

Meeting Minutes

Anti-Black Racism Working Group

Wednesday February 9th, 2022, 6:30 pm

Online – Zoom Web Call

Attendees: Samantha Adebisi (Notetaker), Nicole Facey, Charmain Brown, Stephen Linton

Library Staff: Sabrina Yung

Absent: Bernadette Hood-Caesar (left at 6:45)

1. Welcome, PPL Land Acknowledgement and ABRWG Ancestral Acknowledgement (read by Sabrina and Steven respectively).
2. Conflict of Interest Declaration (Standing Agenda Item)
 - Noting no conflicts of interest declared.
3. Review of last meeting minutes
 - Jackie has asked that we share the minutes with the Board, which means that we will need to finalize our minutes in time for the Board package. Due date typically one week after the ABRWG meeting. Notetakers and SY agreed this is feasible.
4. January Board Meeting Delegation Debrief
 - Thanks to Stephen and Charmain in presenting the group and doing a great job at the meeting.
 - Any questions will be captured in the Board meeting minutes and Sabrina will share with the group once that is posted to the public.
 - **Stephen's Feedback:** He felt that it was a great opportunity, and that a lot of the questions that were asked explored the richness of the Black community and it felt good to have a foundation to rely on.
 - **Charmain's Feedback:** She was very impressed with the questions, and that it was very clear that the conversation on the Board indicated that they wanted to talk about the work we are doing and what it means for other communities. Questions asked showed that they really listen and that there was a genuine interest and dedication in this work. Other members of the group felt that the presentation went well.
5. International Decade for People of African Descent:
Action: Complete the submission draft. Stephen received the proclamation draft from Carwyn.

Sabrina question: What is the outcome desired from the proclamation? Is there a call to action the group has in mind, pertaining to the proclamation? What is the date and significance of the date the group is proposing as part of the proclamation request?

Charmin: Having the City of Pickering do the acknowledgment of the of the proclamation might be something to start with.

Stephen: The City of Toronto acknowledges proclamations and uses the proclamation as a measure of accountability. It is not just the proclamation, it is the action, so what are the other things we are looking for the City to commit to? This may be where we might want work with Anti-Black Racism Taskforce involved.

Sabrina: Re-shared the City of Pickering request for proclamation process.

Action: Determine submission next steps and point of contact.

The group wants to explore some ideas around the possible outcomes/call to action to be included, and what actions may bring more awareness around it (as opposed to a purely acknowledgement of an initiative that exists. We will add it back to the agenda in March. From the draft received from Carwyn, the group will determine the ideal date to propose and present some context as to how this could tie into the proclamation we're proposing. The group also needs to think about the context on what we are looking for the city of Pickering to proclaim.

Stephen shared some links to some information on the importance of recognizing the proclamation.

<https://fmjf.ca/programming/special-projects-and-partnerships/>

<https://www.thestar.com/opinion/star-columnists/2017/12/10/an-important-moment-for-black-p>

<https://pm.gc.ca/en/videos/2018/01/30/pm-trudeau-announces-canadas-recognition-international-decade-people-african>

6. One-Year Self- Evaluation Results

Action: Review outcomes and determine action items.

- Four out of five self-evaluation were completed. Sabrina is still waiting for 1, but the group agreed to still review the results.
- All evaluation statements rated well, generally most were 4.5 or higher (out of 5). Wanted to talk about statement 7 and 8, as they saw lower ratings. Group reviewed to see if there is any action plan needed and no action was needed.
- **Stephen Feedback:** In responds to the presentation he was not sure what would have happened if the Board did not support the 2021 Recommendations and 2022 Work Plan. It was observed that the Board put forward a motion during the meeting, after the presentation, and Stephen was curious about the significance if the outcome was that the motion was denied. What would happen?
- Sabrina noted that the Board's motion was to acknowledge they received the information. However, Sabrina will take our questions to Jackie and assure that the Board is taking our conversation seriously.

- The ABRWG is creating a space to have important conversations about what is happening in the library with regards to the experiences of Black clientele.
- The Board would welcome us back to have these types of discussions at their meetings.
- Jackie/Sabrina would like to know if we would be interested in sharing this model at a future library conference (example: Ontario Library Association Conference). The group agreed to consider this for future opportunities to share what we're learning as we develop the ABRWG and the work we do collaboratively.

7. New Membership EOI Call Out Update and Interview

- We currently have 8 EOIs! The EOI deadline extension seemed to help.
- The group interviews will be held next week.
- The interviews will be conducted in groups of 3 to 4 depending on how many candidates confirm their attendance.
- New! As discussed at the January meeting, as question came up about Vulnerable Sector Check since ABRWG members may work with the Vulnerable Sector Check (example, ABRWG members on the youth subcommittee would be working directly with youth). Sabrina looked into this internally and yes, we will align the ABRWG volunteers with the same requirement as all PPL volunteers. We will now mention this during the interview process.
 - Group agreed.
 - New ABRWG members will be processed as they begin.
 - Existing members will be included this requirement. Sabrina will send more information and next steps.
- Review of questions to be asked (Sabrina screen shared document).

Listening Notes for Interviewers.

Interviewers are listening for:

- People who are interested in the library and interested in making it a better experience.
- Looking for people who are active in the local Black community and are involved with a unique network where they can bring forward community feedback and experiences.
- People who have previously worked in the DEI space or have advisory experience.
- Candidates that have an understanding of available library services (from a client perspective).
- People who have an ability to collaborate through conflict or who won't share their honest lived experiences.

8. ABRWG Proposal for DEI 'Officer' Role at the Library

Action: Per the 2022 Work Plan, the goal for February 2022 is to draft a proposal for the DEI 'Officer' (role title to be further

determined through this work). Amendment consideration: Draft work plan and timeline for this task.

- What do we need to do to get the draft of the proposal? The group identified some considerations and research needed prior to beginning a draft. We need to build a role for this person that doesn't overlap what the different teams are already doing.

Example: The DEI officer would build a collection that is relevant and specific to the community. It has been challenging when it comes to DEI/anti-Black racism. How will this role function in relation to existing Collections/Librarian staff roles?

- Where is the focus and what is needed for the role? Will the candidate be focused on DEI broadly? Anti-Black racism? What aspects of the library experience?

The group determined some preliminary thoughts on needs:

- Someone who has an anti-oppressive lens with the ability to train and mobilize to bring changes to the library.
- Experience with and understanding of marginalization (the isms)
- Someone who has the ability to mobilize others (collaboration) with a variety of expertise to solve DEI issues
- Someone who can work on training staff and ensure they have an understanding of the work.
- The DEI officer should be there to set up a system to educate as opposed to being the go-to person to solve issues regarding racism

Next steps:

- We can pool together our efforts to find examples of job requirements for a DEI position that aligns with each member's vision for this role.
- Source the requirements that were used to hire the DEI officer for the City.
- Invite the DEI city officer to speak to the ABRWG.

9. Youth Subcommittee Update (TAC – Teen Advisory Community)

- Possibly up to 7 members with the addition of some new volunteer teens from the City's youth committee (Pac 4 Teens).

10. From Durham One

- Seeking Black owned spaces for youth to record the sessions for Know Your Rights. Please provide any Black owned businesses or establishments that would be interested in participating.
- Sabrina mentioned the Library could be an option. We've had successful, well attended youth programs have happened after hours and could explore that for this initiative if interested. Stephen to let Sabrina know after considering other venues/agencies.