

The 1st Yao City Foreign Residents' Council Meeting for FY2024 [Minutes Summary]

Date & Time: Wednesday, July 17, 2024, 7:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

Location: Conference Room 701, 7th Floor, Main Building, Yao City Hall

Council Members in Attendance: NONAKA Monica, KUWANA Megumi, I Cyanjye, Jeremy CARLSON, LE THI KIEU Nga, Tikas Ibrahim DARLINGTON, PAKU Yanghaeng, KIYOHARA Sachiko, OU Suichin, YAMAUCHI Masayuki (titles omitted)

Secretariat Members (Human Rights Policy Division): Mr. MIYAZAKI (Manager), Mr. SAKATA (Asst. Manager), Mr. TOMITA (Group Chief)

1. Opening

2. Current situation involving Yao City foreign residents

A member of the Secretariat explained Document 1.

<Questions, etc.>

- You mentioned that the number of residents with Philippine, Nepalese, Indonesian, and Myanmar nationalities is increasing. Do you have any trouble dealing with them at the city hall?

⇒(Council member) The consultation desk for foreign residents does not receive many consultations from people with those nationalities. They probably receive assistance from someone with the same nationality with various matters including completing necessary procedures.

⇒ (Council member) There are situations in schools where teachers have difficulty dealing with foreign children and their parents. Teachers are trying to understand their students by learning about the cultures and customs of their home countries.

3. Regarding the Yao City Plan to Promote a Multicultural Society (Basic Goal 1): Answers to questions about the fiscal 2022 results and report on achievements in fiscal 2023

A member of the Secretariat explained Documents 2 and 3.

<Questions about Document 3, etc.>

- Regarding "No. 10: Information dissemination through multilingual information magazine," have you received any comments from residents about the discontinuation of the multilingual magazine?

⇒(Secretariat) We have received requests from some people who had been using the multilingual information magazine to communicate with foreign residents in their community, asking us not to discontinue publication. When receiving comments like this from residents, we provide them with leaflets containing information on the multilingual information site "Yao-Garu," and ask them to distribute leaflets to foreign residents in their community. We also ask them to sign up and follow the City's social media accounts themselves.

- Regarding "No. 12: Dissemination of multilingual information through social media, etc.," is the number of subscribers increasing?

⇒ (Secretariat) We feel that it is more difficult than expected to get people to sign up for our LINE account as they can access information without signing up. However, in some cases, foreign residents contact the consultation desk after viewing our social media sites. This means that they look to our social media sites

when they need certain information.

- Regarding "No. 23: Multilingual interpretation and information provision for administrative procedures," didn't you hire any Japanese-Vietnamese interpreters? Or were you unable to do so?

⇒ (Secretariat) With the intention of hiring Japanese-Vietnamese interpreters, we conducted interviews with a number of candidates, but we were unable to hire any of them because we could not reach agreement on employment conditions, mainly because it was a short-term contract. This fiscal year, the Japanese-Vietnamese interpreters who had worked for us before have returned, and we now have two Japanese-Vietnamese interpreters.

- Regarding "No. 28: Implementation of literacy and Japanese language classes," what is the learning situation of foreign residents?

⇒ (Council member) Many Chinese people are studying at the Takasago Japanese Language Class. Also, about four foreign residents are studying at the Yasunaka Reading and Writing Class.

- Why are evening classes not included in the initiatives under "1-3: Support for Japanese Language Learning"? I think that many foreign residents are studying at Yao Junior High School (evening classes).

⇒ (Secretariat) The evening class initiative is listed as educational support under Basic Goal 2.

4. Opinion exchange — Theme: "Creating a floor map for Yao City Hall"

A member of the Secretariat explained Document 4.

<Opinion exchange>

- You should create a map in digital format, rather than a paper map. It would be useful if there were a touch-screen digital information board on the first floor.
- Guidance should be provided in a way that enables visitors to easily reach the appropriate division by just stating the purpose of their visit to the city hall.
- Pictograms should be used to aid understanding.
- I don't think it is necessary to translate division names, because we can't tell from the name what the division does. Wouldn't it be better to write the names of the divisions in Roman letters?
- I think that since most inquiries are about health, welfare, taxes, child care, and education, floor maps for the first, second, and seventh floors are necessary.
- Another issue is how to provide multilingual support for foreign residents after they arrive at the counter.
- Why not ask students for their opinions and ideas?
- It would be better to have interpreters and a support desk for foreign residents on the first floor.
- The "Division Information" section on the Yao City website provides an outline of the services and administrative work done by each division at the city hall. I think you should translate the content of this section into simple Japanese and multiple languages, and list the available services in bullet points along with the names of the divisions.
- Until the Basic Resident Registration Act was revised, there was a dedicated registration counter for foreigners, separate from that for Japanese people, but now both Japanese and foreigners are required to register as residents, and there is no longer a dedicated counter for foreigners.
- If multiple languages are written together, it is difficult to read and understand. I think it is better to create and

display a QR code for each language.

- I believe that staff members at each counter at the city hall are aware of the questions that are frequently asked by foreign residents. I think you should provide information about those typical questions in multiple languages as frequently asked questions and procedures.
- I hope that the general information desk will function effectively in guiding foreign residents.
- I would like you to provide information on certain things that cannot be dealt with at the city hall but are often mistakenly thought to be things that can be handled there.

5. Other

- The next council meeting will be held sometime in January or February 2025. A member of the Secretariat explained that an email would be sent in November 2024 to adjust the schedule.

6. Adjournment