

ITEM 10  
MANAGER'S REPORT NO. 68  
COUNCIL MEETING 1982 12 13

RE: FIRE AT EDMONDS HOUSE

MUNICIPAL MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATION:

1. *THAT this report be received for information purposes.*

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1982 December 08

TO: MUNICIPAL MANAGER

FROM: DIRECTOR RECREATION & CULTURAL SERVICES

RE: FIRE AT EDMONDS HOUSE

Occurrence:

At 5:24 on the morning of Saturday, 1982 December 04, a fire was reported burning at Edmonds House. It is understood that one of the bus drivers on the Edmonds Loop called the Fire Department.

The majority of the upstairs interior and the roof have suffered fire damage. All of the downstairs has suffered smoke or water damage. The majority of the frame and brick facing of the building appears to be structurally undamaged. This will have to be confirmed. It is my opinion that the building will not be able to open for partial use until all repairs have been completed.

Pre-Fire Activity:

On the evening of Friday, 1982 December 03, there was a normal programming cycle at Edmonds House with drop-in programs and one or two scheduled programs, all of which were completed by approximately 10:00 p.m.

The evening custodian was on duty from 5:00 p.m. through to 1:00 a.m. in the morning. Before he left, the normal check was made and all doors and windows were secured and everything in order. The overnight custodial supervisor arrived at Edmonds House about 1:45 a.m. to pick up time sheets and also reports that all was correct with the building.

Building Fire Protection:

The building did not have a sprinkler system. At the time of its construction, 1972, sprinklers were not required by the building code.

The building was equipped with internal (only) smoke alarms. These alarms only warn persons in the building.

The alarms were recently installed and were operational. There was no one available at the site to report whether or not the alarms activated.

Action Taken:

Once the Fire Department had suppressed the fire, staff from the overnight janitorial crews operated as security guards to prevent the public from going in and the removal of anything from the building. Through the Treasury Department, contact was made with the adjusters and Mr. Henry Sienema of the firm of Fisher-Holfeld and Associates of Langley, Telephone # 530-5155 attended the scene.

In conjunction with the adjuster, our Superintendents determined that the building should be boarded up and the preference of the adjuster for the firm of Cascade Projects of Surrey was acknowledged. Cascade completed the boarding up at approximately 6:00 p.m. This cost should be recoverable under the insurance policy.

The only other clean-up work carried out was in the basement, where some standing water was removed and the pool tables and pianos were cleaned up and re-covered to prevent any further damage. Lakeview Electric attended as the Corporation's electrician and together with Hydro, determined that some power could continue to be made available in the basement.

Recreation staff who turned up for the day's work were sent home with the exception of one staff member, who stayed on duty until approximately 3:00 p.m. to speak with Edmonds House members who continued to turn up throughout the day in anticipation of attending programs. No attempt was made to re-allocate space for programs for the weekend. Signs were left on the building advising any other Edmonds House members who wished further information to telephone a given number.

Cause of Fire:

At this time, the cause of the fire is suspected arson. Police and Fire investigative staff spent some time on the scene early Saturday morning and then, in consultation with the adjuster, agreed that the building should be boarded up and that they would continue their investigation on the morning of Monday, 1982 December 06. It is understood that when the Fire Department arrived, they found the back door, i.e. the south door, ajar.

Insurance:

The Corporation's insurance will cover the entire rebuilding, refurbishing, and equipping of the building at replacement cost. As you are aware, we are presently designing some additional kitchen facilities for Edmonds House through the Commission's budget, grants from the Federal Government and donations from the Edmonds House Steering Committee. This will be taken into consideration as part of the rebuilding specifications.

Rebuilding:

The adjuster met with representatives from Building, Engineering and Recreation and Cultural Services staff and will be acquiring the original plans and specifications of the building. Specifications and plans will be prepared and the insurance company will call bids from interested parties.

The adjuster will be provided with replacement inventories for the equipment and supplies lost or damaged. The building and all contents have been secured by the adjuster. On timing, the adjuster feels that four months should be sufficient. I believe that this is optimistic, particularly with the holiday season upon us, and that six months would be more realistic. Therefore, I am predicting that the building could be open for use by the 1st of July, 1983.

At this time, there have been no official estimated costs of even a ball park variety placed on the damage. Opinions of people attending the scene ranged between the \$300,000 - \$400,000 mark.

Interim Programming:

Fire is, of course, bad anytime. However, this is the worst time of year for a place like Edmonds House to be closed because so many people depend upon it over the holiday season as a place to go. On Monday, 1982 December 06, the Recreation staff met with the Edmonds House Steering Committee at Eastburn Recreation Centre and have rescheduled their Christmas special event. Eastburn has been set up as a temporary headquarters and clearing house for Edmonds House business.

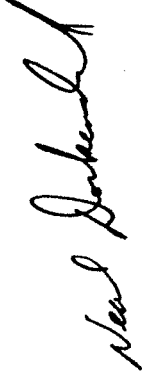
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Staff are reviewing the potential for including Edmonds programs in other recreation centres particularly Eastburn and Bonsor and also the options for the use of any adjacent facilities such as Churches, store-fronts or other Community Halls such as the Golden Age Hall on Rumble. The emphasis will be on establishing continuity for as many programs as possible. Within the context of the success of this re-allocation of programs, the option is that the Edmonds House staff could have continuous employment through the running of these decentralized programs, and in planning and redeveloping the resources for Edmonds House.

Conclusion:

The foregoing is a preliminary report. Almost everything in it is subject to confirmation and further review. I will keep you informed as events take place.

This report is for information purposes.



Mr. DENNIS GAUNT

ND:lm

cc: Members of the Parks & Recreation  
Commission

