



County of Simcoe
Social and Community Services
Children & Community Services Department
1110 Highway 26,
Midhurst, Ontario L9X 1N6
Main Line (705) 722-3132
Beeton Area (905) 729-4514
Fax (705) 725-9539
simcoe.ca

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MEETING DATE: 9/30/2020

MEETING TIME LOCATION: 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.
Microsoft Teams; On-line Meeting

ATTENDANCE: M. Dunot (COS - LIP), E. Onouha (Contact South Simcoe – Employment Service: Bradford WORKS), A. Fletcher (South Simcoe Police (Co-Chair)), K. Fraser (Lakehead University), G. Hall (COS - Library Cooperative), M. Arbour (Georgian College – Career and Employment Community Services), I. Oliviera (Bradford Immigrant and Community Services), J. McGee (YMCA of Simcoe/Muskoka), M. Kuzma (Nottawasaga Futures), S. Lee (COS– LIP), K. Manners (Child Youth and Family Services Coalition of Simcoe County), I. Pavlik (pavliks.com), A. Scavarelli (COS– OW), S. Sarin (Ethnic Mosaic Alliance), I. Toor (Simcoe County District School Board), C. Vellinga (Georgian College), L. Wild (City of Barrie, Mayor's Office), L. Woodrow (Barrie Career Centre), V. Chapman (COS – Research Analyst), V. Newhook (CMHA South Simcoe)

REGRETS: C. Colcy (Barrie Community Health Centre), A. Dubeau (COS - County Councillor (Co-Chair)) (Ontario Provincial Police), A. Dunning (Ontario Provincial Police), C. Gagnon (Province of Ontario (ex-officio)), J. Rajalingam (Simcoe Muskoka Catholic District School Board), S. Laycock (Simcoe Muskoka Workforce Development Board), C. Vanderkruys (Barrie Public Library), M. Wynia (COS - LTC), R. Haggins (Credit Canada)

ABSENT: L. Moorhouse (City of Barrie Police Services), A. Ratnashingham (Welcome Centre Immigrant Services)

MINUTES: Debra Filak (County of Simcoe)

SUBJECT: Local Immigration Partnership Council Meeting

1. Welcome/Introductions

A. Fletcher (meeting chair) welcomed the group and mentioned that during these days of COVID fatigue, it is nice to connect with everyone.



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2. Community Updates & Other Business

L. Wild announced that the City of Barrie has launched the recruitment of an anti-racism task force. They are looking for a diverse representation of the City's residents to form this group. They will be accepting applications until October 19, 2020. They will consider non-residents if required. More information can be found on the City's website at www.barrie.ca/committeecouncilvacancies

C. Vellinga informed the group that international students have arrived at Georgian College and that they have received funding from UW and RTSA. Georgian College has also been able to accommodate a 14 day quarantine for the international students that have arrived for "hands on" educational programs.

K. Fraser shared that students at Lakehead University will be accessing their studies online this semester and that there was a recent announcement that the winter semester will be online as well. Students deciding to relocate to the Orillia campus will be required to complete the mandatory quarantine period.

3. Approval of Minutes – June 10, 2020

MOTION to accept the minutes by 1st G. Hall and 2nd by V. Newhook; ALL IN FAVOUR.
Motion Carried.

4. IRCC/MHSTC Updates

C. Gagnon was not able to join today's meeting. She will provide updates at the next meeting.

5. County of Simcoe LIP Secretariat Update

S. Lee noted that that most of her summer was dedicated to writing reports and finalizing the 2020 Progress Report publication. The annual report required by the Federal government (normally due May 31st) and a special COVID-19 report were submitted to IRCC on August 31, 2020. The LIP learned that some of our partners were successful in obtaining ESCF funding from the United Way of Simcoe-Muskoka. Georgian College received funding to support vulnerable international students and the SCDSB receiving funding for ESL summer programming.



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M. Dunot shared that she worked extensively on the Simcoe County Diversity Hub during July and August. This is an online community of practice designed to engage community stakeholders passionate about eradicating discrimination and racism. She is currently working on uploading resources to this site. Community information sessions will be provided when the site is finished to encourage community stakeholders and residents to use these resources. A presentation on the Simcoe County Diversity Hub will be shared at the November meeting.

The 2020 Progress report is 99% complete. Outstanding artwork and design elements need to be finalized and the group is encouraged to send any outstanding requests for content/photos/logos.

6. CMHA York Region South Simcoe

V. Newhook shared a presentation (Newcomers Health and Wellbeing) about new services that the CMHA is able to provide to the South Simcoe immigrant population. As a result of the increasing immigrant population in South Simcoe, they applied for funding in the 2019 IRCC CFP. CMHA has developed a program for newcomers, delivered by a diverse group of staff with extensive training. The program has received 3 years of funding with a possible 2 year extension. The program is now up and running and is taking referrals. S. Lee inquired as to the locations that this program is offered in Simcoe County. Currently, there is service delivery available through their Alliston location.

Immigrant residents without a family doctor are able to connect with a nurse practitioner through this program to obtain prescriptions. Due to COVID, services are primarily provided in a virtual format, but if needed, participants can visit the Alliston office to obtain support while observing appropriate safety precautions.

Referrals are provided by agencies only, and require the completion of a referral form. Unfortunately, services are not available for refugee claimants at this time. If a participant does not wish to provide personal information to the agency, the agency may direct the participant to CMHA's phone number for a self referral.

S. Lee observed the limited number of settlement services in Simcoe County, emphasizing the need to connect with main stream service delivery organizations. V. Newhook offered to provide information sessions to local agencies as requested.

7. Newcomer Recognition Awards

M. Dunot provided a brief presentation. The PC was emailed a week ago, outlining the status of sponsorships, nominations and selection committee members. This year, the event will be showcased online on November 19, 2020, using the County of Simcoe's social media feeds. Award winners will be asked to participate in a short video.



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To date, there is a shortfall in nominations, and the original October 1, 2020 deadline has been extended to October 7, 2020. This group was asked to reach out to their communities and encourage nominations. Nomination forms can be found on the County of Simcoe website. The selection committee will meet on October 14 or October 15, 2020. The LIP still needs 5 more volunteers for this committee. Sponsorship goals were reached and the funds will support the filming, video editing, and the costs of awards.

S. Lee noted that historically 160-170 people attended this event annually. The online platform can support unlimited attendance/viewing of this year's celebration.

8. Immigrant Health Outcome Survey

V. Chapman provided a brief presentation of the current status of the survey. The survey has been updated to include additional questions about the challenges immigrants may have faced as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The survey will be available in some of the top languages in Simcoe County, including Arabic, Chinese, Farsi, Russian, Portuguese, and Spanish, as well as English and French. Data collection is set to take place in October or November. Participants will be encouraged to complete the survey online, but a paper copy is available if required. The next step is to submit an application to Lakehead University's Research Ethics Board (REB) for approval.

S. Lee encouraged the PC to forward the survey to their networks/clients. The survey will likely be launched before the next PC meeting.

9. Sub-Councils/Working Groups

M. Dunot noted that the Cultural Competency Working group (CCWG) met on June 17, 2020. Conversation focused on the current global racism events. The group is waiting for approval of a recently submitted grant application and has decided to repurpose an existing share-point platform to create an online community of practice focussed on diversity, equity and inclusion, called the Simcoe County Diversity Hub. M. Dunot has been uploading resources and the LIP expects to share the site with community stakeholders by the end of the year. The CCWG will meet next on October 29, 2020.

The Settlement Sub-council met on June 23, 2020 to maintain currency on service delivery changes and the challenges facing local immigrant residents. The next sub-council meeting is scheduled for October 8, 2020.



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S. Lee noted that there are currently 24 members on the CCWG. The LIP is happy to extend electronic invitations to PC members or their representatives to participate in the development and sharing of resources regarding racism.

Recruitment for #ITSTARTS ambassador typically takes place in January and February, but the 2021 plans will feature online learning opportunities. The LIP is still working on details for the 2021 Ambassador Information sessions. A planning group of community champions will be organized in November. In the past local libraries, school boards, South Simcoe Police Services, OPP, Georgian College, YMCA and Lakehead University have participated as community champions. The LIP would like to increase the number of community champions in 2021 to three per week during the month of March.

10. Community Projects

G. Hall provided an update about local public libraries. Libraries are currently operational and open to the public. The Simcoe County Co-operative Library re-opened on September 8, 2020. There are some staff in the office and book rotations have commenced. Libraries are limiting the amount of patrons in their buildings and practising safety protocols. When materials are returned to the libraries, they are quarantined for a specified period. Library fines have been waived for the remainder of the year.

Some of the 2020 Simcoe County Library Cooperative budget has been spent on e-resources regarding racism and diversity. New material has been added to the online book club that includes multicultural resources. The Collingwood public library now has a multicultural collection. This fall the Bradford-West Gwillimbury public library has hired a consultant to review library hiring practices and the cultural diversity of staff.

A. Fletcher asked if libraries can connect with the CMHA to learn about and make referrals to the new mental health programming for immigrant residents. G. Hall agreed with this suggestion and S. Lee encouraged CMHA to make can provide presentations to staff in local libraries. V. Newhook shared that this is currently in place in York Region and can be provided to South Simcoe. V. Newhook will connect with G. Hall to make arrangements.

H. Hie was unable to attend this meeting. In her absence, M. Arbour provided an update to the Immigrant Job Finding Club. The program is still running strong but providing services remotely. Please refer any newcomers that are looking for employment. From October to March they are offering workplace training that is free to refugees and permanent residents. The OSLT program is geared towards healthcare careers. M. Arbour provided her contact information for OSLT/JFCI at 705-796-2016 or maureen.arbour@georgiancollege.ca



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S. Sareen provided an update from the Ethnic Mosaic Alliance (EMA). In June, EMA created a Canada Day video, and has been working all summer. There are new board members representing Barrie, Bradford West Gwillimbury and Innisfil. To date, EMA have received eight letters of interest to contribute land for a multicultural centre. Today is the deadline to submit. EMA has been applying for various grants. They are hoping to receive funding to hire staff to support a family matching program in Bradford West Gwillimbury and Innisfil. Culture Days take place in October and EMA hopes to create some excitement about this initiative. As there is an influx of ethnic grocery stores and restaurants that have recently opened, EMA will be promote these new businesses, supported by a videographer. S. Sareen is hoping to have more good news to share at this group's next meeting.

S. Lee noted that there has been a significant increase in newcomers moving to our area from the GTA during the pandemic and that more resources are need to keep up with the demand for services.



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11. Questions – Open Forum

No questions were brought forward.

E. Onuoha mentioned that there is financial assistance provided by the United Way for newcomers having difficulty with utility bills, moving expenses, rent, etc. He will forward a flyer to be shared with the group to distribute as necessary.

Meeting adjourned at 11:15 a.m.

Next Meeting – Wednesday November 25th, 2020, 9:30 am to 11:30 am, video chat

Educational Inclusions: