



City of Surrey

Multicultural Advisory Committee

Minutes

Pondside
City Hall
14245 - 56 Avenue
Surrey, B.C.
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 16, 2008
Time: 9:06 am
File: 0540-20

Present:

Chair – Councillor M. Martin
Councillor Higginbotham
Councillor Villeneuve
N. Beuk
T. Ghuman
Dr. B. Gurm
H. Hong
J. Kovach
F. Kung
M. Malik
S. El-Nashar
M. Solorzano
E. Szücs
Debbie Lawrance

Absent:

Mayor Watts
R. Asistio
Corp. J. Hundial
B. King
C. McBeth
V. Pittakidis
K. Polubinski
D. Sandhu
W. Sandvoss
K. Sanghera
S. Scott
H. Stilwell, Surrey S.D.36
M. Thompson

Staff Present:

L. Cavan, GM, Parks, Recreation & Culture
N. Webb, GM, Human Resources
A. Murphy, Senior Social Planner
K. Swanson, Section Manager - Community Development Services
D. Luymes, Policy Planning Manager
C. Amundsen, Exec Asst, Human Resources
H. Dmytriw, Legislative Services

A. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

- Minutes** of the Multicultural Advisory Committee meeting, July 15, 2008, to be adopted.

It was

Moved by Mohammad Malik

Seconded by Emese Szücs

That the minutes of the Multicultural Advisory Committee July 15, 2008, be adopted, as circulated.

Carried

B. DELEGATION

C. NEW BUSINESS

1. Community Grass Roots - Multi-Cultural Sharing

Connie Hong, Consortium Coordinator, provided a presentation regarding Options Multicultural Services Consortium.

The following comments were provided:

- A Consortium has been formed and has developed a program model that is working as a partnership with the broader community in an effective and efficient way: **OPTIONS, PICS, DIVERSEcity** and **S.U.C.C.E.S.S.**
- This Consortium helps new comers to settle in Canada by providing orientation to their new communities, guidance and support to access government and community services.
- Translation services are available in 18 languages.

- Information services are provided in person, by phone, email and through group sessions. Through partnerships with Parks, Recreation & Culture, Library staff talk about services in group sessions:
 - Housing, banking and financial services, labour market related settlement services, health and well being, social benefit, education, immigration and family reunification, community services.
- Eligible service recipients:
 - Permanent residents of Canada
 - Naturalized citizens
 - Those intending to receive permanent resident status
 - Non-immigrant foreign domestic workers
 - Refugee claimants
- Child Care Subsidy Outreach Pilot Project
 - These services are provided for non-English speaking, parents/care givers as a bridging service.
- Settlement Related Labour Market is an enhanced settlement service which assists new immigrants and refugees with their labour market related needs and includes: information on labour market, and on workplace culture, cross culture, communications and employment standards. Providing understanding for the process of finding employment, how to search for volunteer opportunities, and obtaining English language upgrading.
- Funded by Ministry of Advanced Education & Labour Market Development.

The Chair commended Connie Hong on all the work that she does for all of Surrey and other agencies, and thanked her for her presentation.

D. OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS

The process for vetting committee membership for this committee was discussed and confirmed as per the Terms of Reference.

Certificates of participation will be provided to the Committee members.

E. STAFF PRESENTATIONS

1. Laurie Cavan, GM, Parks, Recreation & Culture to provide an overview of the **Fusion Festival** and sought feedback from the Multicultural Advisory Committee on the event.

Following are the comments provided:

- 60,000 people attended the Festival. It was very successful.
- 20 Surrey based cultural organizations provided food, entertainment and information on their cultural backgrounds. Good volunteer participation.
- Over 100 entertainers on 5 stages.
- First time to use the newly renovated Holland Park.

- Will be building permanent washrooms over the next 12 months that will be complimented with portable amenities as needed.
- Did surveys on site – received input from many different angles. 245 surveys received. Mayor and Council received good feedback with a few things that need improvement.
- Most attendees were from Surrey. Survey responses rated the festival above average.
- Survey feedback from pavilion operators also provided good feedback.

Further comments from committee:

- Debrief to be scheduled for festival participants (members are asked to bring thoughts and experiences from other festivals to this meeting).
- Have a detailed budget with about \$600,000 in funding from Heritage Canada and from the City of Surrey, as well as over a \$100,000 in corporate sponsorships.
- The Chair commended staff for the fabulous work they continue to do.
- GM, Parks, Recreation & Culture noted that the Multicultural Advisory Committee and many others are always ready to help out.
- Everyone had a good time, the weather was good and the event brought the community together.
- The Fusion Festival is one event that the City should repeat in future.

The Chair commended staff for the fabulous work they continue to do.

It was

Moved by Balbir Gurm

Seconded by Connie Hong

That the Multicultural Advisory Committee

recommends that Council support a Fusion Festival in 2009.

Carried

2. Don Luymes, Policy Planning Manager provided an update regarding the Official Community Plan (OCP) Review.

The City of Surrey is launching a major review of the OCP over the next 16 months

- The OCP is a high level document that municipalities are required to prepare. It sets out the land use and policy statements that govern future development. The OCP primarily encompasses the Land Use but also includes the Environmental, Social and Economic Planning, and Civic Infrastructure (water, sewer, amenities and services).
- A copy of the current OCP's section on "Improve the Quality of Community" was provided on-table.
- The first OCP was ratified in 1986 and is updated every five years. The last major review to the OCP was in 2002.
- The OCP is updated to articulate a vision for the City that is consistent with recent initiatives and strategies including the Sustainability Charter, Crime Reduction Strategy, and major City plans (e.g. transportation, parks, employment lands, social well-being, etc.) and to respond to

significant changes in provincial and regional plans (transit, etc.) and policy initiatives.

- The ultimate goal of this process is to address significant planning issues and build a sustainable livable community.

Discussion ensued and the following comments were provided:

- Metro Vancouver has not been favourable to Surrey in providing transit to serve the populace. 180 busses operate now with a projected 150 additional busses over the next 5-6 year period.
- Have we ever contemplated allowing small community busses?
- A possible idea to explore is when a new community is developed the developer(s) be obliged to provide \$100,000-\$200,000 in funding for transit.
- A development should be planned in a comprehensive way to ensure shops are in walking distance to reduce needs for private autos.
- Population density is increasing in City Centre, and jobs are locating there to support transit investments.
- Public open houses were held looking at how to create a more dense City Centre.
- Tariq Ghuman noted he has a CD depicting low cost *container* housing.
- The bulk of Surrey is owned housing. 1/3 is rental. The stock of affordable rental units is an issue.
- Jobs to labour force ratio is a focus. Surrey is working on equalizing that ratio. 40% of workers who live in Surrey work in Surrey.
- Sky train station at King George will not be abandoned. The question is how to extend the rail service. The King George line will be continued over to Guildford with a line that splits off at City Centre and goes to Guildford.
- A major issue is expanded hospital services. Health services need to keep pace with population growth.
- Don Luymes requests any thoughts, ideas, issues and problems be emailed to ocpreview@surrey.ca.

The Chair thanked Don Luymes for the presentation and encourage all Committee Members to provide any suggestions they may have.

3. Aileen Murphy provided an update regarding the June 26, 2008 Welcoming and Inclusive Communities Forum.

The following comments were provided:

- The Province is seeing immigration as a two way process:
 - i. New immigrants adapting to life in Canada;
 - ii. Communities such as Surrey as being welcoming and adapting to newcomers.
- A new 3 year program is being created. Aileen Murphy is sitting on the Welcoming and Inclusive Communities Joint Steering Committee that brings together staff from Federal, Provincial and 8 Metro Vancouver Municipal governments.

- The Welcoming and Inclusive Communities Program includes community-led program elements that will provide funding to communities to work on the issue of making the community more welcoming of newcomers.
- Program has 4 components. Each component has dollars attached to it.
 - i. Community Partnership Development - up to \$15,000
 - ii. Knowledge Development and Exchange - up to \$50,000
 - iii. Public Education - up to \$50,000
 - iv. Demonstration Projects - up to \$250,000
- Province is accepting applications from communities for Phase 1 - Community Partnership Development (\$15,000). The funds are intended to be used to: 1. Create a “partnership group” that includes representatives from a broad range of sectors including settlement agencies, faith community, business, government and Aboriginal community; and 2. Develop an Action Plan.
- Surrey Foundation approached the City in the summer and expressed an interest in partnering with the City to lead this initiative. An application for funding was submitted to the Province in late August.
- On the proposed list of who would be in that partnership group is a representative from this committee.
- The focus will be on refugees as opposed to full range of immigrants.
- Expect to hear from the government regarding the approval of the application within the month. Stage 2 funding would allow a forum to be organized next spring. Aileen Murphy will advise the Chair when she receives response from the government regarding the approval of the application.
- Responsibility for settlement services and programs has recently moved from the Ministry of Attorney General to the BC Ministry of Advanced Education and Labour Market Development. Focus is much more employment based and how immigrants can find employment. Anti-racism and multiculturalism programs have remained with the Attorney General.
- Craig Amundsen noted that the feedback on the June 26 forum was positive. A similar event is being planned for the Interior of BC. There is a serious shortage of employees in some parts of the Province. Due to demands for labourers energies are now being focused on the need to import workers with trades skills.
- Craig also noted that New Westminster is being very proactive in setting up a welcoming committee with subcommittees for specific areas of the City.

Comments provided by participants in the 2008 Welcoming and Inclusive Communities Forum held on June 26, 2008:

- Sireen El Nashar – it was an excellent day. Of concern is that it was a bit too philosophical. Would like to see it viewed in short term – not looking 20-30 years in the future.
- Muhammad Malik – many great ideas were discussed. Question is how are we going to take action. Have to be specific about the action plan to

put things into practice.

- Connie Hong – the Forum was really well done. Had small group sessions. A few people pointed out that the Plenary Panel had no one from a Multi-cultural community. What policy-makers consider welcoming may not be what the newcomers think is a welcoming community.
- Emese Szücs – time was allotted for a one hour long discussion in smaller groups that involved about 25 people contributing ideas. It worries her that a full day of discussion should have been allotted to that alone.
- Craig Amundsen – looking for more action at a community level. The forum was discussing ideas at a high level. That first step is done and funding has been announced so we can now begin looking at local action.
- Aileen Murphy – This program is responding to the need to work at a community level to build up capacity to create a welcoming community. We will have some funding and can develop an action plan and then use the provincial funding to take action.
- There is the hope that we do use that money *wisely*.
- The final step is a demonstration project. The Forum was the beginning of the conversation, not the end.

G. INFORMATION ITEM

Committee members who wish to provide a presentation to this Committee are requested to contact the Chair or the administrative assistant in advance of the next meeting. The agenda goes together a week prior to the meeting.

H. NEXT MEETING

Next meeting of the Multicultural Advisory Committee scheduled for November 18, 2008 at 9:00 am at Pondsider.

I. ADJOURNMENT

It was

meeting do now adjourn.

Moved by Sireen El-Nashar

Seconded by Emese Szücs

That the Multicultural Advisory Committee

Carried

The Multicultural Advisory Committee adjourned at 11:15 a.m.

Margaret Jones, City Clerk

Chairperson, Councillor M. Martin
Multicultural Advisory Committee