

RECREATION, LIBRARIES AND AUTHORITIES COMMITTEE

08-0535R

RESOLUTION OF INTENT TO SELL THE "MINNEHAHA" STAINED
GLASS WINDOW.

CITY PROPOSAL:

RESOLVED, that the Duluth City Council does hereby express its intent to sell the city's stained glass window known as the "Minnehaha Window," presently on display at the Depot, to the highest bidder, by a process to be approved by the council in order to assist the city in meeting its fiscal responsibilities.

Approved as to form:

Attorney

ADM/ATTY REA:cm 8/15/2008

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE: The purpose of this resolution is to express the city's intention to sell the "Minnehaha Window," presently on display at the Depot, to highest bidder. The sale proceeds would be used to rebuild the city's undesignated reserve and assist the city in responding to the present fiscal deficits facing the city and its citizens.

The window in question was originally commissioned by the famous Tiffany Glass Works and was designed by Anne Weston. The window depicts the Indian princess, Minnehaha, in stained glass in a wooded glen. It was purchased by the St Louis County Women's Auxiliary and was donated to city for display in the library which was then housed in the Masonic Temple building. When the new Carnegie Library building at First Avenue West and Second Street was constructed it was moved there. The auxiliary as an organization no longer exists.

When the library was moved to its new building on Superior Street and the old library building was sold, this window, along with the "Daniel Greysolon Sieur duLhut Window," was removed. It has subsequently been displayed at the Depot.

The window was unconditionally gifted to the city and so there appears to be nothing to prevent the city from selling it. It has been determined to be a very valuable and highly marketable art piece which is expected to bring a price in excess of \$1 million. This value makes it possible to convert it into funds which can be applied to meeting some of the city's greater needs without further burdening the taxpayers.

City staff is currently investigating the best means of marketing the window and of maximizing the value received for it and will return to the council with a specific proposal for its consideration. In the mean time, the council will have expressed its intent to allow the window to be sold so that the best means of realizing the greatest value can be determined. The expression of the city's willingness to sell the window is key to being able to securing an offer from serious buyers willing to pay the maximum price that the market will support.

It should be noted that the city is not disposing of all of its stained glass windows. It will continue to retain and display the "Daniel Greysolon Sieur duLhut Window" which was also designed by Anne Weston in 1904 on behalf of the Daughters of the American Revolution and donated for display at the library and also the "Daniel Greysolon and Indian Chief on Park Point Window" created by Axel Burgholtz of the stained glass firm of St. Germain Bros. Unlike the Minnehaha window which is not as strongly connected with the Duluth area and its history, the "Daniel Greysolon Sieur duLhut Window" and the "Daniel Greysolon and Indian Chief on Park Point Window" are both unique to the city and its history and will continue to be retained and displayed locally as they have much greater local connection and the administration believes that the city should retain them in public ownership. In addition, while very valuable to the community neither of these windows has the same level of market appeal as the Minnehaha window.