



## MINUTES

**MEETING DATE:** October 11, 2012

**MEETING TIME:** 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

**ATTENDANCE:** S. Brislin (Town of Innisfil); Brown, D. (Bridge Translations); Douglas, L. (LIP, recording secretary); Konrad, Y. (ESL – Gibson Centre); Milne, R. (Town of New Tecumseh); Persaud, C. (Turning Points); Skybin, Y. (YMCA); Wisken, R. (LIP)

**SUBJECT:** Welcoming Communities Sub-council Meeting

---

1) Welcome & Introductions

S. Lee welcomed new co-chair of the Partnership Council, A. Pickard, who stopped by to introduce herself to the Sub-council.

2) Community Updates

Rick Milne

- Recent appointment as co-chair of the Local Immigration Partnership Council
- Launch of Community Settlement Strategy on October 17

S. Lee

- Venue for Community Settlement Strategy Launch on the 17<sup>th</sup> changed to Mady Centre
- Video which will reflect the 4 themes of the settlement strategy
- Presented at SMWDB Lunch n' Learn for Employers yesterday
- Portal underway
  - Coordinator begins on October 15 with 5 Information sessions planned at the end of October and early November
  - Meeting with 211 on October 15 to discuss portal
  - Sustainability after first year discussed
  - Content management will be conducted in-house
- Opening Doors Project Workshops are being held on November 6 & 7<sup>th</sup> at the Township of Springwater Administration centre.
- Multi-cultural focus group being held to determine newcomers needs
- Presentations to the municipalities being planned in conjunction with the Partnership Council
- Library hub model – no proposal was submitted to CIC by the libraries due to timing; however, York Region CIC was approached with the idea of library hub who requested further information on this initiative for their consideration.
- Business Development Sub-council Update

### S. Brislin

- Suggested that CIC website be checked for changes to requirements for citizenship, including language capacity
- 

### 3) Immigrant Resource Directory Update

R. Wisken reported that work continued throughout the summer on the immigrant resource directory. The last meeting of the working group on the “Employment” section takes place today. The “Education” section is slated to be developed next.

### 4) Draft Public Education Strategy / Framework (continued)

The material on the public education framework was recirculated at this meeting. The discussion from the meetings of July 4 and July 31<sup>st</sup> was briefly reviewed including targeted groups, champions, seniors, service clubs, changing membership at Kiwanis Club in Barrie. It is anticipated that the framework will be presented to the LIP Partnership Council in November or January.

Further discussion ensued on

- Immigrant youth connection with seniors (i.e. Chinese community)
- Public initiative – focus group with newcomers
- New Canadian piece to Settlement Services Sub-council as they are the funded service providers and experts
- Employment could be moved to Employment Sub-council
- Focus on the Broader Public Sector

#### *Volunteerism:*

- Explore Volunteer initiatives – March of Dimes and Heart and Stroke – targeted immigrant groups and disease related to certain medical conditions → bridging with immigrants by moving into the volunteer sector → Ask organization about why they are targeting this area or different segments of populations, opportunities → Targeting specific groups may be beneficial.
- Peel had an event last year on volunteer opportunities – challenges; positive experience generally → hospitals, larger organizations
- Responsibilities of living in the community → giving back
- Relate - Not giving something for free but sharing skills to benefit the community
- Volunteer with those within their own ethnic background who share similar health or other problems
- Informal, comfortable setting → Canadian volunteerism more formalized → application forms, police checks → disconnect with large event
- Bring volunteer initiatives that certain groups would understand – more informal
- Application form and police checks can be intimidating
- Expose others to different cultures – volunteerism is one way
- Recognizing newcomers as part of the community and be welcoming
- Change of mindset for newcomer – aversion to sharing personal information
- Language could be a problem
- Two way benefits – broader public sector to expose

- Newcomer organizations – introduce idea of volunteerism to association to filter to their members
- Social cultural groups – safe, soft entry to concept
- Students could use volunteer jobs for work experience
- Connecting with seniors – at home, isolated
- Volunteer in related job field to gain experience
- Newcomer clients may walk in and offer to volunteer only to face a wall of rejection – cultural competency piece
  
- Approach larger organizations that might have an appropriate spokesperson to address specific groups within the newcomer community
- An event to introduce newcomers to concept of volunteerism → Job fair for volunteer opportunities
- Information sessions on application process – educate
  - Obtain samples of application forms for volunteers to gain insight into types of questions asked
  - Explain police check is pro-active, not negative
  - Boundaries within volunteering
- Speak to RVH, Human Resources, about their volunteer program
- Library → integrate those with limited language abilities
- Schools → have short info sessions on orientation to volunteerism – nothing specific for new immigrants → Inform students about volunteerism
- Identify those organizations that are open to volunteers

#### *Cultural Competency Training*

- Who? individual front-line workers (first encounter); never say “no”;
- How to build? in modules; organizations such as Waypoint – 1000 trained now in cultural competency; understand process
- Connect as a component to client service training – more revenues – improved reputation
- Newcomer may otherwise seek services in underground economy which could pose legal and other issues for them
- To be added as an agenda item at the next meeting.

#### *How?*

Ask municipalities to endorse public education framework → one of the asks in the presentations to municipalities possibly

#### 5) Chair Position for Sub-council

Currently there is no dedicated chair for this Sub-council. S. Lee asked members to consider and identify the role of Chair. Responsibilities would include taking leadership, setting agenda, motivating the group to move forward with priorities, and being a champion.

6) Other Business

- *Opening Doors Project Workshops*. Flyers were distributed on the 4 Opening Doors Project Workshops taking place on November 6 & 7<sup>th</sup> in Midhurst at the Township of Springwater Administration Centre

- *Portal Community Information Sessions*: 5 sessions will be held throughout the County at the end of October and the beginning of November. Exact dates and locations will be announced.

7) Next Meeting - November 9, 2012

S. Lee will invite Mr. Ted Zatylny, Project Leader, New Resident Attraction and Retention, Sarnia-Lambton Economic Partnership, to be a guest speaker at the next meeting. Sarnia-Lambton serves as an excellent example of a very welcoming community.