



County of Simcoe
Social Services
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MINUTES

MEETING DATE: January 26, 2012

MEETING TIME: 9:30 a.m., Community Service Centre South Simcoe, Alliston, ON

ATTENDANCE: Present: Adams, J. (Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration); Beattie, L. (CONTACT); Brislin, S. (Town of Innisfil); Brown, D. (Social Enterprise for Canada); Davis, A. (Barrie Public Library); Douglas, L. (recording secretary); Fisher, M. (211 Community Connection); Helmerichs, R. (Georgian College); Holt, R. (LIP); Lee, S. (LIP); Milne, R. (Town of New Tecumseh); Persaud, C. (Turning Points); Ryan, V. (Nottawasaga Futures); Vanderkruys, C. (Barrie Public Library)

Regrets: Beaucage, G. (Barrie Native Advisory); Boulanger, F. (College Boreal); Brislin, S. (Town of Innisfil); Davis, A. (Barrie Public Library); Helmerichs, R. (Georgian College); Hillier, P. (2-1-1 Community Connection); Kouassi, C. (Conseil de la cooperation de l'Ontario); Rodford, E. (Simcoe County District School Board)

SUBJECT: LIP Welcoming Communities Sub-Council Meeting

1. Business Arising from the Meeting of December 8, 2011

The discussion of characteristics of welcoming communities will be continued at today's meeting.

2. Update on LIP Activities

S. Lee provided an update on LIP activities including the community consultation process, upcoming focus groups in Bradford, Collingwood & Penetanguishene - with newcomers and business associations, the extension of CIC contract for settlement strategy, main problems identified from focus groups – employment, discrimination, isolation, defining welcoming communities from newcomers perspective – community, resources, celebrating multiculturalism and diversity, employment; improvement areas – employment, connectivity, school system, expansion of settlement services, transportation, and housing; key informant interviews; need for basic services; public and not for profit sectors roles; on-line survey results; barriers/service gaps preventing immigration; importance of being viewed as culturally diverse to consumer base; and 2012-13 work plan . A copy of the presentation will be distributed electronically to the Sub-council.

In the works is the development of a 5th sub-council on business development. V. Ryan offered to chair this sub-council and will encourage colleagues' participation.

R. Holt reported that *Why Hiring Immigrants Makes Good Business Sense*, a resource guide for employers based on the Niagara model, will be available in March. Funding for the guide was provided by the Simcoe County Workforce Development Board and developed in conjunction with LIP.

3) County of Simcoe Welcoming Communities Assessment

The exercise from the last meeting was not continued as sub-council members appeared well-tuned with the characteristics of a welcoming community. Discussion followed.

- Investment funds are available for newcomers starting business program
- Barrie Economic Development Plan

- County looking at transportation system – huge challenge for newcomers
- County not as on board or proactive as York or Durham regions → more services in the south region
- Important to get information out to municipalities
- Hard to compare rural vs. urban
- CIRRO Training - Collingwood
- Good information available through province – statistical data, landscape changed from last census
- Warden is very supportive of LIP program – municipal politicians looking at dollars – really not aware of LIP
- More LIP presentations in community → important to spread word → South Simcoe business links meetings, etc.
- Education piece important → misinformation as fact → lack of education results in defensive behaviour
- Educate business community, politicians, etc.
- Working with central LHIN → very active with regular meetings and recruitment activities
- Characteristics of newcomer in rural community → rootlessness → most immigration interprovincial – come and go
- *211*
 - networking important to get people to services
 - get community to be aware of 211
 - Identify 211 as first point of access
 - offers 3rd party interpreter services
 - getting updated information to 211
- Language barriers – concierge service – direct person to appropriate service – lack of communication
- Welcome Centre offers service in 19 different languages
- 5 other information services throughout county- walk in services
- Advertising and promotion
- “Pocket “ directory of language services– welcome centres – make available in shops, grocery stores, banks, library, medical clinics
- Existing list of doctors who are language-specific that are taking patients
- Development of an Immigrant resource directory
- Connect people to opportunities
- Health & Social directory – CONTACT - needs to be updated
- Communities getting info to immigration booth at Toronto airport
- Online portal – on track for county → information available prior to arrival
- Matching information with immigrant
- Service mapping
- Claimant refugees – defraud experiences– unaware of services – isolation
- Provincial nominee program – one in each province – learn from experience in eastern Canada – corruption
- *Mentorship Models*: College – picks up every student ; St. Michael’s Hospital - TRIEC; Schulich School of Business pairs immigrant students with employers
- *Libraries*
 - Well-connected – all municipalities have libraries
 - Good starting point for newcomers
 - Free services
 - Library budgets \$10K for translation
 - Have municipalities direct \$ to libraries.
 - Social Enterprise has good liaison with libraries.
- *Funding*
 - Identify gaps or new ways of funding
 - Community cannot rely on just CIC funding
 - Foundations, municipalities, diversify funding
 - Welcome Centre – school board funding, MCI funding
 - Collaborate with private companies
 - Cultural competency – myth of cost of translation – becomes more accepted practice
- Assistance with legal matters → YMCA, CONNECT, pro bono lawyer?
- Connection between Simcoe County and CIC
- Promote friendliness of community

- Collaboration important
- Be culturally aware
- Discourage growth of enclave communities – results in disengagement and self-sufficiency

4. Establishing Priorities

The following six items were determined by the Sub-Council to be areas of priorities:

1. The development of an information resource (6)
 - Multiple languages
2. The development of a single point of contact (7)
 - one stop shop
 - hub - Libraries
3. The development of host/mentorship initiatives (1)
 - i.e. TRIEC – ST. Michael's
4. Connection with newcomers prior to arrival. (1)
 - -connect with private organizations
5. Public education/awareness strategy (8)
 - Must be tailored to community
6. Multi-cultural celebrations (1)

Of these 6 items, members then selected the 3 areas they would be most interested in moving forward on, which are:

1. Public education/awareness strategy (8)
2. The development of a single point of contact (7)
3. The development of an information resource (6).

5) Discussion on Public Education Strategy

Tabled.

6) Next Meeting

D. Brown offered to host the next meeting at the Newmarket Welcome Centre Immigrant Services, on *February 29, at 9:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m., which will give members an opportunity to visit a one-stop shop for servicing immigrants. (**Note: Meeting was originally scheduled for March 1.*)