

HALIFAX REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY

COMMUNITY AND RACE RELATIONS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

OCTOBER 4, 2000

MINUTES

PRESENT: Ms. Betty Thomas, Chair
Ms. Sylvia Parris
Mr. Haji M. Amari
Mr. Andre Massicotte
Ms. May Lui
Mr. Tom Rissesco
Mr. Keith Gillis

ALSO PRESENT: Ms. Charla Williams, Coordinator, Diversity Programs
Ms. Lynne Le Boutillier, Assistant Municipal Clerk

REGRETS: Councillor Blumenthal

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.0	Approval of Agenda	3
2.0	Approval of Minutes	3
3.0	Business Arising from Minutes	
3.1	Web Site	3
3.2	Update on Problems Identified with Internal Communications	3
4.0	Update from Community & Race Relations Policy Implementation Committee	3/4
5.0	Chair's Report	4
6.0	2000 - 2001 - Workplan	4 & 5
	Brochure	4
	Suggestions to Tourism, Culture and Heritage	5 & 6
7.0	Issues Affecting Diverse Communities	6
7.1	Communications Between New Canadians and the Police	6
7.2	Municipal Elections	6
8.0	New Business	
8.1	CRRF - Awards of Excellence Program	6
8.2	Community Grants Program	6
8.3	Membership Applications	6 & 7
9.0	Next Meeting Date	7
10.0	Adjournment	7

The meeting was called to order by the Chair at approximately 5:00 p.m. in the Board Room of the offices of Tourism, Heritage and Culture, 2nd Floor Ferry Terminal.

1.0 APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Added to the agenda as item 8.3 was Membership Applications.

The agenda, as modified, was adopted on motion of Mr. Massicotte and Ms. Lui.

2.0 APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the August 2nd meeting were adopted, as circulated, on motion of Mr. Rissesco and Mr. Massicotte.

3.0 BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES

3.1 WEB SITE

Deferred in absence of Mr. Canales-Leyton.

3.2 UPDATE ON PROBLEMS IDENTIFIED WITH INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS

Ms. Williams recalled that this subject had been raised by Mr. Canales-Leyton as a result of problems he encountered in May trying to find out information pertaining to an event in City Hall. She reported that this is not a new issue and felt a letter should be written to the Mayor's Office stating concerns and providing suggestions or recommendations as to what the Committee would like to see done.

4.0 UPDATE FROM COMMUNITY AND RACE RELATIONS POLICY IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE

Ms. Williams reviewed with the Committee the events held during Diversity Week, which had been organized by the Community and Race Relations Policy Implementation Committee. The purpose of the event was to help employees develop a better understanding of diversity. Ms. Williams felt it had been a good turnout although the number of participants was small. Approximately 100 persons participated. She noted that the Kick-off was attended by Ken Meech. Guest speakers were Mayann Francis, Executive Director, N.S. Human Rights Commission and Blye Frank, Mount Saint Vincent University. Mr. Frank's focused on the subject of sexuality in the work place, particularly heterocentrism. Ms. Williams had a copy of his presentation. A discussion followed on

having Mr. Frank speak on another occasion and Ms. Williams explained why she did not feel this was practical.

It was noted that the Mission Possible - An Ability Challenge to be held on the Tuesday was cancelled. It will be held as a standalone event at a later date.

The Employee Equity Forum attracted a dozen or so community representatives and a similar number of HRM staff. The Building Cultural Competency Training was attended by eight to ten individuals.

Multicultural/Heritage Potlucks were held at four or five HRM offices. This event was very well received.

Ms. Williams met with Mr. McLellan after the event. He expressed disappointment regarding the number of people who got involved.

Mr. Massicotte questioned Ms. Williams on what progress is being made on implementing the Community and Race Relations Policy. It was noted that representatives of the Committee had met with EMT, December 10, 1999 on this issue. Ms. Williams felt the progress made may not have met the Committee's expectations. In some measure, this reflects a lack of staff resources. It would be helpful to have a project team to review the policies and practices against the Policy.

Mr. Massicotte was particularly anxious to see the Policy implemented in instances of HRM day to day dealings with the community. Ms. Williams will bring his concerns to the attention of the Community and Race Relations Policy Implementation Committee.

The Chair felt that rather than expressing concerns regarding progress, etc. through Ms. Williams, it would be more effective for the Committee to approach Mr. Meech directly. Mr. Massicotte felt a time line for implementation would be desirable. It was proposed that the EMT be invited to a Committee meeting in early 2001. They would like an update from Ken Meech on progress. The Secretary will check the Corporate Calendar to determine the best date.

5.0 CHAIR'S REPORT

The Chair had no report.

6.0 2000 - 2001 - WORKPLAN

BROCHURE

Ms. Williams requested that Mr. Massicotte e-mail her a copy of the finalized brochure when available. She has spoken with Shared Services about putting final touches on it. Once they receive the text of the brochure, they will develop an estimate. This is a charge back operation which charges \$35.00 an hour. As the Committee has no budget, it will be necessary to find a business unit willing to absorb the costs. Mr. Massicotte and the Chair will finalize the contents. The brochure and associated costs should be available for the next meeting.

The Chair thanked Mr. Massicotte for all the work he has done on this initiative.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TOURISM, HERITAGE AND CULTURE

The intention was to brainstorm for suggestions to pass along to Tourism on ways to make tourism publications more inclusive. Earlier this year representatives of the Committee had met with Mr. Rogers and agreed to provide him with suggestions. The topic arose as a result of a letter to the Mayor from a tourist expressing disappointment with the apparent lack of attention to the cultural diversity of the Municipality. She felt the Municipality would better serve tourists by highlighting cultural diversity.

As a result of the brainstorming, the following comments and suggestions were made:

- C Calendar of Events to reflect more multicultural occasions.
- C The publication "One City - Many Communities" has left out some communities. This publication seems to centre on the white Anglo-Saxon portion of the community. Very Eurocentric. No mention of the Indian, Acadian or Black communities. It was noted that this publication was not developed through the HRM Tourism Department but Millennium Funding.
- C It would be nice to have some general history. It was felt that the various communities should be contacted to provide this background.
- C Lack of reference to Mi'kmaq community, particularly the Friendship Centre.
- C Referring to the "Visitors Guide Book" more pictorials reflecting all races should be included.
- C Local black and ethnic businesses should be encouraged to advertise in the publication.
- C It was noted the Guide isn't solely a HRM publication, either. It was prepared with the assistance of HRM. A number of Tourism projects are worked on as a joint effort of the various levels of government. It was recognized that the majority of marketing is provincial. While recognizing that HRM is not solely responsible for these initiatives, they can influence content.
- C It was recognized that the publication for 2001 has already gone to press. Any changes the Committee desires incorporated won't materialize until 2002.

- C The "Visitors Guide Book" would benefit from a guide to ethnic Halifax. Sites which would be of interest to those who are racially and ethnically diverse. It could be recommended to Tourism, Heritage and Culture that they apply for a grant to hire a summer student to do this research. It was cautioned that one would not wish to list organizations which could disappear in the book. This would reflect poorly on the HRM. The criteria for making a submission should be discussed within the ethnic communities.
- C Different communities should determine how they wish to be portrayed. Ms. Williams suggested this might require an additional publication.
- C Any outdoor advertising should reflect diverse communities, i.e. bus stops, billboards.

The Chair will send a letter to Mr. Rogers outlining the suggestions on how to make tourist publications more reflective of cultural diversity within the HRM.

7.0 ISSUES AFFECTING DIVERSE COMMUNITIES

7.1 COMMUNICATIONS BETWEEN NEW CANADIANS AND THE POLICE

Deferred until Cst. Upshaw in attendance.

7.2 MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS

Ms. Williams reflected on the upcoming Municipal Election and the opportunity to influence municipal government. She felt that the Committee should be encouraging more racially visible people to run for office.

Reference was made to the opportunity to vote for an African Nova Scotian Member of the Halifax Regional School Board. This provision was included in the Education Act following the report on the Cole Harbour School incidents. Members felt that it will be very difficult for this one member to deal effectively with all the issues affecting race. The work load would be potentially enormous and the representative will have only one vote. The members were encouraged to lobby their MLA and the Minister of Education to amend the Act. It was not felt that the choice is either fair or beneficial to the community.

The Chair congratulated Ms. Parris on her new position of Department Head, Access Programs, Nova Scotia Community College's Metro Campuses. It is a three year secondment. Ms. Parris indicated that she is building a list of potential employees and sought input from the members.

8.0 NEW BUSINESS

8.1 CRRF - AWARDS OF EXCELLENCE PROGRAM

Information pertaining to this year's program was circulated in the agenda package. The deadline for submissions is November 17th. The members were urged to contact the Chair if they have any suggestions and she and Ms. Williams will review.

8.2 COMMUNITY GRANTS PROGRAM

Copies of the Community Grants Guidebook, Applications for Community Grants and Tax Exemptions, plus the Community Development Manual were made available to the members.

8.3 MEMBERSHIP APPLICATIONS

The Secretary referred to an advertisement for volunteers for boards, committees and commissions to be placed in newspapers this weekend. The deadline for applications is October 27, 2000. Copies of the application form were provided.

It was noted that the terms of Mr. Khokhar, Ms. Parris, Mr. Massicotte, Mr. Amari, Mr. Gillis and Ms. Khan expire November 2000. The Secretary explained that there is no need for them to fill out an Application Form if they wish to extend their terms, just advise her. If there is some new information which they wish included, a new form can be submitted. Mr. Massicotte, Mr. Amari and Mr. Gillis indicated their desire to continue on the Committee. Ms. Parris is undecided. Mr. Khokhar and Ms. Khan will be contacted regarding their intentions.

Concern was expressed regarding the problems obtaining quorums on occasion. It was noted from the Terms of Reference that "in the case of any member missing three meetings without the consent of the Committee, the member shall be deemed to have resigned".

It was also noted from the Terms of Reference that "members may be re-appointed for no more than three consecutive terms". Since terms are two years in length, a total of six years maximum can be served on the Committee.

The members were encouraged to recruit people to apply for membership on the various committees, boards and commissions. Diversity reflected on all committees, not just this Committee, should be the goal.

MOVED BY Ms. Lui and Mr. Gillis that members of the Community and Race Relations Advisory Committee should lobby their respective community and

broader public to apply for positions on HRM boards and committees to increase diversity on all HRM boards and committees. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

It was felt that it should be suggested to the Municipal Clerk's Office that they try to distribute the advertisement to organizations within HRM and utilize Channel 10.

FAMOUS FIVE

Ms. Lui had more disturbing information on the "Famous Five". She referred to extracts from the book "Black Candle" and a web site. She has been asked to spearhead opposition to their being honored.

9.0 NEXT MEETING DATE

The next meeting date is Wednesday, November 1, 2000.

10.0 ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at approximately 7:30 p.m.

Ms. Betty Thomas
Chair

Lynne Le Boutillier
Assistant Municipal Clerk

