



## **Anti-Black Racism Working Group Meeting**

**Meeting date:** Wednesday, March 17, 2021 – 6:30 pm

**Location:** Zoom/Online

**Attendees:** Bernadette Hood, Carwyn Holland, Debbi Lay, Nicole Facey, Romina Diaz, Samantha Adebisi, Charmain Brown, Stephen Linton, Sabrina Yung

**Guest:** Dianne Barham (PPL Board member)

**Absent:** --

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### **Minutes:**

#### **1. Welcome and Greetings**

Welcome to guest attendee and Board member, Dianne Barham. Dianne introduced herself and the Working Group provided a roundtable introduction. Dianne joined the meeting on this date as she was interested in meeting the group members and hearing some of the discussion.

Next, the Working Group reviewed and approved the agenda, including the planned time allotments for the topics of discussion.

#### **2. Terms of Reference (TOR) Follow Up**

Transferring 'Diversity Officer' Concept to Recommendations

SY tabled for consideration that the Working Group move its recommendation of the hiring of a 'Diversity Officer' (or 'Director of Equity') to their future list of recommendations. Reason being, the TOR is intended to document the present-day rules of engagement. Considering that desired role does not exist at the moment, the TOR would suggest that the Working Group is currently working with an individual that is not an active representative. SY suggested permitting it to remain as "collaborate with Library staff" for the time being. In the future, should the role (or other roles) be developed and paired with the Working Group, the TOR can be revised to reflect that active engagement. The Working Group agreed and the change was applied.

Honorarium

In follow up to the previous honorarium discussions, SY requested clarification on the Working Group's present-day status regarding the request. During the February TOR revision, an honorarium was not discussed or included. SY noted that on-going discussions on the matter are taking place, however SY wanted to ensure she was representing the Working Group's desire on the matter accurately. After discussion, the Working Group supports SY's continued advocacy for an honorarium. The recommendation was to advocate for a rate that is comparable with a local example, the Town of Ajax's Anti-Black Racism Task Force.

### Clarifying Inclusion of 'BIPOC'

The Working Group discussed the varying perspectives regarding the use of 'BIPOC' within the TOR. One approach was to consider referencing BIPOC as an acknowledgement of the complex intersectionality – recognizing that anti-Black racism work intersects with the broader BIPOC community and that individuals who identify as Black may also identify as BIPOC and therefore be impacted by the work of this group. Proponents for including BIPOC suggested that it prevents silos, demonstrates allyship, acknowledges work is not being done in isolation, and that racism impacts other groups in the community. However, some Working Group members felt it was important to remain anti-Black racism focused and expressed concern that the inclusion of BIPOC would impact the commitment to the specific focus of the Working Group. As the Working Group was unable to reach consensus on the matter, the discussion was deferred to the next meeting (indicated by highlighting in yellow on the revised draft).

### Communication Channels

SY sought the Working Group's preference and direction for managing public inquiries. After some discussion it was decided that [abrwg@pickeringlibrary.ca](mailto:abrwg@pickeringlibrary.ca) would be the email published on the future ABRWG website landing page (which is being developed). Library staff will manage the incoming emails and bring them forward to the monthly meeting for the Working Group to review and respond. It was agreed that if it was simple information inquiry (e.g., where can I find the TOR?), that can be managed by Library staff. However, if the nature of the inquiry is directed to the Working Group, or a complaint pertaining to the focus and work of the ABRWG, that would be held and brought forward to the meeting for review.

The Library's website [pickeringlibrary.ca](http://pickeringlibrary.ca) will host an ABRWG landing page that provides the public with the TOR, meeting agendas, meeting minutes, Working Group membership names, and any additional relevant information/resources. This page is a work in progress now. The intention is to have it go live shortly after the TOR is prepared for public sharing.

### Refining Roles and Responsibility Details

This discussion was deferred from the February meeting for a more detailed discussion at the March meeting. With regards to roles – Chair, Vice Chair, and Notetaker (which were the preliminary suggested/drafted role titles) – there were differing perspectives. Some members advocated for no hierarchy and a flat structure. While others felt there needed to be a leader for accountability and organization of meetings. After debating, the Working Group agreed to set roles.

Next, with regards to the terms (time commitment) for any person assigned to a role, there were different perspectives. Some tabled and supported a one year term, while others preferred a three month rotation to spread and share the leadership opportunities and responsibilities. The Working Group was unable to reach consensus on the matter, the discussion was deferred to the next meeting (indicated by highlighting in yellow on the revised draft).

Further to this, with regards to volunteers, nominations, and/or appointment process, the Working Group was unable to reach consensus on the matter, the discussion was deferred to the next meeting (indicated by highlighting in yellow on the revised draft).

Note, some members requested an additional meeting prior to the formal April monthly meeting for the Working Group to meet (without a Library liaison) to discuss some of the deferred matters. This was suggested to ensure the TOR could be finalized at the April meeting, with outstanding items resolved. The Working Group agreed.

### **3. Process Planning and Introduction to the Survey Results**

SY shared an introductory overview of the 2020 anti-Black racism community survey results.

SY reiterate the Library's sentiment that the survey data is only a starting point and that there are gaps (such as the unrepresented youth voice due to lower than desired youth respondents). More consultation and community engagement certainly needs to be done.

From the Library's perspective, the data was viewed as a preliminary consultation to seek out some priority areas of improvement that helped shaped how we wanted to build a Working Group and what priorities we would seek support in resolving, amongst other additional priorities that may be identified along this learning journey.

SY tabled for consideration, the Working Group to identify where they would most like to begin. While all the priorities are important, the Working Group recognized we need to identify a starting point and build a work plan from there. This work plan would include staff engagement specific to the priority selected.

Based on the overview and ensuing discussions, the Working Group selected staffing as their first priority. Next steps were then discussed. Given that there were unresolved TOR items and that our Human Resources team would need some time to prepare for their engagement with the Working Group, it was agreed that the group would a Human Resources representative to speak at the May meeting. This introduction would involve the Library's Human Resources representative providing some context and information around the Library's existing staffing and staff hiring approaches, existing initiatives as it pertains to anti-Black racism or Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.

The Working Group also wanted time to think about what else they would like the Human Resources representative to speak to during the May meeting. This would also be discussed at the group's additional meeting and relayed to SY if additional specifics are identified.

SY will notify the Human Resources team the next day and begin coordinating their attendance for the May meeting.

### **4. Planning Next Meeting**

It was determined that finalizing the TOR – resolving any remaining undecided details namely would be the top priority of the April meeting. The outstanding items are: inclusion (or not) of a 'BIPOC' reference; Chair/Vice-Chair/Notetaker commitment cycle, appointment, and responsibilities; and additionally, as flagged near the end of the meeting, the Working Group should consider including decision making and time management procedures.

SY to email Doodle poll for April and May meetings.

**Meeting adjourned.**