



Hamilton

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

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

**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 11 - Information Sharing:

**3.1** Addition of item 11.1 Conference for Internationally Trained Professionals.

**3.2** Addition of item 11.2 The Centre - ESL Program.

**3.3** Addition of item 11.3 The Newcomers Magazine website.

**A. Ayrton/T. Marting**

That the agenda be accepted, as amended.

**CARRIED.**

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

The minutes of the February 14, 2013 were reviewed and the following correction was made: item 7.1.3. A. Sahay moved the motion. A. Ayrton was absent from the meeting.

**A. Ayrton/S. Qureshi**

That the minutes of February 14, 2013 be approved, as amended.

**CARRIED.**

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

All matters arising are also on the agenda.

**6. Presentation.**

Linda Barton, Program Manager and Hila Taraky, Working Group Coordinator, Hamilton Immigration Partnership Council (HIPC).

L. Barton provided a brief overview of the HIPC. The organization was established in 2009, as the Local Immigration Partnership Council, by Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC), as a planning and advisory body, dedicated to forging community partnerships and to improve the access, coordination and effectiveness of local settlement and integration programs and services.

The HIPC is a multi sector stakeholder body, comprised of community leaders representing organizations that provide services to or have an interest in the integration of newcomers to the city.

The first tasks of the HIPC included establishing a vision and terms of reference, undertaking local needs assessments and research and establishing a three-year Immigration Strategy and Action Plan. Based on an extensive process of community consultations and research, the Immigration Strategy identified four strategic priorities:

- Building Collective and Collaborative Leadership
- Strengthening Settlement Services
- Creating A Welcoming Community
- Creating and Disseminating Knowledge of Immigration

**Q: How are the HIPC Programs evaluated?**

The organizational activities, tools and programs are evaluated at all the levels by HIPC as well as the CIC. The work plan is reviewed on a regular basis, by HIPC, CIC and community partners. All of the events are evaluated, participant's feedback collected and reports generated. Furthermore, the working groups, which are comprised of members of public, also evaluate various documents and services provided by HIPC.

**Q: What parameters are being used in the evaluation process?**

The following information is used to develop parameters for evaluation:

- Assessing local newcomer needs and community settlement service assets and gaps.
- Creating a single community focal point around immigration.
- Developing local partnerships for information mapping, sharing, planning, coordination and priority setting.

- Recognizing the strengths of Hamilton's civil society and tapping into the social capital of the community.
- Expanding the number and diversity of local stakeholders addressing settlement issues.
- Increasing mainstream provider and newcomer awareness of settlement services.
- Increasing the number of local agencies adapting programs and services to immigrant needs.

**Q: Who are your main funding sources?**

The local Immigration Partnerships, across Canada, are funded by CIC and the City of Hamilton is the contract holder for HIPC.

**Q: How many immigrants do you have on the Council and how many immigrants are on the sub-committees?**

There are a significant number of newcomers in both Council and working groups, comprising of members of the public and various settlement agencies, including the YMCA, St Joseph Immigrant Women's Centre, Centre Francais, the school boards, Mohawk College, College Boreal, Hamilton Public Library, Circle of Friends and Wesley Urban Ministries.

**Q: How many members are on the HIPC and are they elected?**

The HIPC makes an open call for membership on its website. Currently there are 22, who are selected for a two year term. There is no limit on the number of terms each member can serve on the committee.

**Q: Are there any services available in French? What is available if newcomers would like to learn French?**

The resources and services are available in French, through our Francophone partners. For example, Francophone providers do offer Linc programs in French. You must be Francophone. If you are not Francophone, you can learn French. French courses are offered at a variety of colleges and universities. The costs are: Mohawk College - \$250.; McMaster - \$300.; College Boreal - \$300.

**Q: What is the definition of newcomer?**

There is no set definition, however, anyone who has landed within the last 5 years is considered a newcomer. HIPC services those who have landed within 10 years.

**Q: What is the process when newcomers land at the airport, in (Toronto) Canada?**

Our Settlement Service Providers Working Group has developed various communication materials and resources on programs and services available in Hamilton. These resources are readily available to newcomers in Hamilton. The HIPC has distributed more than 1,000 copies of these resources through various outreach events. The Family Class immigrants are met at the airport by their families and the family is responsible for them for a certain number of years. Skilled workers, must bring a certain amount of their own finances with them. This class of immigrants are welcomed at the airport.

**Q: What is the outcome of HIPC? Newcomers within their first year arriving in Hamilton move out to other locations.**

In order to overcome various issues being faced by newcomers, the organization operates through a steering committee, which is comprised of the following working groups:

- Settlement Service Provider Group
- North Hamilton Community Health Centre
- Housing
- Employment/Labour Market
- Language Training

The chair of each of these working groups ensures coordination of the work and report back to the HIPC.

The service providers regularly share information on new and changing programs and services, developing communication materials and sharing best practices and professional development opportunities.

**Q: Are there any services for international students?**

There are some groups working with international students but HIPC is not on the table.

**Q: Would the HIPC not benefit from having the Immigrant and Refugee Advisory Committee at the HIPC table?**

The HIPC appreciates the work of I&RAC as a Council's advisory committee and looks forward to working with I&RAC.

The committee was also informed that the next report of HIPC will be launched at the end of March, 2013.

**Q: Are they elected?**

Members are selected by a committee.

**Q: What is the term?**

There is a staggered term of 3 years. There is no limit for terms.

**Q: What are the criteria?**

Criteria is on the web site.

The committee thanked L. Barton and H. Taraky for attending the meeting and providing an overview of HIPC's roles and responsibilities.

**Z. Siddiqui/A. Ayrton**

That the presentation made by Linda Barton, Program Manager and Hila Taraky, Working Group Coordinator of the Hamilton Immigration Partnership Council, be accepted, as presented.

**CARRIED.**

**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 committee did not meet in February, 2013.

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

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

The committee did not meet in February, 2013.

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

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

S. Qureshi, presented a report to the committee regarding, the information that he gathered from Malton Neighbourhood Services.

The information collected was specifically concerning what information is given to newcomers when they land in Canada.

Malton Neighbourhood Services, provides settlement services at the airport. Up to three members of the committee have been invited to visit the reception centre. Shuja Qureshi and Grace Maciak volunteered to go.

**Z. Siddiqui/A. Ayrton.**

That Shuja Qureshi and Grace Maciak, visit the Malton Neighbourhood Services reception centre, with the specific purpose of collecting information and observing the process of newcomers entering Canada.

**CARRIED.**

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

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

Staff distributed materials to the sub-committee members containing the following documents:

- Changes to refugee system - Policy
- CIC - Summary of Changes to Canada's Asylum system
- CIC - Designated Countries of Origin (DCO) Criteria and list of DCOs
- CIC - Overview of Canada's Refugee Program
- CIC - Making Canada's Asylum System faster and fairer
- Article - Acceptance rates for refugees to Canada decline substantially since 2006

The committee will review the information and report back at the next meeting.

#### **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.**

D. Honig has sent e-mails to the 3 members who have not attended 3 meetings consecutively, requesting that they reply to her regarding their intentions to remain on the committee. She is waiting for a response.

Committee members requested that staff follow-up with the Clerk's Office to find out if there are potential members who may be on a waiting list.

#### **11. Information Sharing.**

##### **11. 1 Conference on Internationally Trained Professional.**

M. Carter informed the committee that the Conference on Internationally Trained Professional is being held on April 5, 2013 at the Toronto Convention Centre. She distributed the brochures.

##### **11.2 The Centre (Skills Development & Training), ESL Program, in Burlington.**

The program brochure for the English as Second Language (ESL) program by The Centre, was distributed, for information.

**11.3 The Newcomers Magazine.**

D. Honig informed the committee that she regularly receives the Newcomers' Magazine, which has many helpful resources and relevant information. Members requested that she share the link, electronically.

**12. Next Meeting Date.**

The next meeting will be held on April 11, 2013.

**13. Adjournment.**

**A. Ayrton/S. Qureshi**

That the meeting be adjourned, at 8:25 p.m.

**CARRIED.**