

RRDOG Presentation to City Council-----May 12/2008  
By Jill Seymour, RRDOG Financial Director

**Your Worship and Councillors:**

I am Jill Seymour, Financial Director of RRDOG

Congratulations to Council for having the initiative, foresight and awareness of Richmond's dog-related issues to setup and direct The Dogs in Parks Task Force. While RRDOG does not necessarily support all the recommendations in the report, we recognize and commend Richmond for being far ahead of many other cities in attempting to resolve dog problems. This Council and the PRCS Committee deserve praise, as does the Chair of DIP/TF, Serena Lusk

That said, I am here today to speak to two specific issues in the Staff's Report.

My statement will take less than 5 minutes.

**First: RRDOG's response to Staff's suggestion that we apply for a contract to conduct education programs.**

RRDOG does NOT INTEND to apply for such a contract BECAUSE:

- We are an ADVOCACY GROUP for ALL DOG-RELATED ISSUES, not just education. We are not in the business of training dogs or people, nor to do want to limit our services to education only.

- Our initiatives, programs, and solutions go far beyond education.

**OUR HOLISTIC APPROACH TO DOG ISSUES INCLUDES:**

- ENVIRO DOG
  - DOG WATCH
  - NEWS HOUND (PUBLICITY, MEDIA, WEBSITE)
  - As well as DOG ED
  - DISABILITY DOG
  - CITY DOG
- We believe we can be most effective in our ADVOCACY if we are NOT CONSTRAINED by being under contract with the City
  - We believe our INDEPENDENCE as a community-based ADVOCACY GROUP WORKING TOWARD REAL SOLUTIONS would be limited if we were under contract to the City
  - Additionally, any City contract would likely take years to formulate and tender. At that point, DogEd MIGHT be ready to consider the bidding process; but RRDOG is READY NOW to implement REAL, COST EFFECTIVE SOLUTIONS.

**Secondly: Funding for RRDOG.**

As many of you are aware, RRDOG submitted a Grant Application for \$30,500 last October. Because of the impending DIP/TF Report, Grants Committee Staff stated that the any provision of funding for RRDOG prior to the presentation of TASK FORCE Report to Council was not appropriate.

At the March 3<sup>rd</sup> General Purposes Committee meeting, several Councillors expressed concern that this did not mean that there was to be NO funding for RRDOG, ONLY that

a funding decision was to be POSTPONED until the Task Force Report was presented. Staff confirmed this at that meeting. Subsequently we received a letter dated April 23/2008 from Lesley Sherlock stating that our grant application was denied—again referencing the still un-issued Task Force Report. At its April 29<sup>th</sup> meeting, the PRCS Committee passed a motion referring it back to Staff again.

**All of this is background to THE IMPORTANT POINT that:**

**Our Grant Proposal has NEVER BEEN REVIEWED based on its OWN MERIT**

- The 12-page Application outlined specifics as to how RRDOG's initiatives would either increase revenue to the City or decrease City expenses, while at the same time operating within the Triple Bottom Line Model. Highlights of proposed solutions that would result in positive financial, social, and environmental impact to Richmond were:
  - Increased licensing revenue from increased compliance rates through our programs about ownership responsibilities
  - Increased Dog Bag Sponsorship revenue by an effective sales campaign to attract new sponsors and reinvigorate lapsed ones
  - Biodegradable bags and composting programs which would reduce trucking expense to landfills, and even methane production revenue in the future
  - Advocating for affordable, local dog training and etiquette classes that would result in better-trained and socialized dogs—with the end result of a savings in the ever-increasing COST OF ENFORCEMENT to the City
  - Assistance to Enforcement by reporting and targeting problematic offenders, resulting in better enforcement, increased fine revenue, and an improved culture of compliance.

Over the past 3 years RRDOG's Directors, Members, Volunteers and Supporters have put huge amounts of Time, Effort and Money into trying to help the City. Funding decisions have been postponed and delayed to the extent that Directors are now using *their own funds to pay for the cost of conducting delegations such as tonight's*, instead of pursuing our established initiatives.

Both Senior Staff and Councillors have stated to RRDOG more than once that Council has DISCRETIONARY FUNDING SOURCES, other than the Grants Program, they could use to fund RRDOG.

**The questions we are putting before Council tonight are simple ones:**

**We need your answers so we can make decisions about the future of RRDOG.**

**Our questions are:**

Do you want our help, or not? Do you want to collaborate with us, or not?

Will the City fund us, or not?

If so, when and how much? If not, please give us a definitive NO so we can move on.

Thank you for your time and attention.

I have copies for distribution to Council.

Jill Seymour (RRDOG Financial Director)