

Reconciliation, Social Inclusion and Engagement Task Force**MINUTES****Monday, March 6, 2023****Meeting held electronically and in Committee Room 2
City Hall****PRESENT:**

Councillor Daniel Fontaine Chair
Councillor Tasha Henderson*

ABSENT:

Councillor Nakagawa

STAFF MEMBERS:

Renee Chadwick*	Manager, Special Projects and Community Partnerships
Christina Coolidge*	Indigenous Relations Advisor
Corrinne Garrett	Senior Manager, Recreation Facilities
Jacque Killawee	City Clerk
Rob McCullough	Manager, Museums and Heritage Services
Jennifer Miller	Manager of Public Engagement
John Stark	Supervisor of Community Planning
Denise Tambellini*	Intergovernmental and Community Relations Manager
Jackie Teed	Acting Director, Climate Action, Planning and Development
Carilyn Cook	Committee Clerk

*Denotes electronic attendance

1. CALL TO ORDER AND LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Councillor Fontaine opened the meeting at 10:02 a.m. and recognized with respect that New Westminster is on the unceded and unsundered land of the Halkomelem speaking peoples. He acknowledged that colonialism has made

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

2. INTRODUCTIONS

None.

3. CHANGES TO THE AGENDA

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT the agenda of the March 6, 2023 meeting of the Reconciliation, Social Inclusion and Engagement Task Force meeting be adopted with the addition of New Business Item 6.1 – Museum Exhibit: Meet Lee Singh Yen by Rob McCullough, Manager of 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 July 15, 2022

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT the minutes of the July 15, 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 – addressed item 5.3 first.

5.1 Reconciliation Working Group (RWG)

Christina Coolidge, Indigenous Relations Advisor, reminded Task Force members that one of the reasons for having the Reconciliation Working Group is to facilitate the improvement of the City's level of engagement with Indigenous groups. She noted that when working with Indigenous people it is important to remember that there is always the element that someone may be put in a position of being harmed and tokenized, and that sharing the burden of the emotional history of generational and traditional harm that comes from colonization helps and that this is also true for other racialized people.

In addition, Ms. Coolidge noted the following:

- The RWG consists of a large cross-section of people from many city departments who regularly attend the monthly meetings and, while this is not a decision-making group, they do put things into actions;
- Upcoming work includes researching other organizations and countries, including the Scandinavian countries that are often noted as being the happiest, to determine what policies and processes work for them to make a happier and better functioning community;
- At the last meeting the definitions of colonialism, de-colonization, and indigenization were discussed as they help to identify what the RWG must do to reach its objectives;
- RWG participants have begun keeping journals of how they feel about the work being done;
- Additional racialized staff and those of all seniority levels are being sought to participate in the RWG which is still predominantly Caucasian; and,
- The RWG will also identify the processes and policies that are working in the City.

In discussion, Task Force members noted:

- The large volume of work is, in part, a result of all of the engagement that is being requested of Indigenous groups across the country;
- The conversation around colonization and decolonization is appreciated;
- The RWG could also identify the systems of government that establish and allow colonial policies to remain and how those could be addressed;
- Generally, those with the loudest voice get things accomplished first; however, that may not necessarily be the best thing for the City;
- Looking at how the City operates through an Indigenous lens will ultimately benefit us all; and,
- The policies review is to identify all actions that the city has taken that involves interaction with Indigenous nations and weigh them against the Calls to Action and UNDRIP.

5.2 United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP)

Christina Coolidge, Indigenous Relations Advisor, shared her excitement for the City's Year of Truth and advised that she would be meeting with staff in various locations in the City to determine how they can create their own initiatives around

truth in reconciliation. She noted that there would be contests and other activities throughout the year and that she would be meeting with local business associations in order to include businesses in the initiative.

Ms. Coolidge advised that truth must come before reconciliation and one of the tasks of the RWG is to identify what is not working and where mistakes are being made with respect to colonial policies in order to make the best reparations, which is a change in behaviour. It must be determined where the City has violated UNDRIP in order to properly implement UNDRIP in a way that is really meaningful and thoughtful.

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

- The City has been doing things in an ad hoc manner;
- It is important to share the City's reconciliation efforts in open Council meetings to keep the public informed; and,
- Work is being done with city departments to look at things such as the procurement process, through an Indigenous lens.

In discussion, Task Force members noted the following:

- The City's endorsement of the UNDRIP should be more widely publicized as should the work that is and has been done in relation to it; and,
- Regarding updating Council's Code of Conduct as required by the Provincial Government, the Task Force could provide a recommendation to Council that it be looked at through an Indigenous lens in order to include Indigenous principles.

5.3 Demographic Profile of Be Heard Users

Jennifer Miller, Manager of Public Engagement, shared a PowerPoint presentation which outlined the demographic profile of registered users of the Be Heard New West online engagement platform.

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

- Additional intersectional work can be done in order to have more targeted outreach;
- It is not the goal to have people provide feedback on things that do not interest or affect them;

- The Be Heard website is mobile friendly and no feedback has been received indicating the need for an app, nor are staff aware of other municipalities that have such an app;
- Not all youth use WhatsApp and there are security issues with TikTok;
- Staff may be able to utilize the City's volunteer database, which includes over 400 people, for engagement;
- The goal is not necessarily to achieve feedback from the highest number of residents but to receive feedback from a large variety of people with different lived and living experiences;
- Information has been shared through various New Westminster based Facebook groups; however, it is challenging for staff to interact with people through those groups; and,
- This information will be brought in a report to Council and shared with the community.

In discussion, Task Force members noted the following:

- Examination of the statistics of who has responded to outreach could lead to public education about things such as zoning which many in the community may not know about. This may empower people to participate more;
- In many cultures women do not have a voice; therefore, utilizing opportunities to go where they are is important to getting information out; and,
- Youth need to be engaged on a regular basis in order to get them to participate in things.

6. NEW BUSINESS

6.1 Museum Exhibit: Meet Lee Singh Yen

Rob McCullough, Manager, Museums and Heritage Services, announced the upcoming August 2023 exhibit titled "Meet Lee Singh Yen" which Linda Tzang, Curator, is working on. The exhibit is a result of research Ms. Tzang was doing in the archives for Asian Heritage month during which she found a Head Tax Certificate for Lee Singh Yen, from when people had to pay a tax in order to be allowed to stay in the country, leading up to the Chinese Immigration Act. He noted that the exhibit to introduce people to Mr. Yen is with the intention of supporting the commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the Chinese Immigration Act and the City's 2010 Chinese Reconciliation Act, which includes actions that the City is

still working on. The exhibition will also facilitate continuation of the work at the museum reflecting community groups representative of the City's multi-cultural heritage and engage the public in order to provide greater awareness of these groups. A large-scale replica of Mr. Yen's Head Tax Certificate will be placed in the window of the Anvil Centre to entice people into the exhibit.

Overall, the exhibit will provide explanations of the Head Tax and the Chinese Immigration Act with presentations focusing on the area's Chinatown and how it was different than other local Chinatowns, with a focus on shop keeping as opposed to the railway, as well as activation of outdoor space.

John Stark, Supervisor of Community Planning, shared that the City has been invited to speak about reconciliation at the Planning Institute of British Columbia's Conference noting that the City's Chinese reconciliation process will be one of the highlighted stories. The Conference is being held at Sun Peaks Resort from May 31st to June 1st; however, it has not yet been determined when the panel discussion on reconciliation will take place.

7. END OF MEETING

The meeting ended at 11:43 a.m.

8. UPCOMING MEETINGS

No further meetings are scheduled.

Certified correct,

Councillor Nadine Nakagawa
CHAIR

Carilyn Cook
COMMITTEE CLERK