

Subject: FW: Form submission from: Write a Letter to Council
Attachments: recommendations_and_response_to_report_on_systemic_racism_and_barriers638.docx

From: Web NoReply <web-noreply@Saskatoon.ca>
Sent: Saturday, May 29, 2021 2:27 PM
To: City Council <City.Council@Saskatoon.ca>
Subject: Form submission from: Write a Letter to Council

--- Replies to this email will go to [REDACTED] ---

Submitted on Saturday, May 29, 2021 - 14:27

Submitted by user: Anonymous

Submitted values are:

Date Saturday, May 29, 2021
To His Worship the Mayor and Members of City Council
First Name Alberta
Last Name Muembo
Phone Number
Email [REDACTED]
Address [REDACTED] Reid Road
City Saskatoon
Province Saskatchewan
Postal Code S7N [REDACTED]
Name of the organization or agency you are representing (if applicable)
Subject Motions on Systemic Racism and the City of Saskatoon
Meeting (if known)
Comments
Good afternoon to you all,

I hope you are well.

Thank you, your Worship, Mayor Clark for sharing the follow up and the documents. We really appreciate your commitment and the commitment of Council and the leaders in our community to this work. I want to thank Ali, Judy and Senos for their contributions and input in our discussions from last year and of course April for her involvement and incredible support. We have been able to meet and review the documents and the report and come up with the attached recommendations and response for your consideration and next steps. We appreciate your commitment and willingness to bring about meaningful changes that will help create a city and community that is inclusive of all its members. We will continue to be committed and available to push the needle forward for this important work in the manner and urgency it deserves and we appreciate that you committed to listen to us.

We look forward to your consideration and response to our recommendations and response to the report.

Alberta Muembo Community Youth Leader/ UofS student
Dr. Judy White Professor Emeritus, University of Regina

Senos Timon President, Equatorial South Sudanese Community Association
Ali Abukar Chief Executive Officer, Saskatoon Open Door Society

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Thursday May 27, 2021

To: Saskatoon City Council
Re: "Motion – Councillor M. Loewen - Identifying and Addressing Systemic Barriers"
From: Mayor's Community Consultative Committee on Black Lives Matter

Recommendations and Response to Approval Report to Council:

The following are recommendations to the Saskatoon City Council in response to the May 17, 2021 Approval Report named above.

These recommendations come from the Community Consultative Committee brought together by Mayor Charlie Clark in the summer of 2020 following the killing of George Floyd and the Black Lives Matter movement. The three motions that were presented to Council on Sept 28, 2020 were in great part as a result of consultations with this group.

The community members include:

Alberta Muembo	Community Youth Leader/ UofS student
Dr. Judy White	Professor Emeritus, University of Regina
Senos Timon	President, Equatorian South Sudanese Community Association
Ali Abukar	Chief Executive Officer, Saskatoon Open Door Society

Recommendations to Report

- 1) We recommend that the terms "race/racism/anti-racism" and "decolonization" be reflected in the report.
- 2) We recommend that specific language be used in the report that name groups such as Black Lives Matter, Idle No More, Anti-Asian Hate, MMIWG etc.
- 3) We recommend that there be far tighter timelines and a sense of urgency reflected in the report. This should include monthly benchmarks and deadlines (dates) for accountability with regular (quarterly) reporting back to Council and community.
- 4) We recommend there be concrete, short-term goals that reflect a move forward for the Black community in Saskatoon.
- 5) We recommend that concrete equity hiring numbers be reflected in the report as part of "systems change". (if this doesn't fit this report we would like to see them in the HR Report presented to council in May)
- 6) We recommend that Administration consult with Equity, Diversity and Inclusion experts as well as Anti-Racism/Decolonization experts to review the plan. Preferably experts who come from equity groups themselves.

Discussion:

- 1. We recommend that the terms “race/racism/anti-racism” and “decolonization” be reflected in the report.**

Language – The language of the report is very vague and does not reflect the original intent of the work that needs to be done. If we are to get to the root of the issues we need to name them so people understand; this is about decolonization and anti-racism work. We should never compromise on using the word ‘racism’.

In the preface to the 3 motions put forward on Sept 28th the following wording is used:

"Whereas City Council wishes to identify and address elements of **systemic racism** that exist in the City of Saskatoon..."

It is noted that nowhere in the report are the words “race”, “anti-racism”, “decolonization” used (other than in Appendix 3 Definitions).

- 2. We recommend that very specific language be used in the body of the report that name groups such as Black Lives Matter, Idle No More, Anti-Asian Hate, MMIWG, TRC, UNDRIP etc.**

This committee originally came together in response to the Black Lives Matter movement/protests. We would like to see ourselves and the Black community reflected in this report.

Timelines

- 3. We recommend that there be far tighter timelines that reflect the sense of urgency this work deserves.**
- 4. We recommend there be concrete, short-term goals with clear benchmarks and outcomes that reflect a move forward for us.**
- 5. We recommend that concrete equity hiring numbers be reflected in the report as part of “systems change”. (if it doesn’t fit this report we would like to see them in the HR Report/work presented to council in May)**

We are very disappointed that it has taken nearly 8 months to produce a report that is simply a plan of what to do going forward. It does not reflect that any change or work has actually been done to move the needle forward in those 8 months nor does it give short-term goals. These are not new issues. You and many others have been talking about them for years and years. Why should this take so long? We keep hearing that this is such a huge undertaking. We need to be doing the work as we go and not just planning and surveying and talking. We know the issues. We need to start addressing them from today. There is absolutely no sense of urgency to the report and yet there is great urgency from our perspective. Administration and Councils change. We don’t want this to get lost. For example:

The plan itself indicates that for the first year 2021 there are 2 phases:
- convene the REDI group (which Appendix 4 indicates was done in October of 2020) and
- Identify and select equity groups. We don't understand why these need to be identified. Equity groups are defined by Human Rights. If you need to connect with individuals in community there are community leaders and organizations connected to members of these groups and identifying members should not take long.

If both of these already exist what else will be done for the remainder of 2021?

Whose voices informed this report and plan?

6. We recommend that Administration consult with external and internal Equity, Diversity and Inclusion experts and anti-racism/de-colonization experts to review the plan. Preferably experts who come from equity groups themselves.

- Who exactly was involved in writing this report and making this plan?
- From the recording for the presentation to Council the response to Councillor Kirton's question: "Are there people with lived experience on the committee?" The answer was vague, "...some representation on committee – continue to reassess who is on the committee where there may not be the lived experience or expertise - Made up of internal staff – might not have the lived experience of all different groups..."

We would like an answer to the question: Who was on the committee that created this report and was there the lived experience and expertise that is needed to write a report regarding Equity, Diversity and Inclusion and Systemic Racism/Barriers? Was there representation from;

- City staff with voices of lived experience and/or expertise?
- Experts in Equity, Diversity and Inclusion?
- Experts in anti-racism?

This committee thanks you for taking the time to read and consider these recommendations. We would appreciate a response at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely,

Alberta Muembo
Dr. Judy White
Senos Timon
Ali Abukar