

MINUTES OF MEETING #9

HUMAN RIGHTS TASK FORCE

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 24, 2016, 1:00 PM

TH 253

MEMBERS

PRESENT: Brad Clarke (Chair), Dolana Mogadime (Vice-Chair), Andrew Bassingthwaighte, LeeAnn Cayer, Margot Francis, Samantha MacAndrew, Anna Lathrop, Julie Rorison, Aniqah Zowmi

ALSO

PRESENT: *Union Observers:* Patrick Foster (BUSU Observer), Ron Thomson (BUFA Observer)

Meeting Guests: Keely Grossman and Jessica Lewis representatives of *Awareness Breaks Limits for Equality- ABLÉ* Student Group, Sarah Pennisi, Director of the Student Wellness and Accessibility Centre, and Judith Brooder, Manager of Student Accessibility Services

Also Present: Thomas Dunk (Interim Provost and Vice-President, Academic), Zanaf Jafry Shah (Ombuds Coordinator – Brock University Students’ Union), and other members of the Brock community.

Resource Personnel:

Grant Armstrong (Associate Vice-President, Human Resources)
Allison Cadwallader (Sexual Violence Response Coordinator)
Christopher Lytle (AODA Coordinator)
Donna Moody (Director, Campus Security Services)
Alana Sharpe (Office of Human Rights and Equity Services)
Darryl Veld (Manager, Student Affairs)
Naheed Yaqubian (Legal Advisor to the Human Rights Task Force)
Chabriol Colebatch (University Secretary), Angela Magro (Assistant Secretary)

REGRETS: Tony Blaschuk (IATSE Observer), Jens Coorssen, Cari Drolet (GSA), Phoebe Kang-Papple (CUPE 4207), Alison Rothwell (OSSTF Observer), Sandra Wong, Elisabeth Zimmermann (Board of Trustees Liaison)

1. Call to Order

Chair Brad Clarke called the meeting to order and welcomed all those present to the ninth meeting of the Task Force. The Chair provided an overview of today’s Agenda, noting this was the last of the three thematic meetings of the Task Force. He acknowledged and thanked the meeting guests for attending today’s meeting to cover the theme of Ableism.

2. Approval of Agenda

The Chair noted a motion was required to approve the Agenda.

MOVED (Rorison/Cayer)

THAT the Agenda be approved.

CARRIED

3. Approval of Minutes

The Chair noted a motion was required to approve the Minutes of the previous meeting held on October 24, 2016.

MOVED (Bassingthwaighte/Francis)

During discussion, an amendment to the Minutes from Meeting 8 of the Task Force was suggested and the Task Force concurred that the following text be added to the *Overview of the Racial Climate Task Force* section, on page 3 following the sentence referring to the need for consistency between practices and policy: “In that context, he introduced Joel Kovel’s concept of meta-racism: a situation in which formalized anti-racism policies have the contrary effect of normalizing practices of individual and systemic racism.”

THAT the Minutes of Meeting 8 of the Human Rights Task Force, held on October 24, 2016 be approved, as amended during the meeting.

CARRIED

4. Business Arising from the Minutes

Ms. Yaqubian provided an overview of the revised timeline, which includes an additional meeting in January 2017 for the purposes of Task Force consultation with employee union equity officers.

MOVED (Zowmi/MacAndrew)

THAT the revised Human Rights Task Force Timeline be approved as presented.

CARRIED

5. Presentation by Christopher Lytle, *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* Coordinator

Mr. Christopher Lytle, *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)* Coordinator provided a presentation, *Accessibility at Brock University* to assist in informing the forthcoming discussions. The presentation included an overview of the accessibility landscape at the University for members of the Brock community and legal obligations with respect to accessibility.

6. Presentation by Awareness Breaks Limit for Equality (ABLE) Student Group

Representatives from the ABLE Student Group, Ms. Keely Grossman and Ms. Jessica Lewis presented an oral report to the Task Force, which included an overview of ABLE and the reasons for its founding. The Task Force also heard first-hand accounts on past experiences and in-depth descriptions of gaps in the accessibility infrastructure, services, and approaches to accommodations. It was noted that while some positive accommodation experiences have occurred, there exist limitations and remaining work needs to be done towards achieving a fully inclusive and equitable environment.

7. Presentation by Sarah Pennisi, Director of the Student Wellness and Accessibility Centre and Judith Brooder, Manager of Student Accessibility Services

[During this Agenda Item the Task Force received a hard copy handout of the presentation file, *Student Wellness and Accessibility Centre* for information.]

Ms. Sarah Pennisi provided an overview of the work and overarching goals of the Student Wellness and Accessibility Centre and referenced specifically the Centre's work in assisting students struggling with mental health issues and aiding in finding pathways to services for students. She referred to the strains on the Centre due emerging demands, noted challenges related to meeting external policy mandates and the need to align policy and practices.

Ms. Judith Brooder outlined a recent directive from the Ontario Human Rights Commission outlining the measures by which the University must comply with respect to accommodations. The Task Force also heard the specific gaps in current practices, the importance of compliance with the measures outlined by the Ontario Human Rights Commission and the primacy of the *Ontario Human Rights Code* over other forms of legislation.

8. Panel Discussion: Questions and Answers Concerning Ableism at Brock University

Mr. Christopher Lytle provided introductory remarks on Ableism prior to the discussion. The Chair then facilitated a panel discussion during which the Task Force engaged in a comprehensive discussion on potential methods and approaches to improve the accommodation system currently in place and working towards achieving a sustainable, structured and proactive approach to accommodations. The Task Force also discussed areas in need of improvements, the need for more clearly-defined processes, and further supports to enable and create an inclusive culture.

On behalf of the Task Force, the Chair thanked today's meeting guests for their presentations and sharing their perspectives.

9. Other Business – Discussion Regarding Protestor

In order to provide clarification to the Task Force, Ms. Colebatch provided an overview of events and a general timeline of the steps taken by the University Administration in addressing a recent attempt by a member of the public to protest on campus. During discussion, the Task Force provided feedback on the incident and potential ways of addressing any future incidents.

The Chair noted that a recent resignation was received by Dr. Ingrid Makus, who is presently serving as the Interim Dean in the Faculty of Social Sciences. During discussion, the Task Force concluded that it would be advisable to nominate a replacement for the faculty member position with the expectation the candidate will take the necessary steps to update themselves on the work of the Task Force to date. The call for nominations would be placed in accordance with the Task Force procedures.

MOVED (Rorison/Zowmi)

THAT a call for nominations be placed to fill the vacancy of the faculty member position on the Task Force.

CARRIED

10. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 3:10 p.m.