



County of Simcoe
Social and Community Services
Children & Community Services
Department
1110 Highway 26,
Midhurst, Ontario L0L 1X0

Main Line (705) 722-3132
Toll Free 1-866-893-9300
Fax (705) 725-9539
simcoe.ca



MINUTES

MEETING DATE: 7/5/2012

MEETING TIME: 2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

ATTENDANCE: Boulanger, F. (College Boreal); Brown, D. (Social Enterprise for Canada); Douglas, L. (recording secretary); Fisher, M. (Community Connection); Gouldson, C. (Nottawasaga Futures); Konrad, Y.; Lee, S. (LIP); Wisken, R. (LIP)
Regrets: Brislin, S. (Town of Innisfil); Helmerichs, R. (Georgian College); Milne, R. (New Tecumseh); Zeng, M. (Barrie & Area Chinese Association)

SUBJECT: Welcoming Communities Sub-Council

1) Welcome & Introductions

S. Lee welcomed members, and members introduced themselves.

2) Community Updates

S. Lee, LIP

- Advertorial – 4-page insert appeared in local newspapers last week. It was the first time that an issue focussed on one subject. Lots of feedback received.
- MOSAIC - Issue 2 was distributed in June and featured articles include interviews with staff and a newcomer employee at the Waypoint Centre for Mental Health Care.
- Introduced Robyn Wisken, who is replacing R. Holt during her parental leave.
- Portal application approved
- Upcoming York IEP Conference - participation

M. Fisher, Community Connection

- 211 provincially funded
- New project community care access line
- Numerous sub group activities
- Emergency disaster information to be added.

Yvonne Konrad

- ESL teacher
- Focused in Alliston
- Making community contacts
- Demand for language services but no resources
- Acknowledged assistance of Deputy Mayor Milne and the local Lions Club, who provided funding to a local family in need.

Darlene Brown, Social Enterprise for Canada

- Mobile unit uses local libraries as temporary satellite sites for meetings with clients.
- Pro-active on providing services in the community.

3) Immigrant Directory Update

S. Lee reported that the Immigrant Directory working group is moving forward. The draft of the Living section will be wrapped up shortly with one more meeting to be planned before formatting. The Health and Wellness portion will be delayed slightly, and work will begin next on the Employment section. The Employment Sub-council was approached for participation, and 2 members at the meeting agreed to partake in the working group to develop the employment content. The Education section will be developed lastly. The projected date for completion of the draft is November 2012.

4) Newcomer Settlement Proposal-CFP

MCI issued a call for proposals for Newcomer Settlement which was distributed electronically to the sub-councils. LIP offered to issue a letter outlining results of their research; however, they are restricted in directly supporting a service provider's proposal application. The letter should be available by next week for interested parties.

5) Priority Areas

(a) Community Hub Model

S. Lee reported that the libraries have confirmed their interest in pursuing the community hub concept. Funding opportunities will be examined, including CIC as a starting point.

(b) Draft Public Education Strategy / Framework

The purpose of developing a public education strategy was discussed.

Discussion centred on:

- Changing attitudes
- Marketing area as a place for immigrants to settle
- Dispel myths - Unemployment rate high – threat of newcomers taking jobs
- Educating community on immigrants and educating newcomer on integration into community → Two-prong → Connecting with one another
- Make the community more welcoming
- Help community understand the benefits of newcomers
- Loss of traditions – lord's prayer removed, Christmas
- Adoption of Canadian cultural norms – i.e. sports, teams
- encouraging people to celebrate their own heritage
- Embracing different cultures through food – restaurants, festivals, groceries
- Image of Canada – open country – provide an understanding of why people come → opportunity, leave repression behind → The story behind the person
- Personal level – identify with that community → make it tangible

- Dollar value back to community (i.e. through programs taken) – Convinces government that support is needed and of benefit to community → possible disinterest in data by individual in the community
- Who is your Neighbour?
- Listening past the accent

Following discussion, identified were these 3

Main Purposes

1. Challenging bias
2. Building bridges
3. Educating on benefits.

Handout

A handout on a framework for a public education strategy was circulated. (The framework was developed from discussion at the last meeting.) New Canadians should be added as a piece to the framework. The goal is to develop a framework that will inform many different activities. A list of links to champion websites was also distributed.

The concept and role of Champions were discussed with the following points noted:

Who?

- Person within a community who is well-connected
- Shows leadership within a service group, i.e. Lions, Rotary
- Service groups can be international
- Service clubs - Lions, Rotary
- Identifying champions from different sectors
- Identifying champions for each of the settlement strategy themes
- Face of the community in that sector
- Someone in the community who people go to
- Someone new in the community may be beneficial
- Senior champion – seniors educating senior immigrants on Canadian living – isolation a problem – commonalities
- Youth champion – young, energetic, socially connected
- Agriculture champion – rural area – consult with Charles Kourassi
- Advisors to local politicians (influence voters, campaigns – ability to steer – connection with political community)

Purpose of champions

- Different meanings - donors; new way of doing things; Nova Scotia developed a toolkit for champions and training by workshops;
- Determine what message that you want delivered
- Take message out to community
- Message should be consistent and simple.
- Connectedness within their community

- Be well-versed in what we are involved in
- Show benefits to champion
- Community animators
- Inspire – young, new, energetic immigrant
- Use social media – great opportunity to reach younger generation

Activities

- Subtle approach - ploughing matches, fall fairs, festivals → bring a flag from your home country and stick in soil
- Host community awards ceremony for champions
- Target specific communities

6) Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, July 31, 2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m., at the County of Simcoe Administration Centre.