EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE

QUESTION PERIOD

Minute No. 52
Councillor Eadie requested an update on the hiring of the City Auditor.

His Worship Mayor Bowman indicated that a new, permanent City Auditor was key to ensuring that processes and procedures were followed and that recommended changes to improve City operations continued to be made and implemented appropriately to ensure accountability through all future audit activities. His Worship also advised that the Audit Selection Committee, comprised of the Executive Policy Committee and Councillors Gilroy and Wyatt, were currently reviewing applications and should be able to provide a recommendation on filling the position in the very near future.

Councillor Wyatt questioned how the BuildWinnipeg Taskforce would interact with Council and how the reporting back to Council would work and suggested that Council should allow BuildWinnipeg to do the work but, at the same time, there should be a voice for the elected representatives to speak to infrastructure issues.

His Worship Mayor Bowman advised that the BuildWinnipeg Partnership fulfilled his campaign commitment to better coordinate various stakeholders and levels of government to ensure greater long-term planning for transportation-related infrastructure, whether active transportation, public transit or roadwork. The BuildWinnipeg Partnership Taskforce had been formed and Annitta Stenning had agreed to volunteer her time, along with all of the other members of the Taskforce over the next six months to work on their recommendation to the Mayor and then to Council, on what the actual BuildWinnipeg Partnership would look like. He added that ultimately they wanted to seek the Counsel of some outstanding community leaders but the first step was to consider how the BuildWinnipeg Partnership might look like and be operational when implemented in due course.

Councillor Wyatt questioned if the Terms of Reference would be tabled for information at Council so they would know exactly what their obligations, work plans and scope would be.

His Worship clarified that the BuildWinnipeg Partnership Taskforce would report to the Mayor and he would then bring the wisest course of action for consideration by Council.

Councillor Wyatt asked for clarification if that meant that there would be no Terms of Reference for the BuildWinnipeg program, and that the next step would be a report to Council stating what the recommendations were.

Executive Policy Committee – Question Period (continued):

His Worship stated that the BuildWinnipeg Partnership Taskforce was a volunteer group set up to provide recommendations to the Mayor for consideration. He stated that he was unsure if the Terms of Reference for the group were public, but agreed to look into that and provide more information to Council if insufficient information had been disclosed about the purpose of the BuildWinnipeg Taskforce.

In reference to the budget process, Councillor Gilroy inquired if there would be an opportunity for the public to be able to understand the budget figures and really see what the suggested cuts or added services might be.

His Worship thanked all of the Winnipeggers who have contributed to Let's Talk Winnipeg website, http://www.letstalkwpg.ca/services, and kiosks moving through Winnipeg. He added that over 3,000 Winnipeggers contributed their thoughts and this budget consultation was the first step to a new way of seeking public engagement and feedback as it related to the budget process. He added that the objective was two-fold, one being to solicit from Winnipeggers their priorities and preferences for the upcoming budget but also to seek their input on how they could build a better Winnipeg going forward. He also stated that the Chair of Finance was committed to ensuring that Council was listening to feedback from Winnipeggers.

Councillor Allard referred to the BuildWinnipeg Partnership and suggested that community feedback was important and asked that there be a mechanism for Council and communities to have their voices heard in the development of any major capital project in Winnipeg.
His Worship replied that the sentiment expressed by Councillor Allard was exactly why they formed an Office of Public Engagement and extended thanks for their work in soliciting feedback from the community on the project.