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The Regional Municipality of Durham

MINUTES

DURHAM REGION ANTI-RACISM TASKFORCE

Thursday, April 25, 2024

A meeting of the Durham Region Anti-Racism Taskforce was held on Thursday, April 25, 2024 in Council Chambers, Regional Headquarters Building, 605 Rossland Road East, Whitby, Ontario at 7:01 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: Councillor Anderson, Regional Council Alternate
PG Case, Industry/Association/Public Institution Representative, Vice-Chair
R. Coelho, Community Member
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
T. Hancock, Community Member

B. Nelson, Industry/Association/Public Institution Representative
Councillor Shahid, Regional Council

Staff

Present: A. Hector-Alexander, Director, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
J. Hunt, Regional Solicitor/Director of Legal Services, CAO's Office – Legal
R. Inacio, Systems Support Specialist, Corporate Services – IT
H. Mohammed, Policy Coordinator, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
A. Patel, Student, CAO's Office – Legal
A. Sharma, Policy Advisor, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
K. Smith, Committee Clerk, Corporate Services – Legislative Services
*** all staff participated electronically**

3. Declarations of Pecuniary Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

4. Adoption of Minutes

K. Smith provided clarification regarding the closed meeting minutes for the Durham Region Anti-Racism Taskforce meeting held on February 22, 2024.

Moved by Councillor Lee, Seconded by G. Wilson-Beier,
That the minutes of the Durham Region Anti-Racism Taskforce meeting held on Thursday, February 22, 2024, be adopted.
CARRIED

Moved by Councillor Lee, Seconded by G. Wilson-Beier,
That the Closed minutes of the Durham Region Anti-Racism Taskforce meeting held on Thursday, February 22, 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

Jason Hunt, Director, Legal Services, Region of Durham, thanked Committee members for their interest in sharing and discussing the research being done on a Hate Speech By-law. He advised that there is concern with offensive speech being used during protests outside of events that Durham Region or other community partners are holding. He stated that there has been some advancements on this topic in the United States and staff are interested in advancing this new area of law to provide necessary protection.

Adam Patel, Student, Legal Services, Region of Durham, provided a PowerPoint presentation with regards to the Hate Speech By-Law.

Highlights of the presentation included:

- The Right to Free Expression
- The Components of Expression
- Brightline's
- When is Expression Infringed?
- Section 1 of the Charter
- The Oakes Test
- Offensive Speech vs Hate Speech
- Where is the Line?
- The Constitutionality of Hate Speech Laws
- Interpreting Evidence of Hate
- What is Hatred?
- What is Hate Speech?
- When does Offensive Speech become Hate Speech?

J. Hunt and A. Patel responded to questions from the Committee regarding hate speech by-laws currently in place in Durham Region; how a hate speech by-law can be enforced; if a Durham Region hate speech by-law, similar to the by-law in Waterloo, could be implemented; why antisemitism is specifically mentioned in the Criminal Code; how the by-law would need to be implemented across all lower tier municipalities in Durham Region; and how those who have experienced a hate crime should report an incident.

- B) Vidal Chavannes, Director, Strategy, Research and Organizational Performance, Durham Regional Police Services, re: Response to Questions Prepared by the Taskforce Working Group
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Vidal Chavannes, Director, Strategy, Research and Organizational Performance, Durham Regional Police Services (DRPS), was in attendance to provide responses to questions prepared by the Taskforce Working Group.

Detailed discussion ensued and V. Chavannes provided responses or attempted to respond to the following questions:

- Equity strategic plan lists indicators; are there results that accompany these metrics? Can they be shared?
- Is there a plan to acquire anti-Black racism/equity training programs specific for personnel within DRPS?
- Will frontline DRPS officers start collecting race-based data for reporting purposes (internally and externally)?

- Are there plans to conduct an internal survey regarding staff demographics and to share that data?
- Can DRPS include demographic data in the onboarding process to avoid any logistical issues?
- How does one serve on the Police Services Board? By appointment? Is there an application process?
- Are there plans to launch a hiring campaign to target diverse communities (e.g. through organizations, local area municipalities, high schools)?
- The Social Services Department did some community engagement regarding a non-police led response team. Can you share any perspectives from DRPS regarding this initiative?
- Under what circumstances do officers have to be armed (e.g. community events, etc.)?

V. Chavannes advised he would liaise with his police service and provide a written response to Committee members for the questions asked during the meeting.

7. Information Items

A) Motion from Councillor Brenner re: Ontario Human Rights Code

A copy of the motion from Councillor Brenner regarding the Ontario Human Rights Code was received and provided to Committee members prior to the meeting.

A. Hector-Alexander advised that there has been no response received from the Ontario Human Rights Commission regarding the motion. She advised Committee members that any questions or thoughts they may have on the motion can be passed along to Councillor Brenner.

A. Hector-Alexander also advised that the City of Pickering released their Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Accessibility Strategy.

Moved by Councillor Lee, Seconded by C. Oyeniran,
That Information Item 7. A), be received for information.

CARRIED

B) Breaking Barriers in Swimming

S. Bookal was not in attendance to provide an update on this matter. H. Mohammed advised that information regarding the Breaking Barriers in Swimming event was provided to Committee members prior to the meeting. She

stated that S. Bookal is part of the Inclusion in Canadian Sports Network and recently received Federal funding for a Breaking Barriers in Swimming program together with the Ajax Aquatics Club, Town of Ajax and Durham Region. She advised that the program is aimed toward diverse children to introduce them to the sport of swimming and to break barriers and harmful stereotypes around racialized people.

H. Mohammed advised that Jamaican Olympian swimmer Alia Atkinson will be facilitating a session on Thursday, May 2, 2024 to promote lifesaving skills and future opportunities in swimming. The Ajax Aquatics Club and Town of Ajax will be offering swimming lessons for those participating in the session in June and July this summer.

8. Discussion Items

A) Durham Region Anti-Racism Taskforce Branding

A. Hector-Alexander advised that this item was discussed at the last meeting and discussion took place regarding graphic artists who could develop an icon for the Durham Region Anti-Racism Taskforce (DRART) and DRART's social media presence. She advised that staff from the Region's communications and engagement team were approached to assist with this and provided an icon for the DRART.

A. Hector-Alexander noted that the communications and engagement team recommended leveraging the Region of Durham's existing social media channels for the following reasons:

- DRART is an official Committee of Council and the message should represent the Region;
- The Region already has a strong social media following; and
- DRART members can echo the message by sharing the posts on their own channels.

Discussion ensued and it was suggested that DRART create a specific graphic design that represents the taskforce and use the graphic to build recognition of the taskforce; there should be an early post as a "reintroduction of DRART" on each social media platform that will speak to the work of the taskforce and set the stage for future posts; and that any additional posts can be provided through the DEI team to the Communications team.

A. Hector-Alexander shared the icon with Committee members and asked for their feedback.

Discussion ensued with regards to whether communications can be sent out without having a meeting; whether the first 'R' in DRART can be removed and

shortened to DART; and the capacity required for the DEI team to make posts on a regular basis.

A. Hector-Alexander advised that any change in name for DRART would require Council approval.

B) Sub-Committee Updates

1. Education Working Group

A. Hector-Alexander stated the Education Working Group has been working with C. Oyenarin on the movie screening for "Subjects of Desire". C. Oyenarin advised that the event is being held on June 1, 2024 at 6:30 PM and there will be a panel discussion, Q&A and community building with Jennifer Holness, Director and Producer and Dr. Grace Adeniyi-Ogunyankin, Professor of African Urban Futures and Black Futurity from Queen's University.

A. Hector-Alexander advised that the working group is exploring a partnership with Womxn of Colour Durham Collective and will provide more information at the next meeting.

A. Hector-Alexander further advised they have reached out to DEI related municipal groups and taskforce committees regarding their interest in attending a symposium on anti-racism and requested a response by April 30. She stated that a survey will also be provided to Committee members regarding their interest in attending the event.

2. EDI Working Group

A. Frempong stated that the EDI Working Group will get in touch with local municipalities and their Council with the information received from the DRPS discussion during the meeting. She thanked J. Hunt, A. Patel and V. Chavannes for their presentations and suggested partnering with Legal to have the presentation shared with the community. She advised that the working group will begin reaching out to municipalities to work with them on preparing a hate speech by-law.

A. Frempong advised that the Women's Multicultural Resource & Counselling Centre (WMRCC) is hosting a Gala of Hope on Saturday, May 11, 2024 at 6:00 PM at the Ajax Convention Centre.

3. School Board Working Group

G. Wilson-Beier advised that the School Board Working Group is planning the next meeting with school boards following the preliminary meeting in February. She advised that they are trying to maintain connections and see what direction they can collaboratively come up with to address the schools needs.

4. DRPS Working Group

Councillor Lee advised that the DRPS Working Group will get in touch with the CAO who has taken over the DEI file. He stated that it would be beneficial for the DRPS working group or any Committee members to attend the next DRPS Board Meeting

J. Munawa advised that the DRPS Working Group is also working with DRPS Communications on the Report Hate Crime Campaign and setting up a date to meet with them.

9. **Other Business**

A) Community Safety and Policing Act

A. Hector-Alexander advised that under the new Community Safety and Policing Act, the DRPS is required to have a Diversity Plan. She will provide more information at the next meeting.

B) Asian Heritage Month

Councillor Lee advised that the month of May is Asian Heritage Month.

C) EmpowerHER Breast & Cervical Health Seminar

R. Coelho advised that the EmpowerHER Breast & Cervical Health Seminar is taking place on Saturday, May 4, 2024 and is offering onsite screening for mammograms and pap tests.

D) Rainbow Week of Action

A. Frempong advised that The Society of Queer Momentum released their Rainbow Week of Action in terms of combating 2SLGBTQIA+ hate across Canada with a national campaign taking place from May 11 to 17, 2024. She stated that she is organizing a rally for Durham Region during the week and asked for Committee member's support and/or participation.

Moved by A. Frempong, Seconded by Councillor Lee,
That the Durham Region Anti-Racism Taskforce support the Rally for
Rainbow Equality taking place nationally from May 11 to 17, 2024.

CARRIED

E) Pride Durham's 2024 Pride Parade

A. Frempong advised that the Pride Durham's 2024 Pride Parade will be taking place on June 2, 2024 and will provide further information at the next meeting.

10. Date of Next Meeting

The next regularly scheduled Durham Region Anti-Racism Taskforce meeting will be held on Thursday, May 23, 2024 at 7:00 PM in the Council Chambers, Regional Headquarters Building, 605 Rossland Road East, Whitby.

11. Adjournment

Moved by G. Wilson-Beier, Seconded by Councillor Anderson,
That the meeting be adjourned.

CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at 8:59 PM

Respectfully submitted,

N. Samuel, Chair

K. Smith, Committee Clerk