



RACE RELATIONS COMMITTEE

**Minutes
Zoom Meeting
May 9, 2022
6:00 p.m.**

<p><i>Attendance:</i></p> <p><u>Committee</u></p> <p>Darius Sookram, Chair Nayani Nandakumar, Vice Chair Edward Choi Madge Logan Mohamad Mtairek Danielle Russell Claudette Rutherford Suat Kenar Councillor Isa Lee</p> <p>Special Guest Dr. Maggie Quirt, Professor, York University</p> <p><u>Staff</u> Joanne Kinya Baker, Staff Liaison (Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Specialist) Hristina Giantsopoulos, Election and Committee Coordinator</p>	<p><u>Regrets</u></p> <p>Hamza Sivanathan Faiz Mohyuddin Sujane Kandasamy</p>
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1. **Chair’s Opening Remarks**
 - a. Land Acknowledgement

Convened at 6:05 PM

2. **Adoption of the May 2, 2022, agenda.**

Moved by: Nayani Nandakumar
Seconded by: Sujane Kandasamy

That the May 2, 2022 Race Relations Committee Meeting Agenda be adopted.

Carried

3. **Approval of the Minutes from March 7, 2022.**

Moved by: Mohamad Mtairek
Seconded by: Madge Logan

That the March 7, 2022, Race Relations Committee Minutes be adopted.

Carried

4. Business Related to Previous Minutes

There was no business related to the previous minutes.

5. Presentation: 100 Year Anniversary of the 1923 Williams Treaties on the Williams

Treaties First Nations

Special Guest, Dr. Maggie Quirt, Professor at York University, made a short presentation, “Honouring the 1923 Williams Treaties: 100 years on”, which provided a high level overview of the centenary signing of the Williams Treaties, and the five year anniversary of the first apology. It was noted that a large portion of Markham is covered by the 1923 Williams Treaties and that this is an opportunity for non-indigenous community members to educate themselves on the treaties and their impact. It was suggested that the Committee reach out to Unionville High School and other high school drama departments in the City to collaboratively produce a play to honor the anniversary. The Committee will work on drafting a proposal (Claudette, Maggie, Madge) in this regard.

The Committee thanked Dr. Quirt for attending the meeting and discussed the significance of this anniversary and ways to honour it as well as the establishment of an engagement plan. Staff will reach out to Tia Kennedy to attend the next Race Relations meeting to assist with increasing engagement and representation of the Indigenous community in the City and on the Race Relations Committee.

Staff noted that the City has an ongoing partnership with the [Eabametoong First Nation](#) and as part of the City’s reconciliation initiatives, the City has purchased the Four Seasons, a nine-module educational program on reconciliation created by the First Nations University which will be shared with the Race Relations Committee in the upcoming year. The Committee noted the availability of [Indigenous Canada](#), a course that provides perspectives highlighting national and local Indigenous-Settler relations.

6. Special Presentation

Mohamad Mtairek noted the importance of increasing reach to all communities in the City, to promote greater inclusion, acknowledge significant dates and celebrate and reflect together.

7. Race Relations Sub-Committee Update

There were no updates to report at this meeting.

Diversity Action Plan Update

Staff advised that the plan was unanimously approved by Markham City Council. The Diversity Action Plan and the Eliminating Anti-Black Racism Plan are expected to launch in June 2022.

8. Vacancy Recruitment

There are many applicants and interviews will begin in the coming weeks.

The Committee made the following recommendation:

That the Race Relations Committee request Council to increase the membership to permit the appointment of a member of the Indigenous community.

9. New Business/Other

Follow up items from last meeting:

- Terms of Reference;
- Financial Barriers –Youth Recreation Programs; and,
- Social Media and Communication Policies

The Committee discussed the importance of City community events, communication, content and support to help advance initiatives and those identified in the Diversity Action Plan and the Eliminating Anti-Black Racism Plan. There was a suggestion to post a community board to invite community members, religious and cultural centers to attend each other's events on the City website. Staff noted that a diversity calendar is being planned and may include special community events. It was further noted that the City is governed by policy and legislative parameters and will invite Corporate Communications staff to an upcoming meeting.

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

11. Adjournment

Moved By: Edward Choi

Seconded By: Danielle Russell

That the Race Relations meeting adjourn at 7:53 PM.