

TORONTO STAFF REPORT

June 3, 2002

To: Economic Development and Parks Committee

From: Joe Halstead, Commissioner Economic Development, Culture and Tourism

Subject: Proposed lease of City property known as Lamport Stadium at
1155 King Street West, Toronto to the Toronto Soccer Association
Parkdale - High Park - Ward 14

Purpose:

To authorize the approval to rescind Clause No. 8 embodied in Report No. 8 of the Economic Development and Parks Committee, as adopted by the Council of the City of Toronto at its meeting held on August 1, 2, 3 and 4, 2000.

Financial Implications and Impact Statement:

There are no financial implications resulting from the adoption of this report.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that:

- (1) Clause No. 8 embodied in Report No. 8 of the Economic Development and Parks Committee, as adopted by the Council of the City of Toronto at its meeting held on August 1, 2, 3 and 4, 2000 authorizing the negotiation and execution of a lease agreement for the management of Lamport Stadium by the Toronto Soccer Association, be rescinded;
- (2) City staff continue to develop an appropriate business plan to maximize the usage of Lamport Stadium; and
- (3) the appropriate City Officials be authorized and directed to take the necessary action to give effect thereto.

Background:

The City owns Lamport Stadium, located at 1155 King Street West. The facility is operated by the Parks and Recreation Division and utilized as a venue for live sporting events, primarily soccer, as well as field hockey. The field turf is in a state of poor repair and requires capital improvements. The Toronto Soccer Association, the primary user of the facility, approached the City to pursue a long term lease whereby it would manage and operate the facility on a daily basis and invest approximately \$500,000.00 for a new playing surface.

At its meeting of August 1, 2, 3 and 4, 2000 Council adopted Clause No. 8 of the Economic Development and Parks Committee which stated “the Commissioner of Economic Development, Culture and Tourism, or his designate, be authorized to finalize and enter into a lease agreement in a form and content acceptable to the City Solicitor with The Lamport Management Group Inc., as further detailed herein”.

The Lamport Management Group Inc. is a separate entity of the Toronto Soccer Association created to manage the stadium.

Based on the Council direction, staff entered into discussions with the Lamport Management Group. The Lamport Management Group was to install a new playing surface, at its expense. However, they could not meet the City’s criteria regarding the replacement turf, as the new turf would need to accommodate both soccer and field hockey. They were prepared to install a turf suitable for soccer only.

In addition, the two principals who were to operate the stadium under the terms of the agreement on behalf of The Lamport Management Group resigned their positions within the organization.

Taking all factors into consideration, a letter terminating the negotiations with The Lamport Management Group was sent out on May 15, 2001.

An informal RFP was issued in September 2001 for proponents interested in entering into a management agreement with the City to manage and operate the stadium. The RFP letter stated that it would be mandatory that any agreement would ensure that the proponent agree to replacement of the existing field turf, at its sole expense, to accommodate the needs of the existing users including International Field Hockey requirements. The proponent must also agree to accept the full responsibility and accountability for the daily operation of Lamport Stadium and therefore must provide a business plan with the submission.

Two proponents submitted written proposals that were analyzed by senior management and a presentation was made by each proponent to senior staff in November 2001.

After careful analysis of both the written proposal and the presentation, neither proponent could meet the criteria for the accommodation of permit holders and for the type of turf that would be

acceptable to both soccer and field hockey as per the RFP. Neither proposal presented cost savings to the City or met the City's financial requirements.

Comments:

The primary benefit of a management agreement from a financial perspective would be a cost saving to the City in the operation of Lamport Stadium. As well, all capital improvements would be at the sole expense of the Leasee and would include a new playing surface. However, field hockey and soccer require two different types of turf on the playing field and the stadium must accommodate both sports. The City must have a proponent that meets all of the City's financial requirements and that demonstrates the ability to manage Lamport Stadium in a manner that meets all of the City's needs.

Conclusions:

Staff have investigated the opportunity to enter into a management agreement with interested proponents. Based on the results of this process, it is in the best interest of the City to rescind the Council Authority and not enter into any agreements at this time. The City will continue to operate Lamport Stadium and will continue to evaluate and develop a long-term management plan for the facility.

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