

Reconciliation, Social Inclusion and Engagement Task Force

MINUTES

Monday, April 11, 2022

Meeting held electronically and in Committee Room 2
City Hall

PRESENT:

Councillor Nadine Nakagawa Chair*
Councillor Chinu Das*
Councillor Chuck Puchmayr*

STAFF MEMBERS:

Christina Coolidge	Indigenous Relations Advisor*
Rob McCullough	Manager, Museums and Heritage Services*
Jennifer Miller	Manager of Public Engagement*
John Stark	Supervisor, Community Planning*
Jacque Killawee	City Clerk*
Emilie Adin	Director, Climate Action, Planning and Development*
Dean Gibson	Director, Parks and Recreation*
Renee Chadwick	Manager, Special Projects and Community Partnerships*
Corrinne Garrett	Senior Manager, Recreation Facilities*
Diana McDaniel	New Westminister Police Department*
Carilyn Cook	Committee Clerk

*Denotes electronic attendance

1. **CALL TO ORDER AND LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

Councillor Nakagawa opened the meeting at 2:30 p.m. and recognized with respect that New Westminister is on the unceded and unsurrendered land of the Halkomelem speaking peoples. She acknowledged that colonialism has made

invisible their histories and connections to the land. She recognized that, as a City, we are learning and building relationships with the people whose lands we are on.

2. INTRODUCTIONS

Councillor Nakagawa noted that introductions were not usually done during these meetings and shared of the importance of having introductions to ensure that everyone knows each other.

A roundtable of introductions commenced with everyone sharing a bit about their heritage.

3. CHANGES TO THE AGENDA

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT the April 11, Reconciliation, Social Inclusion, and Engagement Task Force meeting agenda be adopted with the addition of New Business Item 6.1 – City Celebrations and Observances by Rob McCullough, Manager, Museums and Heritage Services.

Carried.

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

4. ADOPTION OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

4.1 March 7, 2022

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT the minutes of the March 7, 2022 Reconciliation, Social Inclusion and Engagement Task Force meeting be adopted.

Carried.

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

5. REPORTS AND PRESENTATIONS

5.1 Evaluating the Effectiveness of Public Engagement

Jennifer Miller, Manager of Public Engagement, provided a PowerPoint presentation titled, “Evaluating the Effectiveness of Public Engagement.” She noted that this will be the first conversation with the Task Force regarding this topic, and that the goal for 2022 is to develop standards for measuring public engagement.

In response to questions from Task Force members, Ms. Miller provided the following comments:

- While it is important to look at the number of people participating in engagement, it is more important look at who has participated in the process from a diversity aspect as we want to hear from a variety of voices;
- Anyone signed up on the BeHeard website provides consent to receive information regarding all of the City's public engagement opportunities;
- Information collected through the BeHeard platform allows staff to track demographics of who is participating, as well as the growth of membership on the site. While a lot of renters and seniors are participating in engagement through BeHeard, there has not been a big change overall in the demographics of registrants so far;
- It has been somewhat surprising to hear of some of smaller, more diverse groups engaging through the BeHeard platform; and,
- The City must offer a multitude of ways to receive feedback in addition to the BeHeard website, including visiting spaces to speak with those that actually use those spaces.

Discussion ensued, and Task Force members and staff provide the following comments:

- Public engagement questions should be bold and must not be geared towards getting specific answers;
- Our public engagement is moving ahead in a fair and democratic way and we need to be sure to reach people of all ages, especially seniors who may be shut in, and immigrants and other newcomers who may experience language barriers;
- It is important to inform public engagement participants of the outcome of the topic they provided feedback on;
- The timing of engagement for some projects is critical and must be conducted earlier in order to receive meaningful feedback;
- Broad participation could be achieved through using a variety of outreach methods such as holding a pizza party for youth, etc., in order to reach different demographics;
- A sign of successful engagement is whether or not participants feel comfortable sharing their honest opinions, even if it is negative, and providing a safe space for them to do so;
- Plain language must be used during engagement to avoid confusion;

- Expectations should be tempered by informing participants of jurisdictional issues, budgeting, and other aspects of a project that people may not take into consideration, including that the City can advocate for things and not always be asked to develop things; and,
- Determine if participants have received enough information to provide proper feedback on an item.

6. **NEW BUSINESS**

Rob McCullough, Manager, Museums and Heritage Services advised that throughout the course of the year there are different observances and celebratory periods for which requests for recognition come from residents, Council, or staff. He noted some of these celebrations and observances have been going on for generations, while others are new to the predominant culture of the City. Mr. McCullough asked if Task Force members if the City should create a formal list of celebrations and observances to use throughout the year in order to demonstrate the City's values and inclusivity.

In response to questions from Task Force members, Mr. McCullough, Jacque Killawee, City Clerk, and John Stark, Supervisor, Community Planning, provided the following comments:

- We need to determine if this should be a formal policy or more ad hoc, including what the community would want to see celebrated and observed;
- The multi-faith calendar includes hundreds of significant dates; however, we must find out which are most significant to the residents of the City;
- The City of Vancouver has identified dates that they will acknowledge over the course of the year while still remaining open to others that come forward and are not on the list;
- The new Welcome Centre may be able to facilitate and receive feedback on this issue;
- Feedback on this topic will be sought at the next Social Inclusion, Engagement, and Reconciliation Advisory Committee meeting; and
- Staff can proactively put non-religious cultural observance proclamations on the Council agendas throughout the year. A list of those will also be coming out of this work.

Discussion ensued, and Task Force members and staff provide the following comments:

- It is great to see staff taking the initiative with respect to the recent Persian and South Asian displays and celebrations in the City Hall foyer;
- For years the Tsilhqot'in Nation have observed Chief Ahan's execution which took place on July 18, 1865. The City has participated in these observances but has not been a lead in the organization of the observance event;
- The City could attend the October 24th events in observance of the five executed Chilcotin Chiefs, as a sister city;
- A broad list should be created that will reflect the demographics of the City; however, it should not just be of the populations;
- Any list created must be fluid in order to accommodate changes needed and staff must remain cognizant of what the City can accommodate and keep it balanced;
- We need to ensure that smaller cultures are accommodated but perhaps not each year to allow for others to be recognized different years;
- It would be lovely for the cultures of incoming immigrants to be celebrated so that they feel welcome and included in their new community;
- As various groups access city grants, we may see more culturally diverse groups coming forward that we can help and support; and,
- Recreation Services includes a variety of cultures in programs like cooking classes, etc.

7. MOTION TO MOVE THE MEETING INTO THE CLOSED MEETING

THAT the Task Force will now go into a meeting which is closed to the public, pursuant to sections 90(1)(k) of the Community Charter:

(k) negotiations and related discussions respecting the proposed provision of a municipal service that are at their preliminary stages and that, in the view of the council, could reasonably be expected to harm the interests of the municipality if they were held in public.

Carried.

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

8. END OF MEETING

The meeting ended at 3:38 p.m.

9. UPCOMING MEETINGS

Remaining scheduled meetings, which take place at 1:30 p.m. unless otherwise noted:

- May 13
- June 20
- July 15
- December 2

Certified correct,

Original Signed

Councillor Nadine Nakagawa
CHAIR

Original Signed

Carilyn Cook
COMMITTEE CLERK