

## Immigration and Settlement Strategy-Vernon, B.C.

### Local Immigration Partnerships Council Meeting Minutes: December 2 2015

**In Attendance:** Tara Thompson *Vernon Branch Okanagan Regional Library*, Marcel Korver *Community Futures*, Cheryl Bannoya *Club Filipino Okanagan Shuswap*, Carol Wutzke *VDISS*, Dan Rogers *Greater Vernon Chamber of Commerce*, Annette Sharkey *SPCNO*, Wayne Robert *Urban Matters*, Ted Treller *Urban Matters*, Brigitt Johnson *Consultant*

**Regrets:** Lynn Belsher *Nexus BC*, Lisa Krushen *NOYFSS*, Alison Krick *Silver Star Ski Resort Ltd*, Juliette Cunningham *City of Vernon*, Lara Konkin *DVA*, Dauna Grant *Vernon Public Art Gallery*, Heather Press *Tolko Industries Ltd.*, Narinder Bal *APNI Director*, Tannis Nelson *RDNO*, Tanya Osborne *Interior Health*, Lisa deBoer *School District 22*, Pam Myers *Nexus BC*, Jane Lister *Okanagan College*, Scott Manjak *Family Resource Centre*, Kevin Poole, *Economic Development & Tourism City of Vernon*, Marlene Higgins *Kal Tire*, Karine Posnanski, *Translator*

1. **Introductions:** Participants introduced themselves and the organization they represent. A number of Council members mentioned events of interest to LIPC and the community:
  - a. **Dec. 9: Lighting of the Menorah, VDISS:** An informal gathering open to the public will be held to celebrate the lighting of the Menorah at VDISS at 6 pm. Families are welcome. It is a chance to experience this traditional ceremony of the Jewish faith.
  - b. **Dec 11:** Greater Vernon Chamber of Commerce hosts the **Christmas Connections Luncheon** from 11:30-1:30. Opportunities to feature as a sponsor for door prizes are still available, as are tickets for the event.
  - c. **Dec 12: Club Filipino Christmas Party:** This family oriented event features Filipino cooking and a dance afterwards. The event is at St. James gymnasium. Members are free. Tickets are available for guests. Please contact Cheryl Bannoya.
2. **North Okanagan Refugee Committee (NORC):** Annette updated the Council about the recently formed refugee committee in the community. Although it was triggered in response to the Syrian refugee crisis, the committee is open to supporting refugees from any country. Terms of Reference and a Work Plan have been completed. The committee will network with sponsoring groups and the community, and will make sure that refugees are connected to services. VDISS is the coordinating group for volunteers. Almost 100 volunteers have come forward from the community. There are already 4-5 groups actively going through the process to sponsor a family. Updates will be posted on a newly created website [www.norc.ca](http://www.norc.ca) Several LIPC members are on the committee, including Jane, Annette, Carol and Karine.
3. Wayne provided an overview of project progress and the draft strategy that was circulated to all LIPC members before the meeting. In response to feedback, the vision statement has been simplified to:

*Vernon is a diverse and welcoming city where we collaborate to build and share a future of meaningful opportunities.*

Feedback from Council members was positive. Objectives added under each of the four strategic goals were reviewed and discussed. It was observed that there may be crossovers in the target immigrant classes for each strategic goal because there may be more than one reason for an immigrant to come to Vernon.
4. **Action Items:** The group reviewed the list of action items included in the draft strategy. Council members were asked to note their organization's name next to any existing and planned action items they could provide support and/or resources for. Support can be non-financial: staff time, meeting rooms, expertise or other resources the organization has available.

5. **Work Groups:** Four working groups will be created in January to develop action plans for each of the four strategic priorities. Council members were invited to consider which strategic priorities they would be most interested in. Meeting dates will be determined based on what is most convenient for members of each of the work group.
6. **Community Connections:** Whether through work or personal activities and interests, LIPC members are already connected to many organizations and committees in the community. Council members can raise awareness of and speak to the interests of immigrants through these connections. To capture the extent of this sphere of influence, each Council member was asked to list all of the local, regional, provincial, federal and international organizations they belong to.
7. **Next Steps: Council Feedback Survey:** A survey will be sent out following the December meeting to gather feedback and input on the draft strategy, to prioritize the action items, to complete the community connections exercise and to identify the work groups each Council member is most interested in. We are hoping for a 100% response rate!
8. **BC Multicultural Awards:** Congratulations were extended to Cheryl Bannoya and Greater Vernon Chamber of Commerce for being nominated in the Individual and Organizational categories of the BC Multicultural Awards. The BC Multicultural Awards, established in 2008, honor and celebrate British Columbia's cultural diversity and indigenous communities.
9. **Next Meetings:**
  - a. January Work Group Sessions: to be determined
  - b. LIPC Quarterly Meeting:

**Feb 24 2016 10-12 am**  
 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Board Room  
 Community Futures  
 3105 33<sup>rd</sup> Street

## Happy Holidays to All!!

