

**FOURTEENTH MEETING OF THE
RACE RELATIONS COMMITTEE FOR 2011
TOWN OF MARKHAM
Ontario Room, Markham Civic Centre
Monday, May 9, 2011 - 7:15 p.m.**

AGENDA

MINUTES

<u>Attendance:</u>	
<u>Committee</u>	<u>Regrets</u>
Theresa Coulter, Chair Winnie Wales, Vice Chair Councillor Joe Li Councillor Alan Ho Prashanth Srichandramohan Liliana Soengas Vilvan Gunasingham	Councillor Logan Kanapathi Darius Sookram Carla Crooks
<u>Staff:</u> Cheryl McConney-Wilson, Diversity Specialist Darshika Patel – Committee Clerk	

The fourteenth meeting of the Race Relations Committee convened at 7:15 p.m. with Ms. Theresa Coulter presiding as Chair.

1. MINUTES OF THE MARKHAM RELATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON MARCH 7, 2011 AND APRIL 4, 2011.

**Moved by Vilvan Gunasingham
Seconded by Chair Theresa Coulter**

THE TOWN OF MARKHAM RACE RELATIONS COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS:

That the minutes of the Town of Markham Race Relations Committee meetings held on March 7 and April 4, 2011 be adopted.

CARRIED

2. CHANGES OR ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

There were no changes or additions to the agenda.

3. MARKHAM HUMAN RESOURCES UPDATE

A. Diversity Action Plan Update; Launched: 2Q10

Ms. Cheryl McConney-Wilson, Diversity Specialist, stated that various committees from the Town of Markham were asked for their feedback on the Diversity Action Plan, recommendations where it dealt with community. Specifically, the team wanted to know what kind of indicators will show that they are successful in following through with the recommendations. The Diversity Action Plan team will create a report card to track progress with a focus on internal and external factors.

4. SUB-COMMITTEE UPDATE

A. Many Faces of Markham Event; Closed: 2Q11

The Chair, Ms. Theresa Coulter, announced that with a full committee and staff in attendance in the near future, further discussion will take place on the formation of a subcommittee for events and for policies. It was noted that there have been concerns with the amount of meeting time required for the planning of the Many Faces of Markham event and that a formation of a subcommittee will assist in not taking time away from regular Race Relations meetings. There was a discussion regarding the disparity in school attendance at the event. It is mainly private schools that take part in Many Faces of Markham. The issue will be addressed prior to the planning of next year's event. This is a sold-out event and accommodating a large audience will be an issue at the current venue. Furthermore, it was noted that barriers in communication prevented the participation of students from public schools.

B. Diversity Action Plan Committee

No new updates.

5. PENDING ITEMS

A. CMARD Council Representative Appointment; Closed: 2Q11

It was noted that Councillor Logan Kanapathi was appointed as the Coalition of Municipalities against Racism and Discrimination (CMARD) representative for the Town of Markham

B. Race Relations Committee New Member Recruitment; Open: 1Q11

Committee members have been informed that current members must reapply to the Race Relations Committee. The process is yet to be announced. There are up to 15 vacancies for members. A request will be put forth for a representative from the Clerk's Office to be present at the next meeting to provide an update on the board and committee recruitment process.

C. Second Councillor Appointment to the Race Relations Committee; Closed: 2Q11

The Committee was advised that two new councilors have been appointed to this committee, Councillor Joe Li and Councillor Alan Ho.

D. Request to Hold CMARD Conference in Markham; Open: 3Q10

Ms. McConney-Wilson notified CMARD that Councillor Kanapathi will be the Town of Markham's representative. A CMARD conference will take place in the City of Toronto before fall. At this time, they are preparing a tool kit that will be ready before the year end. The Town of Markham may also sponsor a conference before March 2012.

6. NEW BUSINESS

A. Communication (Race Relations Committee and Town of Markham)

There was an enquiry why the Race Relation Committee members were not present in person at Council meetings in regards to the Maclean's "Too Asian" article and the Israeli Apartheid Week. It was noted that it is difficult to make a formal comment on such issues as there isn't sufficient time at the committee meetings to develop clear and consistent resolutions. It was thought that the three Councillors present, can speak on behalf of this committee. The Committee was advised that Council looks to this committee for support and advice. It was agreed that this was a learning experience for this committee and that the communication between the committee and the Town can improve as many of these issues were not brought to the committee's attention in advance.

It was indicated that this committee is here to learn and that members do not have experience in human rights. When subject matters of this nature are brought to this committee, it is

difficult to talk intelligently without core knowledge on human right issues, and additional information is required. A Member had contacted the human rights commission, CMARD and York University in regards to their position on the Israeli Apartheid Week at York University, they did not have a position and thus, the committee was not out of line to not have a stance on this issue as well. It was noted that the committee is based on CMARD principles, then members should be educated on these principles and should be able to reach a conclusion on matters based on these principles. It was suggested that items directed to the committee from Council be brought to the committee's attention well in advance to ensure that the committee is provided with an ample amount of time to prepare and discuss.

B. Council of Agencies Serving South Asians CASSA and YREC York Region Equity Council – Racism Free Education: a community meeting to address racial inequalities in and through education.

Mr. Gunasingham informed the committee of an event that recently took place in the community. This event discussing racism in schools was a packed evening where parents had the chance to raise concerns about how they and their children are treated in schools. The agencies taking part will continue to hold this forum. The topics discussed at this meeting are of interest to this committee.

7. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Race Relations Committee will be held on June 7, 2011 at 7:15 p.m.

8. ADJOURNMENT

The Race Relations Committee adjourned at 9:00 p.m.