

**From:** Executive Director

**Sent:** Sunday, April 2, 2023 11:46 PM

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**Cc:** Council Agenda <councilagenda@london.ca>

**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] LPSB recommendation

March 31, 2023

City of London Mayor Josh Morgan

All Sitting Members of London City Council

Shekoli , Sohuwesiyoklati ni: yukyats, Ohkwa:li ,niwaki'talo:t^ On^yota'a:ka niwakuhutsyo:t^ . In the English language, I am known as Brian Hill and I am Bear clan from the Oneida of the Thames First Nation. I am the President of the Board of Directors of the N'Amerind Friendship Centre, Indigenous community activist, speaker, organizational relationship builder and a resident of the City of London. The City of London has made an effort to build a healthy relationship with the Indigenous communities both Urban and On-Reserve and made a commitment to working with the same to adopt and enact the Truth and Reconciliation Commission 94 Calls to Action that specifically relate to Municipal Government responsibilities. The dream of true Reconciliation has been dealt another blow. The recent political decision to completely disregard the recommendation of the outgoing Chair of the London Police Services Board and many Indigenous and other BIPOC activists in the City of London. The concepts of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion have also been put on the back burner in order to ensure the imbalance of authority is returned to where it once was. There have been many examples of how this has been occurring in the London and surrounding area but this recommendation has garnered more scrutiny due to the fact of the individual who is being put forth. The decision announced that is being recommended for approval has been questioned by other community leaders and even the individual named sought advice from a Federal integrity body to see if there were issues. That alone should have gave some notion that this was not a good decision to make. If you need to ask then there is cause for concern and should be cause for more investigation. The words "conflict of interest" are some of the words that come to mind when the news broke about this recommendation, regardless of the reality or perceived label that can be applied. There been no consideration for the participation of any of the Council Advisory committee's for input which has been another community oriented avenue that has restrictions on what and who they can and cannot "advise" on. The need for transparency and clarity should be the foremost in everyone's mind and there needs to be a more wholesome discussion in regards to this anomaly. How can the people from the diverse communities of London possibly get a fair and rightful chance to have their concerns addressed when the very people that make the decisions do so with great disregard for their input? These words expressed will be held on paper without action, concerns will get their due acknowledgment and declared "received" but will gather dust in some report to be shelved and forgotten and paths of action will go untraveled as they will be of no consequence to

those who do not feel the effects of a history of neglect but rather a history of preference based on a racial demographic. Occasionally, when incidents of hatred are exposed publically and there is media outcry, some actions are taken but then efforts get pushed to the backburner until the next event. Recently a group of concerned North Londoners stood together to ask for resolution over the plan to remove trees from their area. "The meeting had been arranged after residents complained that they had little information or input regarding infrastructure work planned for a number of area streets" and "We will have an information meeting inside. We will have project plans, all the work that we will be doing, as well as the project team there ready to answer any questions that the public may have." (CTV London, March 31, 2023). But yet, there seems to be no opportunity for the Indigenous community specifically and all BIPOC parties in general to be heard in regards to the reasoning behind why Mr. Joseph Wabegijig and other BIPOC applicants being in the running but ultimately being passed over for appointment to the LPSB. Again the system is working as it was designed, benefiting those who control it and political moves are reinforcing the long held ideas, concepts and efforts return to the status quo. Additionally, recent conversations on devising the Mission, Vision statements and Strategic areas of Focus for the 2023- 2027 Strategic Plan for the city completely ignored a suggestion that Reconciliation be in the forefront and then a recommendation by a sitting Councilor to push Reconciliation deep within the plan itself was surprisingly voted down. I have been involved as an activist, speaker and promoter of Indigenous inclusion into mainstream mindsets for over 30 years. The efforts to have our voices heard and to have a seat at the tables where decisions are made, has shown some progress but once again we are being shown by these types of inactions that in reality, our voices don't carry the value that is given to others. There is an immediate need to re-evaluate this ongoing issue and have a public meeting in regards to how these appointments are decided and who ultimately wins or loses. We, as a community, are once again standing up and declare that we be seen as a valued resource in the City of London and seen as such. Actions will always speak much louder than words.

Yaw^ko (thank you)

Sohuwesyoklati

Brian Hill

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Indigenous Community Activist

London Community member