MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS OF THE MEETING OF THE GENERAL COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WESTMOUNT HELD AT CITY HALL ON MAY 16, 2016 AT 4:05 P.M. AT WHICH WERE PRESENT:

Chair
Victor M. Drury

Mayor
Peter F. Trent

Councillors
Philip A. Cutler
Rosalind Davis
Nicole Forbes
Cynthia Lulham
Christina Smith
Theodora Samiotis

Absent
Patrick Martin

Administration
Sean Michael Deegan, Director General
Martin St-Jean, Director of Legal Services and City Clerk

Recording Secretary
Andrew Brownstein

GENERAL COMMITTEE AGENDA

Adoption of the General Committee Agenda of May 16, 2016

It was agreed that the Agenda of the May 16, 2016 meeting of the General Committee of Council be adopted, with the addition of the following items under New Business:

- Urban Planning Update (Councillor Samiotis);
- Westmount Park Church Garden Co-op – Raised Beds (Councillor Lulham);
- Turcot Project Update (Director General Deegan);
- Truck Route (Director General Deegan);
- Grosvenor Avenue Update (Councillor Cutler);
- 1110 Greene Avenue (Director General Deegan);
- UMQ Update (Mayor Trent); and
- Festival of Lights (Councillor Forbes).
**Confirmation of Minutes of the Meeting of General Committee Held on May 2, 2016**

The Minutes of the General Committee of Council’s meeting held on May 2, 2016 were adopted with corrections.

**Business arising from the Minutes of the Meeting of General Committee Held on May 2, 2016**

The Mayor informed Council that Ms. Gaetano later corrected her original statement made at the previous General Committee meeting as to the diameter of the catch basins’ retention pipes measuring 1.2m in diameter. He specified that retention pipes are in fact 1.05m in diameter.

Councillor Cutler and Councillor Smith joined the meeting at 4:18 p.m.

The Director General reported that Atwater Library has received its grant.

He informed Council that further to its decision at the previous General Committee meeting, the alcoholic beverages at the upcoming Sports and Recreation Volunteer Recognition Dinner on June 3rd will be served free of charge.

Confidential items were discussed.

**ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION / DECISION**

**PAPERLESS COUNCIL SYSTEM**

Mme Nicole Dobbie, Assistant Director of Legal Services and Assistant City Clerk, and Mr. Claude Vallières, Division Chief – I.T., joined the meeting at 4:22 p.m.

Mr. Vallières outlined the history of DMS, the City’s current system for managing and recording the decisional process for all contracts into which it enters. He explained that the program was developed specifically for the City. It was never further developed or updated since its launch. Additionally, the company that created the program no longer offers technical support. Accordingly, for its new program, Mr. Vallières explained that the City is best-suited with one that already exists on the market in order to avoid these issues.

Mr. Vallières presented the prospective options for a new program and what it could manage. Specifically, in addition to the management of the decisional process, the files that are currently uploaded to Council’s Dropbox, aside from the General Committee agenda and other similar confidential documents, would instead be integrated into this new system.

Further to Councillor Drury’s inquiry, Mr. Vallières responded that roughly a hundred municipalities currently use the proposed program.
Further to Councillor Samiotis’ inquiry, Director Vallières responded that the objective of introducing this new program is to simplify the internal process while providing Council with a new tool. Mme St-Jean explained that this will greatly simplify the process for compiling the Council agendas as the documents can be compiled directly from the new program into the Council agenda, eliminating the need to convert each file to PDF individually.

Mr. Vallières presented the program’s interface by connecting his iPad to the projector. He informed Council that the system can perform searches by keyword of all of its documents. It is equipped with a calendar as well.

Mr. Vallières reported that he has begun training the administration on the decisional aspect of the program.

Mme Dobbie informed Council that the new program allows for the public Council agenda to be compiled automatically by filtering out the documents intended only for the internal version.

Further to Councillor Davis’ inquiry, Mr. Vallières confirmed that the program has been purchased and is scheduled to be fully in place by October – November 2016. He explained that the director of each department manages the decisional aspect of the program.

Further to Mayor Trent’s inquiry, Mr. Vallières confirmed that the documents can still be printed from the new program.

Further to Councillor Smith’s inquiry, Mr. Vallières responded that past documents like agendas and minutes will not be uploaded to the new system; however, Council will still have access to its current Dropbox account in order to refer to these past documents.

Mme Dobbie specified that Council will still use its current Dropbox account for General Committee agendas and minutes. She reported that either a training day will be organized to familiarize the administration with the new program or the instructions for its use will be distributed by email, depending on what is determined to be required. The objective is for the administration to be using the system in June. Mme St-Jean added that as of June, the Council agendas and related documents will be available to Council on both its Dropbox and on the new program until the new system is fully in place and functioning without error.

Mme Dobbie and Mr. Vallières left the meeting at 4:42 p.m.

DESTRUCTION COMMITTEE

Ms. Joanne Poirier, Director of Urban Planning, and Mr. Tom Flies, Assistant Director of Urban Planning, joined the meeting at 4:42 p.m.

Director Poirier explained that since November 2015, the City has not had a demolition committee in place. The committee had been composed of Councillor Drury, Councillor Lulham, and Councillor Samiotis. Urban Planning and Legal Services jointly recommend
that Council serve as the City’s demolition committee. A quorum of the committee, and therefore of Council, will be required in order for the committee to act. Director Poirier noted that this will remove the appeal mechanism, as appeals of the committee’s decision can currently be taken to Council. Councillor Samiotis pointed out that there is no appeal possible for decisions made in relation to other permits and the proposed change will simply make the process more efficient. Councillor Lulham agreed. Mayor Trent agreed, saying that major building permits are often as important as demolition permits, and having all Council deliberate would allow each application to go to “appeal.”

Councillor Lulham pointed out that the PAC’s recommendation in relation to a requested demolition is currently always presented to Council.

The Mayor informed Council that the PAC originally recommended a modification of the criteria that required a requested demolition to be subject to the demolition committee’s consideration. Specifically, at least 50% of a construction must be planned to be demolished in order to trigger the demolition committee process. The PAC has recommended to increase that percentage, as it has proposed to do so for several years. The Mayor recommended leaving the criteria as is; altering the procedure as recommended; and then, under the new system, assessing whether the criteria should be modified. Councillor Lulham relayed the PAC’s recommendation to include the removal of the majority of a building’s roof, regardless of whether any other portion of the construction is to be demolished, as a criterion to trigger the demolition committee’s consideration process.

Councillor Cutler inquired as to the manner in which other municipalities form their respective demolition committees. Director Poirier responded that many municipalities have their PAC act as their demolition committee. Councillor Lulham noted that at least three elected officials must sit on the committee.

➢ It was agreed that the City will pursue the by-law adoption process in order for Council to act as its demolition committee while maintaining the current criteria for triggering the demolition committee’s consideration of a requested demolition. The notice of the amending by-law’s adoption will be given at the June 6th Regular Sitting. At the July 4th Regular Sitting, Council will vote on the adoption of the by-law. The by-law’s adoption will then by published on July 10th, at which point Council will henceforth act as the demolition committee.

Confidential items were discussed.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:06 p.m., at which point Council held its Special Sitting. The meeting was reconvened at 5:13 p.m.

**SOUTHEAST SECTOR PLANNING PROCESS**

Ms. Gaetano joined the meeting at 5:14 p.m.
Councillor Samiotis introduced the item by outlining the goals of the Southeast Study. Its four stated goals were to reconnect the Southeast Sector with the urban fabric of the City, to re-create the link between the homes south of Dorchester Boulevard and the area to the north, to stimulate commercial activity through the redesign of Sainte Catherine Street, and to incorporate sustainability into the new design and promote walkability.

Mr. Flies updated Council on the southeast sector’s planning process. He explained that the taskforce formed by Acertys, made up of eight residents, Councillor Samiotis, and representatives from Public Works and Urban Planning, has held three meetings over the previous three months and has developed the concept parameters for the planning process. These concept parameters will be presented at a public meeting on June 14th and then to Council in light of the public’s response.

Mr. Flies presented the taskforce’s concept parameters. For the Tupper lots, the taskforce proposes to allow only low-density residential frontage on Dorchester Boulevard, roughly three to four storeys with an increase in the maximum building height towards Tupper Street. Mixed-use building frontage is recommended for Tupper Street. For Dorchester Boulevard, the taskforce recommends narrowing the street and squaring off the intersection at Clarke Avenue. Mr. Flies explained that contrary to Council’s initial vision, the taskforce proposes to keep the median, albeit much narrower.

Confidential items were discussed.

The Mayor pointed out that the reconfiguration of Dorchester Boulevard must take into account the future development of the Tupper lots. Specifically, the reconfiguration must result in the addition of sufficient space alongside the Tupper lots in order to ensure that the area will be suitable for building. Accordingly, the median may need to be removed. Besides, he said, since the goal is to repair the damage done in the 60s when Dorchester went from a street to a wide arterial boulevard, removing the median strip is congruent with the desired reversion to a more local street.

Mr. Flies outlined three possible options for Dorchester Boulevard’s reconfiguration;

1. Removing the median, resulting in 7m to 8m of additional space;
2. Reducing the median’s width and moving it to the south, adding the space gained to the Tupper lots, and maintaining the median’s greenery, possibly with trees if the underground infrastructure permits; or
3. Reducing the median’s width without displacing it, adding 1.5m of the additional space to the sidewalk on the south side of the street, making it a 3m-wide sidewalk, and adding a planting area on the north side of the street.

Mr. Flies reported that the taskforce prefers the third option, which he noted leaves the least available surface area for development.

Mr. Flies informed Council of the planning process’ next steps. The public meeting will be held on June 14th where the taskforce’s concept parameters and vision will be presented to the public, as well as the next steps in the planning process. In the summer, Acertys will provide the City with its final report, which will consider the public’s response at the June
14th meeting. Engineering studies on traffic and infrastructure will then be carried out throughout the summer. A detailed design will be developed by summer 2017, which will involve the design guidelines for the Tupper lots and the public domain, the development strategy for the Tupper lots, and the creation of a special planning programme, with a project manager at the helm of this initiative.

Councillor Samiotis emphasized the need to proceed with a project manager, as was done for the construction of the WRC. She explained that in order to effectively carry out this project that involves Public Works, Urban Planning, and land development, a project manager must be hired.

The Mayor referred to Councillor Martin’s email regarding a bicycle path on Dorchester Street. He recommended that the TAC evaluate whether this would be useful.

The Mayor pointed out that the maintenance required for the greenery on the median must be considered. Accordingly, he proposed a fourth option. The median can be removed and 3.5m allocated to the south side of the street between the sidewalk and the road to serve as a planting area.

Councillor Lulham noted that while trees can be grown on a 2m-wide median, the residents must understand that the 29 large trees currently located on the median will be damaged by the work. However, many of these trees are at the end of their lifespan and 13 of them are ash trees that must be removed.

Councillor Samiotis noted that while the City wishes to install a north-south link for its bicycle paths, the placement of a bicycle path on Dorchester Boulevard would be contrary to the City’s master traffic plan.

Councillor Samiotis recommended that the TAC study the impact of the possibility of squaring off the intersection of Dorchester and Clarke Avenue.

Ms. Gaetano explained that many of the residents on the taskforce like the median for its use as a refuge for pedestrians who do not have enough time to cross the entire street. She informed Council that Stantec will be mandated to carry out the traffic study regarding the narrowing of Dorchester and the possibility of squaring off the intersection at Clarke Avenue. She reported that Gas Métro was pleased to meet with the City as it believes that Dorchester’s reconfiguration can help reduce its maintenance costs.

Ms. Gaetano left the meeting at 5:53 p.m.

Confidential items were discussed.

**NEW BUSINESS: URBAN PLANNING UPDATE**

Confidential items were discussed.
Director Poirier informed Council of the request for a construction permit for a new house on the Westmount Avenue lot adjacent to the Findlay house located at the corner of Forden Crescent and Westmount Avenue. She explained that the two lots were originally one prior to a subdivision carried out in the 1960s. Director Poirier outlined the plans for the prospective new house. She explained that the PAC clearly expressed the need for the prospective new construction to respect the streetscape and the Findlay house’s heritage value. The plans have not yet been approved by the PAC.

The Mayor expressed his concern that this prospective new construction will detract from the Findlay house’s heritage value. Mayor Trent expressed his disappointment to learn that, in spite of all the work that had been done in the 1980s and 1990s to classify and to explore control mechanisms regarding large properties in Westmount, little seems to have been done since. In addition to preventing demolition and inappropriate modifications to heritage properties, he said, we have also to protect the green space around them. While 65 Forden was mentioned in at least one list as one of the many properties having buildable lots attached to it, he said that the City has done nothing to try and preserve the green space – and the same goes for heritage properties specifically listed for protection in the 1997 Bruce Anderson study. Imaginative ways of protection should have been explored. For example, in 1994, Mayor Trent had even managed to get an advance ruling from Revenu Québec to the effect that a property owner could create a permanent servitude on non-construction on an otherwise buildable lot, donate that servitude to the City, and claim a personal income-tax deduction.

Confidential items were discussed.

**NEW BUSINESS: WESTMOUNT PARK CHURCH GARDEN CO-OP – RAISED BEDS**

Councillor Lulham informed Council that further to Westmount Park Church’s Reverend Neil Whitehouse’s new “faith in nature” initiative, he has requested that the City permit the installation of four raised beds made of cedar for a vegetable garden co-op. She pointed out that the same raised beds are used for growing flowers and vegetables in front of the National Assembly. Councillor Lulham expressed her support for the initiative, noting the waiting list for the City’s community garden.

Director Poirier explained that the raised beds are 18 inches in height in order for the elderly to be able to participate in the co-op without needing to bend or kneel to the ground.

Confidential items were discussed.

Councillor Lulham recommended allowing the raised beds to be installed on a trial basis.

The Mayor expressed his concern for the precedent this would set, questioning whether the City would allow these raised beds in front of private residences.

Councillor Smith expressed her support for the proposal, recommending that the same beds be installed in front of Westmount Park School. Councillor Lulham responded that the school is redoing its bricks, and therefore, it cannot be done this year.
Councillor Samiotis pointed out that similar raised beds are being installed at Roslyn School. She noted that while these constructions are generally not permitted as they can detract from the streetscape, the church is situated in Westmount Park and therefore, there is no streetscape to consider. Accordingly, she held their installation to fall within the fair interpretation of the Plans d'implantation et d'intégration architecturale (PIIA).

Councillor Lulham informed Council that the raised beds will only be present during the growing season and will be removed for the winter.

Confidential items were discussed.

Councillor Cutler considered whether fewer raised beds could be installed for this first season as part of the trial. Councillor Lulham responded that the church has already purchased the four raised beds at a cost of $1,200 each, which was subsidized by a grant.

Councillor Forbes expressed her support for the proposal.

➢ It was agreed that the City will passively allow the installation of the four raised beds on a trial basis. Director Poirier will inform Reverend Whitehouse that the City will not object to their installation or use for a trial period, but it cannot issue a permit for said installation at this stage.

Director Poirier left the meeting at 6:44 p.m.

NEW BUSINESS: TURCOT PROJECT UPDATE

Mr. Benoit Hurtubise, Assistant Director General and Director of Hydro Westmount, and Mr. Patrick Raggo, Director of Public Works, joined the meeting at 6:44 p.m.

Assistant Director General Hurtubise briefed Council on the upcoming road closures due to the Turcot project. The Saint-Jacques overpass will be dismantled over the course of the first four weekends in July, resulting in the complete closure of Décarie Boulevard on the weekends of July 9th and 16th, and partial closures on the weekends of July 2nd and 23rd. St-Rémi Street will be closed until summer 2017. Notre-Dame Street West, currently closed in one direction, will be entirely closed from May 25th until the end of July. The Autoroute 720’s Guy Street exit will be closed for two weeks in June, and the Atwater exit will be closed from July to November. The MTQ scheduled the closure of the portion of Greene Avenue near the overpass for one month beginning in mid to late September, which the Assistant Director General foresees will more likely be for the full month of October. He explained that this closure is necessary in order to complete the temporary highway that will pass above Greene Avenue. Glen Road will be closed on some nights and weekends.

The Assistant Director General informed Council that the MTQ is aware that it is overdue for its next meeting with the City. Regarding the City’s resident-representatives on the Bon Voisinage committee for the Turcot project, he reported that he has submitted the names of the two residents intending to join the committee.
The Assistant Director General left the meeting at 6:51 p.m.

TEMPORARY CLOSURE OF THE GREENHOUSES AND THE CONSERVATORY

Director Raggo updated Council on the status of the greenhouses’ and conservatory’s temporary closure. He reported that he has provided Council with a preliminary list of the inventory lost as a result of the forced closure. He pointed out that whenever possible, plants were purchased for seasonal applications in order to avoid having to maintain or replace them. Director Raggo explained that this list does not include the lost inventory from the conservatory or the frog pond.

Director Raggo informed Council that the inspection report that had been commissioned in March was finalized in April, with the preliminary draft to be received by the end of the month. The final version should be completed in June. Director Raggo explained that the City will then have its final assessment as to whether it should, or even can, make repairs to the greenhouses. He reiterated his initial opinion, reinforced by the additional assessments carried out since, that it is highly unlikely that the facility will be able to be reopened this year. Director Raggo explained that the options for repairing the conservatory and the frog pond are very limited as there is no firm in Canada that can undertake the initiative, and bringing in an American company to carry out this work will cost the same as a full restoration project.

In light of the long-term problems associated with the use of a wooden structure and the impossibility of obtaining old-growth cypress, the Mayor suggested using traditional cast-iron – or cast-aluminum, if cast-iron would be a maintenance problem owing to oxidation caused by the high humidity environment. Director Raggo responded that he is looking into the matter.

Regarding the programming for the facility, Director Raggo proposed to contract the services of a professional consultant to outline the needs of the various user groups, including staff and current or potential clientele.

Councillor Lulham informed Council that Ms. Jayme Gerbrandt, the City’s horticulturalist, has proposed that the City purchase banana plants that could be kept in the greenhouses in the winter. Councillor Lulham explained that throughout the decision-making process for the facility’s restoration, the City must consider the space that these plants and others would require, the needs for the facility to serve its educational purpose, and the possibility of making the greenhouses more eco-friendly. By updating the heating system and using a water cistern to catch rainwater to be used for watering, the City can reduce its operation costs and, paired with the facility’s educational purpose, improve its chances at obtaining a grant. Director Raggo informed Council that the City has requested a federal grant for $5-$10 million for the restoration. Councillor Lulham recommended applying for the Federation of Canadian Municipalities’ (FCM) infrastructure grant.
PRINCE ALBERT PARK SPLASH PAD

Director Raggo sought Council’s approval on the design and construction of a small splash pad for toddlers in Prince Albert Park. The prospective splash pad will be placed near the playground intended for toddlers and children of eighteen months to five years of age. Accordingly, it will be placed next to its target demographic, away from the street, and close to the electricity and water services required to operate it. However, its installation would result in the removal of the small secondary skating area. Director Raggo explained that there is currently no area to serve as a replacement location for the secondary skating rink; however, and while outdoor skating rinks are an important part of our culture, this park, along with others, already has a full-sized skating rink, and these rinks can only be used for 6 weeks of the year while a splash pad can serve residents 20 to 25 weeks of the year.

Regarding the prospective project’s budget, Director Raggo reported that other municipalities have installed similar splash pads for roughly $70,000. However, the City would need to undertake electrical, plumbing, and other construction work to accommodate the splash pad, most of which the municipalities on which the above estimate is based did not need to carry out.

Councillor Lulham informed Council that the current proposal came further to the request’s presentation by a petition of residents. Councillor Davis questioned whether these residents would still be in favour of the splash pad’s construction if it is to come at the cost of removing the secondary skating area. She explained that this secondary skating rink is used by the park’s younger skaters. Councillor Davis recommended attempting to accommodate both the current secondary skating rink and the splash pad.

Councillor Davis inquired as to whether a splash pad area can be added for the older children as well. Director Raggo responded that there is insufficient space to accommodate both.

Further to Councillor Davis’ inquiry, Director Raggo confirmed that the water will be turned off overnight and as soon as the temperature approaches 10 degrees.

Further to Councillor Smith’s inquiry, Director Raggo responded that the work would likely be completed by September. The park would need to be closed at times throughout the summer, but it would be open in general.

> It was agreed that the City will proceed with a call for tenders in June for the prospective construction of a splash pad in Prince Albert Park.

2016 URBAN FORESTRY MANAGEMENT REVIEW

Director Raggo briefed Council on the City’s urban forestry management efforts. He explained that an urban forest requires considerably different treatment than a rural one. Specifically, trees in an urban setting decay faster and must be felled prior to posing a safety concern. Director Raggo noted the City’s significant number of Norway maple trees,
the structural integrity of which degrades particularly quickly as they age. The City’s ash trees will ultimately need to be removed due to the emerald ash borer infestation.

Director Raggo reported that Public Works has begun its compilation of an inventory of all of the City’s public trees. The data-collection process will be carried out throughout the summer and completed in August.

Director Raggo informed Council that 85 trees are being removed this year. The stumps from all of the trees removed this year and in previous years will be removed before the season’s end.

Councillor Lulham recommended that Director Raggo look into the possibility of creating benches out of the trees that are to be removed, as was done in Notre-Dame-de-Grâce.

NEW BUSINESS: TRUCK ROUTE

Director Raggo presented the preliminary proposals for possible truck routes. He explained that the matter will be discussed further at an upcoming General Committee meeting.

He outlined the three objectives for establishing a truck route. Firstly, it will allow for a seamless transition between truck traffic outside of the City and the internal road network. Secondly, it will allow for the installation of proper signage and the provision of other information for truck drivers who must navigate the City. Thirdly, it will reduce time and weight restrictions.

Director Raggo outlined the three proposals for possible truck routes;

1. North – South: Claremont Avenue, Victoria Avenue, and Clarke Avenue, East – West: Sherbrooke Street, Ste Catherine Street, and Dorchester Boulevard;

2. North – South: Claremont Avenue, Lansdowne Avenue, and Clarke Avenue, East – West: Sherbrooke Street, Ste-Catherine Street, and Dorchester Boulevard; and

3. North – South: Claremont Avenue, Victoria Avenue, and Wood Avenue, East – West: Sherbrooke Street, Ste Catherine Street, and Dorchester Boulevard.

Director Raggo noted that the second option is more direct, so it may be safer; however, it passes more residences and Westmount Park. The TAC prefers the third option.

Director Raggo outlined the prospective schedule for the truck route’s implementation. The route can be reviewed at the upcoming General Committee meeting. Legal Services will then draft the documents with the collaboration of Urban Planning. The City will then send the detailed plan and map of the route to the neighbouring boroughs, Sud-Ouest and Côte-des-Neiges–Notre-Dame-de-Grâce, in order to obtain their supporting resolutions. The signage identifying the truck route will then be installed.
The Mayor inquired as to whether the City has ever designated a truck route before, and if so, where it was located.

Councillor Samiotis expressed the importance of completing the southeast traffic study prior to deciding upon a truck route.

Director Raggo left the meeting at 7:47 p.m.

Confidential items were discussed.

**ONGOING ITEM: MTQ / AMT**

Councillor Samiotis informed Council that the MTQ has continued to avoid discussions with the City regarding the prospective sound barrier. Ms. Gaetano’s repeated attempts to contact Ms. Lyne Gamache of the MTQ have been unsuccessful. The Director General noted that his attempts have proven to be equally futile.

**NEW BUSINESS: GROSVENOR UPDATE**

Councillor Cutler informed Council that more traffic signage will be installed at the intersection of Grosvenor Avenue and Sherbrooke Street. The traffic lights’ cycle will be modified as well.

**NEW BUSINESS: 1110 GREENE AVENUE**

The Director General informed Council that the depression in front of 1110 Greene Avenue has been filled in and the roadway releveled.

**NEW BUSINESS: UMQ UPDATE**

The Mayor reported that at the UMQ’s recent annual meeting, Montreal Mayor Denis Coderre sought to pass a resolution banning all plastic bags under 50 microns, to which he expressed his opposition. Mayor Trent explained that the provincial government has very recently mandated Recycle Québec to carry out a study on whether the alternatives to thin plastic bags are in fact more eco-friendly than the plastic bags themselves. Moreover, such an initiative cannot realistically be carried out at the municipal level, but rather requires a province-wide program. The Mayor informed Council that his opposition was well-received by the rest of those present, and a very much-revised resolution was graciously prepared by Mayor Coderre and adopted unanimously.

Mayor Trent reported that the Minister of Municipal Affairs has simplified some of its rules. Firstly, the maximum value of a contract that can be awarded by mutual agreement (gré à gré) is to be raised from $25,000 to $100,000. Mayor Trent expressed reservations
regarding this change. Secondly, mayors will no longer be required to give a state of the union address, the content of which had been laid down by Quebec, four weeks prior to adopting its budget. The Mayor recommended that the City continue this practice, but with modifications in content and timing. Thirdly, municipalities will be permitted to reduce the speed limits in school zones without being required to first obtain the MTQ’s approval.

The Mayor reported that the municipalities’ original agreement to the pacte fiscal was intended as a temporary measure; and, when it became permanent, it was with the understanding that municipalities will be able to establish their salary arrangements with employees by decree if negotiations reach an impasse. However, it appears that the provincial government is attempting to move away from its promise in this regard.

The Mayor informed Council that Councillor Lulham and he received awards for their over-20 years of service as elected officials. Council members congratulated Councillor Lulham and the Mayor on their awards.

**NEW BUSINESS: FESTIVAL OF LIGHTS**

As the first night of Hanukkah coincides with Christmas Eve, Councillor Forbes recommended replacing the Christmas tree in front of City Hall with a tree of peace, the lighting and decoration of which would honour the holiday season in more inclusive manner. She explained that the City would still proceed with its traditional Christmas tree lightings in Prince Albert Square and Greene Square.

The Mayor recommended that the City celebrate both Hanukkah and Christmas by honouring the two holidays’ respective traditions, and accordingly, without detracting from either holiday. Councillor Lulham agreed, but noted that the City will still have two Christmas tree lightings in Prince Albert Square and Greene Square.

Councillor Davis recommended scheduling the Christmas tree lighting event in front of City Hall on a night other than one with a Council meeting in order to ensure that Council gives sufficient time to the event.

- **It was agreed** that the Christmas tree lighting event in front of City Hall will not be scheduled on the same night as a Council meeting.
ABSENCES

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

The meeting was adjourned at 9:55 p.m.

____________________________________  ______________________________________
Victor M. Drury                        Mª Martin St-Jean
Acting Mayor                          City Clerk