EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE

QUESTION PERIOD

Minute No. 253
Councillor Browaty referred to a motion he made last summer regarding a sump pump subsidy program and backwater valve program. He cited with the pending flood, there has been a lot of interest in the program with 351 application approved out of a total of 657 received. Councillor Browaty questioned if there was any consideration to a one time extension of the program this year.

His Worship Mayor Katz replied that with the Department's extremely proactive approach last year, they recommended that one million dollars be made available for the program this year. He noted that the City then approached the Province to see if they would match the City's million dollar contribution; to which they agreed, and now there was two million dollars in the program, subject to Council's approval.

Councillor Gerbasi questioned if the Mayor or members of EPC have been briefed on the current status of the Veolia contract, and if so, could they share what was the delay in terms of the contract being signed.

His Worship stated it was his understanding that there was no delay at this point in time and believed it could be coming to Council, potentially for the next meeting.

Councillor Gerbasi noted that it was mentioned by the head of Water and Waste to the Public Works Committee a little while ago that personnel from Viola were already working within the Water and Waste Department prior to the larger contract being signed and questioned how much they were being paid and how they could be working within the department before the contact was signed.

His Worship commented that when working on projects that are hundreds of millions of dollars or even billions of dollars, this work started a long time ago, and the department has been working with people from Veolia. He stated they were getting paid a base cost for their time but that was all that was taking place to date, and committed to getting the information to Councillor Gerbasi.

Councillor Gerbasi referenced the budget item of $250,000 over three years, added at the final tabling for someone in the CAO's office to work on policy and questioned the reasoning behind adding $250,000 for that.

His Worship indicated it was $250,000 allocated to the CAO for planning and to create new policy to move the City forward. He advised that right now, we don't have that availability for people to do policy or to do planning and that was why the money was set aside for the CAO to administer.

Executive Policy Committee – Question Period (continued):

Councillor Swandel noted that there were a number of issues sitting over with the Province. He cited the Province's pending flood issues and the fall election and expressed that some of the City's issues are probably going to be delayed because of that. Councillor Swandel questioned if the Mayor had any idea when the stand alone utility model issue at the Province might come forward; to which His Worship replied he could not give an answer as he did not have one.

Councillor Swandel noted that OurWinnipeg was also sitting with the Province and questioned if it would be coming back anytime soon or if we're going to maybe experience some delays with it as a result of floods and elections.

His Worship stated that he has not had any word from the Province that there are any problems as far as the direction of OurWinnipeg and hoped that it moves forward as quickly as possible.

Councillor Wyatt referred to the Building Canada Funds and noted that last April, Council voted on 11 different projects that were put on the list. He cited reports that a request or idea went in to fund sewer and water hook-up to the R.M. of Rosser or CentrePort - an item not on the list of 11 projects. Councillor Wyatt noted that the request for sewer and water was not endorsed by Council and questioned if the request was coming from the Province.

His Worship replied that funding is available to 2014 and that the Province had mentioned they wanted to look into doing further things with the Building Canada Funds, although nothing was committed to at the point in time. His Worship advised that there was an issue out there that does exist as far as the request for funding for infrastructure with what the Councillor talked about. He noted that there was nothing official whatsoever when in regards to CentrePort. His Worship noted that a significant amount of money was being invested in CentrePort to build a road there and that if you're going to be doing services, you do it at the same time as the road – you don't dig it up twice.

Councillor Wyatt requested confirmation that the reported sewer and water works into CentrePort was not a request from City Council.

His Worship replied that the official request to the Province and the Federal Government was outlined in a motion by Council. He cited that there have been discussions with three levels of government where the sewer and water works matter had popped up but it had not gone any further.

Councillor Wyatt questioned if the request for sewer and water funding had come from the Mayor or the Office of the Mayor; to which His Worship replied that the Mayor's Office was not making any requests.

Executive Policy Committee – Question Period (continued):

Councillor Eadie referred to the item regarding the Proposed Winnipeg Police Board By-law which was filed and questioned if the Mayor would allow him to move forth with his idea and negotiate with the Province.

His Worship noted that as an elected official, Councillor Eadie has the opportunity to go forth and do whatever he so desires. He noted that once the Provincial Regulations are passed, Council will sit down and discuss the issue in an open and productive environment.

Councillor Eadie questioned if it is appropriate for a City Councillor to go beyond the rest of Council and talk to another level of government without that support; to which His Worship replied that there was not a Councillor in the Chambers right now that does not speak to members of the Provincial Government.

Councillor Eadie questioned if His Worship thought it fair to have from all across the City, five different Community Committees select one representative from that region to be on a Police Board; to which His Worship replied he did not find it unrealistic.

Councillor Havixbeck stated that she's heard from a number of constituents that are opposed to the automated garbage pickup. She noted the perception is that the waste minimization strategy is a fait accompli in the way it's been advertised, and that the end result of the automated garbage bins has already been pre-determined, and that the consultation process is simply going through the motions. Councillor Havixbeck asked if His Worship could comment on the validity of these concerns.

His Worship noted the Department was getting public input on the waste minimization strategy and that nothing has been decided in any way, shape or form.

Councillor Havixbeck noted that one person who wrote her suggested that this would actually add to the ecological footprint because more vehicles would be used to collect and questioned if this could be looked at in implementation.

His Worship stated that any decisions made will have to come back to Council and that it would be inaccurate for anyone to think that a decision has been made on any one of the many items being discussed.