

Pilon, Janet

Subject: Bias in IC Recommendation Report of Sept 24

From: Lauren Stephen

Sent: September 29, 2020 10:34 AM

To: Farr, Jason <Jason.Farr@hamilton.ca>; clerk@hamilton.ca

Subject: Re: Bias in IC Recommendation Report of Sept 24

Context. Based on Paragraph 8, it seems that the Integrity Commissioner, Principles *Integrity* has selected which information to include in this report.

[8] On March 4, 2020 we received a complaint submitted to us by the City Clerk on behalf of Council for the City of Hamilton. For the purposes of properly scoping our investigation, we have restated and narrowed the complaint against the Respondent.

In other words, the IC has chosen not to include some information submitted by Council in its Complaint, information the IC considers less relevant. Nevertheless, this note about community concerns about Council's selection of a white, cis-gendered, able-bodied man as Chair of the LGBTQ+ AC is included. A rehashing of history that I don't see as relevant.

On Mon, 28 Sep 2020 at 23:19, Lauren Stephen wrote:

The following statement in the Integrity Commissioner's report of September 24, 2020 reveals racial bias and homophobia. Racial bias and homophobia both in the text of the complaint submitted by Council to the IC, and racial bias and homophobia on the part of the Integrity Commissioner for including the detail in the report.

[47] In March 2019, Council appointed a citizen member to the HPSB. There was some concern raised within parts of the Hamilton community that the appointment was a missed opportunity by Council to ensure the citizen appointment reflected more of the diversity of the population.

The information seems irrelevant to the integrity complaint. Why mention it? Council thought it important enough to include in their complaint, and the IC thought it important enough to include in this report. Why?

If diversity is a competition, then Cameron Kroetsch is more reflective of the diversity of the Hamilton community than you are, Jason Farr. If we remove sexual orientation, then you are the same level of diversity. And that is the problem, and what makes paragraph 47 homophobic and probably racist.

Jason Farr, you yourself do not yourself reflect the diversity of the downtown Hamilton community. You are a heterosexual, white, straight, male, without any visible physical disability. This laundry list of non-diversity applies to most of council, and most of it applies to all of council. Like Cameron Kroetsch, you have some privilege that makes you more likely to be selected for leadership positions within your community.

The people who submitted this information to the IC, and the person who is the IC, clearly are not members of the minority communities they claim to be concerned about here. Rather, this is a strategy to discredit a community leader of a minority community, by pitting minorities against each other. Council and the IC are trying to pit minority communities against each other to silence their criticism of Council.

The diversity of LGBTQ+ community leaders and how well they represent the community is a discussion for the LGBTQ+ community itself. It is a sign of healthy dialogue. It becomes a problem if it then becomes a means for people who are not within the community to undermine our community leaders and representatives, which is what is happening here.

By raising this point, Council and the Integrity Commissioner is attempting to divide the community and turn it

against itself. Members of minority communities within the gay community must wonder whether expressing their concerns about diversity of community leadership will then be used to undermine LGBTQ+ rights as a whole. Based on this document, I strongly suspect the Integrity Commissioner is white. I do not believe a member of a visible minority community would have included this statement in the document; they would have been more sensitive to the implications to minority communities.

Cameron Kroesch is very particularized in this document. Clearly he is identified as gay, and in this passage further particularized (identified) as a cis-gendered, able-bodied, white, male. By contrast, City Council and Principles *Integrity* have no identity. They are not individuals with a race or a sex, but their power seems to come from everywhere and nowhere. But the fact is that almost everyone involved is straight, and white, cis-gendered, etc, etc, and the labels of institutional power help to conceal that fact. Yet Council and the IC is claiming the authority to pass judgements on the diversity of Hamilton's Queer community and its leaders, and using debates within the community to undermine a community leader.

I have further concerns about the integrity of this complaint and report, and will email you in the coming days.

Regards,

Lauren Craig Stephen, PhD
Ward 2