



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

**Ontario Room, Markham Civic Centre**

**November 3, 2014**

**7:00 PM**

**MINUTES**

<p><b>Attendance:</b></p> <p><u>Committee</u></p> <p>Darius Sookram, Chair Astra Josie Rose, Vice Chair Rina George-Alexander Osman Akhtar Moises Calo Bobbie France Saad Omar Khan Dr. Maggie Quirt Jacqueline Sang Barbara Tate</p> <p><u>Staff</u></p> <p>Cheryl McConney-Wilson, Diversity Specialist Bev Shugg Barbeito, Committee Coordinator</p>	<p><u>Regrets</u></p> <p>Carla Crooks Grace Permaul Ramon Solis Councillor Alan Ho Councillor Logan Kanapathi Regional Councillor Joe Li Sharon Laing, Director of Human Resources</p>
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The Race Relations Committee convened at 7:05 PM with Darius Sookram presiding as Chair.

**1. Chair's Opening Remarks**

Darius Sookram welcomed Committee members to the meeting. He mentioned that he was excited to move forward with the many exciting topics facing the Committee.

**2. Changes or Additions to the Agenda**

The agenda was accepted as distributed.

### **3. Approval of the Minutes**

It was

Moved by           Saad Omar Khan  
Seconded by       Jacqueline Sang

That the minutes of the Markham Race Relations Committee Meeting held on October 6, 2014 be adopted as distributed.

CARRIED

### **4. Public Realm Presentation**

Brett Lucyk, Public Realm Coordinator, provided a presentation entitled "Shared Places, Our Spaces", a summary of Markham's current public realm initiatives and the framework to build and maintain Markham's public realm for the future. A draft strategy, approved by Council, aims to define the concept of "public realm" for Markham, educate Markham residents and increase awareness of public realm initiatives, and set out public realm vision and goals. The Markham public realm vision is to ensure that all who live, work, play and visit in Markham share ownership and responsibility to create and maintain public realm spaces. Public realm goals include:

- Creating a "Made in Markham" design to advance the quality of public realm city wide;
- Animating Markham neighbourhoods to celebrate cultural diversity;
- Sharing resources by forming partnerships/increasing collaboration among community groups, committees et al beneficial for public realm initiatives;
- Creating gateways and destinations to showcase Markham's uniqueness.

Mr. Lucyk reminded Committee members that Markham is open, accessible, and promotes equality so that these attributes need to be reflected in public realm initiatives. Next steps include public consultations and committee workshops in January 2015 with the aim of finalizing the strategy document in February 2015. Very soon, a survey will be launched on the Public Realm webpage; Mr. Lucyk would appreciate the Race Relations Committee's help in distributing the survey as widely as possible so that the results may guide development of the public realm strategy.

It is expected that the Public Realm Committee will be expanded; if anyone is interested in serving on the committee, they should advise Laura Gold, Committee Coordinator.

### **5. Markham Human Resources Update**

Ms. McConney-Wilson, Diversity Specialist, advised Committee members that two members could be accommodated in the religious awareness training visiting places of worship on December 2, 2014. Committee members were asked to let Ms. McConney-Wilson know if they would be interested in participating in the tour.

Ms. McConney-Wilson reported that York Region Police have posted updated policies relating to gender identity, religious identity, and other human rights matters on its website.

## **6. Race Relations Business**

### **A) Many Faces of Markham**

Astra Josie Rose reported that she and Barbara Tate tried any times to contact Lily Singh, aka “Superwoman”, to serve as emcee, but have not been successful. It was suggested that D. O. Gibson might be considered as either emcee or a keynote speaker. The Committee agreed a keynote speaker is needed; Bobbie France and Dr. Maggie Quirt will investigate possible speakers with the Aboriginal Center and York Region. An honorarium of up to \$500 may be provided to a keynote speaker.

The Committee discussed how to shorten the program; ideas included giving the certificates at the end or backstage, and having a group photo with the Mayor. It was agreed that it is important that the pronunciation of names be practised so it is accurate.

Information about the event will be sent to community groups, posted on the Markham website and in community centres.

### **B) Community Consultation Roundtable**

Chair Darius Sookram advised that thirteen groups have confirmed their participation in this event, scheduled for Wednesday November 12, 2014 between 7:00 pm and 9:00 pm. The Community Consultation Roundtable will begin with a short presentation about the Race Relations Committee, the purpose of the gathering, information about CMARD and the Diversity action plan, followed by breakout sessions focusing on topics such as Poverty, Housing, Employment, and Schools; other topics such as Religion and Racism could be discussed at future roundtable discussions. Darius Sookram, Astra Josie Rose, Rina George-Alexander, Saad Omar Khan and Dr. Maggie Quirt volunteered to serve as facilitators for the breakout sessions; The facilitators will write brief reports about the discussions during the breakout sessions and this information will be used to make recommendations to Council. Jacqueline Sang volunteered to assist with registration. Astra Josie Rose and Jacqueline Sang will contact groups such as the BIA and Lion’s Club about participating.

### **C) Committee Work Plan**

Darius Sookram had emailed the Committee Work Plan (version 5.0) to Committee members. He reviewed the guiding principles, goals and outcomes of the plan.

It was

Moved by Dr. Maggie Quirt

Seconded by Barbara Tate

That the minutes of the Markham Race Relations Committee Work Plan (version 5.0) be adopted as distributed.

**CARRIED**

**D) CMARD Update: Open: 3Q10**

No update was available.

**7. New Business**

- It was reported that York Region Policed have launched a new initiative in the form of Captain Unity, a super hero with special powers of uniting people.
- Astra Josie Rose advised that she will continue working on creating promotional materials once the Community Consultation Roundtable event has been completed.
- Bobbie France advised that she will gather information about a “Taste of Markham” event.
- Race Relations Committee Chair and Vice-chair positions – Darius Sookram reported that elections for these positions could be held at either the December 2014 or January 2015 meeting. Committee members interested in either position were asked to advise Darius Sookram.

**7. Next Meeting Date**

The next meeting of the Race Relations Committee will be held on Monday, December 1, 2014 in the Ontario Room at 7:00 PM.

**8. Adjournment**

It was

Moved by           Saad Omar Khan  
Seconded by       Barbara Tate

That the Race Relations Committee adjourn at 8:55 PM.

**CARRIED**