

If this information is required in an accessible format, please contact 1-800-372-1102 ext. 2054.

The Regional Municipality of Durham
Durham Region Anti-Racism Taskforce Minutes

Tuesday, January 22, 2026

A regular meeting of the Durham Region Anti-Racism Taskforce was held on Thursday, January 22, 2026 in Council Chambers, Regional Headquarters Building, 605 Rossland Road East, Whitby, Ontario at 7:00 PM.

N. Samuel assumed the Chair.

1. Traditional Territory Acknowledgement

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 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

Electronic participation was offered for this meeting.

* all individuals participated electronically.

Members

Present: N. Samuel, Industry/Association/Public Institution Representative, Chair
PG Case, Industry/Association/Public Institution Representative, Vice-Chair
S. Byfield, Community Member
R. Coelho, Community Member
A. Frempong, Community Member
B. Goodwin, Commissioner of Corporate Services
M. Hamel-Nelis, Industry/Association/Public Institution Representative
A. Kong, Industry/Association/Public Institution Representative
Councillor Lee, Regional Council
T. Morris, Industry/Association/Public Institution Representative
J. Munawa, Community Member

Councillor Shahid, Regional Council
K. Smith, Community Member, attended the meeting at 7:06 PM
J. Williamson, Industry/Association/Public Institution
Representative

Members

Absent: S. Almeida-Schroen, Community Member
E. Baxter-Trahair, Chief Administrative Officer
S. Bookal, Community Member
J. Koono Nyemb, Community Member
B. Nelson, Industry/Association/Public Institution Representative

Staff Present: A. Hector-Alexander, P. Hines, N. Honarbakhsh, R. Inacio A. Sharma, R. Inacio, and K. Smith

3. Declarations of Pecuniary Interest

There were no declarations of pecuniary interest.

4. Adoption of Minutes

Moved by Councillor Lee, Seconded by S. Byfield,
That the minutes of the regular Durham Region Anti-Racism Taskforce meeting held on Thursday, November 27, 2025, be adopted.

Carried

Moved by Councillor Lee, Seconded by S. Byfield
That the minutes of the closed Durham Region Anti-Racism Taskforce meeting held on Thursday, November 27, 2025, be adopted.

Carried

5. Delegations

There were no delegations.

6. Presentations

There were no presentations.

7. Information Items

A) Together Against Hate Durham Update

N. Honarbakhsh thanked Councillor Lee and M. Hamel-Nelis for their attendance at the Together Against Hate Durham coalition meeting that was held on Friday, January 16, 2026. She advised that there will be five recommendations on the Together Against Hate Public Policy Report being presented to the Finance & Administration Committee for consideration on March 10, 2026 and with subsequent consideration to Regional Council on March 25, 2026. The five recommendations are listed as follows: demographic based-data collection;

establishment of a Durham Region Anti-Hate Advisory Table; increased advocacy for equity considerations to Bill C-9; the establishment of an Anti-Hate Youth Advisory Council; and continued public service education and training.

N. Honarbakhsh responded to questions from the Committee with regards to; the recommendation for advocacy of the equity considerations to Bill C-9 and what the advocacy efforts would entail; and whether there was a discussion with respect to online hate at the January 16, 2026 coalition meeting.

A. Hector-Alexander encouraged Committee members to attend the March 10, 2026 Finance & Administration Committee meeting when the policy recommendations would be put forward as it is being positioned as a DRART initiative.

N. Honarbakhsh advised that a list of the policy recommendations will be sent to the committee for review by Friday, February 13, 2026.

B) Black History Month

P. Hines advised that the Black History Month celebration in Durham Region would be taking place on Tuesday, February 3, 2026 at the Milestone Christian Centre in the Town of Ajax from 5:30 to 8:00 PM. P. Hines provided a brief overview on the following details for the event:

- 2026 Black History Celebration
- Theme: legacy ignites the path for youth to lead the future
- Regional event – Partners
- Artwork – Legacy
- Event Details
- Participants
- Durham Region Transit (DRT) Bus Wrap
- How members can support!

P. Hines asked Committee members to share the event within their community and encouraged Committee members to register to attend the event.

8. Discussion Items

A) Workplan Review and Sub-Committee Discussion

A. Hector-Alexander thanked Committee members for providing which sub-committee they would like to participate in. She advised that the sub-committee groups will be establishing a forum, speakers' series, symposium or conference, connections with equity-focused regional advocacy groups and organizations, and a racism and discrimination reporting tool, and will be engaging with the Durham Regional Police Service (DRPS).

A. Hector-Alexander provided a brief overview of the DRART workplan to Committee members and advised that the workplan will be considered by the Finance & Administration Committee and Regional Council in June 2026.

A. Hector-Alexander encouraged Committee members to schedule sub-committee meetings and prioritize concrete actions that will be completed by the end of the term.

B) Questions for Municipal Candidates

N. Honarbakhsh requested feedback from Committee members with respect to whether there was any interest in developing a set list of questions around equity and inclusion that could be asked by DRART to Municipal candidates in the upcoming Municipal election, and whether this item should be added to the workplan.

Discussion ensued with regards to creating a list of questions that Committee members could ask Municipal candidates during election debates; having the City of Pickering Anti-Black Racism Taskforce provide information on their initiatives during the last election period to the Committee; and what the time commitment would be if the Committee were to proceed with the project.

N. Honarbakhsh advised that she would provide an update at the next Committee meeting.

C) Committee Vacancies

P. Hines advised that the Durham Region Anti-Racism Taskforce is currently recruiting for one community member position on the committee and asked Committee members to share within their communities.

D) Subcommittee Updates

1. Education Working Group

A. Hector-Alexander advised that the education working group has begun the planning of the 2026 Municipal symposium and have temporarily booked May 2, 2026 for the event. She advised that the symposium would be focused around online hate and misinformation, and that colleagues who are accessibility leads, would be invited to attend the event. She asked that if any committee member had a suggestion for a keynote speaker for the symposium to reach out to a subcommittee member.

2. DRPS Working Group

Councillor Lee advised that the working group is continuing their month standing meetings with DRPS and recently hosted an in-person meeting with the Equity and Inclusion (E&I) division within DRPS, and that the discussion included the different initiatives that DRPS will be running over the next several weeks. He advised that one of the initiatives they are moving forward with is a meeting with

the DRPS E&I division, the sub-committee and community faith-based leaders in the Town of Ajax and the City of Pickering. He further advised that the meeting will take place on February 5, 2026 and will focus on spreading the initiative to other municipalities.

A. Frempong asked if there was an update from DRPS with respect to the dashboard that is powered by Microsoft Power BI that is collecting data on where crimes are taking place within the Region and when that data would become available to the public. Councillor Lee advised that he would follow up with staff at DRPS and would provide an update at a subsequent meeting

3. EDI Working Group

N. Samuel advised that there was no EDI Working Group update at this time.

9. **Other Business**

A) Durham Region Poverty Response Program

A. Hector-Alexander advised that the Durham Region Poverty Response Program is seeking a member from the Durham Region Anti-Racism Taskforce for their steering committee and can pass on further information for anyone that may be interested.

B) Resignation

B. Nelson advised that she will be stepping down from the Durham Region Anti-Racism Taskforce. Committee members thanked her for her support while being a member on the Durham Region Anti-Racism Taskforce.

10. **Date of Next Meeting**

The next regularly scheduled Durham Region Anti-Racism Taskforce meeting will be held on Thursday, February 26, 2026 at 7:00 PM.

It was the consensus of the Committee that the February 26, 2026 meeting will be held in-person.

11. **Adjournment**

Moved by PG Case, Seconded by Councillor Shahid,
That the meeting be adjourned.

Carried

The meeting adjourned at 8:06 PM

Respectfully submitted,

N. Samuel
Chair, Durham Region Anti-Racism Taskforce

K. Smith
Committee Clerk