

# MULTICULTURALISM ADVISORY COMMITTEE

February 27, 2013; 5:30 p.m.

Committee Room #2

## MINUTES

### VOTING MEMBERS PRESENT:

Councillor Chuck Puchmayr	Chair
Ms. Linda Cooper	Community Member
Ms. Chinu Das	Community Member
Ms. Eman Ismail-Elmasri	Community Member
Mr. Bayoush Mengesha	Community Member
Ms. Maryam Salmani	Community Member
Ms. Maria Elizabeth Soriano	Community Member

### VOTING MEMBER REGRETS:

Ms. Connie Behl	Community Member
Ms. Hargurjeet Sekhon	New Westminster School District #40

### STAFF:

Mr. John Stark	Senior Social Planner, Development Services
Mr. Doug Walcott	Staff Sergeant, New Westminster Police Service
Ms. Stephanie Lam	Committee Clerk (departed at 5:40 pm)
Dr. Bill Shannon	Recording Secretary

Call to order 5:30 pm

## 1.0 ADDITIONS TO AGENDA

### 1.1 MOVED and SECONDED

*THAT the agenda be adopted with the following additions:*

- 6.2 Park Development – Agnes Street
- 6.3 Multicultural Festival
- 6.4 Metro Vancouver – Form and Language of Information

**CARRIED.**

All members of the committee present voted in favour of the motion.

## **2.0 ADOPTION OF MINUTES & REVIEW OF TERMS OF REFERENCE**

### **2.1 Adoption of the Minutes of October 24, 2012**

#### **MOVED and SECONDED**

*THAT the minutes of the meeting held October 24, 2012 be approved and adopted.*

**CARRIED.**

All members of the committee present voted in favour of the motion.

### **2.2 Review of Terms of Reference**

Ms. Stephanie Lam, Committee Clerk, reviewed the committee's Terms of Reference and highlighted the duties and obligations of membership.

## **3.0 PRESENTATIONS**

### **3.1 Orientation and Oath of Office**

Ms. Lam provided general orientation of committee procedure and its interaction with City Council. The Oath of Office was administered to all committee members present.

Ms. Lam departed at 5:40 pm.

### **3.2 New Westminster Museum and Archives Moving Forward**

This item was TABLED for consideration at the next meeting.

## **4.0 UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

### **4.1 Century House Inclusion Enhancement Project**

Mr. John Stark, Senior Social Planner, Development Services, reported that the City has completed a survey of Century House members that was designed to determine how the facility could be more inclusive in member diversity. 162 of the Century House membership responded. Approximately one-third of New Westminster's population is comprised of new immigrants. The community is most diverse between Brow of the Hill to the Burnaby boundary. 13.9 percent of Century House members are visible minorities.

The report further indicated that most of those joining Century House did so to meet people and to stay physically fit. Most commented that the facility was friendly, accessible and receptive. While the survey indicated a positive reception, it revealed that the membership is not reflective of the city's cultural diversity.

The committee received the report for information.

#### **4.2 New Immigrant and Refugee Survey**

Mr. Stark reported that the survey information will be used to develop recommendations on how to address new immigrant and refugee issues identified and how the City can be more inclusive of newcomers. The survey was based on issues as identified in an Access New Westminster Immigrant survey completed in May 2007, a copy of which is attached to the updated survey.

The primary objective was to garner close to 250 completed surveys through a diversity of locations in New Westminster throughout March and April 2013.

#### **4.3 Welcoming Communities Program**

Ms. Eman Ismail-Elmasri provided a synopsis of the New Westminster Community Action Plan, highlighting goals of the program as follows:

- To support inclusive workplaces in New Westminster.
- To create welcoming public spaces in New Westminster.
- To promote understanding of immigrant integration issues.
- To support new immigrants with a strong community partnership table.

From these goals, the plan provided outcomes, outputs, strategies, project specifics and interested organizations with a budget of up to \$200,000.

### **5.0 NEW BUSINESS**

#### **5.1 Safe Harbour Implementation Strategy**

Mr. Stark indicated that on December 10, 2012, City Council in Committee of the Whole endorsed the Multiculturalism Advisory Committee's *Safe Harbour* recommendations. He also outlined the opportunities provided by *Safe Harbour: Respect for All* and advised that the Implementation Strategy will be forwarded to Council in April or May 2013.

Mr. Stark further advised that a workshop titled *Safe Harbour: Respect for All* was available. The Burnaby workshop was scheduled for Tuesday, March 5, 2013 and was designed to address the following:

- Explore the rich diversity that exists in our community.
- Examine the impacts of bias and stereotyping.
- Prepare participants to address discrimination on the spot.
- Provide practical steps to creating welcoming and inclusive environments.

Several committee members indicated an interest in attending the workshop and advised they would contact the workshop coordinator directly.

## **6.0 REPORTS AND INFORMATION**

### **6.1 Vancouver Sun Articles related to 2011 Census on Immigration and Language**

The Vancouver Sun article indicates that Mandarin and Cantonese are the top immigrant tongues in Metro Vancouver, with a strong concentration of Asian language speakers. The article provides some insight into the issues facing new immigrants, improvement strategies and personal examples.

Mr. Stark reviewed information from the Statistics Canada 2011 Census on the mother tongues spoken in British Columbia, as defined as the first language learned at home. The report indicates that:

- New Westminster has the largest component of those reporting Tagalog (4.7 percent).
- New Westminster has the largest component of those reporting Punjabi (4.2 percent).
- New Westminster has the sixth largest component of those reporting neither English nor French as their mother tongue (32.8 percent).

The following website information was provided:

<http://www.vancouversun.com/life/Census+Mandarin+Cantonese+immigrant+tongues+Metro+Vancouver/7442441/story.html>

### **6.2 Park Development – 824 Agnes Street**

Mr. Stark reported that City Council has endorsed the development of a park at 824 Agnes Street to commemorate Chinese history and contributions. To inform the design, the City will be conducting consultation with Chinese associations that represent larger constituencies and the general public. The Multiculturalism Advisory Committee will also play an important role.

### **6.3 Multicultural Festival**

Chair Puchmayr reported that the City, together with the Downtown Business Improvement Association (BIA) and several other organizations, was presently engaged in planning for the 2013 Multicultural Festival. The event will be held on the Boardwalk adjacent to the Discovery Centre, the River Market and beyond. To date, \$11,000 has been gained through grants, with more funding being developed. The Festival has grown considerably over the past decade, with more than 16,000 attendees in 2012. The Planning Group is seeking more “ethno-specific” vendors, especially in the food area. Anyone interested in vendor space was encouraged to contact the BIA directly.

In subsequent discussion of the Chair’s report, the following comments and observations were brought forward:

- The festival should be more interactive.
- Involve cultural/ethnic groups and organizations in the planning and implementation of the festival.
- Have more engagement for children.
- Consider paying selected top artists to perform.
- Screen vendors as to their compatibility with the festival.

The Chair thanked committee members for their input and he undertook to relay the comments to the Planning Group.

#### **6.4 Metro Vancouver - Form and Language of Information**

The Chair observed that given the diversity of cultures in Metro Vancouver, Metro programs, including transit and recycling, should have more information available in a diversity of form and language. This could be in the form of both on-site and computerized material.

Committee members offered comments and suggestions, which Chair Puchmayr undertook to forward to Metro Vancouver.

### **7.0 CORRESPONDENCE**

#### **7.1 Neighbourhood Small Grant Program**

The Chair brought forward information provided by the Vancouver Foundation. Small grants were available for neighbourhood endeavours. This might be an avenue for funding general neighbourhood and/or cultural neighbourhood projects in amounts from \$50 to 1,000. The Vancouver Foundation would provide funding. The deadline for applications was March 31, 2013.

### **8.0 NEXT MEETING**

**8.1 5:30 p.m., March 27, 2013, Committee Room #2, City Hall**

### **9.0 ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting of the Multiculturalism Advisory Committee concluded at 7:55 p.m.

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**COUNCILLOR CHUCK PUCHMAYR  
CHAIR**

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**WILLIAM SHANNON  
RECORDING SECRETGARY**