



RACE RELATIONS COMMITTEE FOR THE CITY OF MARKHAM

**Ontario Room, Markham Civic Centre
January 8, 2018**

MINUTES

Attendance:	
<u>Committee</u> Astra Josie Rose, Chair Andrew Yu, Vice Chair Edward Choi Rina George-Alexander Sujane Kandasamy Faiz Mohyuddin Maggie Quirt Surinder Razdan	<u>Regrets</u> Osman Akhtar Bobbie France Salman Hasan Aamer Mohammed Sara Siddiqui Councillor Logan Kanapathi Regional Councillor Joe Li
<u>Guest</u> Alicia Lauzon, York Region Police	
<u>Staff</u> Cheryl McConney-Wilson, Diversity Specialist, (via teleconference) Bev Shugg Barbeito, Committee Coordinator	

The Race Relations Committee convened at 7:10 PM with Astra Josie Rose presiding as Chair.

1. Chair's Opening Remarks

Chair Astra Josie Rose wished members a happy new year and welcomed them to the meeting.

2. Changes or Additions to the Agenda

The agenda was accepted as distributed.

3. Approval of the Minutes

It was

Moved by Surinder Razdan

Seconded by Maggie Quirt

That the minutes of the Markham Race Relations Committee meeting held on December 4, 2017 be adopted as amended.

CARRIED

4. Markham Human Resources Update

Cheryl McConney-Wilson, Diversity Specialist reported that

- Markham will partner with the Markham African Caribbean Canadian Association in the 21st Annual Black History Month Celebration event on January 22, 2018 at the Flato Markham Theatre. The event theme is “Black History Month 2018: Hidden Innovators”, to honour black innovators in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) industries. The program features dance and musical performances as well as demonstrations from students across York Region. Committee members are encouraged to attend; Astra Josie Rose will forward the invitation to them.
- Markham is encouraging residents to volunteer with the City; Ms. McConney-Wilson will forward the information to Committee members to share it with their network.
- The Aaniin Community Centre, although not yet officially open to the public, hosted an open house on December 29 and 30, 2017. Plans under consideration for the official opening include speakers such as the Prime Minister and/or Governor General, and being mindful of the indigenous community, a blessing from an elder, a land acknowledgement statement, a smudge ceremony, and cultural catering.
- Ms. McConney-Wilson has researched land acknowledgement statements and has made recommendations to City staff about the wording and use of such statements by the City.
- Markham Fire Services is considering recommendations to permit smudging ceremonies in City buildings.
- Ms. McConney-Wilson has collected feedback from the Committee and the community about the draft York Region Diversity Charter. She will forward it to York Region for consideration in conjunction with comments from other York Region municipalities in the preparation of the final draft of the Diversity Charter.
- The legalization of marijuana in Canada will cause the review of many City policies and may result in new associated costs.

5. Update on Committee Terms of Reference

Cheryl McConney-Wilson, Diversity Specialist, advised that pertinent Markham departments, and the Committee Chair and Co-chair, have contributed to the updated Committee Terms of Reference. Ms. McConney-Wilson will request that the draft Terms of Reference be shared with Committee members. She cautioned that Committee input would be considered but may not be incorporated into the final version. Committee discussion focussed on transparency of the process, as well as the Committee’s ability to provide input and to have comments on record and considered.

Ms. McConney-Wilson left the meeting at 7:50 pm.

6. Race Relations Business

A) Race Relations Committee Work Plan

Chair Astra Josie Rose shared the following updates:

- Human Rights event– Chair Astra Josie Rose reported that on December 9th, 2017, the community hosted Markham students and community residents at a Human Rights event, with much positive feedback. She thanked Committee members who assisted that day.
- Open House - Sara Siddiqui is planning this event entitled “Race Relations – *Living as One Community (Equity and Unity)*. The event has been rescheduled to February 2018. Chair Astra Josie Rose requested that Committee members assist at this event.
- Community Awards – Chair Astra Josie Rose reported that Markham staff wish to help make these awards successful. She and Vice Chair Andrew Yu will meet soon with staff to begin the planning process. The Community Awards will be presented on March 21 (International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination).
- Many Faces of Markham - It was reported that the Many Faces of Markham (MFOM) event will be held on March 24, 2018. The Flato Markham Theatre is not available due to scheduling conflicts, therefore the event will be held at Pierre Elliott Trudeau high school. Rina George-Alexander will connect with Ms. McConney-Wilson regarding payment and insurance. The information packages have been distributed to the York Region District School Board which is willing to partner with the Committee to make this an educational event. Chair Astra Josie Rose reported that she has invited the York Region Catholic School Board to participate also. Ms. McConney-Wilson requested that she receive planning updates for this event.

7. New Business

- Committee members were advised that the York Region Alliance for African Canadian Communities (YRAACC) will be hosting its first Black History Month Event on February 17 at Thornlea Secondary School. The theme of the event is Celebrating the Success of Our Black Families in York Region. Committee members were encouraged to attend this and other Black History Month events.
- It was reported that Surinder Razdan has drafted a Project Planning form which will allow the Committee to document project details and budget.

8. Next Meeting Date

The next meeting of the Race Relations Committee will be held on Monday, February 5, 2018 in the Ontario Room at 7:00 PM.

9. Adjournment

It was

Moved by Faiz Mohyuddin

Seconded by Andrew Yu

That the Race Relations Committee adjourn at 9:15 PM.

CARRIED