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# Meeting Minutes

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

Wednesday, July 9, 2025, 6:30 pm

Location: Online, via Teams

**Attendees:** Nicole Facey, Romina Diaz-Matus, Samantha Adebiyi, Scerena Officer, Teronie Donaldson

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

**Library Board Members:** Akeem Maginley (Chair), Doodnauth Sharma (Vice-Chair), Abdullah Mir

**Absent:** Charmain Brown, Salome Odeny, Simone Grant

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1. Land Acknowledgement and Ancestral Acknowledgement
  - Read by SY and RDM.
2. Conflict of Interest Declaration
  - No conflicts declared.
3. Review Meeting Minutes
  - June meeting minutes were reviewed
  - No edits or changes were expressed.
4. Introduction to Local History Collections
  - JD, Manager, Collections and Digital Experience, provided an introduction to Local History.
  - This discussion builds on community feedback about Collections, and the opportunity for better representation across authors and what stories are available, represented, and included in all collections that clients can access.
  - A copy of the presentation will be shared with the group.
  - The group shared what they currently think of when they hear 'Local History'. Some thoughts shared included:
    - Archives or records from earlier times in Pickering's history, land information, decisions around the nuclear power plant.
    - Old geographic surveys, information about families that lived here and the various land changes.
    - History of Pickering itself, not just as it pertains to the library.
  - Post-presentation discussion and feedback:
    - This is important work. How do we get the community involved in this work? Have we considered 'open houses' with partners? Leveraging

partners to bring forward their networks of people. Perhaps a 'Community Day' with displays and entertainment.

- How do we raise awareness around donating/contributing to the collection? Where does the research start? And how do residents know if a donation opportunity fits within scope of the collection? How do staff determine priorities across topics, sources, and formats?
  - A Local History specific collection policy is being developed to formalize criteria for this unique collection. Intention is to have something that can be shared publicly for more transparency.
- When significant community events take place, (e.g., naming of a new elementary school), could the library and these external groups (e.g., Durham District School Board) collaborate to raise awareness about the history and background information around the significant event?
- Does the library work with local history groups? Suggestion: Ontario Black History Society.
- Where do staff start to look for materials?
  - Currently, staff typically start with the digital archive.
- From a diversity perspective, can you invite specific items in more varied formats, e.g., oral histories, music, poetry – other forms of generational storytelling? Suggestion: Ghanaian, Ethiopian cultural music, or cultural representations to reflect the full Pickering community.
- Oshawa museum produced a [book](#), is that something Pickering could do?
- Consider offer more student placement opportunities that could increase capacity and/or diverse perspectives/contributions.

#### 5. Anti-Black Racism Community Survey

- The latest draft version was shared by email. Appreciation was shared for all the input and suggested edits.
- The goal remains to publish the survey no later than July 30, to ensure the survey can be promoted at the Durham Region Emancipation Day event taking place in Esplanade Park.
- The group brainstormed passive activities and other strategies beyond the survey to invite input from residents who may not want to complete the survey.
- SY to gather remaining ABRWG and internal feedback for a final edit and will provide an updated preview link. In the meantime, all members will review the preview link for flow, wording, timing, and overall experience.

#### 6. Debrief February and April In-library Observations and Feedback

- Members shared individual positive and negative experiences from visiting the library in-person.
- Feedback and discussions touched on: spaces/layout, loanable items beyond books, staff-to-teen engagement, additional event ideas, public awareness of what is accessible at the library, and front-line client experience training/accountability.
- SY and SO will share the details of all the feedback with the appropriate teams for follow up.

**Next Meeting: Wednesday, August 13, 6:30 pm (in-person at Claremont Library)**