

London & Middlesex Local Immigration Partnership

Inclusion & Civic Engagement Sub-council

Monday, February 22, 2010

Present: Monica Abdelkader, Saleh Alathamena, Robin Armistead, Lourdes Assis, Rose Aquino, Janette Butler, David Cottrill, Oscar Enriquez, Michael Goodmurphy, Andrea Hallam, Jason Hastings, Suzanne Huot, Jo-ann Hutchinson, Dharshi Lacey, Valy Marochko, Estela Quintero-Weldon, Elisabete Rodrigues, Aness Symons, Maria Vasquez, Janice Walter, Nina Hamou;

Regrets: Nadia Elshirbini, Patricia Mazariegos, German Gutierrez Sanin, Soonlan Lee Switzer, Arlene Thompson.

Facilitator: Valy Marochko

SUMMARY

Welcome and Introductions

Valy Marochko introduced himself as the facilitator for the first meeting of the Inclusion & Civic Engagement (I.C.E) Sub-Council, until a Chair is selected. Individuals were asked to introduce themselves and share a bit about their backgrounds.

Review of Terms of Reference

The group was given a few minutes to review the Roles & Responsibilities of the Sub- council (page 3-4 of the Terms of Reference). A summary of the conflict of interest guidelines was also provided. It was noted that the deadline for completing the Strategic Plan has been extended to June 30th, 2010. Each of the six Sub-councils will be responsible for creating a thematic strategy (i.e. Inclusion & Civic Engagement) which will be one piece in the London and Middlesex Local Immigration Partnership (LMLIP) Strategic Plan.

The role of the Welcoming Communities Initiative (WCI) at the University of Western Ontario in relation to the LMLIP was also highlighted. Dr Victoria Esses is the Co-director of the Community-University Research Alliance (CURA) project involving 16 universities. The LMLIP is very fortunate to have her on the Central Council representing the research arm.

A question arose regarding the frequency of meetings. Valy explained that the Sub-council will meet bi-weekly until the Strategic Plan is completed, then meeting frequencies will spread out.

The Strategic Plan will be the advisory and advocacy piece presented to all levels of government.

Role of Project Staff

Nina Hamou was introduced as the Project Assistant on the LMLIP. She will be providing administrative support to the Inclusion & Civic Engagement Sub-council and the Chair and Co-Chair by taking notes, distributing them, booking meeting space, and communication. Nina's role will involve clarifying or responding to some questions, as needed.

Minutes and other documents will be posted on the Immigration Portal Website.

Community Action Planning Day

Valy provided an overview of the February 2, 2010 Community Action Planning Day. One of the main goals of the event was to establish the six Sub-councils and identify gaps in each of the six areas: Education, Employment, Health & Wellbeing, Inclusion & Civic Engagement, Justice & Protection Services.

Review of Gaps and Priority Setting Results:

The group felt that the meeting minutes reflected most of the discussion. It was indicated that the Community Capacity and Needs Report predominantly reflects answers provided by service providers. However, it was highlighted that many stakeholders were present on the Community Action planning Day and had an opportunity to weigh in and provide input into the gaps.

Although this Sub-council cannot disregard what the community has prioritized, they may choose to focus on certain gaps and defer other gaps (i.e. employment gaps) to other Sub-councils (i.e. employment sub-council) to avoid duplication.

More follow-up is needed with ethno-cultural communities and ethno-cultural media. In order to be more inclusive the sub-council will alternate between afternoon and evening meetings.

ACTION: Each member will identify members of ethno-cultural groups within their networks to invite. Nina and Salah will share contacts. Once a clear definition and scope is established, they will be invited.

More clarification is needed in terms representation. Individuals are not representing their agencies rather they are representing the issue. Agencies may wish to send individuals to meetings, however, conflict of interest must be declared.

More research is needed about Civic Engagement. Monica Abdelkader reported that the Health and Wellbeing Sub-council has decided to do a literature review of the research that already exists. It was also highlighted that United Way, Across Languages and Pillar Non-Profit have done research in this field.

ACTION: Nina to compile a list of existing documents and research and circulate amongst group to add. Members will forward to Nina existing models of engagement.

The group felt that a definition of Inclusion & Civic Engagement is needed to move forward.

ACTION: Nina to send out an email requesting member input into a definition for Inclusion & Civic Engagement, a definition will be created based on group's input.

Once we have a definition we need to work backwards. Need to define and set outcome measures and develop a strategy to address outcomes.

Issues concerning lack of space, language and lack of research were predominate themes of discussion. All of gaps can be found in the Inclusion & Civic Engagement Report.

Interpretation into French

At the present interpretation is not needed and will be provided if needed in the future.

Process

a. Chair

None of the individuals who had indicated that they were interested in chairing were present. German Gutierrez-Sanin had provided Nina with his biography to read. The group decided that he was a good candidate and he was selected as Chair. Estela Quintero Weldon was nominated and selected as co-Chair.

b. Meeting Times

The group committed to alternate between evening and afternoon meetings.

- Monday, March 1: 4:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.
- Wednesday, March 24: 1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.
- Thursday, April 8 4:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.
- Thursday, April 22: 1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

If possible, future meetings will be held in Kinsmen.

Next Steps:

ACTION: Nina to take the gaps in Inclusion & Civic Engagement Report and the gaps mentioned in today's meeting and insert them into the template.

Next meeting:

March 1, 4:00 p.m. -6:00 p.m.

Location TBA

Regrets to nhamou@uwlondon.on.ca