



Ontario Association of Fire Chiefs

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusivity Committee

Meeting Minutes

The Ontario Association of Fire Chiefs' mission is to provide leadership and support to the Ontario fire service through advocacy in service delivery, public and firefighter safety. Our vision is to inspire and influence a safer Ontario.

DEI vision: That every fire department in Ontario is equitable, inclusive, and reflects the diversity of the community they serve.

Wednesday November 22, 2023, 8:30am

In-person Meeting

Lake Huron Room, Hilton Niagara Fallsview Hotel

Attendees: Jeremy Parkin, Jeremy Inglis, Burt Lamoureux, Melanie Jones and Karthik Swaminathan

Guests: Mike MacDonald and Mark Pankhurst

Regrets: Todd Aitken, Normand Beauchamp, Vanessa Devolin and Kalpana Rajgopalan

Minute Taker: Karthik Swaminathan

1. Welcome – Committee Chair
 - The Chair welcomed the group and thanked everyone for their time.
2. Agenda Additions
 - None.
3. Declaration of Conflict of Interests
 - None.
4. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

The Chair approved the October 12, 2023, Meeting Minutes as draft.
5. 2024 Goals and Objectives
 - A discussion occurred around recruitment strategies that ensure diversity and inclusivity.
 - Ideas on how success stories can be amplified were exchanged: suggestions included organizing fire-side chats, publishing articles, recording video clips, sharing via social media, and/or including such stories in department/OAFC newsletters.



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- The Chair and Co-Chair stressed the need to set realistic and achievable goals for the coming year. Some points of discussion included:
 - a. Partnership with FSWO: The Chair aims for a meeting with them in January.
 - b. Additional opportunities, such as Camp Molly, Blaze Fire Academy, career days, etc.
 - c. Scholarship opportunities: The Co-Chair suggested setting up annuities and scholarships for fire-related education; the Chair agreed to take the suggestion to the OAFB Board of Directors.
- 6. Toolkit Program Review and Move Forward Plans
 - The Chair recommended continuing to develop and work on the toolkit.
 - Co-Chair Inglis spoke about ways fire service events (such as career fairs) could be designed to ensure correct messaging.
- 7. 2024 Meeting Schedule
 - Quarterly meetings or meeting every other month were recommended; with meetings to take place around events—in-person at the Conference and Trade Show in May and at the Annual General Meeting in November, and having virtual meetings in between.
- 8. Returning Members
 - The Chair and Co-Chair reminded attendees to confirm their membership for the upcoming year and encouraged them to spread the word in their respective networks.
 - Deputy Lamoureux shared that he would not be continuing on the Committee.
- 9. Roundtable
 - A discussion occurred around helping chief fire officers realise they can do better, recruit from a wider pool and play their part in diversifying the service.
 - Deputy Pankhurst asked if any department had a DEI Taskforce.
 - Deputy Lamoureux indicated the wheels were in motion in the Niagara Region.
 - Chief Jones said there was one in place in Kingston and offered to share details.
 - The Co-Chair said there was one in place through the Town of Newmarket.
 - A brief discussion occurred about rebranding the committee as the Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusivity Committee.
 - The Chair thanked the members for their contribution over the past year and looked forward to continuing the good work in the new year.
 - The Chair appreciated the work Deputy Lamoureux, who will not be returning as member, put in with the toolkit.



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10. Next Meeting

- To be determined.

11. Adjournment

- The Chair adjourned the meeting at 9:41 am.