



RACE RELATIONS COMMITTEE FOR THE CITY OF MARKHAM
Ontario Room, Markham Civic Centre
October 7, 2019

MINUTES

Attendance: <u>Committee</u> Arul Rajasingam Andrew Yu, Chair Darius Sookrum Edward Choi Hamza Sivanathan Harmony Law Maggie Quirt Mohamad Mtairek Nayani Nandakumar Suat Kenar Councillor Isa Lee <u>Staff</u> Cheryl McConney-Wilson, Diversity Specialist Anna Lee, Committee Co-ordinator	<u>Regrets</u> Devendra Mishra Surinder Razdan Herleen Sayal Sabat Ismail Sujane Kandasamy Faiz Mohyuddin
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The Race Relations Committee convened at 7:00 PM with Andrew Yu presiding as Chair.

1. Chair's Opening Remarks

Chair Andrew Yu began the meeting by reading the City of Markham Indigenous Land Acknowledgement. Chair Andrew Yu welcomed all the new and returning members. All members introduced themselves.

2. Adoption of the Agenda

Amendment of agenda with two New Business additions:

- Human Rights Day, December 10th, 2019
- The People's Republic of China flag raising event at the Markham Civic Centre

Moved by Edward Choi

Seconded by Arul Rajasingam

Carried

3. Adoption of the Minutes of the meetings of the Markham Race Relations Committee held on February 4, 2019, March 4, 2019, April 1, 2019, May 6, 2019, and June 3, 2019.

Moved by Arul Rajasingam

Seconded by Harmony Law

That the minutes of the Markham Race Relations Committee Meetings held on February 4, 2019, March 4, 2019, April 1, 2019, May 6, 2019, and June 3, 2019, be adopted.

Carried

4. Markham Human Rights Update

Terms of Reference

- The Terms of Reference is now ready to be presented to City Council. There are no foreseen issues with the content of the document. The only point of interest could be any possible future name change of the committee, which can be implemented later after the whole document's approval as an amendment.

Adoption of the Terms of Reference

Moved by Darius Sookrum
Seconded by Edward Choi

That the Terms of Reference be adopted.

Carried

5. Race Relations Business

Community Virtual Feedback Session feedback analysis

- For the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (March 21st, 2019) the committee worked with the City Corporate Communications to engage with the community on social media. This was through social media platforms such as Instagram and Facebook. Andrew Yu, Harmony Law and Maggie Quirt were the sub-committee that analyzed the responses and engagement from the community and have created a report of observations and recommendations based on the analysis. The feedback is not representative of the community as there wasn't enough engagement, but there were some comments that can be addressed. Andrew Yu will speak to city staff regarding the protocol of how the report on the feedback can be presented to the Council. The letter will be drafted and everyone will receive a copy of the final draft before it is sent to Council.

Motion to send a letter to City Council with recommendations arising from the Community Virtual Feedback Session, and request that Council endorse these recommendations.

Moved by Maggie Quirt
Seconded by Harmony Law

That a letter be sent to City Council with recommendations arising from the Community Virtual Feedback Session, and Council be requested to endorse these recommendations.

Carried

Many Faces of Markham 2020

- This event will take participation from the whole committee to being preparing for next year. There won't be a subcommittee, it will be the entire committee participating. The event will be held in March, usually around March Break. One decision to be made is whether the event format will stay the same or if we should have two events – one for younger students and another for the more senior students – to create more focused content for the participants. The committee will reach out to the Markham Fair Board of Directors to possibly feature the winners during the Markham Fair. The event will be held on city property as this is a City event – possible venues are the Markham Theatre, community centre or at the Markham Civic Centre. Having the event on city property will make logistics and security for the event more efficient.

6. New Business

Quebec's Bill 21

- The Race Relations Committee in part exists because the City of Markham is part of CMARD (Coalition of Municipalities Against Racism and Discrimination) and to be a member of CMARD, the city is obligated to have a committee such as this. The Calgary Council have a resolution to request CMARD to campaign against Bill 21 and the City of Markham needs to take a position on this matter during the attendance of the CMARD meeting. The question is if the RRC make recommendations and advise the Council on this matter. The committee will look into when the next CMARD meeting will be held and the logistics of advising Council on this issue before the next meeting. This will be a pending Race Relations Business for the next meeting.

Eabametoong First Nation

- The Eabametoong First Nation have declared a state of emergency due to their drinking water. Eabametoong First Nation has a partnership with the City of Markham through a partnership accord. Through a Cultural Collaboration Agreement, the communities promote social, cultural and economic collaboration and harmony and goodwill for the betterment of residents. The committee would like to recommend that City Council proactively reaches out to the community to have a discussion on what kind of help is needed, as a partner city.

Motion that RRC advises City Council to proactively reach out to the Eabametoong First Nation to offer any appropriate assistance towards easing their current water state of emergency.

Moved by Darius Sookrum
Seconded by Edward Choi

That the committee advises City Council to proactively reach out to the Eabametoong First Nation to offer any appropriate assistance towards easing their current water state of emergency.

Carried

Human Rights Day

- Andrew Yu, Cheryl McConney-Wilson and Councillor Isa have met regarding Human Rights Day on Tuesday, December 10th, 2019. The RRC is the sponsor for the Markham Civic Centre flag raising event on this date. This date is usually on a weekday and the flag raising event is usually held in the morning, making it difficult for people to attend. The RRC proposes holding this event in the later and having speakers. The proposed date for this event is Sunday, December 8th, 2019 in the early afternoon and having speakers at the reception. This can then be an event that can be more widely attended with some media present, as well. The committee will brainstorm on speakers that can be invited for this event.

The People's Republic of China flag raising event at the Markham Civic Centre

- Committee members discussed various perspectives regarding the event that took place on October 5. Cheryl will provide the committee with information on the City's flag raising application, review and approval policy and process. Committee members are asked to review the material and provide suggestions for improvement, if any.

Vision for the RRC going forward

- The RRC recommends Councillor Isa Lee as the new CMARD representative for the City of Markham as the CMARD representative is usually the RRC Councillor member.

Motion to recommend the appointment of Councillor Isa Lee as the CMARD representative on behalf of the RRC and the City of Markham

Moved by Darius Sookrum
Seconded by Arul Rajasingam

That the committee recommends the appointment of Councillor Isa Lee as the CMARD representative on behalf of the RRC and the City of Markham.

Carried

7. Next Meeting Date

The next meeting of the Race Relations Committee will be held on Monday, November 4, 2019 at 7:00 pm in the Ontario Room.

8. Adjournment

Moved by Nayani Nandakumar
Seconded by Hamza Sivanathan

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The Race Relations Committee adjourned at 9:00 PM.

Carried