



COMMUNITY AND RACE RELATIONS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
February 3, 2005
MINUTES

PRESENT: Mr. Shawn Leahey, Vice Chair
Mr. Wilf McEachern
Mr. Larry Guptill
Ms. Susanne Wise
Ms. Gail Wilson
Councillor David Hendsbee
Ms. May Lui

ABSENT: Ms. Sylvia Parris (regrets)
Mr. David Khokhar (regrets)
Councillor Debbie Hum (regrets)
Mr. Juan Carlos-Canales Leyton (regrets)
Ms. Betty Thomas, Chair (regrets)
Mr. Thomas Rissesco

STAFF: Ms. Sheilagh Edmonds, Legislative Assistant
Ms. Charla Williams, Coordinator, Diversity Program

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Call to Order 3

HRM Cultural Plan - Councillor Hendsbee 3

Minister of Immigration, Province of Nova Scotia - Councillor Hendsbee 3

Immigration 2005 Conference - Charla Williams 3

Difficulty in Getting a Quorum 3

Upcoming Community Events 4

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

The Chair called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. without a quorum present. He indicated that due to a lack of a quorum, the regular agenda would be suspended, however, the Committee could put forth issues for discussion if they wished.

The Chair introduced two recently appointed members—Gail Wilson and Susanne Wise and welcomed them to the Committee.

HRM Cultural Plan - Councillor Hendsbee

Councillor Hendsbee advised of a motion passed by Regional Council approving a revised cultural plan project process and the establishment of a Cultural Advisory Committee. He pointed out that during the discussion he requested that the Community and Race Relations Advisory Committee be consulted during the process. Councillor Hendsbee asked the Legislative Assistant to circulate copies of the Council Report to the members for their information.

Minister of Immigration, Province of Nova Scotia - Councillor Hendsbee

Councillor Hendsbee advised that the Province of Nova Scotia recently announced a new ministerial portfolio—Minister of Immigration. He suggested, and **it was agreed**, that a letter of congratulations from the Chair on behalf of the Committee be forwarded to the Minister.

Immigration 2005 Conference - Charla Williams

Ms. Williams advised of an Immigration Conference the Atlantic Mayors Congress is hosting May 15 to 17, 2005.

Difficulty in Getting a Quorum

A general discussion ensued concerning the inability of the Committee to deal with its regular agenda over the past several months because of the difficulty in obtaining a quorum. Highlights of the discussion focussed on ways to try and ensure the Committee gets a quorum; the Committee's Terms of Reference; and whether the Committee was effective.

Further discussion ensued on the application and appointment process to sit on Regional Council's Boards and Committee's and concerns were expressed. The following comments were put forth:

'people submit applications and do not hear anything further'

'application form is not user-friendly - very confusing'

'if there is difficulty in getting applicants to sit on Committees - - someone who has applied for a couple of years to sit on a Committee and gets absolutely no response, will eventually give up trying to serve on any of HRM's Committees'

'Provincial Boards and Committees pay a per diem. People wanting to volunteer their time and expertise will choose these committees over HRM's, even if the per diem only covers their travel costs'

The Legislative Assistant was asked to forward the comments to the appropriate staff in charge of the appointment process.

Upcoming Community Events

The following community events were noted:

- C February is African Heritage Month
- C Chinese New Year February 9, 2005; Banquet is at Casino Nova Scotia Hotel February 12
- C William P. Oliver Night at the Cultural Centre - Wall of Honour
- C Heritage Day Reception by the Mayor - February 21, 2005

The Committee engaged in general discussion on various matters, and the meeting adjourned at 6:45 p.m.

Sheilagh Edmonds
Legislative Assistant