

HALIFAX REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY

COMMUNITY AND RACE RELATIONS ADVISORY COMMITTEE July 7, 2005

MINUTES

- PRESENT:** Ms. Betty Thomas, Chair
Mr. Shawn Lahey, Vice Chair
Ms. Susanne Wise
Ms. Gail Wilson (5:10 p.m.)
Ms. May Lui
Mr. Wilfred McEachern
Councillor David Hendsbee
Councillor Debbie Hum
- ABSENT:** Mr. Larry Guptill (regrets)
Mr. Juan Carlos Canales-Leyton
Mr. David Khokhar
Ms. Sylvia Parris
Mr. Thomas Rissesco
- STAFF:** Ms. Charla Williams, Coordinator, Diversity Program
Ms. Sheilagh Edmonds, Legislative Assistant

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1. **Call to Order**

At 4:50 p.m. the Chair called the meeting to order in the Media Room, City Hall without a quorum present.

5. **New Business:**

5.1 **Metro Coalition for a Non-Racist Society**

Ms. Carol Willett and Ms. Donna Malone, representing the Metro Coalition for a Non-Racist Society, were in attendance to give a brief presentation on book produced by their group entitled, *Racism, Whose Problem?*

Ms. Malone and Ms. Willett provided a brief background on the Coalition, elaborating on why it was formed, and the various activities and projects in which they are involved—one of which has been producing the book. The presentation concluded with Ms. Malone advising that their purpose in attending today's meeting was to inform the Committee about the Coalition and to present the book to the Committee.

Ms. Charla Williams noted that she had been provided enough copies of the book to distribute to Council members and senior staff. She thanked the representatives for their presentation.

The Chair expressed her appreciation to Ms. Malone and Ms. Willet and advised that she would like to have them back at a future meeting when the Committee would have more time for an in-depth discussion. She added that she would open the floor at this time for a few questions.

At 5:10 p.m. Ms. Gail Wilson entered the meeting and a quorum was present.

In response to a question from Councillor Hum, Ms. Malone advised that it was her understanding the book is currently working it's way through the process to be registered as a school curriculum item.

Councillor Hum suggested that books can also be donated to libraries, thus, making them available for teachers for reference material, and available for students who can check them out.

Councillor Hendsbee suggested that, when the Chair invites the Coalition back, it may be an opportunity to have a café style round-table discussion with other organizations of similar interests.

2. **Approval of the Minutes**

MOVED by Councillor Hendsbee, seconded by Councillor Hum the minutes of April 7, 2005, May 5, 2005, and June 2, 2005 were approved as circulated. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

3. Approval of the Agenda, Additions and Deletions

The agenda was accepted as presented.

6. Added Items:

- C Councillor Hendsbee advised that he was trying to get in contact with Holly Richardson concerning the immigration forum which was held on June 10. He suggested that it would be informative for the Committee to have a synopsis of the discussion.
- C Councillor Hendsbee advised that on July 14, the last cultural café will be held at the Black Cultural Centre.

For clarification, Ms. Williams noted that Jennifer Church had co-ordinated the Immigration Forum and that she had spoken with her about providing information to the Committee. Ms. Williams added that Ms. Church is willing to attend a meeting of this Committee.

Ms. Lui advised that, when forums, such as the ones noted by Councillor Hendsbee, are held the invitees always seem to be the usual groups. She noted that there were new organizations like hers—Asian Heritage Month—that should also be included.

5. New Business (cont.'d):

5.2 Table Questions from Immigration Forum

- C A document entitled, Questions for Roundtable Discussion, June 10 Immigration Forum was submitted.

Due to time constraints, the Chair asked members to submit their comments to the Legislative Assistant, and that she and the Legislative Assistant would review past discussions in the minutes on this topic and pull out relevant comments. She explained that her objective is to put together a presentation on the subject, on behalf of the Committee to Council. *(Later in the meeting this item was raised by the Chair and further discussion held)*

At 5:50 p.m. Councillor Hendsbee retired from the meeting.

4. Business Arising out of the Minutes:

4.1 Review of Community & Race Relations Policy

The Chair asked Committee members to review the Policy and submit any comments to the Legislative Assistant. This will be on the agenda for discussion for the next meeting.

7. Date of Next Meeting

A discussion ensued concerning whether the Committee should meet in August. The Chair advised that she may not be able to attend, but felt the meeting should proceed given the topics the Committee is now undertaking for discussion, i.e. cultural policy, immigration strategy. She also advised that, given the difficulty in getting through all the agenda items, she would call the meeting to order at the scheduled time (i.e. 4:45 p.m.)

Councillor Hum suggested that if the Chair felt the meeting should be extended to accommodate the discussions, perhaps she and Councillor Hendsbee could work something out, whereby, if the Committee wanted to work until 8:00 p.m. or 8:30 p.m. the Councillor could see that supper is provided.

The Chair advised that the Legislative Assistant will send out an e-mail to determine who will be available for an August meeting. Also, it was generally agreed that due to the long weekend, the regularly scheduled meeting of September 1 would be rescheduled to September 8.

Ms. Wilson advised that she would not be able to attend the August meeting.

Mr. McEachern questioned if a review of the Committee's Terms of Reference would be a topic for a future agenda. He advised that it appears to him that some of the comments discussed at the Committee are more of an advocacy type of issues and that his interpretation of the Terms of Reference is that the Committee should be discussing civil society type of issues.

The Chair indicated that she would put this item on a future agenda.

4. Business Arising out of the Minutes (cont.'d):

4.2 Future Work Plans

Deferred.

4.3 Committee Members Bios on the Web

The Legislative Assistant advised that she anticipated having the bios up to the Webpage the following week.

5. New Business (cont.'d):

5.2 Table Questions from Immigration Forum (cont.'d)

For the information of the Committee, the Chair gave a brief overview of the Immigration Forum she attended in Halifax Hall on June 10. Referring to the questions which were circulated in the agenda packages, the Chair indicated that she felt it would be beneficial for the committee members to be apprised of the roundtable questions. She indicated that once the results of the forum are available, she will share them with

the Committee.

At 6:30 p.m. Ms. Wise retired from the meeting.

Ms. Lui suggested that the organization she belonged to—Asian Heritage Month—should be included in such forums, seminars, etc. in the future.

In response, Councillor Hum suggested that Ms. Lui forward information (e.g. website address and brochure) to the Mayor's Office and the Office of the Chief Administrative Officer.

Additional Information Items:

- C The Chair advised that June 6, Mayor Kelly hosted a reception for a delegation from Guyana to which she and Mr. McEachern attended.
- C Mr. Lahey advised of a meeting he attended recently at Pier 21. The guest speaker was from Hawaii and his presentation focussed on the issues faced by immigrants from areas of crises.
- C Prior to adjourning the meeting, the Chair advised that she would provide the Legislative Assistant information regarding the work of the Cultural Advisory Committee to be circulated to the Committee.

8. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

Sheilagh Edmonds
Legislative Assistant