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The Regional Municipality of Durham

MINUTES

DURHAM REGION ANTI-RACISM TASKFORCE

Thursday, May 26, 2022

A meeting of the Durham Region Anti-Racism Taskforce was held on Thursday, May 26, 2022 in the Council Chambers, Regional Headquarters Building, 605 Rossland Road East, Whitby, Ontario at 7:03 PM. Electronic participation was permitted for this meeting.

1. Traditional Territory Acknowledgment

Chair Lee read the following land acknowledgement:

We are currently located on land which has long served as a site of meeting and exchange among the Mississaugas Peoples and is the traditional and treaty territory of the Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation. We honour, recognize and respect this nation and Indigenous Peoples as the traditional stewards of the lands and waters on which we meet today.

2. Roll Call

Present: Councillor Lee, Regional Councillor, Chair
F. Ahmed, Community Member, Vice-Chair
S. Bookal, Community Member
S. Caibaiosai, Industry/Association/Public Institution Representative
PG Case, Industry/Association/Public Institution Representative
S. Dave, Community Member
T. Hancock, Community Member
C. Oyeniran, Community Member
N. Samuel, Industry/Association/Public Institution Representative
K. Vieneer, Community Member
J. Williamson, Industry/Association/Public Institution Representative
G. Wilson-Beier, Community Member

Absent: E. Baxter-Trahair, Chief Administrative Officer
L. Francis, Community Member
J. Munawa, Community Member
Z. Pickering, Community Member

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
K. Smith, Committee Clerk, Corporate Services – Legislative Services

3. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

4. Adoption of Minutes

Moved by F. Ahmed, Seconded by PG Case,
That the minutes of the Durham Region Anti-Racism Taskforce meeting
held on Thursday, April 28, 2022, be adopted.

CARRIED

5. Delegations

There were no delegations to be heard.

6. Presentations

- A) Meera McDonald, Chair, Clarington's Diversity Advisory Committee and Co-Chair, Clarington's Anti-Black Racism Subcommittee, re: Update on Diversity and Anti-Racism Initiatives in Clarington

Meera McDonald, Chair of Clarington's Diversity Advisory Committee and Co-Chair of Clarington's Anti-Black Racism Subcommittee, provided a PowerPoint presentation with regards to an Update on Diversity and Anti-Racism Initiatives in Clarington.

Highlights of the presentation included:

- Clarington's Diversity Advisory Committee and Anti-Black Racism Subcommittee
- Our Work
 - Land Acknowledgment Statement
 - Statement condemning racism
 - Advocacy re: Symbols of Hate
 - Community engagement
 - Supported gender diversity initiative
- Focus of Work
 - Partnerships and Collaborations
 - Durham Regional Police Services Community Safety Council (East Division)
 - Inclusive Spaces Policy
 - Recognitions and Celebrations
- Support
 - Symbols of Hate
 - Background in Clarington
 - Action Taken
 - Future Direction
 - Collaboration and Consistency
 - Resources to address concerns of Racism & Discrimination

M. McDonald stated that the Clarington Diversity Advisory Committee is an advisory board for Clarington Council which provides advice, comments, and recommendations on issues that affect diversity in the community, foster awareness, reduce barriers, promote inclusion, and engage residents. She also stated that the Anti-Black Racism Subcommittee is a liaison between the community and the Diversity Advisory Committee and their focus is to develop strategies to address anti-Black racism and other forms of discrimination in the community.

M. McDonald stated that the Diversity Advisory Committee was formed in 2018 as a response to the growing diversity in the community. She also stated that they create an annual workplan which includes initiatives from committee members and requests for guidance from the community or municipality related to diversity and inclusion. She reviewed some of the work completed by the Committee in recent years.

M. McDonald is requesting the following of the Durham Region Anti-Racism Taskforce:

- To support their work by recommending that Regional Council support the same advocacy;
- When there is an opportunity / vacancy on the Durham Region Anti-Racism Task Force, that representation from Clarington be included in the membership to ensure their issues and concerns are discussed by the group; and
- To ensure consistency across the Region, to request support from the Durham Region Anti-Racism Task Force to be able to address and provide resources for Clarington residents.

M. McDonald responded to questions with regards to addressing symbols of hate and supporting residents; and if there is any development regarding jurisdiction with the Ontario Human Rights Commission.

B) Jaihun Sahak, Durham Children's Aid Society, re: Child Welfare Redesign Strategy

Jaihun Sahak of the Durham Children's Aid Society provided a PowerPoint presentation with regards to the Child Welfare Redesign Strategy.

Highlights of the presentation included:

- Kasserian Ingera
- The Focus
- The Outcomes for Families
- Systemic Outcomes
- Co-Design
- Co-Create

- Co-Produce
- Co-Deliver

J. Sahak stated that Durham Children's Aid Society (CAS) has launched an urgent response model to the child welfare redesign called Kasserian Ingera. He stated that the main focus of the redesign is to transform children and family services to strengthen families and communities by prevention, early intervention, and finding more permanent homes for children and youth that cannot stay in their own homes or communities.

J. Sahak stated that the strategy is designed so that the outcome for families is less intrusive, their voices are being heard, they are being connected with families, communities and cultures, and ensuring that children, youth and families are being supported in their communities. J. Sahak provided various examples of calls that were heavily biased towards marginalized or racialized communities and reviewed how the redesign seeks successful outcomes for the child welfare system.

J. Sahak advised that Durham CAS has reached out to Durham Region to focus resources on addressing the over-representation of Black and Indigenous children in the child welfare system. He also advised that consultations were set up with the community and internally with their own staff, youth, foster parents and caregivers, and executive directors and staff from service providers to understand what is causing the over representation within the system.

J. Sahak stated that a number of Black-led agencies within Durham were invited to propose how they would proceed with the project and advised that the request for proposal from Ifarada Centre of Excellence was accepted. J. Sahak advised that upon initial contact with Durham CAS, families identifying as Black or bi-racial will be given the opportunity to receive service from Ifarada or stay with Durham CAS to ensure the best outcomes for the families.

J. Sahak advised that the goal is to replicate the model across all of Ontario. He added that the project is a three-year pilot that will be going through a robust evaluation process from the beginning. He stated that Durham CAS has partnered with an evaluator that has worked on the One Vision One Voice project and the University of Toronto will also be a part evaluator.

J. Sahak responded to questions with regards to receiving push back from the community; the number of Black foster parents and whether there are enough to help the Black children in care; closing the loop of accountability on the organization; education for non-racialized people who are caring for racialized children; potential internal resistance to the model and how it was approached; addressing having Black children placed in Black family homes; education available to those who have a duty to report on how the new model will work moving forward; how the information for the new model is being provided to the Indigenous and Black communities; and how the new model will assist youth when they age out of the program.

7. Information Items

There were no information items.

8. Discussion Items

A) DRART Infographic

Hanna Mohammed shared an infographic that was put together by the graphic design team outlining the milestones of the Durham Region Anti-Racism Taskforce and that can be shared online to show members of the public what the taskforce has implemented since its inception. At the request of H. Mohammed, members of the committee provided their feedback on the infographic.

H. Mohammed advised that the communications team will develop social media products that can be shared with the community and advised that the social media products will be provided to members of the committee.

B) DRART Letter of Support for Racialized Ukrainian Immigrants

Councillor Lee read the draft Letter of Support for Racialized Ukrainian Immigrants to committee members which would be sent out by Councillor Lee on behalf of the Durham Region Anti-Racism Taskforce.

A. Hector-Alexander advised that the letter would be provided to members of the committee and requested their feedback. Discussion ensued with regards to members of Provincial parliament, other diversity communities, and all municipalities in Ontario being copied on the letter.

C) Sub-Working Group Updates

1. Create an Anti-Racist Practices Standard for a Varsity of Sectors Including the 8 Local Municipalities

J. Williamson provided the following update:

- The sub-working group has been working on having a consistent document through the academic, healthcare, and business sectors on how to report anti-racist practices and removing duplicate processes.

2. Support Anti-Racism Education in Schools

K. Vieneer advised that the sub-working group has not had an opportunity to meet since the last meeting.

3. Create a Durham Region Anti-Racism Hub

Councillor Lee provided the following update:

- The sub-working group has been compiling the contact information of all the Durham Region diversity groups that are currently in existence and stated that it is a key facet for the hub.
- There has been discussion regarding creating a common language between the subcommittees and all Durham Region municipalities as it would be more productive if the taskforce and Region were speaking in a common language.
- There has been brainstorming on ways to appeal to community members, such as by creating videos on different topics and connecting it to the hub.

4. Education for the Broader Community

F. Ahmed provided the following update:

- The excel spreadsheet has been cleaned up to ensure the information presented is streamlined, and the main focus is on Black, Indigenous, and 2SLGBTQI+ communities.
- The sub-working group is hoping to get assistance from the students in terms of validating the information and seeking consent from organizations to post their information on our websites.
- She provided the following updates on the tabs on the excel spreadsheet:
 - Prepared a list of speakers to utilize to bring different lens and perspectives to the conversation.
 - Prepared a list of organizations from within and outside Durham Region that focus on Black, Indigenous, and 2SLGBTQI+ communities.
 - Prepared a list of potential funding opportunities from the Federal government, with the potential of Provincial and Municipal funding.
 - Topics have been broken up into key areas and subtopics for speakers and different areas to explore.
 - Prepared a calendar of events
 - Prepared a community mapping tool to allow for community members to search for services and organizations.
- S. Caibaiousai advised that the sub-working group is proposing to hold an annual cultural event in Durham Region in partnership with other community partners, leaders, educators, businesses, and service organizations to host local vendors, artisans, performers and cultural food makers.

A. Hector-Alexander responded to questions with regards to the event being facilitated by Durham Region and the timelines for preparing for such an event.

A. Hector-Alexander advised that the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Division has two students that are available to assist the subcommittee groups where needed.

9. Other Business

A) Traditional Territory Acknowledgment

Discussion ensued with regards to modifying the current Traditional Territory Acknowledgment that is read at the beginning of Durham Region Anti-Racism Taskforce meetings.

10. Date of Next Meeting

The next regularly scheduled Durham Region Anti-Racism Taskforce meeting will be held on Thursday, June 30, 2022 at 7:00 PM in the Council Chambers, Regional Headquarters Building, 605 Rossland Road East, Whitby.

11. Adjournment

Moved by K. Vieneer, Seconded by C. Oyeniran,
That the meeting be adjourned.

CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at 8:57 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Councillor Lee, Chair

K. Smith, Committee Clerk