



RACE RELATIONS COMMITTEE FOR THE CITY OF MARKHAM
Ontario Room, Markham Civic Centre
February 3, 2020

MINUTES

Attendance: <u>Committee</u> Andrew Yu, Chair Edward Choi Harmony Law Mohamad Mtairek Nayani Nandakumar Sabat Ismail Suat Kenar Sujane Kandasamy Councillor Isa Lee <u>Staff</u> Anna Lee, <i>Committee Coordinator</i> Cheryl McConney-Wilson, <i>Diversity Specialist</i> Sonia Singh, <i>Emergency Preparedness Coordinator</i>	<u>Regrets</u> Darius Sookrum Faiz Mohyuddin Arul Rajasingam Devendra Mishra Herleen Sayal Surinder Razdan
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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 attended City Council's General Committee meeting the morning of February 3, 2020, during which two motions of the Race Relations Committee, passed as recommendations to Council on November 4, 2019, were considered. He reported the following:

Regarding the motion on Quebec's Bill 21 - The General Committee endorsed this recommendation.

Regarding the motion on Markham's Community Flag Raising and Flag Protocol Policy - In response to a question from the General Committee, the City Clerk advised that staff considers "groups, organizations, or events that promote beliefs contrary to any other City policy", as mentioned in the proposed Revised Community Flag Raising and Flag Protocol Policy, to include "groups, organizations, or events that incite and promote hatred, violence and/or other forms of discrimination", in accordance with the principles enshrined in the

Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Based on this advice, the General Committee received the Race Relations Committee's recommendation for information.

2. Adoption of the Agenda

No changes or additions.

Moved by Sujane Kandasmy
Seconded by Suat Kenar

Carried

3. Adoption of the Minutes of the meeting of the Markham Race Relations Committee held on January 13, 2020.

Moved by Councillor Isa Lee
Seconded by Nayani Nandakumar

Carried

4. Markham Human Resources Update

None.

5. Race Relations Business

• **Many Faces of Markham**

- There will be a meeting with Corporate Communications at 1PM on Thursday, February 6th, 2020 at the Markham Civic Centre. If you would like to attend, please let Andrew Yu know, and your name will be put on the attendee list.
- Judging of submissions will be on March 15th, 2020 at the Markham Civic Centre. Please do your best to attend the judging as there are always a lot of submissions and to have diverse perspectives and options. Performance auditions and last rehearsals will be on March 28th, 2020. The performances will be by schools and community organizations. The rehearsals are important to ensure that the space is adequate for the performance.
- We are working with schools and reaching out to the community and parents through the City of Markham's promotional channels. Packages have been sent out to school principals, but due to the labour actions and Coronavirus, there are disruptions in communicating with the schools. The City Clerks are reaching out directly to the schools and looking at contacting the school trustees, as well. The event is to be promoted through the City of Markham's social media to engage students and parents, as well as in the local newspaper. We are inviting all of the Markham Council to attend the event.
- The event will be held in the afternoon and for a shorter amount of time as the focus is on elementary school aged students. As there are only 2 events the RRC is holding, we no longer have any subcommittees; we ask that everyone volunteer before and during the event.

6. New Business

• **2019 Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV)**

- Sonia Singh, Emergency Preparedness Coordinator for the City of Markham, has joined the meeting to discuss the current situation. Sonia is in charge of emergency planning for the city, for example, storms, environmental situations, etc. to ensure the city can function and handle the emergency that arises. This includes ensuring that roads are cleared, there is communications and that residents are safe. The City of Markham's emergency management program is legislated, and the City of Markham staff is trained annually.
- For situations such as the Coronavirus, the York Region Public Health Department are the experts and in charge of handling it. As a municipality, the City of Markham is in constant contact with them for clear communications. Communication is key when it comes to any type of emergency. The City of Markham provides information to the staff and residents as soon as it is received from York Region Public Health.
- Currently, there are only about 100 cases in the world, outside of China, and there have been more deaths because of influenza than the coronavirus. Those who have pre-existing illnesses or are immunocompromised are ones that are vulnerable, everyone else has been able to recover. The virus is droplet spread – coughing. As of now, the incubation period is thought to be about 14 days, and as a precaution, those suspected of possibly having the virus are quarantined for 14 days. The best practice is to ensure hands are washed and sanitized. Masks are not recommended as they are to protect the ill from infecting others rather than preventing an individual from receiving infections from others. There is no vaccine for this, yet, and it may take up to a year to have one.
- This is a new virus and due to the media's focus, there has been a lot of attention on the coronavirus. There is a criterion for if you will be tested for the virus and two tests are run independently in Ontario and one in Winnipeg for confirmation. At this time, there are 3 confirmed cases in Ontario, and there are 29 cases being investigated. It is recommended that you only go to vetted and validated sites for information, such as Public Health websites. The risk is very low and the City is trying to educate the community of this. There are York Region Public Health pamphlets in multiple languages with information pertaining to the coronavirus.
- The coronavirus has affected businesses due to the widespread fear of it, and the City of Markham is doing their best to educate the community that they do not need to be afraid.
- The Chinese Restaurants Association will be having a meeting to discuss how this has affected businesses in the community and solutions. Members of RRC are welcome to join the discussion.

7. Next Meeting Date

The next meeting of the Race Relations Committee will be held on Monday, March 2, 2020 at 7:00 PM in the Ontario Room.

8. Adjournment

The Race Relations Committee adjourned at 8:45 PM.

Moved by Edward Choi

Seconded by Mohamad Mtairek

Carried