

ITEM 2

MANAGER'S REPORT NO. 17

COUNCIL MEETING March 5/73

2. Re: Letter from Mr. Richard Fears, 8177 - 18th Avenue  
Vandalism and Public Mischief in Robert Burnaby Park

Appearing on the Agenda for the March 5, 1973 meeting of Council is an undated letter from Mr. Richard Fears regarding vandalism and damage which is allegedly caused by horses that are ridden on grass in Robert Burnaby Park.

The vandalism to which Mr. Fears makes reference, namely the theft of his car and breakage of windows, is a matter which of course requires the involvement of the police. Mr. Fears in the past has correctly reported unlawful incidents to the R.C.M.P., and it is recommended that he and all citizens continue to do so in the future as this is the proper course of action when evidence of criminal activity is observed in the community.

The Parks and Recreation Administrator has investigated the matter concerning damage to grass by horses in Robert Burnaby Park and advises as follows:

"Mr. Richard Fears' reference to Robert Burnaby Park contains a general statement relating to abuse of the Park; and a specific observation about uncontrolled riding of horses on trails and grassed areas.

In general, I can state that vandalism and damage at Robert Burnaby Park is fairly typical of the experiences at our other large parks. It also compares with other communities in this area. Certainly we do suffer from thoughtless abuse of our park facilities, and on occasion, very specific acts of deliberate vandalism. In my opinion, the problem of Robert Burnaby Park is no better, and no worse, than any other part of Burnaby.

The matter of horseback riding in the park is one that requires our frequent attention. For many years horseback riding has been permitted on those trails which are not interrupted by narrow bridges or stairways. This is believed to be a reasonable policy as it does provide the equestrians with an opportunity to ride in a pleasant, wooded environment. There have been very few complaints of conflict between equestrians and pedestrians. Unfortunately, we do have a few irresponsible people who ride horses and stray on to trails reserved for pedestrians, and on occasion, ride their horses over grassed areas. This practice is illegal under the Parks Regulation Bylaw, and my staff have standing orders to do what they can to prevent this abuse. Unfortunately, enforcement is difficult, and an employee on foot, or in a motor vehicle, finds it impossible to intercept a competent rider on a good horse.

I have advised the Park Patrol Service of the complaint and have directed that they pay particular attention to the problem. I would suggest that a copy of the complaint be sent to the Burnaby Lake Riding Stables and the Burnaby Horsemen's Association with a covering letter seeking the assistance of these two organizations in discouraging the indiscriminate riding of horses on park areas."

RECOMMENDATIONS:

THAT a copy of this report be sent to Mr. Richard Fears; and

THAT copies of this report be sent to the Burnaby Lake Riding Stables and the Burnaby Horsemen's Association with a request that these two organizations cooperate by discouraging their members from the indiscriminate riding of horses on park areas; and

THAT a copy of this report be sent to the Parks and Recreation Commission.