EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE

QUESTION PERIOD

Minute No. 315
Councillor Wyatt noted that IBM recently developed an experimental smart phone App for the City of Surrey, British Columbia that, verbally and in writing, provides an answer to questions about certain services / customer service inquiries and questioned what advances in technology / initiatives Winnipeg could implement to increase customer service.

His Worship Mayor Bowman stated that he was familiar with the App and it was exactly the type of innovative technology they would like to embrace for Winnipeg. He advised that Winnipeg has a mobile link at the bottom of the City of Winnipeg homepage and the service requests related to everything from potholes, sidewalk repairs, graffiti, sanding and snow removal can be handled through it. He added that informal discussions have taken place with the new Chief Administrative Officer on Smart City initiatives in other cities.

In reference to the real estate audit, Councillor Eadie noted that there was a motion related to hiring a specialist to help the City implement the recommendations and questioned if the Mayor would help, or request Legal Services to help, to create a motion to change what was the will of Council at that particular meeting.

His Worship replied that he would be more than happy to converse with Councillor Eadie to and encouraged him to speak with the Clerk's office in terms of preparation of motions.

Councillor Eadie inquired if the Mayor appreciates that the will of Council and the decisions made should be upheld and followed implicitly; to which His Worship replied in the affirmative and suggested that all members expect that the letter and spirit of the will of Council be respected.

Councillor Eadie questioned if the Mayor had been looking to establish a committee or expertise to deal with situations related to potential environmental hazardous emergency situations and if there were any plans to replace the Mayor's Environmental Committee.

His Worship advised that he was having discussions with Members of Council on reinvigorating and better coordinating efforts to protect the environment in a more sustainable way.

Councillor Allard noted that Council prioritized the intersection for the Marion-Archibald intersection improvements as the City's second priority for the Building Canada Fund and asked the Mayor what conversations he had had with the other levels of government regarding this intersection.

Executive Policy Committee – Question Period (continued):

His Worship indicated that the motion Council voted on in terms of prioritization for the Build Canada submissions was proceeding. He added that there were ongoing discussions with the Provincial and Federal partners and they were waiting for formal confirmation from the Province regarding the submissions.

Councillor Allard questioned if there was a time line in which Council would know whether or not these projects would be approved in this agreement between the City, the Province, and the Federal Government.

His Worship replied that the time frame was contingent upon ongoing dialogue with the Provincial and Federal partners and acknowledged and thanked the recent federal budget which continued the Build Canada funds.

Councillor Gerbasi asked His Worship to comment on the very successful outcome of the budget and an announcement of a billion dollar ongoing program for dedicated funds for transit.

His Worship thanked Councillor Gerbasi for her ongoing years of advocacy for increased public transit and rapid transit, in particular. He also thanked the Federal Government for their leadership in establishing a dedicated fund to assist with public transit initiatives in the future, which is note-worthy in that it had never been done before.

In reference to the Energy East pipeline that would be close to the City of Winnipeg, would cross some waterways, and potentially cause problems for Winnipeg's water system, Councillor Eadie asked His Worship to consult with the citizens of Winnipeg about their perspective on the Energy East pipeline.

His Worship acknowledged that few issues were more important than protecting the safety and security of the water source and advised that the administration continued to investigate ways to protect the source and indicated that he would meet with the National Energy Board Chair to establish a relationship with the regulatory body.