

Diversity Committee
Meeting held August 18, 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
Saiful Bhuiyan (arrives at 10:22 a.m.)
Lacy Carty
Sungee John
Sherrilyn Colley-Vegh

Delegations include:

Andrew Teliszewsky, Chief of Staff, Mayor's Office, regarding *Item 4.1(a)*
Steve Vlachodimos, City Clerk, regarding *Item 4.1(a)*

Also present are the following resource personnel:

Steve Vlachodimos, City Clerk
Andrew Teliszewsky, Chief of Staff, Mayor's Office
Gayle Jones, Diversity/Accessibility Officer
Jason Moore, Senior Manager Communications
Mary Ellen Bernard, Manager Social Policy & Planning
Katie Pavlovski, Community Development Coordinator
Jamie Adjetey-Nelson, Windsor Police Services
Justin Grainger, Intern, Council Services
Karen Kadour, Committee Coordinator

1. Call to Order

The Chair calls the meeting to order at 10:06 o'clock a.m. and the Committee considers the Agenda being Schedule A attached hereto, matters which are dealt with as follows:

2. Conflict of Interest

None disclosed.

3. Adoption of the Minutes

Moved by Councillor Sleiman, seconded by S. John,

That the minutes of the Diversity Committee of its meeting held March 30, 2021
BE ADOPTED as presented.

Carried.

4. Business Items

4.1(b) Windsor-Essex Local Immigration Partnership (WE LIP)

The Chair reads the following motion approved by City Council (CR 190/2021) regarding WE LIP:

“That a collaboration of the Windsor Essex Local Immigration Partnership (WE LIP) and the Diversity Committee be approved to undertake a community consultation in conjunction with the Diversity and Inclusion Initiative to address racism in the community be approved.”

M. E. Bernard advises that the Local Immigration Partnership is unable to continue with the collaborative work with the Diversity Committee. She adds that this is not the right time for this consultation with the Diversity Committee.

Andrew Teliszewsky, Chief of Staff, Mayor’s Office appears before the Committee and provides the following comments:

- In terms of the anti-racism initiative, he notes that his own lived experience is different and may create a challenge as it relates to understanding issues relating to the systemic and systematic racism in the City of Windsor.
- As a representative of Mayor Drew Dilkens, is looking for feedback in terms of how best to suggest moving forward.
- As it relates to the funding allocation around anti-racism, the Mayor and City Administration do not have a firm belief about next steps for that funding allocation, now that the Multicultural Council (MCC) has withdrawn their proposal, and WE LIP has withdrawn from the work with the Diversity Committee.
- A budget presentation in February 2021 included the proposal to Council to set aside \$200,000 for an anti-racism initiative. This was based on the Mayor’s hearing from multiple communities that the City of Windsor was experiencing a challenge with instances related to anti-racism in the community.
- The Mayor’s intention by proposing that funding allocation was a small contribution that the City could make towards anti-racism efforts.
- It is important to acknowledge that since the tabling and passing of the budget, the Mayor’s Office did not hear from stakeholders about how to allocate and spend that money. They did not hear from the Diversity Committee, and it is acknowledged that they did not seek out how to spend that money which may have

been an innocent error because by the time the MCC proposal was received, activists were looking for tangible action. The MCC proposal was seemingly designed to include tangible benefits to individuals, community groups who were experiencing racism.

- He asks the Diversity Committee to provide next steps especially with the news that the WE LIP effort and consultation would not be proceeding.
- Council will have to decide ultimately how and where to allocate those resources.

S. John indicates that there appears to be two points of view for the level of consultation that took place against racism. There was not a lot of in-depth conversation between and within racialized communities about the issues in Windsor. She adds that the Chinese Community was not consulted about anti-racism in general. She states that the Black Community indicated that there was a lack of serious and meaningful conversation around anti-racism. It is disappointing that this happened and it triggered the resignation of one of the Diversity Committee members.

G. Jones states that Mayor's Office has provided their comments and is seeking input from the Diversity Committee. She asks if there is interest in having a fulsome conversation with a full survey; or to hire a consultant to assist with that. What is the most beneficial way to acquire that input so we are putting as a city the best things in place to help our community?

The Chair states that one of the reasons that the MCC was able to produce a proposal was that they were privy to the intent of the city.

S. Vlachodimos, City Clerk responds that as a point of clarification for the record at the Council meeting, the Councillor that is employed at the Multicultural Centre disclosed an interest at the top of the meeting and abstained from voting on this matter. This happens all the time with all members of Council who have work obligations, family conflicts and we have no reason to question the integrity of the decision-making behind the scenes on that.

S. John advises that one of the things that the Committee has discussed is having a Town Hall public consultation and to develop a series of questions around that. It is incumbent upon the Committee to reach out to the community to determine where it stands on anti-racism and how effective the city structure, policy and actions are.

G. Jones responds that in order to have an effective anti-racism initiative, we first have to listen and find out what the problem is. Whatever we could do to get some assistance may be to hire a facilitator with lived experience and expertise in this area to assist the Committee, and adds that there are other agencies in this community that would want to be involved in this process.

A. Teliszewsky, reiterates the comment by G. Jones relating to the hiring of an expert facilitator who could undertake a comprehensive consultation that would draw

together the experience of the members of the Diversity Committee and other organizations across the city. He asks if this is something that would be supported.

The Chair expresses concern that advisory committees are restricted to holding four meetings a year.

S. Vlachodimos responds that in terms of advisory committees holding four meetings a year, he adds there is a clause in the Procedure Bylaw that provides for the City Clerk to allow for additional meetings if they are warranted and with an agenda being provided in advance of the meeting. He indicates there are nineteen advisory committees under the jurisdiction of the Committee Coordinator. We want to ensure that the morale on these committees is of a positive note and will be reaching out to all chairs over the next few months to gain feedback on how to improve the process going forward.

Moved by S. John, seconded by S. Bhuiyan,

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.

Carried.

S. Bhuiyan leaves the meeting at 11:15 o'clock a.m.

4.2 Letter of Resignation form Riham Al-Saadi

The letter of resignation from Riham Al-Saadi is acknowledged by the Committee.

S. Vlachodimos responds that resignation letters are forwarded to City Council, and are received, or Council will seek an applicant to fill that vacant position.

5. Other Business

Discussion ensues regarding a letter received from Paul Gleason, Vice President Customer Care & Corporate Operations, ENWIN Utilities Ltd. regarding bringing forward diversity goals within their recruitment process for review by the Diversity Committee.

It is generally agreed to invite Mr. Gleason or a representative from ENWIN Utilities Ltd. to the next meeting to allow for further dialogue and information.

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 11:32 o'clock a.m.

CHAIR

COMMITTEE COORDINATOR