

HALIFAX REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY

COMMUNITY AND RACE RELATIONS ADVISORY COMMITTEE NOTES

September 7, 2006

PRESENT: Ms. Betty Thomas, Chair
Ms. Betty Josey
Mr. Thomas Rissesco
Ms. Nicole Briand
Mr. David Khokhar
Mr. Inder Bhatia
Ms. Shelley Fashan

ABSENT: Ms. Sylvia Parris (regrets)
Ms. Alexandra McCallum (regrets)
Ms. Kristel Vom Scheidt (regrets)
Ms. May Lui, Vice Chair (regrets)
Ms. Tamara Krawchenko (regrets)
Councillor Debbie Hum (regrets)
Councillor Krista Snow

STAFF: Ms. Tatjana Zatezalo, Diversity Consultant
Ms. Sheilagh Edmonds, Legislative Assistant

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1. CALL TO ORDER

The Chair called the meeting to order at 4:55 p.m. **without a quorum present**. She noted that many of the regrets received only came in today, at a time when it was too late to cancel the meeting. In addition, the Chair pointed out that, often, members will not call in regrets, therefore, the Legislative Assistant assumes they will be in attendance and takes this into account when determining if there will be a quorum for the meeting.

The Chair stressed the importance of Committee members letting the Legislative Assistant know as soon as possible if they cannot attend a meeting.

The Chair noted that since several members have shown up for today's meeting, rather than cancel, she would proceed with the meeting, although it would be informal and no votes would be taken.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES - August 3, 2005

Minutes could not be approved, as a quorum was not present.

3. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA, ADDITIONS AND DELETIONS

4. BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES:

4.3 Community and Race Relations Appointment to the Cultural Advisory Committee

The Chair advised that when Ms. May Lui called in her regrets, she indicated she would be willing to serve as the Committee's representative on the Cultural Advisory Committee if no one else was interested in serving.

In response to questions about the Cultural Advisory Committee, Ms. Zatezalo advised that she would contact Heather McLeod, Community Planner, for more information on the Committee.

A brief discussion ensued and there was general consensus that May Lui would be the Committee's representative on the Cultural Advisory Committee. **The Chair advised that this item will be placed on the agenda of the next meeting for formal approval.**

4.1 Canadian Commission for UNESCO re: Canadian Coalition Against Racism Council report

Ms. Tatjana Zatezalo provided an oral update on the draft staff report regarding this matter.

At 5:04 p.m. Ms. Shelly Fashan entered the meeting.

Ms. Zatezalo gave an overview of the report and concluded by advising of staff's recommendations. She indicated that staff were recommending Regional Council support the initiative and sign the declaration to join the Coalition; that the Municipality share information with the Coalition on the initiatives already undertaken; and, that the Municipality develop an action plan to advance its work in areas relating to the common commitments.

Ms. Zatezalo advised that the report is expected to go Regional Council on September 19, 2006.

Ms. Zatezalo responded to questions and was thanked by the Chair for her update.

4.2 Future Work Plans

Dr. Bhatia made reference to the last meeting where he raised the issue of the Committee giving a presentation to school children. He noted that, at the time, the Committee was advised that this something the School Board was responsible for and would not fall under the jurisdiction of the Committee. The Chair suggested that perhaps a letter from the Committee could be sent. Dr. Bhatia then read aloud a letter he had prepared and advised that it was not necessarily something he was requesting to be sent on behalf of the Committee, and that he could undertake this on his own initiative.

Dr. Bhatia submitted the letter to the Chair; a brief discussion ensued, and the Chair advised that she would follow up on the letter. The Chair also noted that she would speak with Sylvia Parris on this matter, as was indicated in the minutes of the last meeting.

At 5:37 p.m. Mr. Rissesco retired from the meeting.

5. NEW BUSINESS

6. CORRESPONDENCE, PETITIONS AND DELEGATIONS

7. ADDED ITEMS

7.1 HRM Diversity Week Activities

Ms. Zatezalo gave a brief presentation on HRM's Corporate Diversity Week activities. She explained that it begins September 18 with an official event at Halifax Hall, and that all employees are invited to celebrate their own diversity and directors are invited to report on the diversity initiatives of their business units. Ms. Zatezalo highlighted some of the activities that are planned and responded to questions from the Committee members.

At Ms. Zatezalo's request, the Chair agreed to attend the official opening of Diversity Week and give a brief presentation on the role of the Committee.

7.2 Introduction of New Member

The Chair introduced Ms. Shelly Fashan to the Committee and welcomed her to her first meeting. At the request of the Chair, Ms. Fashan provided a brief bio on herself.

8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING - October 5, 2006

9. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 4:55 p.m.

Sheilagh Edmonds
Legislative Assistant