



2SLGBTQ+ ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MINUTES

March 6, 2025

A meeting of the 2SLGBTQ+ Advisory Committee was held on Thursday, March 6, 2025, at 5:31 pm via electronic means.

PRESENT: Eddy Elmer, Co-Chair
Tara Fraser, Co-Chair
Hana Chisako Acorn
Rick Hurlbut
Tristan Lai
Stephen Menon
Chris Morrissey
Ash Rich
Bradley Sarandi
Viplav Subramanian, Vice-Chair

ABSENT: Saif Al Shamaa (Leave of Absence)
Michael Yus

ALSO PRESENT: Councillor Peter Meiszner, Council Liaison
Samantha Mills, Vancouver Public Library Liaison
Constable Kat Dauncey, Vancouver Police Department
Khoa Vo, Alternate Member
Robert Hadley, Alternate Member

CITY CLERK'S OFFICE: Terri Burke, Meeting Coordinator

WELCOME

The Co-Chair acknowledged that we are on the unceded homelands of the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh Peoples. We thank them for having cared for this land and look forward to working with them in partnership as we continue to build this great city together.

Modified Procedures

MOVED by Chris Morrissey
SECONDED by Rick Hurlbut

THAT the 2SLGBTQ+ Advisory Committee suspend the rule of section 15.13 of the

Procedure By-law in order to allow for modified decision-making methods during the meeting.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY AND
BY THE REQUIRED MAJORITY

Leave of Absence Requests

THAT the 2SLGBTQ+ Advisory Committee approve a leave of absence for Saif Al Shamaa for this meeting.

APPROVED BY CONSENSUS

Approval of Minutes

Following discussion, the resolution below was put on the floor:

THAT the 2SLGBTQ+ Advisory Committee approve the Minutes from the meeting of Thursday, January 9, 2025, as circulated;

FURTHER THAT the Committee submit Supplementary Notes for this item to administrative staff, to be appended to the Minutes as Appendix A.

APPROVED BY CONSENSUS

Note: Supplementary Notes can be found on pages 6 to 12 in Appendix A of the Minutes.

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Vary Agenda

THAT the Committee vary the order of the agenda in order to consider Item 1 until 6 pm, then consider Item 2, and then return to finish Item 1.

APPROVED BY CONSENSUS

Note: For ease of reference, the minutes are recorded in numerical order.

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1. Council Motion Regarding Committee Structures

The Chair provided an overview of the item. Councillor Meiszner provided an update and responded to questions.

Following discussion, the resolution below was put on the floor:

Motion to Maintain and Strengthen the 2SLGBTQ+ Advisory Committee

WHEREAS

1. The 2SLGBTQ+ Advisory Committee advises Council and staff on enhancing access and inclusion for Two-Spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer communities to fully participate in City services and civic life;
2. The Committee specifically exists to elevate the voices of people who have historically been, and continue to be, marginalized, and to ensure that the unique needs, concerns, and perspectives of the 2SLGBTQ+ community are meaningfully and thoughtfully incorporated into municipal decision-making;
3. 2SLGBTQ+ people have historically faced, and continue to face, barriers to meaningful civic participation, and some have experienced outright bias and oppression;
4. While there is merit in the need to ensure that advisory committees provide more focused engagement and feedback, it is vital to ensure the continuation of distinct advisory committees like this one, which can exist alongside other committee structures;
5. There are alternative ways to improve the functioning of advisory committees without removing the benefits they provide, such as clear mandate letters, enhanced meeting processes, and cross-committee collaboration;
6. The potential elimination of this Committee in favour of a different structure would diminish the representation of 2SLGBTQ+ voices and lived experiences in municipal decision-making and decades of progress in increasing civic participation among marginalized communities;
7. Including a handful of 2SLGBTQ+ people within a larger, broader body, such as a Community Advisory Assembly, or only within committees focused exclusively on specific topics or Council priorities, would fail to fully capture the diverse experiences of people under the 2SLGBTQ+ umbrella, while also substantially reducing their opportunity to speak;
8. This Committee provides more in-depth and technical feedback than would be possible as part of a larger body, with staff over the years stating that the Committee's feedback is often more extensive than that of other advisory committees and allows staff to demonstrate meaningful engagement with the 2SLGBTQ+ community;
9. Dedicated, distinct committees like this one are essential for providing focused feedback on issues directly relevant to the 2SLGBTQ+ community, such as the

[Trans, Gender Diverse and Two-Spirit Safety and Inclusion Action Plan](#); hate crimes; 2SLGBTQ+ older adults and housing; and issues affecting Davie street and other 2SLGBTQ+ neighbourhoods;

10. The October 9th Council motion on advisory committee structures ([Minutes, page 13](#)) suggests that committees may be placing more emphasis on operations rather than policy, but in practice, these two areas are deeply interconnected, as operational matters directly impact the lived experiences of 2SLGBTQ+ people and often signal areas where policy improvements are necessary;
11. Given historical experiences of stigma and marginalization, many 2SLGBTQ+ individuals feel safer sharing their lived experiences and perspectives as part of a separate group of like individuals, whereas participation in a majoritized group could limit open and frank discussion;
12. This Committee gives members sufficient time and space to bring forward ideas and concerns that may not be apparent to a majoritized group, ensuring that issues affecting the 2SLGBTQ+ community are not overlooked;
13. Over the years, this Committee has established strong relationships with Council members and City staff, which have facilitated meaningful engagement and policy improvements, and such relationships would be disrupted if the Committee were dissolved; and
14. The Committee plays a critical role in bridging the gap between City Council, municipal staff, and marginalized 2SLGBTQ+ communities, ensuring that policies and services are informed by lived experiences and clearly conveyed to the community.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the 2SLGBTQ+ Advisory Committee recommends that Council:

- i. Ensure the Committee remains a distinct, dedicated body that provides focused, expert feedback on issues affecting 2SLGBTQ+ people;
- ii. Ensure that any changes to advisory committee structures do not diminish the representation of equity-denied communities, including 2SLGBTQ+ people, in municipal decision-making; and
- iii. Recognize that specialized advisory committees like this one play a vital role in democratic participation beyond voting and should continue to serve as a means for historically marginalized communities to engage with civic processes.

APPROVED BY CONSENSUS

2. PRESENTATION: Davie Street - Transportation and Public Space

Staff from Engineering Services provided a presentation and responded to questions.

3. Corporate Sponsorship of Pride Events in Light of Recent Developments in Toronto

Due to time constraints, this item was not dealt with.

4. Working Session Updates

Following discussion, the resolution below was put on the floor:

THAT the 2SLGBTQ+ Advisory Committee approve the Supplementary Notes from the February 13, 2025, Working Session, attached to these Minutes as Appendix B.

APPROVED BY CONSENSUS

Note: Supplementary Notes can be found on pages 13 to 20 in Appendix B of the Minutes.

5. Liaison Updates

Due to time constraints, this item was not dealt with.

6. New Business

None.

ADJOURNMENT

THAT this meeting be adjourned.

APPROVED BY CONSENSUS

Next Meeting:

DATE: Thursday, May 8, 2025
TIME: 5:30 pm
PLACE: Business Centre Meeting Room, 2nd Floor,
City Hall/ Webex Online

The Committee adjourned at 7:35 pm.

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APPENDIX A

Supplementary Notes for 2SLGBTQ+ Advisory Committee Meeting

January 9, 2025

Introductions

Stephen Menon

- The Committee welcomed new member Stephen Menon
- Stephen is from Nova Scotia and was a long-time resident of Ontario, where he was on the Board of directors at the [519 Church Street Community Centre](#)
- Has lived in BC the last 7 years
- Is on the Boards of QMUNITY and RainCity Housing and Support Society
- Has an Honours Degree in Commerce, Business Strategy and Marketing from Queen's University

Alternate Members

- The Committee also welcomed three alternate members
- Khoa Vo is the Chair of the Teaching Support Staff Union at SFU and a member of the SFU Medical School Advisory Committee
- Dr. Ashley Rich, who could not attend the meeting, is a social epidemiologist at UBC, focusing on sexual and gender minority health equity, HIV, and chronic disease
- Robert Hadley: TBA

Attendance

- The Manager, Civic Agencies, indicated that future amendments to the Procedure By-law may include a change requiring that members resign from the Committee after a total of three unapproved absences, rather than three consecutive unapproved absences

Payment of Honoraria to Advisory Committee Members Who Attend Staff Engagements

- Members raised privacy concerns relating to the City's use of the [Jaggaer](#) supplier payment platform
- For members who have participated in a staff engagement where an honorarium was offered, they have had to claim that money by registering as a City of Vancouver supplier using the Jaggaer system

- This required entering personal information, including address, phone number, SIN, and banking information
- Given the risks around cyber breaches and fraud, members feel very uncomfortable sharing such information, especially with a company domiciled in the United States, where privacy protections may be more lax and where the information about 2SLGBTQ+ people may be shared at the behest of government
- Members prefer the City's old approach, which was simply to issue a cheque
- The Clerk's office advised that, going forward, members can list the City Hall address in place of their home address and can then pick up their cheque at City Hall (e.g., the Clerk's office)
- There is also an option in the profile setup where members can indicate that they are an honorarium recipient (Under "Tax Custom Fields," select "Not Applicable – I'm an Honorarium Recipient")
- Although these workarounds are fine, members feel that these options should be clearly communicated to honorarium recipients, who may feel there is no choice but to risk sharing their personal information in order to get their honorarium; others might simply forgo the honorarium to avoid any risks, which is unfair if they were expecting to receive a payment
- Members would like staff to come in and present on this matter

Community Agreement

- Members reflected on the importance of creating an environment where everyone feels safe to share their views and express disagreements; this is especially important given the vulnerabilities experienced by members of our community

Council Motion Regarding Structure and Function of Advisory Committee

- Members discussed the following motion (pp. 10-15):
<https://council.vancouver.ca/20241009/documents/cfsc2024109min.pdf>
- They expressed concern that this and other advisory committees could possibly be eliminated/consolidated following the staff review that will go to Council
- The motion's intent to allow for more focused feedback on Council priorities
- Most of this committee's work is already focused on Council priorities because the bulk of the feedback is provided at the request of City staff, who are acting on motions passed by Council
- Notably, staff almost always say that feedback from this committee is valuable and often more extensive and technical than what is provided by other committees

- At times, members raise their own issues that the City may be unaware of; however, this is only about 25-30% of the time
- Feedback from the committee is very unique as the committee exists to elevate the voices of marginalized groups whose voices have historically been silenced, or who have difficulty sharing their views in a space dominated by majority members
- The Council motion suggested that more time should be spent deliberating on policy and not on operations; however, policy and operations often go hand-in-hand
- Being “on the ground”, advisory committee members are uniquely placed to advise if operations are meeting the needs of residents and what changes could be made to improve deficiencies
- Operational issues may indicate problems with policy, and policy must be shaped by understanding how it impacts operational matters; to be effective, committees need a balance between bottom-up lived experience and top-down strategic alignment
- In the past, some Councilors have raised questions about the total cost of the committees; aside from staff time and catering, this committee does not use many resources and members are unpaid; yet the committee often provides the kind of high-level feedback that a city might hire expensive consultants for
- Several members discussed a broader concern that possible elimination of advisory committees may erode democracy—that the only way people can participate in the civic process is by voting; advisory committees are important because they give citizens an opportunity to feel that they are valued members of the community and that their voices are heard
- Many members find it very rewarding to be on this committee and to have opportunities to learn about municipal issues, educate the public about them, and raise important issues with staff and Councillors

Development at 1157 Burrard Street at Davie

- Members would like to talk to City staff about the [Arts and Culture Administrative Hub](#) that will be located at the base of the building; in particular, they would like to know if the City will prioritize space for 2SLGBTQ+ arts organizations
- It was noted that QMUNITY will be across the street, which could create synergies between the two spaces
- The developer should provide street-level art that reflects the building’s location in the Davie Village; consider the Committee’s support for the lighting installation next to Joyce-Collingwood station, which was provided by a developer after Council had requested artwork to recognize the area’s 2SLGBTQ+ history

- The Committee is happy to work with City to find suitable operators/tenants for the space

Recognizing and Preserving Davie Village as a Historic District

- Rick Hurlbut shared the following article from *The Bay Area Reporter*: [“Report finds potential historic LGBTQ district in Sacramento”](#)
- Members discussed the implications of this report for 2SLGBTQ+ neighbourhoods like Davie Village and others (e.g., The Drive; Joyce/Collingwood)
- In Vancouver, 2SLGBTQ+ spaces have been displaced many times
 - Nightlife used to be at Granville and Pender; then moved to warehouses at Yaletown, until redevelopment as part of Expo 86
 - Then they moved to the Davie Village, but only through the very hard work of residents
 - Davie Village might not have come to fruition because there had been plans to create a single entertainment district along Granville Street, with no separate, safe space for 2SLGBTQ+ people
- Today, there is concern that the re-development of St. Paul’s Hospital will cause substantial changes to the Village
 - With the hospital’s closure, there may be less need for 24-hour businesses like Denny’s and Shoppers Drug Mart
 - New residents may seek to limit noise in the area, thus curtailing night life
 - Owners of buildings serving 2SLGBTQ+ businesses and residents may be forced out due to development pressure, high taxes, etc.
 - [Similar issues](#) are being faced in other gay villages, including Toronto’s Church Street
- The committee would like Council to declare Davie Village as a historically significant and sensitive area, which may ease development pressure and preserve its history, character, vitality, and livability
- The City has been working on revitalizing Chinatown and Gastown, recognizing the history and value of these neighbourhoods; the same should be done with Davie Village
- There is already at least one historically designated building in the Village—Celebrities; the Junction Pub is a mid-century modern building that could also be protected; if other such buildings could be designated, then it may become easier to designate the entire area
- Some members asked how many tourist dollars come to the City due to attractions like the Village; if 2SLGBTQ+ tourism from the US is slowing, there may be an increase in tourism from across Canada; so there is a financial benefit

in raising the profile of the Village through a special designation; Tourism Vancouver could support this with a more consistent ad campaign

Vancouver Public Library Update from Samantha Mills

- This was Chief Librarian Christina De Castell's last day; there will be an interim Chief Librarian for the next 6 months while VPL conducts a search for her replacement
- Committee members discussed past issues about renting library spaces to speakers who make controversial statements about 2SLGBTQ+ people
- Samantha noted that anyone who is not violating the law has the right to rent the library's spaces without discrimination
- The VPL's internal 2SLGBTQ+ Advisory Committee was created in response to this matter

Vancouver Police Department Update from Cst. Stephen Jones

Statistics on Hate-Motivated Crimes and Incidents

- From January to November 2024, there were 202 reported hate-motivated crimes or incidents; there were 8 from December that were not yet included in the 2024 statistics
- 33 of the 202 cases involved 2SLGBTQ+ people; this is down from 46 last year
 - 15 assaults
 - 4 harassment, including in online spaces
 - 3 disturbing the peace
 - 1 robbery
 - 2 uttering threats
 - 1 mischief
 - 7 unclassified
- During the Pride Season: 3 incidents in June, 3 in July, and 2 in August
- In November/December, only 1 incident on Davie Street (a person got shoved and called a homophobic slur)

Underreporting of Hate Crimes and Incidents

- Many (most) hate crimes and incidents are likely unreported; members discussed various reasons for this
 - issues calling 911 (will the call-taker be patient and understanding?)

- embarrassment
 - fear of not being believed
 - fear of being blamed
 - retribution/threats from the offender
 - challenges of being involved in a court process
- Tara Fraser: When someone has been attacked, they are in a very vulnerable state and so reaching out can feel terrifying; this is why we need stronger and more trusting relationships between 2SLGBTQ+ and the police, and why police should continue to be trained in trauma-informed practice
- Robert Hadley: While some 2SLGBTQ+ people feel safer with a greater police presence on the street, some feel the opposite
- Robert Hadley: the “[See It. Say It. Sorted](#)” campaign in the UK encouraged members of the public to report troubling behaviour, including hate incidents; this may have increased reporting in cases where the victim felt uncomfortable to do so
 - Eddy reported that VPD is considering a similar campaign; this will be discussed at the internal VPD SOGD Liaison Committee
- Members also discussed reporting through third parties; this issue has also been discussed at the internal committee; the main issue is whether third parties are willing to share their reports—at least the raw statistics—with VPD
- Chris Morrissey: What role can the 12 Community Policing Centres (CPCs) play, especially the West End-Coal Harbour Community Policing CPC?
 - perhaps VPD could encourage people to report hate crimes/incidents at CPCs
 - at the very least, the Neighbourhood Police Officers (NPOs) could increase their liaising with community members, although it is recognized that the NPOs already have a high workload
 - perhaps some of the CPCs could do with additional NPOs
- Cst. Jones said that he could arrange for a hate crime detective to present to this committee on the latest statistics or the other matters discussed; a presentation from E-Comm could also be arranged
- Eddy mentioned that the internal VPD SOGD Liaison Committee regularly discusses these matters; perhaps members of the CoV Committee would like to have some joint meetings with the VPD Committee

Other Business

- Members recognized the passing of [Joe Average](#), who made a huge contribution to Vancouver’s arts and culture scene and was a strong advocate for HIV/AIDS

awareness and 2SLGBTQ+ rights; members suggested that the City formally commemorate his life in some way

- Members were encouraged to view meetings of the City of Toronto 2SLGBTQ+ Advisory Committee to learn about issues affecting constituents in that City and how our committee could improve its processes (all meetings can be viewed on YouTube)

APPENDIX B

Supplementary Notes for 2SLGBTQ+ Working Session

February 13, 2025

Development at 1157 Burrard Street at Davie

- Members heard a presentation from Kristen Lambertson, Cultural Planner – Cultural Spaces, about the [Arts and Culture Administrative Hub](#), a cultural amenity that will be located at the base of the new residential development at 1157 Burrard
- She was invited to our meeting to discuss prioritizing the space for 2SLGBTQ+ arts organizations, given its location within the Davie Village

The Space

- 14,000 sq ft of City-owned space across two levels (levels 3 and 4); most space is on level 3
- Level 4: will include a 1,300 square foot multi-purpose space that groups can apply to access on an as-needed basis for meetings, etc.; trying to see if that could be made available after-hours
- Level 4 will also include childcare space
- Space available in 2027; call for proposals through RFP process will commence in fall 2025
- Leases will be for 10 years with an option to renew

Eligibility Criteria

- As a designated cultural amenity space, it will need to be operated by an arts and culture mandated organization; 2SLGBTQ+ arts and culture organizations are welcome to apply
- As per [Making Space for Arts and Culture](#), proposals for the space will need to align with the City's equity principles
- Intended use and goals for the space are to:
 - serve as a dedicated space for local non-profit arts and culture administrative use
 - provide affordable and accessible cultural space on a cost-recovery basis that balances sustainability and affordability

- support and amplify the artistic practices and voices of artists from Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh Nations, Indigenous communities, and equity-deserving communities
- Applications that meet the eligibility criteria will be evaluated on vision and need; organizational and financial readiness; and equity and reconciliation (see this [link](#) for further details)
- The site's West End location and proximity to equity-deserving populations such as 2SLGBTQ+ communities will come into play when considering equity and reconciliation criteria
- As this is a large facility, staff encourage partnerships between organizations; for example, individual organizations that may not want to assume the financial, capital maintenance, or organizational responsibility to operate the entire facility could partner with another organization(s) that does; in such a case, the latter would be the operator(s) and the former would be subtenants
- Ideally, the operator(s) will have had experience in managing large spaces and multiple tenants
- All subtenants will need to meet the same eligibility criteria as the main operator(s)
- Committee members suggested that there may be an opportunity to create a queer cultural umbrella group to be the operator; perhaps the City could consult with other cultural hubs to see how they operate this kind of space
- Members mentioned that many non-profits are subsidiaries of larger for-profit organizations; would these non-profits be able to apply? Staff will look into this

Cost Recovery

- The space will be operated on a cost-recovery basis; operator(s) should not charge tenants excess rent; rent will be below market
- Operator(s) will be responsible for their own staff, administration of the space, insurance, utilities, capital maintenance, etc.
- Committee members indicated that costs can be quite high in luxury buildings like this; may be hard for non-profits to manage
- Staff noted there will be shared maintenance costs with the strata, but the costs would be proportional
- To minimize costs, shared amenities (e.g., the childcare space) will be isolated from the rest of the strata; the HVAC, etc. will be independent; other amenities like the kitchen, bathroom, and boardroom will be shared by the office tenants

Moving Forward

- If the Committee knows of any 2SLGBTQ+ arts and culture organizations that may be a good fit for the facility, either as operators or tenants, please connect them with staff at cultural.spaces@vancouver.ca
- Subscribe to the [VanCulture Email Listserve](#) to receive information and the Request for Proposals

Healthy City Strategy Refresh: Update from Staff

- Members received an update from Jesse Bierman, Peter Marriot, and Atlanta Grant, Social Planners with Social Policy and Projects
- Staff thanked members for the extensive feedback they provided last year, which was the most technical they had received from all committees
- Members thanked staff for incorporating their feedback into the Strategy, including the following:
 - *Setting Priorities*: Defining the process of setting priorities and the timeline for decision-making
 - *Health and Vulnerability*: Mentioning that health equity can only be achieved by prioritizing support for vulnerable populations; recognizing contributions of newcomers; addressing anti-racism; incorporating an aging population into the strategy
 - *Targets*: Acknowledging contributions outside of City efforts; separating targets from broader system changes
 - *Data Sources*: Considering new primary data sources and the use of utility data
 - *Hate Crime Reporting*: Using data from the new provincial hate crime hotline; using VPL's revised security incident reports, which now include categories for gender-based violence, racism, and hate crimes; including questions about experiences of discrimination and violence from the [UN Safe Cities and Safe Public Spaces Initiative](#)
 - *Emergency Preparedness*: Including indicators for emergency preparedness and response

Measuring Safety and Belonging

- Members provided additional feedback on data sources:
 - Ask about people's perceived sense of safety (e.g., walking alone at night)
 - Ask how people feel in public spaces (e.g., parks, plazas, entertainment districts)

- Look at VPD hate crime data; City staff had been looking at annual reports, but more detailed data is available; Cst. Jones offered to help with this
- Look at 3rd party reporting statistics
- Consult with City's Anti-Racism Team for data on complaints
- Review Vancouver School Board on bullying statistics, especially re: 2SLGBTQ+ students; also consider Adolescent Health Survey and qualitative data (e.g., interviews with students)
- Consult with Vancouver Fire & Rescue (e.g., How many people have access to first aid equipment? How many people know how to use it? How many people have access to a fire extinguisher and know how to use it? How many older adults have requested a home safety audit?)
- Measure aspects of digital life, which is a big part of young peoples' lives
 - How safe and socially connected do young people feel online?
 - See if Pew Internet or related organizations have any relevant measures
- Measure sense of neighbourhood trust:
 - How many neighbours do you know?
 - How much do you trust them? Do you feel comfortable to turn to them for help?
 - If something happened to you, do you think your neighbours would check on you?

Moving Forward

- Report going to Council mid or late May
- Given the unique perspectives of our members, and our ability to provide detailed, technical feedback, our Committee is available for ongoing consultation as the Strategy progresses

Council Motion Regarding Structure and Function of Advisory Committees

Staff Engagement Session

- Eddy discussed his attendance at the staff engagement session relating to the following motion (pp. 10-15):
<https://council.vancouver.ca/20241009/documents/cfsc2024109min.pdf>
- Attendance was low (only Eddy, two people from the Transportation Advisory Committee, and one person from the Older Persons and Elders Advisory Committee)

- Perhaps low attendance was due in part to timing and lack of reminders about the session; also, it is unclear if most members were aware that this engagement was directly related to the above-noted motion and the possibility that advisory committees may be merged, dissolved, or replaced by a new model(s)
- Similar reasons may explain the low response rate (25%) to the survey that was sent to all members
- A survey was also administered to staff liaisons; response rate was even lower (10%), likely due to timing at the end of the year
- This low participation is concerning because it means that a majority of members and liaisons have not shared their views, providing an incomplete picture for staff and possibly affecting the recommendations that will go to Council

Issues Raised at the Staff Engagement Session

Engagement and Impact

- There is a perception by some that committee recommendations are not incorporated into City decision-making;
- May be useful to acknowledge committee recommendations in Council meetings, on the public record, and report back to committees to show how their input has influenced policy
- Eddy's own perception is that this has improved over the years, with staff making a concerted effort to incorporate feedback into their reports

Operational vs. Policy Focus

- The Council motion asked: "Are committees focused on policy and strategic items, or are they getting involved in operations?"
- Eddy noted that operational issues have direct relevance to this committee's mandate and scope (e.g., "Advise Council and staff on enhancing access and inclusion for Two-Spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer communities to fully participate in City services, and civic life")
- Moreover, operational issues are often intertwined with policy issues

Improving Current Committee Functioning

- The following suggestions were discussed at the engagement session:
- Provide clear, detailed mandate letters from Council, containing specific objectives, as is common practice with other boards
- Ensure that Work Plans are explicitly tied to Council priorities

- Ask Committees to set aside a portion of time for discussing Council priorities vs. member-driven items (e.g., 60-70%)
- Have a mix of regular committee meetings and joint-committee working sessions on Council priorities affecting all committees

Alternative Structures

- Participants were informed that one of several options being considered by staff is the [Community Advisory Assembly](#) that was piloted last year in the City of New Westminster
- This option was identified as part of an environmental scan of other cities' advisory structures, including the City of Guelph's [Framework for Advisory Committees](#)
- Under this model, it appears that most of New Westminster's existing advisory committees were dissolved, and a single, demographically weighted advisory panel was selected to replace them
- In this model, members were first selected using a quota system to allow for adequate representation of specific demographic groups; then individual applications were reviewed
- The results of that pilot do not appear to be available, but there was [feedback](#) from advisory committee members prior to the initiation of the pilot

Honoraria

- Attendees were advised that the City has honoraria in place for staff engagements, but they are looking to expand this, with an eye to reducing barriers to participation; staff said they would be happy to discuss this further with Eddy, given that this committee has raised the issue in the past
- It was unclear to Eddy if this meant that honoraria would be extended to advisory committee members for participation in regular meetings

Committee Discussion

- Members agreed that more focus on Council priorities is valid
- However, questions and concerns were raised about the possibility of switching from individual advisory committees to another model, like a general Community Advisory Assembly
- Members wondered how such a model would allow for sustained, detailed feedback on municipal matters, especially from minority groups
- Advisory committees exist not just to allow focus on particular substantive areas by people with relevant interest/expertise (e.g., aging, transportation), but also to

elevate the voices of minority groups who have historically had fewer opportunities to share their views and participate in civic life

- Committees also exist to provide feedback on Council initiatives that specifically affect particular groups (e.g., the [Trans, Gender Diverse and Two-Spirit Inclusion and Safety Action Plan](#))
- Members wondered how a general, all-purpose committee would provide feedback on issues pertaining to minority groups if some or most members lack relevant interest or expertise, and if representation of these minority groups is capped to their proportion in the general population
- If New Westminster has a Community Assembly of 36, how much bigger would Vancouver's assembly need to be? If it will be larger, how much time would individual members have to provide feedback in a typical session (which in New Westminster is four hours)?
- How much time and space would be provided for members to raise their own issues?
- Would minority groups like ours be comfortable raising voices in a general setting, with members who may not be welcoming of 2SLGBTQ+ people?
- Would a paid consultant be hired to lead meetings? How appropriate and effective would that be vs. allowing members to lead?
- Have other cities had experience with community assemblies? How did minority groups feel about them?
- The City of Toronto has a dedicated [2SLGBTQ+ Advisory Committee](#); has it ever discussed an assembly model? Why do they continue to have a dedicated committee?
- If the City of Vancouver's advisory committees were dissolved, what would happen with their published reports and motions? Would they be removed from the City's website? Note that these documents are still important for City staff, the public, and people from other jurisdictions
- Is it possible to have a Community Advisory Assembly that provides feedback on broader topics and Council priorities alongside specific advisory committees like ours that provide focused feedback and expertise on matters affecting equity-denied groups?
- Would a Community Advisory Assembly simply be representation for the sake of representation, rather than a mechanism for material action?

Moving Forward

- It is unknown what model staff will recommend to Council
- Engagement participants asked if they could see the report prior to presentation to Council, but were advised this would likely not be possible

- Committee members noted it would be productive to have a second engagement where advisory committees could provide feedback on the actual recommendations, rather than just the initial engagement session about their committee experiences
- Members suggested inviting our staff liaisons to attend the next meeting and asking them for an update on the review
- Members also suggested writing a letter or motion outlining their feedback on this topic; a joint meeting with other committees was also proposed