

Riverdale Farm - Building a Sustainable Future

March 2013

Preamble

Riverdale Farm holds the love and interest of residents of the City of Toronto and beyond. It is truly a destination site for tourists and residents across the city, an oasis from the hustle and bustle of life within a big city, and an educational hub within the City. Life at the Farm is always evolving, including how the public engages with it.

At its meeting of July 11-12, 2012, City Council adopted the following:

1. City Council authorizes the General Manager of Parks, Forestry and Recreation to accept donations from Toronto Parks & Trees Foundation of funds raised by the Riverdale Farm Coalition through activities outlined in the business plan. All funds raised through fundraising initiatives (fundraising campaigns, membership drives, donation boxes etc) and revenue generation (farmers market, venue bookings, gift shop, food facilities etc) be allocated as first priority toward offsetting the operating costs.
2. City Council request the General Manager of Parks, Forestry and Recreation to work with the Riverdale Farm Coalition to develop Terms of Reference for the Riverdale Farm Stewardship Group including defining roles and responsibilities for the City, organizations and residents.
3. City Council support and encourage efforts to raise funds in support of the ongoing operation of the Farm, such as permitting the use of the Farm for fundraising events.
4. City Council direct Parks Forestry & Recreation staff to include in the 2013 budget process any expected net operating budget impacts as a result of fundraising.

The attached Terms of Reference are the result of implementation of items #1-3of Council's decision. Approval of the Terms by the General Manager of Parks Forestry and Recreation and the Chair of the Riverdale Farm Stewardship Group (RFSG) confirms the working relationship between the City and the RFSG as an advisory group to City staff authorized to carry out fundraising efforts for the purpose of supporting Riverdale Farm operations.

The creation of the RFSG brings a strong, single voice to seek out sustainable funding, create new learning opportunities and develop the Farm's financial opportunities for the future, in partnership with the City. The RFSG will work closely with the local Ward Councillor, City staff and ever growing list of partners, to bring financial sustainability to the farm. Through the Riverdale Farm Business Plan (July 11, 2012), it will create new and vibrant partnerships that inform, educate and increase public awareness of the role farms have played and continue to play in our lives, now and for future generations The success of the RFSG is dependent on the support of Riverdale Farms' numerous stakeholders, partners, participants and members of the general public. Together we are stronger!

Riverdale Farm Stewardship Group - Terms of Reference

1. Goal

The goal of the Riverdale Farm Stewardship Group is to secure a stable and sustainable funding base to offset the operating costs of Riverdale Farm and ensure existing service levels are maintained or enhanced, while remaining accessible to the public.

This goal will be achieved, in part, through activities outlined in the Riverdale Farm Business Plan, considered by Council on July 11, 2012 (Item EX21.3). The Plan includes activities such as fundraising, soliciting sponsorships, establishing strategic partnerships, and facilitating educational and participatory learning that targets our diverse population.

2. Guiding Principles

The Riverdale Farm Stewardship Group (RFSG) will embrace the following principles to achieve its goals: Sustainability, Transparency, Partnerships, Education, Accessibility, Maximize Potential, Inclusive and Representative, Fair and Equitable, Flexible, Pro-active, Co-operative, Heritage Sensitivity.

3. Relationship to the City

The RFSG is an advisory group to the General Manager of Parks, Forestry and Recreation, with a mandate to provide advice to City staff related to fundraising activities, and to raise funds directly for the continued operation of the Riverdale Farm.

The General Manager of Parks, Forestry and Recreation continues to have full responsibility and authority for all operations related to Riverdale Farm, including programs, services and the management of fiscal, human, and physical resources. Furthermore, the General Manager is responsible for ensuring the operational compliance with all forms of legislation, policies and procedures pertinent to the City of Toronto.

The City will accept funds raised by the RFSG through the Toronto Parks and Trees Foundation and apply them as a first priority to offset the Riverdale Farm operating costs. All written agreements related to Riverdale Farm fundraising or sponsorship must be with the Parks, Forestry and Recreation Division, and authorized by the General Manager or their designate.

The RFSG is herein created by the General Manager of Parks, Forestry and Recreation. Its mandate is to fulfill the goal and carry out activities set out in the Terms of Reference. Accordingly, the General Manager, acting on behalf of the City of Toronto, may dissolve the working group when its mandate is fulfilled, when its role is supplanted by staff or other resources, or its business model is no longer appropriate to the City's objectives for Riverdale Farm. Otherwise, the term of the Group's mandate is from the date of signature of this Terms of Reference, to November 30, 2014.

See Appendix A for a diagram showing RFSG accountabilities.

4. RFSG Membership

As a general premise, a cross section of skills, expertise, knowledge and experience is required to ensure maximum fulfillment of City Council's directives. Membership in the RFSG is limited and must represent a cross section of the City of Toronto to capture and acknowledge City Council's acceptance that

Riverdale Farm is an oasis for a wide range of clientele, including Toronto residents and national and international visitors.

The Riverdale Farm Stewardship Group will consist of 12 members in total, as per the following:

- Seven (7) skills-based representatives,
- One (1) volunteer representative from the local community
- One (1) volunteer representative from Riverdale Farm registered program participants,
- Two (2) Parks, Forestry & Recreation staff (non – voting, designated by the General Manager of Parks, Forestry and Recreation)
- The City Councillor for Ward 28 (by virtue of office, non-voting)

5. RFSG Selection Process

An advertised recruitment process will be used to select representatives for all positions. Seven of these positions will be recruited on a city-wide basis, having a blend of the skills outlined in the criteria section below. The local community member will be recruited using the same process, but with emphasis on those applicants having involvement within the local community and familiarity with Riverdale Farms place within the community. The Farm registered program participant will also be selected using this process, with emphasis on their participation in a registered program(s) of Riverdale Farm. All members shall be at least 18 years of age and must reside in the City of Toronto.

The selection process will be led by Parks, Forestry & Recreation staff delegated by the General Manager of Parks, Forestry and Recreation. The process will include short listing, interviews and selection.

For the initial term of the RFSG, the Selection Committee will be comprised of the following representatives: Ward Councillor for Ward 28, Parks, Forestry & Recreation staff, staff from the Toronto Office of Partnerships, and a member of the former Riverdale Farm Coalition. The Riverdale Farm Coalition representative will only be a member of the Selection Committee for the initial selection process, and must not be a candidate for the RFSG.

a) Skills-Based Representatives

The 7 skills-based voting members of the RFSG, as a group, should possess a blend of the skills, knowledge, experiences and expertise listed below:

- Corporate fundraising; Legal
- Marketing & Communications
- Events Management
- Educational Activities (Farm Related)
- Change Management
- Financial Management
- Facilitation
- Partnership building
- Strategic and Business Planning
- Grants and Reports
- Heritage sensitivity.

b) Local Community Representative

This voting member of the RFSG will have involvement within the local community and ensure that a local perspective and connection between the community and Riverdale Farm is maintained. One or more of the skills identified above would be an asset.

c) Riverdale Farm Program Participant Representative

This voting member will represent the many people who take part in the registered programs offered at Riverdale Farm. This will ensure that the perspective of those who participate at the Farm is included in the work of the RFSG

RFSG Roles and Responsibilities

Voting Members

- Review and adhere to the RFSG Terms of Reference
- Review and prioritize the work outlined in the Riverdale Farm Business Plan of July 11, 2012, together with City staff
- Establish and confirm an Action Plan to achieve the goal of the RFSG
- Set performance goals and outcomes to measure financial enhancement success
- Establish a Marketing and Communication strategy using a variety of approaches for the promotion of Riverdale Farm
- Establish a bank account to manage ongoing activities
- Assume a leadership role as the “voice” of Riverdale Farm as it relates to its’ revitalization through fundraising and educational activities
- Establish a close partnership with City of Toronto staff
- Facilitate the establishment of long term funding sources, strategic partnerships, activities and events to effectively and efficiently achieve the Council directives in compliance with City and Divisional policies and procedures
- Provide advice to City staff on the programming and operation of the Riverdale Farm for their consideration
- Ensure transparency and openness
- Demonstrate fair and equitable practices
- Maintain a regular meeting schedule and records related to the meeting (finance, minutes, correspondence etc)
- Maintain open communication with stakeholders and the public
- Liaise with Ward Councillor
- Work with City staff members to clarify and amend these Terms of Reference as and when it is deemed necessary.

Parks Forestry & Recreation Staff (non-voting)

- Provide context and expertise as to the operations, and activities within the City of Toronto, Parks Forestry & Recreation and Riverdale Farm
- Review and prioritize the work of the Riverdale Farm Business Plan of July 12, 2012, together with RFSG voting members
- Establish a close partnership with RFSG voting members.
- Facilitate and actively engage in the establishment of any new partnerships, activities and events designed to support the financial sustainability of Riverdale Farm
- Work closely with the RFSG and the Ward Councillor to support the goals of the RFSG
- Foster mutual understanding through information sharing and dialogue to assist the RFSG in the performance of their duties.
- Liaise with Ward Councillor on matters related to the RFSG
- Work with members of the RFSG to clarify and amend these Terms of Reference as and when it is deemed necessary

Ward Councillor (by virtue of their office, non-voting)

- Represent City Council and act as a liaison between City Council and the RFSG.

- Provide support to the work of the RFSG
- Ensure members of City Council are informed of the work of the RFSG
- Ensure transparency and openness

Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary and Treasurer

The RFSG shall be chaired by Parks, Forestry & Recreation staff delegated by the Director of Parks until a Chair and Vice Chair are chosen.

The Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary and Treasurer shall be voting members of the RFSG. Positions will be filled through a vote within the first two initial meetings of the RFSG.

The Chair and the Vice-Chair shall collaborate with Parks, Forestry and Recreation staff to determine what items are to be placed on the meeting agenda. The Vice-Chair shall assume the role of the Chair when she/he is absent.

The Secretary is responsible for preparation and distribution of minutes, agenda, notices of meetings, and correspondence related to the RFSG in consultation with the Chair, Vice-chair and Staff.

The Treasurer will keep records and statements related to the RFSG operating bank account. This account is solely for the purpose of supporting the activities of the RFSG. All donations and funds are to be directed to the Toronto Parks & Trees Foundation for appropriate direction. At the close of the RFSG any remaining funds are to be directed to the TP&T Foundation for direction to Riverdale Farm.

The Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary and Treasurer shall hold office for one year and shall then be replaced or reaffirmed through a vote of the voting RFSG members. In no case shall a Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary or Treasurer sit more than 4 years in their position.

7. Term of RFSG Membership

The initial term of the RFSG will extend from the inaugural meeting of the RFSG to the end of the current term of City Council in the fall of 2014. Subsequent terms of the RFSG will be for a two-year period, renewable for an additional two-year period, with the four years coinciding with terms of City Council. Members can serve a maximum of four years on the RFSG before they are required to step down for a period of two years.

8. Policies and Procedures

Meeting Frequency

The RFSG will meet at least 6 times per year and no more than 12 times per year depending on the number of issues to be discussed.

Open Meetings - Public Input

Meetings are open to the public. Anyone wishing to make a presentation may attend and present on agenda items but must be placed on the meeting agenda prior to its distribution and with the agreement of the Chair.

Meeting Quorum and Minutes

Meeting quorum is a simple majority of appointed voting members. Minutes of the Meetings shall be kept on file by the RFSG Secretary, with copies supplied to Parks, Forestry and Recreation staff and available

to the public upon request. The RFSG shall approve the meeting minutes at the next meeting of the RFSG.

Conflicts of Interest

Riverdale Farm Stewardship Group members, including non-voting members, will declare any actual, apparent or potential financial interest, direct or indirect, that the member, or any friend or family member of the member, has or may have, in any matter to be discussed at a meeting. Disclosure shall be made prior to the meeting, or discussion of the matter at the meeting, and the member shall excuse him or herself from the meeting while the matter is under consideration, and shall not debate or vote on the matter or do anything to influence any decision or disposition relating to the matter.

Member Conduct

Riverdale Farm Stewardship Group members, including non-voting members will treat each other with respect and act civilly and professionally during meetings and outside of meetings. Where a member’s behaviour is inappropriate the Chair can request the member to leave the meeting. If the behaviour is ongoing and persistent from meeting to meeting the Chair can request that the member resign.

Privacy and Protection of Personal Information

Parks, Forestry and Recreation staff will take appropriate actions to protect personal privacy, and protect information that if released would either create a conflict of interest or work against the interests of the City.

Annual Review

The Chair of the RFSG will convene an annual meeting to:

- Present a Year-In-Review, including activities of the volunteers and financial information
- Review the upcoming year's work plan

The meetings will be an opportunity for RFSG members, Parks, Forestry and Recreation staff, and members of the public to discuss Riverdale Farm fundraising efforts, operations and emerging issues.

9. Relationship to Riverdale Farm Ambassadors

The Riverdale Farm Ambassadors is the model selected by, and operated through, the Parks Branch to ensure a broad, inclusive means of engaging the many groups, organizations, agencies, participants and interested members of the public with Riverdale Farm under one umbrella. It is intended to be a valuable resource to enhance the ongoing work of Riverdale Farm through volunteer and programming opportunities.

The Riverdale Farm Ambassadors are also expected to be a valuable resource to support the RFSG, particularly as it relates to their fundraising activities / events, and as a community feedback source.

10. Signatories

_____ (Date) _____

Jim Hart
General Manager
Parks, Forestry and Recreation Division

_____ (Date) _____

Chair
Riverdale Farm Stewardship Group

Appendix A: Riverdale Farm Stewardship Group Accountability

