

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Surrey Nudists Launch Legal Action Against City Over Pool Use

Surrey, British Columbia - May 13, 2007 – After years of failed attempts at negotiation over private use of Newton Wave Pool, nudists in Surrey are seeking intervention by the courts. A petition seeking a Judicial Review of the dispute will be filed in B.C. Supreme Court tomorrow.

In 2002 and 2003 Newton Wave Pool was rented on a monthly basis to a nudist group for private, members-only nude swim nights. These events took place after the facility was closed to the public and the windows were covered to maintain privacy. Recreation facilities in Surrey are routinely rented to local groups for private use.

Although the nude swim nights were extremely popular, the arrangement was unilaterally canceled in February 2003 by the City after the group was profiled in a local newspaper. Since then the group has attempted to negotiate with the City to regain access to the pool, to no avail.

Paul Andreassen, President and original organizer of the group says the process has been frustrating. "All we want is to negotiate a sensible arrangement in good faith. The City simply refuses to negotiate at all."

Mr. Andreassen says that nudists understand its not for everyone but people shouldn't be prevented from joining if they want to.

"Look, if you don't approve of nudism you don't have to join. There are activities that we don't care for, too, but we don't want to stop other people from enjoying them – we just want the same consideration."

It would seem that the City of Surrey doesn't agree with the idea that its citizens can make up their own minds about their recreational choices. In fact, the City is in conflict with its own statements. On the City of Surrey website, the Mission Statement of the Parks Recreation and Culture Division says:

"We enhance the quality of life in our communities by working together to *celebrate diversity* and community identity." (emphasis added)

And the Culture, Marketing & Community Development Division states:

"...through the development of policies, procedures and initiatives that *celebrate the diversity of Surrey* we continue to work to ensure all community members feel welcomed in our facilities and programs. (emphasis added)

Apparently, the City of Surrey is prepared to welcome only "approved" diversity. However, according to Supreme Court of Canada Chief Justice Beverley McLachlin, "...as members of a diverse society, we must be prepared to tolerate conduct of which we disapprove, short of conduct that can be objectively shown beyond a reasonable doubt to interfere with the proper functioning of society." (2005)

Contact:

Paul Andreassen
Skinnydipper Services Inc.
Skinnydipper Recreation Club
paul@skinnydipper.ca
530 7360 137 Street,
Surrey,
British Columbia
Ph: 604-484-7957

A copy of our petition and affidavit will be available upon request after it is filed in the court.

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