



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

Ontario Room, Markham Civic Centre

April 13, 2015

7:00 PM

MINUTES

<p>Attendance:</p> <p><u>Committee</u> Astra Josie Rose, Chair Maggie Quirt, Vice Chair Darius Sookram, Immediate Past Chair Bobbie France Rina George-Alexander Salman Hasan Sarah Siddiqui Harleen Sayal Barbara Tate Andrew Yu</p> <p><u>Council</u> Regional Councillor Joe Li</p> <p><u>Guest</u> YRP Ricky Veerapan</p> <p><u>Staff</u> Laura Gold, Council & Committee Coordinator Cheryl McConney-Wilson, Diversity Specialist Bev Shugg Barbeito, Committee Coordinator</p>	<p><u>Regrets</u> Moises Calo Carla Crooks Osman Akhtar Saad Omar Khan Grace Permaul Jacqueline Sang Ramon Solis Sharon Laing, Director of Human Resources Councillor Logan Kanapathi</p>
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The Race Relations Committee convened at 7:10 PM with Astra Josie Rose presiding as Chair.

1. Chair's Opening Remarks

Astra Josie Rose welcomed new members Salman Hasan, Sarah Siddiqui, Harleen Sayal, and Andrew Yu, and guest YRP Ricky Veerapan to the meeting and introductions were made.

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 Bobbie France

That the minutes of the Markham Race Relations Committee meetings held on March 2, 2015 be adopted as amended with the following changes *in italics*:

Community Consultation Roundtable

The concept of the roundtable discussions was explained for those who were not part of the planning for the event. Maggie Quirt has collated the data from the Community Roundtable session; Chair Darius Sookram asked her to email the information to Committee members. Maggie Quirt will prepare a letter to the community and email it to all Committee members so they can review it in advance of the next meeting. At the April meeting, the Committee will *devote at least an hour to discussion of* discuss the Roundtable data and *considering* consider how best to move forward on the issues, including reviewing the Committee's role or scope, what would be needed, and ways it could partner with others to achieve results.

CARRIED

4. Board and Committee Orientation

Laura Gold, Council and Committee Coordinator, Clerk's Office, made a presentation designed to help familiarize Committee members with their volunteer role on the Committee. Topics included Municipal governance, roles and expectations, Code of Ethics, Accessibility considerations, Diversity considerations, Privacy & Confidentiality considerations, media relations, procedures & meeting management, conflict of interest, and meeting effectiveness.

Ms. Gold requested that new members read the Accessibility Guide in their orientation packages, since providing accessible customer service is required by law.

5. Markham Human Resources Update

Cheryl McConney-Wilson, Diversity Specialist, reported that Markham hosted a delegation from Sweden who wished to learn about Markham's efforts to strengthen its commitment to inclusion and diversity. Ms. McConney-Wilson advised that lunch 'n learn sessions have been held on deaf, South Asian and Aboriginal culture. Markham is considering offering to committee members an abridged version of the Diversity training which is mandatory for Markham staff; if offered, it would be presented to the four committees dealing with Diversity issues.

Ms. McConney-Wilson also advised that, on May 4, 2015, the Municipal Multicultural Reference Committee will be hosting a Diversity dialogue event from 6:30 – 9:00 pm in the Canada Room at the Markham Civic Centre. This happens to be the same date as the May meeting of the Race Relations Committee, so perhaps Committee members may wish to serve as facilitators at the information tables or booths. Ms. McConney-Wilson will send an email to Chair Astra Josie Rose so that she, in turn, may forward it on to Committee members.

6. Race Relations Business

A) Many Faces of Markham

Chair Astra Josie Rose reviewed for the benefit of new members details of the Many Faces of Markham event, held to showcase diverse performers. The theme for the 2016 event will relate to aboriginals. Vice Chair Maggie Quirt and Rina George-Alexander will coordinate the event, with assistance from sub-committees. The Committee will discuss the planning of this event further at the May and June meetings.

B) Community Consultation Roundtable

Chair Astra Josie Rose reviewed for the benefit of new members that the Committee held a Round Table Discussion event, which was attended by thirty representatives. Vice Chair Maggie Quirt collated the data from the Community Roundtable session, and then prepared a summary and a list of possible action items. The goal now is for the Committee to discuss the findings, agree on a few action items within its mandate which the Committee could undertake, and advise those who attended. Chair Astra Josie Rose will ask the Clerk's Office to email the report and possible action items, and the Committee's work plan, to Committee members. All Committee members were asked to review the documents and, by April 20, 2015, suggest three action items for the Committee to undertake.

C) COMMUNITY INCLUSIVITY EQUITY COUNCIL of YORK REGION (CIECYR)

On behalf of the Committee, Chair Astra Josie Rose will attend the CIECYR Second Bi-annual Diversity Equity & Inclusivity Symposium 2015: Truth, Reconciliation & Engagement on April 28 – 29, 2015.

D) "Taste Of Markham"

Cheryl McConney-Wilson will work with Bobbie France, Chair of the Taste of Markham sub-committee, to determine the vision and timing for the event.

E) CMARD

This item was deferred to the next meeting.

7. New Business

A) York Region Police Presentation

YRP Ricky Veerapan provided an overview of his work in the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Bureau with the York Region Police. The Bureau focuses on five areas of responsibility through:

- Diversity initiatives– responsible for outreach and relationship building; when policing a global community as found in York Region, it is critical to understand the issues.
- Hate Crime team – responsible for vigorous prosecution of any criminal offense with an element of hatred or bias, because such crimes suppress diversity.

- Internal Diversity Specialist – responsible for the review of policies and regulations relating to policing to ensure compliance with Human Rights legislation; this role raises Diversity, Equity and Inclusion issues for discussion.
- Police Chaplains – there are currently seven chaplains of various faiths, including an imam and a rabbi. One of their initiatives is to host tours of places of worship with the aim of promoting experiential learning to increase understanding of spirituality and religious issues.
- Counter Violence Extremist (CVE) strategy – police have a global mindset to cope with the challenges and opportunities of such a diverse community as is Markham; human rights is the foundation of all their activities.

YRP Ricky Veerapan advised that either he or another York Region Police representative would attend future meetings.

In response to questions, Committee members were advised that:

- York Region Police have strategies in place, including recruiting ambassadors in communities underrepresented by York Region Police, to have the employees more closely reflect the diversity of the York Region population
- Specific challenges to policing in Markham are different than those experienced in a city such as Toronto; it's important for YRP officers to be critical thinkers and to speak many languages. The YRP Elimination of Racism event is a response to police brutality.
- Initiatives, such as safety programs offered in high schools to connect with youth, summer youth employment, youth leadership camp, ventures and rovers scouting, and youth band, are in place to encourage youth engagement to become police officers.

Chair Astra Josie Rose thanked YRP Ricky Veerapan for his presentation.

YRP Ricky Veerapan left the meeting at 8:30 pm.

B) York Region Police Elimination of Racism event

Barbara Tate, Maggie Quirt, Bobbie France, Carla Crooks and Josie Rose were present at the event, which was well attended, and emailed pictures of it to Committee members.

C) Community Partnerships

Chair Astra Josie Rose advised that she had contacted Real World; they would be interested in partnering with the Committee, perhaps regarding coordinating entertainment for the Many Faces of Markham event.

D) Brochures

Chair Astra Josie Rose thanked Cheryl McConney-Wilson for her assistance in realizing the Diversity and Race Relations brochures.

E) Awards

On behalf of the Committee, Chair Astra Josie Rose and Vice Chair Maggie Quirt thanked Immediate Past Chair Darius Sookram for his many years of leadership of the Committee and presented him with a plaque recording a donation to Jumpstart to mark his accomplishments as chair.

F) Sub-committees

Chair Astra Josie Rose advised that that a number of sub-committees will be created: Roundtable Subcommittee, Many Faces, Treasurer, Taste of Markham, and Community Engagement (to include awards).

7. Next Meeting Date

The next meeting of the Race Relations Committee will be held on Monday, May 4, 2015 in the Ontario Room at 7:00 PM.

8. Adjournment

It was

Moved by Regional Councillor Joe Li

Seconded by Andrew Yu

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

CARRIED