



**RACE RELATIONS COMMITTEE**

**Minutes**

**June 3, 2024**

**6:00 p.m.**

**Roll Call**

P	Danielle Russell, Chair	A	Councillor Juanita Nathan
A	Jas Atwal, Vice-Chair	A	Braman Thillainathan
P	Satya Arora	A	Claudette Rutherford
P	Edward Choi	P	Stephen Yan
P	Madge Logan	P	Joanne Kinya Baker, Manager, Diversity, Equity & Inclusion
P	Ali Mtairek		Jamaal Kossy, Staff Liaison
	Nayani Nandakumar	A	Alicia Lauzon, York Regional Police
P	Rochele Padiachy	P	Hristina Giantsopoulos, Committee Coordinator
		P	Joann Sotiropoulos, Sr. Manager,

P=Present, A=Absent, L=Late, TD: Technical Difficulties

Agenda Item	Owner/Action
<p><b>1. Call To Order</b></p> <p>The Race Relations Committee meeting convened at 6:03 PM. Danielle Russell, Chair, provided opening remarks and read the Land Acknowledgement.</p> <p>Jamaal Kossy, Staff Liaison, advised that this would be his last meeting as Joanne Kinya Baker, Manager, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion resumed her role as staff liaison for this committee.</p> <p><b>Land Acknowledgement</b></p> <p>We begin today by acknowledging the traditional territories of Indigenous peoples and their commitment to stewardship of the land. We acknowledge the communities in circle. The North, West, South and Eastern directions, and Haudenosaunee, Huron- Wendat, Anishnabeg, Seneca, Chippewa, and the Mississaugas of the Credit peoples. We share the responsibility with the caretakers of this land to ensure the dish is never empty and to restore relationships that are based on peace, friendship, and trust. We are committed to reconciliation, partnership and enhanced understanding.</p>	

<p><b>2. Adoption of the Agenda</b></p> <p>MOTION: That the June 3, 2024, Race Relations Committee Meeting Agenda be adopted.</p> <p>Moved by: Satya Arora Second by: Madge Logan</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Carried</p>	
<p><b>3. Approval of the Previous Minutes</b></p> <p>MOTION: That the March 4, 2023, Race Relations Committee Meeting Minutes be adopted.</p> <p>Moved by: Satya Arora Second by: Stephen Yan</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Carried</p>	
<p><b>4. Business Related to the Previous Minutes</b></p> <p>There was no business related to the previous minutes.</p>	
<p><b>5. Chair’s Remarks</b></p> <p>Ms. Russell added the draft Terms of Reference to the meeting agenda which were received from Claudia Storto, City Solicitor and Director of People Services, just prior to the meeting for discussion and review. She indicated that their receipt was an important committee goal to provide an understanding of the committee’s work and objectives moving forward.</p>	
<p><b>6. Update from Diversity Office</b></p> <p>The committee welcomed all new members as well as Joann Sotiropoulos, Senior Manager, Organizational Development and Learning, who was in attendance as a new member of the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion team. She noted that the City’s Pride Flag raising event was very well attended by staff, Members of Council, and members of York Region. She encouraged committee members to attend the York Region Pride Parade on June 15, 2024, and noted that the City will have a float. She indicated that the DEI team would have a tent at the City’s Canada Day celebration.</p> <p>The committee acknowledged that June is Indigenous Awareness Month and encouraged members to participate in reflection, and the various events and celebrations taking place.</p>	

<p><b>7. 2024 Priority Workplan Updates and Discussions</b></p>	
<p><b>7.1 Committee Terms of Reference Update and Review</b></p> <p>Danielle Russell expressed support for the draft Terms of Reference and that they provided a good outline of the role and responsibilities of the Race Relations Committee as well as the Chair and Vice-Chair.</p> <p>The committee discussed what the next steps in the adoption of the Terms of Reference are, the timelines for feedback, that there be consideration to provide a linkage between members roles and responsibilities as part of the committee’s mandate as well as when they will be placed on a General Committee Agenda for endorsement.</p> <p>There was further discussion on the Many Faces of Markham initiative and staff indicated that it would be rolled out in conjunction with the United Nations National Day to Eliminate Racism in March next year and that there will be further discussion and direction on this initiative.</p>	<p>Hristina to provide information on when the Terms of Reference will be placed on the General Committee Agenda.</p>
<p><b>7.2 Recommendations to address Islamophobia</b></p> <p>The committee discussed ways in which Islamophobia intersects with anti-black racism and that it is important for staff to hear feedback on this issue.</p> <p>The following suggestions were made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- That there be more communication and education on Islamic culture;</li> <li>- That there be increased awareness and reminders of events;</li> <li>- That the City use social media to post information about issues and increase awareness;</li> <li>- That there is diversity within each community and that there should be consideration to link community members to the Diversity Action Plan and that it includes inclusion of religious groups;</li> <li>- That a database be created to share information and learning on community cultures and religions.</li> <li>- That there be more resources for greater community engagement to connect people and provide awareness of issues, culture, and religion.</li> </ul> <p>Staff indicated that these suggestions would be reviewed and work to identify other gaps that align with the Diversity Action Plan and the Anti-Black Racism Action Plan and alignment with the social media strategy.</p>	

<p><b>7.3 Workplan for 2025 Many Faces of Markham</b></p> <p>The committee expressed concerns with the direction of this initiative and that it requires additional resources outside of the Race Relations Committee to identity its purpose and overcome the disconnect between the school boards and the City. It was noted that the previous process to execute this initiative needs to be updated to reflect the current community environment and attract greater participation.</p>	<p>Committee to think about the nomination or appointment of a vice chair, theme and initiative strategy.</p>
<p><b>7.4 Confirm Process for Selection of Next Chair</b></p> <p>Staff indicated that the Chair and Vice-Chair may stay on for another term and if their decision is to step down, and that nominations and an election can take place at upcoming meetings.</p>	<p>Hristina</p>
<p><b>8. New/Other Business</b></p> <p>There was no new or other business.</p>	
<p><b>9. Next Steps – Advice Provided to the City of Markham Council/Staff</b></p> <p>There were no motions to forward.</p>	
<p><b>10. Next Official Meeting Date:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monday, September 9, 2024</li> <li>• Monday, December 2, 2024</li> </ul>	
<p><b>11. Adjournment</b></p> <p>MOTION: That the Race Relations Committee meeting adjourn at 6:59 PM.</p> <p>Moved by: Edward Choi  Seconded by: Satya Arora</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Carried</p>	