



## RACIAL AND ETHNO-CULTURAL EQUITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

### MINUTES

JUNE 4, 2020

A meeting of the Racial and Ethno-Cultural Equity Advisory Committee was held on Thursday, June 4, 2020, at 5:42 pm, by electronic means.

**PRESENT:** Ignatius But, Co-Chair  
Alexandra Gunn  
Naz Gurbuz  
Bindy Kang-Dhillon  
Naomi Kronitz\*  
Anabel Lopez  
Sonia Medel Borja  
Amal Rana  
Juggy Sihota  
Yaron Stern  
Kevonnie Whyte

**ABSENT:** Felix-Marie Badeau  
Nikki Koutsochilis

**ALSO PRESENT:** Councillor Sarah Kirby-Yung, Council Liaison  
Trustee Allan Wong, School Board Liaison  
Baldwin Wong, Senior Social Planner, Staff Liaison  
April Sumter-Freitag, Social Planner, Staff Liaison

**CITY CLERK'S OFFICE:** Tamarra Wong, Meeting Coordinator

\* Denotes absence for a portion of the meeting.

### WELCOME

The Co-Chair acknowledged we are on the unceded territories of the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh Nations.

Following the welcome, the Co-Chair called for the committee to take a moment of silence to acknowledge the current and historical acts of police brutality against Indigenous communities and black communities across North America.

## Approval of Minutes

MOVED by Alexandra Gunn  
SECONDED by Anabel Lopez

THAT the Racial and Ethno-Cultural Equity Advisory Committee approve the Minutes from the meeting of January 16, 2020, as circulated.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

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VARY AGENDA

MOVED by Ignatius But  
SECONDED by Kevonnie Whyte

THAT the Racial and Ethno-Cultural Equity Advisory Committee vary the agenda to deal with one item of New Business prior to Item 3, "Liaison Updates".

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

*Note: For clarity, the Minutes are recorded in numerical order.*

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## 1. Collection of Disaggregated Race-based Data Motion

### a) Letter to Mayor and Council

Kevonnie Whyte introduced the item and the Committee engaged in discussion.

MOVED by Amal Rana  
SECONDED by Juggy Sihota

WHEREAS

1. Individuals and groups of different marginalized identities, including race, experience health inequities despite the existence of Canada's universal healthcare system;
2. Racialized communities are among those most likely to contract COVID-19 and face disproportionate challenges navigating life in the "new normal";
3. Racialized individuals are more often employed in sectors deemed essential (including healthcare<sup>1</sup>, food<sup>2</sup>, and transportation), live in smaller housing units where it is difficult to self-isolate<sup>3</sup>;

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<sup>1</sup><https://www.theglobeandmail.com/canada/article-how-the-coronavirus-took-north-vancouvers-lynn-valley-care-centre/>

<sup>2</sup><https://www.macleans.ca/society/health/cargill-covid19-meat-plant/>

<sup>3</sup><https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/edmonton/edmonton-language-barriers-covid-19-low-income-housing-1.5517122>

face barriers to accessing information, resources and support services<sup>4</sup> among other factors, thus contributing to their vulnerability;

4. A thorough understanding of COVID-19's impacts on racialized communities does not yet exist;
5. Collecting race-based data is the first step to illuminating the experiences of racialized communities within local, provincial and federal healthcare and social service systems; and
6. In Canada, Manitoba has started asking patients their ethnic identity as part of its case investigation process as of May 1<sup>5</sup>. Ontario and Quebec have also announced plans to do the same.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the City of Vancouver's Racial and Ethno-Cultural Equity Advisory Committee request that City Council urges the Province of B.C. to take action on health inequities by mandating the collection, use and analysis of disaggregated, socio-demographic and race-based data in health and social service sectors; and ensuring that the collection of data is led by critical race researchers who identify as having racialized identities and experiences to ensure that the data collection measures meaningfully contribute to building a culturally safe health care system and is not used for any other purposes;

FURTHER THAT the Racial and Ethno-Cultural Equity Advisory committee calls on City Council to pass a motion for the City of Vancouver to also mandate the collection, use and analysis of disaggregated, socio-demographic and race-based data in health and social service sectors; and ensuring that the collection of data is led by critical race researchers who identify as having racialized identities and experiences to ensure that the data collection measures meaningfully contribute to building a culturally safe health care system and is not used for any other purposes;

AND FURTHER THAT the Racial and Ethno-Cultural Equity Advisory Committee send the letter dated June 5, 2020, entitled, "Call for Race-based Data Collection in B.C", outlining these recommendations to City Council.

CARRIED  
(YarOn Stern Opposed)

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<sup>4</sup><https://www.thestar.com/news/canada/2020/04/24/new-immigrants-face-special-challenges-adjusting-to-life-in-bc-amid-covid-19.html>

<sup>5</sup><https://www.theglobeandmail.com/canada/article-manitoba-charts-new-course-by-collecting-race-based-data-on-covid-19/>

**b) Media Release**

MOVED by Naomi Kronitz  
SECONDED by Anabel Lopez

WHEREAS

1. Individuals and groups of different marginalized identities, including race, experience health inequities despite the existence of Canada's universal healthcare system;
2. Collecting race-based data is the first step to illuminating the experiences of racialized communities within local, provincial and federal healthcare and social service systems; and
3. It is important to highlight these health inequities in the public domain to bring appropriate attention to the need for race-based data collection in BC.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the City of Vancouver's Racial and Ethno-Cultural Equity Advisory Committee publish a media release with the letter to City Council dated June 5, 2020, entitled "Call for Race-based Data Collection in B.C".

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

*Note: The Committee's letter to City Council dated June 5, 2020, entitled "Call for Race-based Data Collection in B.C", and the media release are on file in the City Clerk's Office.*

Following the approval of the motions, Ignatius But, Co-Chair, provided an update on the draft motion that will be brought forward to Council and requested Committee members to submit their edits to Ignatius by Sunday, June 7, 2020, at 7 pm.

**2. COVID-19-related Initiatives**

The Committee engaged in discussion on COVID-19-related initiatives within the community.

**3. Liaison Updates**

**a) Councillor Liaison Update**

Councillor Kirby-Yung provided an update on the Council COVID-19 Recovery Committee (CCRC), noting the following topics that will be discussed at future CCRC meetings:

1. Economic Recovery and Complete Communities
2. New Fiscal Tools for the City
3. Housing and Homelessness
4. Municipal Government Role and Responses
5. COVID-19 recovery and the climate emergency

Councillor Kirby-Yung also shared a motion that she will introduce at the Council meeting on June 9, 2020, entitled “Standing Up to the Rise of Anti-Asian Racism, All Racism & Hate Crimes”. Councillor Kirby-Yung responded to questions regarding the motion and requested that individual feedback from Committee members be sent to her by the end of day on Sunday, June 7, 2020.

#### **b) School Board Liaison Update**

Trustee Wong noted the following motion that the Vancouver School Board (VSB) adopted at their meeting on May 25, 2020:

*That the VSB requests the Superintendent of Schools to investigate whether there have been any forms of racism in the District association with the COVID-19 pandemic, prepare a memo to staff and students that racism will not be tolerated in our schools, share the memo with stakeholder groups and the Diversity Committee and provide a verbal report to the Board of Education at a public meeting of these efforts.*

In addition, Trustee Wong provided a brief update on the VSB field expert that was recently hired to update the Vancouver School Board on policy and procedures, particularly in response to discriminatory student conduct. Trustee Wong agreed to provide a further update when the Vancouver School Board receives a report back from the field expert.

Sonja Medel Borja requested that Staff Liaison updates regarding the Vancouver School Board and education be prioritized on the agenda for future Committee meetings.

#### **c) Staff Liaison Update**

Baldwin Wong, Staff Liaison, noted the following initiatives being done by the City of Vancouver and the community:

- Downtown Eastside meal program;
- Work with vulnerable people in the Chinese community;
- Virtual celebration of the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Punjabi Market, known as “Punjabi Market Day”, held on May 31, 2020;
- Launch of the City of Vancouver COVID-19 multilingual resource webpages in seven languages; and
- An upcoming public pledge from Chinese Canadians addressing anti-Black racism

April Sumter-Freitag, Staff Liaison, provided a brief update on her work in the Emergency Operations Centre (EOC), specifically her work regarding sex worker safety.

### **4. New Business**

#### **a) Anti-Black Racism Initiatives**

The Committee engaged in discussion on anti-black racism initiatives which included learning materials, training courses and initiatives led by organizations in the community.

Kevonnie Whyte agreed to send Committee members the website for the Stratagem 2020 Conference and to share the report dated August 12, 2019, entitled “Towards a Healthy City: Anti-Blackness Equity Principles for Engagement and Practice in Vancouver”.

Councillor Kirby-Yung agreed to share the Stratagem 2020 Conference details with Mayor and Council and to enquire about funding for advisory committee members to attend.

**ADJOURNMENT**

MOVED by Alexandra Gunn  
SECONDED by Anabel Lopez

THAT the meeting be adjourned.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY  
(Naomi Kronitz absent for the vote)

**Next Meeting:**

DATE: September 24, 2020  
TIME: 5:30 pm  
PLACE: WebEx Online

The Committee adjourned at 7:45 pm.

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