

MINUTES IMMIGRANT & REFUGEE ADVISORY COMMITTEE (I & RC)

Thursday, June 14, 2012 - 6:30 pm City Hall, 71 Main St. W., Room 192

Present: Aspy Ayrton, David Hosten, Maher Hamade, Arvind Sahay,

Dustin Rouse, Minh Trinh, Dena Honig, Paul Hoang

Also Present: Maxine Carter, Jaffar Hayat – City of Hamilton - Access &

Equity Division, Grace Maciak, Ontario Works Program

Regrets: Hana Pinthus Rotchild (leave), Nasir Sarwar (leave), Isaac

Acquah (leave), Zafar Siddiqui, Shuja Qureshi, Abdulkhaliq

Herati, Joana Fejzaj, Thayra Marting, Sumaira Khurshid

Absent:

1. DECLARATION OF INTEREST.

None declared.

2. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS.

All were welcomed and everyone introduced themselves.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA.

Addition of Item 10.1: Community Briefing- News Letter Addition of Item 9.1: Sharing of new paper Articles Addition of Item 11.1: Date and time for next Sub-committee meetings.

A. Ayrton/A. Sahay

To accept the agenda, as amended.

CARRIED.

4. Approval of minutes of May 10, 2012.

Correction: Min Trinh was present at the meeting of May 10, 2012. Correction: Item 3; 10.7 spelling error By-law instead of Bye law.

A. Ayrton /M. Hamade

To approve the minutes of May 10, 2012, as amended.

CARRIED.

5. Matters Arising from the Minutes of May, 10, 2012.

5.1 Work Force Census:

The committee agreed that the ideas generated during the discussion at the May 10, 2012 meeting regarding the results of the Workforce Census for the City of Hamilton warrants a more focused

discussion. The matter was referred to the sub committee dealing with Employment.

D. Honig/M. Hamade

That the following discussion points taken from the May 10, 2012 committee meeting be added to the sub-committee work plan dealing with Employment Opportunities.

- Some members noted that they know of qualified individuals who have applied for jobs that they are qualified for but very few have been successful in obtaining interviews and even fewer get work with the City.
- Members recommended that the Human Resources develop a process whereby prior to final selection candidates are interviewed one more time.
- It was also recommended that the City develop a transparent process whereby candidates have a right to request an explanation for why they were not successful in getting the job that they were in competition for. This will be a good learning process for them.
- Aspy Ayrton cited the case of medical doctors in Ontario and how one school of medicine revised its entry test criteria by adding the interview process and awarded a huge percentage for this part of the process. In so doing this addition ultimately reduced the numbers of Asian students that were accepted to the school.
- The committee agreed that one of the sub-committees will collect and track these cases where qualified individuals who are newcomers are not getting jobs that they are competing for in the hiring process. More discussion to come at future meetings.
- That the Human Resources at the City conduct a system's review, to ensure that the entire recruiting, hiring, retention, promotion and evaluation process is fair and equitable and it was suggested that this is also a requirement of the new AODA 2005 (to facilitate the hiring of persons with disabilities.)

• The committee also noted that they could provide valuable input to the Human Resources at the City regarding the entire recruitment, selection, hiring and retention process?

CARRIED.

The committee discussed how the Immigrant and Refugee Advisory Committee can connect regularly with the Hamilton Immigration Partnership Council and other committees that focus on issues related to newcomers.

D. Hosten stated that the committee must play a proactive role and research the issues pertaining to the employment of new comers to Hamilton. The committee should be focused on providing advice to Council and staff regarding these issues.

Members also raised the issue of lack of involvement of the committee in the Local Immigration Partnership Council (LIPC). M. Carter, informed members that the previous chair of the committee was a member of LIPC, as a result of request made on behalf of committee. His role was to bring back the information to the committee and to also provide guidance and information sharing with the LIPC on specific issues.

Some members also suggested that it will be of benefit to join other groups working for the same cause and represent the committee in those forums.

M. Hamade informed the committee that he has joined Employment and Labour Workforce Planning Committee of HIBC working on the employment of new comers in Hamilton.

5.2 Arts of August Fashion Show

The committee decided that since J. Fejzaj who requested to have this item put on the agenda is not present to speak about the event and considering that the time frame is very tight for sponsoring the event, that this initiative be abandoned.

M. Hamade/A. Sahay

To abandon the idea of sponsoring the Arts of August Fashion Show event due, to time constraints, to make the partnership successful.

CARRIED

5.3 Super Visa

This item was tabled to the next meeting.

5.4 Awareness and Outreach.

The committee discussed alternative ways to improve its outreach. Regarding the use of virtual media, committee discussed the use of "Linkedin", an internet based service to share and access information. However, it was pointed out that many newcomers to Canada may find it difficult to use these forms of communication due to English as their second language and perhaps lack of familiarity. It was also highlighted that the information at Linkedin can also be translated in other multiple languages.

5.5 By Law and Equity Policy Review Project.

The committee members who volunteered to attend the workshops, requested more information about the project. M. Carter informed members that once the workshop plan and schedule is finalized they will be provided with more information. This should happen in late July.

6. Presentation.

No presentation.

7. Business Items.

7.1 Work Plan & Priorities Discussion.

Committee members agreed that it would make sense if they wait until the August or September meeting so that members who are absent will have an opportunity to join a sub-committee, before formally starting sub-committee meetings. Sub-committees should be prepared to develop their task lists and work plans within the next couple of months before presenting to the larger committee.

7.1.1 Employment Sub-committee.

This committee will meet briefly at the end of the formal committee meeting to discuss their next meeting date and time.

7.1.2 Partnerships Sub-committee.

The committee members asked for clarification regarding the meaning of partnerships. Members also realized that it would be beneficial to network with these organizations so that we could learn more about the mandate of each other.

In the ensuing discussion partnership was defined as:

- ➤ A relationship where members can gather and or share information
- Networking with other groups working for the same cause
- > Developing resources for immigrant and refugee affairs
- ➤ Advocating for immigrants and refugees

The sub-committee will prepare a plan and present it to the larger committee at a future meeting.

7.1.3 Open House Sub-committee:

M. Carter briefed the committee regarding the availability of the dates for the open house. It was decided that she will circulate these dates by email. The dates selected were October 13th and 14th 2012.

7.1.4 Business cards:

The members have requested business cards for committee members so that members can share these business cards when they attend community events and functions. M. Carter to work on getting the business cards as soon as possible.

8. Review and comment on reports, legislation and studies.

No reports.

9. Correspondence/Current Affairs.

No correspondence.

10. New Business.

10.1 Community Briefing - New Letter

A copy of the spring issue of "Community Briefing" was distributed for information only.

10.2 Sharing of Articles

A copy of following articles from Globe and Mail was distributed;

- Why Canada Needs a flood of immigrants
- > Essential resources to immigrating to Canada
- ➤ Let the job market choose our immigrants
- How networking helped prevent an immigrant brain drain in Nova Scotia
- > Canada must actively recruit the best and brightest immigrants

D. Hosten highlighted the salient features of each article including how it affects new comers to Canada.

11. Next Meeting Date.

The next meeting will be held on July 12, 2012.

12. Adjournment.

The meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.