



# City of Surrey

## Multicultural Advisory Committee

### Minutes

Executive Boardroom  
City Hall  
14245 - 56 Avenue  
Surrey, B.C.  
**TUESDAY, MARCH 6, 2007**  
Time: 1:10 p.m.  
File: 0540-20

#### **Present:**

Chair – Councillor Mary Martin  
Mayor Watts  
Councillor Higginbotham  
Councillor Villeneuve  
R. Asistio  
N. Beuk  
Dr. B. Gurm  
Corp. J. Hundial  
B. King  
J. Kovach  
F. Kung  
M. Malik  
C. McBeth –  
Alternate: S. Cadwallader, Director

S. El-Nashar  
K. Polubinski  
D. Sandhu  
S. Scott  
M. Solorzano  
E. Szucs

#### **Guest:**

V. Pittakidis  
T. Ghuman

#### **Absent:**

H. Hong  
K. Sanghera

#### **Staff Present:**

L. Chernick, Training & Development, Human Resources  
H. Dmytriw, Legislative Services

## **A. INTRODUCTION OF MEMBERS**

## **B. DELEGATION REQUESTS**

Councillor Martin advised the committee members that any delegations requests should be directed to the City of Surrey, Legislative Services.

## **C. STAFF PRESENTATIONS**

### **1. Celebrations and Accomplishments**

Louise Chernick, Training & Development Manager, provided a PowerPoint presentation to the new Multicultural Advisory Committee members, outlining City of Surrey past celebrations and accomplishments, and planned celebrations for 2007.

Owen Croy, Manager, Parks spoke about Surrey and provided the following information about the plans for cultural celebrations in the future and events happening around the city each year:

- 37% of Surrey's population are new people to Canada (information collected from 2006 Census).
- Fusion Festival
  - To receive funding from the government for 2008 of up to \$800,000.
  - This is a 3-day event, tentatively set for the August Memorial Day weekend or the September Labour Day weekend.
  - To be held at the Cloverdale Fairground Millennium amphitheater.

- The event to feature food, dance, creative storytelling, film, and music from around the world.
- This will be an opportunity for young filmmakers in Surrey to show their films.
- Hope to expand the array of events offered to the public.
- Children's Festival – sponsored by Surrey Council
  - Many nations represented
  - August Memorial Day at Bear Creek Park
  - 40,000 per day expected to attend
- Jamaican Festival
  - Hjorth Road Park (also planned events to be held at Holland Park once park is completed).
- Whalley Community Festival
  - Features food tasting, dance, and storytelling, but hope to grow these events.
- Lantern Festival
  - A remarkable event with months of construction of lanterns, a parade, and dance
- Vaisakhi Parade
  - The largest such parade around
  - Senior government officials attend
  - Parade route runs along 128<sup>th</sup> Street with speeches being held this year at a commercial park – more space is needed.
- Cultural Marketing Plan – a strategic Plan to reach out to residents of Surrey in an effort to ensure that the programs are more inclusive to people with disabilities and language barriers, through ensuring our printed materials are more representative of the different ethnic communities. Publications (i.e. Leisure Guide) show how to access translation services and multilingual signs are used showing services, such as washrooms, etc.

Discussion ensued and the following points and comments were raised by the committee members:

- The Federal Government has been approached regarding funding, but an answer for 2008 events will not be available until April. This information can hopefully be provided at the next Multicultural Advisory Committee meeting. It was noted that there has been a great deal of progress in making this grant happen.
- Establishing dates for the Fusion/Multicultural Festival is based on other scheduled events that need to be discussed with the various community cultural representatives first.
- Involving all cultural communities in these events is important for building understanding through sharing and learning. Hosting events such as tree planting/arbor days, actively engages the community in developing a synergy

where all groups come together and the event becomes a large event, an extravaganza, a month long cultural fair. Suggestions raised were:

- It was noted that Toronto hosts a “Caravan” whereby events are held in different locations of the city and the public follows the events, using passports to document their event locations.
- The First Nations community could bring in their tribal canoes. The City has four parks with amenities that are on the water that could be considered for events. Each park wouldn’t hold many people but each park could hold distributed aquatic events.
- Integration needs to happen. Being Canadian means knowing about all the cultures and integrating them.
- Our society needs to look at what is *common* as opposed to what is *different*.
- The comment was made that there may be -too much catering to ethnic groups. There is far more to culture than food and dance.
- The comment was made that communication be held in English as that is the only way others will integrate.
- There is the need to influence the City’s concept of diversity. Diversity encompasses ethnicity, sexual orientation, music, religion, food and culture.
- Start with the schools and with teaching our children how to love all cultures. Teach about Easter, Diwali, Vaisakhi, Red Envelope (Chinese New Year), samosas, etc. Easter is not about the Easter bunny and Santa is not what Christmas is about. The children are a good place to start learning about commonalities between value systems and spiritual backgrounds.
- Grandparent storytelling can be one of the most fun weeks at schools.
- City of Surrey offers an environment that fosters a positive environment for youth. The Leader and Now newspapers and the Leisure Guide offers information on sports, learning, activities, events and much more.
- Look at the media, communications, focus groups, workshops, and events to get the information on what the City offers, out to the public.
- One type of workshop we could do to build community is a values workshop to discover and bring *commonalities* to the forefront: equity, honesty, etc.
- Ethnic groups should not be pinpointed but expanded to represent areas such as the Caribbean, Spanish, eastern European, and Asian communities. Remove any reference to any ethnic specific groups.

Councillor Martin noted that the general consensus is that the group doesn’t want to wait for any funding to come through from Government, but want to keep involvement, have a plan, workshops, or presentations at each meeting in which to learn and share ideas. She asked that the committee members forward any ideas, suggestions or information to the recording secretary.

#### **D. NEW BUSINESS**

#### **E. ITEMS REFERRED BY COUNCIL**

#### **F. CORRESPONDENCE**

**G. OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS**

**H. NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Multicultural Advisory Committee is tentatively scheduled for 4:00 pm, Tuesday, May 8, 2007.

**I. ADJOURNMENT**

It was

Moved by Sandra Scott

Seconded by Sireen El-Nashar

That the Multicultural Advisory Committee

meeting do now adjourn.

Carried

The Multicultural Advisory Committee adjourned at 2:35 p.m.

Certified as true and correct:

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Margaret Jones, City Clerk

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Chairperson (Councillor Mary E. Martin)  
Multicultural Advisory Committee