MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS OF THE MEETING OF THE GENERAL COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL (GC) OF THE CITY OF WESTMOUNT HELD AT CITY HALL ON JULY 3, 2018 AT 4:30 P.M. AT WHICH WERE PRESENT:

Chair Philip A. Cutler
Mayor Christina Smith
Councillors Anitra Bostock, Marina Brzeski, Mary Gallery, Cynthia Lulham, Conrad Peart, Jeff J. Shamie
Absent Kathleen Kez
Administration Jocelyne Dragon, Director of Human Resources (Replacing Benoit Hurtubise due to personal emergency)
Recording Secretary Andrew Brownstein

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION / DECISION

EMERGENCY MEASURES – HEAT WAVE

Mr. Greg McBain, Director of Public Security, joined the meeting at 4:30 p.m.

The heat wave that began on June 29th is expected to end on July 5th. The intensity of the heat wave has caused the City to shift from alert mode to intervention mode, as such a heat wave constitutes an emergency situation due to the risk of heat exhaustion and heat stroke.

Accordingly, until July 5th, or later should the heat wave persist, the hours of operation for the pool and the WRC have been extended. Specifically, the pool is open from 7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. and the WRC is open from 7:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. Additionally, the splash pads’ hours of operation have been extended to remain open until 11:00 p.m. The Library and Victoria Hall are also operating as cooling stations for the duration of the heat wave.

GC members discussed the possibility of waiving the pool’s admission fee for the remainder of the heat wave, in light of other nearby municipalities’ decisions to do so with their pools. While the City’s general priority is to ensure residents’ access to the pool, in the event of a heat wave of such intensity that it constitutes an emergency situation, the City’s
ultimate priority is to operate its pool in a manner that ensures every person who needs to cool off is able to do so, even if only for a brief period, as even a short swim can greatly help to reduce the risk of heat exhaustion and heat stroke.

➢ **It was agreed** that the extended hours for the pool and the WRC will be maintained for the duration of the heat wave, which is expected to end on July 5th. During this period, the admission fee for the pool will be waived, adult swim will be cancelled, with one lane left in the pool when possible, and up to 100 additional swimmers will be permitted to use the pool during the hours typically devoted solely to swim team and swimming lessons.

➢ **It was agreed** that the City will publicize the extended hours for the pool, the WRC, and the splash pads, as well as the Library's and Victoria Hall’s use as cooling stations, on its website. In the same publication, the City will urge residents to take the proper precautions to avoid heat exhaustion and heat stroke. The City will also place a similar communication document in all apartment buildings, targeting seniors, informing residents of the aforementioned City services and elaborating on the measures for preventing heat exhaustion and heat stroke.

Director McBain left the meeting at 4:58 p.m.

Confidential items were discussed.

**2018 FINANCIAL RESULTS AS AT MAY 31st, 2018**

Ms. Julie Mandeville, Director of Finance, joined the meeting at 5:21 p.m.

Director Mandeville presented the “2018 Financial Results as at May 31st, 2018,” highlighting certain elements.

While the transfer duties collected as at May 31, 2018 constitute only 25% of the amount budgeted for 2018, it is too early to accurately predict the total revenue that will be collected as duties on transfers.

Court fines are on track with what had been collected as at May 31st, 2017.

As the majority of the interest on the City’s investments come due in the summer, only 11% of the 2018 budget has been collected as at May 31st.

The City’s “other revenues” increased, namely due to a $50,000 payment received as part of a settlement with an insurer and $90,000 received for the sale of equipment.

Ultimately, revenues and expenditures are on track, and while it is too early to conclude with certainty that the City will end the year within its budget, it appears this will be the case, barring any unforeseen circumstances.
It was agreed that the “2018 Financial Results as at May 31st, 2018” will be published on the City’s website along with an explanatory introduction drafted by the administration.

TIMELINE FOR 2018 SALE OF IMMOVABLES FOR NON-PAYMENT OF TAXES

There are 65 property owners who have unpaid taxes for 2017 and/or 2018, totalling at $1.8 million.

Immovables for which there are unpaid taxes from 2017 may be sold in accordance with the procedure laid out in the Cities and Towns Act. On June 19th, the City sent a letter to all property owners with unpaid taxes from 2017, reminding them of the amount that remains outstanding and briefing them on procedure for the potential sale of their immovable. At the August 6th Regular Sitting, Council will prospectively adopt a resolution ordering the City Clerk to sell the immovables on which taxes remain to be paid, and another letter will be sent to the property owners that same week. A first notice will then be published in Le Devoir and in the Montreal Gazette, in order to attract the largest pool of potential buyers, within 30 days of the aforementioned resolution’s adoption, prospectively on August 18th. A second notice will then be published in Le Devoir and in the Montreal Gazette on September 8th, and the sale, which is to occur least 15 days after the date of the second publication, will occur on September 25th.

This procedure is the City’s only practical way to ensure that it obtains its tax revenue from the property owners who fail to pay their taxes; the financial penalties and interest charged are modest enough for property owners to consider it to be a fair cost for financing what is effectively a loan from the City. Accordingly, the City must proceed with the sale of immovable for non-payment of taxes on an annual basis.

Director Mandeville left the meeting at 5:50 p.m.

Confidential items were discussed.

URBAN PLANNING COMMITTEE

Mr. Tom Flies, Director of Urban Planning, joined the meeting at 6:45 p.m.

Section 146 of the Act Respecting Land Use Planning and Development stipulates that “the council a municipality may, by by-law...assign [the PAC] powers of study and recommendation in regard to planning, zoning, subdivision, and building.” Accordingly, Director Flies recommended that Council amend By-law 1320, “By-law to Establish a Planning Advisory Committee,” in order to grant these powers to the PAC. Specifically, Director Flies recommended the following:

The City should amend By-law 1320 to increase the maximum number of regular members and substitute members, currently set at five and four respectively, as three urban planners are recommended to be appointed to the PAC in order for it to fulfill this prospective new mandate.
The PAC should adopt its own rules of internal management, as provided for in section 14 of By-law 1320, with the goal of distinguishing the responsibilities of the PAC’s three prospective subcommittees, namely the subcommittees for architectural review, planning, and the Local Heritage Council. Urban Planning would prepare a draft for the PAC’s review and approval.

An urban planner should be appointed as substitute chair of the PAC. Said urban planner would then be able to chair the sub-committees’ meetings when such expertise is necessary.

An orientation meeting should be organized for the potential candidates for the urban planner positions in order to confirm their interest in working on the comprehensive review of the urban planning by-laws and the planning programme.

Meetings for the planning sub-committee should then be organized twice a month, for a period of three to four hours, in order to provide Mr. Nicolas Gagnon, Urban Planning – Project Manager, with continued guidance for the review of the urban planning by-laws and the planning programme.

- **It was agreed** the City will re-publish the posting for the urban planner positions in order to attract the largest possible pool of candidates, specifying that the candidates must be a member of the Order of Urban Planners of Quebec.

Director Flies left the meeting at 7:00 p.m.

**KING GEORGE PARK POND PROGRESS REPORT**

Ms. Elisa Gaetano, Director of Engineering, joined the meeting at 7:00 p.m.

The pond in King George Park has been leaking water, which is beginning to damage the nearby park infrastructure.

At this stage, the pond must be repaired, repaired and optimized, namely with the inclusion of a water recirculation system, or completely reconstructed with a new footprint and design. Director Gaetano recommended repairing and optimizing the pond, as, while more expensive than simply repairing it, this approach will result in lower operation costs.

The prospective contract for this project would ideally be awarded this fall and the work then carried out during the spring of 2019.

- **It was agreed** that the City will temporarily close the pond in King George Park in order to avoid damage to the surrounding infrastructure.

- **It was agreed** that the City will issue a call for tenders for the repair and optimization of the pond.
DOG RUN – UPDATE

The City has mandated Groupe Solroc to test the materials used in King George Park’s dog run for the presence of silicon dioxide, assessing it in consideration of the Commission des normes, de l'équité, de la santé et de la sécurité du travail’s standard for the acceptable level of silicon dioxide to which employees may be exposed on a full-time employment basis. Groupe Solroc will also test the level of dust to determine whether it exceeds the normal level of dust for such an environment. A purchase order has been issued for the testing for a value of $8,800.

If Groupe Solroc determines the silicon dioxide or the dust to be above their acceptable levels, the City will temporarily close the dog runs until a solution is found and implemented.

Director Gaetano left the meeting at 7:30 p.m.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:30 p.m., at which point Council held its Regular Sitting. The meeting was reconvened at 9:46 p.m.

GC AGENDA

Adoption of the GC Agenda of July 3, 2018

It was agreed that the Agenda of the July 3, 2018 meeting of the GC be adopted.

Confirmation of Minutes of the Meeting of the GC Held on June 18, 2018

The Minutes of the GC’s meeting held on June 18, 2018 were adopted with corrections.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION / DECISION (Continued)

VARIA: BELL CANADA EMERGENCY WORK

Further to Bell carrying out emergency work at 3:00 a.m. that was ultimately much louder than it was supposed to have been, Director Gaetano will be meeting with Bell’s representatives to discuss how such issues can be better handled in the future.

CONGRESS SUMMARY – ICLEI WORLD CONGRESS 2018, MONTRÉAL

Councillor Brzeski briefed the GC on the 2018 International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI) World Congress that she attended in June. The international conference was held in Montreal this year over a period of four days.
Five pathways for cities' environmental initiatives were put forward at the conference. Specifically, cities should seek to:

1. Reduce emissions from transportation;
2. Promote agriculture and nature-based initiatives;
3. Promote circular development, namely through prioritizing long-lasting design, maintenance, reusing, remanufacturing, and recycling;
4. Promote resilient development, which constitutes a consistent dedication to adapting to the challenges facing urban environments in the context of climate change; and
5. Promote equitable development, namely inclusive, people-oriented development.

The International Organization for Standardization's issuance of ISO37120:2018, "Sustainable cities and communities -- Indicators for city services and quality of life," was also discussed at the conference. According to the International Organization for Standardization, ISO37120:2018 "establishes methodologies for a set of indicators to steer and measure the performance of city services and quality of life," namely by allowing cities to compare themselves to others in these respects. Councillor Brzeski recommended utilizing this resource.

Garbage removal was also discussed at the conference, particularly the current trend of cities charging residents for this service by the weight of their waste.

- **It was agreed** that Councillor Brzeski will meet with the representatives of the two merchants' associations to discuss the City's plan for waste management in the commercial sector. She will recommend that the merchants' associations communicate their enthusiasm for this initiative, as the public will appreciate their ecological consciousness.

**ABSENCES**

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

The meeting was adjourned at 10:23 p.m.