



WEST HANTS REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY REPORT

Information ☐	Recommendation ☒	Decision Request ☐	Councillor Activity ☐
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To: Mayor Zebian and Members of Council

Submitted by: Deanna Snair, Municipal Clerk

Date: October 27, 2026

Subject: 2026 Resident Advisory Committee Appointments

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

Nova Scotia Municipal Government Act – Sections 24-27 (Standing, special and advisory committees; Vacancy on Boards, Commissions and Committees; Citizen Advisory Committees; and Community Committees).

RECOMMENDATION or DECISION REQUEST

Committee of the Whole recommends...

Council approves Guido Furlani be reappointed to the Police Advisory Board for the term October 28, 2026 to October 31, 2028.

Council approves Juanita Giles (Windsor), Rob Lewis (Hantsport), and Jeff Starratt (Hantsport), be appointed to the Planning and Heritage Advisory Committee for the term October 27, 2026 to October 31, 2028.

Council approves Michel Bourgeois and Markus Kehoe be reappointed to the Planning and Heritage Advisory Committee as West Hants representatives for the term October 27, 2026 to October 31, 2028.

Council approves Dylan McLeod be appointed to the Climate Action Committee for the term October 27, 2026 to October 31, 2028.

Council approves Muhammed Asrath Paro Thodukayil be appointed to the Accessibility Advisory Committee for the term October 27, 2026 to October 31, 2028.

Council approves Denise Long and Michel Bourgeois be reappointed to the Accessibility Advisory Committee for the term October 28, 2026 to October 31, 2028.

Council approves Muhammed Asrath Paro Thodukayil be appointed to the Diverse, Equitable and Inclusive Communities Advisory Committee for the term October 27, 2026 to October 31, 2028.

BACKGROUND

Property ☐	Public Opinion ☐	Environment ☐	Social ☐	Economic ☐	Councillor Activity ☐
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Advisory committees play an important role in municipal governance by providing a forum for residents, community stakeholders, Council members, and staff to work together on matters that affect the community. Through research, discussion, consultation, and recommendations, advisory committees help ensure Council's decisions are informed by a broad range of perspectives, expertise, and community experiences.

Ultimately, advisory committees provide a valuable forum for collaboration between residents, Council, and staff. They help strengthen public trust, encourage community engagement, and ensure Council benefits from informed advice that reflects the diverse needs and priorities of West Hants residents. By bringing together experienced members and new voices, advisory committees support innovative thinking, informed decision-making, and meaningful community involvement in local governance.

Council remains the final decision-making authority; however, advisory committees provide valuable advice and recommendations that support informed, transparent, and responsive governance.

DISCUSSION

Through the approval of the Equity, Anti-Racism, and Accessibility Strategy Plan, adopted by Council in 2025, Council committed to fostering a more inclusive and representative approach to municipal governance. The Plan was developed to guide elected officials, municipal employees, residents, businesses, and community organizations in working together to:

- Increase equity, diversity, inclusion, accessibility, and justice;
- Dismantle hate, including racism and discrimination;
- Foster a sense of belonging for everyone; and
- Advance Truth and Reconciliation.

Recognizing the importance of diverse perspectives in municipal discussions and decision-making, staff reviewed all expressions of interest received for committee appointments with the goal of achieving broad representation across the Municipality's advisory committees. Consideration was given to applicants lived experiences, backgrounds, skills, and perspectives, including individuals who self-identified as members of marginalized or underrepresented communities.

This approach supports Council's commitment to creating advisory committees that reflect the diversity of the communities they serve and are better positioned to identify barriers, understand emerging issues, and provide meaningful advice to Council.

Recruitment and Application Process

All eligible resident members were encouraged to reapply for the upcoming term.

Accessibility Advisory Committee – this committee will consist of no less than seven (7) resident members. In addition, at least one half of the members of the AAC must be persons with disabilities or representatives from organizations representing persons with disabilities; There were three vacancies to fill on this committee as the remaining appointments do not expire until 2027/28.

A total of three applications were received:

- Applicant 1 – Michel Bourgeois (***Recommended Re-Appointment***)
- Applicant 2 – Denise Long (***Recommended Re-Appointment***)
- Applicant 3 - Muhammed Asrath Paro Thodukayil (***Recommended Appointment***)

Climate Action Committee – the committee's composition includes two (2) resident members, who are not members of Council.

In total only one application was received:

Resident member – Lauren Douglas (term expires in 2027)

- Applicant 1 – Dylan McLeod (***Recommended Appointment***)

Diverse, Equitable and Inclusive Communities Committee – the committee will consist of eight (8) citizen members of diverse race and ethnicity (including, but not limited to those from the African Descent, Acadian, Glooscap First Nation, Indigenous, 2LGBTQIA+, Senior, Youth, and Newcomers' communities) to ensure all perspectives are represented and side in a tie breaking scenario that promotes progression without uncertainty.

There were several vacancies to fill within this committee. In total only one (1) application was received:

Applicant 1 - Muhammed Asrath Paro Thodukayil (***Recommended Appointment***)

****Recruitment efforts will continue to fill the remaining vacant seats****

Planning and Heritage Advisory Committee – *the committee's composition is:*

- *three (3) resident members from the former Municipality of West Hants area who are not Council members or Municipal Employees and three (3) members of Council. (excluding Hantsport).*
- *two (2) resident members from the community of Hantsport who are not Council members or Municipal Employees, and*
- *two (2) resident members from the community of Windsor who are not Council members or Municipal Employees.*

For the **community of Hantsport**; one resident member was not eligible to reapply as they have completed three consecutive terms and was not eligible for a consideration under the Meeting and Committee Procedural Policy Terms of Reference for the Planning and Heritage Advisory Committee. The remaining eligible resident member chose not to reapply for another term.

In total three applications were received:

- Applicant 2 - Rob Lewis (**Recommended Appointment**)
- Applicant 3 - Jeff Starratt (**Recommended Appointment**)

For the **community of Windsor**, there was one vacancy to fill as the other representative for Windsor's term does not expire until 2027. In total two applications were received:

- Resident member – Dave Moore (term expires in 2027)
- Applicant 2 – Juanita Giles (**Recommended Appointment**)

For the community of West Hants, there was one vacancy to fill as the other representative for West Hants term does not expire until 2027. In total two applications were received:

- Resident member – Beth Easson (term expires in 2027)
- Applicant 1 – Markus Kehoe (**Recommended Re-Appointment**)
- Michel Bourgeois (**Recommended Re-Appointment**)

Police Advisory Board – the committee's composition is:

- two members appointed by resolution of the council, who are neither members of council nor employees of the municipality; and
- (c) one member appointed by the Minister.

In total only one application was received:

- Resident member – Carla Rafuse (term expires in 2027)
- Applicant 1 – Guide Furlani (**Recommended Re-Appointment**)
- Ministerial Appointment – Jane Davis

NEXT STEPS

If approved by Council, staff will take the necessary steps to notify committee members of their appointments and begin the onboarding and orientation process.

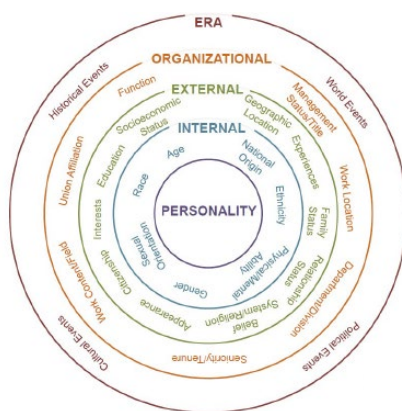
FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Resident members appointed to a Committee of Council will receive remuneration in accordance with the Council Remuneration Policy, which is identified in the annual Operating Budget.

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION AND ACCESSIBILITY CONSIDERATIONS

The recommended appointments support Council's commitment to equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility. In reviewing applications, staff considered opportunities to include a variety of perspectives, experiences, backgrounds, and lived experiences while maintaining the skills and knowledge needed to support each committee's work.

Having diverse representation on advisory committees helps ensure a broader range of community voices are heard, supports more inclusive discussions, and strengthens the advice and recommendations provided to Council. This approach aligns with the Municipality's Equity, Anti-Racism, and Accessibility Strategy and supports meaningful community participation in local governance.



ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

There are no direct environmental impacts associated with the appointment of advisory committee members.

ALTERNATIVES

Council could choose to direct staff to re-advertise for the vacancies; however, this will result in additional costs associated with advertising and may delay the committees meeting. This is not the recommendation from staff.

ATTACHMENTS

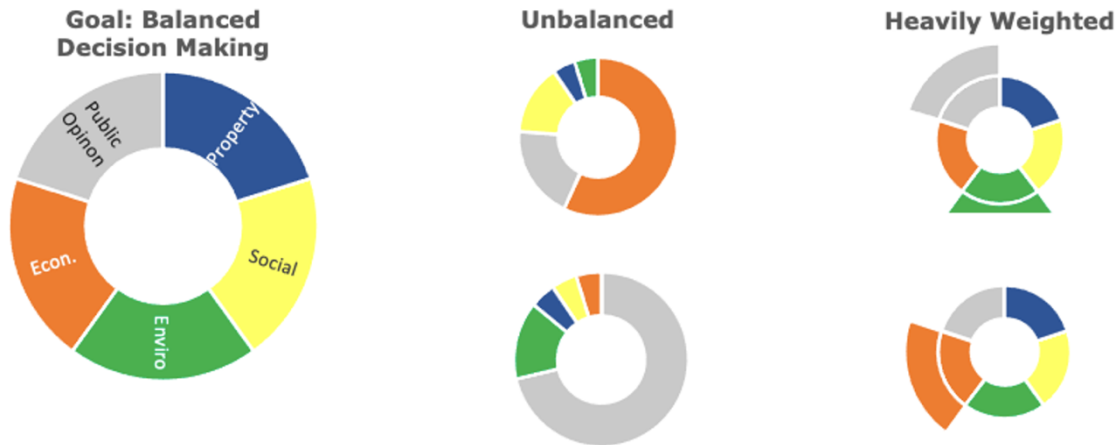
None

CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER REVIEW

I have engaged with staff in the review process.

I support the recommendations.

Council has been provided with a reference taken from the Meeting and Committee Procedural Policy , Appendix C “Decision Making by Council and Committee of the Whole” as a reminder of the principles highlighted for good decision making.



Report Prepared by: _____
Deanna Snair, Municipal Clerk

Report Reviewed by: _____
Carlee Rochon, Director Financial Services

Report Approved by:  _____
Mark Phillips, Chief Administrative Officer