

## Council Meeting Minutes

<b>Date:</b>	February 17, 2016
<b>Time:</b>	12:00pm – 2:00pm
<b>Location:</b>	99 Regina St. S. Room 210 & 211
<b>Present:</b>	Peter Donahue (Chair), Linda Terry (Vice Chair), John Haddock (Past Chair), Pari Karem (SSG Chair), Ian McLean (WSG Chair), Fauzia Mazhar (BSG Chair), Asnake Dabala, Jan Bockmaster, Douglas Bartholomew-Saunders, Theron Kramer, Karen Spencer, Tracey Hare Connell, Lucia Harrison, Kelly McManus
<b>Regrets:</b>	Jan Varner, Jennifer Roggemann, Conal Vaughan, Anna Aceto-Guerin, Elif Gunce, Sonja Erstic
<b>Staff:</b>	Tara Bedard, Pauline Peng, Daniella McIntosh

### 1. Welcome and Review of the Meeting Agenda

Peter Donahue welcomed everyone and called for additions to the agenda – no items were added.

### 2. Declaration of Conflict of Interest

There were no declarations of conflict of interest raised.

### 3. Approval of Consent Agenda

Peter introduced the content of the consent agenda, which included the 16 December 2015 Council Meeting Minutes, 10 February 2016 Council Ad Hoc Meeting Minutes and CAP Implementation Progress Reports. Council members were given the opportunity to pull items from the consent agenda for discussion. None were brought forward.

- Linda Terry brought forward a motion that the Immigration Partnership Council approves the consent agenda in its entirety.
- Pari Karem seconded the motion.
- Council voted to approve the consent agenda. No members opposed or abstained from vote.

### 4. CAP Implementation Highlights

#### SSG

Pari Karem reported that the latest SSG meeting was successful. She recalled for Council the immigrant and refugee housing consultation held in spring 2015 and brought Council's attention to the summary findings and recommendations related to Housing Challenges, Systems, Collaboration, and Regional Focus. Pari invited Council to provide any insights before the report is finalized and shared with community for follow-up.

Daniella McIntosh asked for comments related to the recommendations in particular, and specifically those related to Immigration Partnership follow-up.

Theron Kramer noted the recommendation to establish a housing specific action group and recalled recent SSG progress reports which reference difficulties in bringing existing action groups together. He suggested that it may be wiser to seek IP/SSG representation on one or more of the housing groups that already exist.

Linda Terry agreed and noted that at a recent housing consultation meeting the need to come together and advocate for housing for all was clearly articulated. She noted the housing waitlists in this region, which are an issue for all Canadians, and suggested that refugees and immigrants should not be separated from this narrative in advocacy at federal, provincial and municipal levels.

Lucia Harrison also agreed and talked about the Syrian Refugee Housing Working Group where there's been lots of learning which should be shared with our other partners. Douglas Bartholomew-Saunders concurred and noted that a lot of housing has been identified through the working group.

Fauzia Mazhar expressed appreciation for Syrian refugee working groups, noting the complexity and intersectionality of the issues, which need a lot of bridging.

Pari agreed and pointed out that the housing consultation report includes also recommendations for other actors.

Theron suggests that IP/SSG may consider asking the Housing and Homelessness Umbrella Group to form a specific sub-group to look at the unique needs of immigrants and refugees.

Peter invited Council to review the recommendations in more detail and send any further comments to Daniella.

### **WSG**

Ian McLean reported that WSG has slowed down with ITEP and formed a sub-group which is looking at the governance model for the program. He noted that since we have passed the pre-pilot phase, the program is getting bigger and it is important to work out governance issues. He reported that the group is still in discussion with the initial sponsor Scotiabank. Its local team is advocating for us and we've been invited to meet senior business development partners in Toronto. Ian recalled that the ITEPs success will show when employment and other service providers see it as a tool in their arsenal and when we figure out how to engage SMEs through the system.

Peter noted a call to Council members to engage around immigrant employment. He reported that he joined the employment equity committee at Wilfrid Laurier which is paying off in terms of raising awareness about IP and the works its doing to support employers and immigrants seeking jobs. He encouraged other Council members to do the same.

### **BSG**

Fauzia reported that the public education campaign is progressing. A poster design has been approved and once we develop the content posters will be launched throughout the year. There will be engagement through social media. The theme is "I am Waterloo Region.:" and the campaign will profile diverse immigrants. The nomination form will be open soon; can nominate self or others. The stories gathered will also be used in other ways.

BSG partners Waterloo Regional Museum has launched a similar campaign focused on religion awareness. The banners will launch at the interfaith breakfast on April 16.

Fauzia also noted that World Refugee Day is coming up in June 2016 and BSG is leading community planning. It is being discussed by members from the BSG, SSG and CCORIC. The theme this year will be "Waterloo Region Celebrates Refugees". A call for artists and events will come out soon.

Council asked for more information on the call for artists and events for World Refugee Day. Tara will provide.

**Action Items:**

- Council to review the housing consultation report recommendations and send any further insights to Daniella.
- Tara to send World Refugee Day information to Council.

**5. Manager Report**

Tara provided an update on Immigration Partnership's federal funding. Last week, IRCC notified IP about its funding contribution from April 2016 to March 2017, which is down from last year's contribution by about 5%. IP is in the position that it can handle the current reduction due to Region of Waterloo support. Tara is working with ROW to prepare cash flows and will begin the contracting process. We can not extend our existing contribution agreement – we have to enter a new agreement because we've reached the maximum duration of IRCC agreements (5 years).

Tara reported that IPs application for MCIIT funding to redevelop the immigration portal was successful. The other application submitted to support settlement sector development is still on hold. The draft contract has been reviewed and is ready for signature once approved by Regional Council.

Tara informed Council that in follow up to the partnership evaluation, she will be using the financial support from United Way to hire a part-time planner to work with staff and partners in our ongoing evaluation and the review of the Community Action Plan beyond 2016. The person hired will work closely with staff and the evaluation committee to be set up.

Tara also noted that she and Peter have been talking various departments at Wilfrid Laurier University about better alignment of research needs and capacities, student placements and other supports, based on partner input. In follow-up to the workshop Peter organized on this topic in May, WLU has come to us with a project proposal that they would seek funding for which would move us forward in these areas.

Peter recalled the mismatch between research universities want to do and the research the community needs. Resulting from funding cuts, a lot of agencies are not able to do the research.

John Haddock stated that it would be beneficial if this moves us toward research that matches community and agency needs. The current deciders are generally in the academic circles.

Lucia noted that KWMC still gets a lot of research request, but now typically rejects them because of a lack of follow-up and ethics reviews in the past. She asked if partners will be able to give input on research topics. Tara indicated that that is the intention behind the project.

Douglas noted a similar project in which the Region is involved, with Renison College, University of Windsor, City of Windsor, McMaster University, etc. focused on poverty reduction and children. It is also aimed at moving us to a place where our issues are heard at universities. The intention being that research could support funding.

Tara closed by stating that the proposal being developed is intended to get the ways of working together and infrastructure in place between the university and IP so that we can move forward with research and other programming in greater alignment.

**6. Items for Discussion/Approval****6.1 2016 Community Forum and Progress Report**

Peter noted that this year we decided to delay the Community Forum since the community is very busy. Looking at an event in May or early June. Community Forum past themes: 2012 – IP Launch, 2014 – CAP launch, 2015 – Forum for stakeholders focused on positioning IP.

He recalled that we're looking at how to best structure this year's Forum. It may be focused on raising awareness of the work we do, as we are in a very different place from where we were a year or two ago. Peter invited Council to give input.

John noted that initially it was thought of as a report back to the community. Is that still the intention of the funder and do we think that is still needed? He suggested profiling an action under each of the pillars, rather than doing everything in general. Bring out one or two things from each pillar and ask for input and discussion at the forum, to keep people excited.

Kelly McManus asked who our intended audience is. She recalled that many people are newcomers to this community and there is a lot of momentum right now because of the Syrian resettlement. We need to think about how we can convey the message that everyone, including Syrians, are welcome here to settle, belong, and work.

Peter recalled the Council's focus at the December meeting on telling the story of IP, and asked if this is a space for that. He also recalled that our annual progress report is tied with the forum and asked what story do we want to tell and how.

Theron cautioned to ensure that the Forum is not just one way; that participants have the opportunity to give feedback and input to our work. For example with our evaluation – how do they react to it?

Tara stated that she doesn't believe we need a Forum just for our community partners. We come together and do a lot of information sharing amongst our groups. Where do we want to be with community after the forum is over?

Ian noted the Point of View event on which IP and the Chamber are partnering on April 15, which is intended for broader audience, getting businesses, politicians, etc. to understand our message. We're featuring John Stackhouse as the keynote speaker, through outreach by Nora with Toronto counterparts. He noted that it is an outstanding opportunity to reach beyond our usual circles.

John urged us to not be safe in planning the Forum, to bring a speaker to challenge the community regarding not only the refugee issue, but immigration as a whole. He likes the idea of a futurist piece – what will this community look like in 5 years and how is what we do now preparing for that.

Linda agreed and expressed worry at immigration issues overall. She noted that our partners are welcoming, but is the community overall? People don't feel like they belong. She came back to asking who our audience will be and how do we engage them in hearing this?

Douglas agreed to go the bold route, but noted that this can be a risk-averse Region, so we might land somewhere in the middle. With reference to age-friendly work, local partners have learned that if you plan for the elderly, you plan for everyone. The same learning is emerging from what we are doing in welcoming the Syrian refugees. The tracks have been parallel, but we're seeing that learnings from the housing outreach work is allowing us to learn new things in the general housing area too. Everything we've been doing related to the newcomers actually benefits the whole community. That is the best message to community since some are not interested in newcomers.

Karen Spenser stated that she's seen tremendous leadership from settlement agencies and IP on Syrian resettlement locally and suggested that we find the best way to profile this leadership in the community, with work done collectively.

Ian recalled the importance of profiling IP together with its individual partners. Message needs to be personalized and be clear on who did what, not just under the name of Immigration Partnership which doesn't always hold meaning for the general public.

Pari suggested recognizing the individuals who have done something to engage and encourage others.

Theron noted the upcoming Working Centre Mayor's Dinner where long time partners are being recognized. He suggested that Ip buy an ad in the program, or something to be present and show support. That's also how we'll reach to the public that we don't normally connect to.

Kelly suggested a theme of belonging and informed everyone that Adrienne Clarkson is visiting soon through an event with University of Waterloo and The Kitchener and Waterloo Community Foundation.

Tara noted that she would take the input from Council and work on a plan. She asked if Council members wanted to volunteer to be more involved as the details of the event are being planned. Jan Bockmaster and Pari Karem volunteered.

## **6.2 Syrian Refugee Developments**

### **Immigration Partnership Fund for Syrian Newcomers and Task Force**

John provided an overview of progress, noting that staff were working on the online form and the draft agreement – currently going through legal, finance, IT etc. reviews. Tara noted that these should be ready by the end of this week. Ready for announcement next week – John will be the contact person. Tara would like to launch it by Monday so people can start submitting applications in March.

### **Municipal Coordination Developments and Advocacy**

Lucia provided an update on the Syrian refugee resettlement work and the Steering Committee. She recalled for IP Council that the structure includes all area mayors and the regional chair, as well as a steering committee and 10 working groups. Each working group chair presents what has been happening and challenges, and shares information with other groups for their consideration in their specific area. The meetings have been taking place once every 2 weeks and have been very effective.

Lucia noted that the English levels of the incoming refugees are much lower than expected and that it will be a long settlement process for most of them. She noted that based on indications from the federal government, Waterloo Region is expecting government-assisted 600 refugees per year from next year forward (compared to around 250 in years past).

Lucia also provided an update with respect to settlement funding for Waterloo Region. Funded agencies in the Region were given another 5% budget cut for the 2016-2017 fiscal year. This is the 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> year in a row that we've seen such budget cuts meaning reduced service hours, increased waiting times for service from 1 day to 2-3 weeks. She stated alarm that this is happening while we are receiving so many refugees. She asked how the IP Council can advocate beyond writing a letter, noting that the people coming in will be in high need, but we don't have the tools to provide for their needs.

## **6.3 Advocacy Update**

### **MP Engagement and Federal and Provincial Budget Consultations**

Peter provided an update on the meetings he and Tara had with local MPs and noted that we have invitations for revisiting MPs as a result of the last meetings. At that time, we were not aware of the funding cuts. Should we go back? How to provide advocacy beyond just a letter?

Fauzia expressed concern about funding being a big issue and suggested that future advocacy messages note that it is necessary to think less about how to bring more people in but how to settle the people who are already here.

Lucia provided information about the budget consultations that she participated in and suggested using other networks that we have (e.g. other associations we are a part of) to strengthen our messages. If we bring people to Canada, we need to have the resources to help them settle.

Fauzia notes that Syrian refugees' situations are different: lower education levels, but higher living standards compared to previous refugees.

Pari also noted that they have higher expectations. Some clients are dissatisfied as to why privately sponsored refugees have better housing than government-assisted ones. She expressed concern that the generosity of people tends to fade out after one year and noted that even privately assisted refugees are back at settlement agencies after a year asking for help.

Linda thinks we need to think about the strategy to get money flowing – we need a strategic plan.

Theron suggested bringing our messages into related policy discussions. For example, housing is a part of the infrastructure discussions, and it is not adequate – how to accommodate the refugees, as well as the general community. The major concern is government-supported refugees: they are not getting the support they are supposed to get.

Fauzia suggests including the new groups in the advocacy efforts.

Karen expressed concern about the consequences of people not being able to get services in this region. It may not show that we are a welcoming community even though we say we are. She suggested that research could be done in this area.

## **6.4 Immigration Portal Development**

Tara reported that IP was successful in its application for funding in revamping the portal – still needs a lot of work in order to be useful. The portal was established many years ago. The site is supposed to be used to attract newcomers to the region and agencies to see the work we do as a partnership. Identify who are the key people whom we want on the table developing the portal. We gather the inputs and know that it will be useful.

Make sure the portal is positioned as a useful tool for development and integration, and that the tool is used and referenced by various agencies in the community.

Currently working on the contract; anticipating the start of the work will be in the beginning of April. This will be a 15-month project. Approximately \$40,000 has been funded to this project.

**Action Items:**

- Tara to work with staff to develop a plan for the Community Forum based on Council input, with input from Jan Bockmaster and Pari Karem.
- Tara and Daniella to work on key advocacy messages based on Council discussion to share.
- Council to contact Tara about key people and agencies they want to see involved in developing the Portal.

Theron suggested putting in the next agenda: issue related to government-assisted refugees.

**7. Meeting Adjourned at 2:00pm**

Peter thanked everyone for their input and adjourned the meeting.

**Next Meeting: April 20, 2016 11:30am – 2:00pm**

**Location TBD**

**Immigration Partnership Council  
Meeting Minutes**

<b>Date:</b>	April 20, 2016
<b>Time:</b>	12:00pm – 2:00pm
<b>Location:</b>	Kitchener Public Library, Meeting Room C 85 Queen Street North, Kitchener
<b>Present:</b>	Peter Donahue (Chair), Linda Terry (Vice Chair), John Haddock (Past Chair), Pari Karem (SSG Chair), Jan Bockmaster, Douglas Bartholomew-Saunders, Karen Spencer, Tracey Hare Connell, Lucia Harrison, Jan Varner, Jennifer Roggemann, Sonja Erstic, Kelly McManus
<b>Regrets:</b>	Ian McLean (WSG Chair), Fauzia Mazhar (BSG Chair), Elif Gunce, Theron Kramer, Conal Vaughn
<b>Absent:</b>	Asnake Dabala, Anna Aceto-Guerin
<b>Staff:</b>	Tara Bedard, Pauline Peng, Daniella McIntosh, Nora Whittington, Janet Howitt

**1. Welcome and Review of the Meeting Agenda**

Peter Donahue welcomed everyone and called for additions to the agenda – no items were added. The order of items 6.4 and 6.5 were switched.

**2. Declaration of Conflict of Interest**

Lucia Harrison asked if she should declare a conflict of interest because KWMC applied to the Syrian Newcomer Fund. Peter stated that it is not necessary. There were no conflicts of interest.

**3. Approval of Consent Agenda**

Peter introduced the content of the consent agenda, which included the 17 February 2016 Council Meeting Minutes, 29 March Syrian Fund Task Force Meeting Report, and CAP Implementation Progress Reports. Council members were given the opportunity to pull items from the consent agenda for discussion. None were brought forward.

- Pari Karem brought forward a motion that the Immigration Partnership Council approves the consent agenda in its entirety.
- Tracey Hare Connell seconded the motion.
- Council voted to approve the motion. No members opposed or abstained from vote.

**4. CAP Implementation Highlights**

**SSG**

Pari noted that the Settle Steering Group recently welcomed Vanessa Lopek from the Region of Waterloo (Citizen Services) as a member, and that Diana Palmerin-Valasco (YMCA Cambridge) from the Belong Steering Group also joined the last meeting. The CAP was reviewed at the meeting and partners are very positive about progress in its implementation. Pari recalled the SSGs new Refugee Action Group (RAG), which is focused on the development of a service hub for refugees in Waterloo Region, and includes mainly refugee-specific agencies, not broader settlement.

Pari shared a letter prepared by the RAG addressed to the IP Council and its Chair, expressing concern about the perceived favouring of Syrian refugees over other refugees in the community, and in particular the group's concern with the focus of the Syrian Newcomer Fund on support for Syrian refugees only, while the mandate of the Immigration Partnership is broader. The RAG is seeking IP

Council input on whether the name of the Syrian Newcomer Fund can be changed and if it can be used to support other refugees as well.

Pari noted that the concerns outlined in the letter align with what agencies are seeing in the community and have been previously discussed by Council, and that the RAG wanted to bring their voice to the discussions. Pari asked for asked for IP Council input.

John Haddock noted that with the Syrian Newcomer Fund, the IP Council is in partnership with The Kitchener and Waterloo Community Foundation (KWCF) and the Cambridge & North Dumphries Community Foundation (CNDCF), and the Foundations have the relations with the Fund donors, so the IP Council itself is not able to make those changes. Linda Terry agreed.

Kelly McManus noted that IP Council also has ownership of this initiative so this should not just be put back to the Foundations. She noted that the IP Council is in this together with the Foundations as well as the fact that Funds have been donated in the context of the national and local Syrian initiative and there accountability stems from that. She stated that she would not support a change in the direction requested at this time.

Jan Varner agreed and recalled that the IP Council initiated the involvement of the Foundations so shares responsibility, and stated that this is an unintended consequence of moving to action. She suggested that this concern be shared with the Foundations so that they are aware.

Lucia acknowledged the reasons that things as they are and also agreed that it creates a real problem in our community. She stated that the situation is not changing and noted that IRCC will issue a call for proposal for settling Syrian refugees exclusively.

Kelly noted this situation is not unique to this community that it may be helpful to see how other communities are handling it. She asked that staff reach out to counterparts in other communities to ask how they are handling this.

John suggested that the IP Council and individual agencies advocate, with a letter to MPs, indicating the need for increased resources without excluding any one group. Linda agreed and suggested that the letter be followed-up with face-to-face meetings.

Karen Spencer suggested that the KWCF may have experience with this type of situation and suggested that we share these concerns with the,

Jennifer Roggeman shared that she is receiving a very high volume of inquiries from people expressing concern that Syrian refugee claims can be processed in one month while all other immigrants have to wait very long times, which she believes may lead to problems in the long-term and negative sentiment against Syrians.

Douglas Bartholomew-Saunders recalled that donors have given money to support Syrian resettlement, the KWCF agreed to match donations for Syrian resettlement, so it is not as simple as just changing the name.

Jan V. stated that it is important for the IP Council to consider how we respond for all refugees and build on what is happening for Syrian refugees.

John stated that he sees an opportunity going forward and our local MPs want to help. The federal government may have brought 25,000 Syrian refugees to Canada but it is communities and community agencies that are central to the success of their resettlement in the long term. IP Council

should work with our MPs and also talk with the Foundations about the long-term, local giving and supporting all refugees.

Tracey noted that MPs advocating the broader perspective is important and we can support them in that with our advocacy.

Kelly noted that the upcoming IP Community Forum will provide a good platform to get our messages across.

Peter summarized that IP Council would like to move forward with a letter to MPs outlining our concerns and also follow-up with the Foundations to discuss the concerns that are arising in the community. to keep them apprised and with a view to forward planning.

Douglas reminded IP Council of the value of also working with Regional Council, which has also been advocating on behalf of the community through the Syrian Refugee Resettlement Control Group. He suggested that once the letter is ready, Tara prepare a staff report to Regional Council to share the letter and ask that Regional Council do the same.

Tara agreed that staff will follow-up.

## **WSG**

In Ian's absence, Nora provided an update on WSG activities. She informed IP Council that a more formalized sub-committee has been struck for ITEP to look at governance and structure for the project. It consists of 4 members who met several times and developed some guidelines. They are seeking to develop a Memo of Understanding for the project, as well as the budget. She noted that Ian, Nora, Cindy Tarasow and Suzanne Snaggs-Wilson travelled to Scotiabank Toronto for a presentation which went very well, which Tracey helped in preparing. Scotiabank is very interested in the software and in seeing the demonstration of the dojo. A \$180,000 proposal was put forward.

Nora informed Council about the recent Point of View event co-hosted with the Greater KW Chamber of Commerce with John Stackhouse as the keynote speaker. She stated that the presentation was great and reached 100 employer representatives, compared to 60-70 that usually attend such events. Peter noted that it was a good event and targeting an audience that IP doesn't normally reach, including the banking and insurance industries.

She reported that the 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Global Skills event was a week earlier and that IP hosted a Networking Event at the end of the conference for 27 participating employers and internationally trained professionals in attendance.

Nora recalled that IP was a partner to the Workforce Planning Board's Employer One Survey. Carol Simpson, WPB executive director, has shared information from the survey with our partners and is very concerned with the gap in manufacturing where local employers can not find talent.

Finally, she noted that WSG/IEAG is planning an HR panel event at the end of June for employment service providers. It will bring in HR specialists for a sector-specific panel to share industry trends and answer questions of service providers regarding recruitment and hiring specific to those sectors.

## **BSG**

In Fauzia's absence, Janet updated Council about the "I am Waterloo Region" campaign and passed around draft posters for Council to see. She noted that nominations closed last month – we received 32 nominations for newcomers originating from 19 different countries with a range of traits and experiences. She noted that next steps will involve gathering stories, getting photographs, producing

buttons to brand the campaign, working on the “I am Waterloo Region” webpage, linked to the IP website, where all stories will be available. She noted that BSG would like to launch the campaign at the IP Community Forum, and then publish one poster per month.

She recalled that May 4<sup>th</sup> is the interfaith community breakfast at the Waterloo Region Museum and that the Region of Waterloo is finalizing its multi-faith banner series, which IP has supported.

She also noted that World Refugee Day is coming up on June 20 and BSG is involved in community coordination. This year’s theme will be “Waterloo Region Celebrates Refugees”. A website is being launched. Many groups are thinking about how to get engaged –there lots of positive energy in the community right now on refugee matters.

**Action Items:**

- Staff to draft a letter to MPs on behalf of IP Council outlining concerns discussed in this meeting
- Staff to support IP Council in bringing issues arising in the community to the Foundations with a view to forward thinking
- Staff to connect with counterparts in other communities to gathering learnings on response to the issues arising
- Staff to prepare a report for Regional Council bringing their attention to the IP Council letter to MPs requesting parallel action.

**5. Manager Report**

Tara provided an update on Immigration Partnership’s funding and contracts. She recalled at the last IP Council meeting we discussed a 5% reduction in our IRCC funding contribution and noted that since that time, based on strong advocacy in the community, there was no funding cut for IP and other settlement agency funding agreements. Funding was held at the same level as the previous year. She noted that this was not the case in other communities and is a positive result of community advocacy. She noted that the proposal for provincial funding to support settlement sector development discussions was not successful.

As concerns staffing, Tara noted that IP is currently experiencing significant change. She reminded Council that are recruiting for a part-time Planner who she expects to be in place soon. HR is working on final details. She noted that there was an open recruitment for IP Program Assistant and that based on the results Pauline Peng will remain with us as Program Assistant moving forward. Tara also informed IP Council that Daniella McIntosh has accepted a position with the Ontario Trillium Foundation so we will begin recruitment for another Community Engagement Coordinator.

Tara informed Council that the Centre for Community Based Research was successful in securing funding for a research project looking at the interaction and partnerships between settlement and faith communities in immigrant and refugee settlement, and that Waterloo Region will be one of their research sites, among others. She noted that Immigration Partnership supported their proposal given the growing importance of this topic and will provide a forum for their research as the project unfolds, through research access to partners, etc.

Pari noted that this is very timely and that she sees big shifts in the community in this area. She noted a sense of growing isolation within the settlement sector between refugee-specific and other settlement agencies, and noted that this may be linked into the topic.

Douglas noted that to be in stark contrast to the overall experience of engagement and collaborations seen in the community through the Syrian resettlement initiative. Through that, partners are seeing

how much is possible, and how that can and should be applicable to everyone so that people aren't treated differently. He noted that a debrief is starting at the Syrian resettlement steering committee and control group, looking at how much we evolved and can we sustain it.

Jan V. noted that this messaging should be included in the IP Council letter to MPs – that no one be left behind and the benefits of our actions and learning should be applicable to all.

Linda reported that in planning the upcoming poverty symposium partners were taken by Tara's comments about how much the community has accomplished with respect to the Syrian resettlement, what the learnings are looking like and that it shouldn't stop there – there needs to be a focus on benefiting the whole community.

Peter summarized that overall IP Council was in support of the CCBR research and confirmed that we are able to manage it around our existing tables. Tara agreed.

Douglas reminded IP Council of the poverty reduction fund and noted there may be ways to pick up on that from these discussions and move forward with community learning. He noted that the Region is hosting a meeting on May 16 with the deputy minister to explore ideas and how to access the fund, which is open to community. Tara was asked to share the information with partners. He noted that in the last round there was very little money allocated to this community

Jan V. asked if that was because agencies were looking through their own lens rather than a community lens.

**Action Items:**

- Tara to share information about the May 16 session on the poverty reduction fund with IP partners
- IP to engage in the CCBR research project on settlement and faith groups.

**6. Items for Information/Discussion**

**6.1 2016 Immigration Policy Developments, Local Implications**

Jennifer shared Canada's 2016 Immigration Levels Plan, which foresees 300,000 people immigrating to Canada in 2016, calling it the "Plan of the Century" since the last time we reached this level was 1913. She noted that most immigration today is not people coming from overseas - many in-country applications – around 80% of all applications.

In the family class, around 66% of applications (approx. 40,000 of 60,000) come from people who are already in the country.

In the humanitarian class, 99% (of the 3,600 target) are already in the country without status.

In the refugee class, half (of 45,000) are expected to be government-assisted and half privately-sponsored.

The economic class is expected to make up 63% of all immigrants overall in 2016 (191,500). Of those

- Only 4% of spaces (800) are reserved for entrepreneurs
- 50% are expected to come through provincial nomination programs
- 20% are live-in caregivers who are already here

At a recent meeting with Minister McCallum, he noted that the federal government plans to move national immigration levels to 330,000 per year. Since Waterloo Region is 5th overall in terms of immigrant settlement in the country, these figures are important for our planning and will impact the community. The 2016-2017 priorities for IRCC area:

1. Increase refugee intake
2. Faster processing of family reunification applications
3. Improve Express Entry function for economic class selection. 80% of applicants are already in Canada so it's very hard for people outside of the country to successfully apply for immigration to Canada.

The citizenship act is changing and the age of eligible dependents is decreasing from 22 to 18), but it will take 18 months to come into effect.

The Minister talked about international students as a “done deal” in terms of new immigrants. New points may be introduced to the express entry system to enable this transition from student to permanent resident. Overall, universities and colleges will be a bigger source of immigration, they will provide the qualifications and work place experience for many new immigrants. It is important to look at the intersection of settlement with this sector.

IRCC needs to increase its processing capacity to manage the new commitments. Border services are worried because they expect a 30% increase in clients while dealing with a 5% budget cut.

## **6.2 Learnings from recent conferences**

Moved to the next meeting.

## **6.3 Syrian Refugee Developments**

### **Municipal coordination developments and advocacy**

Lucia informed IP Council that the Syrian Resettlement Steering Committee is looking at new ways of working and learnings. It is starting to consider, for example, how to take the learning from housing etc. forward. She has been very excited by the engagement of the Municipal Control Group. She is seeing some parallel activities among groups and committees and the Immigration Partnership, some of which are good, and noted that we're moving into a time when we need to evaluate which parallels are needed and which are not.

Douglas recalled the debrief exercise being conducted with the Syrian Resettlement Committees and suggested that it would be good for the IP Council to do its own debrief and look at that together to the others. He agreed that there is some parallel activity happening and discussed looking at the service learnings and how those could be applied to ensure that “next time” we don't have to reinvent the wheel because there is a responsive system in place. .

Tara commented that IP should be considering the learnings from the Syrian Resettlement Initiative as it moves forward with planning for the development of its work and community action plan. She sees the Syrian Resettlement as a game-changer and IP should be adapting with its developments and learnings. He spoke to “whole of the community approach”, and the need to adapt our our entire philosophy regarding housing and other services – how do we start leverage programs with one another.

Jan V. agreed that there are learnings that the whole community should pay attention to and organizations should then consider the impact on their work.

## **Immigration Partnership Fund for Syrian Newcomers and Task Force**

Linda provided an overview of the Task Force's work to date. It met on March 31 to review 9 applications for funding in the first round. Two were deemed ineligible and four were selected for funding. Agencies supported include: Reception House, Sanctuary Refugee Health Clinic, KW Counselling, and ShamRose for Syrian Culture. The initiatives supported address system navigation, development of community supports and access to health and mental health supports. Supported proposals demonstrated strong collaborative approaches and will benefit both refugees in both urban and rural settings.

The Task Force decided that IP staff will do an eligibility scan prior to subsequent applications being reviewed by the Task Force and two questions were added to the application form going forward with respect to the number of people to benefit and partial funding.

John noted the support from both the Kitchener and Waterloo Community Foundation and the Cambridge and North Dumfries in guide us through the process. The United Way also provided support and guidance.

### **6.4 Community Learning Partnership with WLU**

Peter updated IP Council about progress in developing the community learning partnership with Wilfrid Laurier University. Various conversations between Peter, Tara and several Laurier centres were brought together in one project for which the university is seeking some funding through the McConnell Foundation. It includes:

- A new course to be delivered at the university related to settlement policy for up to 120 students, involving faculty and practitioners in the delivery of course content. Possible non-credit courses for settlement and other service providers on settlement policy as professional development
- Creation of a learning team involving university and IP community partners to identify needs and alignment, interpret results and synthesize findings of the collaboration
- Increase in students in project-based placements in community agencies in alignment with sector needs with a shift toward project- and team-based placements to provide more sustained support to community partners
- Design lab bringing together stakeholders to look at settlement and inclusion needs and the development of sector support to develop a portfolio of innovative solutions for addressing challenges of settlement services that can be implemented and tested by student teams in partnership with local settlement organizations.
- Two community forums to gather input and feedback
- Evaluation of the community learning model

John asked for more detail about how this will connect to the IP community action plan.

Tara recalled that the ideas in this project idea stem from discussions between Peter/Tara other community partners including YMCA, KW Multicultural Centre, etc. and university representatives over the last year in line of partner feedback. She noted that while settlement is the central focus the idea would be for this learning collaboration to span the totality of what we do as a partnership (settlement plus its intersection with a range of service areas, etc.). The idea would be to better leverage the capacities of the university to support individual partner organizations in meeting their needs as well as those of the partnership. She noted that there is an opportunity to align part of this project with the IP community forum to gather information, with support from the university.

Peter stated that he's been quite taken by the commitment of the university.

Pari agreed it would be good to have more information and expressed support for the project, noting that settlement agencies lack the opportunity to develop programs like this on their own.

Lucia noted that there have been issues for many years with respect to research and how that aligns with agency needs and shared back once completed, and that in principal the project sounds exciting.

**Action Items:**

- Tara to provide IP Council with further information about the proposed partnership

**6.5 2016 Community Forum and Ongoing Evaluation**

Jan Bockmaster and Tara provided a brief update about the IP Community Forum. Taking Council's input at its' February meeting, there has been discussion about bringing in a keynote speaker who knows the community and can also inspire and push. Some possibilities include: David Johnston, Doug Saunders (Globe & Mail), Ratna Omidvar (Ryerson University, recommended to the Canadian Senate). John is connecting with David Johnston's office. There has been discussion about following an interview style as opposed to formal presentation, to be more interactive and engaging. Malcolm Gladwell or other a local media personality have been proposed as the interviewer.

There has been discussion about doing a video presentation of IP's work and progress as opposed to having partners to present. This may be a way to profile more partners and convey the message differently.

There would be a community check-in regarding immigration, priorities, real needs, etc., to get feedback from community in terms of how we are aligned to what others in the community think is important.

The idea is to hold the forum in June, being flexible with the date depending on the availability of speakers.

**7. Meeting Adjourned at 2:08pm**

Peter thanked everyone for their input and adjourned the meeting.

**Next Meeting: June 15, 2016 11:30am – 2:00pm**

**Location TBD**

## Immigration Partnership Council Meeting Minutes

<b>Date:</b>	September 21, 2016
<b>Time:</b>	12:00pm – 2:00pm
<b>Location:</b>	Kitchener Public Library, Meeting Room C 85 Queen Street North, Kitchener
<b>Present:</b>	Peter Donahue (Chair), Linda Terry (Vice Chair), John Haddock (Past Chair), Tracey Hare Connell, Conal Vaughn, Jan Varner, Douglas Bartholomew-Saunders, Karen Spencer, Kelly McManus, Theron Kramer, Lucia Harrison
<b>Regrets:</b>	Pari Karem (SSG Chair), Ian McLean (WSG Chair), Iman Arab (BSG Chair), Jennifer Roggemann, Elif Gunce, Sonja Erstic
<b>Abstent:</b>	Asnake Dabala
<b>Staff:</b>	Tara Bedard, Pauline Peng, Dan Vandebelt, Nora Whittington, Diana Palmerin Velasco, Michelle Martin

### 1. Welcome and Review of the Meeting Agenda

Peter Donahue welcomed everyone and called for additions to the agenda. No changes were made. Peter introduced Diana Palmerin Velasco, the new Community Engagement Coordinator for the Belong Steering Group.

### 2. Declaration of Conflict of Interest

There were no conflicts of interest raised.

### 3. Approval of the Consent Agenda

Peter introduced the content of the consent agenda, which includes the 27 June 2016 Council Meeting Minutes and 27 June, 22 July and 24 August Syrian Fund Task Force Meeting Minutes and CAP Implementation Progress Reports. Council members were given the opportunity to pull items from the consent agenda for discussion. None were brought forward.

**Motion:** That the Immigration Partnership Council approve the consent agenda in its entirety

- John Haddock brought forward a motion that the Immigration Partnership Council approves the consent agenda in its entirety.
- Douglas Bartholomew-Saunders seconded the motion.
- Council voted to approve the motion. No members opposed or abstained from vote.

### 4. CAP Implementation Highlights

#### SSG

Dan Vandebelt

3 things to highlight

1. Refugee services action group / SSG where do the conversations go? How do we structure ourselves?
2. Housing awards – given to landlords who helped in the process of settling Syrian refugees. Planning to have it on national housing day (Nov 17). Nominations are welcome
3. Ontario works – consultations regarding funding cuts. In terms of us, month 13 issues. Many refugees will likely go into Ontario works

John: how much budget cut?

Douglas: There will not be a cut in funding, what's happening is the expenditures are exceeding the budget way over what is available. The Region is giving \$2mil on top of the Federal Funding. In total there are \$6mil

Karen: \$6mil represent the need?

Douglas: was the need magnified because they see the money or was the money allocated because there was the need. Hamilton was more than \$6mil over. Not sure if the need is really there or is it artificial

Conal:

### **BSG**

Profiles for lamWR ambassadors have been released. The latest one is Alam Mohammad. The BSG is meeting next Monday. The campaign has been very successful

Citizenship ceremonies – have some dates confirmed for next year

### **WSG**

Would like to extend the project for ScotiaBank beyond just banking

Dojo has been very useful in identifying immigrant talent

How do we get the small and medium sized businesses across the company

Will be looking into the manufacturing sector. Many jobs left in WR in manufacturing sector is advanced.

ScotiaBank wants to be progressive, but as a large organization it is hard to make many changes

Also have a hard time getting youth to get the training for those skilled jobs

Nora added: TechJam – 15 employers. Service providers.

Oct 18: Chamber has an expo at Bingemans. Last year before the expo, networking training session.

Will run a training session again this year

Have an immigrant mentoring day (job shadowing etc.) 10 HR professionals representing different sectors

Ian: end goal is for small and medium businesses to use the dojo to find talent. They have no idea, it's good to use the fact that a large organization uses it will attract them to use it as well

## **5. Manager Report**

Tara Bedard

Money from MCI – supports WSG and some staff cost. Moving into the final year of the funding.

Discussed about how to keep getting the Funding from MCI. There is a lot of momentum in the WSG and it is best we do not lose the funding.

Invitation to selection of IP partners to come to the next meeting to talk about the contents of the learning initiative. Planning at the end of October. Speaker series – organize one in collaboration with the Laurier learning community.

Successfully received the funding for the IP portal. Going to start moving forward with it. Engaging people at different points of the process to get input. Should be done by May or June next year.

Invited and went to Mapping Living Trains – look at collaboratives of services for children. Will be looking at that for different parts of the evaluation.

Theron:

Tara: everyone has been in the resettlement role long enough and no one is spending as much time there as they were at the beginning of this year. The groups are very self-sustaining currently. Evolvement of staff will be there, but not to the extent like last year

John: needs for the refugees are higher. It may take them 3 to 4 years to be settled, compared to 1 year for “normal” immigrants. Only 10 refugees have declared to be employed. A group of 500 more immigrants are coming. They will be settled in Cambridge, but the issues remain the same

Douglas: IP Council should celebrate the fact that it was the genesis of the whole community. The community response was fragmented and conflictual. We’ve past the crisis point, even though there is a new wave coming, now looking at response

Difficulties: housing is mostly exhausted, employment  
Federal funding for literacy training

Ian: budget season for federal government, would like to get to the MPs and let them know what the needs and priorities are

Tara: met Bardish, and Raj, Tarwan with Rosemary last week. There was a lot of discussion about very concrete needs in the community. Ended up with Tara giving them a list of 10 top priorities. We have strong support from the MPs in this community and it would be a good idea to get back to them on that

Theron: many refugees that came to this community are not very educated, maybe we need a balance I this community

Douglas: it is not very easy to establish

Capacity for employment, housing. When you don’t have the accurate information about education and language skills, it makes it more difficult. There is a very big difference between private sponsored and government assisted refugees.

Theron: what is the plan to support those who have no education

Linda: we do not want to see what will happen in month 13 – the majority of them will end up on welfare.

Douglas: Many landlords are giving reduced rent. But after a year, they will charge normal rent. The welfare they receive after the first year will also decrease. How many will be evicted?

Karen: need data to support the claims

John: \$300,000 left. New wave coming through. Concern: the demand is diminishing, but the need stays strong. Dental costs

Ian: need for advocacy

Lucia: still would like to remove the “Syrian” label. Anything we do should be for refugees in general, not just Syrians. Many refugees are not going to get those dental funding

Ian: thinks IP executives and KWCF should talk about changing the “Syrian Newcomer Fund”

John: the money currently in the pot will not be able to be changed, but going forward, it would be best to change

Action items:

- Discussion about making the fund for all refugees

Douglas: if Reception House is trying to establish a group of people in Cambridge.

## **6. Items for Information/Discussion**

### **6.1 IP Council Composition and Membership**

John: six members' terms will be up by March. We want some immigrants and different sectors representing, but it is more important for them to be on the steering groups.

Suggestions/things to think about:

Those in leadership roles (chair, vice chair, past chair, steering group chairs) to extend their term

Are we representing sectors?

Do we have enough settlement experience at the table collectively?

Someone from YMCA and KWMC should still be at the table

Theron is concerned there are people not coming to meetings. Linda suggests us to look at the time of our meetings so more people can participate.

Lucia: we have tried using different times, but there are always people that those times will not work for.

### **6.2 IP Evaluation Update**

Theron gave an update on the IP Evaluation. The presentation and draft report is attached below:

We are in particular struggling with WSG to get the commitment of the time

### **6.3 Syrian Refugee Developments**

#### **a. Municipal coordination developments**

#### **b. Immigration Partnership Fund for Syrian Newcomers, Month 13 discussion**

### **6.4 MP Meeting Report**

## **7. Meeting Adjourned at 2:01pm**

Peter thanked everyone for their input and adjourned the meeting.

**Next Meeting: 16 November 2016, 11:30am – 2:00pm**

**Location:** Kitchener Public Library Meeting Room E (85 Queen Street North)

## Immigration Partnership Council Meeting Minutes

<b>Date:</b>	September 21, 2016
<b>Time:</b>	12:00pm – 2:00pm
<b>Location:</b>	Kitchener Public Library, Meeting Room C 85 Queen Street North, Kitchener
<b>Present:</b>	Peter Donahue (Chair), Linda Terry (Vice Chair), John Haddock (Past Chair), Ian McLean (WSG Chair), Tracey Hare Connell, Conal Vaughn, Jan Varner, Douglas Bartholomew-Saunders, Karen Spencer, Kelly McManus, Theron Kramer, Lucia Harrison
<b>Regrets:</b>	Pari Karem (SSG Chair), Iman Arab (BSG Chair), Jennifer Roggemann, Elif Gunce, Sonja Erstic,
<b>Absent:</b>	Asnake Dabala
<b>Staff:</b>	Tara Bedard, Pauline Peng, Dan Vandebelt, Nora Whittington, Diana Palmerin Velasco

### 1. Welcome and Review of the Meeting Agenda

Peter Donahue welcomed everyone and called for additions to the agenda. No changes were made. Peter introduced Diana Palmerin Velasco, the new Community Engagement Coordinator for the Belong Steering Group.

### 2. Declaration of Conflict of Interest

No conflicts of interest were declared.

### 3. Approval of the Consent Agenda

Peter introduced the content of the consent agenda, which included the 27 June 2016 Council Meeting Minutes and 27 June, 22 July and 24 August Syrian Fund Task Force Meeting Minutes and CAP Implementation Progress Reports. Council members were given the opportunity to pull items from the consent agenda for discussion. None were brought forward.

- John Haddock brought forward a motion that the Immigration Partnership Council approve the consent agenda in its entirety.
- Douglas Bartholomew-Saunders seconded the motion.
- Council voted to approve the motion. No members opposed or abstained from vote.

### 4. CAP Implementation Highlights

#### SSG

In the absence of Pari Karem, Dan Vandebelt gave an update on SSG. The Refugee Services Action Group / SSG is discussing where various conversations should happen - how do we best structure ourselves? This will be considered as we move forward with Community Action Plan (CAP) development.

A Housing Award is being planned in the context of National Housing Day (Nov 17) and refugee resettlement, to be given to landlords who helped in the process of settling Syrian refugees. A nomination process is being put in place and nominations from everyone are welcome.

Ontario Works Discretionary Benefit Consultations – staff have participated in community consultation by the Region of Waterloo and are updating partners. There is a link to month 13 issues for resettled refugees as many will transition to Ontario Works at that time and may need those benefits.

John asked how much of a cut is proposed per household. Douglas replied that it is roughly 20%. He clarified that the Region is not seeking to cut funding. It is spending what has been allocated but claims are exceeding the allocated budget. The Region provides an additional \$2 million above the provincial funding, which has long been capped, and is the only municipality in Ontario to do so. In total there is \$6 million available for discretionary benefits in the Region of Waterloo. Karen Spenser asked if the \$6 million represents the real need. Douglas replies that it is worth considering that if the need was magnified because the see the benefits were available or was the money allocated because there was the need. Conal noted that refugee allowances include a transportation component.

## **BSG**

In the absence of Iman Arab, Diana Palmerin Velasco gave an update on BSG. She noted that the profiles for four #IamWaterlooRegion ambassadors have been released and there has been very positive feedback in the community. The latest one is Alam Mohammad from Cambridge and he and campaign will feature in the Cambridge International Festival. Diana noted that she is starting to engage partners in discussion about how to build on successes to date and planning is taking place for upcoming citizenship ceremonies.

Kelly McManus asked how we are measuring the success of #IamWaterlooRegion. Diana indicated that it has been mostly anecdotal until now.

## **WSG**

Ian McLean reported that the ITEP project will not be moving forward with Scotiabank, which was not able to commit further. WSG has formed a sub-committee for this project which is looking at extending it beyond banking. ITEP and the Dojo have been very useful in identifying immigrant talent, and it is time to consider how we get the small and medium sized businesses involved. WSG will be looking into the manufacturing sector where positions available range in required skill level, in conversation with the Workforce Planning Board.

Nora Whittington added WSG has numerous events in the works which partners are collaborating on:

- Communitech Tech Jam job fair on September 20. 58 employers were in attendance and IP partners were able to develop connections and share information about IP and services in the community.
- KW/Cambridge/Guelph Chamber of Commerce Business Expo on October 18. Partners will collaborate to host a networking training for immigrant job-seekers before the Expo and then support them as they are in the Expo. Good opportunity for newcomers to learn about local businesses, develop their networks and explore possible work opportunities down the line. IP and partners are also able to further outreach and engage with local employers.
- HR Panel and Networking Event on November 22, for service providers and immigrant job-seekers. 10 HR professional from different sectors will share insights on hiring trends and needs in their sector followed by a networking event.
- Exploring the possibility of an Immigrant Mentoring Day with the Workforce Planning Board and partners.
- Business After 5s with KW and Cambridge Chamber of Commerce.

Theron asked if it makes sense to go to other banks with ITEP given early successes with Scotiabank. Ian indicated that WSG feels that would likely end in the same place and would like to look at other sectors and broadening the employer base participating in it.

## **5. Manager Report**

Tara reported that the IP funding from MCI channeled through the Greater KW Chamber of Commerce which supports some WSG activities and associated staff costs is now in its final year. She noted that discussions have started with the Chamber about how to engage MCI in conversation about bringing this work forward and sustain the momentum in the WSG.

The Learning Community Initiative with Wilfrid Laurier University is picking back up. A wider selection of IP partners across all pillars will participate in the next meeting to talk about the contents and moving it forward. We may organize a speaker session in October as part of this, drawing on the experiences of the people profiled so far in #IamWaterlooRegion.

After some delay due to focus on Syrian resettlement, work on the redevelopment of the Immigration Portal is about to commence. Region of Waterloo communications staff are supporting engagement of the developer and streamlining administration processes. We will be engaging various partners at different points in the process and we expect to be done by May or June 2017.

Tara recently participated in an event with various partners called Mapping Moving Trains hosted by the Lyle S. Hallman Foundation. It explored various Regional collaborative tables having an impact on children and families and how they may work together. Participated in the context of IPs ongoing evaluation and CAP redevelopment, to be aware of what is happening in other parts of the community as we are prioritising actions.

Theron questioned whether this work will get sidelined again as the next wave of refugees begins to arrive. Tara responded that with a well established coordination structure and major players all doing their part, the demands on IP staff time will be lessened. We will still be active participants but not the level required at the beginning of the year.

This discussion then merged with agenda items 6.3 and 6.4.

John expressed concern about month 13 for the refugees who have arrived and the need for further education and advocacy to sustain momentum in the community to support them in settling, which is a long-term project, at least 3-4 years, as well as preparing for the 500 more refugees expected this year.

Douglas indicated that IP should celebrate the fact that it was the genesis of a whole of community response to Syrian resettlement. There are ongoing concerns about housing, employment and language training, but we've come through a critical time.

Ian agreed and noted that IP Council should be inputting upcoming Federal budget talks by meeting with our MPs and letting them know what the local needs and priorities are.

Tara reported on recent meeting with local MPs which are very supportive of IP, and have invited input on very concrete ways they can support IP and newcomer settlement. We are invited to put together our top 10 needs and bring that to them.

Theron noted about the plan to support the many refugees who have arrived with little education.

Karen Spencer stressed the importance of having accurate data to support of claims and planning, and asked where the hub for that is. Mostly IP staff bring together available data so far.

Council discussed the Syrian Newcomer Fund and the diminishing level of funding available, while needs remain high. Council discussed the need for advocacy with all levels of government and conversation with the local Community Foundations about the future of this fund and widening the terms of reference to support all refugees, not just Syrians. Council agreed that discussion with the Community Foundations should take place via the Task Force and Tara should work with rest of Council on broader advocacy

**Action items:**

- Tara to support the Task Force to explore future of the fund and widening of terms of reference with Community Foundations.
- Tara to work with Council on further awareness raising and advocacy with MPs and others concerning community needs and preparing federal budget inputs.

**6. Items for Information/Discussion**

**6.1 IP Council Composition and Membership**

John Haddock noted the IP Council leadership team met recently to discuss Council composition and membership. He noted that six members' terms will be up by April 2017 reference the broad and flexible terms in the Governance Document. He suggested that three principles guide the leadership team in moving forward on recruitment:

- That the term of those in leadership roles (chair, vice chair, past chair, steering group chairs) should extend to the end of their term in that position.
- That we have the right representation of sectors
- That we ensure sufficient settlement experience at the table

It was suggested that the YMCA and/or KWMC always be represented on Council.

Theron noted that some people, particularly members with lived experience, are not coming to meetings. Linda noted that we are away of some time conflicts and suggested that we look at the time of our meetings so more people can participate. Lucia noted we have tried that in the past and there are always people who will not be able to make it.

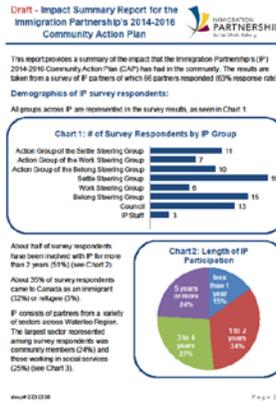
Council was broadly in agreement with these principles. John indicated that he would work with Tara and the leadership team to move this forward for the next Council meeting.

**Action items:**

- John to work with Tara and the leadership team on Council recruitment.

**6.2 IP Evaluation Update**

Theron provided an update on the IP Evaluation. The presentation and report is attached below (double click to open):



Council was pleased to note that partner engagement is higher than when the previous evaluation was conducted in 2014-2015. They were pleased with the work of the evaluation committee look forward to robust outcomes. Council was informed of the October 19 CAP planning meeting and encouraged to attend.

**Action items:**

- Council members to attend the October 19 CAP planning meeting.

**7. Meeting Adjourned at 2:01pm**

Peter thanked everyone for their input and adjourned the meeting.

**Next Meeting: 16 November 2016, 11:30am – 2:00pm**

**Location:** Kitchener Public Library Meeting Room E (85 Queen Street North)

**Immigration Partnership Council  
Meeting Minutes**

<b>Date:</b>	November 16, 2016
<b>Time:</b>	12:00pm – 2:00pm
<b>Location:</b>	Kitchener Public Library, Meeting Room E 85 Queen Street North, Kitchener
<b>Present:</b>	Peter Donahue (Chair), Linda Terry (Vice Chair), John Haddock (Past Chair), Iman Arab (BSG Chair), Ian McLean (WSG Chair), Jennifer Roggemann, Kelly McManus, Theron Kramer, Lucia Harrison
<b>Regrets:</b>	Pari Karem (SSG Chair), Douglas Bartholomew-Saunders, Conal Vaughn, Jan Varner, Karen Spencer, Elif Gunce
<b>Absent:</b>	Asnake Dabala, Sonja Erstic, Tracey Hare Connell
<b>Staff:</b>	Tara Bedard, Pauline Peng, Dan Vandebelt, Diana Palmerin Velasco

**1. Welcome and Review of the Meeting Agenda**

Meeting started at 12:08pm. Peter Donahue welcomed everyone and called for additions to the agenda. No changes were made.

**2. Declaration of Conflict of Interest**

No conflicts of interest were declared.

**3. Approval of the Consent Agenda**

Peter introduced the content of the consent agenda, which included the 21 September 2016 Council Meeting Minutes, 29 September Syrian Fund Task Force Meeting Reports and CAP Implementation Progress Reports. Council members were given the opportunity to pull items from the consent agenda for discussion. None were brought forward.

- Linda Terry brought forward a motion that the Immigration Partnership Council approve the consent agenda in its entirety.
- Lucia Harrison seconded the motion.
- Council voted to approve the motion. No members opposed or abstained from vote.

**4. CAP Implementation Highlights**

**SSG**

In Pari Karem's absence, Dan Vandebelt gave an update on SSG. Dan noted that IP and various partners are participating in a new oral health coalition in Waterloo Region. The coalition is circulating a petition to the province and is asking coalition members to collect signatures. The petition seeks: reform of health plans to include oral health; extended dental coverage for low-income adults; and delivery of public dental services through cost-efficient ways to ensure accessibility to vulnerable individuals. Tara noted that dental supports are important for newcomers who often live on low incomes upon arrival, and in particular refugees.

Several new partners have joined SSG, following up on Council's direction that SNF grantees be linked into the work of SSG. New partners include Muslim Association of Canada, ShamRose, Muslim Social Services, and Big Brothers Big Sisters.

Immigration Partnership is hosting an award for landlords who have housed refugees in the last year as part of the National Housing Day Celebration being held on November 17 by Region of Waterloo. SSG partners worked together to develop the application process and select awardees – 8 landlords will be recognized. Council was provided with a brief of the awardees.

John inquired if topics of discussion at SSG have changed now that we are 10 months into the 1200 Syrian refugees having arrived. It was discussed that planning tables are discussing both ongoing support for earlier arrivals plus those expected at the end of the year. They are also discussing how to sustain improvements made to services and ways of working together.

### **BSG**

Iman Arab updated Council that municipal partners have resumed presentations about municipal services and ways of getting involved to ESL students again, and are planning to host another citizenship ceremony in February.

She noted that discussions are underway with CCORIC around IP providing leadership to the coordination of World Refugee Day events in 2017. She noted a lack of capacity in the community to coordinate events but it is important that they take place.

Tara added that there has been confusion in the past about what IP's involvement means that these discussions aim to eliminate that and that going forward, she would see a very simplified involvement of IP staff in supporting coordination if it aligns with IP plans moving forward.

Theron noted a difference between leading and supporting and expressed concern that BSG not get caught up in leading or being primarily responsible because this would reduce its capacity for other planned initiatives. John agreed and indicated that others should take leadership.

Lucia recalled that CCORIC is a coalition with many of the same agencies represented that participate in IP, and that their capacity is limited too.

Peter suggested that we monitor this and try to identify other ways of more sustainably supporting the coordination needed. He suggested that this may be a way to leverage student capacity and that this be brought to the Learning Community.

Council discussed several possibly funding options that might be sought, to eliminate the need for IP staff to dedicate time to the coordination of this.

Kelly agreed with Peter that a more sustainable approach is needed. The two agreed to follow-up.

### **WSG**

Ian McLean updated Council that WSG is going through a review on the Immigrant Talent Engagement Program. There has been trouble finding out how to reach out to medium sized businesses. Most jobs they offer are not entry-level jobs and they cannot find people to fill them. Partnering with organizations to reach out and make connections and find matches. The local manufacturing sector is relatively advanced and requires technical skills.

WSG participated in the recent Business Expo hosted by KW, Cambridge and Guelph Chambers. It hosted a networking training for about 60 immigrants who were entered the expo to network with the more than 170 business exhibitors to learn about their business and work opportunities. They are planning another networking event and HR Panel in November where HR representatives will share sector insights with employment service providers.

Ian noted that WSG is partnering with the Workforce Planning Board again on its Employer One, so watch for that. He also reported that IEAG may merge with the Syrian Refugee Employment Working Group. He indicated that there are job openings which need to be filled urgently. We are trying to help matching Syrian refugees and immigrants to available jobs. He noted some success, for example the Cambridge Chamber has help match 20-30 people to work with particular employers.

Peter asked how we get sectors that need workers to talk with employment service providers who can help them.

Kelly noted we are approaching a tipping point with the lack of appropriately trained talent to fill local positions. She asked how the CAP responds to that and noted that this needs to be part of Council's advocacy agenda.

Iman noted the need for advocacy around credentialing and proof of education.

Ian states that people generally don't consider manufacturing jobs anymore. Less than 5% of people think about college, 1% think about trades. Not enough people are going into post-secondary for trades, and schools are not pushing it. Linda noted that parents play a role because everyone wants their children to go to university.

## **5. Manager Report**

Tara informed Council that the provincial funding that supports work through WSG has been extended until December 2017. Discussions have started with the KEW Chamber as the project lead about moving forward with discussions about the continuation of that work beyond that time.

She updated Council that we are now starting budget negotiations with IRCC for the next 3-year contract. IRCC has proposed a budget structure that leads to a decrease in funding over the period, which will not support the rising cost of business. The proposal will impact all settlement funded programs in the same way. There is a need to advocate for more funding for settlement funded programs in Waterloo Region. A report was submitted to Regional Council updating them of this development and IP work in 2016, recommending that they advocate for more settlement resources for the region. Lucia noted that KWMC was told the same and that there are efforts to get more funding for the later years of the contributions agreements. It was noted that earlier advocacy by IP Council and Regional Council had a positive impact. Tara and Peter will connect to discuss how to proceed.

She also noted that she is starting a brief for federal budget consultations which she will circulate for Council input.

## **6. Items for Approval**

### **6.1 IP Council Membership Recommendations**

John provided an overview of recent work around IP Council recruitment and introduced the motions. He brought forward a recommendation that targeted recruitment take place to fill several seats that will soon be vacated, looking for the business, health and education representatives. Council expressed a preference for a community health representative. It was also noted that close attention be paid to the involvement of people with lived experience as immigrants.

Motion 1: That the Immigration Partnership Council approve amendments to the Governance Document providing for permanent representation of the YMCA and K-W Multicultural Centre. Lucia indicated that the K-W Multicultural Centre has a very flat organizational structure, unlike YMCA, so they have fewer choices for people to rotate in. She recommended that the statement to

be changed to “The YMCA and K-W Multicultural Centre may provide for periodic rotation of their representative at their discretion.”

Theron indicated that this motion may say something about IP priorities given that we have three pillars. Lucia noted that KWMC is not just about settle. It also has work and belong programs; same with the YMCA.

Kelly inquired if there are any other organizations in that space that would take the exception. Lucia noted the need to be flexible since any agency could cease to exist and agreed to have “or other organizations” written in.

Council agreed to amend the wording of the proposed changes to the governance document and to move the motion on that basis.

- John Haddock brought forward the motion.
- Ian McLean seconded the motion.
- Council voted to approve the motion. No members opposed or abstained from vote. The motion passed.

Motion 2: That the Immigration Partnership Council approve a maximum one-year extension of the terms of the current Chair, Vice Chair and Past Chair.

- John Haddock brought forward the motion.
- Ian McLean seconded the motion.
- Council voted to approve the motion. No members opposed or abstained from vote. Motion is passed.

## **7. Items for Information/Discussion**

### **7.1 2017 Immigration Levels**

Jennifer Roggeman updated Council that the overall immigration levels projection increased by 15%, mainly due to an increase in the number of economic immigrants to be admitted to Canada.

She indicated that the people most likely to benefit from changes to the express entry system include: university educated to BA level, executives, under 30.

People least likely to benefit from changes: university educated above BA level, professors, self-employed, college-educated (1 or 2-year certificate), above 30

Recalling the earlier discussion about the types of jobs to be filled, she noted that Canadian employers will largely not benefit because there will still be a education and skills mismatch.

### **7.2 Immigration Partnership Fund for Syrian Newcomers, Month 13 discussion**

John and Linda updated Council that the Task Force has started discussions with the community foundations about the future of the Syrian newcomer Fund and the need for sustained support for this initiative locally. Particularly coming to the end of year one there is a concern about supports falling off.

Lucia indicated that she, Pari and Carl Cadogan of Reception House would like to request a meeting with the Task Force.

Kelly indicated that their next meeting is at the end of November.

### **7.3 IP Evaluation/Planning Update**

Theron introduced the input gathered for the 2017-2019 Community Action Plan and updated Council about progress and how it will move forward. A community survey was conducted through which we got good input from newcomers. He discussed the October 19 task group meeting and its output, and the desire to focus on fewer actions.

He provided Council with a sampling of the actions in the draft CAP, noting that each pillar now has an introductory paragraph, as well as a statement that as needs and priorities in the community shift, they will strive to be responsive and adopt as needed. He noted that the new CAP will also have a section outlining Council's role, which the current CAP does not have.

Council expressed support for the proposed format and was pleased that Council actions would be included as an integral component of the CAP. They were also supportive of looking to note specific partners as being committed to particular actions.

Peter noted that with world events in the next year we might expect talks on systematic racism and hate crimes. Theron responded that this is reflected in the CAP.

John expressed his agreement with everything and suggested continuous review of what we're doing, such as through annual reflections and adjustments, rather than waiting until then end.

Lucia indicated that she would like to bring the anti-racism by OCASI to Council at the next meeting. Peter agreed.

Theron noted that the full CAP draft is to be discussed at the next meeting and that the evaluation committee will be looking at measurement. Tara noted that there may be need for a short additional council meeting in February, depending on how the January meeting goes.

### **7.4 Immigration Portal Redevelopment Update**

Tara informed Council that work on the new Immigration Portal is underway. It is intended to be a community resource to support the attraction and retention of immigrants. It was started by the Region of Waterloo with many organizations involved about 8 years ago. IP became responsible for the maintenance of the website. It is outdated and very hard to update.

A draft site map has been developed and we held a meeting with settlement, economic development, school boards, tourism, etc, to help refine the sitemap. Our major aim with the new portal is to help people to get to original information so that IP does not have to keep updating. It is also to make direct connections to relevant services more seamless. We are considering dual landing pages - also information for employers and other service providers, so the information is not just for newcomers. The expected launch date is in March 2017.

## **8. Meeting Adjourned at 2:06pm**

Peter thanked everyone for their input and adjourned the meeting.

**Next Meeting: 18 January 2017, 11:30-2:00**

**Location: TBD**