Minutes – Council – April 25, 2024

Minute No. 270
Report – Standing Policy Committee on Community Services – March 6, 2024

Item No. 3 Proactive Cleanup of Needle Debris and Weapons in City Parks

COUNCIL DECISION:

Council concurred in the recommendation of the Standing Policy Committee on Community Services and adopted the following:

1. That the Winnipeg Public Service be directed to report back in 120 days to the Standing Policy Committee on Community Services with policy options and associated cost implications to cleanup dangerous debris inside City of Winnipeg parks.

2. That the Proper Officers of the City be authorized to do all things necessary to fulfill the intent of the foregoing.

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DECISION MAKING HISTORY:

Moved by Councillor Duncan,

That the recommendation of the Standing Policy Committee on Community Services be adopted by consent.

Carried

David Grant submitted a communication in opposition to the matter.

EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

On April 16, 2024, the Executive Policy Committee concurred in the recommendation of the Standing Policy Committee on Community Services, as amended, and submitted the following to Council:

1. That the Winnipeg Public Service be directed to report back in 120 days to the Standing Policy Committee on Community Services with policy options and associated cost implications to cleanup dangerous debris inside City of Winnipeg parks.

2. That the Proper Officers of the City be authorized to do all things necessary to fulfill the intent of the foregoing.

On March 12, 2024, the Executive Policy Committee laid the matter over for 30 days.

STANDING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

On March 6, 2024, the Standing Policy Committee on Community Services considered the Council Motion of February 22, 2024, and submitted the following to the Executive Policy Committee and Council.

1. That the Winnipeg Public Service be directed to report back in 180 days to the Standing Policy Committee on Community Services with policy options and associated cost implications to cleanup dangerous debris inside City of Winnipeg parks.

2. That the Proper Officers be authorized to do all things necessary to fulfill the intent of the foregoing.

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DECISION MAKING HISTORY (continued):

STANDING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION (continued):

The following persons submitted communications with respect to the matter:

- Heather Olson, Executive Director, Knox Day Nursery, Inc.
- David Grant

COUNCIL DECISION:

On February 22, 2024, Council ruled automatic referral of the following motion to the Standing Policy Committee on Community Services:

Moved by Councillor Gilroy,
Seconded by Councillor Chambers,

WHEREAS within the defined higher needs areas of the City, community members and daycares have been finding weapons (knives, machetes, etc) and discarded needles littered around city parks, playgrounds and tot lots, which is creating an unsafe environment for children;

AND WHEREAS discarded needles are a bio hazard and can cause injury to people who find them;

AND WHEREAS parks, playgrounds and tot lots are valuable community assets and are essential to the health and well-being of all Winnipeggers;

AND WHEREAS the proactive cleanup of any needle debris and weapons in City of Winnipeg parks, playgrounds and tot lots will alleviate the strain on 311 and the concerns around safety from residents and children using the parks;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Public Service be directed to report back to the Standing Policy Committee in 60 days on the following:

1. Creation of a policy for the proactive cleanup of needle debris and weapons, prioritising all parks, playgrounds and tot lots located within a 1km radius of a daycare within the higher needs areas of the City.

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DECISION MAKING HISTORY (continued):

COUNCIL DECISION (continued):

2. Potential partnerships with community organizations that may have the infrastructure and capacity to assist.

3. Options for provincial funding to help offset the cleanup costs.