

From: Joe Aiga [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, July 18, 2019 1:33 PM
To: Parks - City of Burnaby
Subject: Re: Request to speak to commissioners

My name is Mamoru Aiga, AKA Joe Aiga.

I would like to be given an opportunity to request if the room rental policy of Bonsor 55+ Senior Centre and Bonsor recreational Centre can be modified so a limited numbers of patients support group such as cancer can be sponsored by Parks and Recreation Service, which will enable us the bladder cancer patients support group can have the same priority of securing the meeting room in advance as currently sponsored programs.

I am 72 years old and have lived in Burnaby near 40 years.
I was diagnosed bladder cancer in late 2016.
Since then, I became a volunteer for Bladder Cancer Canada, a nationally registered non profit advocate organization for bladder cancer patients. Over a year I have been facilitating the patients support group for greater Vancouver region renting a room at Bonsor 55+ Senior Centre, located at 6533 Nelson Avenue, Burnaby.

Bladder Cancer are mainly for seniors affecting both men and women. 90% of new bladder cancer patients are over the age of 55. Many of patients are in 70s and 80s, who rely on public transportation system. Bonsor 55+ Senior Centre and Bonsor Recreational Complex are located in Metrotown and enables senior patients to come to the support meeting from different municipalities. As matter of fact, we have paritipants from North Shore, Richmond, Surrey, West side of Vancouver, Coquitlam and Burnaby and even from Abbosford. Burnaby is the centre of Greater Vancouver.

The problem we have faced is that the room rental policy set by Parks and Recreation Service gives priority to its sponsored programs first. After the rooms for sponsored programmed are secured, then the rooms for non sponsored programs can be filled.

The rental officer kindly assigns us a room even before all sponsored programs get their rooms assigned but we have to agree to the condition that the room may be canceled or moved to another room if a sponsored program is assigned to the same room. This makes very difficult to plan as the securing of the meeting is the critical path for planning the support group meetings.

Though it is called the patients support group meeting, we host occasionally invite medical professional to educate the patients and its caretaker about the disease, treatment and others. So, it is providing education. The difference is that most programs are for healthy and active people but the support group meeting will be for people with health issues.

In terms of the room rental fee, of course it is greatly appreciated the city can sponsor it all, but we are happy to accept the currently policy the the city is providing 50% discount. What we want to is a policy for us to be able to secure the room without worrying about the possibility of being bumped out by a sponsored program and suddenly find ourselves having no rooms for the meeting.

Sincerely,

Joe Aiga

