



SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

APRIL 22, 2018

A Special Meeting of the Council of the City of Vancouver was held on Sunday, April 22, 2018, at 2:07 pm, in the Chinese Cultural Centre, David Lam Hall, 50 East Pender Street, Vancouver, BC, for the purpose of delivering an official apology to the Chinese people in Vancouver for past discrimination.

PRESENT:

- Mayor Gregor Robertson
- Councillor George Affleck
- Councillor Elizabeth Ball
- Councillor Hector Bremner
- Councillor Adriane Carr
- Councillor Melissa De Genova
- Councillor Heather Deal
- Councillor Kerry Jang
- Councillor Raymond Louie
- Councillor Andrea Reimer
- Councillor Tim Stevenson

CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE: Sadhu Johnston, City Manager

CITY CLERK'S OFFICE: Katrina Leckovic, City Clerk
Tina Hildebrandt, Meeting Coordinator
Leslie Tuerlings, Meeting Coordinator

WELCOME

The Mayor acknowledged we are on the unceded homelands of the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh Nations and we give thanks for their generosity and hospitality on these lands.

1. Apology for Historical Discrimination Against Chinese People

At the Standing Committee of Council on Policy and Strategic Priorities meeting on November 1, 2017, Vancouver City Council heard from speakers and subsequently, at the Regular Council meeting following the Standing Committee meeting, carried unanimously a motion entitled Historical Discrimination Against Chinese People in Vancouver which directed City staff to organize the official apology event in April 2018.

The Mayor invited Musqueam Elder Larry Grant to give a welcome.

The Mayor provided opening remarks and invited guests Bill Yee and Maggie Ip, former Vancouver City Councillors, to join him in reading the Official Apology in English and Chinese (*Cantonese and Sze Yup*) as follows:

“The living legacies of the injustices against Chinese people in Vancouver still resonate with us today. They echo in our city, in our collective histories, and in the stories of our elders. After many years of work by community advocates, the Advisory Group on Historical Discrimination Against Chinese People, and City of Vancouver staff in bringing to light the scope of this systemic discrimination, I rise today to acknowledge and address a dark and difficult period of our past.

「在溫哥華歷史中，華裔居民曾面對種種的不公義；其影響之深，時至今日仍在我們的城市、我們的共同歷史，以及長者的故事中引起迴響。社區領袖、歧視華裔居民政策歷史顧問委員會，以及市政府職員花了多年時間研究這種系統性歧視，並指出其範圍之廣。本人今日在此，正式承認溫哥華市過去一段黑暗及艱難的歲月並就此發言。

For the first half of the City of Vancouver's history, racial prejudice and discrimination against our Chinese-Canadian residents was commonplace. And yet for those 60 years, rather than standing up against the injustice of racism, many of our elected officials including mayors and councillors used the legal power of the City to enact and expand laws targeting Chinese residents. Through Council motions and through the everyday effects of bylaws, licences and legalized racism, the Chinese community of Vancouver suffered the awful consequences of lawful discrimination. I rise today as the Mayor of Vancouver to recognize and to take responsibility for the suffering and indignity endured because of this historical injustice.

The depth and breadth of the actions for which we apologize today are deep:

From the first moments of our incorporation as a City, on April 6, 1886, Vancouver took away the legal right for the Chinese community to vote. The minutes of the first Council meeting had the following: “No Chinaman or Indian shall be entitled to vote in any municipal election for the election of a Mayor or Alderman.” Full voting rights, a cornerstone of our democracy, were not granted to Chinese-Canadians in Vancouver until 1949.

The City of Vancouver lobbied the Federal government to pass racially discriminatory immigration policies, including the Chinese Immigration Act in 1923 which formally excluded Chinese people from immigrating to Canada. For the next 25 years, fewer than 100 Chinese immigrants were legally allowed to enter Canada, splintering families and creating unspeakable suffering within Vancouver's Chinese community.

Through its contracts and grants, the City of Vancouver excluded people of Chinese heritage from being employed by the city or by those doing business with the City. No Chinese person was employed by the City of Vancouver until 1952.

Numerous measures were taken to segregate the areas where Chinese residents were able to live and to earn a livelihood. City bylaws restricted where Chinese people could own and run businesses. Housing covenants were used to prohibit Chinese residents from purchasing property. Although these clauses are no longer legally enforceable, many remain even today on legal titles, a reminder of how racial segregation in housing and business shaped our city's neighbourhoods and communities.

在本市前半段的歷史中，華裔居民受到種族偏見及歧視比比皆是。然而在該六十多年中，許多我們的民選官員包括市長及市議員等，不但沒有發聲反對由種族主義造成的不公義，反而利用市府的法定權力去制訂及擴充針對華人的歧視性法例。因為市議會的這些動議，以及透過附例、牌照等的執法權力，令種族歧視政策在法制保護下日益猖獗，使華裔居民蒙受極大傷害。今日我以溫哥華市長的身份發言，就過往的不公義對華裔居民造成的苦難以及喪失的尊嚴表示歉意和承擔責任。

今日我們必須為此而道歉的歧視行為，影響既深又廣：

- 溫哥華在1886年4月6日正式建市後隨即剝奪了華人的合法投票權：「華人或印第安人均沒有資格在任何市選中投票選出市長或市議員」。華裔居民直至1949年才獲得被視為民主基石的全面投票權。
- 溫市府游說聯邦政府通過充滿種族歧視的移民政策，包括於1923年通過的《排華法》，正式將華人拒於加國門外。在隨後的25年間，獲准合法進入加國的華裔移民不足100人，此舉除了拆散無數家庭之外，亦為溫哥華的華裔社群帶來無法形容的痛苦。
- 溫市府透過合約和撥款，令華裔居民無法受僱於市府或其他與市府有生意往來的人士。這情況一直延續至1952年，才首次有華人受僱於市府。
- 市府採取了各種措施，將華裔居民能夠居住及謀生的地方加以隔離。市府的附例亦規定了華人只可以在某些地方擁有及經營生意，房屋契約亦被用來禁止華裔居民購買房地產。雖然這些規條今天已不能被合法執行，但不少類似條文仍然可以在地契上找到，這提醒了我們：居住及營商方面的種族隔離政策對本市整體社群造成了多深遠的影響。

The elected officials of the City of Vancouver used their role as leaders to sow the seeds of intolerance that emboldened individuals and groups to act upon anti-Asian discrimination. Whether by explicitly encouraging anti-Chinese sentiments, or by silently allowing racial hatred and violence to continue, too many of our predecessors stood by – rather than stood up – to racism.

I rise today to recognize and repudiate how such acts stigmatized and dehumanized the Chinese Canadian community of Vancouver. I rise today to formally apologize to the Chinese community in Vancouver and to all Canadians of Chinese ancestry for the discriminatory legislation directed against Chinese people in Vancouver by its elected officials and civil servants from 1886 to 1949. On this day, on behalf of City Council and the City of Vancouver, I sincerely apologize for these past injustices and their cruel effects on individuals and their families, and commit to ensuring that similar unjust practices are never again allowed to fall on any group or community.

溫市的民選官員利用他們作為領袖的身份散播歧視的種子，令其他個人及族群更明目張膽地提倡及進行反亞裔的種族歧視行為。無論是公開鼓勵反華情緒或對種族仇恨與暴力保持緘默，我們有太多的前任民選官員對於種族主義只是視若無睹，而不是發聲加以譴責。

本人今日承認此等行為侮辱及鄙視溫哥華華裔社群，我也發言反對這些行為。就溫市民選官員及公務員在1886至1949年間制訂針對本市華裔居民的歧視法例，本人今日向溫哥華的華裔社群及所有華裔加拿大人正式道歉；對那些曾經因合法歧視蒙受苦難的華裔居民及家庭，本人今日謹代表市議會及市府誠懇表達歉意，並致力確保類似的非公義行徑永遠不容發生在任何一個族群或社群身上。

I rise today to acknowledge the darkness and suffering that anti-Chinese policies and legislation caused, and to vow that never again will Mayor and Council stand aside in the face of racism. We will stand up to those who would use racial discrimination to divide us, and we vow each and every day to challenge and combat intolerance, and to be vigilant against the rise of prejudice and discrimination. This is our responsibility in light of our dark history. This we owe today and tomorrow to those who suffered the effects of the legalized discrimination of yesterday. This debt of shame incurred in our past we pay forward, so that no citizen of Vancouver will ever suffer again the indignity of racism and prejudice.

本人今日承認當年的排華裔政策和法例所導致的陰暗與傷痛，我立誓市長與市議員在面對種族歧視時永遠不會再袖手旁觀，而會挺身對抗那些企圖用種族歧視分隔我們的人，並立誓每日每天都對歧視行為展開挑戰和對抗，以及時刻警醒以防止偏見與歧視滋長。由於這段黑暗的歷史，我們有義務背起這光明正大的責任，我們今日、明日及未來都該為那些過去曾受合法歧視影響的人承擔責任，同時亦須就這筆過去所欠的羞辱之債作出行動，才能使溫哥華居民永遠不再因種族主義和歧視而受屈辱。

Today, Vancouver is a diverse city with a global reputation for celebrating our cultural differences. Our city's reputation is not merely symbolic; it lives each day in the deeds of individual citizens and civic employees who demonstrate principles of equity and fairness, who treat their fellow citizens, including our newest arrivals, with respect and acceptance. The City of Vancouver owes much to the Chinese community and to all immigrant communities. Along with our First Nations and urban Indigenous communities, many have unfairly had to struggle to overcome racism and discrimination, and through their actions have made our society more just and fair.

The struggle to make Vancouver an inclusive, resilient and vibrant city will continue. We recognize that even during the darkest days of racial discrimination and prejudice, there were those brave enough to stand up against injustice. Through such every day acts of firmness and resolve, our city has become a better place, and will continue to become a better place for all of our citizens.

Let us all rise in defence of the principles of equity, inclusion, and equal access for which we stand today and in all the days to come.

今日的溫哥華是個多元的城市，我們以擁護多元文化而譽滿全球。我們得此名聲並非只是象徵性的，多元文化活於每個市民及每名奉行平等與公平原則的市府職員的每天行事之中，他們以尊重及接納的態度對待包括新移民在內的大眾市民。溫哥華市對華裔社群及其他移民族群有所虧欠，他們與原住民族及都市的原住民社群一樣，不少都要經歷一番掙扎才能戰勝種族主義和歧視，然而他們的抗爭行動使得我們的社會更加公平與公義。

我們將持續努力，將溫哥華發展成一個包容、堅忍及充滿動力的城市。我們知道在種族歧視及偏見充斥最黑暗的歲月裡，仍然有人勇敢挺身對抗不公不義。當人們以每天的行動展示出堅持和決心時，我們的城市就會變成一個更美好的地方，並且持續不斷變好，以至造福所有居民。

讓我們一同起立，致力維護公平、包容及獲得平等服務的原則，我們今天維護，將來同樣推崇。

What does an apology mean? Apologizing to a community for past injustices is a reconciliation process. This process allows the community to learn from the mistakes of previous generations and, in doing so, consolidate and embrace our firm beliefs and values of being a just and inclusive community. We recognize attitudes and biases can run deep. Learning from past mistakes is a humble step and reminder of ever-present challenges.

Through the process of reconciliation we consolidate and embrace our firm beliefs and values of being an inclusive community; one that embraces our collective human rights and prepares us to be proactive in preventing discrimination. To ensure that this official apology is not confined to being simply words on paper, the City of Vancouver has adopted actions that would give life and sustenance to this apology; not simply to repair past wrong doings but to prevent injustice from ever occurring again.

道歉的意義何在？對過去受到不公平對待的社群作出道歉是一個致力於和解的過程。這個過程讓社群了解到前人所犯的錯誤，並在過程中肯定及守護我們作為一個公平、包容的社群所推崇的信念與價值觀。我們明白歧視態度和偏見可能積習已久，從錯誤中學習是踏出謙虛的一步，同時亦可提醒我們挑戰永遠存在。

透過和解程序，我們得以確認一個包容的社群所推崇的信念與價值觀，一個包容的社群能夠守護我們的集體人權以及為我們能夠主動防止歧視行為作好準備。為了確保這項正式道歉並非紙上談兵，市府已啟動一系列實際行動，賦予這項道歉實質意義。這些行動並非只是修補以往過失，而是防止不公義的行為再次發生。

On November 1, 2017, City Council approved a set of actions that will move Vancouver forward towards a future of reconciliation. The first, which was delivered today, was to acknowledge past discrimination and offer a formal apology.

The City will also strive to strengthen relations with the Chinese-Canadian community through legacy actions, including: initiating and sustaining a Legacy Working Group to oversee the implementation of this set of actions; education and outreach to all Vancouver residents to ensure the wrongdoings of the past are remembered and used as a basis for new learnings on cultural competency and anti-racism dialogues; conserving, commemorating and enhancing the living heritage and cultural assets of the community, with a specific focus on Chinatown through pursuing a UNESCO designation of World Heritage Site for Chinatown, creating a Chinatown Living Heritage and Cultural Assets Management Plan to support the UNESCO process and supporting a redesign of the Keefer Memorial Square."

2017年11月1日，市議會通過了一系列致力於令溫哥華市達成和解的行動。今日我們進行了第一項，即承認過去對華人的歧視並就此正式道歉。

溫市府將努力透過歷史遺產行動，加強與加拿大華人社群的關係，包括發起及維持一個補育遺產工作小組去監督這一系列行動的實施；向溫哥華所有居民進行倡導及教育，以確保過去的錯誤不被忘記，並以此作為學習多元文化能力與反種族主義對話的基礎；維護、紀念並加強社群的活遺產與文化資產，透過申請成為聯合國教科文組織的世界遺產，我們將重點聚於唐人街，設立唐人街活遺產與文化資產管理計劃，以支持世界遺產的申請過程及重新設計奇化街紀念廣場。」

Following the official apology, the Mayor invited Councillor Louie to introduce and welcome the following community speakers to say a few words:

- Veteran George Ing
- Hilbert Yiu, CBA Chair
- Melody Choi, Youth

The Mayor thanked the community speakers and invited Councillors Louie and Jang to provide closing comments.

ADJOURNMENT

MOVED by Councillor Louie
SECONDED by Councillor Jang

THAT the meeting be adjourned.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

The Special Council adjourned at 3:37 pm.

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