council has any real involvement in those negotiations. His Worship noted that it was on public record what has been asked for in the Asper proposal from both the federal and provincial governments. His Worship further stated that to date, it has been made very clear that the City has given everything it has and there is nothing left for the City to give as far as any financial assistance. His Worship further stated that he did not believe any financial assistance has been asked of the City in the Asper proposal.

Councillor Vandal questioned if there had been any discussions between the Mayor's Office and Hi-Tech and what the status was of the OlyWest proposal in St. Boniface.

His Worship responded that he had had no conversations with Hi-tech and did not see a need to until they worked things out with the Province and the C.E.C.

Councillor Vandal, noting adoption of the Centre Venture Heart of Gold Plan, asked if His Worship would share his position on the reopening of Portage and Main to pedestrians.

His Worship stated that his position has not changed and that he would not go to court to challenge an agreement that the City and certain stakeholders entered into in good faith. He noted that if the stakeholders, on their own, unanimously agreed, then he would be more than happy to work with them.

Councillor Thomas questioned if Council would have access to the information on the Charleswood Bridge P3 before voting on establishing another P3 so that Council could do it from a basis of knowledge and not ignorance.

His Worship reiterated his previous answer to Councillor Smith being the Councillor has never made him aware that he's asked the administration for a copy of the report and did not receive it. His Worship stated that if the Councillor does do that, he would be happy to look into it.

Executive Policy Committee - Question Period (continued)

Councillor Thomas again requested if Council would have this information before voting on P3's tomorrow to which His Worship replied that if anyone requests something from the administration and did not get satisfaction, they should let him know.

Councillor Clement questioned if Council could get information from the Public Works Department as to how much it would cost the City for maintenance on the Charleswood Bridge over thirty years, so that Council could get an accurate costing.

His Worship replied that if a request was made to the administration, and they could not respond to the request, he hoped that the administration would make the Councillor and himself aware of the reasons for not being able to do it. His Worship further stated that he did not believe any request for information had been made.

Councillor Gerbasi advised she had sent an email to the Director of Public Works six days ago requesting information on the Charleswood Bridge, and has not yet received an answer to that email.

His Worship advised that since the Councillor has now made both him and the CAO aware that no response had been received, they would look into it immediately.

Councillor Vandal noted that the Plan Winnipeg document is close to two years overdue for a review and questioned whether or not there was something on the radar screen in the immediate future, to which His Worship responded in the affirmative.