COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WINNIPEG
Wednesday January 28, 2004

The Council met at 9:37 a.m.

The Clerk advised the Speaker that a quorum was present.

The Speaker called the meeting to order.

The opening prayer was read by Councillor Pagtakhan.

ROLL CALL

Clerk: His Worship Mayor Murray, Councillors Eadie, Angus, Clement, De Smedt, Gerbasi, Lubosch, Pagtakhan, Smith, Steeves, Thomas, Vandal, Mr. Deputy Speaker Councillor Lazarenko.

INTRODUCTION AND WELCOME OF GUESTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Pages. Brittanay Perija of Mennonite Brethren Collegiate Institute resides in the Old Kildonan Ward. And Anthony Kachur of Mennonite Brethren Collegiate Institute, also resides in the Old Kildonan Ward.

Mayor Murray: I have a little communications problem. I have a little announcement before that if I may.

Very quickly Mr. Speaker, I would first like to acknowledge and ask councillors to join me in thanking Councillor Angus for his leadership as Chair of the Public Works Committee. His hard work on the Alternate Service Delivery Committee. As well as his yeoman's service working on the budget subcommittees preparing our budget. I think that we've had few people who have had the kind of both quality and length of service that Councillor Angus has brought to this City Council and to Executive Policy Committee. I'm very sad to see him stepping down.

I would personally like to thank him on behalf of all you I think for his real leadership and solid service. Thank you John.

I would also like to announce two appointments today. I'd like to welcome Councillor Steeves as our new Chair of the Public Works Committee. I think Councillor Steeves has shown great energy and leadership on everything from skateboard parks right on through to the Environment Committee. I think he has shown some extraordinary commitment to this community, I think will bring a valuable new level of energy to the Executive Committee. Thank you.

I would like to announce that Councillor Pagtakhan will be taking over as the Acting Deputy Mayor and the Chair of the Alternate Service Delivery Committee. I'm asking Councillor Pagtakhan to take a leadership role in redefining that committee and having it take a lead in looking at the efficiencies that we hope to achieve as part of our new deal discussions. Mike I think has been one of our most affable and consensus building members of Council, and I think he's got some extraordinary gifts and talents.

I want to again thank all members of Council for all the time you've put in on standing committees, extraordinary commitment that you've made in your life's for this. I think over the next couple of years, it's my hope as I've said, to continue to manage some change, give everyone a shot at some of these tough jobs. You might find they're not that fun especially the budget parts, sitting there grinding out trying to find a million dollars here, a million dollars in savings there is not exactly an exercise in joy. I appreciate the time you're all putting in. Thank you.

MINUTES

Councillor Steeves moves the Minutes of the meeting held on December 16 and 17, 2003, be taken as read and confirmed. All in favour? Contrary? Carried.

Delegations, none. We're going to start off just right now for 2004.

We've got a motion.

Motion
Moved by Councillor Eadie
Seconded Councillor Pagtahkan

THAT Councillors O'Shaughnessy and Wyatt be granted a leave of absence from today's meeting due to being away on City business.

All in favour? Contrary? Carried.

The Report of EPC dated January 14, 2004. Mayor Murray.

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE DATED JANUARY 14, 2004

I'd like to move the Executive Policy Committee report of January 14, 2004. Item Nos. 1 – 7 as consent.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: All in favour? Contrary? Carried.

Report of January 21, 2004.

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE DATED JANUARY 21, 2004

Mayor Murray: I would like to move adoption of consent agenda Item Nos. 1 – 18.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Item Nos. 4 and 6 and 8. Anymore? Clauses 4, 6 and 8 have been stood down. The rest, all in favour? Contrary? Carried.

Item No. 4.

Item No. 4 – Utilization of 2003-Year End Surplus
File No. F-1

Mayor Murray: I'll wait to see what the issue is Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Councillor Steek.

Councillor Steek: Thank you Mr. Speaker. Through you to the Mayor and Executive Policy Committee.

The year end surplus albeit modest at $700,000 has been committed to the housing rehab reserve. I'm just wondering in view of the fact that the reserve already has significant dollars in it, was there any thought given to using it in any other capacity. One right off the top of my head that comes to mind, is the fact for instance that we have clearly a shortfall.

I think Councillor Thomas wanted to say something, so I'm happy to stop if she'd like to speak.

I just didn't want to interrupt Councillor Thomas.

The fact remains is that, this $700,000 has been put into the housing rehab reserve, and I'm just wondering why under the circumstances Mr. Speaker, for instance we wouldn't take what's a modest sum of money, but something that could have enormous benefit and allocate on a one-time basis dollars of this nature to, for instance something like the building of skateboard parks in the City. We have one in St. Vital. With this money you could probably do three. I'd be interested in hearing the Mayor's thought on why we would take a relatively modest amount put it into this housing reserve. Or, in the alternative, use these funds for something along the lines of the Home Renovation Tax Assistance Program where we seem to have a dearth of funds regularly, and these could realize benefit for numerous houses in the City. There's just but two thoughts on this.

Certainly this is already fait de accompli. But I'm interested in what the thought process is as to why this would automatically be dumped back into the housing reserve.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Councillor Vandal.

Councillor Vandal: I want to get up and speak in support of the motion coming out of Fiscal Issues and Executive Committee.

Four years ago the City embarked on a housing policy in partnership with other levels of government, the Province and the Federal Government, and I dare say

four years later this is not a good story, this is a great story.

We've partnered with the Province and the Feds through the Winnipeg Housing and Homelessness Initiative and we've developed a comprehensive strategy, a comprehensive implementation strategy to bring life back to our neighbourhoods that basically need it the most. Let's focus on the results.

There's been over 1,000 units that have been completed or soon to be completed in Winnipeg as we speak. Both in the West Broadway Neighbourhood there are 182 units which have been funded and will soon be completed. In the Spence Neighbourhood there are 303 units that are soon to be completed. In the William Whyte Neighbourhood there are 292 units which will be completed. In the North Point Douglas Neighbourhood there are 139 units which will be completed. In the downtown as we speak, there are 88 units which have been funded and will soon be completed. Grand total is at 1,004.

Close to $6 million have been invested in Winnipeg, and I dare say they've levered at least three times that money from the Province and the Federal Government for housing which is desperately needed in the oldest parts of the City.

The assessments that have increased because of that investment is very very significant. When we talk about spreading the pain around, part of the problem before was our over reliance on property tax, was due to the fact that the oldest neighbourhoods in the City were decreasing in values. So we had part of the pie that was decreasing and a smaller part of the pie that had to share more than they should have to fund services that we provide. If you add into that, over $3 million of vacant lots that we've thrown into the pot for redevelopment in those older neighbourhoods, we have a very significant contribution that is really on the cusp of I think exploding and is part of our housing renaissance in the City. We also have a multiple-family grant program that we're investing.

Councillor Steek is right, we have a home renovation tax credit program which is very very beneficial that we're going to be talking about later today. Frankly I think this is a good investment of any surplus that's oncoming. We are leveraging millions of other dollars from other governments. We are partnering with volunteers, with community groups, with the construction industry, with non-profit corporations and we're seeing the benefits of our investment now. I rise in support of the motion from Fiscal Issues, and support from Executive Committee.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Councillor Clement.

Councillor Clement: I'm rising to speak about this particular issue based on our finances. Councillor Vandal has already talked about the programs and how these are worked.

We created three reserves about five years ago. We have put a significant amount of money into the housing reserve with year end surpluses. There's no money left in that account right now or very very little, it's peanuts is what's in there right now.

The difficulty is that, this program that Councillor Vandal has just described was created and was to be funded out of year end surpluses through that housing reserve.

The problem is, that we don't have much of a surplus this year a). B) the program seems to be running and doing a number of very good things and creating strong initiatives in this area. Probably is going to be something that we fund. The cost of this program that Councillor Vandal is talking about, is $1.4 million for the calendar year. The program is ongoing. The reason why we did this is because while we're in the middle of developing a current budget, it's my view that this program should probably be funded out of the current budget and not out of year end surplus is part of the problem. It cost $1.4 million to operate it. They need money in January and February just like everything else around here. It seemed

like a reasonable place to put this money to keep the program running while we are deliberating the current budget. It was frankly that simple.

There is not a lot of extra money, and I don't believe that the year end surplus is going to grow when we get our final numbers very significantly. It might drop $100,000 or go up $100,000. That's why we put it where we put it because the program exists, and it's either cancel the program right now and send everybody home or do this and deliberate the programs needs and requirements. I can tell you that as recent as the last EPC meeting, I requested that we review all of the programs that were in to make sure that we don't have a lot of crossovers. I don't know how everybody else feels but there are a number of programs that are being dealt with, we're part of them with other levels of government in some cases, in some cases they're bilateral agreements. Frankly there's so many of them that I'm having trouble keeping track of them, and I'd like to have them reviewed so that I can at least see what we've got on the table. I believe that this was a prudent way to manage this money in the short term, and that's why it was moved to Fiscal Issues.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Councillor Thomas.

Councillor Thomas: Thank you. I rise as both a member of Fiscal Issues and as a member of the Housing and Homelessness Steering Committee to which these funds will be directed.

Normally we contribute at the end of each year, $1.5 million into this account. Unfortunately we did not have the amount of money that we normally do at year end to make our contributions, so our contribution is a little less than half of what we normally do. We have priorized this as an item that has been approved by Council several years ago. It was totally within our jurisdiction to do this. It was in response to direction of Council received two or three years ago, I can't remember when we made this commitment.

It matches federal and provincial dollars. The dollars are directed towards the poorest areas of town. The money is given to help people whether they're fixing roofs or steps, it's for what's known as critical repair. If you want to know more about the program, I'd be happy to talk a little bit about that or direct you to a member of the Administration who can sit down and talk with you about it in more detail. It is a program that we've had for a long time. It's a very focussed program that is doing well.

As Councillor Vandal who is the Chair of the Committee so rightly pointed out, that when we do this it actually increases the value of the assessments of the homes in that area. The money actually comes back to us in the tax dollars we receive. And it also encourages people in that area who don't get a penny from the program, but who see people helped out in the area. When they see homes around them that are being improved, it encourages people to take pride in the homeownership in their community as well.

We have four citizen groups that are out there working with the dollars and we've received many interesting and exciting reports from them as to what they've been able to do and the pride they're taking in their communities that these small amount of dollars enable them. I very much regret that we weren't able to give them the full amount this year.

As we've been saying each and every year, our budgets are getting tighter and tighter, and we will attempt to manage with a little less than half the amount of funds that we normally give, and try to make our best efforts to do what we can with finances available to us. Thank you.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Councillor Angus.

Councillor Angus: Thank you Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm not going to get in front of this program but at some point this Council is going to have to determine where the investment of city property taxpayers dollars go.

Mr. Speaker, we are in a position whereby we cannot fund the very necessities of sustainability in this city in

terms of roads, in terms of streets, in terms of potholes, in terms of tree cutting, in terms of river cleanup, in terms of all of those things Mr. Speaker that the money we raise from the taxpayers in the City of Winnipeg should be directed to.

This particular program is for those individual levels of government that redistribute their tax dollars. They get money from PST. They get money from GST. They get all sorts of alternative revenues, and they in turn redistribute that to those people that are needy.

I am not suggesting that those people that own homes in this city that have older stock homes that are falling apart do not need assistance. I'm not sure that we should continue to be suckered in to the one-third, one-third, one-third dollars on behalf of our property taxpayers for a program that should be basically funded by other levels of government.

This program has started but it's time that Council took a look at the cost of the gifts of two-thirds cooperative sharing from other levels of government and said, no Mr. Premier, if you want to do this, make a deal with the Province. You decide, you run it, we will certainly help and cooperate but don't ask our property taxpayers to invest in these non core services simply because it's an opportunity to be there.

Mr. Speaker, again I'm not going to get in front of this one. Fiscal Issues looks at the year end money. I see that there's motions coming forward from people on the other side of Executive Policy Committee that want rules changed. One of them would be on the redistribution I guess of the year end surpluses. There must be a better system and a better way to contributing and directing this money to those items that actually need it. Thank you.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Councillor De Smedt.

Councillor De Smedt: Thank you. I wasn't going to speak on this subject but Councillor Angus has fortuitously opened up a line of argument that is worthy of consideration. Certainly considering the financial status of the City, and what we're trying to accomplish here in the next several years with newer deals, what I call the right deal, certainly it bears analysis that we look at the shared programs. I did hear the words from Councillor Angus about core services. It is time we consider that again.

I would be very supportive of supporting a motion if somebody would like to bring that forward so that we could get a further analysis of this done. I think this council as a fundamental principle about the way it operates, needs to examine these myriad of opportunities that we're invited to participate in that really don't lead anywhere. They don't provide essentially core services. They do pull at the heart strings in many areas, and I support that. But we're at the stage of our life now that I think every program that we talk about is costing us in the longer term a hit against our infrastructure renewal.

With that I would just like to add to the dialogue and discussion here as a member of Council and encourage others to start thinking this way that it is really time to send kind of the arrows to our other two significant levels of government that it's time that they start putting their money into the core services that they constitutionally have responsibility for. Thank you.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: No further speakers. Mr. Mayor you want to add anything new to what members of EPC have stated?

Mayor Murray: I'm supposed to close debate.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: You've heard comments made by members of your committee.

Mayor Murray: I'd appreciate if we could discuss the rules, but we just follow them.

The question that Councillor Steek asked is a good one, the answer is very simple. It's Council policy. Which we all voted on, I think it was unanimous. We established three reserve funds. One for heritage

which comes from five percent of land sales. One for economic development which is supporting our economic development initiatives, and one for housing. Any surplus at the end of the year goes first to those. Then up to the Fiscal Issues Committee and then ultimately council to decide on the redistribution if there's anything substantial beyond on the needs of those funds, of those reserve accounts.

To meet the needs of the housing commitment this year out of surplus would have been close to $3 million. As there's essentially no surplus this year since to achieve where we were at, we cut $7.5 million from the budget in the last quarter of the last year, and there was a little bit of uptake estimated of up to $700,000, which is a small fraction of what's required.

The other issue that I think was raised in debate is worthy of further discussion, is why would the City partner in this. This is one of the precious few trilateral agreements we make where there's actually a bounce back in revenue. The reports are put out annually by the Province of Manitoba who do the assessments on what has happened with assessment. I think last year in the neighbourhoods that we have been in in housing the average assessment increase was in the range of 40% to 43%. This is one of the few things that we actually invest in where we actually do get tax revenues back. It is not only providing shelter which is an essential component of a human being's life. If you don't have a safe place to go at the end of the day, it's hard to keep a job, it's hard to participate in our community. For elderly people who live on in retirement who have been faced with increasing taxes and limited income maintaining their home is almost impossible, and this is about something that's essential as human dignity.

We were the first government in Canada to go back into housing. Within 30 days of the civic election in 1998. We're the only city in Canada that's a full housing partner. But the agreement is extremely flexible. We do not see housing as a line item in any budget. The reserve account was set up for those years in which we had surpluses that we would contribute.

Memorandum of understanding with the Government of Canada and the Province of Manitoba which is somewhat unique allows us a target of $17 million making us a full partner in it, but only as the City is able to pay based on surpluses. The other governments have them as line items going forward.

I would dare say if we didn't put this money in, we would not have seen the bounce in assessment. Quite frankly there would be a lot of revenue in those older neighbourhoods coming out from higher valued properties we would not be getting. It's also improving and reducing crime in neighbourhoods. If you look at West Broadway, Spence, William Whyte, you can see the improvement. It takes pressure off. It provides kids with a decent place to grow up and it leverages about $8 to $9 of money from the other levels of government and the private sector. This has been embraced by the non-profit sector, Habitat for Humanity to the Real Estate Board to Ladco.

I think it's shown as a national example. It was said by the Federal Minister of Housing past and present that this is the best housing partnership in Canada. It is being used nationally as a model. It is not a surprise to me that it is more popular within the neighbourhoods that people are affected by it and across the country than it is.

It was also done with an eye on the needs of suburban Winnipeggers. One of the biggest pressures on property taxes, has been the loss of assessed value in older neighbourhoods and the downtown.

The Assessment Act very swiftly corrects that by shifting the tax burden to suburban and middle and upper middle class Winnipeg who then have to make up in the redistribute of effect of assessment. They have to make up every dollar that's lost in assessed value in the innercity.

It was a coherent city-wide program. It had major benefit. It is being modelled and I think an extraordinary one.

The simple answer to the question is, it's because it's Council policy. EPC follows Council policy. The Council policy is quite straightforward. We first put money into the housing reserve, the economic development reserve and then Fiscal Issues Committee under the Chairmanship of Councillor Clement makes recommendations once the requirements of those reserve accounts are there. There are separate budgets for that. Maybe councillors want to look to their CGIP grants and land dedication money which seems to be spent on so many other things that could be used for skateboard parks which would be an appropriate expenditure. Very much what those programs were set up to do.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: All in favour? Contrary? Carried.

Item No. 6.

Item No. 6 – 2004 Home Renovation Tax Assistance Program
File FL

Mayor Murray: This is pretty straightforward. We had some very good suggestions from councillors, Councillor Steek and others and the Environment Committee. I think I can tell you that EPC was in agreement with them. We talked to the Administration about that.

It would hold up the program and cause some challenges if we implemented them this year. All of them have been grouped together. All of the recommendations that came forward from different quarters. The recommendation that EPC is, is to raise the level. We can't do it until 2005. We didn't want to hold the program up. That will be coming forward in a report, and I think it will take effect 12 months from now. We felt it was important to get on with this and not delay it. Thank you.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Councillor Steek.

Councillor Steek: Thank you Mr. Speaker. I asked the questions relative to Item No. 4 on the year end surplus, knowing the answer but hoping that I would hear a couple of speeches relative to the merits of that program, and they certainly came forward in abundance. I was particularly pleased to hear the sterling endorsement from Councillor Thomas. We don't often agree, but we certainly did in her last speech. I come forward with those comments referencing the Home Renovation Tax Assistance Program.

Councillor Thomas spoke glowingly about pride of ownership, about increased assessment base and the overall benefit of the housing program that we support through reserves, and I'm in complete agreement.

When I appeared at Executive Policy Committee I asked for one request to criteria only. And that was to have the current assessment ceiling of $90,000 raised to $115,000. That was not realized.

We've had a situation here where the actual ceiling on this program was diminished from $100,000 down to $90,000. This particular program Mr. Speaker as you're well aware only has $300,000 in it on an annual basis. The benefits of it though are immense. And along with Councillor Vandal, three years ago we revised the criteria in a program had only $35,000 in take up to the point where today it is often taken up in its entirety, although traditionally there are modest surpluses because not everybody acts on the program.

I appreciate the fact that Executive Policy Committee has come forward with the recommendations that they have relative to reviewing the criteria particularly with reference to the assessment base. I say that because of the fact as houses throughout the City continue to age, but assessment values continue to rise, it is more and more difficult for people to access a program of this need. I don't think that you can underscore enough, and I believe it was Councillor Clement who said this at Executive Policy Committee. This is the only program this city offers that has benefits city-wide. I

think that's what distinguishes. It doesn't matter whether you live in an 80 year old home in River Heights, Maples, or Mynarski, the fact remains is that you're in a position then to access some funding here.

The other thing that can't be underestimated Mr. Speaker, is the tremendous economic benefit of this within the community. This $300,000 in order to realize those tax credits, you have to had invested $3 million to $4 million in the acquisition of materials and labour. It's a win-win all the way around.

I'm dismayed frankly that we're staying at the $90,000 ceiling on it, and I would just urge my colleagues to retain this particular program to memory as you come forward to the current budget next year. Historically this doesn't kick in until the first of March each year. With all due respect to the Mayor the change from $100,000 to $115,000 doesn't create chaos within the house. We certainly had no problem in dropping it from $100,000 to $90,000.

The fact remains is this is something that can have benefits for so many people namely seniors, and particularly young people that are trying to get into the housing market.

The fascinating thing about this is, and there was reference made in earlier speeches in housing here, is the need for roofs. The number one item in this particular program is a replacement of a roof which in most instances a minimum of $2,500 to $3,000, that's a huge hit to people.

As a result if we had expanded the base in this to $115,000, more people would come within the scope of the program.

I'm going to be supporting the Executive Policy Committee motion that this thing be reviewed. I have to state this, there's some urgency to this so that by the year we go into the 2005 current budget, that we do up the ante on this thing. Right now the house has to be built prior to 1974. There was a request that it be 1984 which is only 20 years old. I think that is just a little too new for this program.

I'm in complete agreement with the housing industry that the assessment seen in this thing should be raised to a minimum of $115,000, if not $125,000.

The only other thing that isn't in the EPC motion but we'll certainly be pushing for in the current budget next year, is to increase the dollars within the program. We have so many programs that have come out of Executive Policy Committee that get significant support and are passed immediately. If you move the amount in this program from $300,000 to $500,000, and ceiling it at $125,000 it would have immense benefits. As a matter of fact we would have application to 75% of the homes in this city. That's a staggering opportunity. Those are my comments Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: No further speakers. Mr. Mayor.

Mayor Murray: I think that Mr. Speaker this number is bounced around. It was $80,000, it's been $90,000, it's been $100,000. There's also been a number of issues raised about what should be included. Heating systems, different types of retrofits. I think the feeling on Executive Committee was that these were very worthy. That we didn't want to review this every five months. That we're going to ask the Standing Committee and the Administration to review this and to come back with comprehensive recommendation. We have to look at the impacts of it and how it's applied. There was some many many good suggestions. I would expect that we don't want to do this on the knee-jerk basis and just pull another number out of the air. I think what we'd like to do is, take the time we're very close to the budget, leave the program as is, it's an excellent program we all believe in it. But make the modifications over the year. Bring forward a long term strategy, lock that in, and send it forward.

I think it's good. I want to thank Councillor Steek for raising the issue. I think we're all in general agreement on it.

I think we'll see modifications in this for the 2005 budget. Thank you.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: All in favour? Contrary? Carried.

Item No. 8.

Item No. 8 – Board of Revision – Citizen Member Appointments File GK-11.1

Mayor Murray: This is pretty straightforward. This is an excellent group of people who have been appointed, who have put in incredible amounts of time and energy. If someone has suggestions for new names, I think we could consider them for next year. Right now this has been reviewed with the Administration. These people have all done a great job for us. Have come highly recommended by the Secretary Chair of the Board. We try to politically stay out of this process. I think it's good folks and we're lucky to have them put in the time.

Councillor De Smedt: Mr. Speaker, I would like to refer this matter back to EPC for further consideration of the nominees, and with consultation with other councillors.

I can elaborate if you wish. I need to be very diplomatic here. I don't wish to pluck names out of a hat. I do think there is the perception of conflict of interest is very strong in one of the members on this board. I could actually comment on one or two others, but I don't think that's appropriate until the Mayor would like to take this back and have some consultation.

I do think things have changed last year. The person's spouse has become involved in a different category, and I think we should just simply say to some of these people and certainly to one of them, thank you very much for your good service. We appreciate it. Conflict of interest is a very strong issue in our city in any city, in any government. The perception is reality frankly. I simply would like members of EPC to really have second consideration on this.

Just for your information, several days ago I did highlight this issue to a member of EPC, and again through him to the Mayor this morning, but it doesn't seem to resonate. I regret without having to name some specifics, if I have to I will. I think the most diplomatic thing we ought to do, take this back, have another look. I think in fairness to everybody, and say thanks very much, and hopefully we can get some changes made. Refer this back to EPC.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Any further discussions. Mayor Murray.

Mayor Murray: Thanks very much. I unfortunately only became aware of Councillor De Smedt's complaint second hand through another person which I thought was extremely inappropriate.

Number two. I can tell you that all of these are reviewed by the Administration of the Board not by the City's administration. There is not one single person on here that is in a conflict of interest. As a matter of fact Councillor De Smedt's suggestion, if we took it would violate the rights of everyone involved.

This body is arms length and independent. Appeals from this body go to the Municipal Board. I wish some councillors would do their homework before they created what was a potentially embarrassing situation for someone. It's very regrettable. I think we should do the exact contrary Mr. Speaker, is respect the law, respect the hard work of the people involved and not play these political games. I think very straightforward, we should pass this immediately and move on.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: All in favour of referral? Recorded vote.

A RECORDED VOTE was taken the result being as follows:

Yeas

Councillors De Smedt, Steek.

Nays

His Worship Mayor Murray, Councillors Eadie, Angus, Clement, Gerbasi, Lubosch, Pagtakhan, Smith, Steeves, Thomas, Vandal, Mr. Deputy Speaker Councillor Lazarenko.

City Clerk: The vote Mr. Speaker, Yeas 2, Nays 12.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: All in favour of the clause? Opposed? Clause is carried.

There is an additional item of EPC today. EPC dated January 28, 2004.

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE DATED JANUARY 28, 2004

Item No. 1 – Negotiations between the City of Winnipeg and the Winnipeg Association of Public Service Officers (including WAPSO Exempt) – Memorandum of Settlement File GU-4.6

Mayor Murray: This is pretty straightforward. This is a report from labour relations. The results of the negotiations with WAPSO, Winnipeg Association of Public Service Officers. It's a 3%.

We continue to trail most other public sector settlements. This is below within mandate it's actually under mandate and budget.

I think I'd like to thank the Labour Relations team. I just want to point out here that we're not getting as high wage settlements as Edmonton, Calgary and Vancouver. These two, three percent range plus benefits are putting continuing pressure on our budget, at the same time we're not raising property taxes which I think shows some of the commitment of Council to manage budgets. It is challenging, and I think this is a very reasonable settlement. I want to thank the staff involved and I will as we normally don't get into big debates about this, I'll just present it to you. I will present it to you and sit down. Thank you.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: You've heard the clause that is before you. All in favour? Contrary? Carried.

Motions. Motion No. 1 and Motion No. 3 is automatic referral.

By-laws.

EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE CONSIDERATION OF BY-LAWS

Mayor Murray: I'll move that By-law No. 10/2004 be read a first time.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: All in favour? Contrary? Carried.

Clerk: By-law No. 10/2004.

Mayor Murray: I'll move that By-law No. 10/2004 be read a second time.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: All in favour? Contrary? Carried.

Clerk: By-law No. 10/2004.

Mayor Murray: I'll move that the rules be suspended and By-law No. 10/2004, be read a third time, and that the same be passed and ordered to be signed and sealed.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: All in favour? Contrary? Carried.

Question period. Councillor Steek.

EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE QUESTION PERIOD

Councillor Steek: Thank you Mr. Speaker. Through you to the Mayor. During the course of the Mayor's speech on Clause 4, he referenced the fact that the City had trimmed $7.5 million from its budget in the last quarter, and I certainly don't expect to hear all the specifics. In view of the fact that we're going into the current budget deliberations Mr. Speaker for the year '04, would the Mayor just share with us in broad brush stroke terms where that $7.5 million in savings was realized relative to the '03 current?

Mayor Murray: We have a seminar on the budget tomorrow Mr. Speaker. I don't have the numbers at hand, I'd rather not do this off the cuff. I will certainly take the questions under advisement and have the Chief Administrative Officer respond to Councillor Steek.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Second supplementary.

Councillor Steek: Mr. Speaker the reason for the question was simply that, if we were able to do it in '03, are these avenues that are open to us again for the '04 current. That was the reason for the question. Thank you.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Anybody else? No further questions. Well done.

The Standing Policy Committee on Protection and Community Services, dated January 12, 2004.

REPORT OF THE STANDING POLICY COMMITTEE ON PROTECTION AND COMMUNITY SERVICES DATED JANUARY 12, 2004

Councillor Gerbasi: I'm pleased to move Items 2 and 3 as consent items. The only one I can move is Item No. 3.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: All in favour? Contrary? Carried.

Councillor Gerbasi: Each of the other items I'll introduce.

Item No. 1 – Community Incentive Grant – Mulvey Parent Council File PR-2.6 (32)

Councillor Gerbasi: Mulvey Parent Council it's a community incentive grant. As Council's well aware, we changed the policy so that two-thirds of Council approval is required for this to pass today.

This one is a particularly difficult one that I'd like to speak to. It certainly doesn't fit criteria, there's no question. It's buying school supplies with capital money. It's completely inappropriate. I'm not going to argue with that.

The difficulty is, that over the last five years the councillor for the area and now the new councillor Councillor Smith's area, has continued to provide this grant and this is in one of the lowest income school in the City. It's mostly kids in West Broadway. It's totally inappropriate and they've become dependent on it. What I've personally said to Councillor Smith is this is the last time I would support something like this. I would leave it to each of you to vote with your conscience and what you feel is appropriate within our policy.

We do have some discretion to waive criteria for whatever reason we so choose. I'm not comfortable with this one, but I'm not really prepared to pull the rug out from under a school that's become dependent after five years of this kind of decision.

What I've told Councillor Smith is that for one more year I'll support this motion, but following this I hope that he will take the time to go to the school, talk with them and make them aware that this source of funds is no longer available to fund something that the school division, it's much more appropriately funded through some other means.

I know it's a very tough one. I know most members of EPC or Council don't want to support ones that don't meet criteria, and I can certainly understand why anyone would vote that way.

I'm very torn about this because I know of the particular dependency that's been developed after five years of previous policy not being heeded.

I open it up to Council for their consideration.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Councillor Smith.

Councillor Smith: Mr. Speaker, this school is an exceptional situation. Most of the families are very low income. Most are Aboriginal. It's a fantastic school that needs help.

Schools can raise funds. They have parent/teacher groups. You compare the

suburbs what they can do. This school has been helped over the years by Councillor Steek, and I have moved as well to support this.

We're not talking about a great sum of money. We're talking about $5,000. I should tell you this. Councillor Steek acted in those other years not in the interest of self-interest for his ward, he was doing it basically because the need for the students at this school.

Now most of the kids come from Councillor Gerbasi's ward, not Daniel Mac. I think it's worth supporting on the basis of an exception. It's not something that is a striking violation of the CIG's. I think the ward councillor has a better idea than anyone else. I've been to that school a number of times. I've seen what they do. I know how strapped they are. The school division is strapped too in dealing with this.

I would urge you to make an exception in this case at least for this year. I hope that we'll have support for these kids. Thank you.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Councillor Eadie.

Councillor Eadie: Mr. Speaker, just six months ago we debated in these chambers some proposed changes, some changes were eventually adopted by Council to the community incentive grant program to expand some of the criteria to meet some new issues and demands from the community that hadn't been contemplated at the time when the policy was originally established in 1985.

When you read this particular application Mr. Speaker you will see it doesn't fall anywhere within any criteria. It is in fact calling on the City to spend borrowed money to pay for operating costs. Mr. Speaker under the City Charter, this city government is not permitted to use borrowed money to pay operating costs. It's illegal. However the Charter is silent on these kinds of grants.

Mr. Speaker, when will we become disciplined in living with policy. It doesn't mean to say that every single application that comes isn't considered on its own merits, and indeed number two which is not, clause 2 which isn't here today because we didn't have enough information might indeed when we know more about it fall into that grey area where you make a judgment call. That's why it isn't here because we didn't have enough detail to make a recommendation.

This one Mr. Speaker, clause one, simply is not anywhere in policy. We will be debt financing this sum for the next 10 or 15 years to buy school supplies. Everytime we say yes to something like this Mr. Speaker, the school trustees for that area are let off the hook. This is the kind of thing that school boards have a mandate for. Why aren't school divisions spending the money that they raise buying supplies that are needed in schools. This isn't a problem just in this area, I understand it's a problem in many school divisions in the City. However Mr. Speaker, that isn't the problem for city government especially using capital dollars to buy school supplies for an organization that's not even within our mandate directly.

I have no doubt about Councillor Smith's assertion about the school and about its needs, but Mr. Speaker those people ought to be lobbying their school trustees to provide more funding so that school supplies can be bought. There are many areas of the City that have low income Mr. Speaker. I represent Brooklands. It certainly isn't noted as a high income area but just less than a year ago our community committee approved a community incentive grant for that community for something like $10,000 or $12,000. They're going out pounding the beat to raise their required share. What's different? Nothing at all. If you don't start telling people what the rules are, they're always going to be coming forward.

I have no doubt that this is a great need. It's not something that we just six months ago we had a debate on this policy, and here we are today same old, same old. It's just as though we never had this policy at all. When are we going to be disciplined about this? Why are we using

capital dollars to buy school supplies? Why aren't people directing their concerns for this kind of thing to their school trustees? Who actually if we look at our tax bills we all see how much money school boards take from the property taxpayer vis-à-vis the City Government. In many areas more than 50% of the property tax bill goes to schools. Why aren't the school boards then spending some of the money they collect buying school supplies for the needs of the students in their school divisions? This is not a matter for city government to deal with Mr. Speaker, this is a matter for school boards.

This is certainly way beyond the payout. This is nowhere near our established policy. As I said Mr. Speaker, we as a government can't spend capital dollars to pay our day to day operating expenses. We don't buy supplies for our own staff or ourselves with borrowed funds. We have to use operating dollars. This is something the community could do out of its per capita grant for example. You can't do it out of your representation allowance because that's illegal, that's not a granting fund. But if there aren't other funds then it's time for the school boards to take charge Mr. Speaker. It's time for them to be responsible. That's something the councillors for the area ought to be telling their people. Find your school trustee and found out why they aren't spending the enormous sums of money they collect from property taxpayers to supply their schools.

This Mr. Speaker, is beyond the pail, I can't support it. I'm not unsympathetic to the issues raised by Councillor Smith, but this is certainly the wrong way to use community incentive grant money. Which is very valuable money and ought not to be spent in this kind of fashion.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Councillor Steek.

Councillor Steek: Thank you Mr. Speaker. The comments from Councillor Eadie are fascinating. He resents the fact that we're back here and debating this.

The fact remains is that with the exception of parkland where we require two-thirds majority, we required two-thirds for nothing else. This was done simply because of the fact that very frankly, Executive Policy Committee wanted to stop these grants going out because they were able to pass with a pure majority. Now you have the near impossible task of getting 11 out of 12 members because 4 people if you check the records vote against this automatically. So you're asked to get 11 out of 12 votes. What else do you have to do that for. Maybe we should have 11 out of 12 votes for the whole budget.

The fact is, there are unique circumstances here and we have the right and democracy to come back and this doesn't meet criteria. And Councillor Eadie is absolutely right. One of the reasons we have criteria is that if you don't meet it you come back here and you debate it and try and sell it on its merit. Somebody who's the initiator of these grants let me tell you a little bit about the background.

Councillor Smith is correct. This school is highly unusual, it has the lowest socio economic demographic in the entire city. It's fine for Councillor Eadie to talk about going and pounding the pavement selling cookies to raise the money, you can't do it in that school.

Councillor Smith and I attended the graduation ceremonies there where 26 students graduated out of Grade 6, they were almost exclusively Aboriginal. The vast majority of the parents that were there didn't have Grade 6 education. They made it through because of the way this school is. This grant was done for one reason and it's not referenced here in the background.

The reason this grant was introduced was because the major problem in this school was theft. The kids did not have school supplies the way they do elsewhere in the City that parents supply. These kids simply did not have it. It's unfortunate that we don't have either Ms Rodriguez or Lionel Pang who is now the Vice-Principal or the Principal at Pinkham speaking to this.

Here's the thing that rubs so many citizens the wrong way about this, and I can tell you, I relish it, everytime we go through this debate the phone calls that come to the Office are totally supportive. They say, what's wrong with you people down there.

Run this one by the citizens of Winnipeg. A million dollars to True North from the Province and the City of Winnipeg on the ground that that things was going to crater. A million bucks. We're having trouble coming up with $5,000 for school supplies.

Is it outside of criteria? You bet it is. We put $45,000 into that school over the last number of years. One of the things that was done was signage for that school and it was paid for jointly from Councillor Smith's CIG and mine. Councillor Smith did not represent the ward. Why was the signage done? If Councillor Eadie would check the facts he'd find out that through the heritage funds and through the school divisions they've been matching our dollars. One of the fascinating things about it is the reason the sign was put up is because the enrollment was plummeting in the school. The signage went back up telling parents about school opportunities about getting their kids into school and special school programs, the enrollment went up 40 students. As a result they have two more teaching positions.

What do we hear all the time? We hear about let's grow the population in this province. What are the three criteria for growing the population that's recognized? Number one is immigration. We certainly don't control that as a policy. Number two is economic development initiatives. In theory we take some of those. The last criteria is education. Why for a modest amount of money would we not want to step up to the table and help in situations like this?

The truth of the matter is and Councillor Eadie is absolutely correct. He says, 53% of the school of your total tax bill was coming from school divisions, and he's correct. We know there are further increases coming down the road at us. The City has been valiant in its efforts to keep our tax portion under control. The truth of the matter is, it's a provincial jurisdiction to get the school taxes and the education levy off your backs. But it doesn't negate the situation that you're looking at today in a school like this.

Councillor Smith has come to the floor because there is a need. You know what? If you hadn't of modified the policy on this to make it two-thirds, people could vote their conscience and I dare say this, they may pass on a plurality. On a two-thirds, not a chance. So you stacked the game to begin with. All you get is the debate on the floor of council.

I would suggest that some of you go to an innercity school like this. We hear people talking about the housing programs that we leverage federal and provincial monies and the benefits. Go to a school like this and see the turnaround in that community. The Mayor talked about the importance of quality housing, reducing rates of crime. Take a look at what this education means to these people and what it's done to crime rates in that area.

Once again as Councillor Smith said, you know what, these aren't people who are in Councillor Smith's ward. Councillor Gerbasi couches her comments in a neat way, she said, you know what, based on precedent in the past and I won't support it again. These are your constituents. These are 90% Broadway. This is not something that Councillor Smith's doing because he's valiant and he's going to win votes in his ward, these people don't vote for Councillor Smith. What he's doing is the right thing for these students. $5,000.

How much are we over running on the pedestrian bridge and the major bridge? $5 million. No problem in finding that. $275,000 for the Juno's because of the economic spin-offs. No problem in finding that. They're civic jurisdictions. You bet they are. You go out there in the public domain and tell people that you can't come up with a lousy $5,000, but you can cut a cheque to True North for $1 million, and I'm from the business sector and I don't support that and I never did.

I will tell you, $5,000 will have far more benefit in this community than $1 million that you pumped into True North.

So should Councillor Smith be supported on this? Yes. When other councillors come forward with unique needs in their area, should you be there? Yes. Read the first line in the new deal handout that the Mayor put out. What does it talk about? It talks about the autonomy for elected officials in the areas that they know. And if Smith doesn't know what the needs are in his ward, who does?

I'm dismayed councillors that this has to come to the floor seeking a two-thirds majority. If it were a simple plurality there's a chance it will pass. With two-thirds, you're whistling in the wind. But you know what? You're not hurting the ward councillor. Who you're hurting are the students in that area. It's fine to say, the school board should be stepping up and accepting responsibility for this. We have all sorts of things that are cross jurisdictional where we partner with other levels of government. A lousy $5,000. One of the things that's going to come forward in the current budget, is a request for heightened dollars for the per capitas. It won't pass. Not a chance, because it would give some of these individual councillors a little more autonomy in their wards.

I intend to come back with these things. I'm going to close with this little story. I went to Grant Park where I had to battle to get through money for computers. I went and I saw the science experiments that were done and we met with the entire science class and the parent councils, and they showed us science experiments that use to take one full day to graph. And with the computers that a lousy $20,000 bought, they had better computers in the University of Manitoba, they do the same experiment now in 10 seconds.

Where's the better return on your investment.? A million dollars that you pumped into True North or a paltry sum like this that you're going to put into schools that will give these kids the opportunity for heightened education and a future to get out of some of the situations that they're in. Think about it before you automatically vote with a pack and turn this thing down because it requires a two-thirds majority.

People hate hearing this speech from me, I hate giving it. But there's something profoundly wrong in this council if you can't ante up with something like this. Take a look through all the CIG's that went through in the past and where they were.

These are taxpayers dollars. There is only one taxpayer. This is a modest request. Think about it if you were parents and you had children in this school facing the kind of issues that these kids do, day in, day out. Would you stand up and be counted? I hope so. I hope these councillors, don't be led by the pack on this. Vote with your conscience and think what if this were happening in my ward, and I was told that I had to come up with a two-thirds majority.

The question that you should be asking yourself is, other than parkland what else do you need two-thirds for. Why as something as basic and simple as a CIG had this curve thrown at it? It's petty politics. It's wrong. Obviously I'm going to be supporting Smith's request.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Councillor Steeves.

Councillor Steeves: Thank you. It doesn't surprise me that we're here having this debate again. This is a toughie.

In many ways I think we've kind of made matters a little bit worse if we're going to keep coming back to this with what we did sort of prior on this.

The difficulty is I think with what Councillor Steek just said is that, I think everybody agrees that there's certainly a need for what he is talking about, what Councillors Smith and Gerbasi are advancing forward. Just so we can kind of put it in perspective as to what it means in our individual wards I want to tell you a couple stories about two applications that

I've had in St. Vital over the course of the last couple of months that have come forward based on the new criteria. Three as a matter of fact.

After the new criteria was passed, on the first one I went back to the applicant and I said, your application simply doesn't meet criteria. I'm very sorry. I sat down with them, they were disappointed. They made the decision on that basis to withdraw their application.

The second one had an application that was close, we sat down, we had to change the project, we had to look at the new criteria. The project was changed, more public access to make the project actually fit with the new criteria. It was passed because it met criteria.

On the third project somebody phoned and they had a project, they were going to put in for a CIG. I said I'm sorry, I just don't believe it's going to meet criteria. I spoke to them as recently as last night, and I told them it's just not going to meet criteria. I gave them some out of the per capital grant because I thought it was appropriate and certainly met criteria there, it certainly didn't come close to meeting what they perceived was their needs.

I'm not exactly sure Mr. Speaker what I would say to these people if I was to vote for this today. It's not that I don't think it's an appropriate need or needed in a community, but it puts me personally as an area councillor in a very very difficult spot.

Councillor Eadie raises an excellent point. It's a point that probably doesn't come up very much in the context of discussing things like erasers and school supplies and binders and pencils, but if this is money that's going to be put in the capital budget and financed as "capital", although I'm not going to pretend that a project as small as this is going to make an operative difference. We have to remember that when people are lending money and they were financing things on a long term basis, it's no different I guess practically than if you are financing something that your own home. If you're going to be financing things and for want of a better word, borrowing money, although maybe that's not exactly the right word, but if you're looking at a long term repayment program, it's often asked that you're providing actual bricks, mortar and capital to finance those things so that people who are looking to advancing those money in whatever framework it happens to be, have something to hang their hat on. Obviously that's not going to be the case in a project as small as this. The point is a very very important point.

We have to answer to bond rating companies. We have to answer to the big boys and the big girls on Wall Street literally I guess in terms of these types of things. It's important when it comes to policy on these types of things that we are at least paying attention to these important issues.

Councillor Vandal and I had made a suggestion a while back. I don't know that necessarily the suggestion is met with an overwhelming degree of acceptance. We should consider doing as a council is this.

If community committees have a certain amount of CIG, land dedication and per capital grant money within their own community committee, they should look at their allotments. If we can't change the per capital grant amounts in terms, if that's not the will, then we should maybe look at the allotments within the community committees themselves. Heck we could even have a setup whereby if one community committee thinks it's appropriate, I would even be prepared to consider a situation whereby if the downtown community committee want to have more money for per capita grants because they don't have the matching funds in the community to meet their CIG requirements then I don't know if that would particularly concern me. It might cause me some concern, maybe not, if they were receiving more money in totality. But there may be ways of rejigging this to make this fair. We're talking abut $5,000 which isn't a huge sum of money. This is the type of thing that even as it stands right now could be met through per capita grant money, it's

early enough in the year. Maybe it could be split between a couple of councillors. Maybe you could talk to the people who are asking for the money and say, look, things have changed a little bit would you take a little bit less.

These are the realities. These are some of the constructive things that I think could be done just by a simple relatively simple re-examination of just the way things work. If the downtown community committee which is where a lot of these issues seem to be coming from, wanted to rejig things so that they have more leeway on their per capital grant monies and they have less in their CIG and they wanted to do more in this vein of things, I can't imagine that Gord Steeves from St. Vital would stand up and say, I absolutely can't live with that. It would even make me blink frankly.

It might behoove us to look at changing sort of the black and white on this so we have some guidance going forward. I don't disagree with the project. I think it's terrific that you're trying to help your constituents. Whoever's constituents. It is causing some of us some difficulty. And if I was to vote for this this morning, I would have to immediately answer to folks in my constituency who I have worked with over the course of the last few weeks, it gets really really tough.

I won't be supporting this. It doesn't mean that I don't support the young people and the councillors and the community. I think I've made my point. I think people understand how complicated this is getting. Thank you.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Councillor De Smedt.

Councillor De Smedt: Thank you. When we entered into this protocol last year of having to have a two-thirds vote to get these confirmations, we set ourselves on a real wild path. I think Councillor Steeves has just exhibited why the path is wild because people can't figure out what the heck they want to do.

Frankly what I see since that two-thirds vote protocol was invoked that EPC has not followed through with their logical leadership that they ought to have taken on this to try and sit down certainly through intergovernmental affairs, through the Chair of the Committee, to work with the Government, the Provincial Government and school divisions to say, look at folks, you have to rejig how you do things. You're putting the City in a very untenable position.

Having said that, it's kind of interesting. I presume Councillor Steek will be back in the room to vote. The shades of grey are two people dressed in that fashion this morning. We probably support this particular CIG grant. I'm going to do that because of the words that have been stated covering this particular school that's obviously in need.

Sure we could sit and follow policy just regular. We don't need council meetings, I just need a computer to crank the proposal in. And if the computer says no, it doesn't meet policy, that's how council meetings will be, that's easy. We're all elected to kind of use a little bit of intelligence here.

I'm not concerned about the fact that this is capital money, it's internal borrowing. Every time I ask the Administration, how much is it costing us, what's the real amortization cost. Well you know, we shift money around, it's really not that much. In fact when you look at our internal borrowing structure, we're in pretty good shape.

Do I like it that we're going to take capital money to fund these projects? Not entirely. Ought there to be some reasonable understanding for unusual circumstances? I think the answer is yes. There's a matter of compassion here in this kind of thing and many of the things that we do around City Hall.

I will simply close on a quote that I saw the other day that's so appropriate to a lot of the work that we do around here. "There can be no rainbow in the soul if there are no tears in your eyes". I'm going to support this.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Mayor Murray.

Mayor Murray: You know Mr. Speaker, every once and a while you get absolutely unmitigated nonsense presented on the floor of Council. This has now been elevated to an art form.

First we have councillors who are saying, well can't be in housing because it's not a core city service, but we should be in the school supply business. How you connect that logic is that.

We have to follow policy we get chastised at EPC we don't follow policy, but now we shouldn't because we need autonomy. There's no coherence here to this argument. It tells you it's opposition for the sake of opposition.

Let's take this particular request. It meets none of the criteria. None. Which we reviewed. We challenged the councillors who were so upset about actually having some policy criteria to come up with a plan or a program for kids programming, for operational costs and present it to the budget. Six months ago. I said at the time, I bet you, six months from now there will not be one single councillor who took pen to paper to propose an operational budget proposal to fund kids programs. This was such a burning issue, well we don't care about children. But no one took five minutes to do it. Let's look at what happened.

We were challenged to do this. Well the Mayor's Office did something and some members of Council did something. We got together with Ron Duhamel School Drive. If you remember about three members of Council jumped on that bandwagon, campaigned in their constituencies and filled all the boxes that were in the lobby of City Hall, we put them in every library this year, and city-wide we ran a very successful campaign that the Honourable Ron Duhamel started to raise school supplies.

I don't remember a lot of the councillors complaining about this lifting a finger to help with that program because it isn't just a problem about Mulvey. It's a problem in many many innercity schools where there's a lack of school supplies.

How do we deal with problems? We could do it the way that Councillor Steek does, which is ignore the policy. What are the consequences of that? I use to represent this area. Broadway Neighbourhood Centre needs capital dollars for these same kids. It needs play equipment, it needs swings. It needs additions and fixing in the building. The Sherbrook Pool where these kids swim needs $2 million in capital improvements. That's what this program was for. For these kids. Why was it given to the discretion of councillors in the City Centre Community Committee? Because they said look, we need more money in Sargent Park, we need more money at Broadway Neighbourhood Centre, we need more money to fix Magnus Eliason, we need money at Robert Steen, we need money for playstructures. When the new standards came out and playstructures were removed, we put more money in the budget for playstructures. This is a capital program for the recreation and social needs of children in the City. It is not a school supplies program, it is not a program for musical instruments. And if you want a program I've said, put it in the mix and we'll consider it.

If you spend your money on school supplies and you don't support the school supplies drive or get involved in those kinds of things, what does that mean? It means that the other things that this budget is set up for for those exact same kids don't get done.

The other irony, is we had a request don't put the money into housing, and West Broadway that 20 block area has used up more housing dollars than anywhere else, put into skateboard parks. Well think about how that sounds when one of the City Centre councillors stands up and takes the money that's there for the skateboard parks and the play equipment and wants to spend it on school supplies.

The other thing I've said, if this is such a big issue there are three school trustees in Winnipeg 1, which get 55% of our property taxes. Do you know the number of times that I've met with school trustees,

have raised the school supply issue with me that this is the need the City should get involved in? Not once. Not once. I have no letters from school trustees who are voted there.

How should you handle this? Well let's look at how Councillor Gerbasi has done. She came forward and said the Broadway Neighbourhood Centre in this neighbourhood needs help. Operational dollars. It gets a $100,000 grant, it needs $15,000 a year. Councillor Gerbasi came to see me, talked to her colleagues, talked to Councillor Angus and others, and presented a request to increase the budget by $15,000 for the Broadway Neighbourhood Centre. You know what? In the budget that we presented on February 24, what will be in there. $15,000 for the Broadway Neighbourhood Centre for these exact same kids in the appropriate budget following the proper process, $15,000 going in for the recreational needs of these kids. Well the total is $115,000 but it's a $15,000 increase.

We had a need for more recreational needs in this area. Operating dollars. So art city project was spun off of Broadway Neighbourhood Centre. A proposal came forward to the Standing Committee and to Executive Committee for $100,000. You will notice now in the budget there's $100,000 going in to West Broadway for the Art City Broadway Neighbourhood Project to help these kids out and to provide support for them.

Doesn't it seem mighty strange to all of us that this burning need of school supplies can't be formed in a project because here's what happens, think this through.

We set up a school supplies program. We should talk to the school trustees first, I would assume because it's schools and they do get elected. We should talk to the Province which actually in this neighbourhood runs a neighbourhoods alive program and Project Lighthouse both based out of schools, both operating dollars, both to support these same children. And we should put a request in to the Province and the school trustees to say look, the City is concerned about school supplies, we're big supporters of the Ron Duhamel School Drive and we would like to work on a program. That could have been done six months ago. That could have been done three months ago. I've been saying for the last four months, if you've got things you want in the budget, let's present them, this is an operating budget. These are worthy things.

The argument is an untruth. The only reasonable argument was, these kids should get the school supplies. No one disagrees with it. No one is saying we shouldn't put money in the school supplies, we're saying we should. But develop the program to do it. We wouldn't take housing money from the neighbourhood housing program and put it into school supplies. We're not going to take money from the program that's suppose to fit the recreational facilities for these kids and put it into school supplies.

I love the comment, how many times have we spent that million dollars for True North. It's $100 million now, it's been spent on every single project. I know some people really don't support downtown renewal when push comes to shove because they like to tell people they support it but it's only always at the expense of that. This just gets tiresome. We didn't take a million dollars from our streets budget. We didn't take a million dollars from housing. As a matter of fact, we went from zero to $17 million on housing. Actually we've increased the amount of money for recreation. Actually we put more money into that. Actually we've set some money aside for skateboards. Actually we put $215,000 into kids recreational needs. It would not be hard to find $5,000. Then you can't grandstand right? You can't stand up and get all of the grandstanding. Because simply doing what Councillor Gerbasi does doesn't get you headlines, it gets you the money for the kids, but it doesn't get you the headlines.

Is this really about finding $5,000 for Mulvey? It's not. I would suggest we vote this down. I would suggest those councillors that think this is important come up with a proposal for school

supplies. I will invite the school trustees from Winnipeg 1, and I will write a letter to the Minister of Education because I've been waiting six months for others to do it. I will look forward to when we do the Ron Duhamel School Supplies Drive next year, that the City which is a big sponsor of it has active support to try and raise those because most communities are not having problems with this. In most communities in the City, the school supplies drive has solved this problem.

Why would we create a parallel program when the school trustees and the community and MPs and MLAs and many city councillors are out there raising the school supplies, it's not hard to do this. Do you know what I mean? It's not hard to do this. This is not a big problem. It is only a big problem if you want to fit a square peg in a round hole and take these kids recreation money away from them and put it into something that is more about politics than about kids.

Councillor Steek is absolutely right. It's only $5,000. It is easy to find. But we should be finding it fairly for all kids and the same way we don't have two sets of standards for recreation funding for kids in one neighbourhood or another, and we don't have two sets of standing on housing funding, we have one good program that Council votes on, and we make sure that all kids are treated. We should have a program like this, not independently, not in running school trustees, not grandstanding, but going and doing all that hard work about meeting with the right people and putting together a proposal.

I am now convinced that we've had this debate for one year, and I haven't seen a proposal. I am interested in developing such a proposal with the school trustees in the area, and I would invite any councillors who actually have had enough talk and want to see some action to sit down with Lori Johnson and some of the very good school trustees and see if we can come up with a partnership.

I want to thank Councillor Gerbasi for actually showing some leadership and delivering the money in that neighbourhood and not a lot of talk.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: No further speakers. Councillor Gerbasi.

Councillor Gerbasi: I would like to say, there's been some very interesting discussion today. I actually agree with everything the Mayor has said. I don't agree with what Councillor Steek said. The interesting thing was that I'm planning to support Councillor Steek, but he almost convinced me not to with his speech because it was so full of inaccuracies and unfairness.

The Mayor is correct and what I'd like to clarify. The two-thirds vote is an open vote that we have and we make a decision on each issue. I am going to vote with Councillor Smith on this one. The reason I'm going to vote with Councillor Smith even though this grant is totally the wrong way to fund this, and that is because I've got a commitment from Councillor Steek that we will never have this debate again. We will never see this grant again next year. If we do, I will never vote for it again.

The question is, what do we do when we get these kind of request? How do we handle them? Well the way I've been handling them for five years, is I've been saying no. That's what we have to do sometimes. Then we look for other solutions as the Mayor has said. That's what I do in my ward. The problem is, there's been five years of doing it wrong. We've been not following a policy for five years, and when you do something there's fallout unfortunately in a community. I hope this is the last time.

I will support my colleague and my community committee one last time in this inappropriate use. This really is the last time. I don't apologize to the community of West Broadway because we are doing so many other things to support them. I'm discouraged that certain councillors just don't understand this. We will continue on and hopefully this will be the very last time we have this discussion. Thank you.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Recorded vote has been called for. All in favour please rise.

A RECORDED VOTE was taken the result being as follows:

Yeas

Councillors De Smedt, Gerbasi, Lubosch, Smith, Steek, Vandal, Mr. Speaker Councillor Lazarenko.

Nays

His Worship Mayor Murray, Councillors Eadie, Angus, Clement, Pagtakhan, Steeves, Thomas.

City Clerk: The vote Mr. Speaker, 7 – 7. It did not achieve the two-thirds majority required.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Thank you. Clause 4.

Item No. 4 – Community Services Department Safety Management Program
File PR-2.10

Councillor Gerbasi: Mr. Speaker, Clause 4 is here today. We have a disagreement with the motion from the Standing Committee, Executive Policy's decision.

The Standing Committee supported the idea of having a safety program following the Joshua Harder Enquiry, but they didn't support the means to pay for that program other than find more money.

The proposal from the Administration, just to backup slightly. You're all aware of the Joshua Harder incident. There was an inquest. There was a number of recommendations. The City Community Services Department has been very proactive in implementing a safety strategy which started at the end of 2003, and now needs to be funded as part of our ongoing operating budget so that we can provide our citizens safety in all of our recreation programs, aquatics and all of our recreation programs.

You might have noticed, I'm sure you've all heard of the near tragic incident the other day. Everything was done right. Everything was done well. That child the other day is fine and recovering and will be fine. That incident showed that the safety initiative is right up to speed and our staff is right up to speed. It was handled beautifully and I'd like to congratulate the staff and the lifeguards and the schools and everyone that was involved who handled that incident so well and a tragedy was averted. That's exactly why we need this program.

Some councillors are questioning, well if it's just aquatics, why are we looking at all of our recreation programs. But all of our recreation programs involve risk. Wading pool programs for example are under recreation, they're not under aquatics. Skating. The type of initiative that this is, is a little bit broader than maybe some of the councillors are aware of. It's training all of our staff. Making sure that our policies aren't sitting on shelves but are actually in everyone's minds and followed and practiced so that all of our programs are very very safe.

In order to fund the cost of this, there's a proposed increase in recreation fees. As it will be expected that there will be some that don't have the wherewithal to ever increase a fee ever, and they will stand up everytime there is a fee increase and be the hero of the day, and say that they don't support it. I don't think any of us enjoy raising fees, but we already charge fees for some of these services. They're not free now and we have to charge a fee for them. And we have to charge a fee that's reasonable. I think when you look at these increases, we're still providing a very reasonable cost of service for the service we're providing. It's comparable to other jurisdictions. It's very very reasonable.

We also have fee waivers in place and a very clear and sensitive process for people who can't afford it. We provide a large amount of free service. Many of the programs we provide are free. The ones that do cost money we issue a large number of fee waivers for those who can't for economic reasons.

I think this is a reasonable approach. This isn't a one time cost that we can just find somewhere, this is an ongoing increase to the way we do business in response to an inquest. I for one am not prepared to wait until we have some tragedy in one of our recreation areas just so there could be another inquest so we can deal with that part of the department. We're dealing with a whole gamut of our recreation services and making them safer and making them better, and preventing any tragedies in the future.

I hope that all of you will see the reason in funding this through a small fee increase which, although nobody ever wants to raise a fee still leaves us with affordable rates. Actually when you look at the impact of it, it's something like $0.15 a week for a class at a leisure centre. It's really not going to hurt people. If they can't afford it, we have fee waivers that they can go to.

I urge Council to be fiscally and morally responsible and support this initiative. I'd also like to thank Community Services who's done a fantastic job of improving all of our recreation and safety services in complying with the Harder Inquest and making us one more success in our delivering services to our citizens. Thank you.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Councillor Smith.

Councillor Smith: Mr. Speaker, when this came before us, there was for example last year we had the increase with inflation. Then we had five percent over inflation as well. Now we have 4.5% again increase.

Why are we having this increase now? Because of the Harder Inquest. Which dealt with aquatic safety. I support the measures for improving the safety of water sports programs. But, this is across the board on all recreational programs in the leisure guide.

For example. Crazy cartoons, pencil, paper and imagination come together for young children, six to twelve. Pottery using coils by hand. Babysitting course. Guitar for beginners. How are we increasing the safety for guitar players people who are learning guitar? Then emergency first aid course. What are we going to do there? Introduction to improv acting. Lip balm, making a variety of lip-gloss. Beginners song writing course. How are we going to improve the safety there tell me? Creative card design using rubber stamps, making cards. Creative memory scrapbooking. How are we going to improve the safety there? I guess we're going to look after how to handle scissors, I don't know. Christmas tree decorations. Figure drawing. Introduction to water colour painting. How are we going to increase the safety there? Newborn moccasin making. Knitting, gift wrapping. Basic interior decorating. Buyers home inspection course. Composting which we want to encourage. How are we going to improve the safety there? Basic aromatherapy. Tell me how we're going to improve the safety there.

These are just a few. I can go on and on and on. The fact is, this is a way to get an increase, period.

The whole question about providing these courses at the cheapest rate compared to the other groups that offer them. The City of Winnipeg provided the lowest price in the majority of the children programs analyzed. In the majority. They don't list anything. We don't have any information. We just have the opinion expressed.

The Committee Chairperson mentioned that we have a waiver policy. When this was mentioned I asked how we let people know about the waiver policy. Well it's in the leisure guide. On page 4, very small type, there is a mention of a policy where we consider waiving or reducing.

Let me tell you this. This is not, there's no signs up in our facilities. There's no mention in the leisure guide. It's buried. In fact basically only organized groups know about the policy. An individual family does not unless they're involved in the boys and girls club or some organized group. We don't really have a waiver policy. Or we have a waiver policy we

don't tell the people who it applied to that they can apply. In other words, we raise the rates all the time and we say, no one will be hurt. The fact is, an increase of 4.5% plus the 5% over inflation last year plus inflation hurts a lot of people from going ahead and entering these programs. In fact they don't even know about the waiver policy.

There is no grounds for this sweeping across the board hike in recreation fees. In fact if you listen to the Mayor in the new deal talk about user fees, it's people who use it should be paying. Tell me how the person learning guitar why they're paying it. Why are people taking a babysitting course, why are they paying such an increase. There's no earthly reason and I would expect you to go ahead and support turning this down. This is incredibly bad and it makes no sense at all.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: No further speakers. Councillor Steek.

Councillor Steek: Mr. Speaker through you to the Chair. When this item came forward at Protection Committee I sat in on the debate. I would draw your attention to the report itself. It says, a 4.5% increase plus inflation. We have going through here almost a 7% increase because it's inflation coupled with 4.5 points.

I would draw your attention to the report that says, this will realize $336,000 in revenue. Okay. Where and how is the $336,000 being spent? Read the report. It's just generic. It talks about safety initiatives. Well when I went to the meeting one of the things that stunned me, we were told we didn't have the in-house resources to do this, we'd have to do some significant hiring. But one of the hire's was going to be somebody in a six figure salary. Yeah. I sat in on that meeting. If I was wrong in what I heard I'm sure that the Chair will correct me. When I look at it, I say, if we're going to get a report asking for fees that will generate $336,000, how are we spending it? How many people are we hiring?

And Councillor Smith's points are well taken. Nobody is questioning for a moment that you're going to implement the recommendations from the Harder Report, that's a given.

The question though is, when you're asking for $336,000 in additional revenue, where is it coming from up and above the fee increases but where is it going? Well there's nothing in this report that tells you that.

I would like to know how many people are being hired. Most importantly if you go back and you take a look at this report it says point blank, our aquatic fees are already up and above the national average or above the local averages. If we have to be up and above those averages, why?

You may remember during the course of the Harder Inquest that the Judge was very frank and saying, our people weren't well trained, process and procedures weren't appropriate and we have to address those, absolutely. The fact remains, $336,000 the report itself says, you won't glean the entirety of this amount because it's coming part way through a year. Why would this not go to the budgetary process? Why would we not be looking at this in the context of everything else? In all due respect, what this is, is a significant fee increase traveling on the backs of many of those who are least able to afford it and have a look at the leisure guide and try to find the waiver policy. You might if you've got a magnifying glass.

The question is, why wouldn't we have a report that comes up, says the number is $336,000, how do you know it isn't $386,000 or $124,000, you've just got a number stamped on a page but there's no explanation as to how it's being used or where it's going. I think you have a right to that.

We're told there's a revenue stream of $336,000, we're not told how it's spent. Why would we blithely pass something like this when we're knocking on the door of the budget, we're having a budgetary meeting tomorrow, why would this not come forward to the budget and be discussed in that context? Lord knows the world won't stop if you don't move this

$336,000 through here today. I think what it does do it forces everybody on Council to take a look at this as an expenditure and say, is this a fair expenditure. Is it reason? God, maybe after the smoke clears we'll find out we'll need $586,000. But at least we'll know why. Right now you don't know why. You don't know how it's being spent. I mean if it's there to improve the safety of the guitar program, maybe those monies should be allocated to aquatics. I don't know. But you can't tell from reading this report. They didn't have the answers from the Administration. When I asked the Administration after, why do we have to hire a person in six figures for, the answer was, we don't have the resources in the house. Maybe we could hire two crack experts at $50,000 a piece. I don't know, but I think they should. I think there should be some explanations here.

This document does not tell you what is happening with $336,000, other than it's being spent for safety initiatives. You know what? You want $5,000 for school supplies you better be able to articulate where it's going and how it's being spent. $336,000 oh that's okay, let's just cut a cheque. Those are my comments.

I'm hoping the Chair will send this back to the budgetary debate that starts tomorrow morning. Makes good sense. If not, I won't support it.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Councillor De Smedt.

Councillor De Smedt: Thank you Mr. Speaker. I'm having some difficulty as well because the report does not really cover off some of the issues that have been mentioned here today both by Councillor Smith and Councillor Steek.

We do expect to have a little bit more documentation, and we did hear when this went before the Protection, Community Services Committee that there was going to be a significant amount of money spent on one position to cover some of these safety issues off. I'm a little concerned about that. Our city is in an affordability crisis right now at least according to the new deal scenarios that were presented all last year. We still have to review the budget.

I think the only reason this is here today as I understand it, is that they want to produce the leisure guide, I understand that, I have great empathy with gee we have some lee time, and we better get this out. If we do need this money, one could support it. If there was a better articulation of the why's and wherefore's, and how we're attributing these costs across the line and where we're going to be spending the money.

Without that in the absence of I presume the Chair may not be able to cover all these items off, I will not support it. I will be listening closely to see if I can find if there's any sort of consensus here that this makes sense at this point in time. If not, and there's a critical date required for the leisure guide, I certainly would encourage us to consider a special meeting of the Committee to talk with the Administration to get a report out to all members of Council, I mean we're probably going to be having special meetings around here for the next several months until we conclude our budget. It wouldn't take much effort to get 16 people together to wrap up an approval if there was a proper report for this specific issue to meet the leisure guide production requirements. I shouldn't be driven by the production requirements of an administrative document. Important to obviously to our citizens.

We need a little bit of common sense here. I've heard a lot of interesting and logical comment that we're not sure where we're going with this. It seemed too easy to create a simple report saying, look it, we've got the Harder Report, here's the safety initiatives, and I'm just going to immediately after increasing inflation already into the new rates, adding another 4.5% across the board. Fascinating as Councillor Steek has often used that word. I'm a little bit troubled by how we as a council have to consider these things without sufficient information. Thank you.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: No further speakers. Mayor Murray.

Mayor Murray: I'm sure people listening would wonder what this money is being spent on. Implemented risk manager administrative coordinator position, development recreation services division, which was recommended by the courts.

Increased staffing levels in all indoor pools, minimum two instructor guards on duty at all times. Enhanced standardized training and orientation levels for staff and contract leaders. Strength pool admission requirements. The age has increased from 6 to 7 years old for which a child must be accompanied by a parent or caregiver in order to gain entry to the school. Consistent application in enforcement of pool administrative requirements across the system. Enhanced communications with the public pool admission required in all pools. Safety guidelines and messages will be an ongoing regular feature of the City. Review booking procedures are going to be reviewed as part of this and that also costs money. Removed aquatic play mats from the City of Winnipeg pools. Hiring an external safety expert to evaluate and as required propose revisions, policies, procedures, qualifications and safety practices in the aquatic. Implementing the remainder of the recommendations of the divine inquest report.

Last time I looked we were not the management board of the City of Winnipeg. I am not the director of the recreation programs. That's a breakdown. That report has been out for weeks. The presentation was at committee. Councillors had lots of chance to ask questions. This is where I depart company. We've asked the Administration to meet budget targets that are more aggressive than any other city in the country. We operate at 32% less than Edmonton. Part of the reason that's happening is, because we extricated ourselves from management of budget administratively. We give them tough envelopes and tough requirements. We don't need a management team if we're going to go in and second guess that. What we should be holding them accountable for the results and what they deliver.

If you need more of a descriptor than that, you walk across there and you can sit down and go through the reconciliations. But this is the kind of stuff that I think is extremely frustrating to management and it often comes from the same quarters, of let's have the details. Do you really want to know how much, we may not know yet how much two external safety guards take. We may not know how much is. That process by council policy and review. If you want to review it or challenge it or change the pay structures go ahead. It's this kind of sense you know we're facing a $40 million shortfall, and most of that isn't going to be solved on the back of this.

It just gets to the point of our job here is to come up with ideas about how to manage it. We're looking at trying to deal with assessment costs, getting them under control. We're looking at trying to align waste collection costs right now. We're looking at a structural increase in this City's budget from the first year in '98 when we came along with a $35 million shortfall, now it's $40 million. That's easy to understand because it's driven by about a dozen key drivers. Three or four percent increases in police salary, bus parts going up, you've heard the whole list. Increased costs.

There's a magnitude of this. The Administration has never been shy about sitting down with people and going through the details of our current expenditures. Can you imagine what it's like to be a manager in this organization when councillors think their job is to look over someone's shoulder and go through the detailed accounts. We're going forward now and we're saying to the Administration, here are some of the other savings that you achieve. We've got to do our job which is govern the City and set policy and deal with the resources. If we had administration that was trailing nationally, if our structural costs were 32% higher than Edmonton, then there would be a great temptation by council to go and micromanage. But that shopping list is a pretty accurate description.

If you want to get into more detail. Is it our job to count paper clips and know how much the secretary is being paid who works for Richard Kachur? Is it our job to go and figure out how much the lifeguards are paid? No, it's the management's job to do that. If we find the overall budget is too high, we go and tell them to deal with those issues.

This is a reasonable report because a child lost their life. We nearly lost another child's life. I am sure quite frankly if we can't charge for such critical things as aromatherapy, if we're really worried that we're getting 7% increase. I think Councillor Eadie told me the range of charges here, increases, are from twenty-five cents to forty-three cents. That's the range.

I love the percentages. Seven and a half percent increase. You'd think it was a lot of money. We're talking about twenty-five cents to forty-three cents. We spent more time discussing pocket change today and not doing what we need to do which is on these critical areas that people keep on raising where we could have better policies is develop a better policy for this stuff. That's our job. The Administration isn't going to develop policy. We have to develop policy. We are dealing with inflationary increases.

My personal view is, I think we should eventually freeze these rates. One of the things you're going to see tomorrow is that our property tax revenues are flat, they're not going up. Somebody call me a liar. One hundred and ninety-eight thousand dollars more revenue from property taxes in the last year. That's not even going to pay for that. We have a declining revenue base. Most of us don't like these choices as Councillor Gerbasi says. You've got sewer rates, water rates, you've got property taxes and you've got a range of user fees from transit charges at the dump to charging for services. There's precious few.

It's easy to individually be opposed to any rate increase. It's so easy to do that. Then to stand up and say, you don't support property tax increases, and you don't support sewage rate increases and you don't support budget cuts, and you don't support borrowing money. That's a wonderful position to have. Larry Fleisher had a word for it, but I can't repeat it because my mother watches this show.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: No further speakers. Councillor Gerbasi.

Councillor Gerbasi: Thank you Mr. Speaker. I would like to clarify a few points. One being the process in here has been fully and completely transparent and above board. I have to say, it's a little frustrating when we bring a fee request forward and the reason you all know we did, is because they need to publish the leisure guide very shortly, and they need to know what the rates are, and it causes a lot of chaos in the system if they can't do that and a loss of money that they need.

If we brought it up after the budget process like we did last year you're screaming. If we bring it up during the budget process, what's the difference, we're having a debate transparently on this openly and airing out all the issues. I think there's no argument that this hasn't been fair.

The report has been public since our standing committee meeting weeks ago and if anyone had a question I think you all know Gerald Merecki's phone number.

On the floor of Council everyone stands up and complains about the process. It's a very good process. We also have very good managers who are more than willing to talk to all of you and probably have. I don't think there's any complaint that's fair in terms of the process here.

Secondly, there was a number of things raised. Why are we going beyond the Harder Enquiry Harvey? Because the Harder Enquiry revealed to us that we have to make sure our policies aren't sitting on shelves collecting dust, and we don't want to actually prevent things in all of our areas of recreation.

You're right, there's probably not a lot of dangers in aromatherapy. You can pick something out and you can make a cute argument like that.
The fact of the matter is, those are a very small number of programs that are part of a bigger set of recreational programs, and many of those do actually involve risks. In fact learn to skate programs for example. There was a child that died on a skating rink outside of Winnipeg in Manitoba last year. I think we want to have our staff trained in safety and first aid and all those things. A big part of this is training.

There also seems to be a lack of understanding, this is on a small job and yes we need to hire one person at a higher level to make this happen because we're implementing an entire safety program throughout a huge department that involves safety audits of our facilities, reviewing policies, all sorts of things. I don't think we can hire a summer student for a few months to handle that job. If you think you do, then you should apply for Gerald Merecki's job.

We are also hiring lifeguards. As I mentioned earlier there was an incident just two days ago that the department's work has already paid off in terms of preventing a tragedy. I don't think any of you want to be responsible for a tragedy in some other area of our recreation facilities. I as a parent am particularly comforted to know that when my children attend any recreation program the staff are going to be trained. There's going to be clear safety policies. Whatever that program is.

It was also raised that our fees are in fact very competitive, very reasonable compared to other jurisdictions. In terms of aquatics, in Winnipeg we're really the major game in town with swimming lessons. So you can't really compare it to other jurisdictions. That was explained at the Committee. Our aquatic rates aren't the lowest in the world, and there isn't a lot of room to keep increasing these fees. We're not talking about further increases next year, we're only talking about this year because this issue came up and we have to deal with it. I have not yet heard anybody with any other idea of how to deal with it or any other suggestions other than find it somewhere. Frankly, that's getting rather tiresome with all the challenges we face.
Finally one more thing. Councillor Smith made a number of criticisms of our fee waiver program, and I guess he didn't talk to Gerald Merecki about it because there's a whole bunch of information that he would have been given.

First of all, we discreetly deal with every request that comes in from the public. It's raised when there's presentations made to user groups and individuals, parent groups and soforth, the fee waiver, people are made aware of it. It's in the leisure guide, it's on the website. In the new leisure guide it's going to be put in even bolder print. There's nothing wrong about speaking up about that Harvey. But the fact is we've spent $70,000 on fee waivers last year. It's not like it's not being used and it's not being communicated. Your suggestion is appreciated Harvey. Having said that, we do have a very valid fee waiver program that's available to people.
I think that addresses most of the issues and I'm out of time. I urge Council to support this, and I again, congratulate the staff on their excellent work in improving our recreational programs.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: We will be voting on Councillor Gerbasi's motion from the Standing Policy Committee. Recorded vote.

A RECORDED VOTE was taken the result being as follows:

Yeas

Councillors De Smedt, Lubosch, Smith, Steek.

Nays

His Worship Mayor Murray, Councillors Eadie, Angus, Clement, Gerbasi, Pagtakhan, Steeves, Thomas, Vandal, Mr. Speaker Councillor Lazarenko.

City Clerk: The vote Mr. Speaker, Yeas, 4, Nays, 10. The motion to adopt the

recommendation of the Standing Policy Committee is lost.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The motion from the Executive Policy Committee. Councillor Eadie will move. All in favour? Contrary? Carried.

Motions. Motion No. 2 it is automatic referral.

Motion No. 4, Councillor Gerbasi would you like to introduce.

Motion No. 4
Moved by Councillor Gerbasi
Seconded by Councillor Eadie

WHEREAS at the Council Meeting of January 28, 2004, His Worship Mayor Murray appointed Councillor Steeves as the Chair of the Standing Committee on Public Works replacing Councillor Angus;

AND WHEREAS Councillor Steeves currently sits as a member of the Standing Committee on Protection and Community Services;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT Councillor Angus replace Councillor Steeves as a member of the Standing Committee on Protection and Community Services.

Councillor Gerbasi: This has to do with the Appointment today of Councillor Steeves, who was sitting on the Protection and Community Services Committee, is now Chairing Public Works, and congratulations to him. It's resolved that Councillor Angus replace Councillor Steeves as a member of our illustrious and enjoyable and fun committee of the Standing Policy on Protection and Community Services. It will be even more fun if you support his membership. Thank you.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: All in favour? Contrary? Carried.

By-laws.

STANDING POLICY COMMITTEE ON PROTECTION AND COMMUNITY SERVICES
CONSIDERATION OF BY-LAWS

Councillor Gerbasi: I'll move that the rules be suspended and By-law No. 12/2004 be read a first time.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: All in favour? Contrary? Carried.

Clerk: By-law No. 12/2004.

Councillor Gerbasi: I'll move that By-law No. 12/2004, be read a second time.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: All in favour? Contrary? Carried.

Clerk: By-law No. 12/2004.

Councillor Gerbasi: I'll move that the rule be suspended and By-law No. 12/2004, be read a third time, and that the same be passed and ordered to be signed and sealed.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: All in favour? Contrary? Carried.

Question Period. Councillor Steek.

STANDING POLICY COMMITTEE ON PROTECTION AND COMMUNITY SERVICES
QUESTION PERIOD

Councillor Steek: Thank you Mr. Speaker. Through you to the Chair. Can the Chair tell us when we will be having the official review at Council relative to the facilities masterplan that I understand is coming down late March early April, but one would think it has major implications not only for the current budget but for future capitals? When do we anticipate receiving the results and a full council seminar?

Councillor Gerbasi: Thank you. Through you to Councillor Steek. My understanding is the Public Use Facilities Study is right on schedule, and we're expecting it to be ready for April and May. As soon as we get more information we will sort out how to get that information to

Council. I don't really know anymore than that. It's in progress, and I haven't heard of any delays or anything like that.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Councillor Steek second supplementary.

Councillor Steek: Through you to the Chair. On the discussion relative to fee increases, I just wanted to make sure that I didn't misunderstand something here. Perhaps I can ask the Chair.

At the Protection Committee meeting, was I correct in understanding that we are indeed hiring a singular coordinator for the safety initiatives at a base salary of $100,000 plus the benefit package? I guess just in addendum to that because it's not in the report and I think it's a fair request. Can the Chair tell us, how many staff members we are indeed hiring under this $340,000? That's not setting policy, that's just a common sense request. I'd just like to hear from the Chair because certainly the report does not indicate it.

Councillor Gerbasi: It's no problem for me to obtain that information of the specific salaries and details and I will endeavour to get that to all members of council.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Your final supplementary.

Councillor Steek: Does the Chair think that information of that nature should be included in a report going to the Standing Committee?

Councillor Gerbasi: Mr. Speaker, I believe the report was done very appropriately. It comes to standing committee, and the process is, that if councillors have questions of that nature, if they feel there's more information that isn't in the report that they require, then they can certainly ask at that time. There was no limit on the questioning of the staff. I believe the staff was there for quite some time answering questions. That specific question was never even asked. To ask for that information, can I have all those numbers. If it was I don't recall, it's being asked now, it will be given now. Frankly, the staff answered every question that was asked very thoroughly.

There has been weeks of time that this report has been public to ask for this information. I certainly haven't received an e-mail from anyone saying, I want this information I don't have it. In any case I've offered clearly to get that information for you now. Hopefully that will address any questions you have.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Councillor De Smedt.

Councillor De Smedt: Councillor Steek raises an interesting point. I say this not in a (inaudible) way to the Chair. The question is, would you undertake then to assure Council in the future that reports are more comprehensive in the description of why the money is being required, and where it is being spent?

I know you just mentioned, this is suppose to be a question Mr. Speaker, I understand the fact that there's ample opportunity during the committee debate, and reconciliation of the issues at the time. But you know, it is incumbent when a report comes for approval like Council, that the full story is there. That's what we're approving today. Some people could be away, they could miss an issue, so I'm trying not to be antagonistic here. If you would undertake to do that, I think in the future the reports can be a good synopsis of what we're indeed approving. Thank you.

Councillor Gerbasi: Again, I'm sure at the time that when we request reports from the Administration if that committee that's asking for that report can usually specify those types of things if they want that information. If it's not there they have the opportunity to get it in writing at the time. It wasn't requested. Certainly in future we can ask for more information if that's the will of the committee that's asking for the report.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Any further questions? If not. The Standing Policy Committee on Public Works. I'd like to introduce the Chair of the Public Works, the final presentation he will be giving us

as the member of the Executive Policy Committee, here's Johnny.

REPORT OF THE STANDING POLICY COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS DATED APRIL 15, 2003

Item No. 4 – Review of Policy on Financial Assistance for Wastewater Sewer Connection Replacement for Business Properties (Sewer Connection Replacement for Businesses) File WS (Vol. 6)

Councillor Angus: Mr. Speaker, if I may be allowed to take a moment to thank everybody for the kind words they had to say and the support over this last month. It's not something that I do lightly.

I particularly want to thank the Clerk's for all the assistance and the Administration for all the cooperation and assistance they've given me Mr. Speaker.

You just don't do this job by yourself. The word team does not have we in it anywhere. It's us, it doesn't have I in it anywhere. It's us that does the job and gets it done. I'm very appreciative of all your support.

With that I'll move everything on my agenda with no contest.

Mr. Speaker, the first item is in the April 15, 2003 report that has been long overdue coming forward. I asked where it was. They asked for an extension.

I'm moving that it be 30 days no more. Councillor Steeves you can expect to have this report back within the next 30 days to resolve. It has to do with an insurance program for people whose sewers fail. It's been in the Administration's hands far too long.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: All in favour? Contrary? Carried.

REPORT OF THE STANDING POLICY COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS DATED DECEMBER 9, 2003

Item No. 2 – 2004 – 2006 Parks and Open Space Division Fees and Charges Policy File PR-2.10

Councillor Angus: Mr. Speaker, the Parks and Open Spaces Division, this report has been redundant as it's covered off in the main report. EPC has recommended that it be filed.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: All in favour? Contrary? Carried.

REPORT OF THE STANDING POLICY COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS DATED JANUARY 13, 2004

Councillor Angus: I'll move the Report of January 13, and I'll move Items 1 to 5 as consent items.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: All in favour? Contrary? Carried.

No motions. By-laws.

STANDING POLICY COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS CONSIDERATION OF BY-LAWS

Councillor Angus: I'll move that By-law No. 11/2004 be read a first time.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: All in favour? Contrary? Carried.

Clerk: By-law No. 11/2004.

Councillor Angus: I'll move that By-law No. 11/2004, be read a second time.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: All in favour? Contrary? Carried.

Clerk: By-law No. 11/2004.

Councillor Angus: I'll move that the rule be suspended and By-law No. 11/2004 be read a third time, and that the same be passed and ordered to be signed and sealed.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: All in favour? Contrary? Carried.

Any questions. Councillor Steeves.

Councillor Steeves: I would just like to say for the record Mr. Speaker, that last night at community committee I had a chance to speak with Councillor Angus. I asked him if he would sit down with me to discuss the public works agenda, and he replied "no you're on your own kid".

I'm just kidding Mr. Speaker. Obviously I want to thank Councillor Angus for the great work that he's done.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: What's your question?

Councillor Steeves: There's not a question. Maybe on a point of privilege.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The next is Fiscal Issues.

REPORT OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON FISCAL ISSUES DATED JANUARY 13, 2004

Councillor Clement: I'll move that the meeting of January 13, 2004, be brought forward, and I'll move Item No. 1 as a consent agenda.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: All in favour? Contrary? Carried.

Motions, none. By-laws.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON FISCAL ISSUES CONSIDERATION OF BY-LAWS

Councillor Clement: I'll move By-law No. 4/2004 be read a first time.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: All in favour? Contrary? Carried.

Clerk: By-law No. 4/2004.

Councillor Clement: I'll move that By-law No. 4/2004 be read a second time.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: All in favour? Contrary? Carried.

Clerk: By-law No. 4/2004.

Councillor Clement: I'll move that the rule be suspended and that By-law No. 4/2004, be read a third time, and that the same be passed and ordered to be signed and sealed.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: All in favour? Contrary? Carried.

Questions. Councillor Steek.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON FISCAL ISSUES QUESTION PERIOD

Councillor Steek: The Chair of Fiscal Issues wanted to be asked this question so we'll see if he wants to give us the answer today or tomorrow morning.

What are we looking at as a potential shortfall in the current budget for 2004?

Councillor Clement: That's a very good question. The trouble is, is that the answer to it is quite comprehensive. At an informal meeting tomorrow morning of all councillors, the answers to that and many other questions associated with it will be answered.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Second supplementary.

Councillor Steek: An entirely different matter. The City is currently in the Supreme Court of Canada trying to preclude the lawsuit that's being brought forward by the Hotel Association. Certainly the Chair won't have the answer at this point. Can we get, you don't know what the question is do you Councillor, maybe if you know what I'm going to ask you'd like to ask it for me.

My question is quite straightforward. Although it is part and parcel of the normal workload of Legal Services, can we get a quantifiable number at this point as to what it's cost the City of Winnipeg to take this action to the Supreme Court? That's a straightforward question. It

certainly couldn't be answered here today.

Councillor Clement: I assume that there's no problem getting a number to date, but I don't know it off the top of my head obviously. That action is in process as I understand it. I'm not sure how easy it will be for the department to be able to provide us with an ongoing number, but we can ask.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Standing Policy Committee on Property and Development, Report of January 13, 2004.

REPORT OF THE STANDING POLICY COMMITTEE ON PROPERTY AND DEVELOPMENT JANUARY 13, 2004

Councillor Vandal: I will move Items 1 through 15 as consent.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: All in favour? Contrary? Carried.

Motions, none. By-laws.

STANDING POLICY COMMITTEE ON PROPERTY AND DEVELOPMENT CONSIDERATION OF BY-LAWS

Councillor Vandal: I'll move the following by-laws be read a first time, by-laws numbered 1/2004, 2/2004, 3/2004, 5/2004, 6/2004, 7/2004, 8/2004 and 9/2004.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: All in favour? Contrary? Carried.

Clerk: By-laws numbered 1/2004, 2/2004, 3/2004, 5/2004, 6/2004, 7/2004, 8/2004 and 9/2004.

Councillor Vandal: I'll move that by-laws numbered 1/2004 to 3/2004, both inclusive, 5/2004 to 9/2004, both inclusive, be read a second time.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: All in favour? Contrary? Carried.

Clerk: By-laws numbered 1/2004 to 3/2004, both inclusive, 5/2004 to 9/2004, both inclusive.

Councillor Vandal: I'll move that the rule be suspended and by-laws numbered 1/2004 to 3/2004, both inclusive, 5/2004 to 9/2004, both inclusive, be read a third time, and that the same be passed and ordered to be signed and sealed.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: All in favour? Contrary? Carried.

Addendum.

Councillor Vandal: I'll move the rules be suspended and By-law No. 13/2004, be read a first time.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: All in favour? Contrary? Carried.

Clerk: By-law No. 13/2004.

Councillor Vandal: I'll move that By-law No. 13/2004 be read a second time.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: All in favour? Contrary? Carried.

Clerk: By-law No. 13/2004.

Councillor Vandal: I'll move that the rule be suspended and By-law No. 13/2004, be read a third time, and that the same be passed and ordered to be signed and sealed.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: All in favour? Contrary? Carried.

Questions. None.

Alternate Service Delivery Committee, Report of January 20, 2004.

REPORT OF THE ALTERNATE SERVICE DELIVERY COMMITTEE DATED JANUARY 20, 2004

Councillor Steeves: I'll move Item No. 1.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: All in favour? Contrary? Carried.

Councillor Eadie moves adjournment. Roll call.

ROLL CALL

Clerk: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Councillor Lazarenko, His Worship Mayor Murray, Councillors Eadie, Angus, De Smedt, Gerbasi, Lubosch, Pagtakhan, Smith, Steek, Steeves, Thomas, Vandal.

COUNCIL ADJOURNED AT 11:50 A.M.

COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WINNIPEG
Wednesday January 28, 2004
CONTENTS

ROLL CALL.....138

INTRODUCTION AND WELCOME OF GUESTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS....138

MINUTES.....138

MOTION.....139

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE DATED JANUARY 14, 2004.....139

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE DATED JANUARY 21, 2004.....139

Item No. 4 – Utilization of 2003 – Year End Surplus – File F-1 139

Item No. 6 – 2004 Home Renovation Tax Assistance Program – File FL.....144

Item No. 8 – Board of Revision – Citizen Member Appointments – File GK-11.1 146

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE DATED JANUARY 28, 2004.....147

EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE CONSIDERATION OF BY-LAWS.....147

By-law No. 10/2004 147

EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE QUESTION PERIOD 147

REPORT OF THE STANDING POLICY COMMITTEE ON PROTECTION AND COMMUNITY SERVICES DATED JANUARY 12, 2004.....148

Item No. 1 – Community Incentive Grant – Mulvey Parent Council – File PR-2.6(32).....148

Item No. 4 – Community Services Department Safety Management Program – File PR-2.10 158

Motion No. 4.....165

STANDING POLICY COMMITTEE ON PROTECTION AND COMMUNITY SERVICES CONSIDERATION OF BY-LAWS 165

By-law No. 12/2004..... 165

STANDING POLICY COMMITTEE ON PROTECTION AND COMMUNITY SERVICES QUESTION PERIOD 165

REPORT OF THE STANDING POLICY COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS DATED APRIL 15, 2003 167

Item No. 4 – Review of Policy on Financial Assistance for Wastewater Sewer Connection Replacement for Business Properties (Sewer Connection Replacement for Businesses) – File WS (Vol. 6)..... 167

REPORT OF THE STANDING POLICY COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS DATED DECEMBER 9, 2003..... 167

Item No. 2 – 2004 – 2006 Parks and Open Space Division Fees and Charges Policy – File PR-2.10..... 167

REPORT OF THE STANDING POLICY COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS DATED JANUARY 13, 2004..... 167

STANDING POLICY COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS CONSIDERATION OF BY-LAWS 167

By-law No. 11/2004..... 167

REPORT OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON FISCAL ISSUES DATED JANUARY 13, 2004..... 168

STANDING COMMITTEE ON FISCAL ISSUES CONSIDERATION OF BY-LAWS 168

By-law No. 4/2004..... 168

STANDING COMMITTEE ON FISCAL ISSUES QUESTION PERIOD..... 168

COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WINNIPEG
Wednesday January 28, 2004
CONTENTS

REPORT OF THE STANDING POLICY COMMITTEE ON PROPERTY AND DEVELOPMENT DATED JANUARY 13, 2004.....169

STANDING POLICY COMMITTEE ON PROPERTY AND DEVELOPMENT CONSIDERATION OF BY-LAWS.....169

By-laws numbered 1/2004, 2/2004, 3/2004, 5/2004, 6/2004, 7/2004, 8/2004 and 9/2004.....169

By-law No. 13/2004 169

REPORT OF THE ALTERNATE SERVICE DELIVERY COMMITTEE DATED JANUARY 20, 2004.....169

ROLL CALL.....169