



Hamilton

MINUTES
IMMIGRANT & REFUGEE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Thursday March 12, 2015 - 6:30 p.m.
City Hall, 71 Main St. W., Room 192

Present: Dena Honig, Aspy Ayrton, Abdulhaliq Herati, Thayra Marting, Minh Trinh, Sumaira Khurshid
Also Present: Maxine Carter, Cindy Mercanti – City of Hamilton - Access & Equity Division; Grace Maciak – Ontario Works Program
Regrets: Zafar Siddiqui, Paul Duc Thinh Hoang, Joana Fejzaj, Maher Hamade (on leave)
Absent: Isaac Acquah
Guests:

Chairperson: Dena Honig

1. Welcome and Introductions.

- D. Honig welcomed everyone, at 7:00 p.m.

2. Declaration of Interest.

- None declared.

3. Approval of Agenda.

- The agenda was reviewed.

A. Ayrton/T. Marting

That the Immigrant and Refugee Advisory Committee agenda, of March 12, 2015, be accepted, as presented.

CARRIED.

4. Approval of Minutes.

4.1 February 12, 2015.

- The minutes were reviewed by committee members.

A. Ayrton/S. Khurshid

That the Immigrant and Refugee Advisory Committee minutes, of February 12, 2015, be approved, as presented.

CARRIED.

4.2 Matters Arising from the Minutes.

Welcome Open House (Item 6.2)

- M. Carter confirmed that an e-mail response was sent to Brett Basbaum, who manages the English as a Second Language program, at the Hamilton Public Library, regarding his invitation to host the Newcomer Open House, at the Central Library. The response was as the committee requested, that the Immigrant and Refugee Advisory Committee prefers to host the open house at City Hall. B. Basbaum was thanked for his interest and support of the newcomer open house.

5. Presentation.

5.1 None.

6. Business Items.

6.1 Work Plan & Sub-committee Reports.

6.1.1 Education.

- Tabled.
- The committee agreed that all sub-committees will be put on hold until the next meeting agenda, at which time the committee will have a more fulsome discussion regarding the merits of these sub-committees.

6.1.2 Employment.

- Tabled.

6.1.3 Partnerships with Service Providers - Newcomer Welcome Package.

- Tabled.

6.1.4 Refugee Claimants.

- Tabled.

6.2 Welcome Open House – Debrief and Follow-up.

- Confirmation of date for Open House - Sept. 26, 2015.
- April 30, 2015 agenda for meeting with Agencies – same as 2014.
 1. Summary overview of Open House, evaluation summary.
 2. Questions for service providers and questions for the committee.
 3. Ideas for improvement of the event.
 4. The use of the Passport – was this a meaningful exercise?
 5. Promotion of event.

6.3 Sanctuary City – Follow-up.

- Maria Antelo, Sanctuary City Chairperson, to be invited to the April 9, 2015 meeting or to a meeting that is convenient to her schedule.

6.4 Immigrant and Refugee Committee Action Items and Initiatives Presentation.

- S. Khurshid provided an overview of the draft presentation. S. Khurshid asked committee members for input, regarding the following:
 - a. Challenges and successes.
 - b. How could social media be used to promote the Immigrant and Refugee committee?
- G. Maciak – suggested access to information, regarding trends & new ideas regarding newcomers, through cooperation with Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC)
- Invite agency representatives to future meetings, e.g. St. Joseph Immigrant Women’s Centre, CIC and Hamilton Legal Clinic

S. Khurshid/T. Marting

That the Immigrant and Refugee Advisory Committee invite agency representatives from St. Joseph’s Immigrant Women’s Centre, Citizenship and Immigration Canada and Hamilton Community Legal Clinic to future meetings to provide an overview of their current services as it pertains to immigrants and refugees.

CARRIED.

S. Khurshid/T. Marting

That the Immigrant and Refugee Advisory Committee accept the draft report of Action Items and Initiatives Presentation prepared by S. Khurshid as presented.

CARRIED.

6.5 Hamilton Immigration Partnership Council (HIPC).

- D. Honig met with Lily Lumsden and provided an overview of the meeting. The following was shared.
- YMCA – Programs for immigrants and newcomers – wants to get newcomers access to free bus passes. G. Maciak informed the committee that most cities offer newcomers transportation allowances and or bus passes, for free.
- D. Honig to invite Lily Lumsden to the next Immigrant and Refugee Committee meeting or a meeting convenient to her, to explain the initiative, in more detail. The Committee will decide, at that time, how they wish to proceed.

A. Herati/S. Khurshid

That the Immigrant and Refugee Advisory Committee accept the Chair’s report with respect to the Hamilton Immigration Partnership Council (HIPC).

CARRIED.

7. Review and Comment on Reports, Legislation and Studies.

- There were no reports.

8. Correspondence/Current Affairs.

- There was no correspondence.

9. New Business.

9.1. Budget 2015.

- The Immigrant and Refugee members discussed the budget submission document, for the 2015 period

A. Ayrton/S. Khurshid

That the Immigrant and Refugee Advisory Committee approve the 2015 Budget submission, in the amount of \$3,500, as presented and that the document be forwarded to the Audit, Finance and Administration Committee, for inclusion in the 2015 budget process.

CARRIED.

10. Information Sharing.

10.1 The Home Ownership information session will be held on Wednesday April 8, 2015 and Thursday April 9, 2015.

10.2 A Guide to the Finding Housing in Hamilton was shared.

11. Next Meeting Date.

- The next meeting will be held on April 9, 2015.

12. Adjournment.

A. Ayrton/A. Herati

That the Immigrant and Refugee Advisory Committee meeting, of March 12, 2015, be adjourned, at 8:30 p.m.

CARRIED.