



Hamilton

**MINUTES**  
**IMMIGRANT & REFUGEE ADVISORY COMMITTEE**  
**Thursday January 10, 2013 - 6:30 pm**  
**City Hall, 71 Main St. W., Room 192**

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

**Absent:**

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 and approved with amendments.

**3.1** Addition of item 10.4- Resignation of David Hosten and the request for a leave of absence by J. Fejzaj from the Committee.

**3.2** Addition of item 10.5- ON Track Employment Tips

**3.3** Addition of item 10.6 Election of a New Chair

**A. Ayrton/S. Qureshi**

That the agenda be accepted as amended.

**CARRIED.**

**4. Approval of Minutes of December 13, 2012.**

The minutes of the December 13<sup>th</sup> meeting were reviewed and it was noted that Jaffar Hayat was not present at the meeting and committee requested that his name be removed from the minutes.

**A. Ayrton/D. Rouse**

That the minutes of December 13<sup>th</sup>, 2012 be approved, as amended.

**CARRIED.**

**5. Matters Arising from the Minutes of December 13, 2012.**

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

The committee discussed the invitation of the Hamilton Immigration Partnership Council's (HIPC) manager, Linda Barton. The committee was informed by Maher Hamade, who is a member of the HIPC Employment sub-committee that one of the organization's mandate is to develop a strategy for newcomers and immigrants in Hamilton. Committee members felt that it would be worthwhile to know about the tools, programs and the direction in which the HIPC is moving to help newcomers find jobs and or careers in Hamilton. The committee decided to develop some questions to be asked during the HIPC presentation on March 14, 2013.

The following questions were put forward:

- Why does HIPC exist? What is its purpose?
- Please explain how the HIPC programs are evaluated.
- What parameters are being used in the evaluation process?
- Who are your main funding sources for the organization?
- How many immigrants do you have on the Council and how many immigrants are on the subcommittees?

**6. Presentation.**

No presentation for this meeting.

**7. Business Items.**

**7.1 Work Plan & Priorities Discussion.**

**7.1.1 Education Sub-Committee.**

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

The sub-committee reported that they are still collecting information about various programs offered by educational institutions and agencies serving newcomers.

Some questions raised by the members the committee were:

- What will be the use of this information by the sub-committee regarding various programs and services?

- How are various programs linked with each other within one organization? For example, ELT and OSLT, as well as Future Ready programs at Mohawk College.
- What are the similarities and differences among those programs being offered to the newcomers?
- How do these programs help newcomers overcome the barriers they face:
  - For example, the ESL program does not offer any transportation for students to get to the program.
  - Some programs offer very basic levels of education and many newcomers are much more highly educated than what is being offered - so what is the benefit to them?
- How will the new changes to the Canadian Immigration Act, regarding the requirement to have knowledge of English and/or French affect these programs?

The committee members were also informed about the availability of some free online courses being offered by some renowned institutions in the United States, such as MIT, Howard University and Berkeley University. Apparently these programs offer certificates of completion. Committee member S. Khurshid shared this information with the committee. She informed the members that these courses are available, free of charge to newcomers who may not have the money to pay for school however need to enhance and prepare themselves for work in Canada.

### **Future Ready Program, Mohawk College**

The Education sub-committee provided an overview of the Future Ready Program currently being managed by Linda Epplert at Mohawk College. The program is aimed at creating career opportunities for the graduates of the college. The program brochure is available on line.

The sub-committee will continue to work with the manager of the program regarding upcoming programs and services.

### **S. Khurshid/A. Sahay**

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

**CARRIED.**

### **7.1.2 Employment Sub-Committee.**

**D. Rouse, Maher Hamade, Dena Honig, Aspy Ayrton and Paul Hoang**

D. Rouse reviewed the subcommittee's report from the December 13, 2012 meeting.

M. Hamade provided an overview of the "On Track" guide developed by the HIPC and informed members that this guide is an educational piece as well. The purpose of this guide is to help newcomers find work by increasing their access to information regarding existing opportunities and programs in Hamilton. This manual will be provided to all the service agencies in Hamilton. The following suggestions were made by the committee members;

- HIPC should be working with the Immigrant and Refugee Advisory Committee since they have similar goals.
- Members felt that HIPC should report to the Immigrant and Refugee Advisory Committee and hence a request will be made to the City Council.
- It is desirable to create a partnership with service providers and link them with the City of Hamilton services and programs.
- Develop and collect information regarding what other service providers are doing.
- Collect feedback from the other participants attending the open house.
- To translate the guide into other languages to improve access and understanding of newcomers.
- These guides should be provided at the entry points such as airports and bus stations, to those destined to Hamilton.

The committee members agreed to go through the On Track resources and send any questions or feedback to M. Carter (staff) prior to the next meeting.

**D. Rouse/S. Qureshi**

That the report of the Employment sub-committee be accepted, as presented.

**CARRIED.**

**7.1.3 Partnerships with Service Providers Sub-Committee.  
Arvind Sahay, Shuja Qureshi, Minh Trinh**

A. Sahay provided an overview of the committee's work over the past few months. He shared a copy of the questionnaire that was developed for service providers. The purpose of the questionnaire is to find out what services agencies provide for newcomers.

It was recommended by the members that sub-committee 3, work with the Welcome Open House sub-committee and specifically be involved in the organizing of the meeting with service providers who attended the annual open house. The purpose of this meeting is to gather feedback and generate new ideas for this year's open house event.

**A. Sahay/S. Qureshi**

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

**CARRIED.**

**7.1.4 Open House Sub committee:**

No report.

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

No reports.

**9. Correspondence/Current affairs.**

No correspondence.

**10. New Business.**

**10. 1 Initiative for newcomers who are professionally trained.**

This item was brought forward by D. Hosten, the committee Chair.

**S. Qureshi/A. Sahay**

That Maher Hamade, Vice Chair, follow up with D. Hosten regarding the purpose of item 10.1 and should he have any information regarding the subject that he submit the information through the vice-chair.

**CARRIED.**

**10. 2 Facilitation Inclusion Cooperative (FIC).**

S. Khurshid briefed the committee about the mandate of Facilitation Inclusion Cooperative. She reported that the group has trained more than 100 women and carried out various research and facilitation projects.

**10. 3 Review of membership.**

The committee will have a fuller discussion at their next meeting. M. Hamade will work with M. Carter to review the list of members currently active and those on leave.

**10. 4 Resignation and Leave of Absence.**

**10.4.1 Resignation of David Hosten**

M. Carter informed the committee that D. Hosten, Chair of the committee tendered his resignation to her earlier today and wishes his resignation to take effect as of today. He cited personal reasons for his resignation and wishes the committee well.

**A. Ayrton/A. Sahay**

That the committee accept the resignation of David Hosten, with regret.

**CARRIED.**

**S. Queshi/P. Honig**

That staff purchase a card on behalf of the committee, for David Hosten and that it is signed by all members.

**CARRIED.**

**10.4.2 Leave of absence request for J. Fejzaj**

J. Fejzaj provided a written request to the committee asking for approval of a two month leave of absence from the committee.

**A. Ayrton/ S. Khurshid**

That the two months leave of absence requested by J. Fejzj be approved.

**CARRIED.**

**11. Next Meeting Date.**

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

**12. Adjournment.**

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

**S. Qureshi/P. Hoang**

That the meeting be adjourned.

**CARRIED.**