



# Multicultural Advisory Committee – Minutes

Pondside  
City Hall  
14245 - 56 Avenue  
Surrey, B.C.  
MONDAY, JANUARY 17, 2011  
Time: 9:05 am  
File: 0540-20

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**Present:**

Chair – Councillor Rasode  
R. Asistio  
I. Chatha, Surrey S.D.36  
S. El-Nashar  
T. Ghuman  
C. Hong  
B. King  
J. Kovach  
M. Malik  
T. Oleman  
K. Polubinski  
M. Pyne  
S. Scott  
E. Szücs  
R. Takhar  
S. Sabharwal

**Absent:**

Councillor Martin  
Councillor Villeneuve  
Mayor Watts  
Dr. B. Gurm  
M. Solorzano

**Staff Present:**

L. Cavan, GM, Parks, Recreation & Culture  
N. Webb, GM, Human Resources  
K. Swanson, Manager, Community Development Services  
H. Dmytriw, Legislative Services

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Around the table introductions were made.

**A. ADOPTION OF MINUTES**

It was Moved by M. Pyne  
Seconded by S. El-Nashar  
That the minutes of the Multicultural Advisory  
Committee meeting of November 16, 2010, be adopted.  
Carried

**B. DELEGATION REQUEST(S)**

1. **Heidi McCurdy, *Soul of the World Multicultural Choir***, requested to provide a presentation regarding the Choir. They offer music and singing programs, creativity and expressive arts workshops and arts integration for classrooms -- celebrating diversity through the rhythms, poetry and harmonies of the world.  
File No. 0550-20-10

It was Moved by Councillor Rasode  
Seconded by S. El-Nashar  
That the Multicultural Advisory Committee hear  
Heidi McCurdy of the Soul of the World Multicultural Choir at a future meeting.  
Carried

2. **City of Abbotsford Diversity and Multicultural Committee** requested to provide a presentation and to discuss what Surrey is doing toward diversity and multiculturalism. File No. 0550-20-10

It was

Moved by Councillor Rasode

Seconded by S. El-Nashar

That the Multicultural Advisory Committee hear

the **City of Abbotsford Diversity and Multicultural Committee** at a future meeting.

Carried

## C. DELEGATIONS

### 1. Civic Engagement Programs

File No.

Judy Smith, Director of SFU Community Education Program, Dialogue Programs, provided a presentation regarding Civic Engagement Programs at SFU.

The following comments were provided:

- Talking and listening is necessary. It is necessary to feel included in the conversation, in order to resolve issues and to make a community be welcoming and inclusive.
- Surrey's diverse population is of great value.
- To dialogue strengthens mutual trust and negotiations.
- A graph was shown depicting Facilitated Dialogue at the centre surrounded by the categories of Community Consultations, Deliberation, Building Consensus, Conciliation, Arbitration, Mediation, Negotiation, and Civic Engagement.
- Skill building courses explore effective methods for hosting and managing dialogue-based processes. Dialogue programs and participatory Consultative Process and Decision Making programs are offered at SFU (Pacific Centre).
- Programs that foster positive change:
  - Facilitation, Dialogue and Leadership – offered in April
  - Design Processes for collaborative Decision making – offered in June
  - Dialogue and Negotiations – offered in September
  - Dialogue and Civic Engagement – offered in September. A program that attracts NGOs, First Nations Chiefs and Band leaders, activists, reps from crown corporations, advanced education facilities, city workers, union leaders, and many multicultural societies.
  - Instructors include: Tony Penikett – a Vancouver mediator, David Eaves, George Heyman, and Dr. Rhonda Margolis, diversity training
  - Learners are an important part with professional networking.
  - Classes are offered in six three-day chunks (Thursday, Friday, Saturday), plus a practicum.

Committee comments:

- Options to connect with Judy Smith to discuss partnering with SFU to dialogue regarding how to be a welcoming and inclusive intercultural committee, and the possibility of Judy Smith being the facilitator.

- One committee member noted that she took the Dialogue and Civic Engagement Program course last year; another member uses the programs in her work.

## 2. Welcoming & Inclusive Communities

File No. 0390-20

Mary Miller provided an update on the Welcoming & Inclusive Communities Project followed by a group discussion on how to engage the community in discussing the whole issue of the changing demographics of our society and how we can be welcoming and inclusive.

The following comments were provided:

- Surrey's Welcoming and Inclusive Community project is due to wrap up in May 2011. This is the time to provide a brief outline of the project and what we have learned in engaging the broader community.
- It is now time to focus our attention on the "Connections and Bridges":  
(a) Project update, (b) Exploring the concept of being a welcoming and inclusive community, (c) Concerns and issues, and (d) How do we educate and engage the public in this topics?

### (a) Project Update -

- We have connected reasonably well with newcomers. People in this room have been amazingly helpful.
- Five research projects:
  - i. Literature Review – read 65 top research projects in Canada and took the best of ideas and put into the report.
  - ii. Newcomers statistics analysis.
  - iii. Best practices in Surrey (SMH, Alexander Neighbourhood House, Women's Services Society, Options, Library) and asked them to reflect what they are doing to be welcoming and inclusive.
  - iv. 38 newcomer families have been interviewed to hear what has been and has not been 'welcoming'.
  - v. Reviewed the findings from parent focus groups, family resource places, City of Surrey, preschools. About 200 people participated in this exercise.
    - Documentary film ([www.wicsurrey.org/place-for-all](http://www.wicsurrey.org/place-for-all))
    - After school program focusing on diversity/ inclusiveness.
- Five demo projects:
  - i. City of Surrey PRC tours for newcomers
  - ii. Surrey Food Bank and DIVERSEcity's Community Kitchen
  - iii. Kings Place Lodge exploration of cultural neighbourhoods
  - iv. Surrey Library Employment program
  - v. Umoja Youth project
- Community Forum – Saturday, April 16, 2011. Michaëlle Jean, former Governor General and Commander-in-Chief of Canada, has been requested to be the keynote speaker.

### (b) Inclusiveness

Definition of inclusiveness - Common member and equal opportunity.

Inclusive community is one where people:

- Can find work that aligns with their skills and training;
- Can find decent and affordable housing;
- Feel connected to their neighbourhood and wider community; and
- Feel connected to government, especially local government.

Diversity is viewed as an asset -

- Diverse voices are heard.
- People take a collective effort to build their community and address local needs.
- Residents and local community and business leaders work together to reduce barriers separating different population groups.
- Leaders advance an inclusive view of community and speak out on behalf of disadvantaged citizens.
- Inclusiveness is a dynamic process of making and facilitating connections and is about making certain that residents have the opportunity to come together to share their ideas and concerns. That they have the ability and power to effect change and is about a web of relationships, commitment and caring. Taking concrete action on a day to day basis.
- Newcomers did not know how to safely handle the new variety of foods, or how to cook it and how to use the appliances. A community kitchen was held to teach the newcomers.
- They talk about jobs, housing, issues they face, get speakers in, make friends in the process.
- They all now able to enact change, establish dialogues and learn how to get together to effect change for their youth.
- Pie chart was viewed depicting Economics, family, community, education, housing, personal interactions and relationships, and Law.

**(c) Concerns and Issues**

- The biggest issue is getting jobs. There is a practical way to deal with this: work where they are learning English and using the skills they have.
- Temporary foreign workers – there are three times the number of temporary foreign workers as opposed to permanent residents. What are we doing to create a system that works for them?

**(d) Educating and Engaging the Public**

- Family Programs - Seniors, youth, kids, We need to pay attention to this. The community needs to always be attentive and ensure we are doing as much as possible.
- Education – Assess adult skills, upgrade and learn English at the same time.
- Isolation – Families talk about being lonely, needing to meet friends.
- Critical Success Factors -
  - Connections are everything

- Bridges are how connections are made  
"Getting to know Surrey" – this program provides busses, tours of local facilities.
- "One size does NOT fill all" - where and how to make connections with those they need to with regards to their own skills. (e.g.: film producers need to meet people in the film industry)
- Being proactive – both newcomers and Canadians – how can we get these messages out there; who can we engage with to get the message out? Who can we talk to about sharing key ideas and getting lots of folks involved and responding in practical ways?

Committee comments:

- Most important is to individually take that responsibility seriously and help at a personal level.
- How can we share this with the community?
- Professional bodies are not really educated about the foreign credential requirements. The question is what are the reservations about accepting the experience and credentials of the foreign professionals?
- We need to speak with the credentialing bodies about what we can do or who to talk to?
- Settlement agencies assist the newcomers when they arrive in Canada. Information is provided to newcomers to direct them to the right organization. The Ministry is looking at partnering with a personal aide right from the start to get them out there quickly. They are suggesting it be called "*a guided pathway*". This is a good model and as more flexible outreach programs and accompaniment is done, maybe the numbers will go down. We can connect the newcomers with the ethnic communities to assist with going to the bank, stores, etc.
- Years ago there was more emphasis placed on host programs and a broader reach of volunteers. They were good mentors to newly arrived families.
- Volunteer information and services available in Surrey such as Options, DIVERSEcity, Success, the City Hall, and courses available, etc. should be readily available to all on a central repository.
- Incentive programs for Canadians, whereby regular Canadians (such as stay at home mothers), can mentor or host an immigrant family to take them around to introduce them to the City and all it offers.

## D. OUTSTANDING BUSINESS

### 1. Multicultural Advisory Committee November 16, 2010 Workshop feedback.

- Committee members were requested to read through the workshop summary notes provided and provide any feedback and comments.
- Terms of Reference – Name change of MAC to Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Committee.
  - Committee discussion was held regarding the use of the word diversity and all it represents. As a Committee we want to celebrate our diversity, but also determine how to be more inclusive and reduce

barriers to people being involved. We want to look at our commonalities and to fully participate. By marrying the words *diversity and inclusion* this covers not only ethnicity but social status, challenges and disabilities, and takes us to the recognition about integration as being equal partners.

- We are also diverse and a place that we recognize as diverse. This is an evolving Committee with a growing and evolving City and recognizing our role within the community and wanting more participation.
- The name change could be relaunched at the Surrey Open Doors.

### COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

It was Moved by I. Chatha  
Seconded by E. Szücs  
That the Multicultural Advisory Committee  
recommend that Council change the committee name to "**Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Committee**".  
Carried

### COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

It was Moved by S. Scott-Phillips  
Seconded by M. Pyne  
That the Multicultural Advisory Committee  
recommend that Council change the Terms of Reference wording as follows:

1. Mandate
  - (a) The purpose of the Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Committee to enhance and celebrate diversity and inclusion and to advance Surrey as a welcoming and inclusive community for all.
2. Role
  - (a) The Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Committee is established to:  
*Fourth bullet to read: Continue to maintain and support the Fusion Festival and other cultural celebrations in the City;*
  - (b) The above actions are to be based on the principles of diversity and inclusion and cooperation and intercultural partnerships.
4. Staff Assistance
  - (a) *third bullet changed to read: Staff of the Human Resources Department*
5. Meetings
  - (c) A quorum for a meeting of the Committee to be one half of the Council appointed members plus one member.  
*the follow text added: Any member who is absent from three consecutive meetings of the Committee without reason satisfactory the Committee, may be removed from the Committee.*

Carried

## E. NEW BUSINESS

### 1. Refugee Issues in Surrey

File No. 5080-01

Aileen Murphy provided a presentation on refugee issues and what action the City is taking.

- Government Assisted Refugees (GARs) are refugees who the United Nations has identified as need protection. Coming from war torn countries, they have often witnessed or experienced unspeakable horrors. Many have lived in refugees camps up to 20 years.
- Once the refugees arrive in Canada, they have to repay their travel costs. A livable wage is difficult; many rely on social service agencies even to eat.
- Their numbers are small enough at this point that this is solvable. Small but with significant needs.
- 40,000 immigrants arrive each year. Many are highly skilled and highly educated. Refugees are a small portion of the total number, 3.5%. GARs form under 2% of the total number of immigrants.  
GARs are referred by United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. Since 2004, Canada accepts those “most in need of protection”. Initial settlement is financially support by Canadian government. Approx 7,400 per year come to Canada / 850 to BC.
- Transportation Loan Program - Upon arrival GARs must sign a loan document for transportation costs, pre-entry medical exams, service fee. This can amount to a maximum family loan equaling \$10,000. Children 19+ have their own loan. Repayment is expected to start after 12 months, interest starts after 3 years.
- GARs in Surrey in 2006-2009 - 1,218 GARs (approx 250 per year). About half are children and youth. 33% of all GARs arriving in Metro Vancouver 2004-2009 settled in Surrey. 77% of Somali GARs arriving in Metro Vancouver and 50% of Myanmar (Karen people) GARs settled in Surrey.
- ISS mapped out the clustering in Surrey neighbourhoods:
  - 200 people in Guildford area – 152 Street and 104 Avenue
  - 200 people in Cedar Hills area – 128 Street and 96 Avenue
  - 150 people in Grosvenor Road area – King George Blvd. and 108 Avenue
- Immigration and settlement is not a municipal responsibility. Refugee Assistance programs is through Citizenship and Immigration Canada Ministry of Regional Economy.
- City of Surrey Actions – Crime Reduction Strategy:
  - No. 1 - First Steps Refugee Early Childhood Development (ECD) Program
    - Surrey services providers identified the need to settle kids aged 0-6.
    - City contributed \$25,000 per year for 3 years to leverage over \$1 Million for pilot projects.
    - 3 year pilot project – intensive preschool program for refugee kids operated by Options, Diversity and Umoja has been extended to December 31, 2011.
    - First Steps model now in other Metro Vancouver communities.
  - No. 2 - Advocacy to terminate the Transportation Loan program
    - \$13-\$15 Million annually /\$38 Million for outstanding loans
    - City of Surrey Resolution - September 2009
    - UBCM endorsed Resolution – October 2009

- FCM adopted Resolution - September 2010
- Minister's response – "*The Government of Canada is committed to balancing the books.*"
- Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration - struck November 2010.
- Lobbying continuing. News articles will keep pressure on.
- GARs in Surrey Issues:
  - Housing study - low income, overcrowding and unaffordable housing, language and job training.
  - UMOJA: Basic literacy, social isolation, youth.

Committee comments:

- A lot of GARs are coming to Surrey. The burden of the loan repayment sometimes falls on the youth in the GAR family. Youth are ill prepared to take on this responsibility. This is a huge issue for Somali community.
- Schools are not doing enough for refugees. ESL programs are not what they need. They need the sciences and math programs. It was suggested that the Federal and Provincial Government be invited to come and hear the stories from the people.
- Our responsibility is to take a look at is how each of us could start a volunteer program to reach out. The groups are easily identified through neighbourhoods and schools.
- We, as a Committee, can partner with the SPAC to support the cancellation of the transportation loan program.

The Chair thanked Aileen for her presentation and the Committee members for their comments.

**F. ITEMS REFERRED BY COUNCIL**

**G. CORRESPONDENCE**

**H. INFORMATION ITEMS**

**1. MAC 2011 meeting dates schedule**

Committee members all agreed that the meetings on the third Tuesday morning of every second month should remain as such.

**2. Multicultural Advisory Committee Terms of Reference**

**I. OTHER BUSINESS**

**J. NEXT MEETING**

The next Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Committee meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, March 15, 2011.

**K. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting of the Multicultural Advisory Committee adjourned at 11:00 am.

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Jane Sullivan, City Clerk

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Chairperson, Councillor B. Rasode  
Multicultural Advisory Committee