



**MEETING OF THE RACE RELATIONS COMMITTEE FOR THE
CITY OF MARKHAM**

Ontario Room, Markham Civic Centre

September 14, 2015

7:00 PM

MINUTES

Attendance: <u>Committee</u> Astra Josie Rose, Chair Maggie Quirt, Vice Chair Moises Calo Bobbie France Amer Mohammed Harleen Sayal Sarah Siddiqui Andrew Yu <u>Staff</u> Cheryl McConney-Wilson, Diversity Specialist Bev Shugg Barbeito, Committee Coordinator	<u>Regrets</u> Osman Akhtar Rina George-Alexander Salman Hasan Saad Omar Khan Grace Permaul Jacqueline Sang Ramon Solis Darius Sookram, Immediate Past Chair Barbara Tate Sharon Laing, Director of Human Resources Councillor Logan Kanapathi Regional Councillor Joe Li
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The Race Relations Committee convened at 7:08 PM with Astra Josie Rose presiding as Chair.

1. Chair's Opening Remarks

Chair Astra Josie Rose hoped that members enjoyed the summer and thanked them for attending the first meeting of the new term.

2. Changes or Additions to the Agenda

The agenda was accepted as distributed.

3. Approval of the Minutes

It was

Moved by Andrew Yu
Seconded by Bobbie France

That the minutes of the Markham Race Relations Committee meeting held on June 1, 2015 be adopted as distributed.

CARRIED

4. Markham Human Resources Update

Cheryl McConney-Wilson, Diversity Specialist, attending by teleconference, advised that:

- Diversity Training, similar to that provided for City of Markham employees, will be provided to Committee members at the October 2015 meeting; topics will include demographics, pertinent legislated requirements, Markham's Diversity activities, and scenarios for discussion.
- Markham residents are encouraged to complete the Markham Strategic Plan survey which is online at the Markham website until September 29; she will send Committee members a link to the survey.
- An event will be held in the Great Hall at the Markham Civic Centre on October 5, 2015 to encourage residents to complete the Markham Strategic Plan survey.
- The Committee might wish to staff an information booth at the Accessibility Fair on October 24.
- The Massive Open Online Course (MOOC), Reconciliation Through Indigenous Education, is being offered free through the University of British Columbia. It is intended to be a tool to think about changing practices in ways to be more inclusive of Indigenous ways of knowing in classrooms, schools, and community organizations. The six-week course begins September 29th, 2015. Astra Josie Rose and Maggie Quirt will send registration details to Committee members.
- Markham is conducting a procurement survey with the goal to ensure that prospective vendors know how to bid successfully with the City. It will also give Markham a better idea of the diversity among its vendors.
- Markham is developing a formal statement to assist in defining what Markham means by diversity and inclusion.
- Corporate Communications is considering how best to provide web pages or websites to Markham Committees.

Ms. McConney-Wilson led a discussion regarding the Committee's views on cancelling a meeting when it would occur on a religious holiday. Following Committee discussion, it was agreed that the Committee would only cancel or reschedule a meeting if it were scheduled to occur on a statutory holiday.

Ms. McConney-Wilson left the meeting at 7:45 pm.

5. Race Relations Business

A) Sub-committees

Chair Astra Josie Rose reminded Committee members that the following subcommittees have been created: Community Roundtable Subcommittee, Many Faces of Markham, Treasurer, Taste of Markham, and Community Engagement (to include awards). Membership of the Community Engagement subcommittee is still to be determined. It is hoped that other Committee members will volunteer to be part of the subcommittees.

B) Community Consultation Roundtable

Vice Chair Maggie Quirt advised that the next step is to coordinate an event relating to the Committee's mandate, and to issues which resonate with youth, using a broad definition of "youth". She will request input from Committee members regarding a draft letter to be sent to those who attended the Community Roundtable session. It was

recommended that information about the Markham website and Diversity Dialogues be included in the letter.

C) Many Faces of Markham (MFOM)

Chair Astra Josie Rose and Vice Chair Maggie Quirt led a discussion on the theme of aboriginal culture in York Region. Discussion points included:

- British Columbia materials could guide the committee in focusing its promotional efforts
- The theme should celebrate aboriginal contributions to society
- The Committee hopes to give children a positive attitude about aboriginal peoples, have children embrace them as friends, and inspire an appreciation of aboriginal culture
- The possibility of integrating the indigenous response to the Syrian situation, considering they are both displaced from their land

The Committee agreed on the theme: Many Faces of Markham Celebrates Aboriginal Culture. Vice Chair Maggie Quirt will send the discussion ideas to Rina George-Alexander, Co-chair of the MFOF Sub-committee.

It was agreed that Vice Chair Maggie Quirt and Sarah Saddiq will choose from among last year's winning posters to serve as the promotional poster for this year. It was suggested it might be helpful to provide an information backgrounder to assist in explaining the theme and how it might relate to the art project.

D) "Taste Of Markham"

Bobbie France reported that there are many factors to consider in planning such an event and it is too late this year to piggy-back with other events. She will consult with Cheryl McConney-Wilson about how the Event Manager might assist with planning the event.

E) CMARD

No report was available.

6. New Business

Vice Chair Maggie Quirt advised that many municipalities are stating publicly that they wish to help Syrian refugees. The Committee may wish to consider asking Markham Council to play a role in settling Syrian refugees.

7. Next Meeting Date

The next meeting of the Race Relations Committee will be held on October 5, 2015 in the Ontario Room at 7:00 PM.

8. Adjournment

It was

Moved by Andrew Yu
Seconded by Moises Calo

That the Race Relations Committee adjourn at 9:05 PM.

CARRIED