

### Deputation – April 7, 2015 Development Services committee

Once again, this City displayed a flagrant error in judgement in front of all its residents. The planning of an unnecessary junket for Councillor Chiu and a member of the City's staff is an example of "What not to do" with the residents' hard-earned dollars.

In this day and age, arrangements for foreign missions are easily scheduled over the internet and using video conferences. The heady days of sending an advanced team to check out the hotels and amenities are gone. The previous Chief Executive of Hong Kong is now under investigation for exactly just this kind of waste. Unless you are the Head of State of a country and a target for terrorists, then venues will have to be physically checked out to allay any security concerns BUT you folks are NOT.

From a Corporate stand point, trips must be justified and reports must be made to document results achieved and benefits attained. Based on earlier experience with this Council, we cannot recall the filing of reports from Trade missions by its members in the past. I am not convinced by the list of objectives stated in the staff report for this matter. To strengthen ties with Markham's sister city Wuhan without defining the necessary actions is tantamount to wanting to be a millionaire but not having a measurable action plan. Will there be reports submitted to advise us of what was achieved from the advanced mission? Will the public get to see them or will they be considered secrets by the MFIPPA Head and not released?

If the Councillor's ceremonial function is to sign a very **hollow** and **rhetoric** agreement with the Xiamen authorities as the draft attachment within the staff report infers, then we should wait a few months for the

Mayor to do so on the actual trade mission. We all know how he loves the lights and cameras.

If we truly need a face-to-face meeting with some Chinese organization members to establish trusting and working relations, then let the staff member do it alone. The presence of the Councillor on the advanced mission will only serve to distract our hosts from the discussions and hamper the work of the staff member.

Finally, the whole idea of a "Trade mission" must be examined. If we want the Chinese to come to Markham to do business, then we should invite them to come to see our great City instead. That way, they will be jumping on the next plane, on their government's dime and not ours. Do not confuse us with the trade missions from the Federal and Provincial governments, they are entirely different. Their missions are to sell our natural resources and products to China. The City of Markham's trade missions are to attract business to come to Markham, the last time I looked.

As our representatives on Council, you all have a responsibility to spend our increased City budget wisely. Do not think that we are passive and you can dictate tax increases and that the recent election just provided you with another term.

Markham residents do not want their tax monies wasted. They want accountability. Look at our reactions to the millions squandered by the York Region on the TTC overrun. That one is not over yet!

The residents have awakened and we scrutinize your every move so please do what is prudent and responsible. We demand that you cancel this wasteful and unnecessary advance business mission junket.

Robert Mok