

Meeting Minutes

Anti-Black Racism Working Group: Youth Subcommittee

Thursday, October 14, 2021, 6:30pm

Online – Zoom Web Call

Attendees:

Romina Diaz-Matus (ABRWG Chair, Pickering ABRWG Committee)

Carwyn Holland (Playwright, Guyana Youth Group creator, former Mayor, NGO chair, businessperson)

Stephen Linton (Metrolinx Community Engagement Durham, Durham Community NGO President)

Library Staff:

Elaine Knox (PPL Teens, Social Worker)

Brady Williamson (PPL Teens, Children)

Joel Sutherland (Library Youth Worker at Ajax then Georgina Libraries, Author, PPL Client Experience)

Absent:

1. Introductions all around

2. Scope of Subcommittee

- JS: Survey results – Black youth feel they are being surveilled – need to connect to those youth and get their experiences – from that, improve their experience in library
- SL: Survey did not have the numbers we had hoped to get. Hopes we can be creative to re-engage youth. Intends Place & Time-based lens. Wants to revisit survey.
- JS: Should meet youth in their own space, instead of asking them to come to us. Ask TAG how they can help with this. Notes challenge of getting data but need to. Notes Jackie's client-centered goal, desire to put client first.
- CH: Approves of idea that we must meet the youth where they are. They won't reach to you, you must reach to them. Youth want fast results, action, benefit. Notes that young people looking for activities & hours for their HS obligation. Could we reach out to high schools – in person or

online – to do a focus group for PPL. They get community service hours for that. Previously, with youths on street, he would stop, say hi, talk & get them a snack. “What do you really want?” Based on their answers, he got them some sports gear, built it into a football squad. We could be similarly creative to get young people into reading. Poetry nights maybe. Include a prize/recognition. “Something that draws them in to participate in the library.” Spoken word, etc. activities. Link Library to these activities that bring youth of colour in. Be innovative! Get them comfortable with library. Help them develop confidence in the library.

- JS: Considers connecting such an event to solicitation of feedback. Could invite active library or tag participants to join in with our work.
- RDM: Are we inviting youth to join THIS subcommittee?
- JS: Refers question to Sabrina, but his understanding: they wouldn't be official part of ABRWG or this subcommittee, but if they could share their work and opinions, we can invite them to the meetings.
- RDM: Likes this idea. Concerned about gaining youth trust without youth involved. Need a peer involved, so that would help.
- JS: Notes that one of TAG's values is getting others youth involved. Refers us back to limited timeline. Need marketing, programming, etc. help. Reminds us to look at roving for now.
- CH: “We must be intentional about what we're doing.” Without it, young people won't take seriously. They are results driven. Involve parents to encourage youth involvement. Need to draw people to the name Pickering Library. Events/activities will encourage folks to visit library. Spelling bee in Canada?
- JS: From the discussion and Brady's notes, we'll write something up scope-wise and share with everyone to get notes. Work Plan & Meeting Schedule key.
 - We need 2 members of ABRWG to do subcommittee. We have four people, so we're good there.
 - We have a budget for advertising, so we have financial capacity.
 - Rotate minute takers.
 - JS will keep Sabrina in the loop
 - We'll dig into a work plan at next meeting.

3. Next Meeting:

- JS: Maybe we should do a Doodle poll to check for all? Pick a standing date each month. Could increase if we have something big coming up. Plan now to implement something early 2022. Is there a date that works?
- RDM: 2nd Wednesday of each month = committee meeting.
- JS: Different Wednesday works? 4th Wednesday?
- SL: Yes
- JS: Which timing works best?
 - SL & CH both like evenings.

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- 6:30 start time every 4th Wednesday?
 - Oct. 27 at 6:30 meet, 4th Wednesday in Nov, maybe earlier in Dec.
 - **NEXT MEETING: Oct. 27 at 6:30pm**
 - RDM wants more TAG info
 - EK: TAG started around when she started, 6 years ago. Had 32 members pre-pandemic from 13-18. Meet monthly. Advise us on collections, programs, prizes, they run programs too (Weeklong A.R.G). Take promotional materials to VPs of their school and sharing them. Involved & Vocal. EK agrees we need to meet youth where they are. Teens feel watched by security & this has lost a lot of them. Go back to basics, get in community, ensure they're not having that experience at the library.
 - BW: suggests RDM join us for a TAG meeting
 - EK: approves. Next meeting is election, but we'll send the next 3 dates.
 - JS: Suggests we invite RDM or any members of the subcommittee join a TAG meeting AFTER our next subcommittee meeting.
 - EK: will send TAG materials to everyone on subcommittee.
 - JS: Review minutes. EK To send TAG docs. BW to share notes with Joel. BW & JS to draft a scope, share with group for discussion.