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## MINUTES

**MEETING DATE:** June 28, 2012

**MEETING TIME:** 9:00 a.m - 11:30 a.m., County of Simcoe Administration Centre

**ATTENDANCE:** Boulanger, F. (College Boreal); Cuthbertson, R. (Welcome Centre – Newmarket); Desbiens, M. (College Boreal); Douglas, L. (LIP, recording secretary); Gavarre, N. (City of Barrie); Hoysa, B. (Ministry of Training, Colleges & Universities); Low, K. (Northern Lights); Newell, D. (Northern Lights); Smith, T. (Greater Barrie Enterprise Centre); Whittington, P. (Georgian College; Chair); Wisken, R. (LIP); Zeng, M. (Barrie Chinese Association)  
Regrets: Hie, H. (Georgian College); Scott, K. (County of Simcoe); Skybin, Y. (YMCA Newcomer Services); Terrance, M. (Social Enterprise for Canada)

**SUBJECT:** Employment Sub-Council

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1. Welcome

The Chair welcomed members and introduced R. Wisken, who is replacing R. Holt during her parental leave. Members introduced themselves to R. Wisken.

2. Review of Notes of Meeting of April 26, 2012

The notes of the meeting of April 26 were reviewed, and the Chair noted that the invitation to CIC to present on immigrant categories will be postponed to the next meeting due to the number of items on today's agenda.

3. Updates on Working Groups

*Establishing an IEC:* R. Cuthbertson reported that the IEC Working Group has held several meetings that focussed mainly on the framework and key directions. The first draft was prepared by H.Hie and revisions made. The framework is to support the economic growth of Simcoe County by connecting employers and key stakeholders to resources, tools, support s and solutions resulting in better integration of skilled and professional immigrants in the local workforce. Key directions identified are to develop tools to strengthen support services for local employment and create awareness on the benefits of hiring skilled immigrants; build professional networks for skilled/professional immigrations to access labour markets; and to develop collaborative community plans with multi stakeholder groups to facilitate skilled and professional immigrants into the labour force.

The final draft will be circulated to the sub-council for final approval.

The need to identify employer champions is necessary for success and to secure funding from Allies (i.e. Lakehead University, Cranberry Inn). The release of the Settlement Strategy will also provide support within community to secure funding. R. Wisken will present the framework and directives to Allies in August.

*Employer Education, Professional Development, Newcomer Education:* The implementation of these working groups was postponed slightly due to staff changes and commitments but hope to move forward during the summer months.

#### 4. Immigrant Directory

S. Lee circulated a sample of the Youth Directory to the sub-council, along with a Resource Satisfaction Questionnaire. An overview of the Working Group on the Immigrant Directory, which is an off-shoot of the Welcoming Communities Sub-council, was provided. Employment is one of the 6 categories to be featured in the directory, and one of significant importance to new immigrants. The working group is hoping to task 4 members from within Employment Sub-council with the development of content for the Employment category. K. Low and B. Hoysa volunteered to be part of the working group. A meeting will be scheduled to begin production on the development of that section, and a call for 2 more reps will follow at that time. Front line workers or representatives from Collingwood and Penetanguishene could be considered as well.

There were suggestions that a Pathway/map/matrix concept could be included in the Employment category, as well as a section on self-employment, and the description of services should be laid out in a plain language.

The Immigrant Directory will also be available online through our portal and will be available in 5 languages, including French and English.

#### 4. Portal Update

S. Lee announced that the LIP application for an online portal was accepted, and work is expected to begin in August. A demonstration of existing portals linked through the Ontario website was given. The site will be done in English and French, and the welcome will be available in a number of languages. It was suggested that the portal should be dynamic and inviting and use real people, not stock photos. The Employment Sub-council will be consulted on the employment content on the portal.

#### 5. Digging Deeper Survey

K. Low provided an overview and analysis of the Digging Deeper on-line survey which was conducted in April. 10 county service providers compiled 20 easy answer questions for employers to help them better understand the demand side of the labour market. 307 responses were received, from small to mid-size employers, with Barrie having the most respondents. Some of the findings included:

- soft skills were essential by all levels – personal skills, work ethic, personality, communication
- entry level positions are more apt to hire those without experience
- Senior level positions prefer 5+ years of experience
- Employers who have hired immigrants have positive experience
  - Those who haven't may have concerns around language, communication.
- Many have not had the experience of hiring immigrants
- Reasons why applications rejected → poor attitude, lack of relevant experience, physical appearance
- Lack of Canadian work experience and age were not essential factors in hiring
- Sectors that did indicate lack of Canadian experience was a factor were arts and recreation and retail
- Newcomers ranked below high school in the job readiness factor
- Hiring challenges – senior level , 56% hard to hire; entry level – 47% no difficulty
- Difficulty in finding qualified applicants by industry – skilled trades; Entry level – food, retail, social assistance

- All data associated with town or area.

Notes will be sent to L. Douglas for circulation to members. K. Low will check terms of survey to determine whether other service providers could access the database to review the needs of employers and possible contact with employers.

It was suggested that a question on projected turnover due to retirement be included in future surveys for planning purposes.

## 7. Other Business

The Chair asked members about the scope in being involved as a council and service managers in how to meet the needs of immigrants as a discussion point within an IEC as well as a labour market piece on the IEC website. Discussion followed on identifying where the gaps are and the areas that need to be filled (possibly through the Ontario Labour Market Partnership) and to use available subsidies to not only support unskilled/entry labour but higher skilled workers as well (i.e. payment to a physician for supervision of internationally-trained placements, language support), which would also serve as an attraction tool for higher skilled labour.

The Chair solicited members for interest in conducting a test case to track the newcomer through the employment process from apprenticeship to internship to learn different obstacles endured.

### Potential Plan of Action

- Conduct a test case/pilot project/pathway of a client/newcomer's journey through to employment.
- Conduct a test case/pilot project/pathway of an employer's journey who cannot find the right hire
- Agreement to select 2 people
- Determine if sub-council is interested in this study or the employment services management team
- Include MCI or Simcoe County
- Sources for newcomer → personal contact (doctor who is employed in a factory); YMCA Newcomer Services; other employment service providers
- Sources for employer → Collingwood (employer who has 100 unfilled positions); TRACKS; Career Solutions; other employment service providers
- Start small – contribution from partnerships
- Clients would need to sign an agreement that their information can be shared with others
- P. Whittington (Georgian) expressed interest in connecting with the newcomer client. → Will project be done under umbrella of LIP or Georgian College → Research Ethics Committee or county approval?

### Other Resources

- RVH has global plan for recruitment to bring trained nurses and practitioners from Britain, US, etc., as well as offering spousal support. (David Coward, Chief, Human Resources)
- Employers have created partnerships with other companies to help gain employment opportunities for spouse. Send info to Sandy & Lorraine.
- LHIN hired Deloitte & Touche to do a labour force needs analysis.

P. Whittington thanked everyone for their presentations. Extra copies of the document, *Hiring Immigrants makes Good Business Sen\$e*, were distributed to members to make available to employers. Issue 2 of MOSAIC and the 4-page advertorial on LIP, which will appear in the County's free newspaper this week, were also distributed.

8. Next Meetings

Members decided that the July meeting would be cancelled, and the sub-council would reconvene on August 23<sup>rd</sup>. A CIC presentation will be arranged for next meeting.