

**COMMUNITY AND RACE RELATIONS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
DECEMBER 2, 2004**

MINUTES

- PRESENT:** Ms. Betty Thomas, Chair
Mr. Shawn Lahey, Vice Chair
Mr. Wilf McEachern
Ms. Sylvia Parris
Mr. Juan Carlos Canales-Leyton
Councillor Debbie Hum
Councillor David Hendsbee
- ABSENT:** Ms. May Lui (regrets)
Mr. David Khokhar (regrets)
Mr Larry Guptill
Mr. Thomas Rissesco
- STAFF:** Ms. Sheilagh Edmonds, Legislative Assistant
Ms. Tatjana Zatezalo, Diversity Consultant
Ms. Charla Williams, Coordinator, Diversity Program

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1. CALL TO ORDER

The Chair called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. in the Media Room, City Hall. She noted that there was no quorum, therefore, no motions would be put forward.

The Chair advised that Mr. David Khokhar contacted her to say that due to medical reasons, he is unable to drive when it's dark. He asked for consideration to scheduling the meetings earlier in the day, and if this was not feasible, he would not be able to attend the meetings until such time as when he would be able to drive to and from the meetings in daylight.

A discussion ensued and it was generally agreed that meeting earlier in the day would create difficulties in the scheduling of other Committee members. Various suggestions were put forward with regard to ways of assisting Mr. Khokhar. Mr. McEachern advised that he could contact Mr. Khokhar and make arrangements to pick him up on the way to the meetings. The Chair thanked Mr. McEachern for this offer, and provided him the phone number and address of Mr. Khokhar.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES - September 2, 2004 and October 7, 2004; Notes of November 4, 2004

Deferred to the Committee's next regular meeting due to lack of a quorum.

3. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA, ADDITIONS AND DELETIONS

The following items were added to the agenda:

- 6.1 HRM Councillor's Remarks - Immigration - Juan Carlos Canales-Leyton
- 6.2 HRM's Immigration Discussions - Charla Williams
- 6.3 Presentation Chamber of Commerce - Councillor Hendsbee

4. BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES:

- 4.1 Review of Community & Race Relations Policy**
- 4.2 Future Work Plans**
- 4.3 Design of a Poster**
- 4.4 Business Cards - Committee Members Business Cards were handed out.**

5. NEW BUSINESS:

5.1 Committee Members Biography on the Web

The Legislative Assistant advised that she had received bios on David Khokhar, Betty Thomas, Sylvia Parris, and Wilf McEachern for the Web.

The Chair asked the Legislative Assistant to send out a reminder to the other members to forward a brief biography on themselves.

6. ADDED ITEMS

6.1 HRM Councillor's Remarks - Immigration - Juan Carlos Canales-Leyton

Mr. Canales-Leyton advised that recent remarks made by Councillor Streach with regard to immigrants in Nova Scotia was very insulting, and further attempts to explain himself seem to have made matters worse. Mr. Canales-Leyton expressed concern that the Mayor did not immediately respond to the remarks, and added that it is upsetting to see the role being set by such highly public individuals.

Councillor Hendsbee pointed out that he spoke with Councillor Streach just prior to this meeting, and was informed that he is in the process of drafting a statement which he will take before Council to apologize for his comments. Councillor Hendsbee suggested the Committee wait until Councillor Streach makes this statement before it responds.

Councillor Hum concurred with Councillor Hendsbee, and noted that she also spoke with Councillor Streach before this meeting. She added that she believed he should have the opportunity to make statement in public first. Councillor Hum suggested the Committee could ask him to attend a meeting.

A discussion ensued with the general consensus that the remarks by Councillor Streach were offensive and hurtful. The Committee was in agreement that it would be appropriate for the Chair to write a letter to Councillor Streach, with a copy to Mayor Kelly. The letter will express the Committee's concern over this issue and invite him to attend a meeting where the members could explain the value and importance of immigration to this Province, and how the comments are contradictory to what Council has adopted in terms of policy.

6.2 HRM's Immigration Discussions - Charla Williams

Ms. Williams advised the Committee of a staff discussion group pulled together, under the directive of Betty MacDonald, Director of Governance and Strategic Issue, to look at the issue of immigration. She advised that the group would like a representative from this Committee to attend their next meeting. Ms. Williams explained that the group wants to

include citizens who are new Canadians, immigrants, or people with a strong interest in immigration.

Ms. Williams suggested that Mr. Canales-Leyton be the representative, to which he agreed. Ms. Williams advise that the next meeting was December 21st at 9:00 am.

At 6:05 p.m. Ms. Zatezalo retired from the meeting.

For information, Ms. Williams noted that at the recently-held Atlantic Mayors Congress, Mayor Kelly agreed to host a Congress on Immigration, which will be held next May.

6.3 Presentation Chamber of Commerce - Councillor Hendsbee

Councillor Hendsbee made reference to Chamber of Commerce report that was recently released and suggested that the members receive copies of the aspects on immigration and education.

7. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

January 6, 2004

8. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 6:15 p.m.

Sheilagh Edmonds
Legislative Assistant