

DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES

Haldimand County

April 21, 2022 | 7:30 p.m.

In Attendance

Rabiya Azeez, Gayatri Bousfield, Anita Gombos-Hill, Megan Jamieson, Donna Jenkins, Arif Majid, Harsit Pate, Chantelle Seguin

Regrets: Bailey Gardien

1. Introduction

Introduction from Staff Liaison who clarified the role of the committee and our mandate as it relates to County Administration. This includes recommendations to Haldimand County Council and staff that are within Municipal control. In addition, as a member of the public first and foremost, consider our personal experiences and how we are impacted by County decisions and utilize this lens as we advise on community matters and work towards finding approaches that are inclusive, equitable and diverse. As an advisory committee, work will be a combination of self-driven priorities and ad hoc advice.

2. Stakeholder Meeting Update (Community & Recreation Facilities Strategy) - Harsit

Harsit shared information from the Community & Recreation Facilities Strategy Stakeholder meeting which he attended as a representative of the DEIAC. Results of the recent public survey were shared which he explained was a map of what these recreation facilities will look like over the next 20 years.

The committee discussed that once DEIAC goals and objectives established, presence in meetings, such as this, will be important so that we may be involved and given the opportunity to share and provide input from the perspective of diversity, equity and inclusion.

3. Land Acknowledgment Initiative - Megan

This committee was tasked with recommending language, for use at Council meetings, that formally recognizes and acknowledges the land, where our municipality is located, as historically and presently occupied by indigenous First Nations as a commitment to truth and reconciliation efforts.

To move this initiative forward, the committee has agreed to participate in 2 separate virtual presentations:

1. Darin Wybenga, Traditional Knowledge & Land Use Coordinator, Mississaugas of the Credit.
2. Robbin VanStone, Consultation Supervisor, Lands Use Unit Six Nations of the Grand River.

These representatives will aim to assist the committee in understanding the historical viewpoints of local First Nations, and offer advice/suggestions as it relates to proposed language that is respectful, genuine and historically accurate.

The decision of the committee is to reconvene after the presentations and consider whether there is support in drafting and recommending a land acknowledgement and if so, to move forward in providing a recommendation(s) to Council for consideration.

4. Inclusive Recruitment Strategy

Deferred to future meeting, due to timing.

5. Goals & Objectives / 2022 Work Plan

Each member proposed “Action Items” for the term of this committee. Areas / Topics of exploration were introduced and some discussion took place, primarily around the topics of:

- Representation / Reflection in County Business (County website, photos, artwork, showcasing diversity in Haldimand County)
- Awareness Building (training for staff and community)
- Outreach initiatives (PSB, other committees, community)
- Equal Access to Services and protecting demographics in need

Future Meeting: continue this discussion by fine-tuning key catalytic questions related to these areas, prioritizing initiatives, setting realistic/achievable goals and establishing specific action items and timelines for success.

6. Election of Chair and Vice Chair

A blind vote was taken and the following members were chosen to represent the committee:

Anita Gombos-Hill, Chair
Harsit Patel, Vice Chair

Next Meeting

Thursday, May 19th 6:00-7:30pm, Haldimand Room @ the Haldimand County Administrative Building.

Meeting adjourned at 9:15pm.