

Diversity Committee
Meeting held October 27, 2021

A meeting of the Diversity Committee is held this day commencing at 10:00 o'clock a.m. via Zoom video conference, there being present the following members:

Peter Ijeh, Chair
Councillor Ed Sleiman
Lacy Carty
Yo Son Dah Nost Huff
Sungee John

Guests in attendance:

Councillor Kieran McKenzie, Chair, Governance Committee Windsor Utilities Commission, regarding *Item 4.1*
Paul Gleason, VP Customer Care & Corporate Operations, ENWIN Utilities Ltd., regarding *Item 4.1*
Keven Li

Also present are the following resource personnel:

Steve Vlachodimos, City Clerk
Gayle Jones, Diversity/Accessibility Officer
Christopher Menard, Cultural Affairs
Michelle Staadegaard, Manager Culture & Events
Karen Kadour, Committee Coordinator

1. Call to Order

The Chair calls the meeting to order at 10:01 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. Minutes

Moved by Councillor Sleiman, seconded by S. John,

That the minutes of the Diversity Committee of its meeting held August 18, 2021
BE ADOPTED as presented.

Carried.

4. Business Items

4.1 ENWIN Utilities Ltd. – Diversity Goals within the Recruitment Process – Review by the Diversity Committee

Councillor Kieran McKenzie, Chair, Governance Committee Windsor Utilities Commission and Paul Gleason, VP Customer Care & Corporate Operations, ENWIN Utilities Ltd. appear before the Committee.

P. Gleason provides the following comments:

- In the first quarter of 2021, a report was brought forward to both of their governance committees to discuss the topic of Board of Director recruitment and how after the next municipal election, they would implement some of the diversity and inclusion initiatives to adopt for their own internal recruitment processes.
- It was requested that we bring back a recommended approach through the City's Diversity Committee for review and if ask there is any additional items for consideration.
- In terms of equity/diversity they have developed a tool that all postings would be put through the scrutiny, before they are communicated externally to ensure that they are not inadvertently communicating any biases in the postings.
- As far as the process for advertising opportunities, they are looking to community partners who represent a variety of cultural groups, races, genders and abilities.
- Will continue to publicly commit to promoting diversity initiatives with an actual diversity statement that is now included on all of their external postings.
- Continuing to look for software tools to assist them with ranking applications, i.e. redacting certain types of data to remove conscious and unconscious biases from the candidate evaluation process.
- Committing to ensure that they have diversity in the members of the application screening panels and for the board of directors they use competency matrices to rank the applications.
- Asks that the Diversity Committee provide feedback.

Councillor McKenzie advises that he Chairs the Governance Committee for the Windsor Utilities Commission and sits on the Board of Directors for Windsor Utilities Commission. He advises that specific direction was given to Administration at ENWIN and Windsor Utilities to take a hard look to do that analysis regarding whether or not they

are doing well enough with respect with equity, diversity and inclusion within the entire corporate framework.

S. John refers to the software and requests that the list of community organizations/partners be provided to the Diversity Committee to ensure that no organization is omitted.

P. Gleason responds that the list of community partners that they currently engage with will be provided. He advises that the software that is available does a much better job at matching applicant competencies to job competencies, however, does not do a good job in removing elements that may exist relating to bias, i.e. redacting names of applicants or names of previous employers.

G. Jones adds that this is a wonderful initiative to ensure that best practices are in place. She agrees that the software is somewhat lacking at this time. She notes some of the other best innovative practices, which are focused more on boards. Diversity is an asset when you are doing your ranking of competencies having actual diversity that brings expertise and innovations to the table and different thought processes, which should be an asset in the ranking. Another more innovative thing especially for boards is creating positive targets for gender parity and equity seeking groups on a board. The City of Vancouver has a policy that created targets regarding gender parity and equity seeking groups. There is also the 50/30 Challenge meaning fifty percent gender parity and significant representation thirty percent of equity seeking groups. Therefore, if you have a board of ten individuals with three individuals from equity seeking groups, talking about groups such as racialized populations, people with disabilities, 2SLGBTQ+, as well as First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples, the targets should be reasonably achievable.

In response to a question asked by the Chair regarding if there is data on the current make-up of their staff, P. Gleason responds that they reviewed the City of Windsor's census data and in 2017, did their first employee equity and diversity anonymous survey with their employees. The survey was repeated in 2021 to determine if there was a change in the results from 2017. He adds they continue to struggle with gender diversity because as a utility company it has been relatively male dominated but are putting initiatives in place to address that, i.e. sponsoring scholarships for diverse candidates going into non-traditional fields of study at a post secondary level.

S. Vlachodimos indicates that this is a very timely discussion. The city is looking at creating descriptions that define the roles and duties for each of our entities; whether it is an advisory committee, board or agency appointment because in the past, the city has been generic in advertising these positions. There is a network of volunteers that want to serve on these committees but we have not provided the proper context of what is expected of them. We want to create a specific outline that explains what it is, what is required and what skill set and representation that we are looking for. There is a need to ensure proper representation on our committees as conveyed by Members of Council and to improve the way that we market these openings. Traditionally, these openings have been advertised in the Windsor Star but we want more engagement with

the public. Our Communications Department will work to create a comprehensive marketing plan in the New Year. He requests feedback from the Diversity Committee regarding what areas are not being reached and adds that he will request time on future agendas to discuss this issue. It is important to allow interested individuals from every corner to ask questions, receive clarification and to be able to provide their application to sit on a committee and if selected, will not be disappointed in being appointed to sit on a committee for a four year term.

The Chair asks if internship or mentoring programs have been considered.

P. Gleason responds that ENWIN has a partnership program with Women's Enterprise Skills Training of Windsor (WEST) to do mentorship and apprenticeship programs.

S. Vlachodimos advises that he came as an internship student from the University of Windsor and is very much a proponent of internships. He adds that internship students have served under him for the last twenty-eight years and notes that once a year, there is a paid internship for a Master's student in Council Services.

G. Jones remarks that she has also had student internships; recently two of which have been students with previous international degrees. She agrees that internships and mentorships are important.

S. Vlachodimos states that internships play an important role, because if we get them interested and exposed early enough, they will in turn be interested to apply for an agency, board, commission, or employment and will stay in our community.

The Chair notes that he is pleased with the direction that ENWIN is going and offers any assistance in the future.

Councillor McKenzie and P. Gleason leave the meeting.

4.2 City Council Decision 385/2021 – Hiring a Facilitator - Discussion

G. Jones provides information relating to hiring a facilitator to conduct a wider consultation to engage the community around the issue of inclusion and anti-racism:

Council Decision 385/2021 –

- *That the recommendation by the Diversity Committee to organize a wider consultation to engage the community around the issue of the city's inclusion and anti-racism policies and the impact on racialized communities within the city of Windsor be approved, and further, that a facilitator with expertise and lived experience be retained to undertake the community consultations be approved.*

- ***Aim and process:***
- To hire an expert Facilitator with lived experience to undertake the community consultations.
- A small team led by administration and including a representative of the Diversity Committee will make up the “Evaluation Team”. This team will work together to both craft the requirements of the Request for Proposal (RFP), including the timeline.
- Funding for the purchase will come from the \$200,000 set aside for the Anti-Racism initiatives.
- Also included in the discussion is what the RFP will set out, drafting the RFP, RFP distribution, closure of the RFP, two envelope system and the evaluation of the RFP.

Moved by S. John, seconded by Y. Huff,

That an E-mail poll **BE CONDUCTED** to nominate one (1) member of the Diversity Committee to sit on the Evaluation Team for the Request for Proposal for a Facilitator to undertake the community consultations around the issue of the city’s inclusion and anti-racism policies.

Carried.

4.3 City of Windsor Poet Laureate Program – Expansion & Branding

M.. Staadegaard alludes to Council Resolution CR331/2021 which referred the report from the Cultural Development Coordinator regarding the expansion of the City of Windsor’s Poet Laureate program to the Diversity Committee for review and comment. She adds that the report includes two new positions – Indigenous Storyteller and Multicultural Community Storyteller.

C. Menard provides the following comments relating to the City of Windsor Poet Laureate Program:

- The Poet Laureate Program is at the ten year anniversary mark
- The report includes successes over the years and adds that the impact across the community has been huge and the feedback has been positive.
- There have been three poets in the role of Poet Laureate
- Marty Gervais was the inaugural Poet Laureate who is now the Poet Laureate Emeritus
- Currently on the second youth Poet Laureate
- The term of a poet laureate is two years.
- As they neared the ten-year mark, Council requested that they look at an opportunity to further develop the program.
- In the past when applications were received for poet laureate, they did not receive applications from Indigenous or multicultural or marginalized communities.
- Through their internal culture and events team as well as the staff at Museum Windsor, who have had tremendous consultation with the local Indigenous

communities, discussion with these groups indicated that the Indigenous or multicultural groups would not resonate with the title poet laureate.

- They spoke with the Asian community and asked them if they were asked to share something of their culture, how would they do it and they responded through dance, which is a valid form of storytelling.
- When Theresa Simms a respected elder of the Indigenous community was asked how they would engage with the community, she responded that she would play the drum; present the Eagle Song and the Song of Welcome and Unity and share their culture through traditions.
- It was then decided to bring in storytelling, and cultural traditions.

Y. Huff suggests that Can Am Indian Friendship Centre and the Southwest Ontario Aboriginal Health Access Centre (SOHAC) also be contacted.

The Chair advises that he is the President of the African Community Organization of Windsor and asks if the African Community has been contacted.

C. Menard responds that they have partnerships with many organizations through a contact network.

Moved by Councillor Sleiman, seconded by S. John,

That the rebranding and expanding of the City of Windsor's established Poet Laureate Program **BE ENDORSED.**

Carried.

4.4 Diversity Committee 2021 Operating Budget – Discussion

The current balance of the Diversity Committee 2021 operating fund is \$14,801.

The following initiatives for the 2021 Diversity Committee operating budget are proposed:

- Fund one or two short term internships
- Host a positive communication campaign
- Host a meet and greet event
- Bring in guest speakers
- Host living library events – storytelling, i.e. event to learn about Indigenous people

6. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held at the call of the Chair.

7. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting is adjourned at 11:51 o'clock a.m.

CHAIR

COMMITTEE COORDINATOR