

Present:

Councillor Martin, Chair
A. David
C. Iweh
J. Kovach
K. Polubinski
K. Thiara
M. Fallon
M. Malik
M. Pyne
S. El-Nashar
T. Ghuman
T. Oleman

Absent:

Councillor Starchuk, Vice-Chair
B. Gurm
B. King
J. Thind
P. Aylward
S. Altokhais
S. Marcinkowska
S. Sabharwal

Staff Present:

D. Gill-Badesha, Healthy Communities
Manager
K. Boucher, Diversity and Inclusion
Coordinator
L. Cavan, GM, Parks, Recreation & Culture
M. Rukavina, Film and Events Manager
C. Tallarico, Employee Communications Lead
C. Eagles, Legislative Services

A. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

1. The committee will be requested to pass a motion adopting the minutes of May 17, 2016.

It was

Moved by K. Polubinski

Seconded by M. Malik

That the minutes of the Diversity Advisory

Committee meeting held May 17, 2016, be adopted as presented.

Carried

B. DELEGATION

1. **Sanctuary Schools Presentation**
Matt Westphal, Vice-President of the Surrey Teachers' Association
File: 0250-20

In attendance as a delegation before the Committee to provide a presentation on how to ensure access to public schools in the district for all students regardless of immigration status.

The following comments were made:

- Sanctuary Schools provides access to education for non-status immigrants. Children have the right to access an education and attend school without fear. Many children in the community are fearful of attending school because of a lack of legal immigration status, fear of risking deportation, and no clarity in the provincial law and school district procedures.

- Within Surrey, local schools require proof of citizenship from both students and parents in order to register, resulting in the parents not registering their child even if they were born in Canada and are citizens. Reasons for lacking an immigration status include:
 - Overstaying a work, student, or visitor's visa;
 - Denial of claim for refugee status or status based on humanitarian and compassionate grounds;
 - Increasing trends towards temporariness;
 - Sponsorship breakdown;
 - Issues in the immigrants home country; and
 - Government policies.

- Challenges non-status families face is a lack of access to education, healthcare, social assistance and housing, and the ineligibility for a Social Insurance Number. The current system in British Columbia has procedures that vary by school districts and student registrations are handled on a case-by-case basis.

- The next steps for Sanctuary Schools is to create awareness of the challenges facing non-status individuals in accessing education, health care and transportation. They believe the Province should clarify the law on school district policies for the definition of an "ordinary resident" to enable all students, regardless of immigration status, to attend school.

The Committee noted that the Sanctuary Schools Program is a good initiative and would like to see the Surrey School Board collaborate with the program to assist in helping students register in local schools.

It was

Moved by T. Ghuman

Seconded by S. El-Nashar

That the Diversity Advisory Committee request that the Committee School District Representative engage in a general discussion with the Surrey School District to support the Sanctuary Schools initiatives.

Carried

2. **Surrey Urban Aboriginal Social Innovation Strategy**

Tom Oleman, Diversity Advisory Member and Kristin Patten, Planner, Planning and Development

File: 0250-20

In attendance as a delegation before the Committee to provide a presentation on Phase I of the Surrey Urban Aboriginal Social Innovation Strategy, including some of the key findings and conclusions contained in the "All Our Relations" Report and activities planned for Phase II.

The following comments were made:

- Phase 1 “All Our Relations” of the Surrey Urban Aboriginal Social Innovation Strategy was developed because a portion of Surrey is on Reserve Lands and the Aboriginal community feels a sense of belonging in Surrey.
- The urban Aboriginal community in Surrey is very diverse and the population is significantly younger than the non-Aboriginal population. Aboriginal youth face unique challenges with personal safety, police relations, and age appropriate services. There are a high number of Aboriginal foster children living in the community and they face significant challenges and barriers concerning this. A disproportionate number of Aboriginal adults in Surrey lack a high-school degree, but many have post-secondary education.
- Aboriginal people refuse to ride transit due to personal safety concerns and as such end up staying in their homes and/or community. Aboriginal people would like a 24/7 crisis line.
- It was noted that the aboriginal population figures may not represent the accurate numbers of actual first nation members due to some choosing not to declare their aboriginal status.
- The need to expand services for aboriginal people is increasing. The aboriginal community requires more help to find employment and register in secondary and post-secondary school. The Aboriginal community want a place to connect with others; usually, Surrey Central Mall is where they gather to create a sense of community. The Aboriginal community can be improved by ensuring issues and unique needs are expressed to others.

It is aboriginal persons practice to conduct their ceremonies in a circle to show that each person is equal to others, and there is no head person.

The City of Surrey is engaging in multiple activities to support and recognize the impacts of residential schools and those children who did not make it back. Surrey has practices for welcoming and engaging members of the aboriginal community. The Committee supports the Surrey Urban Aboriginal Social Innovation Strategy and believes it is important to carry on and honour their traditions.

3. **2016 Surrey Fusion Festival Update**

Mary Rukavina, Film and Events Manager, Parks, Recreation and Culture
File: 8200-20

In 2008, Surrey was named the cultural capital of Canada, which led to the introduction of Fusion Festival. The 9th Annual 2016 Surrey Fusion Festival had a total of 39 Pavilions, five stages, many food trucks and sponsors, and over 100,000 people in attendance. There was a positive overall rating and quality corporations and sponsors at the event.

The Committee thanked staff for the contributions to make the Fusion Festival successful.

A. David left the meeting at 2:09 p.m.

4. Refugee Resettlement in Surrey

Chris Friesen, Director, Immigrant Services Society of BC

In attendance as a delegation before the Committee to provide a presentation on Syrian and other government assisted refugees settling in Surrey.

The following comments were made:

- In November of 2015, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau announced that Canada would accept 25,000 Syrian refugees. To date, 1,956 Syrian individuals have arrived to British Columbia and of those, 813 have secured housing in Surrey. In the next coming months, Trudeau is expected to announce an additional 25,000 Government Assisted Refugees (GAR), and announce a three-year immigration plan with indications to increase immigration to 1% of Canada's population, which amounts to 100,000 additional residents per year.
- As Canada doubles the amount of refugees from last year, Surrey will require additional access to services and resources. English language classes have over 7,000 individuals on the wait lists, which 3,000 of them are in Surrey. Once the Federal budget is announced, the Immigrant Services Society is hoping that key gaps such as the waitlists and youth services are addressed.
- When the Syrian refugees land in Canada, they are eligible to receive social services, health care, and access to public education. Government Assisted Refugees will also receive the rates that mirror Provincial rates for shelter, food, and allowance (commonly known as "welfare" rates). Surrey Local Partnership Immigration developed a strategic plan and articulated issues and shortfalls. There will be an increased number of residents in Surrey and immigrants will not be working immediately, meaning less taxes and contributions will be provided than what is required to sustain essential requirements.

It was noted that Immigrant Services Society will need to successfully transition these families to British Columbia given their culture differences.

C. OUTSTANDING BUSINESS

D. NEW BUSINESS

E. ITEMS REFERRED BY COUNCIL

F. CORRESPONDENCE

1. Proposed 2017 Meeting Dates

File: 0540-20

The Committee is requested to pass a motion adopting the 2017 Meeting Schedule as presented.

It was
Moved by M. Malik
Seconded by K Polobinski
That the Diversity Advisory Committee
adopt the 2017 Meeting Schedule as presented.
Carried

G. INFORMATION ITEM

1. Orange Shirt Day

File: 0630-02

On September 30, the City of Surrey will encourage Orange Shirt Day to honor the resilience and bravery of residential school survivors, their families, and the children that did not make it home.

2. 2017 Staff Education Diversity Calendar

File: 0630-02

The 2017 Diversity Calendar was distributed to the Committee.

H. OTHER BUSINESS

I. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Diversity Advisory Committee will be held on Tuesday, November 29, at 9:00 a.m. in 2E Community Room A.

J. ADJOURNMENT

It was
Moved by S. El-Nashar
Seconded by K. Polubinski
That the Diversity Advisory Committee
meeting do now adjourn.
Carried

The Diversity Advisory Committee adjourned at 2:48 p.m.

Jane Sullivan, City Clerk

Councillor M. Martin, Chairperson
Diversity Advisory Committee