

WEST HANTS REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY
Diverse and Inclusive Communities Committee Meeting Minutes
May 12, 2025, 6:00pm – 8:05pm
Community Room, West Hants Sports Complex, 16 Centennial Dr, Windsor
Amended June 10, 2025



Attendance:

Anne Bishop, Community Member
Alma Crnalic, Community Member
Lisa Bland, Community Member
Mattea Sexton, Community Member
Domenic Padula, Community Member
Tim Doyle, RCMP Representative (6:35pm)
Heather Kidd, West Hants Middle School Liaison
Donna MacMillan, Avon View High School Liaison
Ashley Connors, Avon View High School Liaison
Michel Bourgeois, Accessibility Advisory Committee Chair
Vanessa Lake, WHRM Employee
Katie Rose, HR Manager (WHRM)
Chris Burns, WHRM Employee

Regrets:

Charlotte Paul, Glooscap Representative
Rayvonne Carrington, SPEC Advisory Member
Karrie-Ann Wilkie, Health Board Representative
Kayla Leary-Pinch, Councillor
Jim Ivey, Councillor (Alternate)
Mark Phillips, CAO (WHRM)
Deanna Snair, WHRM Employee
Jessie Drysdale, WHRM Employee

1) Call to Order

At 6:00pm, Anne called the meeting to order.

2) Land Acknowledgements

Anne and Lisa had discussed how to make a Land Acknowledgement personal and meaningful. One way is to learn more about the land itself, such as learning the Mi'kmaw names of familiar locations. Lisa shared a link to an online map that shows the traditional names of locations throughout Nova Scotia: <https://placenames.mapdev.ca/>. For example, the St. Croix River had

two names, Maqmekwitk and Kanataktuk, meaning “a large, wide portion of the river.” The Mi’kmaw reclaiming the names of their ancestral land is a part of reconciliation.

For ancestral acknowledgements, it is important to remember that history doesn’t always mean the distant past. The first black graduate of the Nova Scotia Hospital School of Nursing was Clotilda Douglas-Yakimchuk, in 1954. She had been rejected from many schools in the 40s, which was the norm for many black individuals. There was a lot of unregulated nursing in black communities at this time because they were unable to obtain official licenses. Lisa emphasized that there are people with living memories of this time, in her own family. There has been a huge amount of growth, with many black high school graduates now going on to study nursing.

Later in the meeting, Domenic and Lisa commented how words and actions should not contradict the treaty ~~and~~ acknowledgement.

3) Attendance

Quorum was achieved. Regrets had been received from Charlotte Paul, Karrie-Ann Wilkie, Rayvonne Carrington and Jessie Drysdale. Mark Phillips, Deanna Snair, Councillor Leary-Pinch and Councillor Ivey were attending a separate Council budget meeting.

4) Approval of the Agenda

Alma added a discussion item under New Business for the West Hants Summer/Fall Program brochure. It was also noted that the agenda listed the date as 2024.

Moved by Lisa Bland and seconded by Mattea Sexton that the agenda be approved as amended. Motion carried unanimously.

5) Declaration of Conflict of Interest

No conflicts were declared.

6) Announcements

Vanessa recently learned of the Rural Nova Scotia Pride Fund from KJ Conyers-Steede at the Planning & Heritage Advisory Committee. This offers funding opportunities to Pride organizations

in rural areas. The Fund is currently looking for charity partners. Vanessa will send out additional information after the meeting. (<https://rcfofns.com/rural-nova-scotia-pride-fund>)

7) Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

Ashley noted that her surname was misspelled in the minutes. Moved by Mattea Sexton and seconded by Lisa Bland that the minutes of April 14, 2025, be approved as amended. Motion carried unanimously.

8) Introductions

Katie Rose is the new HR Manager for WHRM. Michel Bourgeois is the Chair of the Accessibility Advisory Committee and was attending as a guest. Tim Doyle is the new RCMP representative on the Committee. Everyone re-introduced themselves for the sake of new members.

9) Committee Membership

a) Empty Seats

Efforts are ongoing to fill vacant positions. Vanessa recently sent an application form to an interested party. Completed applications can be sent to Deanna (dsnair@westhants.ca).

b) Pride Committee

It was noted that there is no formal link between this Committee and the West Hants Pride group. The Committee discussed including a non-voting position, so not to affect quorum.

Moved by Lisa Bland and seconded by Mattea Sexton that the Diverse and Inclusive Communities Committee include a non-voting liaison member from the West Hants Pride group to the Committee complement. Motion carried unanimously.

10) Ongoing Business

a) Internal Education: Presentation on African Nova Scotian history (July)

Anne had spoken with Sheldon States about this presentation, and he hopes to be able to give it after school lets out for the summer. It is tentatively set for the July meeting.

b) Moving forward with our mandate under the West Hants Equity and Anti-racism Plan

i) Meeting of chairs about coordinating work with the Accessibility Advisory Committee

Anne and Domenic met with Michel of the Accessibility Advisory Committee, and staff supports Mark Phillips, Deanna Snair, Katie Rose and Kathy Johnston-Isenor to discuss communication between the two Committees. They have similar mandates and will share agendas with each other and have their meetings open to each other as well.

Michel provided some background on the Accessibility Advisory Committee and their work. His committee has been in place since 2022, and they break down barriers for people with disabilities throughout the region. They are currently creating a workplan to bring to Council for approval with aspirational, but feasible, targets. He is happy to share resources with the Diverse and Inclusive Communities Committee. He shared that, for Accessibility Week (May 25-31), they will be producing short videos about life with disabilities within the community.

Domenic asked about the potential costs of the workplan. Michel explained that it is vague at present, with many items listing “staff resources.” It will be either a full recommendation report, or an information report to give Council an idea of their intent. The Committee discussed the importance of community involvement. Lisa shared that there will be an engagement session in June for the Windsor Plains community with about 22 community members attending. Anne added that Charlotte will help facilitate a similar engagement session with the Glooscap community.

ii) Anti-poverty as an Aspect of Equity

Former WHRM employee, Kevin Waters, had taken the staff lead position on the Equity Plan. He explained that, during the drafting process, he and the consultants had decided to not make anti-poverty part of the Plan and suggested there be a separate plan for anti-poverty instead. Anne asked if the Committee wanted to go back through the Plan and identify actions where poverty plays a role, because anti-poverty is integral to equity on a whole. The Committee will form a subgroup to review.

iii) Strategic Actions in the Plan where the Committee is designated a Leader

Lisa created an Excel list of the 25 strategic actions within the Equity Plan which listed the Committee as a lead or co-lead. The majority were in the 2025-2028 time frame. She noted that the items were not in hierarchical order. Lisa will share the list with the Committee so they can review, add notes, and make any necessary changes. The Committee looked over some items on the list. Some actions were already underway, and

others require collaboration with other groups or municipal staff. It was suggested to tackle these items as sub-committees. These sub-committees will be decided after everyone has had a chance to review the list.

11) New Business

a) Emancipation Day

Commemorating Emancipation Day (August 1) directly aligns with strategic actions 19.1, 19.2, and 19.3 of the Equity Plan to recognize important dates. Officially proclaiming it and holding a community event would be a positive step forward for WHRM. Lisa noted that it is the same time that Avon River Days begins, which is an opportunity for collaboration and a big party.

Moved by Lisa Bland and seconded by Mattea Sexton that the Diverse and Inclusive Communities Committee recommends Council proclaim & commemorate Emancipation Day and celebrate with a community event in West Hants on August 1. Motion carried unanimously.

b) West Hants Summer/Fall Program Brochure

Alma had noticed that the Diverse and Inclusive Communities Committee was mentioned in the West Hants Summer/Fall Program brochure. No one on the committee was aware of this or had been consulted about it. Alma also expressed disappointment that the Equity Plan was not mentioned. The Committee discussed having the Plan be more readily accessible and advertised on the website and social media.

12) Next Meeting Date / Adjournment

The next meeting date is scheduled for June 9, 2025, at 6:00pm, in the Council Chambers at 100 King Street, Windsor. With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:05pm. Members were encouraged to keep in touch with each other via email.