



Hamilton

**MINUTES**  
**IMMIGRANT & REFUGEE ADVISORY COMMITTEE**  
**Thursday, May 12, 2011 - 6:30 pm**  
**City Hall, 71 Main St. W., Room 192**

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**Present:** Nasir Sarwar, Aspy Ayrton, Shuja Qureshi, Zafar Siddiqui, Maher Hamade, Abdulkhaliq Herati, Arvind Sahay, Joana Fejzaj, Minh Trinh, Hana Rotchild, Dena Honig, Mohamed Hamouda, Paul Hoang, Isaac Acquah, Sumaira Khurshid, David Hosten, Teresa Simms-Obidi, Dustin Rouse

**Also Present:** Maxine Carter, Dan Sadler - Access & Equity Division, City of Hamilton

**Regrets:** Thayra Marting

**Absent:** Rita Giancarlo

**1. DECLARATION OF INTEREST.**

None declared.

**2. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS.**

- All were welcomed and introduced
- Maxine Carter, introduced herself and outlined the role of the A&E Office including support to the advisory committees and outlined the positions in the office, as well as the office's location.

**3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA.**

- Addition of item 5.0, New Business
- Addition of item 5.1, Meeting time change
- Addition of item 5.2, Parking passes

**S. Qureshi/A. Ayrton**

To accept the agenda as amended.

**CARRIED.**

**4. Overview of past committee achievements.**

**4.1** Before the presentation started the discussions took place:

- Maxine noted that elections will be held for the positions of chair and vice-chair for the committee. The process of election was explained to all members including the rolls and responsibilities of the chair

- The idea of communicating among committee members was discussed and it was clear to all members that the best way to communicate is via e-mail; however, if some members choose to communicate via their personal telephone numbers or addresses it will be at their own choice and consent
- The committee also discussed the fact that the room was a little small for the number of people on the committee. M. Carter offered to check the availability of the adjoining room and advise the possibility of having both rooms open together. Healthy snacks were requested as well.
- Mohamed Hamouda volunteered to record the minutes and forward to Maxine

#### **4.2 Update from previous committee members – accomplishments and challenges.**

Everyone introduced themselves and gave a brief background as to why they wanted to be on the committee.

M. Carter informed the committee that their 2011 budget is \$3500 and there was a brief discussion regarding how and when the money can be accessed. For example, as part of our work plan for 2011 the committee will be hosting the “Newcomer Open House”. The open house will allow newcomers to introduce themselves to the Mayor, Councillors and staff and gather information about city services.

M. Carter will ensure that all members receive the December minutes of the previous committee.

David provided an overview of the past accomplishments. The committee had formed sub-committees whose mandates were different.

- To look at why new immigrants want to start a business, find it so hard to stay and do business in Hamilton
- Housing and why opportunities in this area for refugees are extremely difficult
- Language services for immigrants and refugees –the City should hire a greater number of people that speak a variety of languages

David then gave a brief overview of the previous committee’s accomplishments,

There was a discussion regarding the goals of the committee. What and how the committee should act in the future and how the committee can improve the life of new immigrants to Hamilton as well as how Hamilton can benefit from the immigration process,

The guide for newcomers detailing information about city services was discussed. An update is required and committee's input is required. The members will be provided a soft copy of the guide

**5. NEW BUSINESS.**

**5.1 Meeting time change.**

- A brief discussion took place regarding the time of the meeting. Some members thought a 6-8 pm meeting time might be preferable while others stated that a 6 pm starting time might affect their ability to be on time. M. Carter noted that any change in time would require a unanimous vote as the meeting time was known prior to the application period for the committee. It was decided that members think about the potential time change and the committee discuss it further at the next meeting

**5.2 Parking passes.**

- M. Carter explained that the City provides parking at the Convention Centre underground parking and that parking reimbursement for the City meters at the back of City Hall was determined to be a cumbersome process. Anyone with a disability can park at City Hall as long as they have an accessible sticker

**5.3 Next meeting agenda:**

- A review of the mandate of the committee is to be put on the next agenda and a discussion to bring in a facilitator to help develop a strategic plan

**6. Next meeting – June 9, 2011.**

**7. Adjournment.**

- Meeting was adjourned at 8:32 p.m.