MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS OF THE MEETING OF THE GENERAL COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WESTMOUNT HELD AT CITY HALL ON JUNE 19, 2017 AT 4:09 P.M. AT WHICH WERE PRESENT:

Chair                   David Laidley
Mayor                   Christina Smith
Councillors            Philip A. Cutler
                        Rosalind Davis
                        Victor M. Drury
                        Nicole Forbes
                        Cynthia Lulham
                        Theodora Samiotis
Absent                  Patrick Martin
Administration         Sean Michael Deegan, Director General
                        Benoit Hurtubise, Assistant Director General and Director of Hydro Westmount
                        Martin St-Jean, Director of Legal Services and City Clerk
Recording Secretary    Andrew Brownstein

GENERAL COMMITTEE AGENDA

Adoption of the General Committee Agenda of June 19, 2017

It was agreed that the Agenda of the June 19, 2017 meeting of the General Committee of Council be adopted, with the addition of the following items under New Business:

- Permits for Community Events – Park Use (Councillor Forbes);
- Beyond Software (Mayor Smith); and
- Non-payment of taxes for 2016 (M. St-Jean).

Confirmation of Minutes of the Meeting of General Committee held on June 5, 2017

The Minutes of the General Committee of Council’s meeting held on June 5, 2017 were adopted with corrections.

NOTE TO THE READER:

The comments, opinions and any consensus views reflected herein are those of the participants in their individual capacity. As such, they are not binding upon the City or the administration.

The City and its administration are only bound by decisions that are authorized by the Municipal Council in the course of a public meeting by way of a resolution or a by-law.
Business arising from the Minutes of the Meeting of General Committee Held on June 5, 2017

Confidential items were discussed.

The Director General confirmed that further to its preliminary decision on the matter at its previous General Committee meeting, the $8,000 grant to assist in The Open Door’s relocation to a new site is to be presented to Council for decision at the July 5th Regular Sitting.

The Director General reported that further to Council’s decision at its previous General Committee meeting to permit the Dropbike program on a trial basis with 50 bicycles for the current bicycling season, the company will launch the pilot project in August. He explained the late start date as a result of the company’s recent decision to use a model with three gears.

Councillor Cutler joined the meeting at 4:35 p.m.

Items from the Council Agenda to be discussed in General Committee

Councillor Samiotis presented the list of building permit applications being submitted to Council for its approval at that night’s Special Sitting. Regarding the permit application for Marianopolis College, Councillor Samiotis pointed out that the PAC recommended placing part of the proposed air conditioning unit indoors, which would compromise the aesthetic of one of the windows, but would minimize the impact of the air conditioning unit’s noise on the neighbours.

Council Question Period Follow-Up

Access to Documents regarding Permits

Councillor Samiotis explained that residents sometimes contact Urban Planning to find out what a certain permit posted in a window entails. However, if residents request to see the plans, they are instructed to make an access to documents request. M\(^{s}\) St-Jean noted that it is important that residents are not given the impression that they will necessarily be able to consult these plans as a product of their access to documents request, as this is contingent on the permit applicant, the third party owner of these documents, giving permission for these documents to be released.

Councillor Samiotis mentioned that there was formerly a box on the paper version of the permit application form that an applicant could tick to give the City permission to make the plans available. She explained that this box is not available with the new PG Solutions permit application system. She recommended readopting the use of this box on the permit application form.

Further to Councillor Cutler’s inquiry, M\(^{s}\) St-Jean stated that upon receiving requests for access to third party documents, Legal Services contacts the third party and inquires as to
whether the City has permission to release the concerned documents. He explained that according to Urban Planning Director Tom Flies, the box was never used. He noted that the form for PPCMOI applications has such a box, as it is important for these applicants to be open with this information given the extraordinary nature of these requests. Mme St-Jean advised against readopting the use of this box on the general permit application form.

Councillor Lulham noted that residents can also contact Public Security with inquiries as to the general information on the active permits in the City.

**ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION / DECISION**

**SIDEWALK RECONSTRUCTION PROGRAMME 2017**

Ms. Elisa Gaetano, Director of Engineering, joined the meeting at 4:50 p.m.

Further to Council’s decision to allocate the projected surplus of the 2017 Capital Works infrastructure budget to a widespread sidewalk reconstruction project, The Director General presented Engineering’s list of sidewalks to be reconstructed.

Council members were informed that the call for tenders is scheduled to be issued before the end of the month, with the work intended to be carried out in August. She pointed out that 5,000 square metres of sidewalk are to be replaced. This amounts to an approximate length of 3,000m.

Councillor Lulham recommended the reconstruction of the sidewalk on the north side of Sainte-Catherine Street, from Metcalfe Avenue to Kensington Avenue. She further noted that the granite stairs behind this sidewalk extend onto City land and in their current poor state, do not meet the requirements of the *Construction Code*. Director Gaetano informed Council that Engineering has been working with Urban Planning to address the issue of these stairs.

Referring to the decision to prioritize the reconstruction of sidewalks in high traffic areas and in front of schools, the Mayor recommended the reconstruction of the sidewalks along Mount Pleasant Avenue, between Montrose Avenue and Cedar Avenue, if any more can be added to the list.

Confidential items were discussed.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:05 p.m., at which point the Special Sitting of Council was held. The meeting was reconvened at 5:11 p.m. The Assistant Director General did not return to the meeting.

Confidential items were discussed.
NEW BUSINESS: PERMITS FOR COMMUNITY EVENTS – PARK USE

Councillor Forbes reported that the City will refused an organization’s request to use Westmount Park for an event, as it does not conform to the criteria laid out in the draft policy on park use. Director Flies noted that while the draft park policy has never been formally adopted, to be permitted, events must be open and free to the public.

Councillor Forbes inquired as to whether these events can be held alongside one of the City’s community events, like the festivities for the Fête Nationale. Director Flies confirmed that he will look into the matter.

Councillor Lulham emphasized the importance of adhering to the draft park policy’s criteria, particularly for Westmount Park, which is the City’s most used greenspace, and accordingly, expressed her opposition to permitting the event. She recommended that Sports and Recreation or Public Works contact the group in order to obtain more details on the requested event and to explain the City’s policy regarding events in its parks.

Director Flies left the meeting at 7:08 p.m.

INDOOR POOL UPDATE

The Director General sought Council members’ opinions on the poll to be presented to residents in order to assess the community’s interest in the construction of an indoor pool and gymnasium. Once the poll is distributed, the data collection process will take roughly two to three weeks.

The Mayor expressed her approval of the poll, adding that as a second part of this user study, further to Council’s decision at its May 15th General Committee meeting, the City will assess the extent to which and when the existing nearby indoor pools are used and by what types of groups.

Councillor Lulham inquired as to whether the City will examine these nearby indoor pools’ operation costs as part of this second part of the user study. She explained that this will help to consider whether the City should enter into a partnership with a local organization for the latter to manage the operation costs. The Director General confirmed that the administration has already begun to examine these nearby indoor pools’ operation costs, noting that they are quite high.

Councillor Drury referred to the poll of residents conducted in consideration of the WRC’s construction by which residents were informed that its construction would result in an extra $200 in annual taxes per resident. He recommended providing residents with the equivalent figures in order to receive an informed response. The Director General explained that the City is first seeking to preliminarily ascertain whether there is interest among residents for the potential facility, beyond the few who have expressed such interest already. The Mayor, therefore, recommended that the reference to financial considerations be removed from the poll’s first question.
The Director General reported that further to a meeting between him, the Mayor, Councillor Davis, and the YMCA’s representatives, the latter expressed their openness to a possible partnership for the construction and operation of the potential facility.

The Director General noted former mayor Peter Trent’s proposal to put the money from the sale of the Royal Montreal Regiment (RMR) building towards the construction of this potential facility.

Confidential items were discussed.

Councillor Davis questioned whether the poll’s introductory letter expresses that the City is at the most preliminary stage of this project’s consideration. Councillor Samiotis expressed her opinion that it does not, which concerns her as she is not in favour of this initiative. She referred to Council’s decision at its previous General Committee meeting for this matter to be discussed further at the present General Committee meeting and for the administration to provide information on any existing examples of partnerships for the operation of indoor pools between municipalities and local organizations. She questioned whether the City should be prioritizing this initiative when its resources could be devoted to more important existing projects.

- **It was agreed** that the Director General will modify the poll’s introductory letter to indicate that “The City is currently studying the potential for construction of an indoor pool for City of Westmount residents.” To the same end, he will remove the reference to “the project under consideration” on the first page of the poll. He will then send this revised version to members for their final comments on June 20th, with the poll to be finalized by June 23rd.

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT – RESIDENT SURVEY RESULTS**

Councillor Lulham reported that Mr. Pierre Boudreault will be presenting the results of his study on the City’s commercial areas at the July 5th General Committee meeting. She mentioned that Mr. Boudreault interviewed all merchants and building owners and carried out an extensive study, developing excellent recommendations.

According to the resident study carried out by Mark Wilkins Consulting, Councillor Lulham reported that most residents frequently shop at local businesses and consider these businesses to contribute to the community life. She relayed the most commonly reported deterrent for frequenting the commercial areas, limited parking. Accordingly, she recommended carrying out a parking survey to determine precisely how many parking spaces are generally available.

**NEW BUSINESS: BEYOND SOFTWARE**

The Mayor said that a resident inquired as to whether Public Security has a system to register children at their parents’ request to help locate them if they are missing. The Mayor reported that she relayed the inquiry to Public Security Director Greg McBain, who informed her that a software program, Beyond, is already used for this purpose for seniors. She
recommended that the City expand its use of Beyond to include children to be registered at their parents’ request and further communicate its use of this program.

Councillor Cutler expressed his support for the Mayor’s recommendation, pointing out that if it can even help locate one missing child, it is worth it.

- It was agreed that the City will expand its use of Beyond to include children to be registered at their parents’ request and further communicate its use of this program.

NEW BUSINESS: NON-PAYMENT OF TAXES FOR 2016

Mé St-Jean presented the proposed timetable for the sale of immovables for non-payment of taxes for 2016, pointing out that the proposed date for the potential sale is September 20th.

- It was agreed that the City will initiate the process for the sale of immovables for non-payment of taxes for 2016 in accordance with the proposed timetable.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:36 p.m. The meeting was reconvened at 8:15 p.m. Mé St-Jean and Mr. Laidley did not return to the meeting. Councillor Samiotis took the role of chair.

Confidential items were discussed.

COUNCIL OBJECTIVE FOLLOW-UP: HYDRO WESTMOUNT

Councillor Drury reported that while Hydro Westmount has operated at an annual surplus of approximately $1 million in recent years, its infrastructure is in need of maintenance. Accordingly, as of 2017 and for the next several years, $2 million will be allocated annually to infrastructure maintenance. He noted that this year, the substations have been brought up to par.

The Director General pointed out that there has only been one power failure in the City in the previous three months.

In communicating the decision to invest in Hydro Westmount’s infrastructure, Councillor Drury presented four aspects worth emphasizing. Firstly, Hydro Westmount provides more personalized and efficient service than Hydro Québec when issues arise. Secondly, Hydro Westmount’s underground services are more aesthetically pleasing than above ground power lines. Thirdly, Hydro Westmount’s provision of electricity is more reliable, largely due to its underground services. Lastly, with Hydro Westmount, the City can schedule its electrical infrastructure work to be carried out at its convenience, and alongside its general infrastructure work as is necessary.
Confidential items were discussed.

**ABSENCES**

Council members were requested to submit their absence sheets to the Assistant City Clerk.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:29 p.m.

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Theodora Samiotis                      Mme Martin St-Jean
Acting Mayor                           Director of Legal Services and City Clerk