



**WOMEN AND GENDER EQUITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
DRAFT MINUTES
September 4, 2025**

PRESENT: Michelle Benson, Vice Chair
Councillor Virginia Hinch
Councillor Nancy Hartling
Natalie Borden
Cheryl Copage-Gehue
Mairi Graham
Rhiannon Makohoniuk
Delainey McCarron
Sherryll Murphy

REGRETS: Doreen Redmond, Chair
Devi Ayyagari

STAFF: Amy Brierley, Social Policy Strategist
Carla John, Advisor Diversity & Inclusion
Raine Sparling, Coordinator 2SLGBTQ+ /Gender Equity Community
Engagement and Research
Elizabeth Macdonald, Legislative Assistant

These minutes are considered draft and will require approval by the Women and Gender Equity Advisory Committee at a future meeting.

The following does not represent a verbatim record of the proceedings of this meeting.

The agenda, reports, supporting documents, and information items circulated are online at [halifax.ca](https://www.halifax.ca).

1. CALL TO ORDER AND LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Vice Chair called the meeting to order at 4:37 p.m. and acknowledged that the meeting took place in the traditional and ancestral territory of the Mi'kmaq people, and that we are all treaty people.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – August 7, 2025

MOVED by Councillor Hartling, seconded by Councillor Hinch

THAT the minutes of August 7, 2025 be approved as circulated.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

3. APPROVAL OF THE ORDER OF BUSINESS AND APPROVAL OF ADDITIONS AND DELETIONS

Additions: None

Deletions: None

MOVED by Sherryll Murphy, seconded by Natalie Borden

THAT the agenda be approved as presented.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

4. BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES – NONE

5. CALL FOR DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTERESTS – NONE

6. CONSIDERATION OF DEFERRED BUSINESS – NONE

7. CORRESPONDENCE, PETITIONS & DELEGATIONS

7.1 Correspondence – None

7.2 Petitions – None

7.3 Presentations

7.3.1 Overview of 211 Nova Scotia – Sherry Forester

The following was before the Committee:

- Presentation dated September 4, 2025

Sherry Forester, Manager, Marketing & Communications, 211 Nova Scotia gave a presentation and responded to questions of clarification from the Committee.

8. INFORMATION ITEMS BROUGHT FORWARD – NONE

9. REPORTS/DISCUSSION

9.1 STAFF

9.1.1 Discussion of 2026-2030 Strategic Plan

The following was before the Committee:

- Staff report dated July 15, 2025
- Staff presentation dated August 5, 2025

The Committee received a presentation on the 2026-2030 Strategic Plan and noted the following:

- Lack of inclusion of indigenous communities;
- Lack of plans to address homelessness or to collaborate with the Province on the issue;
- The possible role of the Committee to provide feedback regarding safety on public transit through a gendered lens;
- Lack of inclusion of affordable housing;
- Newcomers only being mentioned when connected to productivity and skilled labour; and
- The importance of the use of plain language.

Councillor Hartling, Councillor Hinch, Amy Brierley, Social Policy Strategist and Elizabeth Macdonald, Legislative Assistant responded to questions of clarification from the Committee.

9.2 COMMITTEE MEMBERS

9.2.1 Regional Council Update

Councillor Hartling provided an update on Halifax Regional Council's recent activities and spoke to the proposed Regional Plan. Hartling noted the Province rejected the municipality's submission of the updated Regional Plan and explained that the current 2014 Regional Plan, last amended in May 2025, remained in effect. Hartling spoke to the ongoing work between Halifax Regional Municipality and the Province of Nova Scotia on the Regional Plan.

Councillor Hartling and Councillor Hinch responded to questions of clarification from the Committee.

The Committee discussed potentially providing feedback on the Regional Plan in the future.

10. ADDED ITEMS – NONE

11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING – October 2, 2025

12. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 6:25 p.m.

Elizabeth Macdonald
Legislative Assistant