

The Second Yao City Foreign Residents' Council Meeting in FY 2014

[Minutes]

Date & Time: Jan. 27 (Tue.), 2015, 7:00 pm – 8:30 pm

Place: Conference Room No. 701, 7th Floor, Yao City Office

Participants:

(Council members): Ms. TOKI Hikaru (Chair), Mr. OKUNO Tsunehisa (Vice-chair), Ms. PARK Koon-ae (council member), Ms. Emmanuelle LOUBET (council member), MS. LE THI KIEU Nga (council member), Mr. Ian YATES (council member), Ms. KOZAKURA Michika (council member), Mr. PARK Yanghaeng (council member), Ms. FUJITO Satomi (council member)

(Secretariat: Culture and International Affairs Department): Mr. MATSUHIMA (Manager), Mr. KAWAZOE (Assistant Manager), Ms. MATSUZUKI (Group Chief)

1. Opening of the Council Meeting

2. Progress Management of Yao City Plan to Promote a Multicultural Society

[Secretariat]: The Secretariat gave an explanation of Materials 1-1 to 1-3.

[Vice-chairperson]: Do you mean that each department will self-check the progress of each problem, the Culture and International Affairs Department will summarize the results next summer, and then the results will be submitted to the Residents' Council after that?

[Secretariat]: Yes.

[Chairperson]: The people in charge of filling in the self-check sheet at each department may not understand the meaning of "multicultural society" and the criteria for self-check, and may not be able to fill in the sheet appropriately. I think you may need to support them.

[Secretariat]: We will hold a consultation session and ask them whether if they need any support.

[Vice-chairperson]: Do you mean that, if the self-evaluation and our evaluation are completely different, each department will accept our evaluation as well?

[Secretariat]: Yes.

[Council member]: When they fill in details about their problems, will they write about each project or, will they evaluate themselves for the various projects they are in charge together and write about important problems common to these projects?

[Secretariat]: Each department will self-check themselves from the larger perspective of proceeding with measures they are in charge of, rather than focusing on each individual project, and will write their current problems and future outlook.

[Council member]: Do you mean by “future outlook” how to resolve those problems?

[Secretariat]: Yes.

[Vice-chairperson]: “The Current Problems and Future Outlook” mentioned in Material 1-1 does not appear in the table in Material 1-2.

[Secretariat]: I would like to ask the Residents’ Council to use both Materials 1-1 and 1-2 and give your opinions on them. We plan to have an opportunity to hear opinions on both the full range of activities by the city and each project.

[Chairperson]: As the Secretariat explained, we will conduct the progress management in accordance with the procedure described in the Material 1-3.

3. Promotion Measures to Establish a Multicultural Society in Local Communities

[Secretariat]: The Secretariat gave an explanation of Material 2.

[Chairperson]: We will divide into two groups and discuss this theme, and the chairperson and the vice-chairperson will later report a summary of the discussion.

[Vice-chairperson]: Do I understand correctly that we will discuss two major themes: “Promotion measures to establish a multicultural society in local communities in Yao City” and “effective ways to exchange opinions in the meeting planned in the Takami-minami Elementary School Area”?

[Chairperson]: Yes, please give your opinions both on the project as a whole, and specific measures.

Group A

[Chairperson]: Firstly, I would like to ask your opinions on specific measures to promote the establishment of a multicultural society in local communities as mentioned in Material 2.

[Council member]: I think, if the level of the awareness at each workplace for their foreign workers

remains low, the education for young people will not progress.

[Chairperson]: There are many problems that are hard to improve or resolve at each workplace.

[Council member]: I would like to comment on the “Multilingual service at evacuation centers.” I expect that many foreign residents will be at a loss at evacuation centers, but I also think Japanese residents may not know what to do to help people who cannot speak Japanese. I think Japanese residents must assume a situation in which non-Japanese-speaking people come to evacuation centers.

[Chairperson]: Education for Japanese residents is also very important.

[Council member]: I think Japanese people who live in areas where many foreign residents also live understand that these foreign people will come to the same evacuation center and that they will have to help each other, but they may still be at a loss in a real situation. The same thing can be said regarding the acceptance of people with disabilities. I think people in local communities need to assume and prepare for various situations.

[Chairperson]: In reality, there were many cases when the people in charge of evacuation centers did not know how they could help non-Japanese-speaking people and had to ask the International Affairs Department or international exchange groups for help. It is necessary to raise awareness among Japanese residents and educate them to avoid the same thing being repeated.

[Council member]: In Kashiwara City, a group led by a professor of Kansai University of Welfare Sciences designed a disaster emergency map. Kashiwara is not a very large city, but there are eleven railway stations. You can be anywhere when a disaster occurs. This is why it is important to make maps of shops to where you can evacuate at a time of emergency. These maps contain information of services and languages available at each shop. I think the current emergency map of Yao City covers too large an area. Maps of smaller areas containing information of each community will be useful.

[Chairperson]: It would be reassuring for foreign residents, if they could obtain necessary information through multilingual information on TV or local radio programs. This may also help Japanese residents to realize that foreign residents are among the evacuees.

From here, I would like to ask you to give your opinions on another topic of the discussion meeting. A discussion meeting is planned in the model area (the Takami-minami Elementary School Area), which offers an opportunity for Japanese and foreign residents to exchange opinions, together with people concerned with the school as well as officials of the local residents’ association.

[Council member]: How will the questionnaire results be used in this discussion meeting? Another question is, will this meeting be held this time only, or will similar meetings be held regularly?

[Council member]: I think it would be better to hold a preliminary meeting with a small number of participants first. It would be better to have a discussion between foreign residents with a high level of

Japanese fluency and Japanese people participating in the building of the local community on what kind of discussions will be effective and benefit the community.

[Chairperson]: If foreign residents are asked to give their opinions on Japanese society, it may be difficult for them to give their opinions in front of many people without preparation. They need to make some preparation beforehand.

[Council member]: I think if foreign residents are given an adequate time to prepare, then the discussion meeting will be fruitful.

[Secretariat]: We plan to conduct a preliminary survey of 50 Japanese residents and 50 foreign residents in the Takami-minami Elementary School Area. After gathering opinions from them and sharing problems they face, we will ask people to discuss the survey results.

We plan to hold small-size meetings twice, and then go on to larger meetings inviting many residents.

[Council member]: I hope the results of these meetings will be reflected in the measures conducted by Yao City.

[Chairperson]: We hope that these discussion meetings will help us advance the establishment of a multicultural society in local communities.

Summary of Group A Discussion

-The current measures taken by the city to offer multilingual information focus on assistance to foreign residents. However, it is also necessary to help Japanese residents prepare for accepting people with different backgrounds. It is necessary for the people in charge of evacuation centers and the people of the concerned organizations to realize that they themselves have to offer service to foreign residents.

-Yao City's emergency map covers too large an area. It would be help to make maps containing information evacuation centers and shops to where people in the community can evacuate, just like Kashiwara City's emergency map. Multilingual programs on local TV and radio stations are very useful at a time of disaster.

-It is necessary for foreign residents who are not fluent Japanese speakers to make preparations beforehand to give their opinions in discussion meetings. It is also important that the results of this discussion will help people in each community contribute to the establishment of a multicultural society, rather than depending on support from the city.

Group B

[Vice-chairperson]: I would like to ask your opinions on specific measures to promote the establishment of a multicultural society suggested in Material 2.

[Council member]: I have read the life support guidebooks of several other cities. Compared to them,

Yao City's guidebook has more information, but some important information is missing. It is necessary to review what information foreign residents actually need.

[Council member]: Yao International Center made a life guidebook before, but it was not widely used. I think it is important to prepare a system through which foreign residents can communicate with key people in each local community, rather than publishing a life guidebook. You can obtain more useful information through communication with people.

[Council member]: Many people don't like reading a lot of text. It is important to keep necessary information concise.

[Council member]: Recently the need for information in Tagalog and Thai has been increasing. I also think information in "basic Japanese" is also necessary.

[Council member]: The disaster emergency map created by an NPO in Nagata, Kobe is excellent. The experience of past disasters is reflected in this map. It is foldable and you can carry it anywhere. It is made of water-proof paper and suitable for use at a time of disaster. Information is provided in Japanese and foreign languages. I think Yao City should consider making a similar map.

[Vice-chairperson]: Next, please give your opinions on the discussion meeting. At first, a preliminary survey will be conducted. Then, based on the result of the survey, residents in the community including foreign residents will share the current problems concerning the establishment of a multicultural society, and discuss how to solve such problems. Opinions on the preparation of a life guidebook and measures to be taken at the time of an emergency will be also discussed. Please give your opinions on how to make this discussion effective.

[Council member]: I don't think many people will participate in the meeting, if it will be held in an ordinary conference style. I don't think many foreign residents can picture what kind of meeting this is. For a meeting like this, it is important to establish an atmosphere that encourages many people to participate in discussion and give their opinions freely. How about holding the discussion meetings to coincide with some events?

[Vice-chairperson]: Are there any suitable events being held in Yao?

[Council member]: Since there have not been any meetings where foreign residents are expected to play a central role in exchanging opinions, it may be necessary to take measures to encourage foreign residents to participate in such meetings. Some people may think that such meetings have nothing to do with them. I think, if this meeting will be held to coincide with a lively event such as Yao City International Field Day, more young people would casually participate in the meeting. I want to emphasize that interpreters are necessary for this meeting.

[Vice-chairperson]: How about involving foreign residents as organizers, not just as participants?

[Council member]: If we ask foreign residents to participate as organizers, we have to ask key people in the community to encourage them to participate.

[Council member]: It is desirable that a discussion meeting is held to coincide with a popular event visited by many people. Since many foreign residents are interested in Japanese culture, it may be a good idea to hold the meeting in coincidence with such a cultural event.

[Vice-chairperson]: What about the details of the questionnaire?

[Council member]: It is important that the distribution and collection of the questionnaire form is conducted in an appropriate way.

I would also like to emphasize the importance of the system that encourages foreign residents to participate in the discussion meeting.

It is desirable to involve foreign residents from the planning phase, and have many foreign residents participate in the meeting, but this is just a result. What is important is that Japanese residents and foreign residents cooperate in planning and preparation for the meeting.

It may be necessary to exchange opinions on education at schools and kindergartens, since many people are interested in the education of their children.

[Council member]: It is necessary to exchange opinions on schools and kindergartens.

[Council member]: In a smaller group, people can exchange their opinions more freely. Some people may find it hard to give their opinions in front of many people.

[Vice-chairperson]: I think, a small group of around five people, can create a relaxed atmosphere to encourage people to give their opinions freely.

Summary of Group B Discussion

(On Measures to promote the establishment of a multicultural society)

-Many people would prefer a compact life guidebook rather than guide book with a lot of information. It is necessary to review what information is actually needed. It was also suggested that it may be more important to establish a system to introduce people who can help foreign residents and provide them with necessary information, rather than publishing a life guidebook.

-The life guidebook should be available in basic Japanese, and languages for which demand is increasing.

-It is necessary to improve the disaster emergency map, using as a model excellent maps created by other municipalities, such as Nagata Ward, Kobe City.

(On the discussion meeting)

-Holding a discussion meeting alone will not attract many foreign residents.

-To encourage foreign residents to participate, it may be a good idea to hold the meetings to coincide with lively events such as Yao International Field Day or cultural events. It is also necessary to ask key persons to participate in organizing the meeting from the planning stage.

-Since many people are interested in education, it should be included as one of the themes to be discussed. A workshop style discussion is preferable, because more people could feel comfortable and give their opinions freely.

-It is necessary to make sure that the questionnaire is distributed and collected properly, and that the result is reflected in the meeting.

4. Promotion of the Establishment of a Multicultural Society in Yao City

[Secretariat]: The Secretariat gave an explanation of Material 3.

[Chairperson]: Material 3 is the draft of the summary of opinions given in Residents' Council meetings over the last two years. Please check whether any off-topic comments are included, and if there are any missing comments that should be included, and summarize your opinions in each group.

Group A

[Chairperson]: It is necessary to prepare the manual to set up and organize a multilingual disaster support center, as documentation of the grounds and measures to support foreign residents at a time of disaster. To establish a system enabling cooperation between governmental organizations and the private sector, it is necessary to document such information in some way, for example, in the form of a "memorandum on the provision of multilingual information at a time of disaster." The Culture and International Affairs Department should be responsible for this task.

[Council member]: Yao City has already established a system to provide foreign students with school and career information, and holds training seminars for teachers, etc. The problem is not that the city does not take necessary measures. The problem is how to let people know about such measures, and how to actively utilize the existing system.

[Chairperson]: It is necessary to think of ways to resolve all problems, rather than responding to each problem when it occurs.

I wonder what Japanese residents who do not know the background and current situation think of the Residents' Council or other measures to promote the establishment of a multicultural society?

How about inserting the part explaining the current circumstances of foreign residents, and the problems they face, to clarify the purpose of the Residents' Council?

[Council member]: I would like to suggest putting a summary of the discussion for each topic. Some titles do not seem to summarize the opinions mentioned, and I think people who have not participated in the Residents' Council will find it hard to understand.

[Council member]: Comments on different topics, such as measures taken by the city and awareness

among the resident are mixed. It is better to categorize opinions by themes.

[Council member]: How about adding subtitles to improve readability?

Summary of Group A Discussion

The discussion focused on the points to be improved.

-The explanation on the background of why it became necessary to discuss in the Residents' Council and problems we face is necessary to make the report easier to understand for Japanese residents and people who do not participate in the Residents' Council. Also the title should be modified to appropriately summarize the content of the discussion.

-Several educational measures have already started. The expression of "It is expected to take active measures that enables to provide information to people who need the information" reflects that current situation.

-It is necessary to clearly write that the City will offer multilingual support at a time of disaster. It is also necessary to establish a system that enables the new person in charge to continue the planned project, even after a personnel change. The Culture and International Affairs Department should be responsible for this task.

Group B

[Vice-chairperson]: Please give your opinions on the modification of Material 3.

[Council member]: There are some expressions that may confuse people who do not participate in the meeting. Please modify the following sentences.

"The promotion of education to accept diversity and a support system" on Page 3

-Many foreign residents hide their foreign traits or characteristics that are different from Japanese people" should be changed to "many foreign residents find it difficult to express their true feelings."

On "The progress of human rights promotion to eradicate prejudice against foreign residents" on Page 4.

-The expression of "eradicate the atmosphere in which foreign residents are treated as if they were an enemy" should be changed to the more explanatory sentence of "Recently hate speech against people with roots in specific foreign countries is a serious problem. It is necessary to change the attitude of residents through education."

- There are already training programs to encourage teachers to change their attitude. It should be changed to "Please consider more effective teaching materials and training programs" to reflect reality.

- The problem that foreign residents do not have the right to vote should be treated in the section of specific measures rather than human rights education. It should be moved to the section of "Building a safe and secure living environment for foreign residents."

-The sentence of “They do not think of the possibility of developing the abilities of foreign residents. This is a great loss for society” seems to be off-topic.

[Council member]: Please correct the following sentences.

On “The promotion of the education to accept diversity and a support system” on Page 3

- I am not sure what the sentences of “They do not think of the possibility of developing the abilities of foreign residents. This is a great loss for society” actually mean. Specific examples of such loss should be added.

- As for the expression of “the response to bullying is slow,” it is not very clear whether it takes time before starting the response or, it take time to resolve each case of bullying.

On “The progress of human rights promotion to eradicate prejudice against foreign residents” on Page 4.

“The successful integration of foreign residents in Yao City” should be promoted.

[Council member]: It is very difficult for students who do not have an adequate Japanese ability to obtain necessary information on education or career after leaving school. The problem of language is very important in education too.

[Council member]:

It is desirable to modify the following expressions.

On “The progress of human rights promotion to eradicate prejudice against foreign residents” on Page 4.

-The expression of “it is necessary to develop a local leader who can look after foreign residents” should be modified to “it is necessary to develop a local leader who can work as a multicultural society coordinator.”

-It should be changed to “It is necessary to take active measures to let foreign residents know of the activities of the volunteers.”

On “Multicultural disaster support center” on Page 5

-Information should be available in basic Japanese and several foreign languages on FM Cyao and the community wireless system.

-The expression of “training programs for volunteers and interpreters” should be changed to “training programs for volunteers” because the interpreters are also volunteers.

[Vice-chairperson]: It is necessary to review the title and contents and modify it, if necessary, to expressions easy to understand for people who do not participate in the Residents' Council.

Summary of Group B Discussion

(On full range of activities by the city)

- The overall explanation should be more detailed.
- Some titles do not summarize the contents properly.

(On specific measures)

The meaning of the second measure mentioned in "Building a safe and secure living environment for foreign residents" is not clear.

Measures 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, and 7 in the "The promotion of education to accept diversity and a support system" should be explained in more detail.

Since the section of "The progress of human rights promotion to eradicate prejudice against foreign residents" deals with sensitive issues, it is necessary to pay extra care to the wording used in this section. It is good that important issues such as child-raising and bullying are included.

5. Others

[Chairperson]: The second term of the Residents' Council will end today. On this occasion I would like to ask you to give your opinions on the Residents' Council and suggestions for future meetings.

[Council member]: I think many interesting opinions were exchanged from the perspective of foreign residents. I hope these opinions will be reflected in the measures taken by the city.

[Council member]: I could learn many things through the discussions. If the opinions exchanged in this council will be reflected in the measures taken by the city, I am sure Yao City will become a much better city to live in.

[Council member]: A conference to hear the opinions of foreign people living in Osaka Prefecture is held annually. I participated in the conference and introduced the suggestions made by Yao City's Residents' Council. Most people in other cities in Osaka Prefecture said they did not know of Yao City's Foreign Residents' Council. It is a challenging issue to realize the ideas mentioned in the Residents' Council meetings, but I would like to say now I was very happy to be able to participate in the Residents' Council meetings and have the opportunity to think about how to realize a multicultural society.

[Council member]: I was very happy to share opinions with other participants on the issue of building a multicultural society. From now on, I would like to share opinions with more people on this issue.

[Council member]: I was very happy to be able to hear many different opinions, and share my experiences with other participants. It was a great experience for me to be able to have a role as a

citizen, and contribute to Yao City where I have lived for 27 years.

[Council member]: I have a lot of experience of being involved in Yao City's administrative measures, but it was a great experience for me to participate in the Residents' Council as a representative of foreign residents of Yao City and think about measures taken by the city. I would like to, as an individual as well as a representative of *Tokkabi*, continue efforts to reflect opinions exchanged here in the measures taken by the city.

[Council member]: There are many children with foreign roots at the school I work for, and I have a lot of opportunities to engage with them. However, I realized that I did not know what they actually need or understand their true feelings. I was very happy to be able to obtain many different perspectives through the discussions. The Foreign Residents' Council meeting offers a very rare opportunity to hear the opinions of foreign residents themselves. I hope the Foreign Residents' Council meeting will continue to be held.

[Council member]: I could learn many things. I hope the Foreign Residents' Council will contribute to Yao City becoming a city comfortable to live in for foreign residents. I hope the Residents' Council, the Culture and International Affairs Department and Yao International Center will cooperate in taking various measures.

[Vice-chairperson]: I have used the expression "a multicultural society," but I was glad to be able to realize what it actually means through discussions of this council. I would like to emphasize that, it is a joy for foreign residents to have their own roles in society, and this will help to build a better community. I hope that excellent measures like these council meetings will be continued.

[Chairperson]: I would like to thank to all council members who supported me to play this important role as a chairperson of the council. I understand that, even if we make good plans or gather opinions, the building of a multicultural society may not proceed as planned. Still, I was very happy that Yao City faithfully accepted the opinions given by Foreign Residents' Council members. I would like to continue to contribute in our small way to the building of a multicultural society.

6. Closing of the Council Meeting