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The Regional Municipality of Durham

MINUTES

DURHAM REGION ANTI-RACISM TASKFORCE

Thursday, May 23, 2024

A meeting of the Durham Region Anti-Racism Taskforce was held on Thursday, May 23, 2024 in Meeting Room 1-B, Regional Headquarters Building, 605 Rossland Road East, Whitby, Ontario at 7:03 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: PG Case, Industry/Association/Public Institution Representative, Vice-Chair
R. Coelho, Community Member
A. Frempong, Community Member
T. Hancock, Community Member
Councillor Lee, Regional Council
J. Munawa, Community Member
B. Nelson, Industry/Association/Public Institution Representative
C. Oyeniran, Community Member
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

N. Samuel, Industry/Association/Public Institution Representative, Chair
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. 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, April 25, 2024, be adopted.
CARRIED

5. Delegations

There were no delegations to be heard.

6. Presentations

There were no presentations to be heard.

7. Information Items

A) Community Events

P. Hines stated that there are several upcoming community events taking place in the Region that will provide an opportunity for the Durham Region Anti-Racism Taskforce (DRART) to participate in and will allow Committee members to engage with the community.

P. Hines and H. Mohammed provided details of the following upcoming community events:

- Durham Region's Annual Youth Pride event will be taking place at Regional Headquarters on Saturday, June 22. The event will consist of a resource village, performers, a DJ, dancing, activities, giveaways, and more.

- Ajax's Annual Durham Pride Festival is celebrating its 20-year anniversary and is taking place on Sunday, June 2 at Arbour Park in Ajax.
- North Durham Pride will be hosting parades on separate dates that will take place in each of the northern area municipalities.
- Indigenous History Month is being recognized in the month of June and the Region's Indigenous Advocacy Committee is hosting a movie night on Monday, June 24 at Cineplex Oshawa. The movie being screened is titled "Killers of the Flower Moon", which is based on actual historic events. Tickets are being sold through staff for \$20, which includes admission to the movie and a meal.

8. Discussion Items

A) Municipal Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Symposium

P. Hines stated that a Municipal DEI Symposium with a focus on anti-racism is being organized for September and advised that volunteers are needed to assist with planning. She further stated that the event will be a collaboration among different DEI groups across the Region and advised that the Region's DEI division has met with the DEI representatives of the local area municipalities to gather feedback for the event. P. Hines advised that due to significant interest within the community, a second symposium for the community was suggested, and further details will be shared once available.

B) Sub-Working Group Updates

1. DRPS Working Group

Councillor Lee and H. Mohammed provided an update on behalf of the DRPS Working Group and stated that the group has connected with Sargent Dena Peden, who replaced Sargent Conrad Wong in Durham Region Police Service's (DRPS) Diversity Unit.

H. Mohammed stated the working group is continuing its work in establishing a resource to outline the process for reporting hate crimes through collaboration with DRPS in order to maintain consistency with current DRPS procedures. She further stated that due to recent staffing changes at DRPS, the working group continues to develop relationships with new and existing staff as part of its goal to cultivate meaningful relationships with DRPS.

Councillor Lee stated that the working group is also pursuing their goal of inviting DRPS Chief Moreira to a future meeting to expand on questions posed to V. Chavannes at the previous meeting.

Staff responded to questions from the Committee regarding when it is anticipated that the group will receive written responses to the questions posed to V. Chavannes at the last meeting, and whether there is an ability to expedite the time for receiving such responses; and whether Sargent D. Peden will be invited to a future meeting to continue the discussion initiated with Sargent C. Wong.

2. School Board Working Group

G. Wilson-Beier stated that the School Board Working Group is arranging a follow up discussion with the school boards they previously met with, which is anticipated to take place in September.

3. EDI Working Group

A. Frempong provided an update on behalf of the EDI Working Group and stated that the hate speech by-law presentation from the Legal division at the April meeting provided the working group with meaningful advice and guidance for creating an anti-hate by-law in the Region. She further stated that the group is conducting research and collecting relevant examples as preliminary steps in developing an anti-hate by-law and advised that the group is considering the benefit of implementing the by-law at the municipal level.

A. Frempong provided details of a recent example from the City of Toronto stating that a motion was brought forward at the city requesting that the province implement safety zones around places of worship, faith-based schools, and vulnerable community social infrastructure. She also provided details of campaigns that have been initiated in opposition to the motion. She advised that the matter remains ongoing.

Detailed discussion ensued regarding the City of Toronto motion; the benefit of engaging with legal entities with experience in human rights or hate speech to provide additional assistance to the group; the overall intent of the anti-hate by-law; and steps for moving forward.

4. Education Working Group

B. Nelson stated that the Education Working Group has partnered with the organization Looking Back Into The Future for a movie screening event taking place on Saturday, June 1 (additional details of the event can be found at section 9. A) on page 5 of these minutes).

B. Nelson further stated that the working group remains in the process of organizing a community healing event and are considering potential dates in September for the event.

B. Nelson advised that the working group is seeking ways to increase its visibility in the community and is considering opportunities to collaborate with the Region's DEI division to achieve same.

9. Other Business

A) Looking Back Into The Future – Subjects of Desire Documentary Screening

P. Hines stated that Looking Back Into The Future is hosting a screening of the documentary "Subjects of Desire" on Saturday, June 1 at the St. Francis Centre in Ajax at 6:30 pm and welcomed members of the Committee to attend.

B) Womxn of Colour Collective – Upcoming Community Event

B. Nelson stated the Womxn of Colour Collective is hosting a community event on Sunday, June 2, in celebration of this year's focus on platforming and sharing stories of local and racialized business owners and entrepreneurs who work and live in the Region. She further stated that the event will include a panel of speakers, a mini vendor market, and food.

10. Date of Next Meeting

The next regularly scheduled Durham Region Anti-Racism Taskforce meeting will be held on Thursday, June 27, 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 K. Vieneer,
That the meeting be adjourned.

CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at 7:52 PM

Respectfully submitted,

PG Case, Vice-Chair

V. Walker, Committee Clerk