



Hamilton

MINUTES

LGBTQ Advisory Committee

Tuesday, May 28, 2019

6:00 PM - 8:15 PM

City Hall, 71 Main Street West, Room 192

Present: James Diemert, Autumn Getty, Freja Gray, Cameron Kroetsch (Chair), Violetta Nikolskaya (Vice Chair), Mitch Ray-Borsc, Kristeen Sprague, Maureen Wilson (City Council Appointee)

Regrets: Sean Cullen, Kyle Weitz

Staff: Betsy Pocop (Diversity and Inclusion)

Guests: Janette Smith (City Manager), Jodi Koch (Director, Talent and Diversity), members of the public

Chair: Cameron Kroetsch

1. Welcome / Introductions

Committee members and guests were welcomed and there was a round of introductions.

2. Land Acknowledgement

V. Nikolskaya provided a Land Acknowledgement.

3. Declarations of Conflicts of Interest

None

4. Procedural Business

4.1 Motion to Approve the Agenda

(V. Nikolskaya / K. Sprague)

That the LGBTQ Advisory Committee approve the agenda for today's meeting as distributed with the following additions / amendments:

(a) That item 6.5 be added to the agenda:

6.5 Event on May 31, 2019

(b) That items 3, 4 and 6 be removed from the agenda

CARRIED

5. Regular Business

5.1 Motion to Change the Date of the Community Conversation

(V. Nikolskaya / K. Sprague)

That a Community Conversation be held on June 18, 2019 in place of the Committee's next regularly scheduled meeting.

CARRIED

Discussion: The Chair and Vice Chair will sort out the logistics and invite a panel of speakers. Information regarding the Community Conversation will be shared by those in attendance.

5.2 Motion to Affirm the Committee's Position on the Flag Raising Ceremony

(J. Diemert / K. Sprague)

That the LGBTQ Advisory Committee affirms the decision it made by carrying its motion of May 15, 2019; more specifically, that the Committee continues not to be in support of the City of Hamilton raising the Pride, Trans, and Six Nations flags in 2019.

CARRIED

6. Discussion Items

6.1 Employment of Staff under Investigation

City Manager explained her reason for calling this meeting and wanting to find out more from the Committee about the reasons for their motion of May 15, 2019. City Manager explained the current status of the situation. She expects that the investigation will be concluded in weeks rather than months.

Members expressed concern for the safety of Two Spirit and LGBTQIA+ communities, especially that personal and contact information may have been accessed. Members also expressed concern that there were not adequate background checks performed and that they did not have faith in the hiring practices of the City.

A member of the public expressed that they were concerned about the lack of space for Two Spirit and LGBTQIA+ communities in Hamilton. The focus on the crosswalk missed the point. When the Well closed down the City should have intervened to ensure that there was adequate space.

6.2 Citizen Appointment to the Hamilton Police Services Board

Members indicated process for selecting a community member resulted in a former auxiliary police officer being appointed; there was further erosion of trust in part because 10 minute interviews were held with candidates for a paid position. This was all made worse by the Board refusing to address the issue.

Staff and Councillor discussed the timeline around when this happened and what the process has been like up to this point. There was a discussion about the practices for selection being revised with a focus on an Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) lens moving forward.

Members expressed concern that the City did not seem to have this focus already and that while community consultation is important that neither members of the Committee nor members of the community were in a position to do this work. Members suggested that those responsible at the City get the training necessary.

6.3 City of Hamilton's Trans Protocol

Members confirmed that this part of the May 15, 2019 motion came from a member of the community but that the committee felt it was important to include it in their motion.

Members expressed concern that the reasons for the implementation of the protocol were not widely known (i.e. a result of the City losing a case at the Human Rights Tribunal of Ontario).

Some members expressed that the process for the creation and review of the Protocol was an issue and shared that there was an erosion of trust and a lack of engagement including meeting with some community members individually rather than together in group settings.

Other members expressed that the vetting and engagement process by the City was far reaching and that community consultations were effective.

Staff indicated that a community engagement practice was developed in the last year, ongoing dialogue needs to happen, and that the offer remains to meet with groups or individuals to discuss their concerns further.

6.4 Selection Process for the LGBTQ Advisory Committee

Members summarized the process, especially that the Committee's membership was capped at 9. The Committee was not consulted about this change to its membership.

Guests talked about their experiences of having applied to be on the Committee, specifically that they were not interviewed at all. Representatives from spectrum Hamilton spoke about their campaign to engage youth in the process of applying to the City's Committees through a Voter Access Campaign during the last municipal election. They distributed a copy of a letter that they used during their campaign and urged the City to consider opening up the selection process.

Guests expressed that the Mayor and some members of City Council had supported the Voter Access Campaign and had even signed a pledge to forward 2 youth positions on the LGBTQ Advisory Committee. Members and guests urged the City to commit to ensuring that youth had seats on committees and that they focus on building capacity on committees for youth.

Members expressed that there was a lack of transparency in the selection process and that there needs to more seats at the table specifically dedicated to youth and racialized members. Members also noted that there were 2 youth members on the Committee at present.

A Citizen Committee Report is being prepared on this matter to make a recommendation to Council to expand the size of the

Committee based on the recommendations made in the motion on May 15, 2019.

6.5 Event on May 31, 2019

The Committee had originally considered an event on May 31, 2019 in place of the flag raising ceremony but, due to obvious time constraints, decided that this should be postponed.

The date had been chosen both before there was public attention on the motion from May 15, 2019 and larger public discussions about the selection process and the flag raising ceremony.

Members expressed that they felt that the City's leadership was not listening to the advice of the Committee and that it was important to hold space to hear from as many people in the community as possible. Members especially indicated that it would be nice for City Council to be present at the event and to engage in dialogue with constituents.

Members expressed that the entire community is not unified on the Committee's decision to cancel the flag raising ceremony and that some youth have expressed a desire to see the flag being raised regardless. For some, whether there is a ceremony or not, the flag represents hope and is seen by many as a positive symbol.

7. Adjournment

(J. Diemert / V. Nikolskaya)

That, there being no further business, the meeting be adjourned at 8:15 PM.

CARRIED