

**WEST HANTS REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY**  
**Diverse and Inclusive Communities Meeting Agenda**  
**November 22, 2023 - 6:00 p.m.**  
**Nova Scotia Works (Community Inc) Board Room**



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1. Call to Order
  2. Attendance
  3. Announcements
  4. Approval of the Agenda, including additions or deletions
  5. Old Business
    - a) Election of Chair and Vice Chair
    - b) RAD Report Review and Discussion
  6. New Business
    - a) Introductions
    - b) Municipal Government Review/Roles /Responsibilities
    - c) Terms of Reference - Review /Discuss Mandate
    - d) Strategy Session following discussion Re: Mandate
    - e) Anti-Racism Legislation
    - f) Nova Scotia Human Rights Week
    - g) Open Floor Discussion
  7. Next Meeting Date / Adjournment

**WEST HANTS REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY**  
**Diverse and Inclusive Communities Committee Meeting Minutes**  
**November 22, 2023 - 6:00 p.m.**  
**NS Works (Community Inc) Boardroom**



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1. Call to Order – CAO Phillips called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

2. Attendance

Abraham Zebian, Mayor

Andrea Parker, Community Health Board Representative

Anne Bishop, Community Member

Chris Burns, WHRM Employee

David Ferguson, RCMP Representative

Deanna Snair, WHRM Employee

Domenic Padula, Community Member

Ian Shaw, Community Member

Jamie Patterson, Community Member

Jenna Warren, Community Member

Jessie Drysdale, WHRM Employee

Mark Phillips, CAO

Ripley Brown-Fogarty, Community Member

Sarah Brothers, Community Member

Sarah Taylor, WHRM Employee

Vanessa Lake, WHRM Employee

Regrets:

Jim Ivey, Councillor, District 11 (Alternate Council MDomenic Padulaember)

Shartelle Lyon, Advisory Member

3. Announcements

Mayor Zebian acknowledged that we are in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq People and that this land is governed by the treaties of Peace and Friendship signed in 1726. West Hants Regional Municipality also recognizes that we are all treaty people and have responsibilities to this land and each other. West Hants Regional Municipality also recognizes African Nova Scotians are a distinct people whose history, legacies, and contributions have enriched that part of Mi'kma'ki known as Nova Scotia for over 400 years. CAO Phillips acknowledged that this was a safe space for committee members where they can be themselves with no judgement and sensitive matters will be kept confidential.

4. Approval of the Agenda, including additions or deletions

CAO Phillips reviewed the agenda. Items the committee wanted to add will be addressed during the Terms of Reference discussion. There were no additions to the agenda.

## 5. Old Business

### a) Election of Chair and Vice-Chair

Domenic Padula nominated Anne Bishop for Chair, and Anne accepted the position. Chair Bishop nominated Domenic Padula for Vice-Chair, and Domenic accepted the position. They discussed the option of co-chairing the meeting and will add it to the Terms of Reference.

### b) RAD Report Review and Discussion

The RAD Report was included in the agenda package and was also included in the previous meeting. The report was created pre-consolidation, and the hope is it will give the committee, and municipality, landmarks to strive for. After reviewing the contents, the committee discussed the report. There was surprise at the consensus of the results, as well as how “diversity in municipal staff” was mentioned in the report but was not a final recommendation. Despite persons with disabilities making up 1/3 of the population, they were not addressed in the report. CAO Phillips explained that the municipality has a separate Accessibility Committee which deals with disability concerns and their documents will be shared with this committee. There will be overlap between the two committees. He added that Kevin Waters from the Community Development department is a champion for the cause, and he hopes to have Kevin present to the committee. He is working with Recreation Nova Scotia with regards to a disability charter. It was noted that the housing market has changed drastically since the report was created. There is nothing in the report discussing homelessness, but there are at least 20 people in Windsor who are currently living in tents. Housing, including affordable housing, is a priority to members.

## 6. New Business

### a) Introductions

The committee briefly introduced themselves during attendance.

### b) Municipal Government Review/Roles/Responsibilities

CAO Phillips gave an overview of the structure and role of municipal government, including the different departments. He explained the role of Council and advisory committees, of which this is one. The committee may make recommendations to Council regarding policy and resources, and they may make recommendations to staff on a more operational level. They may also ask Council for support or endorsement of specific objectives. Mayor Zebian said that Council would welcome presentations from the committee. CAO Phillips noted that many municipalities focus their diversity efforts on the Community Development department, but he hopes to take a more holistic approach, including every department. He acknowledged that Community Development would likely be the most involved, and they have grant programs available. He added that the Planning and Development department is currently undertaking a Plan Review process which gives ample opportunity for discussion, both among staff and the public.

### c) Terms of Reference – Review / Discuss Mandate

Deanna Snair explained that the Terms of Reference were drafted by municipal staff and approved by Council before the committee was created. This is the opportunity for the committee to discuss what they want to see included. The recommendation is then taken to Committee of the Whole, and then ratified by Council.

There is currently no Glooscap representative on the committee. There had been no expression of interest despite attempts. The committee would like to see a Glooscap representative among their members and have it reflected in the Terms of Reference. Committee members have contact information that they will share with Deanna.

Moved by Domenic Padula and seconded by Jenna Warren that Section 4.1 of the Terms of Reference be amended to reflect a voting member from the Glooscap First Nation and increase the number of voting members from 7 to 8. Motion carried unanimously.

The committee discussed the length of the term served by each citizen member. They would like an increased length for each term, so momentum is not lost with member turnover. Deanna noted that other committees allow consecutive terms.

Moved by Domenic Padula and seconded by Jenna Warren that Section 5.2 of the Terms of Reference be amended to include “up to two (2) additional terms.” Motion carried unanimously.

The Terms of Reference did not include a meeting frequency. The committee felt they needed to meet more often, at least in the beginning stages, to build a solid foundation. CAO Phillips noted that the policy can outline a minimum, but the committee can meet more often if needed. The committee also asked why the meetings are not livestreamed on Facebook. Deanna explained this was because the meeting locations do not have the technology available, and it was for the safety and comfort of members who do not want their faces or stories in the public eye.

Moved by Chair Bishop and seconded by Jamie Patterson that the Terms of Reference be amended to include Section 5.6, outlining that the committee will meet at a minimum bi-weekly, or 6 times a year. Motion carried unanimously.

Further discussion was held on meeting etiquette and defining what “Diversity and Inclusion” means to the committee. Deanna will send the Code of Conduct out to the members after the meeting. CAO Phillips explained that the mandate is not necessarily time-sensitive and can be amended as needed. Deanna added the positions of Chair and Co-Chair to Section 5.1 to reflect the committee’s earlier discussion.

d) Strategy Session following discussion Re: Mandate

Creating a mandate for the committee requires categorizing and prioritizing its goals and objectives. The committee discussed how they would like to proceed. They decided on a series of 3 strategy sessions to discuss the mandate, each 2 weeks apart, beginning in January. A preliminary meeting will be held in December to plan the strategy sessions.

e) Anti-Racism Legislation

This report was provided to the committee for information purposes. There were no questions or comments.

f) Nova Scotia Human Rights Week

December 10, 2023 marks the 75th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and in commemoration of this, the Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission is declaring the week of December 3 – 10 “Nova Scotia Human Rights Week.” This week encompasses many important dates; December 3 is the International Day for Persons with Disabilities, December 6 is National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women, and December 10 is International Human Rights Day. The committee discussed its importance and how they would like to celebrate it. Suggestions included changing the colour of the lights on the Sports Complex to a colour representing the day being celebrated and doing so throughout the year, and social media posts to inform the community about these special days, such as promotional videos featuring committee members. Significant dates could be added to the committee agenda. Lunch and Learn sessions could be held both in-person and online.

g) Open Floor Discussion

Committee members were excited for the future of the committee. They felt hopeful this committee would bring about action and spark change. The different perspectives each member brings to the table provides invaluable feedback and knowledge. Chair Bishop noted that the timing feels more urgent than before, with how much discrimination is on the rise.

7. Next Meeting Date / Adjournment

The next meeting date will be determined using polls to find the best date to include as many members as possible. Once decided, a formal meeting invitation will be sent.

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:25pm.