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## **The Regional Municipality of Durham**

### **MINUTES**

#### **DURHAM REGION ANTI-RACISM TASKFORCE**

**Thursday, June 27, 2024**

A meeting of the Durham Region Anti-Racism Taskforce was held on Thursday, June 27, 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.

In the absence of the Chair and Vice-Chair, it was the consensus of the Committee for Councillor Lee to begin the meeting. Councillor Lee called the meeting to order and read the Traditional Territory Acknowledgement.

#### **1. Traditional Territory Acknowledgment**

Councillor Lee 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.

At this point in the meeting, Vice-Chair Case attended the meeting and assumed the Chair.

#### **2. Roll Call**

Present: S. Bookal, Community Member  
PG Case, Industry/Association/Public Institution Representative, Vice-Chair  
attended the meeting at 7:05 PM  
R. Coelho, Community Member  
A. Frempong, Community Member  
B. Goodwin, Commissioner of Corporate Services  
T. Hancock, Community Member  
Councillor Lee, Regional Council

J. Munawa, Community Member  
B. Nelson, Industry/Association/Public Institution Representative  
C. Oyeniran, Community Member  
N. Samuel, Industry/Association/Public Institution Representative, Chair  
attended the meeting at 7:20 PM  
K. Vieneer\*, Community Member  
J. Williamson, Industry/Association/Public Institution Representative  
G. Wilson-Beier, Community Member  
**\* denotes Members participating electronically**

Also

Present: Councillor Anderson, Regional Council Alternate

Absent: E. Baxter-Trahair, Chief Administrative Officer  
Councillor Shahid, Regional Council

Staff

Present: A. Hector-Alexander, Director, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion  
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  
**\* denotes staff participating electronically**

### **3. Declarations of Pecuniary Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **4. Adoption of Minutes**

Moved by Councillor Lee, Seconded by G. Wilson-Beier,  
That the minutes of the Durham Region Anti-Racism Taskforce meeting  
held on Thursday, May 23, 2024, be adopted.  
CARRIED

### **5. Delegations**

There were no delegations to be heard.

### **6. Presentations**

A) Dr. Barbara Perry, Professor, Faculty of Social Science and Humanities, Ontario  
Tech University; and Director, Centre on Hate, Bias and Extremism, Ontario Tech  
University, re: Hate Crime

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Dr. Barbara Perry, Professor, Faculty of Social Science and Humanities, Ontario Tech University; and Director, Centre on Hate, Bias and Extremism, Ontario Tech University, provided a PowerPoint presentation with respect to Hate Crime.

Highlights of the presentation included:

- Contexts for Hate
  - Contemporary Flashpoints (i.e. “turbulent times”)
  - Normalization of Hate
  - Current Concerns
- Online Hate
  - Harms of Online Hate
  - Spaces of Hate
  - Exposure to Online Hate in Canada
- Hate Crime
  - Type of Offence
  - Percentage Change in Crime, 2019-2021
  - Under-Reporting/Under-Recording
  - Targeted Hatred: Islamophobia and Antisemitism
  - Global Project Against Hate
  - Anti-Semitic and Islamophobic Hate – Police Reports
  - The Far-Right: Not Taking Sides
- Right-Wing Extremism
  - Canadian Right-Wing Extremism Ideosphere (2016-2021)
  - Types of Right-Wing Extremism Activity (2016-2021)
  - Right-Wing Extremism Homicides (mass and multiple murders)
  - Online Recruitment
  - Emerging Trends in Right-Wing Extremism
  - What’s To Come?
- Countering Hate – Individually
- Countering Hate – Collectively

Detailed discussion ensued with regards to the unofficial and subjective definition of what constitutes a hate crime and the resulting impacts of same; the importance of education and awareness around hate crimes and supports available to persons experiencing same; the role and responsibility of the Committee and its ability to make significant impacts on a larger scale; the importance of law enforcement having a presence in dark online spaces; the challenges with enacting legislation with respect to hate motivated incidents; the obstacles a municipally established hate crime reporting portal may experience due to its association with law enforcement and possible solutions through third-party organizations; and inefficiencies with current data reporting systems.

Dr. Perry responded to questions from the Committee with regards to the legislative threshold to invoke sentence enhancement for persons convicted of a hate crime; whether any emerging practices can be adopted out of the structural

practices from other municipalities such as Halton Region; the data sources and geographical location of the right-wing extremism activity statistics; and whether current data sets exist with respect to anti-black racism movements.

At this point in the meeting, Chair Samuel attended the meeting and assumed the Chair for the remainder of the meeting.

## 7. Information Items

### A) Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) 2024 Healthy Democracy Forum

H. Mohammed stated that the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) is hosting a Healthy Democracy Forum on September 28 and 29, 2024 in Toronto and is open to community leaders, previous and current elected officials, municipal staff, etc. H. Mohammed further stated that the forum is an initiative focused on improving local democracy through civic engagement that is respectful and diverse, and topics will include “Diverse representation matters” and “Engaging youth in local democracy and elections”.

H. Mohammed advised that the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Division will cover the registration costs for any DRART members wishing to attend the forum and encouraged members to share details of the forum with their networks.

## 8. Discussion Items

### A) Durham Region Anti-Racism Taskforce Year 1 Report to Council

H. Mohammed stated that the DEI Division will be preparing a Report to Council later this year that will highlight the milestones and successes achieved by the DRART and sub-committee working groups over the past year. H. Mohammed further stated that the update will report on progress outlined in the DRART’s workplan contained in Report [#2023-A-14](#), which was approved by Council in September 2023.

Staff have confirmed that the update will take place in September 2024.

### B) New Durham Region Anti-Racism Taskforce Website

H. Mohammed stated that the DRART website is now live and can be accessed at [www.durham.ca/drart](http://www.durham.ca/drart). The website is intended to be an interactive platform where members of the community can share relevant stories and access related resources.

H. Mohammed provided a walkthrough of the website and highlighted the following features:

- New DRART logo on the webpage banner;

- Brief profile and photos of Committee members;
- Related resources including links to the DEI Division page, contact information, Committee Terms of Reference, meeting schedule, and meeting live stream;
- News feed that allows members to share short blog style posts; and
- Stories page that allows members of the community to interact and share relevant personal stories.

Discussion ensued regarding the potential barrier created by requiring community members to register in order to post content to the stories page; consideration of alternative methods that would eliminate the need to register or a function to opt out from providing personal details; and feedback relating to additional content that can be added to the website.

Staff responded to questions from the Committee regarding the process for posting content to the website; whether there is a review process before a submission is published; and the framework for story submissions.

C) Sub-Committee Updates

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1. DRPS Working Group

H. Mohammed provided an update on behalf of the DRPS Working Group and stated that discussions with various staff of the Durham Regional Police Service (DRPS) remains ongoing, with the development of a public resource to outline what constitutes a hate crime and the process to report a hate crime as a main topic of discussion. H. Mohammed advised that the structure for a dashboard for reporting a hate crime is also being considered in consultation with DRPS staff.

H. Mohammed further advised that the working group has learned that DRPS has an Intelligence Unit and Detective Constable J. Duggan is assigned to handle bias or hate motivated incidents and crimes. S. Bookal stated that Detective Constable J. Duggan recently provided a presentation to the DRPS Diversity Advisory Committee regarding hate crimes and suggested the possibility of inviting them to a future meeting to provide a similar presentation to the Committee.

Staff responded to questions from the Committee with respect to the possibility of additional DRPS staff being assigned to the division responsible for investigating hate motivated incidents; and the changes taking place within DRPS that will aim to fill gaps in service.

2. School Board Working Group

G. Wilson-Beier provided an update on behalf of the School Board Working Group and stated that the next meeting with the school boards is scheduled to take place in September and will focus on information sharing.

G. Wilson-Beier advised that the school boards conduct a climate survey each year that is open to all families and collects data around a variety of topics such as demographics. The working group will make a request to the school boards to share the results of their climate surveys, specifically with respect to anti-racism data. G. Wilson-Beier also advised that the working group is considering what regional data can be shared to the school boards that may be useful in development of further insights.

G. Wilson-Beier responded to a question from the Committee with regards to which school boards the working group has engaged with.

S. Bookal advised that the Durham Catholic District School Board (DCDSB) Anti-Black Racism and Black Excellence Advisory Committee was advised to reach out to the working group to discuss potential collaboration opportunities and to share resources.

3. Education Working Group

A. Hector-Alexander provided an update on behalf of the Education Working Group and stated that planning for the DEI Municipal Symposium remains ongoing with a date in the fall being considered.

A. Hector-Alexander further stated that planning for a community healing event also remains ongoing with anticipation that the date for the event will align with the launch of a community healing protocol that is being developed through the Region's Community Safety and Well-Being Plan.

A. Hector-Alexander stated that further updates for both upcoming community events will be shared as they become available.

4. EDI Working Group

An update for the EDI Working Group was not provided and will be made at the September meeting.

9. **Other Business**

A) Refugee and Asylum Seekers to Durham Region

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Councillor Lee stated that a report was presented to Council at the June meeting with respect to the large intake of refugees and asylum seekers to the Region and advised that a recommendation in the report is to provide up to \$10 million in funding up to December 31, 2024, and to then discontinue Regional funding as of

the end of this year. Councillor Lee further stated that Council has deferred the decision to the September Council meeting and advised an update will be provided at the next meeting.

A. Hector-Alexander added that there are ongoing inter-governmental discussions currently taking place with respect to refugees and asylum seekers and advised that Peel Region has prepared a proposal to better support refugee and asylum claimants in the community. The proposal includes the development of a reception center that would provide wrap-around services to refugees and asylum seekers, and a request to change the funding model that would provide municipalities with funding up front for services being provided.

Detailed discussion ensued regarding the importance of the Committee advocating for persons from other countries that are in difficult and dangerous situations; existing international conflicts and the expectation of the number of refugee and asylum seekers entering Canada continuing to rise due to complex political matters; and how the Committee can best voice its position for the Region's continued support of refugees and asylum seekers.

Moved by Councillor Lee, Seconded by A. Frempong,  
That Councillor Lee and N. Samuel, on behalf of the Durham Region Anti-Racism Taskforce, prepare correspondence to Durham Regional Council in support of asylum seekers within Durham Region.

CARRIED

B) Breaking Barriers in Swimming

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H. Mohammed applauded S. Bookal on the success of the Breaking Barriers in Swimming event that recently took place in Ajax and stated that ample positive feedback has been received in relation to the event.

**10. Date of Next Meeting**

The next regularly scheduled Durham Region Anti-Racism Taskforce meeting will be held on Thursday, September 26, 2024 at 7:00 PM in the Council Chambers, Regional Headquarters Building, 605 Rossland Road East, Whitby.

**11. Adjournment**

Moved by PG Case, Seconded by S. Bookal,  
That the meeting be adjourned.

CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at 9:02 PM

Respectfully submitted,

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N. Samuel, Chair

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V. Walker, Committee Clerk