

From: [Pride Hamilton](#)
To: [Eisenberger, Fred](#); [Jackson, Tom](#); [Collins, Chad](#); [Stevenson, Kirsten](#); [R. Diodati](#); egirt@hamiltonpolice.on.ca; fbergen@hamiltonpolice.on.ca; afilice@hamiltonpolice.on.ca
Subject: Open Letter to HPSB, HPS, and Mayor
Date: Wednesday, June 3, 2020 12:27:45 PM
Attachments: [Open Letter to the HPSB, HPS, and Mayor.pdf](#)

Please see the open letter attached to this email and please ensure that the other members of the Hamilton Police Services Board receive it.

We do not have their public email addresses.

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Pride Hamilton Board of Directors
pridehamilton.com



June 3, 2020

After almost 30 years of celebrating Pride in Hamilton, and on the shoulders of so many who fought before us, we write this letter to continue the protest.

The Hamilton Police Service and its leadership under the Hamilton Police Services Board, a Board that includes Hamilton's Mayor, continue to undermine, ignore, and silence members of Two Spirit and LGBTQIA+ communities.

In the past 2 days alone, members of these organizations have targeted these communities in inappropriate and unwelcome ways, namely by the:

- Mayor raising the Pride and trans flags without consultation; and
- the Hamilton Police Service posting an inappropriate video on social media.

Before we get into the specifics, we want to reaffirm our support for local Black leaders who spoke truth to Hamilton's institutions yesterday and for Black Lives Matter Toronto for supporting and amplifying their voices. We continue to stand in solidarity with you all.

Mayor raising the Pride and trans flags without consultation

The Mayor unilaterally decided to raise Pride and trans flags at City Hall on June 1, 2020.

Let us be impeccably clear: this was a hollow and empty gesture.

The act of raising flags is a meaningless symbolic gesture if a request to fly them doesn't come from the communities that those flags represent. In spirit, they belong to those communities and not to the institutions that raise them. No organization, to our knowledge, representing Two Spirit or LGBTQIA+ communities publicly asked for them to be raised.

Take the Pride flag down and immediately consult with members of the trans community in Hamilton about the trans flag.

Hamilton Police Service posting a harmful video to their social media channels

With respect to the video released by the Hamilton Police Service, Pride Hamilton is deeply troubled by its content. It demonstrates, clearly, that the Hamilton Police Service is completely out of touch with Two Spirit and LGBTQIA+ communities in Hamilton.

The video contains imagery that is completely inappropriate and harmful. It contains images of bullet proof vests and military-style uniforms mixed with pink- and rainbow-washing calls to join in a virtual celebration. This video makes digital Pride spaces unsafe for some members of Two Spirit and LGBTQIA+ communities.

Take the video down.

As of the writing of this letter, and as a reminder:

- There are still charges pending against those who stood up to defend Pride from white supremacists in 2019: **drop the charges**
- The issues raised by the City of Hamilton's LGBTQ Advisory Committee and Pride Hamilton, both in advance of last year's flag raising and in the aftermath of the violence at Pride 2019, have not been properly addressed: **respond to them publicly**
- The LGBTQ Advisory Committee has not been permitted to meet virtually and, as a result, has been prevented from participating in Pride month or addressing these issues: **allow City of Hamilton citizen committees to meet virtually**
- Neither the Hamilton Police Services Board nor the Hamilton Police Service have taken action to address the damage their organizations and their members have done to all oppressed communities in Hamilton: **take action to address these and other demands made by members of oppressed communities in Hamilton**

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This letter was sent by email to the Hamilton Police Services Board, the administration of the Hamilton Police Service, and the Mayor of Hamilton.