
Attendance:

Anne Bishop, Community Member, Co-Chair
Domenic Padula, Community Member, Co-Chair
Lisa Bland, Community Member
Alma Crnalic, Community Member
Iza Rayworth, West Hants Pride Liaison
Mattea Sexton, Community Member
Tim Doyle, RCMP Representative – 6:14pm
Jim Ivey, Councillor (Alternate)
Mark Phillips, WHRM CAO
Deanna Snair, WHRM Employee
Katie Rose, WHRM HR Manager
Vanessa Lake, WHRM Employee
Brielle Pyette, WHRM Employee
Kathy Johnston-Isenor, WHRM Employee

Regrets:

Karrie-Ann Wilkie, Health Board Representative
Heather Kidd, West Hants Middle School Liaison
Donna MacMillan, Avon View High School Liaison
Ashley Connors, Avon View High School Liaison
Rayvonne Carrington, SPEC Advisory Member
Kayla Leary-Pinch, Councillor
Chris Burns, WHRM Employee

1) Call to Order

At 6:05pm, Anne called the meeting to order.

2) Acknowledgements

Lisa led the Land Acknowledgement. She asked everyone to plant their feet on the ground and think of the land they are on, the ancestral and unceded land of the Indigenous people, the land of the Treaties of Peace and Friendship.

Her sub-committee met earlier in the evening, and they discussed the names of places and the history behind them. For example, the Cogmagun river is the anglicised name of the original

Mi'kmaw name that comes from the phrase "to bury the hatchet." The West Hants region is rich in diversity and culture, and this information should be shared.

Lisa recognized the people of African descent in our region, who have been present for over 400 years. Particularly those in the Windsor Plains community, who arrived as refugees in 1812. She acknowledged that many newcomers to Canada are also refugees. Despite the adversity and racism they face, they come together and thrive. Many people from diverse backgrounds have made contributions on a national scale and their stories are worth telling, including locals, such as George Elliot Clark and John Paris Jr.

3) Attendance

Quorum was achieved. Regrets had been received from Karrie-Ann Wilkie, Rayvonne Carrington, Heather Kidd, Donna MacMillan, Ashley Connors, Councillor Leary-Pinch and Chris Burns. Brielle Pyette, Active Living Coordinator for West Hants, attended her first meeting. Everyone introduced themselves. Tim Doyle arrived at 6:14pm.

4) Approval of the Agenda

Anne added a discussion on the HealthADAPT program from Nova Scotia Health under New Business. The agenda was approved as amended by unanimous consent.

5) Declaration(s) of Conflict of Interest

No conflicts were declared.

6) Announcements

The Valley Regional Enterprise Network (VREN), in collaboration with the Immigration Services Association of Nova Scotia (ISANS), will be hosting an Immigration & Community Fair on November 1, 2025. This will be an excellent networking opportunity and will include a tour of the Valley, information booths, presentations, resume classes, and 1-on-1 interviews.

The West Hants Sports Complex will be hosting a free skate for international students on September 18, 2025, to welcome them to our region. Come out and say hi!

7) Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

Moved by Iza Rayworth and seconded by Mattea Sexton that the minutes of August 11, 2025, be approved as circulated. Motion carried by unanimous consent.

8) Debrief August Meeting

Anne acknowledged that the last meeting was very emotional, and tensions were high. She gave everyone an opportunity to talk about their feelings in a safe, open space. She encouraged everyone to think about the words we use and what the Committee is here to do.

The nature of this Committee tackles difficult topics. Things can get very sensitive and personal, and a little heated at times. Sometimes it can prevent the discussion from progressing. When emotions are high, it may be good to take a few minutes to step away and breathe. It's important to remember that everyone on this Committee is on the same side and working towards the same goals and that disagreement is not disrespect. Learning never stops, and everyone makes mistakes. It's important to try to understand where the other is coming from and not jump to conclusions. Ask for clarification, if needed. Respect and safety are top priority. Everyone around the table should feel safe and be able to share their voice. This Committee has great potential to do good for the whole community. Guiding principles will be discussed at the next meeting.

9) Ongoing Business

a) Strategic Actions: Sub-Committees

Anne, Lisa and Domenic met at 5:00pm to discuss naming and signage. The work isn't just about names but acknowledging significant places. There is lots of work to be done. A background policy should be developed to guide how signs should look, the languages on them, and how renaming should take place. The Committee should also be responsible financial stewards. Lisa shared an anecdote about how changing the name of one street in Toronto cost the city millions because of subsequent changes made to subway stations and mapping. When signs are due to be replaced from weathering, the group discussed how the original Mi'kmaw name and other languages can be added; not changing the sign completely but adding information. Anne and Lisa will be meeting with the West Hants Historical Society to research and assess the existing names of places, past names, and why they were significant. Lisa pointed out the connection between this

work and that of the Heritage Advisory Committee, which created standard signage for designated historical properties. This consistency is important, so visitors know what to look for. Iza shared her own substantial list of safe spaces with Alma.

Mattea and Karrie-Ann haven't been able to meet but have been working individually and keeping in contact. Karrie-Ann sent Mattea a diversity calendar from the NSCC. Mattea is narrowing down the list and is working on including descriptions and sources for each.

b) Internal Education Session: Growing up Queer in West Hants

Mattea's older sibling, Myles, is still interested in giving this presentation; however, they are getting married and have been busy with preparations. Mattea and Iza will get together in December or January to collaborate on a Pride event where Myles can give their presentation.

c) Committee Email

Kathy and Katie have been speaking with Nick, the West Hants IT Specialist, who has created the email address. The email belongs to West Hants and is linked to staff. Nick is currently working on the logistics of external replies. As it stands now, it would have to be forwarded by staff to the rest of the Committee. The Chair(s) may be given a West Hants email address, so they have direct access. The Committee discussed how they should address any emails they get, then and now. Mark explained that they can be filtered accordingly. If the question should go to staff, it should be forwarded to them. If it's of a more personal nature, the Committee may answer it themselves. It should be noted that regardless of how it is answered, Committee members are representing the Municipality and should uphold the Code of Conduct. Deanna added that these emails are subject to FOIPOP, and it would be best to house them outside of personal devices.

d) Committee Member Identification

Many felt business cards would be a good idea in addition to the email address.

e) Update: Environmental Racism Panel

This will be raised again at the September 23, 2025, Council meeting.

f) Update: Peace and Good Order By-law

Council deferred the Public Hearing until October to give time for staff to rewrite the By-law. Items specifically relating to DEI will be referred to the Committee.

g) Update: Encampment

Things are going as smoothly as possible. There is water, porta-potties, and a sharps container. Domenic has been hired by the Province to help keep the peace in the encampment. Last Friday (Sept. 5), an individual had to be relocated. Different groups were able to work together to remove this person. Though the rain was needed, there is a lot of standing water in the lower-laying areas of the encampment. Domenic shared that a new fundraiser will be starting soon. He will have more information at the next meeting.

h) Update: Letter re: Shelter Funding

This letter was sent as correspondence from the Committee to Council. The Committee may wish to submit a recommendation report to Council for more direct consideration. The Committee Chair may also request to speak at a Council meeting.

Mark added that the Caremongers group also wish to discuss this with Council. Finding volunteers remains the biggest issue these groups are facing.

Iza reiterated that the second half of the letter also advocated for assisted/low-income housing.

10) New Business

a) Meeting Format: Sub-committee Meetings + Food

Many of the sub-committees have been unable to meet due to timing and other commitments. The Committee discussed having the sub-committees meet an hour before the regular DEICC meeting (at 5:00pm instead of 6:00pm). That way, there is a dedicated time to meet and focus. Food may be provided in these circumstances.

Moved by Lisa Bland and seconded by Iza Rayworth that the sub-committees will meet from 5:00pm to 6:00pm prior to the main Diverse, Equitable, and Inclusive Communities Committee meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

b) Committee's Budget

The Committee has \$2000 in their budget, with \$1400 currently available. A portion was used for the Emancipation Day flag raising and movie screening event. Funds are available to purchase food and work on other projects, and Mark noted that some projects will overlap with other departments, and the funds may not come directly from the Committee's budget (for example, signage would come from Public Works).

Moved by Domenic Padula and seconded by Lisa Bland that the subcommittees estimate their required budgets at their next meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

c) Meeting Spaces: Windsor Council Chambers, meeting in community spaces

Vanessa explained that the Windsor Township Business Association has booked the Council Chambers at 100 King Street for the first Monday of each month; however, the last two Mondays were holidays, bumping their meeting to the second Monday, when the DEICC regularly meets. The Chambers at 100 King Street are available for the DEICC every second Monday except for these specific circumstances. The Council Chambers at 76 Morison Drive are also available. Mark said that the Committee is welcome to adjust the space to their preferences, such as putting up diverse flags, photos of other important figures, etc.

d) HealthADAPT Project Discussion

Karrie-Ann shared this information with the Committee via email. The HealthADAPT project is a Climate Change and Health Vulnerability assessment. The Central Zone Public Health's Healthy Communities team has secured four years of funding to help the health sector prepare for and respond to the health impacts of climate change. Vanessa noted that WHRM's Climate Action Coordinator is aware of and has been involved in this project. The team is open to giving a presentation to the Committee.

Moved by Domenic Padula and seconded by Mattea Sexton that the DEICC extends an invitation to the team to give a presentation to the Committee. Motion carried unanimously.

The Committee is interested to see how this project is viewed through an equity and inclusion lens. Lisa commented that there are no regional specifics to climate adaptation or environmental racism. She mentioned the work of Dr. Ingrid Waldron, director of the ENRICH (Environmental Noxiousness, Racial Inequities and Community Health) Project and co-producer of the 2019 documentary, *There's Something in the Water*.

11) Adjournment/Next Meeting Date

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:05pm. The next meeting would be regularly scheduled for October 13, 2025, however, that is Thanksgiving. The alternate date of October 6, 2025, was chosen. The meeting will be held in the Council Chambers at 76 Morison Drive, Windsor. The Committee will be notified if there are any changes.