



RACE RELATIONS COMMITTEE FOR THE CITY OF MARKHAM
Ontario Room, Markham Civic Centre
November 4, 2019

MINUTES

<p>Attendance: <u>Committee</u> Andrew Yu, Chair Darius Sookrum Edward Choi Faiz Mohyuddin Hamza Sivanathan Harmony Law Maggie Quirt Mohamad Mtairek Nayani Nandakumar Suat Kenar</p> <p><u>Guest</u> Claudia Storto, <i>City Solicitor & Director of H.R.</i></p> <p><u>Staff</u> Cheryl McConney-Wilson, <i>Diversity Specialist</i> Anna Lee, <i>Committee Co-ordinator</i></p>	<p><u>Regrets</u> Devendra Mishra Arul Rajasingam Surinder Razdan Herleen Sayal Sabat Ismail Sujane Kandasamy Councillor Isa Lee</p>
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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 Claudia Storto, City Solicitor & Director of H.R.

2. Adoption of the Agenda

Amendment of the Agenda to have Community Flag-raising and Flag Protocol Policy discussed first.

Moved by Darius Sookrum
Seconded by Faiz Mohyuddin

Carried

3. Adoption of the Minutes of the meetings of the Markham Race Relations Committee held on September 9, 2019, as amended, with the *September 9, 2019* date deleted from the adoption of minutes and October 7, 2019.

Moved by Harmony Law
Seconded by Nayani Nandakumar

That the minutes of the Markham Race Relations Committee Meetings held on September 9, 2019, as amended, with the *September 9, 2019* date deleted from the adoption of minutes, and October 7, 2019 be adopted.

Carried

4. Markham Human Resources Update

None

5. Race Relations Business

Community Flag-raising and Flag Protocol Policy

- Claudia Storto, City Solicitor & Director of H.R. is attending today's meeting to discuss and hear feedback on the flag raising at the City of Markham. The community flagpole flag raising is to celebrate diversity and inclusion and flags are raised based upon requests from within the community and for dedicated use by the community. The City of Markham does not endorse or support any flag. There is a policy on requests and a process that accompanies that. City staff has been asked to do due diligence on the process and whether the City should continue to take a neutral stance. The process, criteria and decisions need to be transparent and accessible to everyone in the community. Claudia will share the feedback from the RRC to the group reporting on the flag raising protocols.

- It has been noted that one section of the Community Flag Raising Criteria is vague and confusing. The criteria should be in accordance with the principles enshrined in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. This is an ongoing discussion that will continue via email and will be on next month's RRC meeting agenda under Race Relations Business.

Motion to recommend Markham City Council update the Community Flag Raising Criteria with the following wording:

In accordance with the principles enshrined in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, Community Flagpoles will not be used to fly flags—

- i) of Political Parties;
- ii) of Religious Groups;
- iii) in support of fund-raising drives that are political or religious in nature; and
- iv) in support of groups, organizations, or events that incite and promote hatred, violence and/or other forms of discrimination

Moved by Edward Choi
Seconded by Maggie Quirt

Carried

Many Faces of Markham 2020

- Many Faces of Markham 2020 theme is discussed and decided. The information packages will have examples and questions for reflection on the 2020 theme. Andrew Yu will meet with Cheryl and Corporate communications for their criteria and guidance on the information package.

Motion to make the Many Faces of Markham 2020 theme ‘Eliminating Exclusion’.

Moved by Mohammed Mtairek
Seconded by Maggie Quirt

That the Many Faces of Markham 2020 theme will be ‘Eliminating Exclusion’.

Carried

Human Rights Day 2019

- The Human Rights Day flag-raising and community learning event will be on Sunday December 8. It is anticipated that funds will be required for the Indigenous representative, up to 2 speakers and hot beverages for attendees.

Motion to allocate \$500 for Human Rights Day 2019 expenses.

Moved Darius Sookrum
Seconded by Edward Choi

That the RRC will allocate \$500 for Human Rights Day 2019 expenses.

Carried

Quebec’s Bill 21

- Committee members discussed whether the objection to Quebec's Bill 21 should be described as "oppose" or "condemn". The consensus conclusion is that "condemn" is more appropriate.

Motion: "Be it resolved that the Race Relations Committee recommends that Markham City Council condemn Quebec’s Bill 21 in support of building a welcoming city where everyone has access to opportunity and prosperity. Moreover, that residents and those who visit are free from discrimination on the basis of race, sexual orientation, gender, and specifically religious practice."

Move Mohammed Mtairek
Seconded by Faiz Mohyuddin

That the Race Relations Committee recommends that Markham City Council condemn Quebec’s Bill 21 in support of building a welcoming city where everyone has access to opportunity and prosperity. Moreover, that residents and those who visit are free from discrimination on the basis of race, sexual orientation, gender, and specifically religious practice.

Carried

Motion: "Be it resolved that, as a signatory of the Coalition of Inclusive Municipalities (formerly the Canadian Coalition of Municipalities Against Racism and Discrimination [CCMARD]), the Race Relations Committee recommends that Markham City Council call for all signatory municipalities, specifically those in Quebec, to condemn Quebec's Bill 21 and recognize its conflict with the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and negative impact to the unity, reputation and well-being of Canada."

Moved by Darius Sookrum
Seconded by Maggie Quirt

That, as a signatory of the Coalition of Inclusive Municipalities (formerly the Canadian Coalition of Municipalities Against Racism and Discrimination [CCMARD]), the Race Relations Committee recommends that Markham City Council call for all signatory municipalities, specifically those in Quebec, to condemn Quebec's Bill 21 and recognize its conflict with the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and negative impact to the unity, reputation and well-being of Canada.

Carried

6. New Business

None

7. Next Meeting Date

The next meeting of the Race Relations Committee will be held on Monday, December 2, 2019 at 7:00 PM in the Ontario Room.

8. Adjournment

Moved by Edward Choi
Seconded by Faiz Mohyuddin

The Race Relations Committee adjourned at 9:00 PM.

Carried