EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE

QUESTION PERIOD

Minute No. 599
Councillor Eadie referred to the Trans Canada Pipeline, called Energy East or Bitumen Pipeline, proposed to go very close to the City of Winnipeg's main water intake at Shoal Lake and inquired if the Mayor was aware of any consultations with the City in terms of this issue.

His Worship Mayor Katz stated that to the best of his knowledge the City had not been consulted on that issue and suggested that the City of Winnipeg could communicate their concerns about the safety of its water supply and agreed to follow up.

Councillor Eadie questioned if the Mayor could include in any discussion the concern of what the particular damages could be with a worst case scenario at Shoal Lake and what effect that would have on the Winnipeg water system.

His Worship Mayor Katz replied that he would be happy to address that issue and communicate with other levels of government to make sure any potential circumstances of disaster are looked at and to have a Council Seminar once they have the information.

Councillor Eadie further requested that someone from the City should contact the National Energy Board with the concern that the City of Winnipeg has not been consulted as a stakeholder in this particular project; to which His Worship replied in the affirmative.

Councillor Gerbasi questioned how ideas flow to the Winnipeg Police Board agenda, noting that it was supposed to be A-political and an objective expertise for best practices and such, and asked the Mayor to provide assurance that the Winnipeg Police Board would be operating in that kind of objective manner and that recommendations would be based on objective best practice and not an individual board appointees viewpoint.

His Worship concurred that all members of the Winnipeg Police Board, or of any board, should act fairly and objectively and in the best interests of the citizens of Winnipeg and encouraged Councillor Gerbasi to raise the question with Councillor Fielding during Question Period for the Standing Policy Committee on Protection and Community Services.

Councillor Gerbasi noted that it was more of a governance issue in terms of how things get on an agenda and her concern was that all Councillors have different ideas and asked if ideas would appear on the Agenda via the Executive Director who was hired, from the Police Department or from individual members who have political ideas, and questioned if it was any different than a Standing Committee or if it functioned differently because it was the Police Board

Executive Policy Committee – Question Period (continued):

His Worship stated that good ideas come from everywhere and anywhere and noted that the Winnipeg Police Board was created by the Provincial Government and they have basically set the guidelines and created the by-laws and again urged Councillor Gerbasi to raise the question with Councillor Fielding during Question Period for the Standing Policy Committee on Protection and Community Services.

Councillor Gerbasi noted that the Federal Government recently made participation in the long form census optional and inquired if the Mayor was concerned about this and if he had any intention of discussing this with the Federal Government and inquired how the City was going to deal with the fact that a number of neighbourhoods were basically invisible in terms of census data.

His Worship replied that he believed that everyone should be part of the census but the other side of the coin was that the census took place several years ago, so there were pros and cons to the material and how valid and current it was.

Councillor Havixbeck noted she believed that a motion involving the Province and how infrastructure priorities were going to be handled this fall, which was discussed at a recent Council seminar, was to appear on today's Council agenda and asked the Mayor why it had not. His Worship advised that he was not there for the second half of the Council Seminar so, unfortunately, he was not really sure what the Councillor was referring to and suggested the Councillor could come up to his office to discuss it at any time and he would be happy to look into the matter.

Councillor Havixbeck asked when the Fire Audit would be released and what the process would be. His Worship replied that the Auditor was in charge of that and he received a letter the other day saying it would not be coming this week, it would be later on, and he had not more information than the Councillor has.

Councillor Havixbeck referred to a Library Redevelopment Strategy and asked the Mayor for assurance that the residents of Charleswood and Tuxedo, through the Library Strategy, would have a signature legacy library.

His Worship replied that he had communicated on this issue with Councillor Havixbeck, who appeared very unhappy with the direction the Department and the Administration was going. He further noted that the Department was following a process, that they had gone through it, made a recommendation and done their due diligence. In the end, through the process, Committees would deal with the recommendation and it would eventually go before Council for a decision to be made.

Executive Policy Committee – Question Period (continued):

Councillor Smith inquired about the total cost of the new stadium. His Worship replied that, to the best of his knowledge, the cost was the same cost that all of Council had seen. It was a G.N.P. of approximately 200 million and the City's participation was 7.5 million and they had also spent 2.5 million in investment in a facility at the University of Manitoba. He added that both the City and Province put up the majority of the money and would be paid back over a period of time from the property taxes once the old site was developed.

Councillor Smith asked why the Chief Administrative Officer, the President of BB Stadium Incorporated, the organization responsible for building the stadium, the Winnipeg Football Club and the Provincial Government, were all silent about the expenditures over the original cost that the public was told about.

His Worship clarified that BB Stadium Incorporated consisted of representatives from the City, the Province and the Winnipeg Football Club. He added that he believed it had already been stated that they had some over expenditures and were looking to address these. He added that he had stated that the City had put in what they were asked to, had fulfilled its commitments and the Province and the football club would resolve the issues and find a solution.

Councillor Smith asked who was paying for the stadium over expenditures and requested clarification that the City was not paying a cent. His Worship replied that the City had put in its share and had fulfilled its commitments.

Councillor Eadie questioned why the new Manitoba / Winnipeg Infrastructure agreement was not on the Agenda for this Council meeting and asked whether Council would vote on that particular agreement before it was signed.

His Worship stated that it was an agreement between the Province and the City of Winnipeg and there had been changes. He noted that it had been discussed on the floor of Council earlier this year. In the past, the Provincial Government would provide approximately 35 million over a six-year period of time. It would go into infrastructure projects and the City would look at its priorities and make those decisions. About six month ago, the Province said they were not doing that anymore; and, from now on, both parties would have to agree. The Province wanted input to help decide where the money was going, which caused a great deal of stress as some of those monies were already allocated to projects, and Members of Council said it was the City's responsibility to back-fill the projects. The Mayor advised that he has asked the Administration to go back to the Provincial Government because in the six-year commitment, there was no inflation and, if there was no inflation, then a three year agreement would be plenty and the City could try to renew and get more the next go-around as something worth building today changes in six years.

Executive Policy Committee – Question Period (continued):

Councillor Eadie asked if the Mayor was saying that the matter was sent back to the Administration to negotiate a few more points before it comes to Council; to which His Worship replied in the affirmative.

Councillor Havixbeck inquired when a report from the Administration about municipal buildings, the levels of risk associated with a fire and to what degree City buildings were insured would be brought to a Council Seminar.

His Worship replied that he knows the Councillor has had several dialogues with the Chief Financial Officer about that and suggested Councillor Havixbeck should contact him directly.

Councillor Havixbeck cited Edmonton as having 11,718 employees (59% of their budget) and Calgary as having 14,609 employees (55% of their budget) and asked how many actual employees work for the City of Winnipeg and what percentage of the budget that would be. His Worship replied that the number was always changing but that he believed Councillor Havixbeck had the answer as she had spoken to the Chief Financial Officer and other members of the administration.

Councillor Swandel questioned if the Mayor was aware that the number of full time equivalents budgeted each year was included in the service-based budgeting approach for the Operating Budget; to which His Worship replied in the affirmative.

Councillor Swandel asked the Mayor to verify that the metric was full time equivalents, not number of employees; to which His Worship confirmed that the City looks at F.T.E.'s, which stood for full time equivalents.