

Meeting Minutes

Anti-Black Racism Working Group

Wednesday, July 13, 2022, 6:30 pm

Online – Zoom Web Call

Attendees: Stephen Linton (Chair), Marsha Hinds Myrie (Vice Chair), Nicole Facey (Notetaker), Charmain Brown, Bernadette Hood-Caesar, Shaibu Gariba, Titi Katibi, Romina Diaz

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

Absent: Teronie Donaldson, Samantha Adebiji,

1. Welcome! Land Acknowledgement & ABRWG Ancestral Acknowledgements

- Sabrina read the Land Acknowledgement and Charmain Brown read the ABRWG Ancestral Acknowledgement.
- (Re)Introduction of Chris, Elaine, Rebecca, and welcome to Carolyn (all staff representing the Library's Collections team).

2. Conflict of Interest Declaration (Standing Agenda Item)

- No conflicts of interest declared.

3. Review June Minutes

- No omissions or errors to flag.

4. Vice Chair – Voting Results

- Marsha Hinds Myrie has been voted as Vice Chair of ABRWG.
- Marsha acknowledged and expressed appreciation for appointment.

5. Collections Discussion Follow Up: Recommendations

- Rebecca led the group through a follow up conversation, focusing on preliminary recommendations planning.
- Goals for today:
 - Ensure shared understanding about the specific problems we aim to resolve and which ones we collectively want to prioritize.
 - Review and identify preliminary ideas for possible next steps and strategies that may form the recommendations.
 - Establish shared understanding about priorities and success measures
- A copy of PowerPoint presentation will be shared with the group.
- After reviewing the community feedback, ABRWG input, and reflecting on the previous discussions with the ABRWG in April and May, there were two themes that emerged:

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- Theme 1: Procurement
 - Theme 2: Curation and Promotions
 - Theme 1: Procurement
 - We reviewed examples from the community survey feedback (see slide).
 - Thinking about the feedback and the problems we are trying to solve these are the outcomes we want to achieve:
 - Discover and procure more titles from diverse and perhaps lesser-known authors/publishers
 - Increase collection diversity, especially from African and Caribbean voices
 - Ensure collections reflect the full African and Caribbean experience, including Black joy and culture/history outside of slavery and oppression
 - Establish key indicators for assessing children's books from an ABR lens
 - Work to evaluate procurement process aligns with community demographics
 - Develop resources for selectors who are not from the Black community
 - We discussed some proposed, sample preliminary next steps/opportunities. Ideas were shared in two categories, short term (achievable in 1 to 2 years) and long term (achievable in 3 to 5 years).
 - The group identified the priority order for the proposed short-term options. They are (in desired priority order):
 1. Selectors to educate themselves further on Black publishers, authors and related resources and develop annual framework for continuous learning. Goal is to create a living document for current and future staff – strategies to diversify selectors pool to include lived experiences and knowledge (long term)
 2. "Suggest for purchase" promotions to encourage community input from a diversity lens.
 3. Research methods to track and measure procurement in this area to show growth/improvement/positive change over time.
 4. Diversify the selectors pool (can be consultants or other means, if hiring is not an immediate short-term option).
 5. Identify local and international sources for Caribbean and African materials and assess how we can obtain these titles.
 6. Collaborate with vendors to add titles from diverse publishers/authors currently not available.
 7. Add a requirement about diverse content/African and Caribbean content to physical materials RFP.
 - See slide for more live discussion notes.
 - Questions:
 - Shaibu: What is the percentage for increasing the procurement? It was agreed that measures would need to be established, to help guide the goal setting and progress assessment over time.
 - In thinking about narrowing down and trying to determine prioritizing top 3 short term goals: Can we consult with other

libraries/universities for suggestions on their prioritization strategies?

- Also need to consider:
 - Purchasing process and procedures
 - Sourcing
 - Vendor Engagements
- Theme 2: Curation and Promotions
 - We reviewed examples from the community survey feedback (see slide).
 - Thinking about the feedback and the problems we are trying to solve these are the outcomes we want to achieve:
 - Strategies for how to organize/display diverse collections in ways that are visible, impactful, and accessible to library clients
 - Browsing/search assistance to increase accessibility of diverse collections
 - Improved awareness of what collection materials are presently available through enhanced promotion of diverse collections
 - Strategies to improve how we invite all readers to use diverse collections
 - Methods for measuring the impact of any implemented curation strategy or promotion strategy (e.g., a way to track increased circulation and engagement with the collection, increased catalogue searches, list views etc.) to inform continuous improvements
 - We discussed some proposed, sample preliminary next steps/opportunities. Ideas were shared in two categories, short term (achievable in 1 to 2 years) and long term (achievable in 3 to 5 years).
 - The group identified the priority order for the proposed short-term options. They are (in desired priority order):
 1. Create process to ensure staff include diverse titles in their booklists, displays, book recommendations.
 2. Create and promote booklists featuring Black content year-round.
 3. Develop in-Library and virtual displays that promote and spotlight the Black experience.
 4. Collaborate with events teams on ABR-aligned collections-focused events (*Defer to upcoming Events discussions*)
 5. Identifiers on materials and/or shelves for ease of discoverability
 - See slide for more live discussion notes.
 - Questions:
 - Stephen: will we be able collaborate with events and collections team? Romina: there is room for teaming up with both teams.
 - The ABRWG and Events team discussion begins next month (August) and absolutely there is room for discussing event opportunities with the collections in mind.
 - Marsha: we need to ensure that the diversity of the ways communities consume literature is different
 - Also need to consider:
 - Audits and Reviews
 - Displays and awareness raising
 - Next steps: The Collections Team will take today's discussion information and further reflect on the prioritization, success measures, and additional

feedback tabled. Staff will draft your recommendations into a format just like the 2021 recommendations document and bring that back to the group for another review and final editing.

6. UN International Decade for People of African Descent Proclamation Follow Up

- Successful proclamation application with City of Pickering. A decision needs to be made on the signifier that will be used.
- We need to open a channel of communication with the city and library to discuss logistics.
- Sabrina sought clarification for the signifier request. The group confirmed that the signifier is specifically for the proclamation (as opposed to being for the ABRWG or PABRT exclusively).
 - As such, Sabrina will need to investigate the funding and process for organizing this commissioned artwork for the joint proclamation.

7. Youth Sub-Committee Update (Standing Agenda Item)

- No updates

8. Other Business: Upcoming Meeting

- Library Events Team staff, Joel and Shahin, will attend and provide a preliminary Events at PPL overview during the August meeting. This will kick off our Events discussion and per the work plan, further collaboration dates are scheduled for follow up discussion.
- CAREA Health Centre: Black Health Strategy Survey still open and can be shared with community contacts. Although the flyer and survey may say a date that has past, the survey remains open for more responses.
- Reference Checks: We have made some progress on the discussion. During the upcoming September meeting there will be a discussion requesting your feedback.
- Sabrina requested for consideration, inviting the new incoming Director, Engagement & Client Experience to attend the next few meetings, as part of their on-boarding. An invitation will be extended to the new Director to attend the September & October meetings, to learn more about the ABRWG and the work taking place. The new Director will be announced soon.