



RACE RELATIONS COMMITTEE

Minutes

Zoom Meeting

December 6, 2021

6:00 p.m.

MINUTES

<i>Attendance:</i>	
<u>Committee</u>	<u>Regrets</u>
Darius Sookram, Chair Nayani Nandakumar, Vice Chair Edward Choi Sujane Kandasamy (<i>arrived at 6:57 pm</i>) Councillor Isa Lee Madge Logan Mohamad Mtairek Danielle Russell	Suat Kenar Faiz Mohyuddin Claudette Rutherford Hamza Sivanathan Joanne Kinya Baker, Staff Liaison (Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Specialist)
<u>Guests</u>	
Alicia Lauzon, York Regional Police (YRP)	
<u>Staff</u>	
Mona Nazif, Staff Liaison (Senior Manager, Human Resources) Victoria Hamilton, Committee Coordinator	

1. Chair's Opening Remarks

Darius Sookram, Chair called the meeting to order at 6:01 PM and encapsulated the City of Markham Indigenous Land Acknowledgement.

2. Adoption of the December 6, 2021 agenda.

Moved by: Madge Logan

Seconded by: Mohamad Mtairek

That the December 6, 2021 Race Relations Committee Meeting Agenda be adopted.

Carried

3. Approval of the Minutes from November 1, 2021

Moved by: Danielle Russell

Seconded by: Nayani Nandakumar

That the November 1, 2021 Race Relations Committee Minutes be adopted.

Carried

4. Business Related to Previous Minutes

There was none.

5. Follow Up Items

a) Many Faces of Markham (MFOM)

On behalf of the MFOM subcommittee, Darius Sookram shared the key and secondary objectives for the MFOM and where improvements could be made. He advised that the subcommittee had put forward eight concepts for the MFOM theme to a group of youth for feedback and brought before the Committee the three preferred ones for comment. Darius Sookram noted that a one-page pamphlet with school-grade appropriate language was discussed, to increase understanding of the theme. The subcommittee had discussed the evaluation procedure and criteria, allowing Committee members willing to contribute to participate.

The Committee provided the following feedback:

- Commented that allyship should be explained as part of the communication sent out
- Recommended keeping terms consistent with language from the City's Diversity Action Plan to reinforce the terminology
- Proposed having the winners from the MFOM promote the theme and emphasize the necessity of unity.
- Proposed promoting the same terminology on the City of Markham's social media
- Use winners of the Many Faces of Markham to promote the theme, and define allyship in various languages, to explain why beneficial and necessary to have unity.

The MFOM subcommittee planned to obtain additional feedback from the City's youth committees on the themes and once a theme is selected, consult with Staff on timelines to move forward. The subcommittee will share via email a summary of the comments received.

b) Race Relations Sub-Committees

The Committee discussed the benefit of subcommittees. Committee members were asked to consider and recommend additional subcommittees to further the Committee's objectives, at a future meeting.

c) Diversity Action Plan Update

Mona Nazif, Staff Liaison (Senior Manager, Human Resources), advised that the public consultation was completed and the survey to the community would close on December 12, 2021. There was a higher than expected completion rate for the survey and lower than expected number of attendees at the public consultation. The wrap up session identified some emerging themes from the public consultation and the recording was anticipated to be posted on the website. The Diversity Institute would take a few weeks to analyze the surveys and in January 2022 the Staff would have a better sense of how the surveys overlapped with the public consultations.

M. Nazif noted that a Trauma Counsellor was present at all consultation sessions and was available for one hour after the sessions to debrief with participants on instant messenger and in-person. The safe space guideline and Trauma Counsellor's attendance assisted with the Committee's desire for the meetings to be respectful and psychologically safe.

The Committee provided the following feedback regarding the consultation session:

- Acknowledged difficulty of ensuring that individuals present at the consultation sessions do not detract from the conversation with the content raised.
- Noted that the approach to the discussion was well received, though a different approach may have encouraged additional communities to attend the session.
- Proposed more continued direct communication with various communities by attending their meetings, developing a dialogue with additional groups, and garnering enthusiasm.
- Importance of creating accessibility for all communities to participate.
- Advised that the consultation was a good start, and in future the process should be considered so communities see the intentionality of inclusion, and the theme should be encouraged within the communities to continue the conversation.
- Received comments from the public that the survey allowed individuals who were not comfortable speaking at the consultation to express their views in a manner in which they felt comfortable and safe, and provided anonymity.
- Noted that the categories provided did not allow for proper self-identification for some individuals, and some large communities, including the Arab community, were not represented.
- Importance of building robust community contact listings.
- Commented that it would be beneficial for the Committee to receive advance notice in future of when communications would be sent out to allow for members to liaise and engage with groups and committees to coordinate participation.

Staff commented that community groups could be added to the City's email subscription list in future to keep them informed of future consultations and surveys.

6. New and Other Business

There was no new business.

7. Next Official Meeting Date: Monday, January 10, 2022 at 6:00 PM

8. Adjournment

Moved By: Nayani Nandakumar

Seconded By: Edward Choi

That the Race Relations meeting adjourn at 7:05 PM.

Carried