

Terms of Reference

Peel Aboriginal Steering Committee (PASC)

(Definition of "Aboriginal": Inclusive of all groups regardless of status, non-status, on-reserve, off-reserve, urban and remote – Inuit, Métis and First Nations)

Vision

In Peel, all children will thrive, supported by a comprehensive system of culturally sensitive services in a community that meets basic needs: income, housing, nutrition, education and healthy parent/child relationships. (The Best Start Network of Peel)

Purpose

To raise awareness and educate Peel residents (including Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people) about the Aboriginal People's heritage and culture including recognition and respect of the diversity among the three groups included under the Aboriginal heading.

Specific goals

- to recognise and respect all Aboriginal people
- to identify the Aboriginal People in Peel (including their needs and contributions)
- to identify space for Aboriginal activities
- to develop programs/services appropriate for Aboriginal families
- to develop programs to increase awareness of children 0-6 and their families and caregivers about Aboriginal heritage & culture

Membership – see schedule A

- Aboriginal representation will be a maximum of nine (9). Aboriginal representation will consist of one Inuit member, and will strive for a balance between First Nations and Métis members.
- As PASC members it is our collective responsibility to ensure inclusivity, i.e. to ensure that our discussions and plans include consideration for Inuit, Métis and First Nations people whether they are present at the meeting or not.
- Membership will be expanded to include other relevant service providers as well as community representation. Additional members to be determined upon group consensus
- Members are expected to attend and participate in steering group meetings
- If members are unable to attend an update must be provided.

Responsibilities of committee members include:

- Commitment to attending meetings (If a member fails to attend 3 consecutive scheduled meetings and does not send regrets providing a valid reason the committee will discuss the members continued membership and a possible replacement representative)
- Participation in meeting discussions
- Create a respectful and safe environment
- Provide all members with an opportunity to speak

Workplan

The Steering Committee will develop an annual workplan outlining goals for the upcoming year.

Meetings

Meetings are held every month for approximately 2 hours. Meetings are pre-booked for the upcoming year. Members may invite guest speakers to attend a meeting upon confirmation of the Chair.

Chair

The Chair position will be held by The Region of Peel, Community Engagement Specialist. The Chair will be responsible for:

- Preparing and circulating the meeting agenda to all members one week prior to the meeting
- Record, prepare and distribute minutes and other materials
- Call meetings to order, present the agenda and introduce guests and new members.
- Chair the meeting to discuss the issues, summarize concerns and note actions required.

Vice-Chair

The Vice-Chair will be held by an Aboriginal member of PASC. On an annual basis the Chair will send a “call for interest” to committee members to fill the position of Vice-Chair. Members will be notified prior to the next scheduled committee meeting of the interested parties. Committee members will be given an opportunity to vote through a secret ballot process. If a member is unable to attend the meeting their vote can be sent to the Chair through email – the vote will be placed in the ballot.

The Vice-Chair will be responsible for: Performing Chair responsibilities in his/her absence.

- Works closely with the Chair and committee members.
- Performs other responsibilities as assigned by the committee.
- Has voting right unless he/she is acting on behalf of the Chair, in which case would vote only in the case of a tie.

Agendas

The Chair is responsible for creating and circulating the agenda for the next meeting. At the meeting, any member may add an agenda item to be discussed, or a recommendation to be considered. Each agenda includes approving the minutes of the last meeting, discuss business arising, a round-table to provide updates, sharing of information, raising issues and workplan updates. Agenda items not discussed should be added to the next agenda.

Quorum

A quorum is defined as fifty (50) percent plus one of PASC members present. If odd number we round up by 0.5. If less than half of the committee attends a meeting, the meeting may be re-scheduled.

Decision Making

Fifty percent plus one of the members present must be Aboriginal in order for a vote to take place. If there are not enough aboriginal members present, the vote will be deferred until the next scheduled meeting. If the matter is urgent, an emergency meeting will be called.

Process for decision-making will be based on achieving consensus. If a consensus cannot be reached then a vote will be taken and the majority of votes will carry the decision. In the event of a tie, the Chair will have deciding vote.

Working Groups

Ad hoc committees are formed from time to time to address workplan activities. These committees would meet on an as needed basis.

A Gathering – Event Planning Committee

- The Event Planning committee is the decision making forum of the entire planning process. Sub-committees will be created to organize the event and inform the Event Planning Committee. Members of the Event Planning Committee will consist of PASC committee members as well as a number of Regional Specialists. The sub-committees may recruit external members to assist and provide expertise.
- On an annual basis the PASC Chair will send a “call for interest” to PASC committee members to fill the position of the Event Planning Committee Chair. Members will be notified prior to the next scheduled committee meeting of the interested parties. Committee members will be given an opportunity to vote through a secret ballot process. If a member is unable to attend the meeting their vote can be sent to the PASC Chair – the vote will be placed in the ballot.
- In the event an Event Planning Committee Chair is not chosen the position/responsibility will fall to the PASC Chair.
- The Chair will be responsible for providing direction and guidance to the overall planning and organization of the Event Planning Committee with the assistance of the Community Engagement Specialist and the Event Specialist. In addition, administrative resources will be made available to assist in the planning process. The Chair will identify and red flag any issues. Preparing and circulating the meeting agenda to all members one week prior to the meeting. Record, prepare and distribute minutes and other materials. Call meetings to order and present the agenda. Chair the meeting to discuss the issues, summarize concerns and note actions required. The Chair will only vote in the event of a tie.

Outreach

Individual members are committed to promoting the work of the group wherever possible to raise awareness.

Group Structure

The Peel Aboriginal Steering Committee will be integrated into the committee structure of the Best Start Network.

By signing, the signatories agree to the terms outlined and commit to holding themselves and each other accountable for fulfilling their respective roles and responsibilities as detailed above. It will be reviewed by the signatories on an annual basis. However, it is understood that the signatory page may be amended at an earlier date, by agreement of the committee, to allow additional members to sign on as PASC committee members. The committee will review the terms of reference - July 2009

Helen Lewis-FitzGerald
Chair – Community Engagement Specialist, Region of Peel

Debbie Alves
Social Planning Council of Peel

Carol Appleby
Sheridan College

Pat Chrisjohn
First Nations Citizen

Karen Gellman
Early Childhood Outreach Worker

Siobhan Laverdiere
Métis Nation of Ontario

Sharon McBride
Métis Citizen

Judy Moreau
Credit River Métis Council

Ian Pettigrew
Peel District School Board

Dan Reidy
Dufferin-Peel Catholic District SB

Anthony Templer
Peel Aboriginal Network

Silvia Wynter
Peel Children's Aid Society