



**SOCIAL INCLUSION, ENGAGEMENT, AND RECONCILIATION
ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

MINUTES

**Wednesday, September 14, 2022
Electronic and in Meeting Room G
Lower Level, City Hall**

PRESENT:

Councillor Chinu Das	Chair
Nate Batara	Community Member
Frances Blake	Community Member
Tony Duong*	Community Member
Damian Durica*	Community Member
Briana Harris	Alternate Chair/Community Member
Rozina Jaffer	Community Member
Natalie Johnston	Community Member
Nicole Maine	Community Member

ABSENT:

Vishal Jain	Community Member
Satnam Sangra	Community Member
Megumi Taguchi	Community Member
Ruth Weller	Representative from a Local Indigenous Support Organization

STAFF PRESENT:

Rob McCullough	Manager, Museums and Heritage Services
Jennifer Miller*	Manager of Public Engagement
John Stark	Supervisor, Community Planning
Christina Coolidge*	Indigenous Relations Advisor
Claudia Freire	Housing and Social Planner
Carilyn Cook	Committee Clerk, Legislative Services

*Denotes electronic attendance

1. CALL TO ORDER AND LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Councillor Das opened the meeting at 5:30 p.m. and recognized with respect that New Westminster is on the unceded and unsurrendered land of the Halkomelem speaking peoples. She acknowledged that colonialism has made invisible their

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

2. INTRODUCTIONS

Introductions took place.

3. CHANGES TO THE AGENDA

MOVED AND SECONDED

THAT the September 14, 2022 Social Inclusion, Engagement, and Reconciliation Advisory Committee agenda be adopted with the addition of New Business item 6.1 – Appointment of Representative to the Museum Advisory Group.

CARRIED.

All members of the Committee present voted in favour of the motion.

4. ADOPTION OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

4.1 June 15, 2022

MOVED AND SECONDED

THAT the June 15, 2022 Social Inclusion, Engagement, and Reconciliation Advisory Committee minutes be adopted as circulated.

CARRIED.

All members of the Committee present voted in favour of the motion.

5. REPORTS AND PRESENTATIONS

5.1 Summer Outreach Results and Experiences

Jennifer Miller, Manager of Public Engagement, shared a PowerPoint presentation which outlined the City's summer outreach results and experiences. She noted that the goal of the summer outreach was to connect with people who are normally not engaged with the City, based on suggestions from the Social Inclusion, Engagement and Reconciliation Advisory Committee. She noted that staff visited multiple locations on some days and went out every day of the week (during different weeks), at different times in effort to meet the largest variety of people.

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

- Grimston Park, which staff visited 4-5 times, was a successful location to connect with a diversity of people, including young families;
- The Riverfront Walk in Queensborough was also successful and, while there was not a lot of traffic, people were happy to see staff engaging with residents;
- Staff met a wide variety of people in all of the places they visited and saw no particular demographic in any particular area; however, many people were new to New Westminster, especially in the Quayside area;
- Registration on the Be Heard website increased over the summer, mostly by those interested in a particular project, after which they would receive information about other projects and initiatives seeking input;
- While the participation aspect of public engagement is important, the goal of outreach this summer was to reach out to communities and meet people;
- Currently, there are not a lot of active projects on the Be Heard website given summer holidays, the municipal election is coming up, etc., and it will take some time to see the dividends of this summer's outreach in terms of activity on the website;
- Geo-mapping, with the assistance of the City's GIS team, is used and one of the key reasons registrants are asked to provide their postal code when they register on Be Heard;
- In general, participation on the Be Heard website is seen across the City from a variety of neighbourhoods. Examples of this information on a project-by-project basis could be shared at a future meeting;
- It is very important to recognize that Be Heard is only one way for people to participate and engage with the City. In-person engagement such as pop-ups are also a great way for residents to participate and an option for those that do not use or have access to a computer; and,
- Staff continue to reach out, in person, to the community as much as possible and provide staff contact information for continued communication.

Councillor Das noted that City Council is always interested in the demographic information of those who participate in public engagement with the City.

5.2 New Infographic Overview: What is Public Engagement?

Jennifer Miller, Manager of Public Engagement, reviewed the new infographic titled, "What is Public Engagement?" which is designed to explain what public engagement is to those who may not be familiar with the process. Ms. Miller

advised that the graphic was shared at some of the engagement pop ups later in the summer.

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

- Work is being done to create a social media post with the infographic content on Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, etc., possibly with some animation;
- The graphics were specifically developed to stand alone and be self-explanatory; however, translations for the captions can be looked at later if needed; and,
- It is anticipated that a print version of the graphic will be available at some point (i.e. a post card in City facilities).

Discussion ensued and Committee members provided the following comments:

- The approach to share the graphics needs to be multi-faceted depending on which demographic you wish to reach. As many seniors may not be on social media, sharing the graphics through Century House, churches, etc., would be more efficient ways to reach them;
- The graphics must be simplified and in plain language, avoiding the use of words such as “preference” or “implement”;
- The graphics should be shared with the Welcoming and Inclusive New Westminster (WINS) Committee;
- A print version could include a QR Code to take people to the Be Heard website; and,
- To ensure that the graphics are doing what is intended, they could be shared, without the wording, to a group for review and feedback.

5.3 Municipal Election Update

Jacque Killawee, City Clerk, provided an update on the October 15, 2022 Municipal election including:

- A preliminary declaration of candidates occurred on Friday;
- New Westminster Youth Ambassadors have been promoting participation in the election amongst the City’s youth population;
- Work has been done to ensure that someone at each election station speaks a second language fluently;
- A QR Code has been provided on handouts to take people to the website in their language; and,

- Twenty-eight percent of eligible voters voted last year.

Ms. Killawee encouraged everyone to exercise their democratic right and vote, advising that the services of municipal governments impact our lives the most.

5.4 Diwali - City & Century House Plans for Celebration

Councillor Das queried if the City had any plans to acknowledge Diwali which will be happening in October, and it was noted that no formal plans were in place.

Discussion ensued and Rob McCullough, Manager, Museums and Heritage Services shared that the Gurdwara Sahib Sukh Sagar will begin Guru Nanak birthday celebrations which will continue into Diwali celebrations with a number of events taking place.

In response to a suggestion from a Committee member, Mr. McCullough advised that the majority of lamp post banners are managed through Arts Services and that some go through a public art call, some are related to specific programs, and some show what is going on in the City such as the banners along Royal Avenue. He shared that he would speak with Todd Ayotte, Manager, Community Arts and Theatre, about the possibility of having student-created artwork put on banners in celebration of occasions such as Diwali, Chinese New Year, etc.

Discussion ensued and Committee members provided the following comments:

- These celebrations and events should be promoted around the city including on Citypage, on the City's website, and in the Record such as what was done for Shine Bright New West, etc.;
- It is important for children to see themselves represented outside of the Gurdwara and this is essential at the City Hall level as it is decolonizing for the City acknowledge celebrations such as Diwali and be an example for cities across the lower mainland; and,
- As a community we must be to be proactive and regularly celebrate these types of occasions to keep people engaged with the City.

MOVED AND SECONDED

THAT the Social Inclusion, Engagement and Reconciliation Advisory Committee recommends that City Council approve lighting up the outside of City Hall with white strings of lights for a range of days around October 24, 2022 in celebration of Diwali.

CARRIED.

All members of the Committee present voted in favour of the motion.

Councillor Das announced that the Century House Association will be hosting a number of activities in celebration of Diwali including a traditional Indian dinner, entertainment, henna hand painting, etc. She noted that some of the events have a cost associated with them and that pre-registration is required or recommended, depending on the event.

5.5 Truth and Reconciliation Day Events

Rob McCullough, Manager, Museums and Heritage Services, shared information about events being planned for Truth and Reconciliation Day on September 30th, including:

- Some of the events to take place at Pier Park include a variety of speakers, complementary food for attendees, a toy to be given to each child in attendance to reflect the children in residential schools who did not have a chance to be children; etc.;
- Work is being done with Resilience BC Spokes to provide free books to children in attendance as well;
- Last year the event hosted 400 to 550 people and the goal this year is to reach 1,000;
- A federal grant was received to assist in offsetting the costs for the day;
- Spirit of the Children Society (SOTCS), the lead for the day, has connected with the Qayqayt First Nation and other Indigenous groups who have expressed an interest in New Westminster to see if they would like to attend. It is unclear if the Metis Nation has been approached; and,
- SOTCS has created an events page to share the day's events and information can also be found on the City's events page.

Discussion ensued and Committee members provided the following comments:

- For the past three years the Gurdwara has been doing an annual cultural sharing with the Tsilhqot'in First Nation, which is a very powerful event. This year it was held on August 26th;
- It is noticeable as you walk along the Fraser River that there is no acknowledgment of the history of the people who lived on it before the colonizers; however, there is a statue of Simon Fraser;
- It is important for our children to see representation of the people who were here before us; and,
- The City needs to work with the Indigenous peoples of the area to have meaningful representation and to learn the history of the Fraser River;

In response to questions from the Committee, Christina Coolidge, Indigenous Relations Advisor, advised that a large educational piece for the community and non-Indigenous people is the Indian Act as that is where a lot of the colonial violence came from including the residential schools.

Ms. Coolidge noted at that, as an Indigenous person, it is difficult to see the statues of colonizers and that, while the statue of Judge Begbie has been removed, we are not quite ready to move forward with more as we need to have truth before reconciliation. She shared of the big history of the Fraser River and Indigenous people and that many nations are interested in working with the City to tell their stories and share the rich nature of their relationship with the land and the river. The City needs to find a way to engage these nations so that their stories can be shared to help the City come to terms with its history and then work on reconciliation. Ms. Coolidge advised that the City was doing a lot of work on truth and reconciliation before she started work with the City; however, it was not public knowledge. As such, she has updated the city website to share this work and has created strategies to be worked on after Truth and Reconciliation Day.

Councillor Das shared that Council has been in discussions about truth and reconciliation and that they acknowledge that we must get to the truth and understand it before doing the acts of reconciliation.

5.6 Guru Nanak Birthday Celebration Events

Rob McCullough, Manager, Museums and Heritage Services, shared that he has connected with members of the Gurdwara with respect to celebrations of Guru Nanak's birthday and that more information will be shared once plans are in place and that work will be done to promote the festivities with the public.

5.7 Komagata Maru Commemoration Update

Rob McCullough, Manager, Museums and Heritage Services, provided an update on the Komagata Maru Commemoration for which the process began three years ago at the request of the Descendants of the Komagata Maru Society. The request included that the history of the Komagata Maru be acknowledged by the City by way of having something named after it and, as such, Council approved the naming of the Komagata Maru Perimeter Trail and dock. Mr. McCullough noted that the interpretive panel for the dock, which is located at the previously named River Walk in Queensborough, is now complete with the assistance of Committee member Satnam Sangra and his sister Navpreet Kaur Sekhon who ensured accurate translation of the piece which is

now at the printer. It is anticipated that the unveiling of the panel will take place in early October and that all contributors, included Committee members, will be invited to the event.

Councillor Das shared that Council felt that it was important to use these locations in acknowledgement of the Komagata Maru because the passengers of the ship were not allowed to dock the ship nor walk on the soil and these locations would be a recognition of the rights they were denied.

5.8 Ukraine Refugee Support Committee Update

Claudia Freire, Housing and Social Planner, shared the following update regarding the Ukraine Refugee Support Committee:

- The Committee was established in the spring as a result of a conversation at a Welcoming and Inclusive New Westminster (WINS) meeting in effort to share information and opportunities of response efforts to support the Ukrainian community;
- The Holy Eucharist Cathedral was already providing a lot of support for Ukraine refugees prior to the creation of the Committee;
- To date, seven meetings have been held to share information on housing, donations, volunteering, etc., as well as providing the opportunity to share information on Federal Government assistance;
- Follow up will be done with the School District for information on local arrivals as it is estimated that over 60 families have arrived in New Westminster; and,
- An information brochure was shared with the Committee and includes information on various resources, etc.

Councillor Das, a member of the Ukraine Refugee Support Committee, noted how impressive it was to see how quickly the service providers solved some of the issues encountered during the influx of refugees from Ukraine. She advised that now that a formula is in place, the reaction can be faster when there is another influx of refugees to the city.

6. NEW BUSINESS

6.1 Appointment of a Representative to the Museum and Archives Advisory Group

Rob McCullough, Manager, Museums and Heritage Services, advised of the need for a member of the Committee to sit on the Museums and Archives Advisory Group which provides feedback on museum and archives policy and

implementation. He noted that if the appointed Committee member's term on the Committee ends, they could then become a member at large on the advisory group.

In response to questions from Committee members, Mr. McCullough advised that the work of the Museum and Archives Advisory Group would include work on a collection policy as well as a repatriation policy for Indigenous items in the City's collection, and conversations around exhibitions and program development. He noted that the work of the Advisory Group would not include financial or human resource aspects. Mr. McCullough shared that previously the Advisory Group has brought reports to Council regarding the removal of items from the City's collection.

MOVED AND SECONDED

THAT Nicole Maine, Community Member, be appointed as the representative of the Social Inclusion, Engagement and Reconciliation Advisory Committee to the Museum Advisory Group.

CARRIED.

All members of the Committee present voted in favour of the motion.

7. END OF MEETING

On MOTION, the meeting ended at 7:30 p.m.

8. UPCOMING MEETINGS

Remaining scheduled meetings, which take place at 5:30 p.m. unless otherwise noted:

- December 14, 2022

Certified correct,

Councillor Nadine Nakagawa

Carilyn Cook, Committee Clerk