

1998 June 11

TO: CITY MANAGER

FROM: DIRECTOR PARKS, RECREATION & CULTURAL SERVICES

SUBJECT: TARGET RANGES ON BURNABY MOUNTAIN

PURPOSE: To provide Council with a status report on the Gun Clubs at 8530, 8550, 8242 Barnet Highway

RECOMMENDATION:

1. THAT this report be received for information.

REPORT

Arising from the Council meeting of 1998 June 01 was a request for up-to-date information on the actions taken to date by Staff on dealing with the three gun clubs on Burnaby Mountain. This report will outline a chronology of events which clarifies Staff continual efforts to deal with the gun clubs in implementing the recommendations of Council of 1998 January 19.

It must be noted that the report appearing on the Council agenda of 1998 January 19 was reviewed with representatives of the three gun clubs on Thursday, 1998 January 15. This was done as a courtesy and to demonstrate that Staff had heard the concerns of the clubs relating to the need to have time to rescheduled programs and events and make alternative plans.

1. Parks and Recreation staff met with Herb Karras of Burnaby Fish and Game Club on 1998 February 9th regarding the future of the Salmon Enhancement Program. The Director of Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services verbally commented to them that a program would continue and that the Burnaby Fish and Game Club's participation as such would be encouraged and supported. The Burnaby Fish and Game Club was encouraged to proceed with the spring fish rearing program and that assessment of the equipment was necessary and further talks would occur.

2. Letters of notification for termination of the leases were sent by courier to the president of the three gun clubs informing them that clear and vacant possession of the properties at 8530, 8550 and 8242 Burnet Highway (the gun clubs sites) was required by 1998 October 31. Attached to this was an additional letter outlining to the Coast Marksmen and Burnet Rifle Club that Staff expected the clubs' cooperation in phasing out the outdoor shooting activities. This was not only to cooperate with Council's request to phase out the outdoor shooting, but would also allow for unencumbered access to the Burnet Rifle Club and Coast Marksmen sites.

The responses from the Burnet Rifle Club and Coast Marksmen's acknowledged receipt of the 1998 March 04 letters and that they would consider the City's request when they were advised of why, when and how much time the consultant would be on the property.

3. The Director of Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services sent notification on 1998 April 23 to the three gun clubs of the selection of the consultants, what work they would be conducting, the start date and time line. The access plan was based on the Burnet Rifle Club and Coast Marksmen closing their respective outdoor ranges and moving what could be accommodated to the Burnaby Fish and Game Club site. This was outlined in the letter. Staff recognized that the target ranges are very different, however, some outdoor shooting could be accommodated within a limited schedule.
4. Staff immediately received notification from a representative of the Justice Institute Firearms Training program raising concerns of the May 4, 5 & 5 dates. A schedule was worked out with that group as they are the predominant weekday user at the Burnaby Fish and Game Club site. Staff proceeded to make arrangements with Gartner Lee, the consulting team for the project to proceed on the initial dates of May 04, 05 and 06. Notification was sent on April 29th by fax to the presidents indicating access to Burnet Rifle Club and Coast Marksmen on May 04, 05 and 06 and to the Burnaby Fish & Game Club on May 04 after 3:00 p.m., May 05 all day. Gartner Lee was on the Burnaby Fish & Game site the afternoon of May 04 and the morning of May 05.

It was in the responses of April 30 and May 04 from the presidents of the Burnet Rifle Club and Coast Marksmen that Staff were made aware that their respective clubs had no intention of cooperating with the City in the systematic closure of the outdoor shooting activities. They also demanded answers to questions which Staff felt had been responded to assurances that they would receive copies of reports which we agreed they could have as soon as they became public information, and copies of the terms of reference, work plan, and proposal from the environmental consultant. Copies of these documents were provided and to date there has been no agreement reached to gain access, nor meet with Staff to try and work out a mutually agreeable schedule. The City had recognized their leasehold rights, but continued to ask for their recognition of Council's request and cooperation in the closure of outdoor shooting.

5. During this time period the Barnet Fish and Game Club had corresponded with Staff requesting a decision on the Salmon Enhancement Program. They also requested to be put in contact with the Staff who were to work on relocating the gun clubs. This request was understood to be that a staff person was going to assist in moving Barnet Rifle Club and Coast Marksmen to the Burnaby Fish and Game Club site. This was verbally discussed in March with Mr. Karras, and indicated it would be a matter to be worked out among the clubs. It was a scheduling issue and they should make their own arrangements. The Director, Parks and Recreation Services met with Mr. Karras at the Burnaby Fish and Game site on May 05 to view the Salmon Rearing Operation. With the equipment and operation, the volunteers have produced hundreds of thousands of salmon fry for release into Burrard Inlet over the last number of years. The letter was sent from the Director of Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services to indicate her support for the program and that she would recommend to Commission and Council the retention of the equipment and operation on site as it currently is set up and that supplemental facilities such as washrooms etc. were necessary and would be addressed later. These facilities could be achieved in several ways and therefore the commitment was made to provide these amenities.

To date the Burnaby Fish and Game Club have cooperated, asking staff to work with the Justice Institute to confirm a schedule. Dates were established for the months of May and June, recognizing that as per Council's request, outdoor shooting could continue at the Burnaby Fish and Game Club site until June 30th. Staff anticipated that intense environment and geotechnical work would begin on the Burnaby Fish and Game Club site after that date.

6. The Deputy City Manager corresponded with the clubs May 28 indicating that the lease requires the clubs to comply with every applicable law. This includes the Waste Management Act. Again a request was made of the clubs to initiate a meeting with staff to establish a mutually agreeable schedule for access. At the time of writing there has been a call from Mr. Mauser to meet with Staff on Monday, June 15 at 1:00 p.m. at the Barnet Rifle Range. Staff have not heard from the other clubs.

Appearing under correspondence is a letter from Mr. Mauser. The Barnet Rifle Club and Coast Marksmen again are stipulating that as terms of agreement for access to the site, a written guarantee must be made to disclose all information related to the environmental and geotechnical testing. Staff have again written to the President of the clubs to advise them of the process for reporting out and sharing of information.

CONCLUSION

In the correspondence and conversations with the representatives of the gun clubs, staff have been cooperative and recognized the leasehold rights of the clubs. Staff are hopeful that a mutually agreeable schedule can be achieved for access to the sites. If common dates for closure of the ranges to conduct the tests cannot be achieved there will be an increased cost to the project as the consultant will be required to bring equipment and personnel to the site on different occasions.

Their continued outdoor shooting contribute to the contamination of the properties and we hope they will comply with all environmental laws that are applicable.



KATE FRIARS

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