



RACE RELATIONS COMMITTEE FOR THE CITY OF MARKHAM

**Canada Room, Markham Civic Centre
October 2, 2017**

MINUTES

<p>Attendance:</p> <p><u>Committee</u> Astra Josie Rose, Chair Andrew Yu, Vice Chair Osman Akhtar Edward Choi Rina George-Alexander Sujane Kandasamy Faiz Mohyuddin Aamer Mohammed David Quintero Surinder Razdan David Quintero Maggie Quirt Surinder Razdan Sara Siddiqui (teleconference)</p> <p><u>Council</u> Regional Councillor Joe Li</p> <p><u>Staff</u> Cheryl McConney-Wilson, Diversity Specialist Bev Shugg Barbeito, Committee Coordinator</p>	<p><u>Regrets</u> Bobbie France Salman Hasan Alicia Lauzon Councillor Logan Kanapathi</p>
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The Race Relations Committee convened at 7:06 PM with Astra Josie Rose presiding as Chair.

1. Chair's Opening Remarks

Chair Astra Josie Rose welcomed members 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 Maggie Quirt
Seconded by Andrew Yu

That the minutes of the Markham Race Relations Committee meeting held on September 18, 2017 be adopted as distributed.

CARRIED

4. Markham Human Resources Update

Cheryl McConney-Wilson, Diversity Specialist, advised that York Region has created a draft Diversity and Inclusions charter; she requested Committee members review the draft charter and provide comments about the content and on concepts that might be added.

Cheryl McConney-Wilson advised that she has booked the Civic Centre for December 9, 2017 in case the Committee wishes to plan an event to recognize Human Rights Day (December 10). She suggested the Committee think of ways to attract people who the Committee may help appreciate the diversity within Markham. It was mentioned that the proposed Open House event may do that.

5. Update on Committee Terms of Reference

It was reported that Laura Gold and Cheryl McConney-Wilson have drafted updated terms of reference for the Committee; review by senior City of Markham administrators is in progress. Ms. McConney-Wilson suggested that Committee members begin thinking of proactive initiatives it might launch. Committee members advised that the terms of reference should indicate how the Committee is to conduct its meetings, discussions, and events. The Committee briefly discussed the concept of peer reviews and committee self-assessment.

6. Race Relations Business

A) Race Relations Committee Work Plan

In order to kick start planning for work plan initiatives, Chair Astra Josie Rose asked Committee members to separate into groups by work plan subcommittee. After a short discussion period, the groups returned and reported their progress:

- Community Chats – the group agreed to hold a community chat with a focus on high school students and youth. Members proposed holding such chats at high schools within Markham. It was thought that each event would be approx. 1.5 – 2 hours in length; a questionnaire would be developed to help facilitate discussions. A second event focusing on police checks could be held in spring. Police Community Advisory Committee (York Region) volunteers will assist.
- Open House - Sara Siddiqui is planning this event entitled “Race Relations – *Living as One Community (Equity and Unity)*”; it will be an opportunity for the Committee to get feedback from community groups and use that information to develop outreach initiatives. The event may be held in November, or could be planned for December 9 to take advantage of the reservation that day at the Civic Centre. Chair Astra Josie

Rose will email information about the Open House concept to Committee members.
Sara Siddiqui will be in touch with subcommittee members to continue planning.

Cheryl McConney-Wilson and Amer Mohammed left the meeting at 8:20 pm.

- Awards – Chair Astra Josie Rose reported that on December 9th, 2017, the community plans to host Markham students and community residents at a Human Rights event, make a proclamation and possibly have a flag raising ceremony to proclaim December 10th as Human Rights day. It is hoped to have representatives from the Human Rights Commission and Youth for Human Rights Foundation present.

It was suggested that the Committee create the Race Relations and Inclusivity Award; the criteria has yet to be determined. The focus will be on Markham youth and community groups; it is hoped to encourage improved race relations at the ground level. March 21 (International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination) is being considered as a potential date for the ceremony to present the awards. Chair Astra Josie Rose will send Committee members a link to the draft application form; it is hoped to have plans and materials in place so that the competition may be announced at the beginning of January.

- Many Faces of Markham - It was reported that the Many Faces of Markham (MFOM) event may not be held at the Markham Flato Theatre due to scheduling conflicts; the subcommittee will investigate holding the event at Pierre Elliott Trudeau high school. The theme for the MFOM event will tie in with the theme of the Open House event; it was reported that the theme of unity also ties in with such themes embedded in school curriculum. It is anticipated that there will be four prizes: one each for the Markham school, Markham teacher, Markham elementary school student, and Markham high school student best demonstrating unity. Performances at the MFOM event will be tied to the theme as well.

It is hoped that all these events will help bring the community together.

7. New Business

- The Committee briefly discussed a racist video game created in Markham by Big-O-Tree Games that targets the Chinese community which has attracted much criticism.

8. Next Meeting Date

The next meeting of the Race Relations Committee will be held on Monday, November 6, 2017 in the Ontario Room at 7:00 PM.

9. Adjournment

It was

Moved by Maggie Quirt
Seconded by Faiz Mohyuddin

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

CARRIED