

# Meeting Minutes

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

Wednesday, February 8, 2023, 6:30 pm

Online – Zoom Web Call

**Attendees:** Romina Diaz, Samantha Adebiyi, Charmain Brown, Stephen Linton, Titi Katibi, Shaibu Gariba, Marsha Hinds Myrie

**Library Staff:** Sabrina Yung, Shobha Oza

**Absent:** Nicole Facey, Bernadette Hood-Caesar, Teronie Donaldson

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1. Welcome and Land Acknowledgement
  - Read by Sabrina and Charmain
  - Sabrina and Shobha expressed gratitude to Sam and Charmain for being co-presenters at the 2023 Ontario Library Association (OLA) Super Conference and to Romina and Sam for representing the group at the Ontario Library Service Awards Gala.
  - Chair, Stephen, expressed greetings and acknowledgement for Black History Month.
2. Conflict of Interest Declaration (Standing Agenda Item)
  - No conflict to declared.
3. Review November, December, and January Meeting Minutes
  - There was some unusual delay with the minutes. However, we're back on track and hope that we will not fall behind again.
  - November, December, January minutes were emailed to group.
  - Minutes will also be shared at this month's board meeting.
  - No edits or omissions were raised.
4. 2022 Recommendations Draft and 2023 Work Plan Final Review
  - A reminder the intention of this document is to continually account for the implementation of the ABRWG's 2021 and 2022 recommendations.
  - Since we last reviewed the draft, the most significant changes were for the Events section, as we highlighted a few areas of improvement for the measures of success. Those highlighted points were taken back to the Events team for refining, and we feel the revisions reflect a stronger measure of the desired outcome and impacts.
  - ABRWG members will review the changes to ensure changes reflect what has been discussed. Sabrina will be submitting this document for the February Board package by mid-month. Any edits should be flagged before that time.

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- The 2023 Work Plan also reflects the group's discussion and decision to schedule in-person meetings every third month. The in-person meetings will occur March 8, June 14, September 13, and December 13, 2023.
    - ABRWG members requested having in-person meetings at George Ashe also and not only at the Central Library.
    - Suggestion to have in-person meetings at Claremont. However, the library is currently doing some up grades and we can schedule a meeting at Claremont when that work has been completed. Important to note, for Claremont's refresh, there is currently a group of residents coordinated and led by the library, the Claremont Library Collaborative (CLC), and they are collaborating with staff to conduct and gather community input and feedback for the changes taking place at Claremont.
  - Question was raised about opportunities to showcase some of the things the ABRWG is doing to the Black community in Pickering and about whether the library hosts public town halls.
    - The library does not currently host town halls. However, the monthly Library Board meetings are open to the public and is meant to be a mechanism for the community to hear about what is happening at the library. This is where ABRWG information is often shared by way of an update to the Board, including the ABRWG's monthly meeting minutes and work plans.
5. ABRWG 2021 Recommendations - 2022 Year End Progress Summary Review
- This document will also be shared with the Board.
  - It captures the progress updates provided by Clara and Joel.
  - For continuity and ease of reference, a reminder that we added the last column to capture the progress updates, so we can see specific notes for each recommendation.
  - ABRWG members are encouraged to review the new changes and the format, and if something is not meeting the group's needs to share their feedback.
  - Reminder that the progress summary is a living document, so ongoing editing can happen.
6. Youth Subcommittee Update (Youth Consultation Survey)
- Chair, Stephen, was not able to attend the last meeting.
  - Stephen has formally communicated that he will step down from the Youth Subcommittee. As such, Sam and Romina have stepped up voluntarily to take his place, alongside Bernadette.
  - Sabrina will communicate this transition to Muhammad.
  - The Youth Subcommittee is still working on getting into the remaining two Pickering high schools to do the consultation survey. They did see great success at the one school, where we saw 167 youth complete the survey.
  - We hope to have as much success in the remaining schools.
  - The consultation result review was pushed to March, giving the ABRWG members the opportunity to talk about what is next to go forward.
  - Note, we had anticipated youth representation during the OLA Super Conference presentation. After securing a youth who expressed interest, we were unable to

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contact them, despite multiple attempts. In lieu of the youth speaking, Muhammad provided Sabrina with some remarks which were shared to acknowledge the work of the Youth Subcommittee.

#### 7. Ontario Library Association (OLA) Super Conference Presentation

- Feedback from Charmain's experience at the conference
  - The audiences were friendly, energized, and very engaged in the presentation, which showed a reference of the work we're doing. The audience was taking notes and asking many questions, and this was inspiring.
  - Sam and Sabrina did an amazing job, they really knew how to present and keep the audience engaged. I was proud to be joining these beautiful and intelligent ladies.
  - Jackie and Shobha attended, and their support was warm and genuine, and we had the opportunity to meet a new staff member for the library, who commended the work we did.
  - We saw people from many different libraries and even post-secondary and elementary librarians and got the sense that this work is truly groundbreaking.
  - We had the opportunity to shop around and received free books at the library tradeshow, which was great.
  - Meeting Sam for the first time in-person and spending time getting to know her was great.
  - Overall it brought a sense of connection and value to the work we are doing.
- Feedback from Sam's experience at the conference
  - Agrees with everything Charmain mentioned regarding how engaged and supportive the audience was to the work the ABRWG is doing.
  - Loved hanging out with Charmain, shopping for books.
  - Appreciate the love, support, and commitment the team at the Pickering Library give (Sabrina, Jackie, and Shobha).
  - Grateful for the opportunity to attend the awards gala, and was happy that we got nominated for an award even if we did not win. Had great time at the gala with Romina and the team, and the food was great.
  - Appreciation was expressed to all members of the ABRWG in supporting Charmain and Sam to represent the group.
  - Shared idea on how Romina, can use her expertise in art to create a program at the library that support basic learning for children and youth who are interested in art and film.

#### 8. Proclamation Subcommittee Update (ABR Identifier Collaboration with PABRT)

- The mini working group, comprised of PABRT and ABRWG representation continue to discuss and plan the strategy for the City of Pickering ABR identifier. The top focus right now is on learning and engaging with expert stakeholders to determine the appropriate compensation for artists in the context of a contest.
- A public campaign launch date has not been decided yet, as we work out the key details for transparency. There is desire to launch this around Black Mental Health Week in March.

- We do hope to host a joint event on August 31<sup>st</sup>, on the International Day for People of African Descent. At this event, the hope is to reveal the identifier, along with a flag that will be presented to the community. The event is slated to take place in the Esplanade Park and we're hoping to also showcase the work of both groups, PABRT and the ABRWG, to raise awareness about the opportunities for input and engagement the community may not know about.
- Budget estimation is currently around \$4000, and this will be covered by the Library and the City of Pickering. Budgets for 2023 must go through City Council and is awaiting approval. Budget review and approvals may arrive some time late February, early March, and this has a direct impact on the timeline of the ABR identifier initiative.

9. February Board Meeting

- ABRWG members are invited to the Central Library on the same day of the Library Board meeting on February 23<sup>rd</sup> at 6:15 pm. This is to celebrate and show appreciation to the group for the award nomination and the continued work of the ABRWG. The group members are also invited to stay to attend the Board meeting and to support ABRWG Chair Stephen delegating at the meeting.

10. ABRWG Resource/Information Sharing Mechanism

- ABRWG members identified a need for a way to share community events and resources beyond the ABRWG membership.
- ABRWG members are encouraged to share information with Sabrina. Sabrina can share this information with the library's partnership list. Also, eligible community flyers can be printed and posted on the community boards located at each library location.
- We do not currently have a community postings space on the library website, but perhaps we can explore a way for some information to be posted on the ABRWG landing page.
- Sabrina can share information to staff via the Anti-Black Racism staff portal (online sharing page).
- The library receives a lot of requests for sharing resources from all sectors and audiences in the community and is trying to find the most effective tools and ways to support these asks.
- City of Pickering calendar link was shared with group.
- Sabrina will take the idea of having a bulletin board at the library for ABRWG information.