

ITEM	13
MANAGER'S REPORT #	07
COUNCIL MEETING	96/03/04

TO: CITY MANAGER

1996 February 27

File: L34

FROM: DIRECTOR FINANCE

SUBJECT: POST BOX RENTAL AGENCIES AND MAIL DROP OPERATIONS

PURPOSE: To seek Council's approval to regulate post box rental agencies and mail drop operations.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. THAT the Burnaby Business Licence Bylaw be amended to regulate post box rental agencies and mail drop operations.

REPORT

On occasion, the R.C.M.P. and City staff are asked to investigate mail order fraud and related problems. In most cases post box rentals and mail drop services are involved. These businesses offer mail boxes for rent or offer to collect mail for persons who reside or operate businesses off premises.

With these services, questionable business operators have been able to successfully mislead the public, the police, banks, businesses and other institutions, of their true identity and whereabouts. These individuals use the post box or mail drop as if it were a home or business address.

Currently there are six post box rental agencies and six mail drop operations licenced as accessory uses in Burnaby. Typically, the mail operations function as an accessory use to another business. These operations are not regulated beyond normal business licence requirements and therefore the potential for fraudulent activity by renters of these services is high.

The City of Vancouver, District of North Vancouver and the City of North Vancouver have enacted bylaws to require post box rental agencies to keep identification lists of persons who utilize these services for business and to make lists available to police and the Chief Licence Inspector upon request.

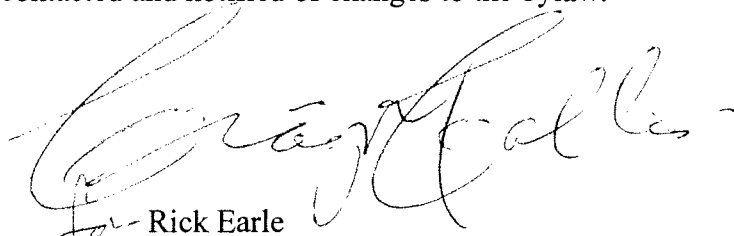
Staff contacted businesses offering these services in Burnaby. Of the 10 businesses that were contacted, nine of these businesses were in favour of a bylaw that would provide regulations to assist in mail order fraud investigations. Canada Post's mail box services are regulated by federal law and are not affected by local regulations.

Staff propose that amendments to the Business Licence Bylaw be developed to regulate post box rental agencies and mail drop operations by requiring:

1. That the post box rental agencies and mail drop operations record the name and residential address of every person who utilizes these services and require the presentation of photo identification to establish the true identity of the mail box renter or service client;
2. That the post box rental agency or mail drop operation determine whether or not the client will be using the service for business purposes; and
3. That the post box rental agencies and mail drop operations make information about their business clients available upon request to the Chief Licence Inspector or the O.I.C., R.C.M.P.

Council has the authority to regulate post box rental agencies and mail drop operations under Section 526 of the Municipal Act.

All affected businesses would be contacted and notified of changes to the bylaw.


for Rick Earle
DIRECTOR FINANCE

SA:aj

cc. City Solicitor
O.I.C., R.C.M.P.