



Hamilton

**MINUTES**  
**IMMIGRANT & REFUGEE ADVISORY COMMITTEE**  
**Thursday February 14, 2013 - 6:30 pm**  
**City Hall, 71 Main St. W., Room 192**

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

Maher Hamade chaired the meeting.

**1. Welcome and Introductions.**

All were welcomed.

**2. Declaration of Interest.**

None declared.

**3. Approval of Agenda.**

The agenda was reviewed. The following items were added under item Information Sharing (item 11):

**3.1** Addition of item 11.1 - Youth Gambling Awareness Program.

**3.2** Addition of item 11.2 - HCCI: Café Conversation.

**3.3** Addition of item 11.3 - Call for Interpreters.

**3.4** Addition of item 11.4 - HPS: Towards Eradicating Racism.

**D. Honig/S. Qureshi**

That the agenda be accepted, as amended.

**CARRIED.**

**4. Approval of Minutes of January 10, 2013.**

The minutes of the January 10, 2013 were reviewed and the following corrections were made: item 7.1.1. correction to the spelling of Minh Trinh; item 7.1.2 - correction to the names of Aspy Ayrton and Paul Hoang; and under item 7.1.3 - correction to the names of Arvind Sahay and Shuja Qureshi.

**A. Sahay/M. Trinh**

That the minutes of January 10, 2013 be approved, as amended.

**CARRIED.**

**5. Matters Arising from the Minutes of January 10, 2013.**

**5.1 Hamilton Immigration Partnership Council (HIPC).**

M. Hamade provided an update to the committee regarding the upcoming presentation by Linda Barton, Manager of HIPC.

Members were reminded that they can visit the HIPC web site to review the mandate and services that HIPC provides.

Committee members have requested that M. Hamade forward the following questions to L. Barton, prior to her attending the meeting:

- Please provide a comparison of HIPC Strategy to other municipalities' immigration strategies or other Immigration Partnership Strategies in other localities.
- Why are so many immigrants relocating to Alberta? How can we keep them here?
- How many new immigrants arrived in Hamilton in 2010/11/12?
- Can you provide us with a listing of all the settlement services in Hamilton and what services they provide to newcomers?

**6. Presentation.**

No presentation for this meeting.

**7. Business Items.**

**7.1 Work Plan & Priorities Discussion.**

**7.1.1 Education Sub-Committee 1.**

**S. Khurshid, D. Honig, M. Trinh and G. Maciak**

The Education sub-committee did not meet in January.

The committee members discussed next steps. They discussed carrying out an audit of all educational and all language programs for newcomers.

They will review websites of CIC, settlement.org and professional licensing body's websites to get a better understanding of what currently exists.

The committee has expressed an interest in knowing what information is given out at the airport to new immigrants in the Welcome Packages.

S. Qureshi volunteered to investigate and obtain a sample of such package.

Staff will provide committee members with a copy of the Newcomer Welcome Guide for review at the next meeting. The Education sub-committee will update and add, if necessary, information regarding

education, careers, credentials, upgrading and other relevant information with respect to the Education section.

**M. Trinh/S. Qureshi**

That the report of the Education Sub-committee be accepted, as presented.

**CARRIED.**

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

**Maher Hamade, Dena Honig, Aspy Ayrton and Paul Hoang**

The committee did not meet in January.

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

**Arvind Sahay, Shuja Qureshi and Minh Trinh**

A. Sahay provided an overview of the committee's work over the past month.

Next steps will be to meet with the Welcome Open House sub-committee to discuss the agenda for the service providers meeting.

**A. Sahay/M. Trinh**

That the report of the Partnerships with Service Providers sub-committee be accepted as presented.

**CARRIED.**

**7.1.4 Refugee Claimants.**

**Thayra Marting, Zafar Siddiqui, Paul Hoang**

Members reported that, as a result of the recent changes by Citizenship and Immigration Canada, six countries will lose their status to apply for asylum in Canada, as those countries are now being declared as safe. Eight more countries will join this list shortly (perhaps as soon as February 15, 2013). This change may affect the new applicants but is not retroactive.

The sub-committee will investigate and bring back information to the full committee regarding the impact of the new amendments to the act. Staff will do some fact finding and forward such information to the committee members.

**M. Trinh/S. Qureshi**

That the report of the Refugee Claimants Sub-committee be accepted, as presented.

**CARRIED.**

**8. Review And Comment On Reports, Legislation and Studies.**

No report.

**9. Correspondence/Current Affairs.**

No correspondence.

**10. New Business.**

**10. 1 Review of Membership.**

M. Hamade, contacted member, Nasir Sarwar to investigate his intention to return to the committee, since his leave of absence has expired. Nasir Sarwar did indicate to M. Hamade that he is returning to the committee.

M. Hamade requested that the new chair continue to pursue other members whose leave of absences have expired to confirm their intentions to return to the committee.

**10. 2 Resignation of Dustin Rouse.**

M. Carter informed the committee that D. Rouse tendered his resignation to her and wishes his resignation to take effect as of today.

**T. Marting/S. Qureshi**

That the committee accept the resignation of Dustin Rouse, with regret.

**CARRIED.**

**10. 3 Election and Appointment of Chair.**

Staff called for nominations and volunteers for the position of Chair. The following members were nominated:

- On a motion, M. Hamade was nominated for Chair. M. Hamade declined.
- On a motion, Dena Honig was nominated for Chair. D. Honig accepted.
- No other nominations were put forward.
- Dena Honig was appointed as Chair, by acclamation.
- That Dena Honig be appointed as Chair of the Immigrant and Refugee Advisory Committee.

**M. Trinh/T. Marting**

To appoint Dena Honig, Chair of the Immigrant and Refugee Advisory Committee, for a period of one year.

**CARRIED.**

**11. Information Sharing.**

**11.1 Youth Gambling Awareness Program.**

P. Hoang distributed a brochure about the “Youth Gambling Awareness Program” and informed members that the program needs to reach all youth, especially the hard to reach youth who may be in the immigrant communities. P. Hoang will send committee a link to the program.

**11.2 Café Conversations.**

A. Sahay distributed a brochure promoting “Café Conversations” organized by the Hamilton’s Centre for Civic Inclusion.

**11.3 Call for Interpreters.**

M. Carter distributed information regarding a call for interpreters in the court system. She asked that members distribute to their networks.

**11.4 Towards Eradicating Racism.**

M. Carter distributed a brochure of the event “Towards Eradicating Racism” to be held on March 21, 2013 and organized by the Hamilton Police Services, in recognition of the United Nations Designated Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.

**12. Next Meeting Date.**

The next meeting will be held on March 14, 2013.

**13. Adjournment.**

**S. Qureshi/M. Trinh**

That the meeting be adjourned, at 8:30 p.m.

**CARRIED.**