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The Regional Municipality of Durham

MINUTES

DURHAM REGION ANTI-RACISM TASKFORCE

Thursday, February 22, 2024

A meeting of the Durham Region Anti-Racism Taskforce was held on Thursday, February 22, 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

Vice-Chair Case 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: S. Bookal, Community Member
PG Case, Industry/Association/Public Institution Representative, Vice-Chair
R. Coelho, Community Member attended the meeting at 7:05 PM
A. Frempong, Community Member
Councillor Lee, Regional Council
B. Nelson, Industry/Association/Public Institution Representative
C. Oyeniran, Community Member
Councillor Shahid, Regional Council attended the meeting at 7:42 PM
K. Vieneer, Community Member
J. Williamson, Industry/Association/Public Institution Representative
G. Wilson-Beier, Community Member
*** all members participated electronically**

Also

Present: Councillor Anderson, Regional Council Alternate

Absent: E. Baxter-Trahair, Chief Administrative Officer
T. Hancock, Community Member
J. Munawa, Community Member
N. Samuel, Industry/Association/Public Institution Representative, Chair was absent to tend to Durham Region Anti-Racism Taskforce related business

Staff

Present: A. Chung, Systems Support Specialist, Corporate Services – IT
A. Hector-Alexander, Director, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
A. Sharma, Policy Advisor, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
V. Walker, Committee Clerk, Corporate Services – Legislative Services
*** all staff participated electronically**

3. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

4. Adoption of Minutes

Moved by Councillor Lee, Seconded by S. Bookal,
That the minutes of the Durham Region Anti-Racism Taskforce meeting held on Thursday, January 24, 2024, be adopted.
CARRIED

5. Delegations

There were no delegations to be heard.

6. Presentations

A) Jason Hunt, Director, Legal Services, Region of Durham, and Adam Patel, Student, Legal Services, Region of Durham, re: Hate Speech By-Law

This presentation was not heard and will be rescheduled to a future meeting.

7. Information Items

There were no information items.

8. Discussion Items

A) Pickering Anti-Black Racism Taskforce – Request for Support

Discussion ensued regarding the request for support from the Pickering Anti-Black Racism Taskforce to attend a Pickering Council meeting as a way to unite and express concerns regarding Pickering Councillor Robinson's recent comments on Black History Month and her statements regarding racism.

Moved by K. Viener, Seconded by A. Frempong,
That the meeting be closed to the public in order to consider personal matters about an identifiable individual, including municipal or local board employees.

CARRIED

The Committee went into closed session at 7:13 PM and reconvened at 7:38 PM.

[Refer to the Closed Meeting minutes of February 22, 2024]

V. Walker advised that during the closed session general discussion ensued.

Moved by Councillor Lee, Seconded by S. Bookal,
That N. Samuel be appointed to delegate at the upcoming Pickering Council meeting on February 26, 2024 to speak on behalf of the Durham Region Anti-Racism Taskforce in response to comments made by City of Pickering Local Councillor Robinson.

CARRIED

B) Sub-Committee Updates

1. DRPS Working Group

Councillor Lee stated that the DRPS Working Group is coordinating with V. Chavannes, Director, Strategy Research and Organizational Performance, to attend a future meeting that will include a discussion regarding how Durham Regional Police Services (DRPS) intends to bridge the gap with racialized communities. He advised that V. Chavannes will be provided with a series of questions to consider ahead of the meeting to guide the discussion and stated that the Working Group intends to invite other members of DRPS to future meetings to continue building understanding and rapport with DRPS.

2. School Board Working Group

G. Wilson-Beier stated that the School Board Working Group held its first meeting with Durham school boards to develop a plan of action for collaboration on joint anti-racism initiatives. She advised that two-thirds of the major school boards were in attendance at the meeting and that the Working Group will continue its efforts to connect with private schools to include them in future meetings and joint work.

3. EDI Working Group

A. Frempong stated that the EDI Working Group is continuing its research and discussions with regards to developing an anti-hate by-law for the Region and advised that the group is following an 8-step resource published

by Public Health Ontario that outlines the steps for developing a municipal by-law.

Discussion ensued with respect to suggestions to engage DRPS and Regional staff to provide assistance and advice in the development of an anti-hate by-law; and whether involvement at the lower tier municipalities has been considered.

4. Education Working Group

A. Hector-Alexander stated that planning for a community healing event remains ongoing with anticipation of the event taking place around Earth Day in April. She further stated that the Working Group is considering engaging a speaker for the event and are looking for someone who can effectively bring together different cultural backgrounds and welcomed suggestions from the Committee in that regard.

A. Hector Alexander advised that the Working Group is also contemplating ways to support and bring together other committees with a shared goal and/or vision and that an event such as a half-day symposium is being considered to encourage discussion surrounding larger goals among such committees.

Discussion ensued with members providing feedback and suggestions regarding collaboration opportunities within the community.

9. **Other Business**

A) Clarington Black History Month Celebration: Black Vendor Village

Councillor Anderson shared that Clarington is hosting its Black History Month celebration on February 24, 2024 at the Garnet B. Rickard Recreation Complex from 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM. He stated that the event will contain a market with over 50 vendors and invited members to attend.

B) Durham Region Anti-Racism Taskforce Apparel and Giveaways

A. Hector-Alexander suggested designing Durham Region Anti-Racism Taskforce (DRART) apparel and giveaways that members can use to increase visibility and promote the work of the Committee while attending events in the community.

Discussion ensued regarding various product options; whether there is a budget to be allocated towards same; the creation of a DRART logo; and how representation of each of the sub-committees can be incorporated.

C) 9th Annual Look Back into the Future Black History Month Conference

Councillor Lee stated that C. Oyeniran is organizing the 9th Annual Look Back into the Future Black History Month Conference, which is taking place on February 25, 2024 from 1:30 PM to 5:30 PM at the Ajax Community Centre. He further stated that A. Hector-Alexander is one of the keynote speakers and invited members of the Committee to attend.

D) Town of Ajax to Raise Pan African Flag for Black History Month

Councillor Lee stated that the Town of Ajax will be raising the Pan African flag on February 29, 2024 at Pat Bayly Square in Ajax in support of Black History Month, and welcomed members of the Committee to attend.

E) Virtual Format for March Meeting

At the consensus of the Committee, it was agreed that the March 28, 2024 meeting will be held virtually.

F) Social Media Presence

Councillor Lee stated that developing a social media presence for the Committee would allow the Committee to access a larger audience and further share the work that is being achieved and suggested adding this as a discussion item for the next meeting to allow for a further dialogue on the topic.

Discussion ensued regarding how a social media presence could be developed and branded; and who would monitor and/or have access to creating and sharing content.

Staff advised they will seek advice from the communications team regarding creating and posting content to social media under the Region's brand and will report back at a future meeting.

G) Womxn of Colour Durham Collective – We Outside Pilot Program

B. Nelson stated that the Womxn of Colour Durham Collective have undertaken a 1-year pilot program called "We Outside" which focuses on addressing barriers in sport and recreation specifically for racialized women and non-binary individuals. She further stated that an end of cohort event is being organized for March 12, 2024 to celebrate the pilot program and invited members to attend.

10. Date of Next Meeting

The next regularly scheduled Durham Region Anti-Racism Taskforce meeting will be held on Thursday, March 28, 2024 at 7:00 PM in the Council Chambers, Regional Headquarters Building, 605 Rossland Road East, Whitby.

11. Adjournment

Moved by Councillor Shahid, Seconded by B. Nelson,
That the meeting be adjourned.
CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at 8:18 PM

Respectfully submitted,

PG Case, Vice-Chair

V. Walker, Committee Clerk