
Attendance:

Anne Bishop, Community Member
Lisa Bland, Community Member
Mattea Sexton, Community Member
Domenic Padula, Community Member
Karrie-Ann Wilkie, Health Board Representative
Iza (Izzy) Rayworth, West Hants Pride Liaison
Deanna Snair, WHRM Employee
Vanessa Lake, WHRM Employee
Chris Burns, WHRM Employee

Regrets:

Alma Crnalic, Community Member
Rayvonne Carrington, SPEC Advisory Member
Kayla Leary-Pinch, Councillor
Jim Ivey, Councillor (Alternate)
Mark Phillips, CAO (WHRM)
Tim Doyle, RCMP Representative
Heather Kidd, West Hants Middle School Liaison
Donna MacMillan, Avon View High School Liaison
Ashley Connors, Avon View High School Liaison
Jessie Drysdale, WHRM Employee
Katie Rose, HR Manager (WHRM)

1) Call to Order

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

2) Land Acknowledgements

We acknowledge that we are in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq people. We are governed by the treaties of Peace and Friendship signed in 1726. We are all treaty people, and we all have responsibilities to this land and to each other. African Nova Scotians are a distinct people whose history, legacies, and contributions have enriched this part of Mi'kma'ki known as Nova Scotia for over 400 years. We acknowledge the historic and ongoing racism

against these communities, and we are committed to mending our relationships by listening, learning, and recognizing our wrongs.

3) Attendance

Quorum was achieved. Regrets had been received from Alma Crnalic, Rayvonne Carrington, Tim Doyle, Heather Kidd, Donna MacMillan, Ashley Connors, Jessie Drysdale and Katie Rose. Mark Phillips, Councillor Leary-Pinch and Councillor Ivey were attending a separate meeting. Izzy Rayworth attended her first meeting as a liaison for West Hants Pride and prospective member.

4) Approval of the Agenda

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

5) Declaration of Conflict of Interest

No conflicts were declared.

6) Announcements

The Pride flag was raised in downtown Windsor on June 1, 2025. It was a well-attended and very meaningful event. The West Hants Pride parade will be held on July 5, 2025, at 2:00pm. It will begin at Victoria Park in Windsor.

Karrie-Ann commended the West Hants Pride group for how they handled the timing of the event. The parade was originally scheduled for the same date as Indigenous Peoples' Day. WH Pride spoke directly with Glooscap to discuss a time and date that worked for everyone.

Domenic shared that Sipekne'katik will be hosting a Freedom Day event on July 21, 2025, from 9:00am-4:00pm. This event honours residential school survivors and commemorates all the children who never came home. All are welcome.

7) Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

Anne noted that a question in the minutes had been attributed to her, but she was not the one who asked it. Domenic confirmed that it was his question. Lisa noted a typo. Vanessa will amend the minutes, and Deanna will investigate the question regarding the cost of the Accessibility Plan. Moved by Lisa Bland and seconded by Anne Bishop that the minutes of May 12, 2025, be approved as amended. Motion carried unanimously.

8) Introductions

a) Which strategic action(s) are you most interested in working on?

Members discussed the list of strategic actions from the Anti-Racism, Accessibility and Equity Plan that are attributed to the Committee. Members chose items that they are interested in working on and Lisa recorded it within the spreadsheet. The list is distributed with the minutes (Appendix A). The Committee will split into different working groups to make progress on each item. Izzy said that WH Pride is working on similar items and is available for collaboration.

9) Committee Membership

a) Empty Seats

Anne shared that Charlotte Paul had to resign from the Committee due to a heavy workload. There are three vacancies on the committee. Everyone was encouraged to reach out to anyone who may be interested. Deanna printed copies of the application to share and said that all applications can be sent to her. Izzy had also applied to become a formal voting member.

Moved by Domenic Padula and seconded by Lisa Bland that the Diverse, Equitable, and Inclusive Communities Committee recommends that Council appoint Iza Rayworth as a voting member of the Diverse, Equitable, and Inclusive Communities Committee. Motion carried unanimously.

b) Pride Committee

With Izzy joining the Committee, the connection has been established.

10) Ongoing Business

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

Anne has confirmed with Sheldon States that he will attend the July meeting. The meeting agenda will be light to give Mr. States as much time as possible for his presentation.

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

i) Windsor Plains and Glooscap community meetings

The meeting with the Windsor Plains community will be held on June 26. Glooscap has yet to respond, and efforts are ongoing. Izzy commented that they are more responsive to in-person contact than emails.

ii) Anti-poverty as an Aspect of Equity

Anne and Deanna discussed this after the last meeting. The Committee was reminded that their mandate is not defined by the Anti-Racism, Accessibility and Equity Plan, and is much broader. They are advisory to Council and can make recommendations as a committee, or requests as an individual. The issue of poverty and homelessness is prevalent in West Hants and equity-denied communities are disproportionately affected. Lisa drafted a letter to Council with the Committee's help to advocate for low-income and supportive housing units to be built within the municipality through joint efforts with the province. It will go to Council as correspondence and has been included with the minutes (Appendix B). Karrie-Ann added that she is part of the Housing Coalition and that they can draft a letter in solidarity, and Izzy said WH Pride can do the same.

iii) Strategic Actions: adding names to tasks, forming sub-committees

This was discussed previously, under 8 (a).

iv) Emancipation Day

Emancipation Day is the same day that Avon River Days is set to begin, on August 1, 2025. Lisa will be sending the program to print soon and asked the Committee how they would like to proceed with the proclamation. Deanna noted that typically, a proclamation would be made by the Town Crier, and it was agreed that this is not the best course of action. Lisa suggested contacting elders and youth from black communities. The Community Development Department can provide an activity trailer and BBQ for the event. Lisa will be in touch with Kathy Johnston-Isenor.

Domenic suggested showing a film, for example, a documentary on the Underground Railroad. The Committee thought this would be an excellent idea. There is money in the Committee budget to cover the rights to the chosen film and buy snacks. They discussed the timing of the events. The flag raising and proclamation will be on Friday, August 1, at 9am, and the screening will be on Sunday, August 3, at 1 or 2pm. The first location choice is the Three Mile Plains Hall, with the lower level of the West Hants Historical Society as a back-up. The film will be chosen later. Lisa may also contact Lance Sampson from Eastlink Community Connection for content from local black communities.

Mattea suggested getting schools involved with some kind of contest, with the prize of a bicycle to each level of schools. Deanna said that would be in the scope of the Community Development Department. Mattea will speak to Kathy.

11) New Business

a) Environmental Racism Panel Report

The Province did not release the report publicly. With the timing of the reopening of uranium mining, it raises major concerns. The Committee discussed making a motion or writing another letter to Council. Deanna noted that this topic is already on the agenda for the Committee of the Whole meeting on June 10, 2025, with a motion to put a pause on issuing any permits until more information is available. Anne and Domenic will send emails to Councillor Ivey and Councillor Leary-Pinch to request an amendment to the proposed motion to include a request that the Environmental Racism Panel Report be released to the public.

12) Next Meeting Date / Adjournment

The next meeting date is scheduled for July 14, 2025, at 6:00pm, in the Council Chambers at 100 King Street, Windsor. The Committee will be notified if there are any changes.

Domenic shared that, beginning the week of June 23, POSSE's non-police crisis intervention program will officially begin. At first, they will work 8am-8pm and will become 24/7 by September. He was impressed by the diversity of personnel. This is the first program of its kind in Nova Scotia and is a huge accomplishment.

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:57pm.

APPENDIX A - TASK ASSIGNMENT

Strategic Action	Task	Priority	Owner	Status	Lead	Start date	End date	Deliverable	Notes
2	Develop a framework* to integrate an intersectional and reconciliatory lens into planning for a more equitable and inclusive West Hants. Ensure equitable representation of Indigenous and African Nova Scotian community members in the development of the framework and examination of spaces via engagement.	2025-2028	DEICC	In progress	Lisa, Anne, Chris				
2	Critically examine the naming of existing municipal assets, establishments, and municipal spaces.	2025-2028	DEICC/MUN	In progress	Lisa, Anne, Chris				
2	Update naming as appropriate. This process must follow the guidelines published by the Geographic Names Board of Canada.	2025-2028	DEICC/MUN	In progress	Lisa, Anne, Chris				
2	Critically examine existing municipal spaces against the framework and implement appropriate required changes to existing spaces to require compliance with the framework.	2028-2031	DEICC/MUN	Not started	Lisa, Anne, Chris				
3	Work with local organizations and businesses to develop a directory of existing safe and welcoming spaces in West Hants. Publicly share the list of partner organizations and inclusive community spaces.	2025-2028	DEICC/MUN	Not started	Alma				Connect with WH Pride as they build a directory
3	Create or enhance dedicated spaces that reflect the cultural traditions and needs of equity-denied communities. This could involve supporting the development of Indigenous- or African Nova Scotian-owned and operated community centres, cultural spaces, or the designation of specific areas within existing municipal facilities.	2028-2031	DEICC/MUN	Not started					
3	Support businesses in understanding needs of communities and encourage ongoing community engagement with equity denied communities.	2031-2035	DEICC/MUN	Not started					
6	Engage with local schools as part of the accessibility and equity and inclusive communities committees and have a designated role for schools in this group.	2025-2028	DEI/MUN/ACC	In progress	Heather, Alma				
10	Conduct a needs assessment of sidewalks, streetlights, and curb cuts with a focus on growth areas, high-traffic areas and areas with high-density of equity-denied community members (including Three Mile Plains).	2028-2031	DEI/MUN/ACC	Not started					
10	Develop a sidewalk/crosswalk remediation plan and plan for new street scapes elements with timeline and budget according to updated provincial standards.	2025-2028	DEI/MUN/ACC	Not started					
10	Develop a plan to increase streetlights based on the needs assessment findings, targeting high-density equity denied communities.	2028-2031	DEI/MUN/ACC	Not started					
10	Improve the condition and availability of sidewalks, curb cuts, and pedestrian crossings to comply with the CSA Accessible Design for the Built Environment B-651 standard.	2031-2035	DEI/MUN/ACC	Not started					
10	Create public education campaign on safe practices regarding sidewalk-less communities.	2025-2028	DEI/MUN/ACC	Not started					

11	Develop an anti-hate and accessibility education resource hub where information on anti-racism, discrimination and hate can be made available for community members and local businesses.	2025-2028	DEI/MUN/ACC	In progress	Mattea, Domenic, Katie				
11	Identify existing resources that can be used and develop new resources with community organizations and groups for the resource hub.	2025-2028	DEI/MUN/ACC	Not started	Domenic				
13	Help create an inventory of available grants for community organizations that target anti-racism and anti-hate initiatives.	2025-2028	OTHER	Not started	Domenic, Karrie-Ann				
13	Work with local groups to create safe and free community and municipal spaces targeted to equity-denied communities.	2031-2035	DEICC/MUN	Not started	Domenic, Katie				
13	Work with community to create public education around visuals that contribute to systemic racism, bias and prejudice (e.g., confederate flags, symbols of white supremacy)	2025-2028	DEICC/MUN	Not started	Domenic, Katie				
14	Work with other levels of government including Mi'kmaq governments like Glooscap First Nation to support and address violence against Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQIA+ as outlined in the Call to Justice in the Missing Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Report.	2025-2028	DEICC/MUN	Not started	Domenic				
19	Create a list of commemorative dates to be publicly acknowledged*.	2025-2028	DEICC/ACC	In progress	Karrie-Ann, Mattea				
19	Invite community leaders to provide recommendations for short-and long- term initiatives they see as appropriate to commemorate these dates.	2025-2028	DEICC/ACC	Not started	Karrie-Ann, Mattea				
19	Co-develop an annual calendar to honor or celebrate the commemorative dates. The calendar should include public campaigns and other tangible actions (e.g., providing funding or support for planning and hosting events and celebrations).	2025-2028	DEI/MUN/ACC	Not started	Karrie-Ann, Mattea				
22	Advocate and promote early and ongoing education about the history of the region and diverse culture and history of West Hants	2025-2028	OTHER	Not started	Heather, Alma, Mattea				
22	Advocate for the continued promotion of equity and diversity within local schools (e.g., Vibe).	2025-2028	OTHER	Not started	Heather, Alma, Mattea				
22	Equip teachers with resources and training to examine their own biases and promote equity within their classrooms and respond to children's questions about equity and accessibility.	2025-2028	OTHER	Not started	Heather, Alma, Mattea				

APPENDIX B – LETTER TO COUNCIL

June 9, 2025

To West Hants Regional Municipality Council,

Six months from now, the Winter Season arrives, and with it a significant risk of illness, injury, and loss of limb & life for West Hants Community members who are living rough (homeless). Homelessness disproportionately impacts equity-denied communities, including those who the DEICC represents and advocates for through the work of the Equity, Anti-Racism, and Accessibility Plan.

In the recently published Everyone Counts 2024 report on homelessness (Sweatman et al, 2024), the recommendations closely align with the goals of the Equity, Anti-Racism, and Accessibility Plan. Particularly, expanding emergency shelter options and supported housing and/or housing support workers; and increasing the availability of affordable housing (costing no more than 30% of the household income, and enhancing financial supports, from rent supplements to basic income). Importantly the report also recommends providing stable, core funding for housing programs and shelters to reduce burnouts and improve staff retention.

Our strategic plan identifies Strategic Action #23 “*conduct meaningful engagement with people with lived or living experience to assist in building out supports for people impacted by homelessness*”, and specifically:

23.1 Create an advisory group of people with lived or living experience of homelessness to provide input/context on community policy, program development, or evaluation.*

23.2 Develop a strategy for the municipality to prevent, address, and end homelessness in alignment with the Provincial Strategy.

Given the direction of the strategic plan, we commend the WHRM council decision to support funding for the shelter space within Windsor last winter. We are advocating for: 1) **continued funding support for shelter spaces for the upcoming winter**, and 2)

continued effort and deliberate advocacy is made to the Province which addresses the concerns of our community's homeless citizens.

We are advocating for low-income and supported housing units built within our municipality through joint efforts with the province. Despite the challenges faced by levels of government discussing where the responsibility is laid for housing, these issues cannot wait to be addressed as they affect real people.

In solidarity,

Diverse, Equitable, and Inclusive Communities Committee

References:

Sweatman, M., Delaney, A., Pattison, O., Grant, S., Casey, R. *Everyone Counts. 2024 Community Support and Service-Based Count on Homelessness in Western Nova Scotia*. Acadia University.