



P.O. Box 1749  
Halifax, Nova Scotia  
B3J 3A5 Canada

**Item No. 12.2.1**  
**Executive Standing Committee**  
**February 27, 2023**

**TO:** Mayor Savage and Members of Executive Standing Committee

**SUBMITTED BY:**

  
Dr. Jane McKay-Nesbitt, Chair, Women's Advisory Committee

**DATE:** February 15, 2023

**SUBJECT:** **Women's Advisory Committee – 2021/2022 Annual Report**

---

### INFORMATION REPORT

#### ORIGIN

Staff initiated.

#### LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

Administrative Order Number 2019-004-GOV, *Respecting the Women's Advisory Committee in the Halifax Regional Municipality*

18. The Committee shall submit a written report of activities annually to the Executive Committee.

19. The Chair, or designate, may present the annual report to a meeting of the Executive Standing Committee.

#### BACKGROUND

On November 26, 2019, Halifax Regional Council approved Administrative Order 2019-004-GOV, *Respecting the Women's Advisory Committee Administrative Order*, to establish the Women's Advisory Committee. The Women's Advisory Committee reports to the Executive Standing Committee. The purpose of the Women's Advisory Committee is to advise the Municipality on the impact of municipal policies, programs, and services on women.

The current membership is available on [Halifax.ca](https://www.halifax.ca)

## **DISCUSSION**

### **2022 Work Plan**

The Committee identified three priorities for 2022 and received presentations from community members, groups and organizations, Committee members, and HRM staff to better inform the Committee on issues around these priorities.

Three priorities for learning and action were specified in the 2022 Work Plan:

1. Housing security for women (homelessness, shelters and affordability), particular emphasis will be given to queer and student women, and gender-diverse individuals;
2. Health, safety, wellness and quality of life facing women with an emphasis on women who are marginalized; and
3. Reviewing existing municipal policies using gender-based analysis.

The Women's Advisory Committee 2022 Work Plan was approved by the Executive Standing Committee on January 24, 2022.

### **Summary of Activities**

The Women's Advisory Committee's business for the period covering December 2, 2021 and December 1, 2022 includes the following:

- 2 Committee member presentations
- 7 presentations from members of public
- 13 staff reports/presentations
- 6 Committee member-initiated motions

The activities of the Women's Advisory Committee were guided by the Administrative Order 2019-004-GOV, *Respecting the Women's Advisory Committee Administrative Order*, and by the Women's Advisory Committee 2022 Work Plan.

Further information on the Summary of Activities is outlined in the Appendix 1.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

No financial implications identified.

## **RISK CONSIDERATION**

No risk considerations identified.

## **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

The Women's Advisory Committee is comprised of nine citizen members and two Councillors. Meetings are live webcast on Halifax.ca. The agenda, reports, video, and minutes of the Committee are posted on Halifax.ca.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment 1 – Summary of Activities

A copy of this report can be obtained online at [halifax.ca](http://halifax.ca) or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 902.490.4210.

Report Prepared by: Jane McKay-Nesbitt, Chair, Women's Advisory Committee  
Catie Campbell, Legislative Assistant, Office of the Municipal Clerk 782.641.0796.

---

## ATTACHMENT 1

### SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES

The Committee determined that they needed to be better informed about the priority issues identified below. Thus, the Committee received presentations from community members, groups and organizations, Committee Members, and HRM staff to better inform the Committee on issues around these priorities.

Following is a list of the presentations within each priority area and the requests forwarded to the Executive Standing Committee that emerged as a result of the presentations.

### PRIORITY 1

**HOUSING SECURITY FOR WOMEN (HOMELESSNESS, SHELTERS AND AFFORDABILITY), PARTICULAR EMPHASIS WILL BE GIVEN TO QUEER AND STUDENT WOMEN, AND GENDER-DIVERSE INDIVIDUALS.**

#### Presentations

Date	Topic	Community Presenter	HRM Staff Presenter	Member Presenter
July 7, 2022	Impact of the housing crisis on women	Sheri Lecker, Executive Director, Adsum House		

#### Outcomes

**Motion, December 2, 2021** Review of municipal services to address housing affordability, housing insecurity, and homelessness using an intersectional gender lens

THAT the Women's Advisory Committee recommend that the Executive Standing Committee:

1. Direct the Chief Administrative Officer to prepare a staff report about the use of an intersectional gender lens on housing and homelessness initiatives within the mandate of the Halifax Regional Municipality;
2. Review the recommendations emerging from the Home for Good research project attached in the December 2, 2021 Request for Women's Advisory Committee Consideration form.

#### **Executive Standing Committee response:**

The Executive Standing Committee considered and approved the motion on December 13, 2021.

**PRIORITY 2**

**HEALTH, SAFETY, WELLNESS & QUALITY OF LIFE FACING WOMEN WITH AN EMPHASIS ON WOMEN WHO ARE MARGINALIZED.**

**Presentations**

Date	Topic	Community Presenter	HRM Staff Presenter	Member Presenter
January 13, 2022	Impact of Climate Emergency on Women	Emma Norton, Climate Emergency Unit, David Suzuki Institute		
February 3, 2022	Persons at Risk and Street Level Women at Risk Programs in London, ON	Sgt. Amy Birch, London Police; Jaclyn Seeler, Program Manager of Street Level Women at Risk; Alannah Delahunty-Pike, Dalhousie University	Amy Brierley, HRM Safe City and Safe Public Spaces program	
February 3, 2022	HalifACT		Shannon Miedema, Environment and Climate Change Program Manager	
March 3, 2022	Human Trafficking	Heidi Marshall, Consultant, Native Women's Association, Jane Paul Resource Centre	Cheryl Copage-Gehue, Advisor, Indigenous Community Engagement	
March 3, 2022	Human Trafficking	Charlene Gagnon, Manager of Advocacy, Research and New Initiatives, Halifax YWCA		
April 7, 2022	Human Trafficking		Sargent Kathryn Willett, Inspector David Boon, Halifax Regional Police	
July 7, 2022	Basic Income and its Impact on Women	Elizabeth (Mandy) Kay-Raining Bird, Basic Income Nova Scotia and Coalition Canada Basic Income		
September 8, 2022	Basic Income in HRM	Councillor Wayne Mason		
December 1, 2022	World Aids Day			Jacque Gahagan
December 1, 2022	Race and Gender Data and the Safety of Asian Women and Non-binary People		Amy Brierley, Program Coordinator, Safe City and Safe Public Spaces	

## **Outcomes**

### **Motion, June 3, 2021 – Exploring the impact of anti-Asian racism on women in HRM**

THAT Women's Advisory Committee recommend Executive Standing Committee recommend that Regional Council request the Chief Administrative Officer, through the UN Safe Cities and Safe Public Spaces Programme, to consider the impact of anti-Asian racism on women's experiences of safety in public spaces and explore ways to identify and collect race-based data about these experiences.

#### **Executive Standing Committee response:**

The Executive Standing Committee considered and approved the motion on July 12, 2021.

### **Motion, December 2, 2021 - Reviewing and Learning from the Steps Taken to Protect Muslim Canadians by Other Canadian Municipalities and Levels of Governments**

THAT the Women's Advisory Committee recommend that the Executive Standing Committee direct the Chief Administrative Officer to prepare a staff report that investigates other municipalities' work around anti-Muslim hate and racism and makes recommendations on potential actions to combat anti-Muslim hate and racism, particularly with respect to women, in Halifax Regional Municipality.

#### **Executive Standing Committee response:**

The Executive Standing Committee considered and approved the motion on December 13, 2021.

### **Motion, March 3, 2022 - Possible actions in response to climate emergency presentations**

THAT the Women's Advisory Committee recommend that the Executive Standing Committee recommend that Halifax Regional Council fully fund and implement HalifACT and that the disproportionate impacts of climate change on women and children are considered and mitigated.

#### **Executive Standing Committee response:**

The Executive Standing Committee considered each motion separately and approved both motions on March 28, 2022.

### **Motion July 7, 2022 - Access to Abortion Services in HRM**

THAT Executive Standing Committee recommend to Regional Council that the Mayor be asked to write a letter to the Federal Minister of Health opposing any bill or motion that is intended to restrict abortion or reduce access to abortions in Canada.

#### **Executive Standing Committee response:**

The Executive Standing Committee considered and approved the motion on July 25, 2022.

### **Motion November 3, 2022 – Access to Guaranteed Basic Liveable Income in the HRM**

THAT the Chair of the Women's Advisory Committee write a letter of support to Halifax Regional Council regarding their decision to send a request to the Government of Canada to implement a Guaranteed Livable Basic Income, which would ensure that everyone has sufficient income to meet their needs.

**Response:**

Letter forwarded to Regional Council as correspondence.

**PRIORITY 3**

**REVIEWING EXISTING MUNICIPAL POLICIES USING GENDER-BASED ANALYSIS**

**Presentations**

Date	Topic	Community Presenter	HRM Staff Presenter	Member Presenter
April 7, 2022	Women's Representation on the HRM's Advisory Boards and Committee (ABC) & the 50-30 Challenge			Christine Qin Yang, Vice Chair
May 5, 2022	HRM Board and Committee Recruitment Process		Iain MacLean, Municipal Clerk and Tracey Jones-Grant, Managing Director, Diversity and Inclusion	
May 5, 2022 and September 8, 2022	HRM's Women and Gender Equity Strategy		Caroline Hemstock, Diversity and Inclusion Advisor; Amy Brierley, Program Coordinator; Baylee Brown, Policy, Raven Glasgow, Community Outreach Coordinator, Government Relations and External Affairs and Research Intern; Cathy Collett, Research and Development Specialist	

### **Professional Development**

The Committee members participated in one elective learning/professional development opportunity in 2021/2022:

1. Federal Gender-based Analysis Plus (GBA+) course: the goal was to have all Committee members complete the GBA+ course, which was met.