

**MEETING OF THE RACE RELATIONS COMMITTEE FOR 2012**  
**CITY OF MARKHAM**  
**Ontario Room, Markham Civic Centre**  
**November 26, 2012, 7:00pm**

**MINUTES**

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

**1. CHAIR OPENING REMARKS**

The Race Relations Committee convened at 7:15 PM with Mr. Darius Sookram presiding as Chair. He reminded Committee members that the premier issue of the magazine Diversity showcases recipients of the 2012 Diversity Awards and that Markham Mayor Frank Scarpitti received a Diversity Award for Public Service. Mr. Sookram advised that it was a great reflection of Markham as well as Markham's work on diversity and the role the Race Relations Committee has played. He will bring a copy of the issue to the next meeting for Committee review.

Mr. Sookram also advised that he had attended a meeting for residents to learn about Markham's draft Official Plan which he found to be very interesting. Information about the Official Plan is available on the Markham website and feedback can be sent via email. Cheryl McConney-Wilson, Diversity Specialist, advised that Markham staff could give a presentation to Committee members at a future meeting.

**2. MINUTES OF THE MARKHAM RACE RELATIONS COMMITTEE HELD ON NOVEMBER 5, 2012.**

It was

Moved by           Liliana Soengas  
Seconded by       Moises Calo

That the minutes of the Town of Markham Race Relations Committee Meeting held on November 5, 2012 be adopted as distributed.

Carried

**3. CHANGES OR ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA**

There were no changes or additions made to the agenda.

**4. MARKHAM HUMAN RESOURCES UPDATE**

**A. Diversity Action Plan Update; Launched: 2Q10**

Ms. Cheryl McConney-Wilson, Diversity Specialist, reported that the City has been meeting with the two Welcome Centres in Markham. Markham's departments will be giving presentations to assist newcomers. The Human Resources Department provided sessions on recruitment and job search.

Ms. McConney-Wilson also reported that, in December, the Human Resources Department will submit a recruitment report to Markham Council; she will advise the Committee when the information is available for the public.

**5. MANY FACES OF MARKHAM**

Chair Darius Sookram reported that the subcommittee met with Laura Gold, Clerk's Office, immediately prior to this Committee meeting. To call for performers, the subcommittee has selected a poster to be distributed, letters have been prepared to be sent to schools, and ads will be placed in the local newspaper. It was recommended that school principals be visited in person. Rina George-Alexander will find out when the next `family of schools` meeting will be convened by the area superintendent; she will attend in order to have them encourage students to apply. It is expected that performers will be selected by the end of January. No decision has been made about a speaker; Mr. Sookram requested that Committee members email their suggestions to him.

**6. SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATE**

Chair Darius Sookram distributed and reviewed the Race Relations Committee Work Plan 2012 which was drafted in February 2012. The Committee may wish to revise the goals for the next year in line with CMARD (Coalition of Municipalities against Race and Discrimination) guidelines. He asked Committee members to review the document in order to be prepared for discussion at the next meeting.

**7. OTHER BUSINESS**

Vilvan Gunasingham distributed and reviewed published information which reported almost 15% of York Region's children live in poverty; the article also asked whether there was a link between poverty and racial minorities in York Region. Following a lengthy discussion, it was agreed that, while the allegations of the article were serious, the Committee needed to verify the quoted statistics, determine the context in which they were quoted, and obtain information from other sources to validate the quoted statistics. If it were determined that the information in the article was accurate, then the Committee could develop plans to assist in improving the situation and ask Council about its plans. The Committee will further discuss this item at the January meeting. In preparation for that discussion, Vilvan Gunasingham will consult with a contact at the University of Toronto, Carla Crooks will contact the writer of the article to verify the statistics and determine the context in which they were used, and Darius Sookram will contact with Cecil Roach, Superintendent of Equity and Engagement at York Region District School Board, to get information about Markham's neighbourhoods.

**8. NEXT MEETING**

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

**9. ADJOURNMENT**

It was

Moved by	Vilvan Gunasingham
Seconded by	Moises Calo

That the Race Relations Committee meeting adjourn at 8:30 PM.

Carried