

Diversity Committee

Meeting held July 7, 2020 via Teleconference

A meeting of the Diversity Committee is held this day commencing at 9:30 o'clock a.m. via teleconference, there being present the following members:

Peter Ijeh, Chair
Councillor Ed Sleiman
Riham Al-Saadi
Saiful Bhuiyan
Yo Son Dah Nost Huff
Sungee John
Khagendra Gautam

Absent:

Lina Chaker
Sherrilyn Colley-Vegh
Shelley Evans
Jamie Bell
Lacy Carty
Christopher Fletcher

Also present are the following resource personnel:

Gayle Jones, Diversity/Accessibility Officer
Katie Arquette, Coordinator Community Development
Mary Ellen Bernard, Manager Social Policy & Planning
Neil MacEachrane, Diversity & Recruitment Officer, Windsor Police Services
Karen Kadour, Committee Coordinator

1. Call to Order

The Chair calls the meeting to order at 9:34 o'clock a.m. and the Committee considers the Agenda being Schedule A attached hereto, matters which are dealt with as follows:

2. Declaration of Conflict

None disclosed.

3. Adoption of the Minutes

Moved by S. John, seconded by Y. Huff,
That the minutes of the Diversity Committee of its meeting held May 14, 2020 **BE ADOPTED** as presented.
Carried.

4. Business Items

4.1 Review of the Diversity Committee Terms of Reference and Mandate

The Diversity Committee Terms of Reference and Mandate is provided as background information.

The Chair expresses concern that the Diversity Committee was not invited to participate in the Zoom meeting held June 19, 2020, which was coordinated through the Mayor's Office and Windsor Police Services. The topic of discussion was "Racism has no Place in our Society".

N. MacEachrane reports he was asked through the Mayor's Office to invite Black leaders in the community to participate in the panel discussion and that the exclusion of the Diversity Committee was merely an oversight.

In response to a question asked by the Chair regarding the rationale for the Mayor and Windsor Police to host the panel discussion. N. MacEachrane responds the Mayor and the Chief of Police are the leaders of the city and they wanted to see what the city can do differently to move forward. He said this was only the first discussion and there will be more.

G. Jones indicates she was unaware of the panel discussion held June 19, 2020 until after it took place. She adds that the initiative appears to have commenced with the Mayor and the Police and that as a result, N. MacEachrane was the Diversity and Inclusion Officer involved in the project.

N. MacEachrane states that Windsor Police Services has embarked on an initiative to form advisory committees that represent the diverse population within the city. He adds gathering feedback from these groups will assist in creating policies for training and recruitment. This initiative will be launched in the fall 2020.

R. Al-Saadi suggests that the Diversity Committee be included in such initiatives going forward.

Moved by S. Bhuiyan, seconded by Y. Huff,
That the Office of the Mayor and Windsor Police Services **BE REQUESTED** to ensure that the Diversity Committee **BE INCLUDED** in all future panel discussions regarding “racism has no place in our society”.
Carried.

4.2 Phase 2 of the Diversity & Inclusion Plan Subcommittee

R. Al-Saadi, Chair of the Diversity & Inclusion Plan Subcommittee advises the subcommittee recently met several times via teleconference. The following questions to glean the thoughts of the community regarding such topics as the Diversity & Inclusion Plan, Windsor Police Services and employment in the City of Windsor are proposed:

1. What are your thoughts surrounding the Diversity and Inclusion initiative as supported by the City of Windsor? (may have to describe the initiative in one statement.
2. With respect to any encounters/communications between both the Windsor Police Services and the City of Windsor staff with members of your community, were they treated with respect and professionalism? Did they feel treated differently because of their race, language or colour?
3. Do you believe the City should collect race-based data within all areas under its jurisdiction? Please explain your viewpoint/perspective.
4. Speaking from a personal or group perspective, what are some areas of success that you have experienced in the Windsor-Essex community? Please give some examples.
5. How can the City of Windsor help foster more of the successes and positive experiences of your group to encourage active participation in the community at large?
6. What are the three most important areas that the city may assist your community best?
7. With respect to gainful and meaningful employment within the City of Windsor managed places of employment, would your community like to see an internship program that addresses the matter of Canadian Experience as a barrier to gaining employment in their areas of specializations? Can you give examples of some parameters that should be integrated into this internship program?
8. Would you like to see the city implement Employment Equity? If yes, please share what measures the City can take to ensure Employment equity in fact exists

9. Is the idea of a community engagement in the Policing of the City of Windsor something that your community may be interested in? (Yes) (No). If yes, please share your thoughts regarding cities “auxiliary policing” and community involvement.
10. Cultural competence and diversity training is provided at some agencies to staff to support them in service delivery to a diverse client base. Please provide your insight on how to provide a more focused cultural competence and diversity training. How should the training be implemented and who should conduct it?
11. What concerns would you like the Diversity Advisory Committee for the City of Windsor to address together with you?
12. What are some steps to be taken to ensure that the Diversity Committee is included in important initiatives at the City level?

G. Jones states that in terms of Question #8, she suggests that another term rather than simply “employment equity” be used, as there is a Federal Employment Equity Act and people have different ideas on what employment equity actually is. She proposes by giving several examples of what you want input on may provide more accurate and valuable responses from the public.

M. E. Bernard alludes to the question relating to the need for sensitivity training and she adds that some city departments currently offer mandatory cultural training for all staff. She suggests one might want to use the term “heightened training or corporate-wide training”.

The Chair notes that the intent is to send out the questions to the various groups in the community, as everyone should have a voice.

G. Jones suggests that through the City’s 211 Call Centre, that a spreadsheet of the community organizations can be created to assist the Diversity Committee in this initiative.

G. Jones proposes that the subcommittee provide a finalized version of the questions to the committee for further review and additions.

4.3 Hiring Policy within the City of Windsor

S. John refers to the recent panel discussion that was held, and notes that the city staff that were present do not represent the diverse faces in the City of Windsor. It was stated previously, that the diverse representation of City of Windsor staff will take time as many people will be retiring in the near future. She adds that there are those who do question the diversity of the staff that are currently being hired.

G. Jones mentions the Workforce Census, that was completed at the end of 2018, and notes that the data is broken down to indicate the length of time an employee has worked for the city.

In terms of hiring practices, Councillor Sleiman indicates that the City does not look at the background of an individual but rather at their qualifications.

G. Jones advises that one problem is that sometimes barriers can unknowingly exist in a system and those barriers can impact certain groups, especially groups that are already disadvantaged. She adds the concept of reviewing the hiring practices is already included in the Diversity initiative.

Councillor Sleiman and R. Al-Saadi suggest that a representative from the Human Resources Department be invited to attend the next meeting to provide the hiring practices process.

Moved by S. Bhuiyan, seconded by K. Gautam,

That the Diversity Committee as part of the Diversity & Inclusion Plan, requests to review the hiring practices of the City of Windsor to ensure there are no barriers to employment.

Carried.

R. Al-Saadi voting nay.

5. Other Business

The Chair requests that the Diversity Committee conduct their own independent survey relating to the workforce census.

G. Jones explains that the Diversity Committee and other groups reviewed the Workforce Census prior to distribution. She adds that she administered the Workforce Census which was done in a thorough and ethical manner and then compared to the Canadian Census by a consultant. If the Committee is seeking further information from that survey, it can be provided.

S. Bhuiyan suggests the formation of a subcommittee to discuss community related matters and the City of Windsor hiring process.

Y. Huff proposes that this matter be discussed at the next meeting to allow more members to be in attendance.

6. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held in September 2020 on a date and time to be determined.

7. Adjournment

There being no further discussion, the meeting is adjourned at 11:27 o'clock a.m.

CHAIR

COMMITTEE COORDINATOR