



**Clarington Diversity Advisory Committee
Thursday, February 8, 2024, 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.
Virtual Via Microsoft Teams**

If this information is required in an alternate format, please contact the IDEA Officer at 905-623-3379
ext 2563

Present: Councillor Granville Anderson (present until 7:35 pm)
Tenzin Shomar, Chair
Joe Solway
Lauren Reyes-Grange
Dione Valentine

Also Present: Pinder DaSilva – Clarington, IDEA Officer

Regrets: Ron Hooper (joined at 8:25 pm)
Pranay Gunti

Absent: Aaliyah Ruddock

The meeting was called to order at 7:03 pm.

1. Land Acknowledgement Statement

Tenzin Shomar shared the Land Acknowledgement Statement.

2. Annual Selection of Vice Chair as per current Terms Of Reference (TOR)

Tenzin Shomar opened the floor for nominations

Dione Valentine had been nominated at the January 11, 2024 meeting but was not present to accept the nomination.

Dione Valentine indicated she is honoured but must decline the nomination due to other scheduling responsibilities.

Moved by Councillor Anderson; seconded by Dione Valentine

That the vote for Vice Chair be delayed to the next meeting when there are more voting members present.

Carried

3. Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest declared by members.

4. Review and Approval of Agenda

Moved by Dione Valentine, seconded by Joe Solway

That the agenda of the meeting of February 8, 2024 be approved.

Carried

5. Review and approval of previous meeting minutes

Moved by Joe Solway, seconded by Dione Valentine

That the minutes of the meeting of January 11, 2024 be approved.

Carried

6. DAC Resignations and Vacancies

Pinder DaSilva shared that she had received resignation notices from committee members Andaleeb Shafi, Yasmin Shafi and Meera McDonald

Tenzin Shomar shared that the postings to fill the positions are live on the Clarington website until February 16th and asked everyone to share them within their network.

Pinder DaSilva advised the posting was also shared with residents who had applied for the last posting but were not successful and with some community partners.

7. Anti-Black Racism Task Force Terms of Reference Request

Moved by Lauren Reyes-Grange, seconded by Joe Solway

That the terms of reference for Clarington's Anti-Black Racism Task Force be updated to include a 2-year term for the Co-Chair position and that the Co-Chair represent Clarington's Black community.

Carried

Committee members discussed the Anti-Black Racism Task Force's request to change the Terms of Reference so that priority would be given to Black applicants.

Tenzin Shomar asked can the committee request that priority be given to Black applicants if the Terms of Reference state that the committee should be looking at anti-black racism and other forms of racism?

Pinder DaSilva advised that if the decision is made to change the Terms of Reference so that the Task Force focuses on Anti-Black Racism only, then the Diversity Advisory Committee will need to address race and discrimination issues that come forward outside of anti-black racism.

The committee members agreed that they are comfortable addressing all other forms of racism and discrimination.

Moved by Joe Solway, seconded by Lauren Reyes-Grange

That the terms of reference for the Anti-Black Racism Task Force be updated to require that majority of members identify as Black, and priority be given to Black applicants.

Carried

Moved by Joe Solway, seconded by Dione Valentine

That the wording in the Anti-Black Racism Task Force Terms of Reference be changed so that “other forms of racism” be removed.

Carried

Additional discussions regarding Anti-Black Racism Task Force

Committee members asked if there was a reason that the Task Force was set up with two Co-Chairs instead of a Chair and Co-chair? Given the motion above, members discussed whether both the Co-Chairs would need to be from the Black community. Pinder DaSilva will look back at original minutes to see if she can find any information prior to the Diversity Advisory Committee making any recommended changes to the Co-Chair positions.

Joe Solway asked if Task Force is the correct name given that Task Force is usually set up to solve an issue. Dione Valentine indicated the committee will never solve racism so maybe it's not the correct name and suggested calling it a working group.

Lauren Reyes-Grange asked what other municipalities like Durham and Toronto call it.

Tenzin Shomar confirmed there are quite a few calling it a task force as task force is a more recognized word right now and would be more aligned with this type of wording so it is best to keep the name as it is.

Pinder DaSilva brought forth the quorum challenges that the ABR Task Force has been encountering. She advised that the challenge has been discussed with Tenzin Shomar as the Chair of DAC and both the Chair and Co-Chair of the Task Force. One of solutions being put forward is going to quarterly meetings but the committee has not had quorum to meet and discuss this since the Pinder DaSilva had the discussion with the Chairs.

Tenzin mentioned that he has attended the last couple of meetings, and he also agreed there is something missing.

Lauren Reyes-Grange mentioned that when the Task Force was first formed there were no challenges with getting quorum, but it does appear that the Task Force has lost its' momentum.

Dione Valentine stated that perhaps the Task Force needs to identify and track goals and measure their success. Pinder DaSilva explained the Task Force does have a 2024 work plan

that they are supposed to be voting on but due to quorum issues, they have not been able to do so.

Tenzin Shomar recommended that may need to look at adding a clause to the Terms of Reference that states if a member does not attend 3 meetings in a row, then DAC has the authority to remove the member and appoint someone else to the committee.

Dione Valentine stated she may be interested in joining the Task Force. Tenzin Shomar suggesting inviting Dione Valentine as a guest so she can assess if she is interested in joining. Pinder DaSilva to invite her to the next Task Force meeting.

Anti-Racism and Anti-Discrimination Community Survey

Dione Valentine asked about the results and next steps for the community anti-racism and anti-discrimination survey that was completed in 2023.

Pinder DaSilva provided an update and advised that the results are being used to develop the anti-racism strategy for Clarington. She explained that there are a couple of members from the Anti-Black Racism Task Force, Region of Durham, Clarington Library, Museums & Archives and Municipal staff on a working committee. They last met in July and another meeting is being set up now to discuss next steps.

8. Work Plan Review, upcoming projects Anti-Palestinian racism

Pinder DaSilva provided information on an email that Councillor Anderson had received from Councillor Elijah on Anti-Palestinian Racism training options if the Diversity Advisor Committee was interested in learning more.

Joe Solway stated that there has been a considerable rise in antisemitism and discrimination against the Jewish community also so how do we determine what/who we bring in.

All committee members agreed that it will be important to receive training and information that provides the whole picture.

Lauren Reyes-Grange mentioned would be great to have residents come in and share their lived experience also.

Joe Solway stated that if we are going to have speakers then it has to be someone from Clarington and understand the issues that Clarington is facing.

Lauren Reyes-Grange stated that although she understands the importance of making it Clarington based sometimes we need an external knowledgeable trainer who may not reside in Clarington so we should try to be flexible while making it as local as possible

Members agreed that it is important that we understand the strategy that we are trying to support when we bring in the speakers; need to better understand what is happening in our immediate community and what is our strategy to helping them? The committee can try to figure out what the common themes are rather than individuals.

9. Revisit Oath of Office: Update wording to include Indigenous Rights

Pinder DaSilva shared that several municipalities have passed motions calling on the provincial government to change the Oath of Office to include acknowledgment of the treaty rights of First Nations, Inuit and Metis people.

Those municipalities are recommending the following wording update:

"I will be faithful and bear true allegiance to His Majesty King Charles III and I will faithfully observe the laws of Canada including the Constitution, which recognizes and affirms the Indigenous and treaty rights of First Nations, Inuit and Metis peoples."

Moved by Joe Solway, seconded by Lauren Reyes-Grange

That the Diversity Advisory Committee recommends that the Municipality of Clarington Council put forward a motion to call on the provincial government to make changes to the Oath of Office to include Indigenous and treaty rights.

Carried

10. Student Bursary Working Group

Joe Solway, Lauren Reyes-Grange, Pranay Gunti and Tenzin Shomar met and had a discussion on the logistics of setting up a student bursary for this year.

Application process – instead of putting more work on guidance dept at school to select the students, the committee decided they would review the applications; students would apply directly to the committee and the committee would recommend the award winners.

Don't want to make the process onerous so make it sure the applicants have multiple ways to apply – on-line, written application, video recording etc.

Criteria for eligibility – can consider the financial components but the main criteria will be based on social justice so that it aligns with the Diversity Advisory Committee goals. Specifically look for students who are having an impact in their community and making a difference in DEI.

Another reason to have the committee look through the application instead of having guidance department select the students because they may not know what the students are doing in the community.

Amount - \$1,500 – for this year may be better to give it to a smaller group of applicants and give them each a larger amount. Applicants must be enrolled in a Clarington high school.

Marketing the bursary – May be better to use social media instead of trying to go into schools and talk about the bursary program in person. Reaching young people through social media ll be easier. As the committee will not have a budget for this will have to be resourceful.

Next steps – Pinder DaSilva to make up a draft PPT outlining the whole conversation to help lead the discussion. Need a few more decisions made before any communication can sent to Mayor’s office.

11. Community Updates

Black Vendor Village – Pinder DaSilva reminded the committee that we will have a table for each committee so we will need members to sign up.

Joe Solway requested some key messages about the role of each committee for members to share with the public. Pinder DaSilva will create them and send out to the committee members.

Additional Event Planning 2024 – Pinder DaSilva asked the committee to consider having Clarington specific celebrations for Pride Month and Truth and Reconciliation Day.

12. Other Business – Hybrid meeting.

The committee is interested in going back to hybrid meetings. At minimum, the Chair and staff member would need to be there in person. Committee decided they could start with quarterly in-person meetings.

Motion to adjourn meeting at 9:20 pm moved by Ron Hooper, seconded by Dione Valentine

Carried

Next meeting: March 14th at 7:00 pm, 2024