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## The Regional Municipality of Durham

### MINUTES

#### DURHAM REGION ANTI-RACISM TASKFORCE

Thursday, January 25, 2024

A meeting of the Durham Region Anti-Racism Taskforce was held on Thursday, January 25, 2024 in Meeting Room 1-B, Regional Headquarters Building, 605 Rossland Road East, Whitby, Ontario at 7:04 PM. Electronic participation was offered for this meeting.

#### 1. Traditional Territory Acknowledgment

Chair Samuel read the following land acknowledgement:

The Region of Durham exists on lands that the Michi Saagiig Anishinaabeg inhabited for thousands of years prior to European colonization. These lands are the traditional and treaty territories of the Nations covered under the Williams Treaties, including the Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation, Alderville First Nation, Hiawatha First Nation, Curve Lake First Nation, and the Chippewa Nations of Georgina Island, Beausoleil and Rama.

We honour, recognize, and respect Indigenous Peoples as rights holders and stewards of the lands and waters on which we have the privilege to live. In our efforts towards reconciliation, we continue to build and strengthen relationships with First Nations, as well as the growing Inuit communities and large Métis communities and here in Durham. We commit to learning from Indigenous values and knowledge, building opportunities for collaboration, and recognizing that we are all connected.

#### 2. Roll Call

Present: PG Case, Industry/Association/Public Institution Representative, Vice-Chair  
A. Frempong, Community Member  
B. Goodwin, Commissioner of Corporate Services  
Councillor Lee, Regional Council  
J. Munawa, Community Member  
C. Oyeniran, Community Member  
N. Samuel, Industry/Association/Public Institution Representative, Chair  
K. Vieneer, Community Member  
J. Williamson, Industry/Association/Public Institution Representative  
G. Wilson-Beier, Community Member  
**\* all members participated electronically**

Absent: E. Baxter-Trahair, Chief Administrative Officer  
S. Bookal, Community Member  
R. Coelho, Community Member

T. Hancock, Community Member  
B. Nelson, Industry/Association/Public Institution Representative  
Councillor Shahid, Regional Council

**Staff**

Present: P. Hines, Manager, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion  
H. Mohammed, Policy Coordinator, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion  
A. Sharma, Policy Advisor, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion  
R. Inacio, Systems Support Specialist, Corporate Services – IT  
V. Walker, Committee Clerk, Corporate Services – Legislative Services  
**\* all staff participated electronically**

**3. Election of Officers for 2024**

This item was not considered. V. Walker advised the Committee that pursuant to the Durham Region Anti-Racism Task Force Terms of Reference, elections for Chair and Vice-Chair are only required to take place at the beginning of each term of Council.

**4. Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

**5. Adoption of Minutes**

Moved by G. Wilson-Beier, Seconded by Councillor Lee,  
That the minutes of the Durham Region Anti-Racism Taskforce meeting  
held on Thursday, November 23, 2023, be adopted.

CARRIED

**6. Delegations**

There were no delegations to be heard.

**7. Presentations**

There were no presentations to be heard.

**8. Information Items**

A) 2024 Regional Black History Month

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P. Hines stated that the Region's 2024 celebration for Black History Month will take place on February 1, 2024 and that this year's theme is "Together We Rise Durham: Black History, Intersectionality and Joy". She advised that the Region has partnered with 13 organizations for the event, consisting of Durham Regional Police Services (DRPS), the Canadian Jamaican Club of Oshawa, Congress of

Black Women of Whitby/Oshawa, Pickering Anti-Black Racism Taskforce, Lakeridge Health, Ontario Shores Centre for Mental Health Services, DurhamONE, and six of the Region's area municipalities. P. Hines stated that the event will include multiple performances and a panel discussion with 4 panelists to discuss Black History and share their personal life experiences.

P. Hines stated that Durham Region Transit (DRT) has offered to wrap one of its buses for the month of February that will display the Black History Month theme and will be featured on various bus routes throughout the month including the Region's most populated route. She further stated that there will be cards inside the bus that describe the significance of Black History and that contain quotes from well-known Black Canadians.

P. Hines welcomed members of the Committee to attend the event and recommended that the Committee reserve a table to facilitate discussions with the community and promote the work of the Committee.

P. Hines responded to questions from the Committee with regards to which routes the wrapped bus will appear on; and whether there is a possibility for DRPS to wrap any of its vehicles.

## **9. Discussion Items**

### **A) Suggestions on Matters to be Discussed with Durham Regional Police Services (DRPS)**

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Councillor Lee stated that as part of the DRPS Working Group's objective to develop a working relationship with DRPS, the group had an initial discussion with Vidal Chavannes, Director, Strategy, Research and Organizational Performance, and are looking to invite him to the February meeting to continue the discussion. Councillor Lee further stated that in preparation for V. Chavannes joining a future meeting, the working group intends to compile a list of questions to send to V. Chavannes in advance to lead to a more productive discussion. Councillor Lee welcomed the Committee to contribute to the list of questions.

Councillor Lee also stated that the discussion with V. Chavannes is a preliminary step to the working group's goal of ultimately inviting the Region's Chief of Police to a future meeting in its endeavour to foster a positive connection with DRPS.

Detailed discussion ensued with the Committee formulating questions with regard to DRPS' budget allocations and rollover of surplus; DRPS' priorities as it relates to diversity and inclusion and accessibility; training for officers handling mental health calls from diverse community members and other educational components within DRPS; the correlation of anticipated increase in crime rates and the continued growth of the population in the Region; the importance of learning and understanding historical origins of police foundations; data collection by DRPS; and the priorities V. Chavannes has identified in his role with DRPS.

B) Anti Hate / Hate Mitigation for Municipalities

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N. Samuel stated that various materials were circulated to the Committee to encourage a general discussion regarding hate mitigation within the Region and welcomed input from the Committee in that regard.

Detailed discussion ensued regarding the draft motions prepared by Councillor Shahid to the Town of Whitby and the Region with respect to hate mitigation with comments consisting of revising the motions to contain more actionable items; specifically identifying additional groups in the motions; considering what policies, by-laws, and whistleblower mechanisms are in place in other municipalities in Ontario as it relates to hate mitigation strategies; the benefit of having a formal process in place that outlines consequences for hate related activity; and the development of a Regional by-law that supports a position of anti-hate in the Region.

Further discussion ensued with regards to the Region of Waterloo's development of an anti-hate by-law and how the same could be accomplished in Durham Region.

It was the consensus of the Committee that the EDI Working Group undertakes the task of developing language to be incorporated into a Regional anti-hate by-law. Staff suggested the Working Group collaborate with the Region's Legal Department to obtain advice from a legal perspective.

C) Sub-Committee Updates

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1. EDI Working Group

A. Frempong advised that the EDI Working Group will work towards drafting language for an anti-hate by-law for the Region and stated that this assignment will tie in with the Group's current objective of the development of a hate reporting tool in the Region.

2. DRPS Working Group

J. Munawa provided the following update on behalf of the DRPS Working Group:

- The discussion that took place earlier in the meeting under Item 9. A) will be used to formulate questions to send to V. Chavannes. The Group will coordinate with V. Chavannes for him to attend a future Committee meeting.
- The development of a public resource that outlines how to report a hate crime is progressing and the Working Group is looking to determine the purpose of the resource, the intended audience, and a

potential release date. The group will have the resource reviewed by Sergeant Conrad Wong of the Equity Unit in DRPS and the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Division, and subsequently routed through DRPS for final approval before being publicly circulated.

- With respect to the focus of community engagement, the Working Group will look at ways to collaborate with DRPS for its Community Day event.

3. School Board Working Group

C. Oyeniran advised that the Working Group has received responses to their invitations to the school boards on collaborating on joint anti-racism initiatives and all Boards within the Region have confirmed attendance. C. Oyeniran stated that an introductory meeting has been scheduled to take place with Board representatives on February 7, 2024.

4. Education Working Group

PG Case stated that the Education Working Group is organizing a healing event that will feature various modes of drumming from different cultures as a way to demonstrate commonalities throughout different communities. He advised that the Group is still in the organizing stage for the event, and that it is the intention that the healing circle is the first part of a series of community healing events that focus on connecting different cultures and communities through shared interests. He added that ideas for subsequent events would possibly be themed around dance and food.

**10. Other Business**

A) Trent U – Black Studies Program Launch

H. Mohammed stated that Trent University is developing a Black Studies program and is hosting an event to launch the program at its Oshawa Campus on February 5, 2024 from 2:00PM to 4:00PM. She advised that the invitation will be shared with the Committee and welcomed members to attend the event with the Region's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Division as an opportunity to connect with other organizations.

H. Mohammed responded to a question from the Committee with regards to whether the event will also be live-streamed.

B) Member Vacancies on Durham Region Anti-Racism Taskforce (DRART)

In response to a question regarding vacant seats on the Committee, P. Hines stated that the number of members on the Committee currently is within the guidelines set out in its Terms of Reference and therefore the Committee is not

formally recruiting at this time. She further stated that if members are aware of someone who would be interested in applying to become a member, that they would be required to submit an application and go through the interview process.

**11. Date of Next Meeting**

The next regularly scheduled Durham Region Anti-Racism Taskforce meeting will be held on Thursday, February 22, 2024 at 7:00 PM in the Council Chambers, Regional Headquarters Building, 605 Rossland Road East, Whitby.

**12. Adjournment**

Moved by A. Frempong, Seconded by K. Vieneer,  
That the meeting be adjourned.  
CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at 8:29 PM

Respectfully submitted,

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N. Samuel, Chair

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V. Walker, Committee Clerk