



City of Surrey

Multicultural Advisory Committee

Minutes

Pondside Meeting Room
City Hall
14245 - 56 Avenue
Surrey, B.C.
TUESDAY, JUNE 17, 2008
Time: 9:10 a.m.
File: 0540-20

Present:

Chair – Councillor M. Martin
Councillor Higginbotham
Councillor Villeneuve
Mayor Watts
N. Beuk
T. Ghuman
Dr. B. Gurm
H. Hong
Corp. J. Hundial
F. Kung
M. Malik
S. El-Nashar
V. Pittakidis
K. Polubinski
W. Sandvoss
S. Scott
M. Solorzano
H. Stilwell, Surrey S.D.36
E. Szucs

Absent:

R. Asistio
B. King
J. Kovach
C. McBeth
D. Sandhu
K. Sanghera
M. Thompson
L. Cavan, GM, Parks,
Recreation & Culture

Staff Present:

N. Webb, GM, Human Resources
N. Van Eeden Petersman, EA, Office of the Mayor
C. Amundsen, EA, Office of the Mayor
K. Swanson, Manager, Community Services
H. Dmytriw, Legislative Services
V. Gonsalves, Fusion Festival Coordinator

Guests:

Debbie Lawrance

A. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

It was Moved by Balbir Gurm
Seconded by Muhammad Malik
That the minutes of the Multicultural
Advisory Committee March 18, 2008, be adopted, as circulated.
Carried

B. DELEGATION

1. David Dalley, South Fraser Unitarian Congregation provided a presentation on Neighbouring Faiths Programs - Early Explorers.
 - Who, what, when, where, why?
 - Who? All families of faith communities in Surrey
 - What? Each visit will involve a short introduction to the people and practices
 - When? Pilot project in fall of 2008
 - Where? In Surrey and North Delta – program emphasizes local communities and their gathering places
 - Why? Neighboring faiths mission statement: *To increase the understanding and appreciation of diversity in Surrey*
 - Goals: To have fun and memorable experiences with those of other faiths
To visit different religious buildings in Surrey

To support children preparing to enter school system
To build connections with families who value diversity

- 9 different faith communities are participating:
 - Baha'i Faith
 - Buddhist Temple
 - St. John United
 - Kla-how-eye – First Nations
 - Hindu Temple
 - Islam (Muslim)
 - White Rock South Surrey Jewish Community
 - Sikh – Canadian Singh Sabha Gurdwara
 - Unitarian
- Community Context: Valuing our Children (item provided on table)
- Provincial resource: BC Early Learning Framework (item provided on table)
- Tell your community about the program
- Funding for translating documents
- Funding for child-friendly facility to use for initial orientation session.
- Website: www.snfp.ca

Chairperson Councillor Martin thanked the delegate and suggested that consideration be given to doing this program for high schools and urged the committee members to take a pamphlet to share with their communities.

C. NEW BUSINESS

1. Community Grass Roots - Multi-Cultural Sharing
Vassilia Pittakidis provided a presentation regarding the Greek Community in Surrey. The following comments were provided:
 - Total population of people of Greek heritage in the Lower Mainland is 18,000. Population of people of Greek heritage living in Surrey is estimated to be 7,500 – 8,000.
 - June is Greek Heritage month.
 - The Surrey Greek Food Festival - July 18-27, 2008 - is attended by thousands who enjoy the food, celebrations, music, dance, raffles.
 - Future plans entail demolishing the old buildings and building a community centre and church at 160 Street – 84th Avenue; to provide services and a reference centre to our community and other Canadians in the Greek culture.Chairperson, Councillor Martin thanked Vassilia for her presentation and urged committee members to go to the festival.

Committee members, who would like to do a presentation at the next or a future meeting, were requested to contact Nicola Webb or the committee administrative assistant.

2. Cultural Community Contacts and Diversity Associations/ Out Reach by the City – Kelsey Swanson provided a brief presentation advising of the City wide community services.

- Office is located at #111, 10277 135 Street, under the Skytrain.
- Primary goal is outreach and communication with all groups to work together to assist in any way, shape or form.

In response to questions the following information was provided:

- On a daily basis the office deals with providing volunteers for the Children's Festival, skating, summer camps, Fusion Festival, Partners in Parks, and inquiries of all type.
- One committee member is puzzled by how Diversity and Accessibility are only handled by the City through Parks, Recreation & Culture and questioned why it is not more explicit on its "how" as a program run by the City.
- The GM, Human Resources provided the answer in that Social Planning has an active group on diversity. Human Resources are also working on various committees to welcome more diversity and have begun the process to bring all resources together for a clearer, more defined group.
- There are 3,000 City employees who are interested in giving back to the community. In a recent venture with the School District, Youth at Risk volunteers worked with six young people needing work experience and assistance.
- The Community Development Services office have been receiving a lot of public inquiries from more and more people wishing to get more involved in their own communities within Surrey.
- Information pamphlets should be brought to the storefront at Community Development Services Section, located at #111, 10277 135 Street, Surrey.

Chairperson, Councillor Martin thanked Kelsey Swanson for her presentation.

3. Chairperson, Councillor Martin introduced **Debbie Lawrance**, who is very interested in becoming involved with the Multicultural Advisory Committee and the Fusion Festival (Vincent Gonzalves to contact her).

D. OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS

1. Pius Ryan, School District 36 provided a presentation at the March 18, 2008 meeting regarding *English Language Learners in the School System*.

Chairperson Councillor Martin requested that committee members submit any questions they may have for Pius Ryan to herself or Laurie Cavan and these will be brought forward to the next meeting of this committee for review.

Deferred to July 16, 2008 meeting.

E. STAFF PRESENTATIONS

1. Vincent Gonsalves, Fusion Festival Coordinator, Parks, Recreation & Culture provided the following update regarding the Fusion Festival '08.
 - Thank you to all for your help. Fusion Festival arose out of the Cultural Capitals of Canada award. July 18-20, 2008. Largest multicultural event in Surrey's history.
 - There will be visitors and performers from all over world. 60,000 – 90,000 people are expected to attend the event.
 - 60 pavilions
 - Festival site map was presented and identified the 5 entertainment stages:
 - Stage 1 – main headliner stage
 - Stage 2 – cultural performers
 - Stage 3 & 4 – community stages sponsored by Chevron and Rogers, local performers
 - Stage 5 – international cooking pavilion – all cultural backgrounds
 - This is the first ever Fusion Festival and already will have 27 food pavilions and 33 cultural pavilions.

Vincent Gonzalves (604-598-5783) thanked all for their valuable input and contributions.

Chairperson Councillor Martin thanked Vincent and staff for their active involvement.

2. Craig Amundson, Executive Assistant, Office of the Mayor, provided an update on **Welcoming and Inclusive Cities Forum** regarding Dialogue – Settlement and Multiculturalism Division to be held June 26, 2008. The following comments were provided:
 - There is potential for Multicultural Advisory Committee member involvement in this project. June 26, 2008 is an all day session; there will be a lunch and a reception.
 - This is to be a Federal/Provincial agreement on working together regarding immigration and refugee issues.
 - The agreement was signed a year ago; all duties now go to the Province. Federal funding increased the budget for settlement services in BC from \$60 Million to over \$110 Million.
 - Connie Hung and Muhammad Malik have been involved (thank you).
 - Event happening on June 26, 2008 with 14 representatives from Surrey, Vancouver, North Vancouver, Coquitlam, New Westminister, Delta and Richmond. Councillors Martin and Villeneuve will be attending, along with the business community, Surrey Foundation, Surrey Pastor Network (Lauren Cavanagh). There may be room for more participants if any Multicultural Advisory Committee members are interested in participating. There will be the opportunity to participate, to talk and provide input in high level discussions.

Councillor Higginbottom entered the meeting at 10:15 am.

- Want as much Multicultural Advisory Committee participation as possible.
- Questions to the Province:

- What constitutes a welcoming committee?
- Where and why?
- Understanding civic engagement, how to, success
- Building capacity for change to get from “a” to “b”
- Funding

Chairperson, Councillor Martin thanked Craig Amundsen for his presentation. Thanked him also for reminding us that we are a one-year-old group/committee and thanked all the committee members for all their participation.

F. CORRESPONDENCE

1. Letter, dated May 26, 2008, from DiverseCity regarding Partnership on Seniors’ Independence and Participation Grant Project.
 - Parks, Recreation & Cultured received a \$40,000 funding grant from United Way to go to Immigrant Senior’s Social/Mental Health.

It was
receive this letter as information.

Moved by Sandra Scott
Seconded by Vassilia Pittakidis
That the Multicultural Advisory Committee

Carried

G. INFORMATION ITEM

1. Sandra Scott provided invitations to the Jamaican Cultural Festival at Holland Park, Sunday, August 3, 2008. Music at the park. Bring own food, chairs, etc. to enjoy Jamaican Culture in the park.

H. NEXT MEETING

Next meeting of the Multicultural Advisory Committee scheduled for July 15, 2008 at 9:00 am at Pondsider.

I. ADJOURNMENT

It was
meeting do now adjourn.

Moved by Emese Szucs
Seconded by Wally Sandvoss
That the Multicultural Advisory Committee

Carried

The Multicultural Advisory Committee adjourned at 11:00 a.m.

Margaret Jones, City Clerk

Chairperson, Councillor M. Martin
Multicultural Advisory Committee