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**Attendance:**

Anne Bishop, Community Member  
Domenic Padula, Community Member  
Alma Crnalic, Community Member  
Mattea Sexton, Community Member  
Lisa Bland, Community Member  
Rayvonne Carrington, SPEC Advisory Member  
Kayla Leary-Pinch, Councillor  
Jim Ivey, Councillor (Alternate)  
Jessie Drysdale, WHRM Employee  
Chris Burns, WHRM Employee  
Kevin Waters, WHRM Employee  
Vanessa Lake, WHRM Employee  
Deanna Snair, WHRM Employee

**Regrets:**

Charlotte Paul, Glooscap Representative  
Mark Phillips, CAO  
David Ferguson, RCMP Representative  
Karrie-Ann Wilkie, Community Health Board, Representative

**1. Call to Order**

At 6:03pm, Kevin called the meeting to order.

**2. Announcements**

There were no updates or announcements.

**3. Approval of the Agenda**

Moved by Domenic Padula and seconded by Lisa Bland that the agenda be approved as circulated. Motion carried unanimously.

The minutes from the last meeting were not yet available. Approval of the minutes was deferred until the next meeting in April.

**4. New Business**

**a) Welcome and Introduction**

The Committee introduced themselves for the benefit of new members and staff who had missed previous meetings. Kevin noted that Charlotte Paul and Mark Phillips had sent regrets, and Jamie Patterson had resigned from her position due to a high workload. There are now two vacancies on the Committee, and they are being advertised. The open positions are for an individual of Acadian descent and an individual with an accessibility perspective. Kevin shared some of the suggestions Jamie had to improve the Committee for future members: a better understanding of the scope and goals of the Committee, an option for community members to meet without WHRM staff present for more open discussion, and assessing the meeting location based on transportation options.

**b) Nomination and Election of Chair and Vice Chair**

Anne and Domenic had discussed prior to the meeting to continue with the Co-Chair model used in the previous iteration of the Committee. The Committee agreed to this model.

Moved by Domenic Padula and seconded by Lisa Bland that the Diverse and Inclusive Communities Committee split the Chair position into two Co-Chair positions. Motion carried unanimously.

Domenic Padula nominated Anne Bishop for the Co-Chair position. Anne Bishop nominated Domenic Padula for the Co-Chair Position. There were no further nominations, and both Anne and Domenic accepted their nominations.

Moved by Lisa Bland and seconded by Rayvonne Carrington that in the presence of two Co-Chairs, the Vice-Chair position does not need to be filled. Motion carried unanimously.

**c) Terms of Reference Review and Discussion**

The Committee currently does not have a Terms of Reference. Using the Terms of Reference from a different committee as a template and Appendix M the Meeting and Committee Procedural Policy (which refers to the Diverse and Inclusive Communities Committee), the Committee discussed how they would like to structure their own Terms of Reference.

Kevin asked if the Committee was still OK with the name. Lisa noted that the acronym, DICC, may be problematic. The Committee discussed different options to get away from that acronym but still carry the same meaning. They also suggested using the full Committee name when possible. Diversity, equity and inclusion were the foundation of the Committee, and the members wanted that reflected in the name.

Moved by Lisa Bland and seconded by Domenic Padula that the Committee change their name to “Diverse, Equitable, and Inclusive Communities Committee (DEICC).” Motion carried unanimously. This will be formalized by Council at their next meeting.

Committee composition was discussed next. The intersectionality of identities was a key point. One person may belong to multiple communities as outlined in Appendix M. To encourage as much diversity as possible, the interpretation of this composition would be understood as people belonging to one *or more* of the outlined communities. When filling vacancies, priority could be given to those of an identity whose perspective is missing from the table. Anne also commented that guest speakers from any missing identities could be brought in to share their perspective. Lisa suggested adding a comma between “diverse

race” and “ethnicity.” The Committee discussed adding non-voting school representatives to the complement as well (non-voting so not to affect quorum). Domenic added that migrant workers are not currently able to join the Committee due to the constraints of their work permits, but their voices should also be heard.

For Goals and Deliverables, Kevin noted that the Equity and Anti-Racism Plan is still under review and will tie into the Committee mandate. The plan is discussed later in the next section. Domenic felt that the goals of the Committee are not defined, and that flexibility is what allows the Committee to function, to respond to what happens in the community. Lisa said this could be built into the mandate, with “in-time response to community needs or Council direction in relation to anti-racism, equity, and inclusion” listed as a priority. As the Equity Plan would be an “inflexible” printed document, allowing the Committee to remain flexible to respond to real-time events would be beneficial.

The Committee discussed livestreaming and public access to their meetings. Currently, the meetings are not publicly advertised or livestreamed. While the Committee would like to be more public to show the community that people care about these issues and work is being done, there was a concern that individuals may not be as open or vulnerable before a camera, and open, vulnerable conversation is an integral part of the Committee’s work. There were also concerns about judgement or harassment from the public. Safety is paramount for members and a live meeting may not offer that feeling of safety. The Committee discussed the possibility of only making certain meetings live, such as when a guest speaker is present, or they are reviewing their plan.

The location of these meetings was also discussed. Many were not comfortable with the Council Chambers at 76 Morison Dr as a location. Deanna noted that the meeting was being held here in part to show the setup required to livestream. Off-site streaming and recording devices do not offer the same level of quality. The Committee discussed different locations they could meet, such as the NS Works Boardroom, the conference room at the Hants Community Hospital, the Visitor Information Centre, or the Council Chambers at 100 King St, which can be rearranged into a more friendly, less colonial setup. Staff will provide more options at the next meeting. As for the next meeting, the Committee chose 100 King St. Future meeting locations will be chosen based on availability and transportation.

Moved by Lisa Bland and seconded by Anne Bishop that the Terms of Reference for the Diverse, Equitable, and Inclusive Communities Committee be created based on the discussion held at the March 10, 2025, meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

**d) Equity, Anti-Racism, and Accessibility Plan Discussion**

Kevin provided an update on the Equity, Anti-Racism, and Accessibility Strategy Plan. It has been reviewed by both the Diverse and Inclusive Communities Committee, the Accessibility Committee and the Province, through the Association of Municipal Administrators Nova Scotia (AMANS) and the Office of Equity and Anti-Racism. The province did note that the plan was quite long. It is being pared down to strategic actions, with the sub-actions becoming Committee responsibility. Kevin is also working on the accessibility of the

document (colour, format, etc.). Glooscap First Nation's council currently has the document and are preparing notes. He informed the Committee that the Plan will be going to Council for approval on March 25, 2025, with the hope of it being publicly available on the website on April 1, 2025. Lisa reminded Kevin to change the name of the Committee in the final document. Copies of the latest version were handed out to the Committee. Kevin asked for any feedback and thanked the Committee and community consultants for their invaluable contributions so far. The document is still being finalized, and any gaps are still under revision.

The Committee was appreciative that their concerns were taken seriously. It was a point of pride that they helped shape this document. The glossary and educational section were very welcomed additions as well. Lisa would like it to be mentioned that African Nova Scotians have been in West Hants since the 1700's. The section on where racism occurs was one of the sections under review and the Committee had several examples to add. Racism occurs everywhere, all the time. For the glossary and education section, the Committee would like to see the poor treatment of the unhoused included and expanded definitions of homophobia and transphobia. Kevin is accepting further comments by email.

## 5. Open Floor Discussion

Domenic had concerns about the Provincial Government's new intent for mining and fracking. He would like for Council to write a letter to the Government asking them to respect First Nations and other equity-denied communities and to ensure proper consultation is followed. Lisa added that there are statements in place to reduce environmental racism.

Moved by Domenic Padula and seconded by Anne Bishop that the Committee recommends that Council write a letter to the Province asking how they plan to fulfill their constitutional obligation of consulting with the local Mi'kmaq people and how they are going to address the structural and systemic environmental racism those developments can and will create. Motion carried with Alma abstaining from the vote.

Alma asked for further clarification on the purpose of the letter. Domenic explained that the Government must understand that they cannot just bulldoze over marginalized and equity-denied communities and rights without consultation and without consequence. Proper procedure and due diligence must be followed. Alma changed her vote to be in favour of the letter to the Government. Alma also felt that some of the timeliness in the draft plan still need some work. Kevin responded that there are 74 actions set for the first three years, making it a very front-loaded timeline. Adjustments are still being made.

Mattea is still getting her footing in the Committee and agreed with the points made.

Jessie thought moving away from the old acronym would be a good thing, so the Committee would not be seen as something to laugh at, because it is *not* a laughing matter.

Jim appreciated the chance to sit at the table to listen and learn. The conversations had by this Committee are very good. He was also happy to see the old acronym be changed with and would like for the Committee to use its full name whenever possible.

Chris thanked the Committee for the opportunity to participate. The draft plan looks excellent, and he looks forward to future accomplishments.

Anne commented that changing the name of the Committee to have “DEI” as a central focus is making an important statement, given the current situation in the US where diversity, equity, and inclusion are being actively suppressed.

Kayla congratulated the Committee for all their hard work so far. She mentioned the March Break Camp is piloting a program share with Limitless to offer accessible programs for children, ranging from physical disabilities to neurodiverse diagnoses. She hopes it goes well so it can continue through the summer. Limitless initially focused on adults and had recently branched out to children’s programming. It will be a great partnership going forward.

Mattea offered carpooling for anyone in the Brooklyn area.

## **6. Next Meeting Date / Adjournment**

The next meeting is scheduled for April 14, 2025, at 6:00pm, at 100 King St, Windsor. An invite will be sent out and the Committee will be notified if there are any changes. With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:49pm.