

MARCH 2003 NEWSLETTER

CALGARY PHILHARMONIC ORGANIZATION

In December, Council authorized a one-time grant of \$250,000 to be payable through the Calgary Region Arts Foundation (CRAF). It was subject to prior commitment of at least equal contributions from the other two orders of government, and the CPO reaching its expected support from the private sector, so that the necessary \$1.5M is achieved.

The Province of Alberta has accelerated their one-time grant payment, administrated through the Alberta Foundation for the Arts (AFA), to be given with the proviso that future AFA grants to the CPO, will be reduced by \$50,000 per year for five years beginning in 2004, thus paying back the \$250,000.

I brought forward a Notice of Motion with Alderman McIver that a similar arrangement be entered into with the City of Calgary and the CPO to ensure that this money be recovered over 5 years in a similar manner. It is important to have this money repaid, and further, that the CPO be self-sustainable and that Council not bail out organizations that find themselves in financial difficulties. Unfortunately, this motion failed.

SEIZURE OF VEHICLES INVOLVED IN PROSTITUTION RELATED OFFENSES

Harvey Cenaiko, MLA, has decided to introduce similar legislation to that in Manitoba, which allows police officers to seize vehicles involved in prostitution-related offences. By amending the Traffic Safety Act, this will improve its effectiveness as a deterrent against street prostitution. I encourage citizens to contact Mr. Cenaiko's office (244-7737), to receive a copy of the petition letter and return it to him so that he can help inform other Members of the Assembly about the need to address the community-related problems with street prostitution.

As you know, abhorrent issues arise from street prostitution with the sexual and drug paraphernalia (condoms, needles, etc) that are discarded throughout our streets, front yards, alleys and playgrounds. Hundreds of millions of dollars of real estate are affected, as well as the safety of thousands of residents throughout the City.

HISTORIC TSUU T'INA NATION MEETING WITH CALGARY CITY COUNCIL

An historic meeting was held in January between the Tsuu T'ina Nation Band Council and Calgary City Council. The main purpose of this meeting was to discuss areas of mutual interest, and in particular, how we can advance discussions related to the potential of a roadway being built through the Nation. Nearly 50 years ago, the Nation surrendered their land so that the Province could build Highway 22, and there are other examples around the Province of similar agreements being in place. When Highway 22 is no longer required, the land would revert back to the Nation.

I had the privilege of bringing forward the Motion following this meeting that was unanimously approved by Council, directing his Worship Mayor Bronconnier to work directly with Chief Sandford Big Plume and Premier Klein to find possible solutions for roadway access for Calgarians and visitors alike to the Nation. There is a very ambitious timeline by all parties, and Mayor will report back to Council by May 5, 2003. The Nation will also be undertaking a very comprehensive consultation with their citizens to share a number of options and considerations.

Chief Big Plume flew down from Edmonton in January to specifically meet with Ward 13 Presidents for nearly two hours, and returned following this meeting. This was a very valuable and insightful meeting, and all were impressed with Chief Big Plume's sincere desire and commitment to move forward, and to do all he can to ensure the future economic and social sustainability for future generations. The Chief's Band Council are united behind his leadership and I am committed to do all I can to work with the Nation and to, first and foremost, understand and get to know our neighbors and how we can work together for our mutual benefit.

BRAECENTER AND RIVERBEND COPS STATION

The Calgary Police Service is currently reviewing the operation of both the BraeCentre and Riverbend COPS. The Police Service continuously reviews all their operations to ensure good value for money with respect to productivity, volunteer development and operating costs. I want to again convey my unequivocal support and commitment to the Community Operated Police Stations and the valuable work that community volunteers do in partnership with our Police Officers. I know citizens are concerned about this review and I encourage people to let the police service know of your support of this essential service.

I have been a long-standing champion of the Calgary Police Service and the financial resources they require to serve our communities. COPS is a very essential component to community-based policing, and I am committed to staying apprised of the review and the conclusions reached.