Meeting No. 5 Council Chamber
Winnipeg, January 30, 2002

Council met this day at 9:32 a.m.

The Speaker called the meeting to order.

Opening Prayer read by Councillor Eadie.

Present: The Speaker Councillor O'Shaughnessy, Councillors Lazarenko, Angus, Clement, De Smedt, Gerbasi, Lubosch, Smith, Steek, Deputy Mayor Thomas, Vandal, Eadie and His Worship Mayor Murray.

Councillors Prystanski, Steeves and Timm-Rudolph entered the meeting after roll call.

In attendance: Mr. R. Kachur, City Clerk, Mr. M. Lemoine, Deputy City Clerk and Ms B. Greschuk, Committee Clerk.

INTRODUCTION AND WELCOME OF GUESTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

132 - The Speaker introduced Duncan McMonagle, Journalism Instructor, Red River College, and his class of journalism students.

133 - The Speaker introduced and welcomed Joseph A. Mallet, Commissionaire, to his first meeting of City Council.

MINUTES

Councillor Gerbasi moved that the minutes of the meeting held on December 12, 2001, be taken as read and confirmed, which motion was carried.

COMMUNICATIONS

From the Honourable Greg Selinger, Minister of Finance,
134 - Submitting communication dated November 2, 2001 advising that By-law No. 7921/2001, being an Initial Borrowing by-law of The City of Winnipeg to authorize the borrowing of money by the issue and sale of Debentures of The City of Winnipeg in the aggregate principal amount of $43,399,483.60, which received first reading by City Council on November 21, 2001, is hereby approved. Also advising that it is hereby ordered that the maximum term of the debentures to be issued pursuant to this authorization be limited to thirty (30) years.
File FC-2 (Vol. 18)

From the City Solicitor/Manager of Legal Services,
135 - Submitting as instructed by Council on November 21, 2001, draft by-law to widen the corner at the rear of 545 Newman Street, in the City Centre Community, which by-law may receive all three readings.
File DAO 7/2001 (By-law No. 7955/2002)

From the City Solicitor/Manager of Legal Services,
136 - Submitting as instructed by Council on November 21, 2001, draft by-law to amend By-law No. 6546/95, being a by-law of the said City to regulate the construction, maintenance and removal of private approaches and private walks, in the Assiniboia Community, which by-law may receive all three readings.
File SC-1(31) (Vol. 4) (By-law No. 7956/2002)

From the City Solicitor/Manager of Legal Services,
137 - Submitting as instructed by Council on February 28, 2001, draft by-law to close part and to open an alternate part of the public lane south of Portage Avenue, west of Spence Street, in the City Centre Community, which by-law may receive all three readings. File DAOC 4/2000 (By-law No. 7959/2002)

Communications (continued)

From the City Solicitor/Manager of Legal Services,
138 - Submitting as instructed by Council on October 20, 2001, draft by-law to approve a Plan of Subdivision and to amend Zoning By-law No. 6400/94 for the enactment of a zoning change on land located at 270 Armstrong Avenue, in the Lord Selkirk-West Kildonan Community, which by-law may receive all three readings. File DASZ 20/2001 (By-law No. 7963/2002)

From the City Solicitor/Manager of Legal Services,
139 - Advising that Council on December 12, 2001 adopted Clause 3 of the Report of the Standing Policy Committee on Public Works dated November 20, 2001, for the undertaking of concrete pavement on all lanes in the block bounded by Essex Avenue, Ellesmere Avenue, Egerton Road and Des Meurons Street. Further advising that the works will not commence until 2003 and that funding will come from the 2003 Capital Budget.

Submitting draft by-law to authorize the undertaking of certain local improvements during the year 2003, in the Riel Community, which by-law may receive all three readings. File SL(2001) (Vol. 1) (By-law No. 7964/2002)

Deputy Mayor Thomas moved that the following communications which were received too late to be placed on the regular agenda, be received as information, which motion was carried.

From the Civic Charities Administrator,
140 - Submitting Statement of Fund Raising Reports received by the Designated Civic Charities Administrator during the year ended December 31, 2001. File GL-5.2

From the City Auditor,
141 - Submitting memorandum dated January 25, 2002 with respect to the report on the audit of the property assessment function, for Council's information.

Advising that the Audit Department found significant progress has been made in the last several years, particularly with respect to the valuation of residential properties. The decrease in the appeals rate for this property type points to the success of such initiatives as the Preview Program and the new website. The Audit Department's comparison with other jurisdictions suggests that more attention should be paid to improving cost effectiveness and it is also clear that the legislative regime is impacting the effectiveness of this function.

Also advising that with respect to the appeals process, the Audit Department acknowledged the commitment of the current Chair and members to delivering an accessible and timely process where all citizens can exercise their right to be heard. At the same time, the Audit Department is concerned that the focus on timeliness may have affected the quality of the outcome. They heard from assessors and tax agents that heavy workloads and the lack of a discovery process prevented both sides from providing their best case. The Audit Department also agrees that the provision of a written rationale for decisions would enhance transparency and accountability. The Audit Department believes that the time has come for a comprehensive review of the process to ensure that it will continue to meet the City's current and future needs.

Further advising that both the Chief Administrative Officer and the Chair of the Board of Revision endorsed the recommendations fully and committed to actions that will improve the property assessment function for all citizens. File FA-2