



City of Surrey

Multicultural Advisory Committee

Minutes

Pondside Meeting room
City Hall
14245 - 56 Avenue
Surrey, B.C.
TUESDAY, JANUARY 15, 2008
Time: 9:10 a.m.
File: 0540-20

Present:

Chair – Councillor M. Martin
Councillor Higginbotham
C. Hong
J. Kovach
F. Kung
M. Malik
C. McBeth
S. El-Nashar
V. Pittakidis
K. Polubinski
W. Sandvoss
S. Scott
H. Stilwell, Surrey S.D.36
E. Szucs
M. Thompson

Absent:

Councillor Villeneuve
Mayor Dianne Watts
R. Asistio
N. Beuk
T. Ghuman
Dr. B. Gurm
Corp. J. Hundial
B. King
D. Sandhu
K. Sanghera
M. Solorzano

Staff Present:

L. Cavan, GM, Parks, Recreation & Culture
Craig Amundsen, Office of the Mayor
N. Webb, GM, Human Resources
L. Chernick, Training & Development, Human Resources
K. Swanson, Community Development Services Section
H. Dmytriw, Legislative Services

Guests:

Sue Zhang, and Vera, Fiona and Frank,
Divine Performing Arts
Paul Wheeler, Semiahmoo House Society
Jas Cheema, Surrey Public Library

A. ELECTIONS

1. The committee is requested to pass a motion electing the Vice-Chair for the 2008 calendar year.

It was

Moved by Councillor Judy Higginbotham
Seconded by Emese Szücs
That Cameron McBeth be elected as Vice-

Chair for the 2008 calendar year.

Carried

B. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

It was

Moved by Emese Szücs
Seconded by John Kovach
That the minutes of the Multicultural

Advisory Committee November 20, 2007, be adopted, as circulated.

Carried

C. DELEGATION**1. Divine Performing Arts Spectacular
File: 7800-01**

Sue Zhang was in attendance to provide a presentation on the Divine Performing Arts Group and provided information on the nature of the show and shared common grounds on how the show may contribute to the City's cultural development and diversity.

The following comments were provided:

- The Chinese Spectacular will be performing the Divine Performing Arts Spectacular in Surrey's Bell Performing Arts Centre, April 27 & 28, 2008.
- By popular demand the show is to expand to 220 shows in 65 cities for audiences totaling over 650,000 people on five continents.
- The spectacular was started in 2004 in an effort to reclaim Chinese long-forgotten traditions.
- The true essence of a Chinese spectacular constitutes:
 - A celebration of human dignity and positive values
 - Ode of Mulan - Mulan Triumphant – is a faithful account of the story of Hua Mulan, a true figure heroine in Chinese history
 - Divine Chinese culture
 - Divine performing arts group artists include Qi Zianchun, Gaimin Guan – “King of Tenors”, and Michelle Ren – famous dancer
 - Stages include New York Radio City, New York Beacon Theater, San Francisco Opera House, Berlin, Paris, Ottawa (last night – January 14, 2008) and Vancouver Queen Elizabeth Theatre
- A 10-minute video presentation was provided. This spectacular celebrates cross-culturalism, diversity and promotes cultural pluralism and response.
- The purpose of today's presentation is not just to promote ticket sales, but the belief that culture will bring spirituality to the community.
- The delegate congratulated Surrey for being chosen among the cultural capitals of Canada and thanked the Surrey Multicultural Advisory Committee for the opportunity of presenting today.

Councillor Martin thanked Sue Zhang for their delegation's presentation of the Shen Yun Chinese Spectacular.

D. NEW BUSINESS**1. Community Grass Roots**

Presentation regarding community grass roots by **Wally Sandvoss** was deferred to the March 18, 2008 meeting.

2. Multi-Cultural Sharing: Presentation Opportunities for 2008.

Cameron McBeth, Urban Aboriginal Community provided a presentation on the Kla-how-eya Aboriginal Centre of SACS and the First National Communities. Following are the comments provided:

- Cameron McBeth introduced himself as a Métis from Manitoba with historical family ties with the Dupuis family. He works with Homelessness and Steering Committees.
- Kla-how-eya is one of the areas where we provide services to the aboriginal community in Surrey –from where the people were to where we want them to be: to being healthy, vibrant and integrated into the rest of Canada.
- A 10-minute video was presented showing historical challenges of the Aboriginal peoples in Canada: “Our Nations have a Story”.
- An information sheet on Kla-how-eya Aboriginal Centre for SACS was provided on table.
- Aboriginal peoples include status and non-status. The people are surviving, rebuilding, healing their spirits, and strengthening their communities and their families through celebration of cultures and communities. They will succeed with new partnerships.
- Cameron is working with Surrey through a variety of social services that offer programs that provide community care and social services, training, employment and counseling services and fostering relations with other organizations who support the goals and objectives of the Society.
- Cameron thanked the committee for the opportunity of presenting today.

Councillor Martin thanked Cameron McBeth for his presentation.

3. Paul Wheeler from Semiahmoo House Society provided a presentation and information on the Semiahmoo House Society’s programs. Information packages and a DVD were mailed to the committee members in December to provide time for review. Following are the comments provided:

- Semiahmoo House Society has been in existence for 50 years this year. As recently as 30 years ago, the medical system encouraged people with cognitive impairment of one sort or another to be put into institutions. Thus organizations like Semiahmoo House Society was formed by parents to alleviate this practice.
- The biggest reason to be here today is that the Semiahmoo House Society considers itself the representatives of the wishes and needs of the community and the belief that everybody in the community has a responsibility to take care of its own members.
- The Semiahmoo House Society Board wants to hear from the wider community what the goals, dreams and aspirations are for the most challenged members of its communities; how and what kind of services should be provided.
- One of the things the society is conscious of is that, although the social services have been provided by the community for 50 years they want to be more inclusive and hear from all members of Surrey’s diverse community.

How do we as a community, reach out to the different communities for feedback from the people on how they think the people should be supported?

- The Society needs help with how to find those voices and what the expectations are for the long term future.

Discussion ensued and in response to queries the following information was provided:

- People find out about the services of Semiahmoo House Society usually through the school system and by word of mouth (other parents). The government and Community Living BC will provide the public with the information. One of the problems is there are many cultural groups in Surrey who do not hear about Semiahmoo House Society through these channels and do not get the possibility of support or help where needed.
- Many school board staff do a lot of advocating through the school system.
- Many cultural groups are very under-represented and receive no support. Some cultures are embarrassed by their family member's disabilities. It is the parents who need a support group. How do we connect with them?
- The packages and information has been forwarded to the Polish community with the request for feedback.
- One dilemma is that the services provided can usually be provided in the needed languages as the Semiahmoo House Society staff is very multi-lingual, but that need cannot always be met. The publication materials are all in English and that provides a language barrier for immigrant social services.
- The City of Surrey city has recently adopted a new social plan, which focuses on needs of the people with disabilities. A mapping of services, parent support groups, etc. for equal level opportunities could be provided to the general population as public information.
- There is a "red book", but not certain where to gain access to this. In the disabilities network, Surrey is the most responsive to peoples with disabilities. Semiahmoo House Society is probably the best known organization in British Columbia but, along with Kla-how-eya and many other organizations, are not known by many who should know. Semiahmoo House Society could partner with Surrey.
- There are 15 committee members not here today who are missing out on this information.
- About 20% with development disabilities need support. What used to be institutionalized homes and group homes are now used less and less, but the people are increasingly living in families and companion/model homes (this works much better), or are assisted in their own apartments.
- A high percentage of homeless are aboriginal people, but there also are those with cognitive disabilities.
- Semiahmoo House Society would love to get involved in 8-10 apartments (cluster apartments) in a large building, with staff as assisters. Options and Peace Arch Community Services have such a program.
- It was noted that this report was a masterful package of work. But the question was raised as to why there was not more representation from more ethnic groups. There is also the fact that a lot of cultures still have the "shame" of their disabled and challenged family members. We know they exist since their doctors know they were born. They are kept at home but

the community is unaware of them until their parents are too old to be a caregiver any longer. These citizens would not be seen in the video since they are very under represented.

- Semiahmoo House Society Board wants to set a policy and a strategic plan for its organization and coming to this committee is the first step. Are asking today if anyone from the Multicultural Advisory Committee would be interested in being a representative?
- Upcoming Event at Semiahmoo House Society: The Taste of BC's Finest – early May, annual fund raising event. Over 30 exhibitors and vendors come from all communities and give away beer, wine, food and chocolates. \$60. People tour buildings and talk to staff during this event.

Councillor Martin thanked the delegation for their appearance today.

4. Multiculturalism & Library Programming

Jas Cheema, Library Board, Surrey Public Library Administration, provided an overview on information received from other communities. Following are the comments provided:

- Delegate is interested in diversity. Currently a manager for Surrey Memorial Hospital and looking at building diversity and community engagement issues.
- Here today on behalf on Surrey Public Library
- Attended a conference in Toronto in the summer.
- Immigrant Populations - Attended a conference a couple of weeks ago with people from across Canada. Discussed what their cities are doing to address immigrant populations.
 - Federal Government provided \$15 M in funding to increase awareness of racism.
 - Employers with 100+ employees to encourage diversity in the work place.
 - Aboriginal communities and immigrant communities. These two particular communities are being focused on because these are the two populations that are growing the fastest.
 - How to address the needs of foreign-trained immigrants that are entering Canada? How to identify their needs? How to market the services and to gear towards the different communities?
 - Surrey Memorial Hospital is opening a new immigrant health services clinic, located out of Diversity's offices by Superstore.
 - Multicultural Health Fair - South Asian community.
 - This year opened to everyone to learn about healthy lifestyles.
 - Partnered with the City (thank you) and CBC and local businesses.
 - Cultural – teaching health professionals on health care and communication.
 - Keynote speaker, Adrienne Clarkson – spoke on targeting newly arrived immigrants and fully engaged citizens and getting them all fully engaged into their communities.
 - Professor Keith Banting – “Is multiculturalism actually working in Canada?”

- Following are some comments provided by the various City Mayors/Councillors in attendance at the immigrant populations conference:
 - Provincial government and the City to assist foreign-trained professionals – Mentoring of foreign-trained people and teaming them up with a mentor from the City to prepare them to find employment.
 - Inviting settlement workers into local libraries – showing them the reference materials available and brochures is a good use of libraries
 - Municipal governments to alleviate exclusion.
 - “Faces of Ottawa” - Employment area – train foreign-trained professionals to integrate them into the workforce, plus provide support for the employers.
 - Diversity policies within city. Showing real leadership in addressing these issues.
 - Website – portal launched – immigrants to citizens – labour market funding in partnership with stakeholders initiative, the aboriginal community and people with disabilities.
 - A list of staff that is available to speak other languages, if needed.
- How to create a more inclusive society through shared identities and common values, civic networks and increasing political association.
- The need for common values and goals in order to survive as a society.
- Immigrants come to Canada to become Canadian. We need to address that being Canadian is who we are. Encourage tolerance.
- Application in with Attorney General Office to open an office at Surrey Public Library. Heather currently has 35 settlement workers in a special office – just starting.
- EDGE – doing programs in library on foreign trade professionals.

Chairperson Mary Martin thanked Jaz Cheema for her presentation and noted that the City does a wonderful job of celebrating as many religious holidays as possible. The City of Surrey is diverse with many cultural employees.

Diversity has its own Cultural Diversity Awards celebrations in March that has been expanded to include the whole lower mainland.

Fei Kung arrived at 10:45 am.

Wally Sandvoss arrived at 10:50 am. His presentation has been deferred to the next meeting.

E. OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS

F. STAFF PRESENTATIONS

1. Laurie Cavan, GM, Parks, Recreation & Culture to provide an update regarding the Fusion Festival '08. July 18-19-20th, 2008.
 - Festival is funded thru Cultural Capitals of Canada.
 - Have been busy with the planning of the festival over the past few weeks. Donnelly and Associates have been confirmed as the production company to put on the Fusion Festival '08 for Surrey. This company has organized many festivals across the lower mainland. They put together a very strong proposal with many good ideas on how the festival can unfold. The company works on site layout, technical power, and are very inclusive in how they present. We are very pleased to have them on board.
 - Winter Festival – all members to receive a specific invitation to this event. Features will include great entertainment: Deli to Dublin, dance, pyrotechnics and will be a significant launch to the program.
 - Presentation will be made to school trustees (will be on the next Regular School Board agenda) January 24, 2008. To talk to school district regarding the Fusion Festival, the canoe journey event, and other programs.
 - Meeting with Fusion Festival Committee is scheduled for January 16, 2008 at 4:00 pm. Focus in on connecting with community groups and getting them showcased at the festival and presenting the festival to the community.

2. Laurie Cavan, GM, Parks, Recreation & Culture provided a virtual photo tour presentation of **Holland Park** showcasing the following highlights:
 - Central feature – stage and water features to be installed, great lawn are all connected with various walking paths throughout the park.
 - Finalizing construction for the grand opening in May.
 - Great lawn has extra drainage lines under grass so field drains quickly and is built to withstand heavy public use. The great lawn will have a great stage at one end.
 - The central staging area has been completed. Features include tiles, mosaic and waterfall, ponds, and a smaller stage. Hard surface all around the central staging area. A great feature for Fusion Festival and also for future events. The hard surface area is sunken to be an amphitheatre.
 - There are horticultural plantings with flowers and blooms, and a rose holly plant that has been created specifically for Holland Park.
 - Horticultural promenades at the main entrances emphasize the importance of welcoming entrances to the site and the landscape layout of Holland Park will provide connectivity of trails throughout the park for the programs.
 - The location offers spectacular views of the North Shore mountains and the public art features located throughout the park.
 - Adjacent malls will provide parking, but the use of public transit will be encouraged.

Discussion ensued and in response to comments and questions the following information was provided:

- Signage around park will be kept at a minimum to reduce barriers around parks and accessibilities. Washrooms will be brought in for the festival. .
- Bringing a staff member on to connect with all the different community

groups – anticipating that different groups will be showcased through the different pavilions. The main focus in the next couple of months will be organizing of a main central location called Canada Tent for the sharing of cultural practices and lifestyles.

- The annual Greek Festival in Vancouver is a wonderful event. They will also be participating in the Fusion Festival and at Holland Park.
Website: www.greekday.com
- The Polish community will be hosting a Multicultural fair at the Croatia Cultural Hall in Vancouver on February 23, 2008. Last year 1,500 people attended. Website: www.Ammsa.org
- Connie Hong –
 - 16 community services in Surrey are planning to do an event on anti-racism in April. The event will host one tent for all the agencies to bring their brochures and information.
 - Event on April 2nd – more specific issue: Diversity at Workplace. Pam Reddy – Guildford area is more accessible to service providers and the public. Venue still to be determined.
 - Panel discussion – 4-5 panels to discuss human rights aspect, and education.
- Judy Higginbotham – Mayors Task Force on Literacy & Early Childhood – Would like to do a gathering on partners in literacy. To access libraries, schools, etc. for lifelong learning. Looking at good programs to use or start. Information regarding this would be welcomed.
- Sandra Scott – February is Black History month. Jamaican Cultural Centre is putting on a gospel in honor with a Caribbean style worship service. People’s Full Gospel Church. Website: www.jccabc.net

G. NEXT MEETING

Next meeting of the Multicultural Advisory Committee to be March 18, 2008 at 9:00 am at Pondsider.

H. ADJOURNMENT

It was
meeting do now adjourn.

Moved and seconded
That the Multicultural Advisory Committee

Carried

The Multicultural Advisory Committee adjourned at 11:15 am.

Margaret Jones, City Clerk

Chairperson, Councillor M. Martin
Multicultural Advisory Committee