The Chair was passed on to Aurelia Tokaci so that Liban Abdi could participate in the meeting.

1. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**
   None declared.

2. **WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**
   Committee members introduced themselves.

3. **APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**
   Agenda approved.

4. **APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES:**
   (Gwozdowski /Hosten)
   That the February 13, 2008 minutes of the Immigrant & Refugee Advisory Committee be approved as circulated. **CARRIED.**

5. **BUSINESS ITEMS**

   5.1 **Review of Work Plan & Priorities Setting**
   David Hosten gave a summary of why the committee should develop an immigration strategy for immigrants and refugees. The subcommittee will review the immigration strategies of Peel Region, Mississauga, Kitchener/Waterloo and City of Toronto.
It was suggested that the Committee request a copy of the Economic Development Plan from Tim McCabe and present the Plan to the Chamber of Commerce.

*(Hosten/ Salman)*

That a subcommittee of the Immigrant & Refugee Advisory Committee be formed to review information from neighbouring municipalities where they have implemented successfully business start-up for success plans for immigrants.

**CARRIED.**

David Hosten and Samia Qadims volunteered to be part of this subcommittee. David Hosten will circulate an email with a one-page overview of the role of the subcommittee. Others can volunteer at that time. Maxine Carter will add this initiative to the workplan.

II. City of Hamilton Communication Strategy for Immigrants & Refugees

The Committee will table this discussion for the May 2008 meeting.

5.2 Review and Comment on Reports, Legislation, Studies

Maxine Carter informed the committee that Community Services staff, Barbara Powell and the General manager Joe-Anne Priel has requested that members of the Immigrant & Refugee Advisory Committee review a proposal being developed for the Immigration Strategy. The turn around time will be 48 – 72 hours. Maxine will send the document once it is forwarded to her.

Committee will consider participating in the Poverty Reduction Consultations coming up in May.

Liban Abdi will draft a report to the Hamilton Poverty Roundtable stating that issues affecting immigrants become part of the Poverty Roundtable Strategy document.

Suggestion that Samia Qadims approach SPRC to prepare a summary of issues related to poverty affecting immigrants.

New Federal Immigration Policy: Hearings to be held on immigration changes. Committee is considering making a presentation to Council to have them send a submission to the Federal government.

Aurelia will prepare a summary of what was presented in the budget and what the positions are (pros & cons) and send it by email for comments.

5.3 Update – Community Councils Task Force

Councillor Powers provided an update. Public delegations completed. Report was tabled. Mayor has asked to wait until the budget is approved. Will likely have more public consultations. Dundas Community Council has reviewed it and sent comments to Council.

5.4 Equity & Inclusion Policy Update

Committee was asked to decide if they want to have the consultation part of the regular monthly meetings or do they want to strike a subcommittee that will report back.
That the Immigrant & Refugee Advisory Committee extend the meeting times for consultation on Equity & Inclusion Policy to 9:00 p.m., and,

That the agenda be adjusted to suit the consultation time. **CARRIED.**

**5.5 Hamilton Police Services Diversity Committee Update**
No report this month. This item was tabled to the next meeting.

**6. CORRESPONDENCE / CURRENT AFFAIRS**

6.1 Ontario Human Rights – statement concerning issues raised by complaints against MacLean’s Magazine.

6.2 Hiring Skilled Immigrants Makes Good Business Sense – April 15, 2008, 7:00 p.m., Mohawk College.

**7. ADJOURNMENT**
The meeting adjourned at 8:35 p.m.