

**TO:** Mayor Josh Morgan, London City Councillors

**FROM:** Deanna Ronson

**RE:** Meeting of Council, April 4, 2022, Item 8.2, 5. (4.2) on the Agenda  
Consideration of Appointment to the London Polices Services Board

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As Council makes its final decision this afternoon on the matter of the appointment to the London Police Services Board, I urge Mayor Morgan, Councillors Hillier, Prebil, Lehman, Cuddy, Lewis, Van Meerbergen and Stevenson to reconsider your previous votes for Ryan Gauss.

The BIPOC community has been very clear in stating that police services require oversight by a diverse board that includes members of the BIPOC community, more specifically, Black and Indigenous people.

We know that there is systemic racism in policing across Canada. As recently as June 2021, the House of Commons heard a report entitled "Systemic Racism in Policing in Canada: Report of the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security" (<https://www.ourcommons.ca/Content/Committee/432/SECU/Reports/RP11434998/securp06/securp06-e.pdf>).

There is an over-representation of Indigenous and Racialized people within the Canadian criminal justice system. Because of this over-policing, the Police Services Board requires representation from qualified members of the BIPOC community.

In the most recent vote for consideration of appointment to the PSD, there were **at least** two other equally qualified candidates who stood alongside Ryan Gauss.

I cannot think of a single reason why the pleas from the BIPOC community to appoint a fellow BIPOC member to the Board would be ignored, except for the fact that Mr. Gauss is a friend, former campaign manager and campaign donor to Mayor Morgan. That decision smacks of cronyism.

I urge the councillors who voted for Gauss, to put aside your white privilege and vote in a BIPOC member, more specifically, Joseph Wabegijig.

The Ontario government website for Police Services Boards, states that appointees should, "*reflect the diversity of the people of Ontario and deliver services and decisions in a non-partisan, professional, ethical and competent manner*" ([https://www.ontario.ca/page/police-services-boards?](https://www.ontario.ca/page/police-services-boards?fbclid=IwAR1rfb0e38YyRBf0UDVLdh8mmGdjoy4mC43EU0LffSImyd1BNkJWE-FXe6M#section-2)

[fbclid=IwAR1rfb0e38YyRBf0UDVLdh8mmGdjoy4mC43EU0LffSImyd1BNkJWE-FXe6M#section-2](https://www.ontario.ca/page/police-services-boards?fbclid=IwAR1rfb0e38YyRBf0UDVLdh8mmGdjoy4mC43EU0LffSImyd1BNkJWE-FXe6M#section-2)). Wabegijig has the lived experience that Gauss is lacking. He has served

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with a the Wikwemikong Tribal Police Services Board and he served as an elected councillor in his First Nations community of Wikwemikong. Considering both qualifications and diversity, Wabegijig is clearly a better fit for the position.

Mayor Morgan, you campaigned on "Vibrant and Inclusive Neighbourhoods. In your campaign you stated that you would *"implement recommendations put forward in the city of London's Community Diversity and Inclusions Strategy"*. And, that you would *"support London's Director of Anti-Racism and Anti-Oppression to continue to engage with Black, Indigenous, People of Colour, and LGBTQ2+ communities, so that all Londoners feel supported and represented by their city."* You also promised that you would *"support the continued implementation of Truth & Reconciliation calls to action at the municipal government level"* and that you would *"commit to meeting regular with the Chiefs of area Indigenous communities and focus on listening, fostering deeper relationships, and meaningful outcomes."*

These promises are meaningless if they are not backed up by action.

Several people have recently spoken to the press on this matter and stated that the Police Services Board is already diverse because it's made up of white women, men and one person of colour. Please let it be known that gender parity is **NOT** the same as diversity. I self-identify as a white woman with disabilities. If I am vying for a position where there is an equally qualified Black or Indigenous woman applying, the position should go to her. My disabilities do not trump skin colour. Although I may be disabled, I am privileged because I am white.

It's sad that this needs to be explained.

While admitting mistakes can be difficult for our ego, there is no harm in it. Admitting this mistake and fixing it now, shows your constituents, particularly the BIPOC community, that you are compassionate, empathic and good listeners. Wouldn't you rather that be your legacy of power?

Please appoint one of the BIPOC candidates to the London Police Services Board.

Thank you.