

Memo



Date: February 15, 2011
File: 0700-20
To: City Manager
From: Deputy City Clerk
Subject: Southern Interior Local Government Association (SILGA)/Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) Resolutions

Recommendation:

THAT Council endorses the City of Kelowna resolutions as attached to the report of the Deputy City Clerk, dated February 15, 2011;

AND THAT Council direct staff to forward the City of Kelowna sponsored resolutions for consideration and endorsement by the Southern Interior Local Government Association (SILGA).

Purpose:

At the February 07 and 14, 2011 meetings, staff were directed to bring forward resolutions as identified by Council for submission to SILGA (UBCM) by their March 01, 2011 deadline.

Background:

Members of the Union of BC Municipalities are asked to submit resolutions to Area Associations for consideration at their annual spring meetings. If endorsed, the resolutions are submitted automatically to UBCM for consideration at the annual meeting.

Internal Circulation:

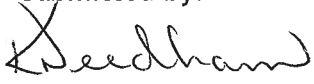
Manager, Community Planning
Manager, Cultural Services
Director, Land Use Management

Considerations not applicable to this report:

Legal/Statutory Authority:
Legal/Statutory Procedural Requirements:
Existing Policy:
Financial/Budgetary Considerations:
Personnel Implications:
External Agency/Public Comments:
Community & Media Relations Comments:
Alternate Recommendation:

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Submitted by:



K. Needham
Deputy City Clerk

Approved for inclusion:



R. Mayne, Director Corporate Services

Increase Funding and Resources for Agriculture

WHEREAS the success of agriculture depends on an investment in infrastructure, education and expertise by the provincial government through their Ministry of Agriculture and British Columbia is spending a mere 3.3% of Gross Domestic Product for supporting the agricultural industry, while the average in Canada is 16.4%;

AND WHEREAS The Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) is a provincial land use zone in favour of agriculture administered by the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC) to preserve BC's limited agricultural land base and to provide land use certainty to encourage agricultural businesses;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the provincial government increase financial support for agriculture consistent with the national average and provide additional resources to the Agricultural Land Commission for increased services in support of agricultural businesses.

Provincial Income Assistance Rates

WHEREAS the October 2005 CMHC Rental Market Report for Kelowna indicates average rents far exceed the shelter allowance portion of BC Assistance, and the cost of living, particularly shelter, in this province has continually increased without corresponding adjustments to the levels of assistance;

AND WHEREAS thousands of low-income households in our city are paying far in excess of 30%, the majority in excess of 50%, of their gross income before tax on shelter including adults with disabilities who may have greater expenses than seniors in order to address the needs of their disability, including access to special needs housing;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Provincial Ministry of Employment and Income Assistance be asked to increase current assistance rates and implement a program to adjust those rates annually based on the BC Average Annual Consumer Price Index;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Provincial Ministry of Employment and Income Assistance also be asked to increase assistance for adults with disabilities to the same level of assistance available to seniors.

Return to Heritage Funding

WHEREAS heritage generally throughout Canada is suffering due to the economic downturn, the loss of provincial government support in 2008 with the withdrawal of provincial funding for the Heritage Branch (Ministry of Tourism, Trade and Investment), Heritage BC, as well as community-based organizations throughout the province, means that community heritage resources are at risk for deterioration and loss;

AND WHEREAS Heritage is an important asset for economic development in British Columbia as a draw for cultural tourism, one of the fastest growing segments of the tourism industry and the loss of heritage resources and the opportunity for people to experience the unique identity of communities in BC could further negatively impact on the local and provincial economy;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED the provincial government adopt Heritage BC's "Call to Renew British Columbia's Heritage" initiative by:

1. Adopting the Provincial Heritage Strategy, completed in 2009 but never implemented;
2. Restoring the budget for the Heritage Branch, Ministry of Tourism, Trade and Investment;
3. Resolving the heritage properties question, which includes issues related to provincially-owned heritage properties;
4. Restoring community support through governmental initiatives including programming and gaming funds;
5. Reinvesting in the Heritage Legacy Fund in order to support long-range heritage conservation work throughout the province.

Restore Gaming Grants

WHEREAS Arts, culture and heritage organizations provide valuable services to citizens residing in municipalities throughout BC and most of these organizations rely on funding from all 3 levels of government;

AND WHEREAS most of these organizations have lost significant operating funds due to cuts in BC Arts Council grants and changes to the Community Gaming Grant program resulting in additional funding demands at the local government level;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that non-restricted funding from the Province's general revenues be restored immediately to the BC Arts Council at least at the level (adjusted for inflation) provided in 2008/09;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the eligibility criteria for Community Gaming Grants be reviewed and revised so that funding to arts, culture and heritage organizations will be accessible at, and restored to, 2008/2009 levels.

Citizen Complaints Regarding the RCMP

WHEREAS Canadians should have confidence in their national police force and the RCMP strongly supports transparency and accountability in order to maintain and strengthen public confidence and trust;

AND WHEREAS half of the national contingent of RCMP officers are located in British Columbia with local governments throughout British Columbia, as partners in policing, impacted when their citizens have a serious complaint against the RCMP;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Province create a British Columbia RCMP Civilian Oversight Committee with a mandate to review citizen complaints of a serious nature against the RCMP.