

\$397,200 upgrade to council chambers planned

City to overhaul 12-year-old audio-visual equipment

by Matthew Hoekstra
Staff Reporter

Richmond City Hall is preparing for a \$397,200 overhaul of the audio-visual system in council chambers, a project the mayor believes is money well spent. "Of course with anything in the field of technology, 12 years is a long time. It was felt that it was time to upgrade and replace what we had there," said Mayor Malcolm Brodie. "It's basically going from an analog-based system to a digital system."

This week staff issued a request for expression of interest to find a contractor capable of the six-figure upgrade. The existing system dates to 2000, when city hall was built, and utilized the best technology available, said Brodie.

Since then many components have been replaced or upgraded, and a new system is needed to "maintain reliability and serviceability," according to the proposal document. In recent years some key equipment has failed, requiring costly repairs and equipment downtime, staff say. This, while audio-visual technology has "significantly changed."

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Preteen girls program builds their self-esteem

City Centre association program delivered at Anderson, Cook and General Currie schools

by Martin van den Hemel
Staff Reporter

General Currie elementary vice-principal Emmanuel Adu-Achampong isn't one to get his nails done very often. But if that's what it took to get out the word about a great new program catering to preteen girls, Adu-Achampong was willing to take one for the team, even at the expense of an absent-minded nail polish smear on his suit jacket.

Richmond City Centre Community Association rolled out the new Hey Girlfriend program at three local elementary schools last fall, thanks in large part to a \$10,000 donation from Nancy Saenger Credit Union.

"This is such an awesome program for the students at our school as it provides positive mentorship, and a supportive space for the students to interact with their peers," Adu-Achampong said. "This in turn builds their confidence and self-esteem."

The girls-only program is offered at Henry Anderson, William Cook and General Currie elementary schools.

"The program is designed to provide a safe, interactive and developmental-oriented recreation environment for preteen girls and female youth volunteers to build leadership, social connections and self-esteem," explained

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Science Jam celebrates a decade

Science fair at Aberdeen Centre is largest of its kind in B.C.

by Martin van den Hemel
Staff Reporter

Nearly 1,300 students from 19 local schools will be participating in the 10th annual Science Jam next Tuesday afternoon at Aberdeen Centre.

Billed as B.C.'s largest, non-competitive science fair, the annual exhibition of local scientists-in-the-making will be held from 4 to 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, Feb. 26, and is part of Education Week.

Co-ordinated by dozens of teachers at Richmond elementary schools, more than 500 projects that cover all areas of science will take centre



Science Jam features projects from local students.

stage at Science Jam.

At 5 p.m., the exhibition will feature an "Are you Smarter than a Fifth Grader?" segment, followed at 6:10 p.m. with a 20-minute Science World Show.