Minutes – Executive Policy Committee – May 22, 2020

REPORTS

Item No. 11 2020 Urban Agriculture Project

EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

The Executive Policy Committee recommended to Council:

1. That the City enter into, execute and deliver an agreement with the Province of Manitoba (Department of Agriculture and Resource Development) for a "2020 Urban Agriculture Project" whereby:

    A. The City will act as agent for the Province to deliver funding in the amount of approximately $140,000 to support community gardens and other food production initiatives within the City of Winnipeg for the 2020 growing season.

    B. The City will use approximately $40,000 in Provincial funding to engage an Urban Agriculture Coordinator for the 2020 fiscal year.

    C. The City will use approximately $10,000 in Provincial funding for the creation and distribution of communications materials highlighting the significance of the COVID-19 pandemic in this overall effort.

2. That an Urban Agriculture Coordinator be engaged on a contract basis by the City for the 2020 fiscal year with the following responsibilities:

    A. Provide high-level coordination support of food production initiatives in the City of Winnipeg for the 2020 growing season, to assist in maximizing the amount of locally produced food available.

    B. Provide advice to the Chief Administrative Officer concerning the distribution of funds referred to in Recommendation 1.A.

    C. Report to a project team comprised of representatives from the City of Winnipeg Office of Sustainability, Winnipeg Food Council, and Provincial Department of Agriculture and Resource Development.

    D. Establish and maintain effective working relationships with relevant City of Winnipeg management and staff, and liaise with relevant City departments, as well as garden groups and other organizations.

EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION (continued):

3. That pursuant to 1.A. above, the Chief Administrative Officer of the City (CAO) be delegated authority to implement and administer the 2020 Urban Agricultural Project, including:

    A. Selecting an individual to serve as the Urban Agricultural Coordinator;

    B. Providing funding support for supplies and equipment to existing urban agriculture organizations, including community garden organizations and newcomer initiatives, so that they can scale-up food production.

    C. Waiving City fees and charges for water used in community gardens and other urban food production initiatives.

    D. Reporting to Council at the conclusion of the fiscal year concerning the implementation of the program.

4. That authority be delegated to the CAO to approve the terms and conditions of:

    A. An agreement with the Province of Manitoba in accordance with Recommendation 1 and any other terms and conditions deemed necessary by the City Solicitor to protect the interests of the City.

    B. An employment contract with the individual selected as the Urban Agricultural Coordinator.

    C. Any necessary grant agreements with the recipients of funds under the 2020 Urban Agricultural Project.

    D. Any additional agreements reasonably necessary to implement and administer the 2020 Urban Agricultural Project.

5. That the Proper Officers do all things necessary to implement the intent of the foregoing.

DECISION MAKING HISTORY:

Moved by Councillor Gillingham,

That Rule 10(3) of The Procedure By-law No. 50/2007 be suspended in order that the following item, which was received less than four business days preceding the committee meeting, be considered by Committee.

Carried

Moved by Councillor Mayes,

WHEREAS the COVID-19 pandemic has caused disruptions to our food system and raised concerns about food insecurity, both here in Winnipeg and across the globe;

AND WHEREAS increasing local food production (including at the community and individual levels) will build resiliency in the food system and proactively address concerns about food insecurity;

AND WHEREAS the provinces of Ontario, Alberta, New Brunswick and British Columbia have declared community gardens and subsistence agriculture (growing food for personal consumption/extra-market purposes) as essential for their food and agriculture service provision;

AND WHEREAS some existing organizations in Winnipeg connect community-produced foods with those in need by partnering with food banks and other social programs (including Winnipeg Harvest's Grow-A-Row campaign);

AND WHEREAS representatives of both the City and Manitoba Agriculture and Resource Development have recommended a coordinated Urban Agriculture Project this year intended to support the outcome of increasing local food production by supporting existing organizations to scale-up food production while simultaneously meeting the necessary physical distancing, cleaning and disinfection requirements to ensure safe operation during this pandemic;

AND WHEREAS the Winnipeg Food Council is positioned to support this Urban Agriculture Project as a meaningful response to COVID-19 by providing baseline data on participation and scale of urban agriculture food production as well as by supporting a policy review to ensure that the project is conducted in accordance with all relevant regulations and policies;

AND WHEREAS there are many community groups and organizations engaged in urban food production in Winnipeg that could scale-up food production if provided with access to land, temporary water infrastructure, supplies/equipment and human resource support for coordination of production, processing and distribution, a coordinated Urban Agriculture Project holds great potential to leverage this existing capacity and enable increased food production.

DECISION MAKING HISTORY (continued):

AND WHEREAS the desired outcomes of the proposed Urban Agriculture Project would include:

- Greater coordination of all aspects of urban agriculture and reporting to make growing, preserving and distributing food more impactful on food supply;
- Encouragement for urban agriculture organizations to increase food production this year;
- Increased food security and resiliency in Manitoba's food system through local, community-based food production/processing and distribution;
- Positioning local food production for long-term success beyond COVID-19;

AND WHEREAS the creation of the position of Urban Agriculture Coordinator created under the proposed Urban Agriculture Project would:

- Provide high-level coordination support of food production initiatives in the City of Winnipeg for the 2020 growing season, to assist in maximizing the amount of locally produced food available; report to a project team comprised of representatives from the City of Winnipeg Office of Sustainability, Winnipeg Food Council, and Provincial Department of Agriculture and Resource Development;
- Establish and maintain effective working relationships with relevant City of Winnipeg management and staff, and liaise with relevant City departments, as well as garden groups and other organizations;

AND WHEREAS the Province of Manitoba has indicated its willingness to make available funds in the amount of approximately $190,000 to support unban agricultural production within the City of Winnipeg but requires the City to serve as its agent in distributing these funds appropriately;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

1. That the City enter into, execute and deliver an agreement with the Province of Manitoba (Department of Agriculture and Resource Development) for a "2020 Urban Agriculture Project" whereby:

    A. The City will act as agent for the Province to deliver funding in the amount of approximately $140,000 to support community gardens and other food production initiatives within the City of Winnipeg for the 2020 growing season.

    B. The City will use approximately $40,000 in Provincial funding to engage an Urban Agriculture Coordinator for the 2020 fiscal year.

DECISION MAKING HISTORY (continued):

C. The City will use approximately $10,000 in Provincial funding for the creation and distribution of communications materials highlighting the significance of the COVID-19 pandemic in this overall effort.

2. That an Urban Agriculture Coordinator be engaged on a contract basis by the City for the 2020 fiscal year with the following responsibilities:

A. Provide high-level coordination support of food production initiatives in the City of Winnipeg for the 2020 growing season, to assist in maximizing the amount of locally produced food available.

B. Provide advice to the Chief Administrative Officer concerning the distribution of funds referred to in Recommendation 1.A.

C. Report to a project team comprised of representatives from the City of Winnipeg Office of Sustainability, Winnipeg Food Council, and Provincial Department of Agriculture and Resource Development.

D. Establish and maintain effective working relationships with relevant City of Winnipeg management and staff, and liaise with relevant City departments, as well as garden groups and other organizations.

3. That pursuant to 1.A. above, the Chief Administrative Officer of the City (CAO) be delegated authority to implement and administer the 2020 Urban Agricultural Project, including:

A. Selecting an individual to serve as the Urban Agricultural Coordinator;

B. Providing funding support for supplies and equipment to existing urban agriculture organizations, including community garden organizations and newcomer initiatives, so that they can scale-up food production.

C. Waiving City fees and charges for water used in community gardens and other urban food production initiatives.

D. Reporting to Council at the conclusion of the fiscal year concerning the implementation of the program.

DECISION MAKING HISTORY (continued):

4. That authority be delegated to the CAO to approve the terms and conditions of:

    A. An agreement with the Province of Manitoba in accordance with Recommendation 1 and any other terms and conditions deemed necessary by the City Solicitor to protect the interests of the City.

    B. An employment contract with the individual selected as the Urban Agricultural Coordinator.

    C. Any necessary grant agreements with the recipients of funds under the 2020 Urban Agricultural Project.

    D. Any additional agreements reasonably necessary to implement and administer the 2020 Urban Agricultural Project.

5. That the Proper Officers do all things necessary to implement the intent of the foregoing.

and submitted the matter to Council.

Carried