

Whitby Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Committee Minutes
June 3, 2021 – 7:15 PM
Virtual Meeting

Present: Mayline Brown (logged on at 7:20 p.m.)
Andrea Cecchetto
Cheryl Frayne
Brianna Nelson, Vice-Chair
Catherine Philogene, Chair
Ayse Yuksel
Venita Anderson

Also Present: Regional Councillor Roy, Mayor's Designate
Mallory Dawson, Whitby Public Library Representative
Kim Evans, Staff Liaison, Supervisor, 55+ Recreation Services
Heather Oerlemans, Council and Committee Coordinator
(Recording Secretary)

Regrets: None noted

Call to Order

1. Disclosures of Interest

1.1 There were no disclosures of interest.

2. Approval of Previous Minutes

2.1 Minutes - May 6, 2021

Recommendation:

Moved by Cheryl Frayne

That the Whitby Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Committee minutes of May 6, 2021 be approved.

Carried

3. Presentations

3.1 There were no presentations.

4. Delegations

4.1 There were no delegations.

5. General Business and Reports

5.1 Indigenous Education Event: June 14, 2021

Kim Evans advised that 60 individuals had registered for this event and that reminders would be sent one day and one hour prior to the start of the event. Ms. Evans stated that Dr. Dawn Lavell-Harvard, Director at the First Peoples House of Learning at Trent University, would be discussing the contribution of Indigenous people to the country, the relevance of the land acknowledgement, how we can keep the legacy and culture of Indigenous people alive, how systemic racism impacts Indigenous people, and how we can be allies.

Discussion ensued regarding:

- addressing the children's remains in the mass grave at the Kamloops Indian Residential School;
- lowering of the Town's flags to half mast on June 8, 2021 for 215 hours to commemorate the children found in the mass grave at the Kamloops Indian Residential School;
- a memorial to tie a ribbon to the fence outside the cafe at the Central Public Library for the month of June; and,
- a four-part panel series focused on Indigenous peoples and First Nations hosted by the Whitby Public Library.

5.2 Anti-Black Racism

Kim Evan requested feedback from the Committee regarding establishing an Anti-Black Racism Subcommittee. Ms. Evans provided an overview of the anti-racism initiatives of other municipalities, which included:

- an Anti-Racism Taskforce led by Durham Region's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Staff;
- an Anti-Black Racism Taskforce established in Ajax to advocate for the rights of Black people and eliminate barriers related to racism;
- an Anti-Black Racism Taskforce comprised of 23 appointed members in Pickering;
- an Anti-Racism Subcommittee to address anti-racism issues in Oshawa; and,

- an Anti-Racism Subcommittee to act as a liaison between the community and the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee in Clarington.

Catherine Philogene requested feedback from the Committee regarding whether an Anti-Black Racism Subcommittee should be established in Whitby and whether the roles between the Subcommittee and the Whitby Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Committee would overlap.

Discussion ensued regarding:

- recognizing the accomplishments of Whitby residents;
- the ability of the Whitby Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Committee to focus on anti-racism issues;
- the process for choosing who to recognize;
- clarifying the role of a Subcommittee in relation to the Whitby Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Committee;
- resources that would be available to a Subcommittee;
- waiting for feedback from the focus group consultations before making a decision;
- forming an alternative body such as a Taskforce rather than a Subcommittee;
- updating the Whitby Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Committee's webpage to showcase the accomplishments of the Committee, current action items, and upcoming action items; and,
- establishing a Subcommittee for the summer months to continue working on items such as the next webinar, and how to recognize citizens' achievements.

5.3 Anti-Asian Racism

Kim Evans advised that the Durham Region Police Services requested that victims and bystanders report any incidents of anti-Asian harassment or violence.

Catherine Philogene asked whether there was information regarding the increase of anti-Asian harassment or violence.

Kim Evans advised that she would contact the Durham Region Police Services to enquire about whether there has been an increase in anti-Asian harassment or violence.

Discussion ensued regarding:

- outreach opportunities to support the Asian community;
- utilizing social media to address anti-Asian harassment; and,
- contacting Asian community groups such as the Durham Chinese Canadian Culture Centre to offer support.

It was the consensus of the Committee to draft a letter to the Durham Chinese Canadian Culture Centre to acknowledge anti-Asian harassment and request feedback on the ways in which the Whitby Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Committee could support the Durham Chinese Canadian Culture Centre.

5.4 Town of Whitby's Internal Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Anti-Racism (IDEA) Initiatives, Staff Task Force, and Staff Training

Kim Evans requested feedback from the Committee regarding the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Staff Training program.

Kim Evans provided an update regarding initiatives of the Staff Task Force such as the employee resource groups, generating awareness on the Days of Recognition, and hosting lunch-and-learns.

6. Correspondence

6.1 First Nations Plaque Request from Resident

Councillor Roy advised that a request came from a resident to establish an Indigenous land recognition plaque in the Town of Whitby acknowledging the traditional treaty territory of the Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation of the Mississauga Nation. Councillor Roy stated that Staff would undertake consultations with the Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation (MSIFN) to determine a suitable location and wording for a plaque on Town land.

7. Council Update

7.1 Councillor Roy provided updates regarding:

- the unveiling of the Sir William Stephenson Statue at Celebration Square;
- the commencement of community consultations regarding the Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Anti-Racism (IDEA) project;
- a presentation to Council on June 7, 2021 from the Hospital Task Force regarding the site bid for a future hospital in Durham Region;
- an update on the Whitby Sports Complex at the Special Council meeting on May 31, 2021; and,
- a presentation on the current state of COVID-19 vaccinations from the Region's Health and Social Services.

8. Other Business

8.1 Whitby Public Library Update

Mallory Dawson provided an update for Whitby Public Library programs which included:

- the summer Story Walk program;
- the Summer Reading Club program; and,
- the four-part panel series would begin June 17, 2021.

8.2 Funding for Bursary Program

Kim Evans advised that Elexicon approached the Town to offer funding for a school bursary program for the Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour (BIPOC) community. Ms. Evans stated that the bursary would be issued in 2021. She requested feedback from the Committee.

A question and answer period ensued regarding:

- whether the Town would be contributing to the bursary;
- who would determine how the funds were allocated and divided among the school boards;
- what supporting documents would be required to include in the student application;
- who could apply to the bursary;
- whether the funding could be deferred to 2022;
- whether the funds could be used for summer programs; and,
- whether the funds could be used for summer employment opportunities.

9. Next Meeting

9.1 Thursday, September 2, 2021 - 7:15 p.m.
To be determined

10. Adjournment

10.1 Motion to Adjourn

Recommendation:

Moved By Andrea Cecchetto

That the meeting adjourn.

Carried

The meeting adjourned at 8:47 p.m.

Note: These minutes were approved by the Whitby Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Committee on September 2, 2021.