MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS OF THE MEETING OF THE GENERAL COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL (GC) OF THE CITY OF WESTMOUNT HELD AT CITY HALL ON AUGUST 6, 2018 AT 4:03 P.M. AT WHICH WERE PRESENT:

Chair                          Jeff J. Shamie
Mayor                          Christina Smith
Councillors                    Anitra Bostock
                                Marina Brzeski
                                Philip A. Cutler
                                Mary Gallery
                                Kathleen Kez
                                Cynthia Lulham
                                Conrad Peart

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.

Administration            Benoit Hurtubise, Director General (DG)
                                Martin St-Jean, Director of Legal Services and City Clerk
Recording Secretary        Andrew Brownstein

GC AGENDA

Adoption of the GC Agenda of August 6, 2018

It was agreed that the Agenda of the August 6, 2018 meeting of the GC be adopted, with the addition of the following items under New Business:

- Substitute Mayor (DG Hurtubise); and
- Upcoming Agglomeration Council Meeting (Mayor Smith).

NEW BUSINESS: SUBSTITUTE MAYOR

➢ It was agreed in principle that as the Mayor and Councillor Shamie, currently the Substitute Mayor, will both be out of town from August 18th to August 22nd, Councillor Bostock will serve as the Substitute Mayor during this period, subject to Council’s adoption of a resolution to this effect at that night’s Regular Sitting.
NEW BUSINESS: UPCOMING AGGLOMERATION COUNCIL MEETING

Councillor Shamie will attend the upcoming Agglomeration Council meeting in the Mayor’s absence.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION / DECISION

SNOW REMOVAL POLICY

Ms. Sandra Avakian, Assistant Director General (ADG), Ms. Elisa Gaetano, Director of Engineering, Mr. Robert Talarico, Director of Public Works, Mr. Réjean Binette, Public Works – Superintendent, and Mr. Todd Seguin, Public Works – Superintendent, joined the meeting at 4:10 p.m.

There are four types of snow removal operations, namely the spreading of salt and abrasives, clearing, removing, and dumping. The operations to be undertaken are dependent on the amount and type of precipitation received (snow, ice pellets, mixed precipitation, etc.) and the forecasted weather. Arterial roads, emergency routes, the areas around schools, and sloped streets, particularly for the spreading of salt and abrasives, are prioritized.

GC members discussed the possibility of charging commercial property owners for snow removal given the cost of removing the snow that has been cleared from private commercial driveways and left on the public domain.

GC members recommended considering purchasing or renting one or several snow removal trucks equipped with a brush, as are used in Ottawa and Saskatoon.

- It was agreed that the administration will draft an executive summary of the snow removal policy for communication purposes, to be presented to the GC in October for its review and publicized in November. The executive summary will outline when and how snow removal operations are undertaken, emphasizing the variables that can affect the process, as well as the reasoning behind the prioritization of certain streets and areas. This will give residents a better idea of when they can expect their street to be cleared. The executive summary will also point out that Westmount’s snow removal is far better than most of the other municipalities on the Island while explaining the reasons for the ever-increasing costliness of this service, such as traffic and construction in and around the City and an increasing demand for snow removal trucks across the Island.

- It was agreed that the City will consistently communicate the opening and closing of its outdoor skating rinks throughout the winter.

Mr. Binette and Mr. Seguin left the meeting at 4:45 p.m.
DOG RUN – UPDATE

Further to the City mandating Groupe Solroc to test the materials used in King George Park by analyzing the levels of dust and silicon dioxide in the surrounding environment, samples were taken on July 12th and a variety of tests were performed. Groupe Solroc, which specializes in geotechnics and quality control and is not affiliated with the builder or supplier for the dog run, is in the process of preparing its report.

While the material used is the standard “mélange à chien” used in dog runs across the Island, the City is carrying out these tests as it is determined to hold itself to the highest standard of ensuring its residents’ health. Accordingly, in the unlikely event that Groupe Solroc concludes that the material poses a health risk, the City will immediately close its dog runs and proceed with a call for tenders for the removal and replacement of the material.

GC members discussed the possibility of using different materials in each dog run, as some materials are better suited for smaller dogs and others are better suited for larger dogs, and encouraging residents to use the appropriate dog run for their dog.

ROADWORK – UPDATE

Roadwork on Roslyn Avenue is scheduled to be completed by the end of September. The City will soon begin its roadwork on Burton Avenue and on the northern section of Argyle Avenue.

SIDE GUARDS FOR HEAVY TRUCKS

All of the City’s heavy trucks are equipped with side guards and cameras, and the City requires that its contractors’ snow removal trucks be equipped in the same manner. GC members discussed the possibility of requiring side guards on all of the City’s contractors’ heavy trucks, year-round, and including a penalty in the contracts requiring side guards to be imposed if the trucks are not so equipped.

It costs roughly $1,200 to equip a truck with sideguards.

➢ It was agreed that in order to assess the cost of requiring side guards on all of the City’s contractors’ heavy trucks, in the calls for tenders for road reconstruction projects involving heavy trucks for 2019, contractors will be requested to submit two bids, providing pricing for trucks with and without sideguards.

The ADG, Director Gaetano, and Director Talarico left the meeting at 5:18 p.m.
WESTMOUNT YOUTH ORCHESTRA

Ms. Julie-Anne Cardella, Director of the Library and Community Events, joined the meeting at 5:18 p.m.

The City met with a few members of the Westmount Youth Orchestra’s board of directors to explain that the group does not meet the criteria for use of a municipal building, as only a minority of the participants are Westmount residents, and accordingly, the group may only use the space until January 1st, 2019. Specifically, only 14% of the participants are Westmount residents, and the City’s longstanding policy, dating back to 1996 and formally reiterated by resolution in August 2017, is to only allocate its resources to community groups in which more than 50% of the participants are residents, as municipal buildings are paid for and maintained by taxpayers. The board members explained that the group is hoping to move its activities to Sacred Heart School in September, as, in any case, Victoria Hall is no longer suitable for its needs. However, this move may not be possible until the end of the upcoming academic year, and the City is awaiting their information on this matter.

Confidential items were discussed.

PARK(ing) DAY

Director Cardella recommended that the City not participate in this year’s PARK(ing) Day 2018, explaining that the international event is to be held in September, a particularly busy time for the Library and Community Events.

GC members noted that the event has been well-received in previous years, in Westmount as well as in Notre-Dame-de-Grâce, Saint-Henri, and Ville Marie, which also participate.

- **It was agreed** that the City will offer Healthy Cities the possibility of organizing Westmount’s PARK(ing) Day 2018, suggesting that this year’s event constitute Healthy Cities and the Association of Pedestrians and Cyclists of Westmount each converting one or two parking spaces into temporary public spaces. The City will then assess how to proceed for 2019.

Director Cardella left the meeting at 6:20 p.m.

BYLAW ON PARKS – UPDATE

- **It was agreed** in principle that the City will proceed with its amendment of By-law 69, “By-law Concerning Parks,” to prohibit smoking in all parks. The grounds surrounding City Hall and the green space in front of the former train station will be added, amongst other green spaces, to the list of parks under Annex A.
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➢ It was agreed that the City will explain that the by-law amendment is aimed at improving air quality in parks, as the current standard set by provincial law, namely the prohibition of smoking within 9m from any playground, does not sufficiently protect park users, many of whom are children and elderly.

Confidential items were discussed.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

In June, the DG and Councillor Lulham met with Mr. Pierre Boudreault, senior consultant and founder of Artères services et conseils en gestion d'artères commerciales et de centres-villes, Mr. Guy Bazinet, Assistant Director General – PME MTL, and Ms. Athia Kabanguka, Project Officer – PME MTL, to discuss plans for the commercial sectors’ economic development.

By June, the Greene Avenue and Victoria Village merchant associations had been created. At the meeting, Mr. Boudreault confirmed that he would follow up on the opening of the associations’ bank accounts. Once said bank accounts are opened, the associations will be able to seek funding. The City has agreed to provide each association with $10,000, half of which is to be allocated to the creation of a website and the other half to an event to be held in late November, early December. Ms. Kabanguka will assist with the website development with the two associations starting in September or October, after the two commercial sectors’ branding has been established, which will be used on their websites, in storefronts, in vacant storefronts, and during their events. The designing of the branding is expected to cost between $20,000 and $23,000 for each commercial sector.

Once the branding has been designed, the City will install totems at key locations to identify the commercial districts in 2019. The City will be responsible for the manufacturing, installation, and maintenance of the totems, but their design will be agreed upon with the associations.

GC AGENDA (Continued)

Confirmation of Minutes of the Meeting of the GC Held on July 3, 2018

The Minutes of the GC’s meeting held on July 3, 2018 were adopted with corrections.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION / DECISION (Continued)

ONGOING ITEM: AGGLOMERATION SUMMARY REPORT

While the cost of bicycle lanes is to come from the Agglomeration’s budget, the cost of substantial Hydro Québec work was being lumped into a project for the addition of bicycles lanes in the Plateau. As a result, the full cost of the project was being unduly imposed on the Agglomeration. Further to the demerged municipalities’ mayors’ strong opposition, the Agglomeration Council
appears to have accepted that only the cost of the bicycle lanes will be borne by the Agglomeration.

**ABSENCES**

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

The meeting was adjourned at 7:20 p.m.

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Jeff J. Shamie                        M. Martin St-Jean
Acting Mayor                         Director of Legal Services and City Clerk