

**COMMUNITY AND RACE RELATIONS ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**August 3, 2006**

**MINUTES**

**PRESENT:** Ms. Betty Thomas, Chair  
Ms. May Lui  
Councillor Debbie Hum  
Mr. David Khokar  
Ms. Betty Josey  
Ms. Alexandra McCallum  
Dr. Inder Bhatia  
Ms. Kristel Vom Scheidt  
Ms. Nicole Briand  
Ms. Tamara Krawchenko

**ABSENT WITH  
REGRETS:** Ms. Sylvia Parris  
Councillor Krista Snow  
Mr. Thomas Rissesco  
Ms. Shelley Fashan

**STAFF:** Ms. Jennifer Weagle, Legislative Assistant  
Ms. Tatjana Zatezalo, Diversity Consultant

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**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The Chair called the meeting to order at 4:50 p.m. in the Media Room, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor, City Hall, 1841 Argyle Street, Halifax.

Round-table introductions were provided to introduce Committee members and staff.

**2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES - March 2, 2006**

**MOVED BY Mr. David Khokhar, seconded by Councillor Hum, that the minutes of March 2, 2006 be approved as distributed. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

**3. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA, ADDITIONS AND DELETIONS**

It was requested that the following items be dealt with immediately following the Approval of the Agenda:

- 6.1 Cultural Plan Update
- 6.2 Community and Race Relations Appointment to the Cultural Advisory Committee

**MOVED by Ms. Alexandra McCallum, seconded by Ms. May Lui, that the agenda be approved as distributed. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

**6.1 Cultural Plan Update**

- C An Executive Summary of the Cultural Plan dated March 2006 was before the Committee.

A brief Cultural Plan update was included in Item 6.2 Community and Race Relations Appointment to the Cultural Advisory Committee (see below).

**6.2 Community and Race Relations Appointment to the Cultural Advisory Committee**

- C A Council Report dated April 29, 2006 re: establishment of HRM Cultural Advisory Committee & HRM Urban Design Task Force, including the Cultural Advisory Committee Terms of Reference and Cultural Plan Short-Term Action Plan were before the Committee.

Ms. Heather MacLeod Baudelot, Community Developer, Community, Culture and Economic Development, addressed the Committee. Ms. Baudelot provided a brief update and overview of the Cultural Plan and reviewed the Terms of Reference of the Cultural Advisory Committee, noting the following:

- C Council approved the Cultural Plan document and policy direction in March 2006,

- C One of the immediate priorities of the Cultural Plan is the formation of a Cultural Advisory Committee,
- C The terms of reference set out that membership shall include one member from the HRM Community & Race Relations Committee.

Ms. McCallum requested that detailed updates of the Cultural Plan continue to be provided to the Committee.

At the request of Ms. Briand, staff clarified that it is not within the mandates of the Cultural Advisory Committee, nor the Community and Race Relations Advisory Committee to be directly involved with the Commonwealth Games bid.

Councillor Hum noted that there is a Commonwealth Games Advisory Committee, and she suggested that the Chair could author a letter to the Chair of that Committee offering the Committee's support for the bid.

#### **4. BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES**

##### **4.1 Canadian Commission for UNESCO re: Coalition of Canadian Municipalities Against Racism and Discrimination**

- C An updated version of the Community and Race Relations Advisory Committee Work Plan was distributed to the Committee.

Ms. Tatjana Zatezalo, Diversity Consultant, summarized the UNESCO initiative for the Committee, and noted the following:

- C The research portion of the report is completed,
- C She will share the report with the Committee before it goes before Council, which is scheduled for September 19, 2006,
- C The benefits and challenges of the initiative must be weighed,
- C The practicality of HRM joining the initiative must be considered,
- C Consideration must also be given to other race relations initiatives already underway, or that have previously been undertaken, in order to avoid duplication of work,
- C Joining the initiative would involve a number of other stakeholders, such as the School Board, Police, and the Human Rights Commission.

Ms. Zatezalo requested that Committee members forward suggestions and comments to herself via email by August 18, 2006.

Ms. Krawchenko commented that several of the Commitments outlined in the initiative are Provincial or Federal issues, and inquired whether an inter-governmental task force would be set up for these Commitments. Ms. Zatezalo noted that if Council chooses to join the initiative, such issues will be addressed at that time.

Ms. McCallum inquired as to the working relationship between Metropolis, the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, and HRM. Ms. Zatezalo indicated that she is contacting potential

stakeholders to this initiative, including Metropolis and the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, to determine their willingness to participate, and in what capacity.

A brief discussion regarding the under-employment of immigrants ensued.

## **9. ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR**

At this time nominations were received for the position of Chair.

**MOVED by Ms. Betty Josey, seconded by Mr. David Khokhar, that Ms. Betty Thomas be appointed as Chair of the Community and Race Relations Advisory Committee. MOTION PUT AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Ms. Thomas took the position of Chair and called for nomination for the position of Vice-Chair.

**MOVED by Mr. David Khokhar, seconded by Ms. Tamara, that Ms. May Lui be appointed as Vice-Chair of the Community and Race Relations Advisory Committee. MOTION PUT AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**MOVED by Councillor Hum, seconded by Ms. Alexandra McCallum, that the Chair write a letter to Ms. Charla Williams thanking her for her long-standing service and contributions to the Community and Race Relations Advisory Committee. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

Councillor Hum left the meeting at 6:00 p.m.

## **4.2 Future Work Plans**

C An updated Community and Race Relations Advisory Committee Work Plan was before the Committee.

The Chair discussed how the Work Plan was compiled. At the request of the Committee, the Chair clarified that the role of the Committee is as an advisory committee to Council. At the request of the Committee, the Chair further clarified that materials on the Committee were already produced and distributed, however these should be updated and re-distributed. The Committee agreed that work plan priority be assigned as follows:

- Priority #1: 1.b. Distribute printed materials to HRM Elected Officials
- Priority #2: 2.d. Advertisements Diverse Communities Newsletters (Provide info on the mandate of the committee and contact info for the public to raise issues of concern).
- Priority #3: 2.e. Presentations to various organizations in HRM Diverse Communities (Initially send letters to various organizations).
- Priority #4: 2.c. Host a Councillor's gathering on the 1<sup>st</sup> Thursday of October to promote Diversity Week.

Ms. McCallum suggested that the same information could be distributed to both the public and the Councillors. She further suggested that town hall meetings be held after the information is widely distributed, to obtain further input from the community.

Ms. McCallum further suggested that the Committee approach Eastlink Television to educate the community about the Committee. She noted that HRM's website could be used for this purpose as well.

Ms. Zatezalo indicated that HRM Diversity Week is from September 17-23, 2006, which celebrates the diversity of HRM as a corporation. She commented that this will be an ideal time to promote the policy to HRM employees.

Ms. Kristel Vom Scheidt and Ms. McCallum offered to compile a database of cultural organizations. It was suggested that a letter be drafted to these organizations introducing the Committee. The list will be brought before the Committee for the addition of any other organizations.

A brief discussion regarding inclusion and community ensued.

Dr. Bhatia suggested that the Committee present to school children regarding race relations issues. It was clarified by members of the Committee that while this is a good idea, presentations to school children would fall under the jurisdiction of the School Board, and would not be within the mandate of the Committee. The Chair suggested that perhaps a letter be written to the School Board from the Committee. Ms. McCallum suggested that Ms. Sylvia Parris, who could not be in attendance this evening, will be able to expand more on the School Board's race relations initiatives for school children.

Ms. Krawchenko indicated that members must keep focussed on municipal issues and keep within the mandate of the Committee.

Mr. Khokhar indicated that he will provide to the Legislative Assistant an article from Time magazine regarding technological advancements in India, to be distributed to Committee members, for their interest.

The Chair suggested that the Work Plan be presented to Council, for their information and feedback.

5. **NEW BUSINESS** - New

6. **CORRESPONDENCE, PETITIONS AND PRESENTATIONS**

6.1 **Cultural Plan Update**

This item was dealt with earlier in the meeting.

6.2 **Community and Race Relations Appointment to the Cultural Advisory Committee**

This item was dealt with earlier in the meeting.

7. **ADDED ITEMS** - None

8. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Community and Race Relations Advisory Committee is scheduled for September 7, 2006.

Ms. Krawchenko gave regrets for the September meeting.

9. **ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR**

This item was dealt with earlier in the meeting.

10. **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:01 p.m.

Jennifer Weagle  
Legislative Assistant