

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Action Coalition

November 21st , 2024

5:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

Virtual

Minutes

Members in Attendance: Joanna Mitchell, Pauline Janke, Tajay Turner-Smith, Patricia Marshall, Tami Murray, Mohamed Ismail

Regrets: Amy McKague

Staff Support: Ayesha Sajid (Oxford County) – staff support

Guests: Marcus Ryan, Sarah Hamulecki

1. Call the Meeting to Order (5:06 p.m.)

2. Land Acknowledgement and Statement of Reconciliation (Patricia)

3. Committee Member Check-In – Round Table

No check-in is needed this evening by the committee members

4. Approval of the Agenda of Thursday, November 21, 2024

Resolution No. 1 Moved by Tami Murray
 Seconded by Joanna Mitchell
 RESOLVED that the DEI Action Coalition approve the
 Thursday, November 21, 2024 agenda as presented.

DISPOSITION: Motion Carried

5. Approval of the Minutes of October 28, 2024

Resolution No. 2 Moved by Pauline Janke
 Seconded By Tajay Turner-Smith
 RESOLVED that the DEI Action Coalition approve the
 Monday, October 28, 2024 meeting minutes as presented.

DISPOSITION: Motion Carried

6. Discussion Items

- i. Funding: Patricia declared that if there are discussions regarding funding, Patricia may have a conflict of interest as a Director of IISAN. However, this committee will not be deciding on funding during this meeting. If this does come up, Patricia will excuse herself.
- ii. Inclusion Charter & Area Municipalities (Tami)
 - i. Concerns addressed coming from municipal meetings that are not in line with the Safe and Well Oxford document, i.e., the Community Safety and Well-being Plan.
 - ii. Is this volunteer committee responsible for bringing this forward for action?
 - iii. Councils should be non-partisan. Is there a code of conduct for the municipalities, and are they being followed? Each municipality has an integrity commissioner and an ombudsperson if people want this to be investigated.
 - iv. Marcus clarified some procedural items at council meetings: Councilors may say many things about agenda items, but ultimately, it's whether the entire Council has passed the resolution. This means there is still an opportunity for the majority of the Council to endorse the DEI Charter. However, the committee is concerned with the rhetoric of the meeting and how it affects the community. It was discussed that the Council should be aware of the scope of the Human Rights Code and how they must adhere to it and be held accountable for it.
 - v. Tami: How do we implement the strategies of the DEI Charter if we need to combat rhetoric that is continuing to happen? How can we be proactive in balancing the information that is being shared? Is that the responsibility of this committee?
 - vi. Pauline: Clarify our purpose: Are we trying to dismantle harmful colonial systems? Or are we focusing on DEI? Need to be clear on what we can do within our committee.
 - vii. Sarah: It is difficult to change someone's beliefs, but we can educate them to open their eyes to other perspectives. The Community Safety and Well-Being Plan currently lists DEI as a priority area. Do we need to look at expanding the scope of the Safe and Well document?
 - viii. Marcus: Adding to what Sarah said, page 43, point 5 of the Community Safety and Well-Being Plan, talks about building on best practices, i.e., providing training to leaders and staff across municipalities. We know this is the right thing to do because there is no unanimous support. We need to continue to educate the people who are looking to learn. I suggest putting together a one-pager to inform those who want to learn.
 - ix. Tami: People need to be willing to first come to the table to be able to proceed with education. **Action:** Tami and Ayesha will work

- together on a one-page education sheet on the DEI Action Coalition Webpage.
- x. Tajay: Concurs with Tami on a more proactive approach to education. Make people aware of Oxford's resources, as people often only hear of what we don't have. Educate respectfully.
 - xi. The frustration is expressed at the slow pace of change as lives are being destroyed while things move so slowly. We want to turn all spaces into safe spaces for marginalized people in our communities.
- iii. Draft of Oxford County's DEI Action Plan (Ayesha) Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Action Plan 2023–2027 (niagararegion.ca) – SAMPLE
What can we prioritize for the next year?
 - i. Priority 1:
 - a) 1.3 – taking the Human Rights Code training, Truth and Reconciliation (municipally applicable training) - already available and can be self-directed.
 - b) 1.4 – Populating the webpage with simple terminology and links
 - ii. **Action:** The committee is to review the DEI Action Plan external draft and send feedback to Ayesha before December 2nd with 3-5 priorities out of the whole document for 2025. Also, if there are any additional actions you want to add, send them.
 - iv. Update on the DEI Action Coalition page (Ayesha will share the resources).
 - i. An outline has been provided
 - ii. Add unconscious bias questionnaire – **Action:** Tami to send it to Ayesha
 - iii. Add links to Access Now, Safe Spaces, Welcome to Oxford
 - iv. Ayesha will send the current webpage outline out for further review.

7. Next Meeting Date – January 20th, 2025, 5 pm

8. Committee Member Check-out – Round Table

- i. Pride Committee Event - December 7th – Ugly Christmas Sweater bowling event
- ii. Tillsonburg and Blandford-Blenheim have endorsed the DEI Charter.
- iii. Patricia will not chair the next meeting; we need a volunteer- **Action:** Ayesha will prepare a list that will Chair meetings on rotation; that way, everybody will receive an opportunity to have a voice.

9. Adjournment

Resolution No. 3 RESOLVED that the DEI Action Coalition meeting adjourn at 7:15 p.m. by all.