



**Clarington Diversity Advisory Committee
Thursday, March 14, 7:00 PM**

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

Present: Tenzin Shomar
Ron Hooper
Dione Valentine (left at 8:43)
Joe Solway
Lauren Reyes-Grange
Pranay Gunti
Councillor Anderson

Also Present: Pinder DaSilva – Municipality of Clarington

Absent: Aaliyah Ruddock

The meeting called to order at 7:05 p.m.

1. Land Acknowledgement

Read by T. Shomar

2. Annual Selection of Vice-Chair as per current Terms of Reference

Moved by Cllr Anderson; seconded J. Solway

That the selection of the Vice-Chair be deferred to the April meeting to align with new members who will be joining the committee.

Carried

3. Declaration of Interest

No declaration of interest declared by members.

4. Review and approval of Agenda

Moved by P. Gunti, seconded by J. Solway

That the agenda of the meeting of March 14, 2024, be approved.

Carried

5. Review and approval of meeting minutes.

Moved by R. Hooper, seconded by Counsellor Anderson

That the minutes of the meeting of February 8, 2024, be approved with correction to the following motion:

“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”

Be changed to:

That the following motion request from the Task Force be referred back to the Anti-Black Racism Task Force for clarification on why there are two co-chairs for the Task Force

“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

6. Diversity Advisory Committee recruitment

P. DaSilva explained that the application process for new DAC members was updated for this round to include demographic questions, in addition to questions regarding the applicant's interest, skills and knowledge. Asking these questions provided more information to Council to help increase representation on the committee. This information will be used to create a skills matrix for the committee but in order to complete it, the current members will also need to complete a demographic survey. P. DaSilva will send a link to the anonymous survey next week.

D. Valentine shared that she felt more youth representation was needed on the committee and we should make extra effort to ensure we are reaching out to youth.

P. DaSilva explained that Terms of Reference does state that the committee membership will include two youth members (aged 16-24) and that currently the committee has two youth members but have had some challenges with getting one of the members to attend due to conflicting priorities.

J. Solway asked if there were any youth applicants in this round of recruitment.

P. DaSilva explained that one of the postings was specific to a youth position but was not sure if there were any youth applicants in the mix. Cllr Anderson stated he believes

there was one youth applicant, but they were not one of the successful applicants who was recommended by council.

Counsellor Anderson asked if there are exit interviews / questions asked to find out why individuals are resigning before their term is up. P. DaSilva explained there is no process in place for this but can explore it and bring it back to the committee.

The committee discussed the idea of sending the posting to local colleges and high schools next time to reach the youth.

D. Valentine asked about the anti-racism and anti-discrimination survey and what was happening with the results. P. DaSilva advised that there is a meeting with the planning committee next week and that the planning committee includes representation from DAC and the ABR Task Force.

7. Workplan review

T. Shomar asked the committee to consider what topics mentioned in the agenda (Training, community celebrations, diversifying community events etc.) that the group is passionate about and would like to move forward in the work plan - topics that can help the committee form some working groups to allow the members dive deeper into specific topics and help move it forward.

D. Valentine asked where the committee was at with the updated 2024 work plan for the year. T. Shomar explained that the plan was presented with a priority column a few meetings ago and the topics suggested in this meeting are as a result of what was identified in the work plan.

P. DaSilva explained that only extra topic added was “training” and it was based on the conversation at the February meeting where members discussed the need to create a strategy on what types of diversity education sessions the committee would engage in as part of their continuous learning plan.

Committee members asked P. DaSilva to reshare the 2024 work plan with members. Once it is sent out, committee members to look at what they are really passionate about or if something new should be added – contact P. DaSilva or T. Shomar with this information so that plan can be updated, and the committee can start actioning the items.

8. Student Bursary Program

T. Shomar thanked the planning committee members (J. Solway, L. Reyes-Grange and P. Gunti) for the work they have done on it. The following items were finalized for the program:

Process – 1 scholarship to one student for about \$1,000-\$1,500. Decided this was the best approach for the initial scholarship; can revisit as we move forward.

Application – Questions will be asked to better understand the applicants; what kind of work are they doing in the community? What is the impact they are wanting to have? How will the funds they have received impact them financially?

Letter of Reference and interview process to finalize the candidates.

D. Valentine asked if the committee would we also have input from other sources of funding to support the student's application?

T. Shomar explained that the challenge with figuring out what level of financial information the committee can ask for; the risk will always be there that we may receive inadequate financial information but the interview will help the committee to get some additional information.

J. Solway said that the committee will also request a reference letter which will help narrow down the candidates.

T. Shomar explained that is gearing the bursary towards individuals who have done exemplary work/involvement in the community and the secondary factor is the financial need.

D. Valentine asked if it is aimed at exemplary students then do we need to focus on financial need?

T. Shomar explained that the committee is not explicitly asking if they have financial need; wording it carefully so that it doesn't exclude kids who may not have a financial need but are doing great work in the community. The community involvement will be the key criteria, but financial circumstances will also be used to evaluate between equally qualified individuals.

L. Reyes-Grange shared that in her experience of managing bursary process in her job that most students who are looking at bursaries are usually looking because they need some financial support so the bursary can cover having aspirations to make positive change plus provide some financial support.

Next steps – P. DaSilva to present the request to implement the bursary to the Mayors Office for support for the initiative this year; moving forward will need to also look for financial support to increase the amounts and expand the program.

9. Anti-Black Racism Task Force

T. Shomar shared the challenges the Task Force has been experiencing with achieving quorum; the March Task Force meeting was cancelled as we couldn't make quorum.

P. Gunti shared that there is definitely a gap and challenge as the committee has not been able to move the workplan forward or make any motions or decisions as quorum hasn't been met in quite a few meetings.

T. Shomar shared that at the last DAC meeting, there was a discussion around changing the Task Force's Terms of Reference to include a section stating that if a member missed 3 meetings, then they can be removed from the Task Force through a motion and vote by DAC.

D. Valentine asked if we talk about the commitment level and accountability when we do recruitment?

T. Shomar explained that the website talks about the commitment level, the number of meetings and it's included in the conversations.

D. Valentine suggested that perhaps the Task Force members don't feel motivated or engaged as the monthly agenda is not sufficient or they don't relate to what is being covered in the agenda or in the workplan.

P. Gunti stated he does not believe it has to do with the agenda or the frequency of meetings. There is always an opportunity for people to add items to the agenda and the workplan includes a number of items that were identified by the committee.

Cllr Anderson shared that there is still lots happening in the in the community related to Anti-Black racism and there is still work to be done by the Task Force.

D. Valentine asked what happened with the results of Clarington's Anti-Black Racism survey results that was done in 2020 or 2021 (different from the Anti-Racism survey completed in 2023) and why is the committee not using the results of that survey to form their agenda and workplan.

P. DaSilva and committee members asked D. Valentine for more detail on the survey as no one was aware of this survey. L. Reyes-Grange stated that she has been part of the Task Force since inception and does not recall a Clarington specific Anti-Black Racism survey.

D. Valentine stated she will look for the survey information and send it out to the committee members.

L. Reyes-Grange suggested that DAC ask the Task Force members through a mandatory anonymous survey why they have not been attending the meetings? She offered to help come up with the questions which she will forward to P. DaSilva who will coordinate with Communication department to set up the survey.

Moved by L. Reyes-Grange, seconded by R. Hooper

That a mandatory survey be sent out to Anti-Black Racism Task Force members asking about the lack of attendance and engagement at meetings.

Carried

10. Council Update

Councillor Anderson provided the following updates:

Confirmed that the following motion was passed by Council and will be sent to the Province:

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.

Committee member recruitment - there were eight resumes/applications put forward to Council for consideration at the GGC meeting and three individuals have been recommended. The recommendation will be ratified at the March 25th Council meeting at which point the successful candidates will be contacted. They will be invited to the April DAC meeting.

The recommended changes to the Terms of Reference for all committees were also approved and will go to Council for final ratification. P.DaSilva to share the document with the committee.

Councillor Anderson thanked and congratulated both the committee and the Task Force on the success of the first Black Vendor Village. The feedback was great, the event was well received and well attended. Only recommendation was for there to be food vendors at next years event.

J. Solway suggested possibly doing a one-day event highlighting diverse food and vendors.

The results of a recent Region of Durham Employee Census showed that there is an important need to create better and more inclusive hiring practices to improve staff diversity and representation. Councillor Anderson indicated there is a similar need at Clarington and is wondering how the committee could impact the hiring practices at Clarington.

P. DaSilva shared that diversifying the workforce is part of the IDEA and HR strategy so there is a plan in the works.

Parks, Recreation, and Culture Master Plan report will be presented at the March 18th Planning and Development Committee meeting. Councillor Anderson emphasized that there may be some misinformation regarding the cricket pitch in Courtice, indicating that

the pitch is not booked that often so there is not a need to expand it. Stated he knows this is not true and recommended to P. Gunti that the community complete a delegation to council to emphasize the need for it.

11. Community Update

P. DaSilva shared the following information with the committee:

The 2023 IDEA report has been passed by Council and will be shared with the committee.

The IDEA Strategy 2024-2027 will be going to Council for approval in April. P. DaSilva to share the strategy once it is approved.

The Region of Durham is embarking on community focus groups of part their next Strategic Plan. P. DaSilva will share the information and link to participate.

P. DaSilva will share a link to a survey being hosted by Durham Community Health Centre focused on the future of 2SLGBTQI community, their family members and allies.

The DRPS Community Safety Advisory Council is recruiting and last time a member of DAC helped with the interviews. P. DaSilva asked anyone who is interested in helping to reach out to her and she will provide information.

12. Other Business

Next meeting will be a hybrid so that all those wanting to attend in person will be able to do so. A link to Teams will also be provided for those members not able to join in person.

Future item:

Share off line the results of the anti-racism and anti-discrimination survey results

Moved by P. Gunti, seconded by R. Hooper

That the meeting be adjourned at 9:04 p.m.

Carried

Next meeting: Thursday, April 11, 2024 @ 7:00 PM

Hybrid: In person - Municipal Administrative Centre, Room 1A and via Teams link