

Minutes of the Community Advisory Council Meeting

March 9th, 2020 – 6:30 pm-8:30pm
Boardroom

PRESENT:

Community Members: Leroy Clarke, Sandra Forsythe (Teleconference), Raphael Francis, Renee Whittaker, Karen Chen, and Blessing Morka

Board Members: Aisha Delpeache, Elaine Forde

Staff Members: Rona Jualla van Oudenhoven (Co-Chair), Dawn Walcott Parris, Steve Woodman

Student Interns: Gifty Dem (Absent), Uzma Danish, Caitlyn Collins, Aneesa Atta

Guest: Jodi Potts (Guest)

Absent: Veralyn Alleyne (Co-Chair), Bryan Buttigieg

Item	Agenda Item	Item Discussion (if required)	Action / Decisions
1.	Welcome	Land Acknowledgement and CAC Statement	Rona read the Indigenous and Council statements.
2.	Approval of Agenda	Meeting was called to order at 6:41 pm.	Unanimous decision to approve the agenda of March 9 th , 2020. MOTIONED by Aisha Delpeache and seconded by Leroy Clarke. CARRIED
3.	Declaration of Conflict of Interest	There were no declarations of conflict of interest.	No conflict of interest noted.
4.	Approval of Past Minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The notes of meeting February 10th, 2020 were reviewed. ○ It was noted the importance of Staff member JP's Presentation of Organizational Effectiveness and Service Relations with regards to compliments and complaints within the agency. 	MOTIONED by Elaine Forde and seconded by Raphael Francis to approve the minutes of February 10 th , 2020. CARRIED
5.	Presentation and Complaints Process Exercise	A presentation was done by JP of Organizational Effectiveness and Service Relations with regards to compliments and complaints.	Questions over at 8:06.

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		<p>Yale professor David Berg and Brene Brown on organizational effectiveness and how to have tough conversations with our whole hearts. The process to allow the conversations to occur and how it will help us be more effective in providing to children, youth and families.</p> <p>Truly listening to the people that we are working with.</p> <p>Talking about compliments and complaints and how it's a shift of language that we have control over. Ignoring a complaint will not make it go away.</p> <p>Exploring compliments as a way to balance complaints. This makes it so we are not reflecting on the great work that is actually being done in the agency.</p> <p>Compliment number is very high at this agency and it is feedback that we are not acknowledging or exploring:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The amount of time, energy and resources that go into managing complaints.</i> • <i>The importance of closing the loop.</i> • <i>There is a lot of fear and worry among staff related to the experience of a "complaint" and that this needs to be normalized with a recognition that many times complaints are related to systemic matters and that we are all in this together.</i> <p>Learning over the last year:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There were a lot of overlapping complaint policies. • There were inconsistencies when it came to the handling, documentation and recording of complaints. <p>Keep child, youth, families, and staff at the centre of the decision-making process when it comes to complaints. <i>The process needs to be accessible and equitable which will then lead to a more improved service delivery.</i></p>	

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		<p>JP showed us the new feature on the Durham CAS website where anyone is allowed to email and submit a complaint and listing all of their options when it comes to giving feedback.</p> <p>JP opened the floor for questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Community member: Happy that the agency made the position but said that they didn't know about the process and it would've been helpful to know. What's the rationale to having this at human resources? - JP: Once getting more feedback – they can add this to the further training for staff. - Community member: Adding that attaching it to HR may make it defective. Saying that it is more aligned with AOP than with HR traditional values. - Community member: When thinking of HR as an entity of governing the agency and employees, HR is more on regulating the image of the company as a public entity. Having complaints aligned with HR is reminiscent of “putting things under the table”. The memory is still at the forefront and it would be a better fit of putting it in AOP departments. - Community member: Concerning effectiveness of the agency, is part of your job reviewing online complaints and compliments? Is this part of your portfolio since 2018? - JP: Worked for DCAS for 15 years, in new position since October of 2018. Been connecting with communications department with responding to social media feedback. - Community member: Is there documentation of the social media feedback because it would be needed for accountability. - JP: Challenge is with names on social media – it isn't always clear who is writing or doing reviews. It is hard to document when you can't confirm who the person is. Whenever possible there is great success with connecting the dots when who is posting and linking them to their worker if possible. - Gave an example of a 5 star google review but no comment. Sent an email to caseworkers – named the family and found the worker and talked about the feedback. - Board member: Question regarding individuals talking to the supervisor about the complaint. Made a great point of the power imbalance involved and about the possible retribution. Is there a process of having an unbiased person come in and 	

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		<p>talk about the complaint? No information about what happens after you make the complaint. Have people complained about the complaint process about having to go back to the supervisor?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - JP: Power imbalance is a challenge. An equal challenge is them having an open file and having a separate place all together. Feedback goes straight to JP. If they go back to her, they don't need to go back to the supervisor. Said that they are welcomed to bring a support person at any stage. Something that they will add to the website. Working with person in communications. - Community member: If a child makes a complaint – can you track the child back to the parent? They are trying to find a way to be able to connect the complaint to the family. Does it make sense to always respond to the comments (it will get more popular). They are trying to reach out wherever possible. - Asking if person in communications department has a social service background to determine who gets priority on which complaint gets answered first. If she doesn't have that background how is she supposed to tell what gets priority. - JP: communications goes through and forwards them to the correct department. - Staff member: it is a work in progress. Quality assurance said that they both need to have some input and have been working closely with JP because it needs those lenses. Our HR department does not represent the soft slavery that it might be associated with. They are trying to change and move forward from HR being oppressive. Having a second email is something that they are looking at so that it can get sent directly to the AO office so that they are able to see all of the feedback. The concerns have not been missed as an agency and that is where JP comes in. - Community member: Trite reporting: a report generally comes from three sources. How do you communicate with them? How can you minimize the complaints that come with these sources? How do you get that message across to them? - Staff member: this is a separate process – community member is talking about the referral process, but it is separate from JPs job. This is something that we will talk about further. - JP: Noted that she also gets complaints about community partners as well – not her job but it gets forwarded on to directors. - Community member: Recognized that we are talking about the complicated relationship that the community has with HR – not that we have to undo our 	<p>Agency will add that people are welcome to bring a support person with them at any stage of the process to the website.</p>

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		<p>knowledge base but how are we able to sort of undo it so that the community work is more effective. How does it get responded to in a way that it is more effective? Talking about the amount of confidence, anger, knowledge in order to engage with this process. The process of being a person of colour and the engagement with DCAS and how it can be belittling at times. How are we encouraging the people with negative engagement at DCAS to be able to complain? Are we having this conversation at intake? Setting up the fact that the workers are accountable to the client because there are consequences to our actions. Are these files retained as long as the personal files (indefinitely)? Do the complaints last forever too?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - JP: The distinguishing of complaints verbal or in writing. The writing becomes a more formal complaint that warrants an opening of a new file. It isn't the same as a protection file, but it allows us to look more at the feedback to be able to close it off. In terms of the worker, whatever the service experience has been, needs to be captured. The complaint files are kept indefinitely. - Community member: Talking about patterns that are being recorded and them being there indefinitely. - Staff member: These are not as easy to find as you think. You can't search the worker and the complaints come up. - Community member: Talking about the training – if the worker has so many complaints- should there be more training. How is this being used? - Staff member: When getting service, if the family is not happy and it is in the file, it stays in the file. If the complaint is about a specific person – there is an internal process that when the complaint comes in about a worker, there has to be a follow up with them and their supervisor. If that continually happens with the same person over and over- there is obviously a need for some training and that is the piece that JP is talking about using. - Community member: Concerning trite reporting, are these questions are incorporated into the intake? - Staff member: CWW 0017 identity-based data – policy and directive- one that requires info collecting on first meeting with the child. It is not information that is going to be had at first telephone contact. - Community member: Looking at policies again and also the eligibility spectrum. Saying that there can be policy tweaking to whatever works for them. 	

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Staff member: Explaining person records and how we can use that information that a student is studying. - Staff member: Explaining that the student is going to go back in and be looking at some ways that we can check on trite reporting and how we are getting the data. The brochure is given at time of first contact. - Community: Is there an interaction with the privacy and info office and DCAS? - JP: Mentions the big interaction that they both have. They address them in partnership so that it is one point of contact to make it an easier process. - Community member: Trite reporting for the past four years. Talking about something and doing something is another thing. This wasn't dealt with and we keep revisiting it and it doesn't seem like its being dealt with. We have recognized that it is a problem but doesn't think we've moved past it. What in the policy is addressing trite reporting? - Staff member: Everything is true. Big conversation with trite reporting and coming up with ideas. We realized we were going circular. Have more informal discussions about trite reporting and having that conversation occurring with a lot more context and knowledge. Explaining over the past four meetings, it was something that was given context and trite reporting will be picked back up after given the information. - Community member: Follow the ministries rules and setting the standard. Standard 8 talks about closing a case. Formulating a case closure would be when you would look at trite reporting. Looking at it with CWW 0017 and working with standard 8. Not understanding what documents DCAS is going by. - Community member agrees. Sees children's files as they become adults as a weapon of them engaging with their children. Hyper monitored because you grew up in the system. Purging at the age of the child's adulthood would be a great idea. The keeping open of the files is still allowing the file to weaponize these people. - Community member: Is that a question for DCAS or the ministry. - Community member: Closing a file does not mean that the info is purged. - Staff member: Case closure means that you have come to a point where any issues have been addressed and resolved. There is no further involvement with the family at that time and it is documented. You have reached a point where 	<p>Concluded that the purging of records goes beyond the scope of DCAS and it is a ministry level issue.</p>

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		<p>there is no further contact. The issue of purging records goes beyond the scope of DCAS and it is a ministry level issue.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Staff member: It is not beyond the committee's work to do some advocacy around that issue. - Community member: How can DCAS not keep a person's information against them in perpetuity when they have aged out of the system. - Community member: If there have been complaints made about him as a parent, does he have any right to see them? - Staff member: Part X explains that he has the right of access to that file. There is a process but you can receive the file that contains information about you. You get information about you but not necessarily anyone else. - Community member: Not my child? - Staff member: You would get information about child if you are the parent. - Community member: What is the process and how long to get a file? - Staff member: It takes 30 days; we have to make it available. It can sometimes be done sooner but there is a process. Child welfare court is a different process. If you are not involved in anything and are asking for your file, then it is a 30-day turnaround. - Community member: When engaging with the website, looking at accessibility within language. French and English works, Somalian does not. Also, people with learning disabilities – navigating someone through this with a video would be helpful. 	
6.	Community and Agency Update and Discussions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Community member: Thanking DCAS for the support and partnership for black history month. - Community member: Opportunity to speak at Aids Committee of Durham and self-care panel. Also working with CJA (Community Justice Alternatives) hosting a dialogue for youth on March 24th. - If you need to slot in for a further discussion for your next session, send an email and let the board know. - Community member: Did a presentation for Whitby historical society. Had a woman ask about how to get rid of her racist thoughts. - Community member: Working one on one with certain families. 	

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Community member: Had the privilege of seeing elder Angela Davis at University of Toronto. Racism is something that people don't want to talk about. Once it's done, we can get together and find solutions and fix it. 	
7.	Other Items: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Policies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - International Women's Day celebrations today. Had a big panel discussion and talked about gender equity in the workplace and in life as a whole. How much more difficult it is for more marginalized people like black single moms. - Going to be at the community partnership OACAS meeting. - Staff member: Had an OACAS meeting recently with a lot of community members. Black action network was there and many more community representation. It was similar to this committee but bigger representation and more funding, there's a lot to learn about that group. Gave his name and contact and they're going to reach out to find out what they've been doing in the Peel region. Peel is great with its community partner network. Have been approached by the Community Network Organization. How do we prepare parents in terms of social locations and privilege with regards to referrals? - Board member: Volunteers with an organization that organized first Black Mental Health Day around the city of Toronto. The one talked about anti-Black racism and mental health. The first Monday in March is designated as Black Mental Health day and how important it is. - Community member: Beneficial to have training on Black mental health. Non-white trigger words for depression are not the same. - Policy: need to reflect on eligibility spectrum – that should be the document that we need to use with the One Vision One Voice. Looking at the complaint policy, the last time it was reviewed and updated. Now that we have new staff, are you looking into updating policies? 	
8.	Meeting Evaluation	<p>Council members agreed that good discussions were held at this meeting. Community member liked the part with JP saying that we must have difficult conversations because it is needed for change.</p> <p>Student intern: Talked about the great timing for this to happen. Mention that she is doing research on South Asian immigrants and their experience with CAS. She has finished doing interviews and there is a lot of information and will share at the next meeting because a lot of the issues relate. People who have just received services</p>	<p>Council unanimously agreed that we must have difficult conversation in order to have change.</p>

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		<p>don't want to talk because it is still painful. Also mentions that the complaint procedure is great but the language and accessibility with the internet needs some work.</p> <p>Community member giving different options for accessibility – WhatsApp</p>	
9.	Adjournment	Meeting was adjourned at 8:27pm	<p>MOTIONED by Aisha Delpeache SECONDED by Leroy Clarke. CARRIED.</p>

DRAFT

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