

# Diversity Committee

## MINUTES

April 30, 2008 – 11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.  
RRDSB Training Room

**Present:**

Anne McCoy, Ontario Provincial Police  
Bobby Mainville, Ontario Provincial Police  
Jack McMaster, Rainy River District School Board  
Heather Campbell, Rainy River District School Board  
Vik Nowak, Family & Children Services  
Ashlee Grimard, Canadian Mental Health Association  
Lincoln Dunn, Fort Frances Chiefs Secretariat  
Christine Denby, Fort Frances Chamber of Commerce  
Mary-Catherine Kelly, Northwest Catholic District School Bd.  
Roy Avis, Town of Fort Frances  
Jim Cumming, Fort Frances Times  
Lori Maki, Riverside Healthcare  
Linda Plumridge, Fort Frances Safety Coalition  
Dean McMahon, United Native Friendship Centre  
Kathy Egan, Confederation College

**Regrets:**

Anne Renaud, Confederation College  
Wayne Woods, Riverside Healthcare  
Tyrell Bruyere, Fort Frances High School  
Youth Rep.

1. Anne McCoy

- Introduced herself
- Gave background to discussion re: initial meeting
- Powerpoint – invited people who are positive influences in the community with the focus on celebrating diversity

**Needs:**

Focus on the entire Rainy River – Atikokan District – however, will start in Fort Frances

- Access, literature, directories
- Youth involvement – training of peers
- Cultural sensitivity training publications that reflect diversity
- Practices that encourage new business

**Possible Next Steps:**

- Events, celebrations, displays, e.g., flag day, symposium on Diversity Awareness
- Involvement – appointment of town rep. to advise Town Council on measures to strengthen community E.g. Sioux Lookout – garnered business manager position to oversee Anti Racism Committee
- Create tools for learning
- Recognition of practices that support and promote diversity
- As of June 2005 – coalition (UNESCO) 13 communities have signed on
- Create mission or charter (e.g., Sudbury – charter disseminated through Chamber of Commerce)
- Investigate Drayton Valley, Alberta, which is a town the approx. size of Fort Frances who has embraced diversity within its mandate
- Pilot and evaluate various strategies

## Suggestions:

Kathy Egan

- Worthwhile – look into

Lori Maki

- Very worthwhile – organization is already going through cultural sensitivity training – respect within workplace – contact person in Winnipeg to speak with all staff

Linda Plumridge

- Very interesting
- Other groups/representatives needed

Mary-Catherine Kelly

- Thanked Anne
- Issues need to be addressed
- Current activities underway within board
- Interesting to come together
- Anti-bullying, safe schools fit within focus of committee
- Particular events, collective endorsement is influential

Heather Campbell

- Appreciated support of OPP
- Wealth of resources within board and within community
- What are next steps? – more to be done
- As a group – learn, support one another
- Ensuring that we support all diverse groups

Christine Denby

- Pleased to be invited
- Voice of business – improving quality of life in Rainy River District
- Recently working on strategic plan – have done customer service training
- Want to work proactively
- Link website – use as a tool to disperse information – know that this website is reg. accessed

Vik Nowak

- Thanked Anne for organizing
- Organization excited to participate in initiative
- Committee focus also within strategic plan – personal relevance – “walk the walk” committee – meaningful, practical way
- Confederation College – **RESPECT** campaign -- implications far reaching beyond College and could bring in Jim Lees to assist with this
- All doing things – opportunity to share resources
- Great power to influence
- Other people needed at table

Dean McMahon

- UNFC – very excited and willing
- Try to blend as much of aboriginal community within mainstream community

- Personal note – father – white with mother as First Nation – focus of committee very close to home

#### Ashlee Grimard

- Works with a group of people marginalized/discriminated daily
- Awareness in community needed
- Look at big factors – lots of groups to touch on and support them in issues

#### Jack McMaster

- Huge thank you to Anne
- Commitment to a better society
- Power of group – proactive, positive message re: diversity – all groups
- Various examples of groups/partnerships working toward this purpose
- Capitalize on negative messaging – send a more positive image
- Feels that this can attract business in region – opportunity to make a difference – can now network with one another for a common goal

#### Lincoln Dunn

- Thank you
- Focus paramount – for Chiefs/leaders
- Distressed at low number participating in UNESCO
- Outlying municipalities?
- Gap – educating adults in community
- Racism/discrimination – learned behaviour
- Looking forward to sharing information with Chiefs

#### Roy Avis

- Experience in council – has not dealt with issue to a large extent
- Will share with council
- Thanked Anne for bringing forward
- Demographics changing – there is a growing need to ensure that we are a welcoming community for all people
- Shared that as an employer – saw very few times received applications from First Nations and other cultures in retail sector

#### Jim Cumming

- Interesting sitting here – sat through strategic plans for District – lack of inclusion for different racial backgrounds
- Missing other leaders who have the abilities to influence the public
- Influence training, direction of community – hoping to see Anne to champion
- Must be prepared to speak about this

#### Linda Plumridge

- Safety Coalition – Rainy River District – redesignated a safe community by World Health Organization
- If someone feels marginalized – not sure if on agenda for safety coalition

#### Bob Mainville

- Positive start – something that has to be done
- Aboriginal officers across Ontario are part of a team – to address any situation as mediators (ART members) and therefore, can be a resource to the committee

Anne McCoy

- Please read over package provided, as it gives ideas what communities are doing e.g., Sudbury
- Unfortunately, not all people could not attend
- Need someone to step up to the plate to be the chair
- Please provide names of other people to invite
- For next meeting, please list what each has been doing
- Then, share and set directions
- Large undertaking but it's time – very important
- If one person can't be here – send a representative

**Next Meeting:**

Date: June 11, 2008

Time: 11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Place: FACS Multipurpose Room