




**HIPC Partnership Council Meeting Minutes**  
**Tuesday, December 6, 2022 | 2:00 – 4:00pm | The Gasworks, 141 Park North**

**Present:** Rashed Afif (chair), Claudio Ruiz-Pilarte (vice-chair), David Hennick, David Quezada, Grace Baldwin, Jennie Hamilton, Kim Martin, Kojo Dampthey, Larry Huibers, Lily Lumsden, Lina El Ali, Didier Aoue (for Luc Bonaventure), Nabila Sissaoui, Sandra Valeri, Yudara Weerakoon, Sarah Wayland (HIPC staff), Natasha Hernandez (HIPC staff), Mohammad Araf (HIPC staff)

**Guests:** Astrid Hepner, Hamilton Music Collective

**Regrets:** Anabelle Ragsag, Cheryl Stepan, Deborah Schwientek, Grace Maciak, Jennifer Patterson, Olive Wahoush, Morris Hucal, Sue Connell, Uzma Qureshi

**Absent:** Khadija Hamidu, Leo Johnson, Maria Holland, Noura Afify, Paul Szachlewicz, Paul Takala, Rami Safi, Terri Bedminster, Stephanie Taylor

Item Description	Summary	Supporting Documents
Land Acknowledgment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Land Acknowledgment was offered by David Quezada. (document attached)</li> </ul>	 Land of acknowledgement by _____
Welcome, Introductions & Agenda Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rashed welcomed Council members.</li> <li>Kojo Dampthey will be leaving Hamilton Centre for Civic Inclusion in February 2023 and thus stepping down from HIPC Council. Rashed thanked Kojo for his work as an active member of HIPC since 2019 and the chair of the Anti-Racism Working Group, which has had many accomplishments since it was formed.</li> <li>No corrections were suggested to the last meeting minutes.</li> <li>Motion to approve meeting agenda was moved by Dave Hennick and seconded by David Quezada.</li> </ul>	
ARGW Presents: What One Thing?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This agenda item gives space for a HIPC member to share an initiative or practice around anti-racism and anti-oppression within their own organization and generating discussion among HIPC members.</li> <li>Claudio talked about an initiative led by OCASI that his organization, Immigrants Working Centre, is participating in.</li> <li>IWC is taking part in an initiative started by OCASI called Positive Spaces Initiative to engage with community organizations to (when applicable) adjust their policies and practices to better meet the</li> </ul>	

Item Description	Summary	Supporting Documents
	<p>needs of the LGBTQ community. As part of this initiative, a survey was sent out to all organizations to evaluate staff readiness to engage in training for organizational change, to build staff knowledge, and inform their attitudes. The initiative will start in a few months.</p>	
<p>Connecting Newcomers and Families: Hamilton Music Collective</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Astrid Hepner from the Hamilton Music Collective provided an overview of the organization and its programs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The vision of the collective is to create a space for youth, being inclusive and making music accessible to everyone.</li> <li>○ The collective was founded in 2008 and the “An Instrument for Every Child” program was launched in 2010 in partnership with school boards in Hamilton.</li> <li>○ The program intends to reach kids who do not have the opportunities to be exposed to music. Most of the kids are in “priority” schools identified by the school boards.</li> <li>○ The collective has served almost 6,000 kids since 2008. 600-700 children are currently enrolled.</li> <li>○ The program provides instruments and instruction. Research shows music education has many benefits on the brain and can help build cognitive and behavioural skills.</li> <li>○ HMC relies on fundraising and has a strong group of individual and corporate donors, including the City of Hamilton.</li> <li>○ Programs are open to everyone, and many newcomer kids are participating. This is a great way for newcomer kids to make friends and get exposed to music at the same time.</li> <li>○ Scholarships and subsidies are available. More information is available on the program website.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>Hamilton Music Collective website at <a href="https://hamiltonmusiccollective.ca/">https://hamiltonmusiccollective.ca/</a></p>

HIPC Evaluation and Planning: Activity

- Araf, Yudara and Sarah delivered a presentation on the findings from HIPC evaluation and partner survey. (presentation attached)
- Partner survey results showed that top barriers to successful settlement and sense of belonging for newcomers were: lack of employment opportunities commensurate with skills, lack of housing availability and affordability, lack of social connections, discrimination/racism, and lack of knowledge of official languages.
- Two breakout groups discussed what each organization is doing to address the above-mentioned barriers and what actions HIPC can take. Top 2-3 actions that were reported are highlighted below:

**Breakout Group Discussion 1:**

What are organizations doing?

- Wesley delivers community connections programs virtually for Ukrainians and Government-Assisted Refugees. Topics range from fraud and scam prevention with the police to doing income tax with Service Canada.
- *Réseau francophone* works closely with the informal sector to do in-person activities, events and workshops to promote social connections.
- College Boréal has a navigator who is responsible for planning activities with newcomers. The college's employment department helps a lot of newcomers with employment.
- IRAC has had challenges to maintain its members and meet on a regular basis. Participation in HIPC helps us to develop ideas on what our committee should work on.
- Good Shepherd focuses on emergency issues like shelter. COVID has exacerbated lack of social connections. The organization can do better in promoting social connections as well as services that already exist in the community. Most clients served by Good Shepherd's family shelter are refugees who may not be eligible for certain settlement services. The organization has set aside budget for interpretation as well.
- YMCA can connect with Good Shepherd as their funding allows them to serve everyone regardless of status.
- There are 315 people on the waitlist for LINC classes and 111 for ESL classes. YMCA does 400 language assessments each month. Being on these waitlists can impact both language acquisition and social connections for newcomers. Creating more spaces for language classes is a funding issue.
- The sector continues to be challenged by workforce issues and turnover among teachers.
- YMCA has been doing more English Conversation Circles to fill this gap. There is a need for evening and online classes.
- Childcare spaces also impact the waitlist as some newcomers look for classes that provide childcare.
- Hamilton Police Service has been sending its members to go out in different communities and participates in job fairs as HPS is currently hiring for various positions. HPS has also partnered with community organizations such as PraAction to hold events focusing on diverse communities.



v2HIPC Evaluation  
Report Findings - Cou

**Actions HIPC can take:**

- Have HIPC's presence at different community events, including at places of worship.
- Leverage HIPC membership to translate and modify (through a cultural lens) the existing pamphlets on domestic violence, human trafficking, the role of Children's Aid Society and more.
- Organize more networking events beyond the Newcomer Day.
- Connect with the informal sector and ethno-cultural association and host events in their community spaces.
- Newcomers face discrimination in housing. While landlord discrimination used to be more subtle, recently there has been more overt discrimination. Create a formal committee on housing and bring someone from City housing at the table.
- Promote opportunity for organizations to participate in the creation of the Hate Crime Review Team.

**Breakout Group Discussion 2:**

**What are organizations doing?**

- Wesley and IWC offer community connection programming. IWC's programs include community gardening, weaving programming, cooking programs etc. Wesley recently created a program for seniors based on their feedback.
- There is a need to work on connecting to other services beyond settlement.
- COVID has affected social connections, behavioural issues, and social consequences.
- Integration is a two-way street and requires both groups (newcomers and Canadian-born population) to try to learn from each other.
- Seniors are particularly vulnerable because of lack of social connections.
- Examples of ways to promote social inclusion include welcoming events at schools with social services available. This can be an opportunity to connect with other families.
- Burlington Public Library promotes accessibility for all. It emphasizes the importance of space and not only books/services. It is important to tailor services for newcomers/immigrants.

**Actions HIPC can take:**

- Bring people together, facilitate conversations. Create fellowship opportunities.
- Identify more specific gaps around social connections (e.g. who is not socially connected?)
- Promote civic engagement beyond election time especially as many newcomers do not have the right to vote in the first 3-4 years of arrival.
- There is a huge backlog for LINC classes, and funders are not adjusting to this need. There is a need for more funding.
- Renters are less likely to vote, and many newcomers are renters.
- Housing challenges perpetuate the social isolation/lack of social connections.
- Ask communities what types of events they would like to have.

Committee Reports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social inclusion and Community Engagement Committee: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Lina reported the committee met on November 22 and had guest speakers from St. Matthew’s House and Environment Hamilton. The committee is making progress on several projects.</li> <li>○ Stories of Migration and Belonging Exhibit part II: 6 nominees were selected, and the filming is completed. There will be an event early next year to showcase these stories.</li> <li>○ Inclusion Campaign: The report from community listening sessions is finalized. A planning team has been meeting regularly. Possible launch of the campaign (named Hamilton For All) in spring 2023.</li> <li>○ Planning for the Newcomer Day will start early next year. Connect with HIPC team to be part of it.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Anti-Racism Working Group: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Sarah provided an update on behalf of Kojo, the working group chair:</li> <li>○ The working group has had many accomplishments since its creation: 1) reviewed HIPC terms of reference and recommended changes, all of which were adopted, 2) disseminating/acting on discrimination survey findings, 3) articulated need for a new Hamilton-focused inclusion campaign, 4) instituted land acknowledgment protocol, and 5) implemented “what one thing” agenda item.</li> <li>○ Current projects include an EDI Checklist for use in four areas: events and meetings, project development and planning, communications, and research and evaluation. The checklist is aspirational and will be a ‘living document’ that evolves. It is intended for HIPC internally, but it is hoped that other organizations will draw from it.</li> <li>○ The WG will meet in January to discuss next step to the workshop held in 2020 for the incoming council.</li> <li>○ Call for new members: With the departure of several members, the group is issuing a call for new members to join this working group.</li> <li>○ David Quezada offered to be part of the working group.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
HIPC Business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HIPC Communication Strategy: Natasha encouraged members to use this document for their own organization’s communication. The document includes best practices, how to use different communication channels and for what purposes. (document attached)</li> <li>• Stories of Migration and Belonging Exhibit: Filming took place November 28, and the team will plan an event early next year to launch the exhibit with Hamilton Civic Museums.</li> <li>• Newcomer Day: City Hall is tentatively booked for Friday, May 26 for an in-person event. Sarah has sent a request to IRCC for a citizenship ceremony. There is an opportunity to work with IRAC and other organizations around this table to hold a fun, informative and celebratory event.</li> </ul>	Presentation - - sent separately
Roundtable Updates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kim shared Social Planning and Research Council’s recent publication based on analysis of census 2021 data on different topics including poverty, housing, social assistance rates.</li> </ul>	
Adjournment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Next meeting in March 2023 (TBD)</li> </ul>	

