



## Hamilton

### MINUTES

#### IMMIGRANT & REFUGEE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Thursday May 9, 2013 - 6:30 pm

City Hall, 71 Main St. W., Room 192

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- Present:** Maher Hamade, Dena Honig, Zafar Siddiqui, Aspy Ayrton, Paul Duc Thinh Hoang, Isaac Acquah, Joana Fejzaj, Minh Trinh, Nasir Sarwar
- Also Present:** Jaffar Hayat – City of Hamilton - Access & Equity Division  
Grace Maciak – Ontario Works Program
- Guest:**
- Regrets:** Maxine Carter, Arvind Sahay, Hana Pinthus Rotchild (leave), Shuja Qureshi, Sumaira Khurshid, Thayra Marting
- Absent:** Abdulkhaliq Herati

**1. Welcome and Introductions**

All were welcomed.

**2. Declaration of Interest**

None declared.

**3. Approval of Agenda**

**M. Trinh/N. Sarwar**

That the agenda be accepted, as presented.

**CARRIED.**

**4. Approval of Minutes of March 14, 2013**

The minutes of the March 14, 2013 were reviewed.

**A. Ayrton/Z. Siddiqui**

That the minutes of March 14, 2013 be approved, as presented.

**CARRIED.**

**5. Matters Arising from the Minutes of March 14, 2013**

**5.1 Discussion- Hamilton Immigration Partnership Council (HIPC) presentation.**

Follow-up discussion regarding the presentation of Linda Barton and Hila Taraky of HIPC at the March 14, 2013 meeting. The committee discussed various options to collaborate with HIPC, such as;

- To develop a formal partnership with HIPC. The committee could work in collaboration with HIPC to organize events and participate

in events and projects of HIPC. This collaboration could also help to bring more participants to the “Welcome Open House for Newcomers”.

- To be a member and/or observer of the governing council of HIPC. The committee members will have an opportunity to learn and to provide feedback on the organization`s program and services.
- Members of the immigrant and Refugee Advisory Committee could become members of each working group of HIPC. Since HIPC has several committees; we have enough members that we could each sit on one of their working group. The committee was informed that M. Hamade, is already a members of the “Employment Working Group”.

The committee members were asked to mail any additional ideas regarding the collaboration with HIPC to M. Carter.

## **6. Presentation**

No presentation.

## **7. Business Items.**

### **7.1 Work Plan & Priorities Discussion**

D. Honig requested sub-committees to organize their regular monthly meetings so that the work plan items for the term 2010-2014 are accomplished. Some members pointed out that it will be worthwhile to set a fixed monthly date for each of the sub-committees to meet.

The majority of members recommended leaving this matter to the discretion of each sub-committee and to keep the meeting dates flexible, however they agreed that each sub-committee will provide an update at the regular monthly meetings.

#### **7.1.1 Education (Sub-Committee 1)**

No report.

#### **7.1.2 Employment (Sub-Committee 2)**

No report.

#### **7.1.3 Partnerships with Service Providers (Sub-Committee 3)**

No report.

#### **7.1.4 Refugee Claimants (Sub-Committee 4)**

No report.

**8. Review and Comment on Reports, Legislation and Studies**

No report.

**9. Correspondence/Current Affairs**

No correspondence.

**10. New Business**

**10.1 Request from J. Vengris, Housing and Homelessness Strategy**

The committee discussed the request of Jennie Vengris, Senior Policy Analyst, Housing Services for a presentation to the committee on Housing and Homelessness Strategy. Committee members felt that it would be worthwhile to know about the findings and recommendations before hand so that they can learn more about the program. The committee decided to develop some questions to be asked during the presentation on June 13, 2013. It was also recommended to prepare questions and send them to M. Carter.

**A. Ayrton/Z. Siddiqui**

To invite Jennie Vengris, Senior Policy Analyst, Housing Services for a presentation to the committee in its June meeting.

**CARRIED.**

**10.2 Resignation of Arvind Sahay and Hana Pinthus Rotchild**

J. Hayat informed the committee that Arvind Sahay and Hana Pinthus Rotchild have tendered their resignations. Both of them have cited personal reasons for their decision and wish the committee well.

**A. Ayrton/N. Sarwar**

That the committee accept the resignation of Arvind Sahay and Hana Pinthus Rotchild, with regret.

**CARRIED.**

**M. Hamade/A. Ayrton**

That staff purchase a card on behalf of the committee, for Arvind Sahay and Hana Pinthus Rotchild and that it is signed by all members.

**CARRIED.**

### **10.3 Discussion: Open House**

D. Honig invited discussion regarding continuing with the Welcome Open House for Newcomers in 2013. The committee members decided that it was in fact important to continue the annual event. They unanimously agreed to organize the event on a Saturday. The committee also expressed the desire to continue to build partnerships with organizations like Hamilton Immigration Partnership Council and Citizenship and Immigration Canada.

The committee also discussed various ways to target settlement agencies in open house, such as;

- Talking to the funding organizations
- Engaging the management of settlement service providers
- Outreach

After some discussion the committee agreed to host the open house on Saturday October 19, 2013.

#### **A. Ayrton/M. Hamade**

That the Immigrant and Refugee Advisory Committee's Welcome Open House be set for Saturday, October 19, 2013 from 12 noon to 4 p.m.

**CARRIED.**

The committee also requested staff to prepare a task list and circulate it to the members, so that various tasks and responsibilities are assigned to different people.

### **11. Information Sharing**

None.

### **12. Next Meeting Date**

The next meeting will be held on June 13, 2013.

### **13. Adjournment**

#### **A. Ayrton/ M. Hamade**

That the meeting be adjourned, at 7:40 p.m.

**CARRIED.**