

Meeting Minutes

Anti-Black Racism Working Group

Wednesday, April 13, 2022, 6:30 pm

Online – Zoom Web Call

Attendees: Stephen Linton (Chair), Nicole Facey (Notetaker), Charmain Brown, Bernadette Hood-Caesar, Shaibu Gariba, Titi Katibi, Teronie Donaldson, Marsha Hinds-Layne (7:30), Romina Diaz, Samantha Adebisi,

Library Staff: Sabrina Yung, Chris Moore, Elaine Bird, Rebecca Courtney

Absent: --

1. Land Acknowledgement and Ancestral Acknowledgement

Land acknowledgement by Sabrina and Ancestral Acknowledgement by Stephen (Chair)

2. Conflict of Interest Declaration (Standing Agenda Item)

- No conflicts of interest declared.

3. Review of last meeting minutes

- Deferred.

4. Introduction of Pickering Public Library Collections

- Welcome to Rebecca, Elaine, and Chris, joining the group this evening to share a presentation of the library's collections. This is the start of the ABRWG's focus on PPL collections.
- The library's Support Services team consists of Elaine Bird (Director of Support Services), Chris Moore, (newly hired, Manager of IT and Collection), Rebecca Courtney (Assistant Manager of Collections), Carolyn von Hasselbach (CES Collections), Debbie Pogue (Senior Support Services Associate), and Jamie Bristow (CEA Support Services).
- There are some vacancies on the team, as well as a leave of absence.

The Support Services team has completed a number of learning and development training opportunities, including:

1. Diversity Audit Course
2. Webinars promoting new materials representing diverse viewpoints/stories
3. Black Caucus of ALA conference: Creating Racially Equitable Collections
4. Equity in Action course (upcoming training)
5. Readings, research, webinars.

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- Most of this training has been completed by Carolyn and Rebecca as they are the selectors for the collections, and any library wide training would include the rest of the team.
 - Carolyn also sits on the PPL internal Inclusion Committee.
 - Rebecca shared a little on the history of collections and cataloguing in North America for public libraries, so that the ABRWG can understand the system that the Pickering library works with in serving the community.
 - When it comes to purchasing materials for the collections, the Library predominantly works with the ‘big five publishers’, most commonly known for working with public libraries across Canada. There are other publishers that the library has access to, can and does draw from.
 - **ABRWG Member Question:** How is the library improving its work with the publishers in terms of representation? Rebecca, “There is an increase in what the five publishing companies are making available in line with the community, and from a selection standpoint while we used to be limited to what was available, now there is a more diverse selection to choose from.” There are more publishers beyond the big five that we can also source from, to increase diverse options.
 - **Cataloguing system and the practices the library relies on to identify materials:**

The Dewey Decimal System, the Library of Congress Classification and Subject Heading: These systems are a product of the time period in which they were established. In present day terms, we acknowledge that there are problematic aspects. More conversation is growing in present day, on this topic. Some vendors are increasingly looking at the classification systems with a DEI lens and exploring ways to improve.
 - **Collection policies used to guide Library practices:** There are two policies. The Local Author/Creator Policy and the Resource Development Policy. These policies are reviewed annually and internally and are available to the public on the library website. We refer to and pull from public library governing bodies that when we develop our policies. For example, we look to the Canadian Federation of Libraries Associations and Ontario Libraries Services
 - **Collections processes:**
 1. **Selection, acquisition, and cataloguing:** The selectors work with different vendors to determine what is purchase for the collections. For physical and digital collections, the Library uses a request for purchase (RFP) to establish the list of vendors that we purchase from. The RFP process presents an opportunity for the Library to convey the library’s needs and requests, and can help identify which vendors can best meets those needs and requests. Physical collection is from Canadian vendors and Digital Collections mostly from the USA. In terms of diversity, equity and inclusion, there is more work to be done in terms of exploring vendor practices.
 2. **Budgeting:** There are two streams, one for physical collections (everything sitting on selves) and one of for digital collections (online and loanable equipment/kits). A review of the budget occurs annually, and considerations are based on different factors including:

1. **Stats and usage:** What we spent on the previous year and the measurable performance outcomes.
2. **Trends:** including readings and information use like online learning tools. As well as trends in leisure reading content.
3. **Prediction** for the year ahead. Example exploring themed bag pack for children.
4. **Trends in community demographics** and projection for the near future.

ABRWG Member Question: On working with clients using a digital world, does the library budget plan on supporting this? Rebecca, "Library is shifting with it". As trends show that people are shifting to more online resources, our budget has shifted to a large digital collections budget to meet those changing user trends.

ABRWG Member Question: How useful is the demographic data? Rebecca, "It's a number but we do not know if it tells the full story, and it's hard to tell what it means in isolation. Speaking with the community is helpful." The library does pay attention to demographic data as it pertains to age for example. In Pickering we have a large 55+ population and a lot of young families, so we have a large collection dedicated to those age groups for that reason.

ABRWG Member Question: Could surveys be implemented after library check out or in the email receipt people can get from checking out items? Rebecca, "I love that idea. One of the projects this year is to try a survey link on the front of our curated picture book collection. We hope to gather feedback from clients using this collection and to explore the volume of feedback we may get from using that method of surveying."

ABRWG Member Question: Seeing that you're understaffed, do you use volunteers to help your team? Sabrina, "The Library has not used volunteers for collections work in the past, as there are Union/Collective Agreement implications that would need to be considered and discussed before any volunteers can be utilized for collections related tasks."

3. **Working with vendors:** We outsource some selection to our vendors. They act as our go between for publishers/content creators and producers to provide resources that the community needs. For some digital platforms we do not have access to decision-making on the content and are not able to add items to those collections.
 - The library provides to vendors decision-making parameters (e.g, 'best sellers', 'major blockbuster movies').
 - The vendors also offer automatic release plans (ARPs). ARPs automatically provide popular materials under selected categories (predetermined by the library) for physical collections and some eBooks and audiobooks.
 - **ABRWG Member Question:** How do you come up with the number of copies to purchase for the different collections? Rebecca, "It is based on author grade (based on publisher sales data)." It's also based on what's popular and the anticipate demand from the community (based on reader trends demonstrated in similar categories previously).

- **ABRWG Member Question:** How do less popular titles gain representation if the chosen vendors are focusing mostly on popular material? Rebecca, “A challenge that selectors face, is the time it takes to more actively track the less popular titles” and research the title/author to determine if there is community demand/interest. This is a challenge across diversity, equity, inclusion topics that need considerable research and learning as part of that selection process.
 - **ABRWG Member Comment:** On the customer side for example, black youth not really seeing the collection they want and maybe they would not check it out.
 - **ABRWG Member Question:** Do you coordinate in your purchasing with different Durham libraries? Rebecca, “We do not coordinate with other libraries, and there is not a current process for that”. Each library also is assigned a municipal specific budget, so the spending is determined by municipal use, which is not consistent across the Region.
 - **ABRWG Member Question:** Do you have access to purchase more books from the vendors that are more Canadian based? Most of our physical collections are purchased from Canadian vendors, which carry Canadian publishers and authors. When selectors are independently choosing titles, outside of the ARP process, staff use a more manual consideration process. Rebecca, “Selections outside of the ARPs are guided by the Resource Development Policy, statistics and trends, requests from the community and collection development resources.
4. **Noteworthy selection issue:** Adding items to collection from independent publishers/self-published authors/local authors: Library rely on reviews/collection development resources to guide collections decision-making and when these things are not available it makes it difficult for us to make those selections. Also, it takes a lot of time to read through potential materials to assess whether it meets the collection’s criteria. As this is time consuming and requires various contextual considerations, it can be difficult to make that selection decision quickly.
 5. **After selecting the titles for purchase, we work with our vendors to catalogue and process everything on our shelves.** Catalogue record is inputted onto the Integrated Library System (ILS), which informs users (staff and clients) where they go on the shelves and makes each item visible in the catalogue (which can be viewed in person or on the website). Labeling is required for each item and reflects the collection name, author name, item barcode and Dewey number. Items are also given security tags and at times so other identifying labels. This labelling is now mostly done by our vendor. Some exceptions apply and may require staff to manually label and enter the material information into the system.

Due to time: ABRWG members have all agreed to have Rebecca and Elaine return to the next meeting to continue the presentation. Group will also try to cover remaining agenda items below at the May meeting.

5. UN International Decade for People of African Descent Proclamation

- Follow up discussion deferred.

6. Pickering Residency Requirement – Terms of Reference Addition/Amendment Follow Up

- Review and approval of updates deferred.

7. Determining Vice-Chair

ACTION: Group to prepare for nomination and voting at May meeting.

- Nomination deferred.

8. Youth Subcommittee Update

- Update deferred.

9. Other Business:

- No additional items tabled for discussion.