

**COMMUNITY AND RACE RELATIONS ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**TERMS OF REFERENCE**

On August 19, 1997, Halifax Regional Municipality Council adopted a Community and Race Relations Policy. Under Section 2 of the Policy, the need for a Community and Race Relations Advisory Committee was identified as a necessary source of advice and input on issues affecting HRM's Diverse Communities. The following will outline the Terms of Reference of the Committee.

**1.0 OBJECTIVE**

The main responsibility of the Committee is to advise Halifax Regional Municipality Council on how the municipal government's policies and programs impact community and race relations as defined in the Policy. The Advisory Committee has the following objectives:

- 1.1 To facilitate the participation of all residents of HRM in civic and community affairs by ensuring that policies and programs do not impose barriers to such participation.
- 1.2 To increase civic and community awareness about the Municipality's Diverse Communities by promoting effective communication.
- 1.3 To work towards the elimination of racism and discrimination; and, to promote understanding and acceptance among the Diverse Communities residing in the Municipality by advising Council on issues and concerns raised by residents.
- 1.4 To promote greater knowledge, understanding, acceptance and celebration of diversity by liaising with all communities of interest.
- 1.5 To ensure that HRM's diverse communities have an equitable opportunity to voice their views on community and race relations issues, as defined in the Policy, affected by HRM policies and programs by monitoring the effectiveness of policies and programs.

**2.0 RESPONSIBILITIES**

- 2.1 To Advise Council on strategies and initiatives to promote full and equal access and participation by all residents of HRM to and in services and programs offered by HRM.
- 2.2 To assist Halifax Regional Municipality in the identification and elimination of discriminatory policies or practices in its operation.
- 2.3 To provide direction, upon request, to Council on matters involving community and race issues

or concerns in the context of human rights.

2.4 To raise issues of ethnic and community tensions, racism and discrimination to Council.

2.5 To facilitate, where necessary, effective communication between HRM Council and groups wishing to participate in improving community relations.

### 3.0 **COMPOSITION**

3.1 Members of the Committee shall be appointed by Council and will consist of not less than 11 and not more than 15 residents of HRM and two members of Council.

### 4.0 **SUB-COMMITTEES**

4.1 The Committee may appoint sub-committees to deal with specific issues.

4.2 The Committee shall develop terms of reference and time lines for any such sub-committees as referred to in 4.1.

### 5.0 **OFFICERS**

5.1 The Committee shall yearly elect a Chairperson from among its members at the first meeting of the year.

5.2 The Committee shall yearly elect a Vice-Chairperson from among its members at the first meeting of the year.

5.3 The officers of the Committee shall be elected from among the 11 to 15 residents who serve as members.

### 6.0 **QUORUM**

6.1 Quorum shall consist of not less than 50% + 1 of the voting members.

6.2 Meetings can be held without a quorum present, however a quorum will be required for voting purposes.

### 7.0 **MEETINGS**

7.1 The Committee shall meet on a regular basis no less than 4 times per year. Members shall receive reasonable notice.

7.2 In case of emergency, the Chairperson or designate can call a meeting with reasonable notice.

7.3 Upon receipt of a written petition of the majority of the members of the Committee, the Chairperson shall summon a special meeting for the purpose and at the time mentioned in the petition, on at least three days' notice.

8.0 **RELATIONSHIP TO COUNCIL AND CAO**

8.1 The Committee shall make recommendations to Council and/or the Chief Administrative Officer solely in an advisory capacity.

8.2 Significant issues, plans and programs impacting on the Community and Race Relations Policy, and affecting residents of HRM shall be referred to the Committee for its consideration and recommendations to Council and/or the Chief Administrative Officer.

8.3 Members of the Committee and Council shall come together on a periodical basis to participate in a joint working session.

9.0 **APPOINTMENTS**

9.1 A public appointment process encouraging representation from HRM's diverse communities be used with regard to appointments to this Committee.

9.2 All appointments shall be for a two-year term following Council's normal selection and appointment process. Members may be re-appointed for no more than three consecutive terms.

10.0 **RESIGNATIONS**

10.1 Any resignations from the Committee shall be tendered in writing to the Chairperson, who will advise Council through the Municipal Clerk.

10.2 The name of a replacement member shall be obtained through the most recent public appointment process from the list maintained by the Municipal Clerk.

10.3 When approved by Council, the new appointee shall serve the remainder of the vacant term.

11.0 **ABSENTEEISM**

11.1 In the case of any member missing three meetings without the consent of the Committee, the member shall be deemed to have resigned.

12.0 **PROCEDURE**

- 12.1 The procedure to be followed at meetings of the Committee shall be governed by the Regional Council's PROCEDURE BY-LAW as amended from time to time.
- 12.2 Council is to provide the Committee with a copy of the by-law and to update it as required.
- 12.3 The Committee may call public meetings to solicit public input to assist the Committee to achieve its mandate.
- 12.4 All meetings of the Committee shall be open to the public, except that In-Camera meetings may be held in accordance with the Municipality's In-Camera policy.

13.0 **REPORT TO COUNCIL**

- 13.1 The Committee shall submit a report of activities to Council during the first quarter of each year.
- 13.2 The Chairperson of the Committee, or a designate, may make reports to Council on the activities of the Committee as necessary, or as requested by Council, together with such other presentations that the Committee may deem advisable.

14.0 **AMENDMENTS**

- 14.1 The Committee may from time to time recommend to Council the amendment of these Terms of Reference following an appropriately voted resolution.

15.0 **REIMBURSEMENT FOR EXPENSES**

- 15.1 Each member of the Committee shall serve without remuneration, but may be reimbursed by Council for any necessary expenses incurred while engaged in official duties, provided that such expenses are approved by Council in advance.

APPROVED BY REGIONAL COUNCIL  
NOVEMBER 4, 1998

\* **Amended by Regional Council on September 14, 2004** to reflect the addition of the word "Advisory" in Community and Race Relations Committee and to change the word "citizens" to

“residents of HRM”.