

Cleaning services – a report in response to the Employee and Labour Relations Committee motions of September 8, 2008

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| Date: | October 27, 2008 |
| To: | Employee and Labour Relations Committee |
| From: | Director, Information Technology & Facilities |

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to respond to the Employee and Labour Relations Committee request for information regarding levels and standards of cleaning services and an analysis of the Union's proposal (Option 2) and of the cleaning standards used in Option 3 in the report *Contracting-in of Cleaning Services - Options*. This report also provides information about the structure of the RFP to enable accurate costing of partial contracting out.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Director, Information Technology & Facilities recommends that:

1. the Employee & Labour Relations Committee receive the report *Cleaning Services – a report in response to the Employee and Labour Relations Committee motions of September 8, 2008*.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

This information report has no financial impact.

The Director, Finance & Treasurer has reviewed this Financial Impact Statement and is in agreement with it.

DECISION HISTORY

At the September 8, 2008 meeting of the Employee and Labour Relations Committee, the following motion was carried:

That the Employee and Labour Relations Committee:

1. receives the report on options for the contracting-in of all or some of the cleaning services;
2. requests appropriate staff to extend the current cleaning contract on a month-to-month basis until December 31, 2008;
3. requests appropriate staff to report to the Employee and Labour Relations Committee before the end of October, such report to include:
 - a. a description of the level of service required by the current contract;
 - b. an analysis of how well the current contractor has met the level of service required under the current contract;
 - c. an assessment of the adequacy of the current standard of cleaning, taking into consideration public and staff complaints;
 - d. any recommendations for improvements to the cleaning standards;
 - e. a full analysis of the cleaning standard staff used in Option 3 of the September 8, 2008 report Contracting in of cleaning services – options;
 - f. a full analysis of Option 2 of the Union’s proposal;
4. requests appropriate staff to continue meeting with the Union to review the Union proposal and report to the Employee and Labour Relations Committee before the end of October; and
5. requests appropriate staff to report to the Employee and Labour Relations Committee before the end of October on options for structuring an RFP for cleaning services that would enable the accurate costing of partial contracting out, such as the cleaning within a region or within a specific type of library, such as large or small branches.

This report responds to the requests directed to staff in motions 3, 4, and 5.

ISSUE BACKGROUND

At the September 8th meeting, Local 416 C.U.P.E. distributed the Union’s proposal to in-source cleaning at Toronto Public Library branches. The proposal includes two options for the Committee’s consideration based on the costing provided by management to in-source cleaning. The Committee asked Library staff to prepare an analysis of Option 2 of the Union’s proposal (see motion 3.f).

Also, at the September 8th meeting, Library staff presented three options for contracting in some or all of the cleaning services. The Committee asked Library staff to prepare an analysis of the cleaning standard used in Option 3 (see motion 3.e).

COMMENTS

Levels of service

The current contract is based on the requirements in the RFP issued in 2005. It requires cleaning service at 94 library locations, to be performed when facilities are closed for use by public and staff. No visible soil is the level of cleanliness to be achieved at all

facilities of the Toronto Public Library. This level of cleanliness prevents daily soil build up and provides staff and public facilities that display an acceptable level of cleanliness.

The contract describes requirements based on the frequency of cleaning (*e.g.* emptying of garbage and recycling bins on a nightly basis, washing all sinks, faucets, urinals, toilets on a nightly basis, vacuuming high traffic areas nightly, steam cleaning carpets twice a year). The contract describes requirements based on specific areas of the library (*e.g.* public areas, meetings rooms, washrooms, bookmobiles, elevators & stairwells). The current contract also requires special cleaning services at specified branches (*e.g.* day porter/full-time cleaner service at 5 locations, afternoon washroom cleaning at specified branches and exterior grounds litter abatement at a number of branches).

The level of service required by the current contract would be described as basic, but addressing all aspects of cleaning; a level consistent with other public sector cleaning expectations. Higher levels of cleaning could be achieved by requiring certain tasks to be performed on a more frequent basis.

The current contractor provides nightly cleaning services at the 94 contracted locations (the exception being branches that are closed for renovation) and also the day porter and afternoon washroom cleaning and litter abatement at the specified locations. The contractor has also provided ad hoc cleaning services, on a special request basis. Most of the essential elements of cleaning are being done. Public comments in this report about the level of service by the current contractor are being kept to a minimum because of the competitive bid process currently underway.

The Facilities department tracks complaints about the cleaning service, as reported by Library staff. In 2007, 673 complaints were received for cleaning in all library locations. This compares with 414 complaints in 2006 and 458 complaints in 2005. The reported complaints are categorized (percentages for 2007) under the headings of: vacuuming/floors (41%), washrooms (27%), dusting (8%), garbage (10%), cleaners' closet/supplies (4%) and miscellaneous (10%). The average number of staff complaints per branch for the year 2007 is 7. In the context of more than 16 million visits each year to our 99 public locations, this is not a large number.

In 2006 the Library conducted a public opinion survey and one of the questions asked was about the public perception of the cleanliness of the branches. 90% of the respondents expressed satisfaction with the attractiveness and cleanliness of the library they used.

One observation made by Library staff is that staff and public perception of cleanliness may be related to the Library's state of good repair backlog. In some cases, worn-out carpets, old, corroded washroom fixtures and walls that need painting will look unclean, regardless of the effort put into cleaning.

Recommendations for improvements to the cleaning standards

There is room for improvement in the delivery of cleaning service, to meet the standards set in the current contract, and to some significant extent this depends upon the investment the Library Board is prepared to make. Library staff have identified several actions, that if implemented, should improve the quality of cleaning services. Some of these actions have been incorporated into the RFP for cleaning services that was issued in October 2008.

The ability to monitor and supervise the cleaning, against the standard set in the cleaning contract, is important to improving the quality of cleaning. The RFP requires that certain cleaning activities take place on specific nights, which will make it easier to monitor and enforce, since branch staff will know when to expect cleaning, such as vacuuming to take place on certain nights of the week. Increased supervision of the nightly cleaning crews has been identified as a contributor to improved cleaning and the RFP asks bidders to provide costing for a higher level of supervision, as an optional service, to be priced separately.

There are several enhancements to the cleaning service that would have an impact on the standard of cleaning and these have been included in the October 2008 RFP, as optional services, to be priced separately. They include: more frequent (4 times per year instead of 2 times) carpet cleaning, more frequent floor cleaning (stripping and waxing) and full-time crews for carpet and floor cleaning. These optional services will only be implemented if budget permits and with Board approval at the time the cleaning contract is awarded. But the recommended enhancements support the staff position that more frequent “heavy duty” cleaning will contribute to cleaner libraries.

Analysis of the cleaning standard staff used in Option 3 of the September 8, 2008 report *Contracting in of cleaning services - options*

Option 3 was prepared on the basis of the Union proposal to bring in-house all nightly cleaning services and was intended to replace the existing contracted service. In addition, contracting in parts of other contracted services (such as window cleaning) was also considered as part of the custodians tasks. The underlying assumption was that the cleaning to be performed would be at the same frequency and to the standard as described in the cleaning contract.

The development of the staffing complement in Option 3 was based on the following assumptions, which had a major impact on the staff count of 109 FTE.

- The staff would provide some coverage during the afternoon, but most of the cleaning would be done after the branch closes. For safety reasons, and in keeping with the principle that staff not work alone in a library facility, Option 3 staffing was based on two custodians in a branch after open hours.
- The current cleaning contract calls for nightly cleaning on every day that library facilities are open to staff or public. This same coverage was provided in Option 3. This would provide cleaning after branches are open on Saturday and Sunday.

- Enough “floater/relief” staff were added to the complement to cover for custodian absences (e.g. vacation, sickness, emergency/family leave), based on days of absence in the Facilities department.
- Management and supervision of the cleaning service would be important to the successful operation of in-house cleaning service. With 106 custodians mostly working evenings and with scheduling and training requirements there is a need for a manager, two supervisors and two lead hands. The supervisors and lead hands would be expected to work evenings, so as to support staff at the time they would be working.
- The Union proposal to bring in-house all nightly cleaning was aimed at creating full-time positions. The Option 3 proposal created 86 full-time positions out of the 106 bargaining unit positions.

Analysis of Option 2 of the Union’s proposal

In Option 2, the Union proposed 69 FTE custodians and 8 FTE relief custodians. The table below provides a staffing comparison between the Union proposal (Option 2) and the proposal in the September 8 report (Option 3).

| | Option 3 | Option 2 |
|--------------------------------------|----------------|---------------|
| Large libraries (22 locations) | 44 FTE | 34 FTE |
| Smaller libraries (travelling crews) | 42 FTE | 35 FTE |
| Floater (relief) staff | 18 FTE | 8 FTE |
| Manager & supervisors & lead hands | 5 FTE | 0 FTE |
| Totals | 109 FTE | 77 FTE |

The reduction in staff complement for the smaller libraries is achieved by increasing the number of branches cleaned by each crew each night from 3-4 to 4-5. This reduces the amount of time spent cleaning in each branch, with a corresponding increase in travel time.

The staffing model for the largest 22 libraries provides for one full-time position per branch, with the exception of two full-time positions at Fairview and Northern District and a total of 6 full-time positions for the Research and Reference libraries. The model also provides for a floater position in the 17 district and 3 largest libraries, one floater per cluster of four libraries. The floater would move among the libraries in the cluster, providing relief during absences.

The lower staff complement is based on the following assumptions.

- As in Option 3, staff would perform some cleaning functions in the afternoon, but most cleaning functions would be done after the branches were closed. However, in the Union’s Option 2, staff would be working alone in the branch after open hours.
- With the exception of the Research & Reference libraries, the staffing model does not provide coverage for Saturdays and Sundays. The Union position is that Option 2 provides more hour of cleaning per branch than provided in the current cleaning contract and therefore should result in cleaner branches. Management’s

position is that a branch needs cleaning of washrooms and high traffic areas at the end of every day of service.

- The floater positions for the district and 3 larger libraries and the other 8 floater/relief positions do not provide adequate coverage for absences due to vacation, illness, etc. based on current experience in the Facilities department.
- All 77 positions are full-time. This does reduce flexibility in scheduling, especially when covering a 7 day/week operation.
- The Union's proposal does not provide for designated management and supervision of cleaning staff.

Without addressing the need for cleaning services on Saturdays and Sundays, adequate relief staff to cover absences and management and supervision, this proposal is not viable.

Meetings with the Union

Library management and the Union met three times in September and October to review details of the Union's proposal and to explore possible variations to the deployment of staff based on the Union's proposal.

Costing of partial contracting out

A RFP for cleaning services was issued by the Library on October 8, 2008 and will close on October 30. This will allow Library staff to evaluate the proposals and recommend an award to the Board at its November meeting. This will ensure that cleaning services continue uninterrupted when the current month-to-month extension ends at December 31.

The initial term of the proposed cleaning contract is for one year, with the option to renew twice, for an additional year each time. The Library has indicated that it has the right to award the initial contract and any renewal in whole or in part, which gives the Library the flexibility to consider and implement full or partial contracting-in of cleaning service. The Library has requested costing by branch and so has the ability to accurately assess the cost of partial contracting out, with no commitment to any particular configuration at this time.

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SIGNATURE

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