



**County of Simcoe**  
**Social Services**  
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## MINUTES

**MEETING DATE:** March 29, 2012

**MEETING TIME:** 9:00 a.m - 11:30 a.m., County of Simcoe Administration Centre

**ATTENDANCE:** Black, B. (Simcoe Muskoka Workforce Development Board); Douglas, L. (LIP, recording secretary); Gavarre, N. (City of Barrie); Hie, H. (Georgian Employment Service); Holt, R. (LIP); Pacheco, D. (TRACKS); Scott, K. (County of Simcoe); Skybin, Y. (YMCA Newcomer Services); Whittington, P. (Georgian College; Chair); Woodrow, L. (Barrie Career Centre)  
Regrets: Brown, D. (Social Enterprise for Canada); Goruk, S. (Greater Barrie Chamber of Commerce); Gamache, G. (Le Cle d'la Baie en Huronie); Low, K. (Northern Lights); Plewes, S. (Simcoe Muskoka Workforce Development Board); Schlicter, S. (City of Barrie); Terrance, M. (Social Enterprise for Canada); Zeng, M. (Barrie Chinese Community Association)

**SUBJECT:** Employment Sub-Council

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1. Welcome and Introductions

R. Holt chaired on behalf of P. Whittington. The Acting Chair welcomed the sub-council, and members introduced themselves.

2. Review of Notes of Meeting of February 23, 2012

The notes of the February 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting were previously circulated on March 3. There were no comments or business arising at this time from the notes.

3. Best Practices Presentation & Case Studies

Holly Hie provided a presentation on the Georgian College Employment Services, including a brief history of Employment Ontario, how to locate local employment service providers at <http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/eng/search.asp>, components of the employment service such as job search, resources and information, accessing assisted services, job matching, placement and incentives, job training and retention and other employment services. She also shared a success story on the pathways of an immigrant who was an internationally trained engineer. He approached their services after seeing an employment ad in the paper and eventually became successfully employed as a systems designer.

The floor was opened to questions. Questions and discussion centred on the success with job matching, the importance of evaluation to make good matches, the challenge of matching more highly skilled clients than entry level ones, the need to put the client at the centre; credential assessment, and job development generally done for at-risk clients, i.e. youth as opposed to newcomers.

A copy of the presentation will be circulated to members.

#### 4. Moving Forward with Employment Working Groups

The following starting points of discussion were suggested for the each of the working groups.

##### Professional development (frontline staff)

- Cultural competence training, i.e. SickKids
- Good models – tips /suggestions
- Local services presentations directly to staff
- Guest speakers, such as those at the Internationally Educated Professionals Conference

##### Employer education

- Benefits to employer
- Understanding what they are seeing – professional associations
- Credentials – what they should mean
- Cultural competency for employers
- How to assist with integration and assimilation in the workplace?
- Toolkit of how to be inclusive
- Hiring Immigrants makes good business sense

##### Newcomer education

- ISAP – give info and referrals – give workshops
- Tailor presentations to newcomers specifically
- Mobile Unit portfolio development workshops
- Familiarize the newcomer with the culture of the Canadian workplace – what to expect
- Newcomer knowing how to educate employer
- Selling themselves to employer
- networking
- Inventory of what employment services are available in our community (Welcoming Communities sub-council has identified the creation of a Simcoe County Immigrant Directory as one of its priorities, and SMWDB has assumed this project for next year.)
- Put something out to newcomers that share common threads (i.e. Latin community associations advertise amongst themselves → well-connected.)

It was recommended that one of the sub-council members should be at the first couple of the working groups meetings to help guide the discussion.

#### 5. Update on Working Group on Establishing an IEC

R. Holt and H. Hie provided an update on this working group's activities.

- ALLIES was contacted and provided suggestions for the feasibility study:
  - enquiries to local employers – through studies, focus groups
  - meeting with employer stakeholders
  - identifying local champions
  - inventory of who is interested in hiring newcomers
  - identifying the welcoming host – chambers, municipalities, enterprises
  - determine key message.
- Approach the EDO at Simcoe County to contact all EDOs in area to gage their interest in an IEC
- Keep consistent message of what is an IEC and its benefits
- Include research from focus groups, LHIN Market Partnerships & the upcoming County of Simcoe Ontario Labour Market Partnership
- Snapshot of results.

6. Debut of “Hiring Immigrants makes Good Business Sen\$e”

R. Holt reported on the debut of the guide, “*Hiring Immigrants makes Good Business Sen\$e*”, which is currently at the printers. She reviewed the content of the booklet, which included workplace changes, how to support the employers, work permits, Provincial Nominee program, recruiting diverse talent; Simcoe County programs and services, building cultural understanding, mentoring and immigrants, internships and immigrants, and a Lakehead University piece on cultural diversity.

It was noted by Sub-council members that two of the programs and services are no longer in existence. B. Black will contact the publisher and make the appropriate revisions to the booklet if not published yet. In the event the booklet has been published, an insert will be added with the correct information. The distribution list has not yet been finalized.

7. Other Business:

R. Holt provided an update on LIP’s Employers Focus Groups held recently in Bradford, Collingwood, and Midland.

Y. Skybin responded to a few queries on the YMCA Newcomer Services.

The next meeting is scheduled for April 26, 9:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m., at the County of Simcoe Administration Centre.

