

Equity and Inclusion Advisory Committee

Agenda

Tuesday, March 09, 2021

Electronic Participation at 7pm

As part of the City's commitment to safety during the COVID-19 pandemic, this meeting will be held electronically.

This Meeting may be viewed online at www.stcatharines.ca/youtube

Public Comments: The public may submit comments regarding agenda matters by contacting mwenzler@stcatharines.ca by March 8th before 3:00 p.m. Comments submitted will be considered as public information and entered into public record.

Members:

Haley Bateman, Chair
Marcel Grimard, Vice Chair
Trecia McLennon
Jingjing Ke
Lina Aristizabal
Esther Roselyn Wainaina
Nesrine Kandil
Denise Zecchin
Emily Kovacs
Sean Vanderklis
Fatima Sheikh, representative from Anti-Racism Committee

Staff Liaison:

Melissa Wenzler, Government Relations Advisor

Guests:

Cindy Pfeffer, City of St. Catharines Organizational Development Consultant

1. **Call meeting to order (Chair H. Bateman)**

2. **Recognition of Traditional Territories**

The land on which the Equity and Inclusion Advisory Committee meets today is the traditional territory of the Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe peoples, many of whom continue to live and work here today. This territory is covered by the Upper Canada Treaties and is within the land protected by the Dish with One Spoon

Wampum agreement. Today this gathering place is home to many First Nations, Metis, and Inuit Peoples. Acknowledging this is a reminder that our great

3. **Additions / Deletions to the Agenda**

4. **Motion to approve the agenda**

That the agenda of the March 9th, 2021 meeting Equity and Inclusion Advisory Committee be approved.

5. **Motion to adopt the minutes of the previous meeting**

That the minutes of the February 9th, 2021 meeting of the Equity and Inclusion Advisory Committee be approved.

6. **Declarations of Interest**

7. **Presentations**

Cindy Pfeffer, City of St. Catharines Organizational Development Consultant, Presentation on the Leadership Accord for Gender Diversity

8. **Business arising from the minutes**

- Presentation on the Leadership Accord for Gender Diversity
- Equity Position: staff have prepared a report that will likely be published on the March 8th 2021 Council agenda
- Equity Training: The Region has initiated equity training recently for their Council and based on their experience, staff have been in discussions with Brock University to arrange similar training for city Council
- Motions were sent to other committees as directed for feedback, see item 10 Items of Correspondence

9. **Business**

- a) **9.1 Workplan 2020 Annual Report**
- b) **9.2 Finalize Workplan 2021 Discussion**

10. **Items of Correspondence**

- a) Sub-Item 1 – Memo from Anti-Racism Advisory Committee: COVID Recovery Plan Feedback
- b) Sub-Item 2 – Memo from Anti-Racism Advisory Committee: Recognizing the Improvement of Equity and Inclusivity in the Community
- c) Sub-Item 3 – Memo from Anti-Racism Advisory Committee: Equity and Inclusion Training and Anti-Racism Training
- d) Sub-Item 4 – Memo from LGBTQ2+ Advisory Committee: COVID Recovery Plan
- e) Sub-Item 5 – Memo from LGBTQ2+ Advisory Committee: COVID Equity and Inclusion Training and Anti-Racism Training

11. **Date of next meeting**

Tuesday April 13, 2021, electronic participation at 7pm.

12. **Motion to Adjourn**

Memorandum

To: Melissa Wenzler, Staff Liaison for the Equity and Inclusion Advisory Committee

From: Chantal Switzer, Staff Liaison for the Anti-Racism Advisory Committee and the LGBTQ2+ Advisory Committee

Date: March 4, 2021

Subject: Covid Recovery Plan

The Covid Recovery Plan which was developed by the Equity and Inclusion Advisory Committee was circulated to the Anti-Racism Advisory Committee for feedback. It was agreed that the Anti-Racism Advisory Committee members would submit their comments through electronic mail to the staff liaison C. Switzer prior to their meeting on February 16, 2021. No amendments were made to the comments at that meeting.

Reservations were expressed on how these ideas would specifically apply to St. Catharines and whether they would bring benefit to the citizens. It was stated that although advocacy for change at different governmental levels is a good idea the City is only able to conduct the work it is responsible for.

Below are comments provided on three examples:

1. Niagara Region Housing has a priority list for those who are escaping domestic violence. How would a 10% allocation for each of the equity seeking groups (so what is the total percentage?) work with this priority list? Do we know who on the list is a member of an equity seeking group, or what proportion of the people on the list are members of each of the equity seeking groups? How achievable is 10%. The number does not consider the actual situation on the housing list which itself is broken apart geographically and by type of housing. Would each municipality and housing type have a 10% priority allocation for each equity seeking group?
2. The provision of free internet is called for but this is already being provided by the library: there are devices with free wireless internet being provided to low income people in public housing and this program is now being expanded to additional devices which can be borrowed from the library.
3. Likewise, the Community Cares food bank already does pickup and delivery service. They are already open and providing expanded and additional supports as is called for in the plan, again this is outside of the City government and the City does not have control over this service.

A question was raised on which leadership equity groups in St. Catharines provided input to the plan? It was felt that equity groups in Ottawa and Toronto do not necessarily represent local communities and cannot speak to issues in this area.

The Anti-Racism Advisory Committee is proposing a social/diverse procurement policy, on which the Equity and Inclusion Advisory Committee was consulted. However, the ARAC pointed out that giving priority to any business could be contrary to the Ontario Discriminatory Business Practices Act which is why the ARAC did not include that in the policy proposal.

With reference to 10d of the Covid Recovery plan, it was stated that the City is not able to collect COVID data and would therefore not be able to disaggregate data and that this would be done at the Regional level.

It was commented that the items need to be more specific and specific to St. Catharines to translate into work the City can do that will make a practical difference.

The Equity and Inclusion Advisory Committee was commended for taking on this important work.

Memorandum

To: Melissa Wenzler, Staff Liaison for the Equity and Inclusion Advisory Committee

From: Chantal Switzer, Staff Liaison for the Anti-Racism Advisory Committee and the LGBTQ2+ Advisory Committee

Date: March 4, 2021

Subject:

Recognizing the Improvement of Equity and Inclusivity in the Community

A recognition programme for the improvement of equity and inclusivity in the community which was developed by the Equity and Inclusion Advisory Committee was circulated to the Anti-Racism Advisory Committee for feedback. It was agreed that the Anti-Racism Advisory Committee members would submit their comments through electronic mail to the staff liaison C. Switzer prior to their meeting on February 16, 2021. No amendments were made to the following comments at that meeting.

- Awards should only go to individuals as businesses have an unfair advantage, not only because they have profits, but because they are in a position to do basic steps for equity that non-businesses cannot do (e.g. have an employment equity program), that they should be doing anyway compared to taking extra-ordinary steps. It can become tricky to judge between what should be expected what is extra ordinary for businesses.
- The example of the living wage campaign is given, but how many of these employers have diverse staff? Can that truly be equity?
- There are too many awards being suggested, this may prove to be too ambitious and there may be great unevenness in nominations. It may be best just to start out with one award. There could also be conflicts because of existing awards being given within different equity seeking communities, the City's award(s) should be distinct.
- Anti-racism and diversity should not be in the same award category, diversity is not anti-racism.
- An award in the form of funding a workshop sounds like a good idea, but I am not sure there is the capacity to promote it properly.

The following comment was made during the meeting:

- It is important how improvement is measured. If there is no baseline data how is this done? Baseline data should be gathered.

Memorandum

To: Melissa Wenzler, Staff Liaison for the Equity and Inclusion Advisory Committee

From: Chantal Switzer, Staff Liaison for the Anti-Racism Advisory Committee and the LGBTQ2+ Advisory Committee

Date: March 4, 2021

Subject: Equity and Inclusion Training and Anti-Racism Training

The motion on equity and inclusion training and anti-racism training for City Council which was provided by the Equity and Inclusion Advisory Committee for comment was circulated to the Anti-Racism Advisory Committee members prior to their meeting on February 16, 2021. At

At that meeting committee members agreed that the motion for training City Council in equity and inclusion and anti-racism is a good one.

The committee recommended that the training should be done by “experts from equity seeking groups” which is included in the Anti-Racism Advisory Committee’s recommendations for police reforms.

Memorandum

To: Melissa Wenzler, Staff Liaison for the Equity and Inclusion Advisory Committee

From: Chantal Switzer, Staff Liaison for the Anti-Racism Advisory Committee and the LGBTQ2+ Advisory Committee

Date: March 4, 2021

Subject: Covid Recovery Plan

The Covid Recovery Plan which was developed by the Equity and Inclusion Advisory Committee was circulated to the LGBTQ2+ Advisory Committee prior to their meeting on March 3, 2021 for feedback.

At that meeting committee members raised concern that foodbanks are closed during the pandemic. It is suggested that the recovery plan should address foodbanks being open during the pandemic and that this is a high priority for the community.

It was suggested that if there is a lack of volunteers due to the pandemic, Brock students who need to accumulate volunteer hours could be a resource for working in the foodbanks.

Comments were made that the plan is not specific to the community and does not focus on community needs.

Memorandum

To: Melissa Wenzler, Staff Liaison for the Equity and Inclusion Advisory Committee

From: Chantal Switzer, Staff Liaison for the Anti-Racism Advisory Committee and the LGBTQ2+ Advisory Committee

Date: March 4, 2021

Subject: Equity and Inclusion Training and Anti-Racism Training

The motion on equity and inclusion training and anti-racism training for City Council which was provided by the Equity and Inclusion Advisory Committee for comment was circulated to the LGBTQ2+ Advisory Committee members prior to their meeting on March 3, 2021.

At that meeting committee members agreed that the motion for training City Council in equity and inclusion and anti-racism is a great one.

Questions were raised on whether this training would be extended to staff.