

MEETING OF THE RACE RELATIONS COMMITTEE FOR 2013
CITY OF MARKHAM
Ontario Room, Markham Civic Centre
February 4, 2013, 7:00pm

MINUTES

<p>Attendance:</p> <p><u>Committee</u></p> <p>Astra Josie Rose, Vice-Chair</p> <p>Moises Calo</p> <p>Bobbie France</p> <p>Rina George-Alexander</p> <p>Liliana Soengas</p> <p>Saad Omar Khan</p> <p>Barbara Tate</p> <p><u>Staff</u></p> <p>Sharon Laing, Director of Human Resources</p> <p>Cheryl McConney-Wilson, Diversity Specialist</p> <p>Bev Shugg Barbeito, Committee Clerk</p>	<p><u>Regrets</u></p> <p>Darius Sookram, Chair</p> <p>Carla Crooks</p> <p>Samil Chagpar</p> <p>Vilvan Gunasingham</p> <p>Ramon Solis</p> <p>Councillor Alan Ho</p> <p>Councillor Logan Kanapathi</p> <p>Regional Councillor Joe Li</p>
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1. CHAIR OPENING REMARKS

The Race Relations Committee convened at 7:07 PM with Ms. Astra Josie Rose presiding as Chair. She presented information relating to initiatives of other race relation committees in York Region, Waterloo and Hamilton, and suggested using these resources to assist in developing this Committee's work plan and marketing materials.

2. CHANGES OR ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

There were no changes or additions made to the agenda.

3. MINUTES OF THE MARKHAM RACE RELATIONS COMMITTEE HELD ON JANUARY 14, 2013.

It was

Moved by Liliana Soengas
Seconded by Moises Calo

That the minutes of the Town of Markham Race Relations Committee Meeting held on January 14, 2013 be adopted as distributed.

Carried

4. POVERTY IN MARKHAM

A panel of experts attended the previous meeting to help educate this Committee on this issue. Committee members agreed that the panel discussion was helpful in showing them how they can be part of the solution to poverty. It was also agreed that it would be helpful to have the panel return as the focus of a future meeting. It was suggested that York Region staff would have information about poverty in Markham and they should be invited to discuss this at a future meeting. The Mayor and three regional councillors influence policy decisions about social services in York Region. In turn, the Race Relations Committee can influence Markham Council on matters related to the committee's mandate. Sharon Liang, Director of Human Resources, will present information about the levels of government and the services each provide and how this Committee, as agents of change, can influence change and policy on many issues, not just poverty.

5. RACE RELATIONS

A. Race Relations Committee Work Plan 2013

This item was deferred to the next meeting.

6. MARKHAM HUMAN RESOURCES UPDATE

A. Diversity Action Plan Update; Launched: 2Q10

Ms. Cheryl McConney-Wilson, Diversity Specialist, reported that the Diversity Action Plan was recently presented to Markham Council. With a theme of "Everyone Welcome", the plan includes 68 recommendations that further strengthen Markham's commitment to inclusivity and celebrating diversity. The Diversity Action Plan pays particular attention to the needs of four groups: youth, newcomers and visible minorities, seniors and persons with disabilities. To date, Markham has offered a leadership diversity workshop for directors, developed training AODA and implemented diversity resources on the Markham staff intranet site. Markham plans, among other initiatives, to incorporate diversity competence into the performance management process for managers, partner with groups providing programming for seniors, develop new programs for youth by partnering with youth councils and cultural youth groups, continue to provide recreational opportunities appropriate to the interests of newcomers, and ensure that the design of all improvements to Markham buildings and parks address the needs of persons with disabilities. As a result, Markham is considered a leader in the GTA in making diversity work. The Committee discussed the possibility of changing the name of the committee to reflect the concept of diversity in addition to race relations.

7. MANY FACES OF MARKHAM

In recognition of March 21st, the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, Markham hosts the Many Faces of Markham event. Organized by the Race Relations Committee, it is an annual celebration featuring an art, video and writing competition for students across Markham as well as a show featuring local performers and the competition winners.

Josie Rose advised that the deadline for competition submissions was Friday February 8th, judging of entries would take place on Sunday February 10th in the Canada Room at the Markham Civic Centre, and that Laura Gold, Clerk's Office, would confirm this information. Committee members were encouraged to take part in judging the competition entries. Josie Rose also reported that six acts had been selected to perform at the Many Faces of Markham show; it was hoped to add up to three more acts.

8. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Race Relations Committee is scheduled for March 3, 2013 at 7:00 PM.

9. ADJOURNMENT

It was

Moved by	Barbara Tate
Seconded by	Moises Calo

That the Race Relations Committee meeting adjourn at 8:15 PM.

Carried