

Appointment of Members to the Aboriginal Affairs Advisory Committee

Date: November 25, 2021

To: Civic Appointments Committee

From: Director, Indigenous Affairs Office

Wards: All

REASON FOR CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

This report deals with personal matters about identifiable individuals who are being considered for appointment to the Aboriginal Affairs Advisory Committee.

SUMMARY

The report recommends the appointment of 10 public members to the Aboriginal Affairs Advisory Committee.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Director, Indigenous Affairs Office recommends that:

1. City Council appoint the 10 candidates listed in the Confidential Attachment 1 to the Aboriginal Affairs Advisory Committee, at pleasure of Council, for a term of office ending on November 14, 2022.
2. City Council direct that the balance of Confidential Attachment 1 remain confidential as it relates to personal matters about identifiable individuals who are being considered for appointment to the Aboriginal Affairs Advisory Committee.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There are no financial implications arising from this report.

DECISION HISTORY

At its meeting held October 1 and 4, 2021, City Council amended the Terms of Reference for the Aboriginal Affairs Advisory Committee and requested staff to recruit members to fill vacancies on the committee as soon as practicable:

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2021.EX26.10>.

At its meeting held December 16, 17, and 18, 2020, City Council appointed one member to the Aboriginal Affairs Advisory Committee, at pleasure of Council, for a term of office ending on November 14, 2022:

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2020.CA16.4>.

At its meeting held October 29 and 30, 2019, City Council appointed one member to the Aboriginal Affairs Advisory Committee, at pleasure of Council, for a term of office ending on November 14, 2022:

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2019.CA10.3>.

At its meeting held July 16, 17, and 18, 2019, City Council appointed 18 members from Indigenous organizations to the Aboriginal Affairs Advisory Committee, at pleasure of Council, for a term of office ending on November 14, 2022:

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2019.CA8.6>.

At its meeting held March 27 and 28, 2019, City Council established Council Advisory Bodies for the term ending November 30, 2022 or until their mandate is completed within the 2018 to 2022 term, including the Aboriginal Affairs Advisory Committee:

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2019.EX3.4>.

COMMENTS

City Council has amended the Terms of Reference for the Committee

At its meeting held August 10, 2021, the Aboriginal Affairs Advisory Committee recommended to the Executive Committee that City Council amend the Terms of Reference of the Aboriginal Affairs Advisory Committee to include members of Aboriginal organizations and the community at large. City Council adopted these recommendations at its meeting held October 1 and 4, 2021.

The Aboriginal Affairs Advisory Committee is composed of 25 members with one Member of City Council. With the exception of the Member of City Council, Aboriginal Affairs Advisory Committee members are representatives of Aboriginal organizations and of the community at large. Previously, public members could only be representatives of Aboriginal organizations.

The Aboriginal Affairs Advisory Committee has discussed these changes

A discussion on the composition of the committee was first considered by the committee at its meeting held July 7, 2020. Further discussions about the composition and how to fill vacancies were added to the committee's agenda at five subsequent meetings.

To support these discussions, staff from the Indigenous Affairs Office, City Manager's Office, and the City Clerk's Office presented information and answered questions from members regarding how Council Advisory Bodies are governed and the public appointments process. Discussion at these meetings suggested that current membership may potentially be enhanced by including committee members who are:

- Elders and Knowledge Keepers;
- Community members at large (those unaffiliated with organizations);
- Seniors;
- Youth; and
- The 2-Spirited community.

Sector and issue-specific representation was also a potential consideration for new members, with new members (either community members at large or representatives of organizations) offering expertise in:

- environmental issues and land stewardship;
- business and innovation;
- the arts; and
- economic development.

It was noted that some of these sectors are represented by existing members, though additional voices could augment the representation or add perspectives not yet included in the Committee. It was also noted that new members could represent multiple sectors or backgrounds at once.

Eligibility and qualifications

In addition to the general eligibility requirements set out in the Public Appointments Policy, members should collectively bring the following skills and expertise to the committee:

- Strong knowledge of urban First Nation, Inuit and Métis communities, gained through personal or professional experience
- Knowledge in one or more areas of Indigenous: service planning and delivery, employment, policy and procedure, business, built environment and public spaces
- Experience in Indigenous governance, decision-making, communication and advocacy
- Availability to participate in meetings during business hours

Term of Office

Under the Terms of Reference for the Aboriginal Affairs Advisory Committee, public members are appointed for a four-year term, coinciding with the term of City Council.

Therefore, the candidates appointed through this process will be committee members until the committee completes its mandate or the end of the current City Council term, whichever comes first.

Outreach was conducted to fill these vacancies

Staff from the Indigenous Affairs Office and the Public Appointments Secretariat of the City Clerk's Office conducted extensive outreach to share news of this opportunity with the local Indigenous community. Outreach included:

- Direct contact with dozens of local Indigenous organizations and community leaders
- Contacting previous applicants for the Aboriginal Affairs Advisory Committee
- Sharing promotional text and a link to the online application with current committee members for circulation to their networks
- Direct contact with members of the public who had previously spoken on these items at committee
- Use of the Public Appointments e-updates list
- Use of social media including Twitter, LinkedIn, and Facebook

Nominees were selected by a panel of City staff

Following direction from City Council, the process of reviewing and nominating candidates for Council Advisory Bodies is delegated to staff, who report recommended candidates to the Civic Appointments Committee.

All applications received for these vacancies were considered by a panel of staff who shortlisted candidates and conducted interviews. The panel consisted of five Indigenous City staff who collectively represent a range of experience in social services, community engagement, housing, and diversity and inclusion, including in relation to Toronto's Indigenous community:

- Justin Lewis - Shelter, Support and Housing
- Reggie McDonald - People and Equity
- Ashley Nadjiwon - Indigenous Affairs Office
- Joe Rock - Children's Services
- Melissa Stevenson - Toronto Public Health

Panel members considered many factors when making their nominations including the needs identified by current committee members, a balance of representation from organizations and community members at large, intersectionality, the diversity of voices within Toronto's Indigenous community, and how candidates can support the mandate of the Aboriginal Affairs Advisory Committee.

Public release of names of recommended candidates

The names and biographies of the recommended candidates will be publicly reported once the Civic Appointments Committee forwards its recommendations to City Council.

CONTACT

Jeff D'Hondt, Consultant, Indigenous Affairs Office, Jeff.DHondt@toronto.ca, 416-392-2895

SIGNATURE

Selina Young
Director, Indigenous Affairs Office

ATTACHMENTS

Confidential Attachment 1 - List of Recommended Candidates, Qualifications, and Confidential Voluntary Diversity Information Summary, and Applications for Appointment to the Aboriginal Affairs Advisory Committee