



City of Calgary: Gender Equity and Diversity

Statement for May 2, 2018 – 9:30 am

These notes have been made in preparation for a statement being made to the Standing Policy Committee of Community and Protective Services of the City of Calgary regarding Notice of Motion - CC 661 (R2009-05).

Greeting and Introduction:

- Good morning and thank you for hearing me today
- My name is Johnathan Kuipers and I am the Coordinator of Development and Programming at Calgary Outlink: Centre for Gender and Sexual Diversity.
- I am here today to speak on behalf of our organization and voice our support for a strategy to advance Gender Equity and Diversity in Calgary
- We stand in collaboration with our community partners and appreciate the opportunity add our voice to the growing number of individuals and organizations who want to see Calgary become a new leader in addressing Gender Equity and Diversity.
- Specifically, we would like to see more equitable participation of diverse communities in committees, boards, commissions, and throughout the City of Calgary's workforce.
- We aim to raise awareness and promote the equitable participation of gender and sexually diverse people in city life
- While we cannot possibly speak for everyone in our community, we do speak up for those whose voices have been silenced.
- Many of our most vulnerable community members include, gender non-conforming individuals, transgender individuals, queer and trans people of color (QTPOC) and those who identify as two-spirit (2S).

Unpacking Gender Equity:

- At Outlink, we acknowledge the fact that gender is a social construct, not a binary.
- Consider what is masculine or feminine?
- What happens when you fall somewhere in between?

- We aim to educate the broader community on the delineation of biological sex, gender identity, and gender expression...
- With regard to Gender Equity, we all have a responsibility to provide room for a diversity of identities and expressions across the spectrum of human existence.

Diversity:

- We acknowledge the complexities and intersectionality that exists within the diversity and multiculturalism narrative.
- Diversity encompasses so much and it is our hope that the City adopts a fulsome definition of diversity, which includes intersectionality
- As a representative of Outlink, we want to ensure that diversity with regard to sexuality and gender are represented in decisions and actions taken by the city
- As a result of our mandate, we are working to bring a voice to the table for LGBTQ, QTPOC and 2S folks. We specifically aim to raise awareness about the intersections of race, sexuality, and gender.

Action Oriented Approach:

- We encourage the city to establish a formalized advisory committee of diverse representatives from the LGBTQ, QTPOC, and 2S communities
- We encourage and are willing to provide training, in collaboration with our community partners, on topics related to diversity, intersectionality, and inclusion
- We ask that the city of Calgary continue to be proactive in its approach to addressing diversity and gender equity. This may include but it not limited to community consultations, diversity audits, anti-racism organizational change, and funding opportunities for LGBTQ, QTPOC, and 2S serving organizations.
- We further suggest that the City of Calgary begin to implement aboriginal land acknowledgements at events, and meetings such as these.
- Once again, we ask that the City make intentional efforts to implement diverse representation on committees, boards, and commissions and throughout the City of Calgary's workforce.

Why is it important for the City to act on this work?

We acknowledge that this work has been going on for decades, starting with grassroots organizations and growing into non-profits, charities, foundations, and other NGO's.

We see this notice of motion as a call to action for the City to begin responding from a structural and governance level.

We believe that bridging the gap between a bottom-up and top-down approach will lead to greater social cohesion and inclusion, as well as healthier and more vibrant communities.

If we can agree on social wellbeing principles such as...

- Equity (Accessibility and Inclusion)
- Truth and Reconciliation
- Cultural Diversity
- Prevention

... then we are well on our way to building a stronger community together.

Thank you for taking your time to hear my statement and I welcome any questions you may have.