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Item No. 13.2.1
Executive Standing Committee
August 26, 2024

TO: Mayor Savage and Members of Executive Standing Committee

FROM: Dr. Jacquie Gahagan, Chair, Women's Advisory Committee

DATE: July 4, 2024

SUBJECT: **Revisions to the Women's Advisory Committee Approved 2024 Work Plan**

ORIGIN

June 20, 2024 and July 4, 2024 meeting of Women's Advisory Committee, Item 9.2.1 and 6.1.

RECOMMENDATION

The Women's Advisory Committee recommends that Executive Standing Committee review and approve the Women's Advisory Committee Revised 2024 Work Plan as outlined in Attachment 2 of this report.

BACKGROUND

Women's Advisory Committee approved the Committee's 2024 Work Plan at their February 1, 2024 meeting and forwarded the 2024 Work Plan to Executive Standing Committee for approval, including an opportunity for the Woman's Advisory Committee to review and make amendments to the 2024 Work Plan by May 1, 2024. The Executive Standing Committee approved the Women's Advisory Committee's 2024 Work Plan [See Attachment 1] at their March 11, 2024 meeting.

Women's Advisory Committee received a draft revised 2024 Work Plan [See Attachment 2] brought forward for consideration by member, Liz Fraser at their June 20, 2024 and July 4, 2024 meetings. The proposed revisions included the following:

Priority 1: Health, safety, wellness and quality of life facing women, with particular emphasis on marginalized women:

- the addition of sub-priorities (a) Addressing gender-based violence, (b) Addressing mental health for women in HRM, and (c) Addressing public safety risks for women in HRM, including road safety;
- notable revisions to the "Desired Outcome" and Performance Indicators" sections; and
- the addition of quarterly time frames

Priority 2: Women's involvement in HRM governance, particularly Indigenous and racialized women:

- notable revisions to the "Desired Outcome" and Performance Indicators" sections; and
- the addition of quarterly time frames

Priority 3: Housing and food security for women in HRM:

- notable revisions to the “Desired Outcome” and Performance Indicators” sections; and
- the addition of quarterly time frames

For further information refer to Attachment 1 and Attachment 2.

DISCUSSION

Women’s Advisory Committee considered the draft revised 2024 Work Plan and approved the recommendation to Executive Standing Committee as outlined in this report.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

No financial implications identified.

RISK CONSIDERATION

No risk consideration identified.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The Women’s Advisory Committee is comprised of 9 citizen members and 2 Councillors. Most meetings are live webcast on Halifax.ca. The agenda, reports, video, and minutes of the Committee are posted on Halifax.ca.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

No environmental implications identified.

ALTERNATIVES

The Women’s Advisory Committee did not provide alternatives.

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

Administrative Order Number 2019-004-GOV, *Respecting the Women’s Advisory Committee in the Halifax Regional Municipality* Section 9:

Duties of the Committee

9. The Committee may develop an annual work plan for approval by Executive Standing Committee.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 – Women’s Advisory Committee’s Approved 2024 Work Plan
Attachment 2 – Women’s Advisory Committee’s Draft Revised 2024 Work Plan

Report Prepared by: Elizabeth MacDonald, Legislative Assistant, Municipal Clerk's Office 902.497.7548

Attachment 1

Women's Advisory Committee 2024 Work Plan

The duties of the Women's Advisory Committee of Halifax (WACH) are specified in sections 6-9 of Administrative Order-2019-004-GOV (AO 2019-004-GOV), as indicated below:

Duties of the Committee

6. The Committee shall advise Council, through the Executive Standing Committee, on matters related to women as follows:

(a) receive and review municipal policies, priorities and decisions using a gender lens, for items directed to the Committee by Council or a Standing Committee of Council, or on its own initiative with direction from the Executive Standing Committee, and to make recommendations;

(b) advise on mechanisms to engage and empower women to fully participate in the political process at the municipal level;

(c) advise on mechanisms to promote community leadership development for women in the municipality;

(d) provide information and resources about women's gender-based issues to Council, including the use of Gender-Based Analysis Plus; and

(e) advise and make recommendations about strategies designed to achieve the objectives of the Committee.

7. The Committee shall advise business units, through the Chief Administrative Officer, in responding to gender-based issues and concerns of women when requested to do so by the Chief Administrative Officer.

8. The Committee may advise the municipality on matters relating to its participation in the UN Safe Cities and Safe Public Spaces Programme.

9. The Committee may develop an annual work plan for approval by Executive Standing Committee.

To effectively carry out the duties specified above, it is important for WACH Members to be informed about issues facing women in the Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM). Thus in 2024, WACH will continue to devote time to becoming better informed about these issues and approach the following priorities through an intersectional lens.

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The three items listed in the Subcategories/Action column listed below were identified at the December 2023 WACH meeting as priorities for learning. WACH believes that devoting time to learning about these issues will enable them to more effectively perform the duties specified in AO-2019-004-GOV. The actions listed in the Performance Outcomes column indicate WACH’s desire to convert their learning to action.

Particular attention will be given to performance indicators during 2024, particularly those pertaining to proactively reviewing HRM policies and procedures, so that learning goals are ultimately achieved. In addition, WACH will endeavor to provide input regarding broader Municipal policies such as the 2024/25 Municipal Budget.

To maximize the Committee’s efficiency in fulfilling the three priorities identified, WACH will create a tracking sheet to both “look ahead” at upcoming municipal policies and initiatives related to by-laws and Administrative Orders and monitor the Committee’s progress in achieving the performance indicators related to each priority.

Subcategories/Action	Alignment with Terms of Reference	Person/ Group Responsible	Resources required other service providers, Government, Funds, etc.	Time Frame	Desired Outcome	Performance Indicators: How will you measure your accomplishments
<p>Priority 1: Health, safety, wellness & quality of life facing women with an emphasis on women who are marginalized.</p> <p><i>The following topics have been identified as being especially important</i></p>	<p>Sections 5(c), 6, & 8</p>	<p>All Committee Members</p>	<p>Expertise of Committee Members, staff members of HRM, and Halifax community organizations with specialized knowledge about health, safety, wellness, and quality of life issues facing women in the HRM.</p>	<p>2024</p>	<p>Committee Members will become more knowledgeable about health, safety, wellness and quality of life issues facing women in HRM so that they may operate</p>	<p>Committee Members will review at least (1) existing HRM policy or procedure that impacts the health, safety and quality of life facing women.</p> <p>Committee Members will receive presentations from at</p>

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Subcategories/Action	Alignment with Terms of Reference	Person/ Group Responsible	Resources required other service providers, Government, Funds, etc.	Time Frame	Desired Outcome	Performance Indicators: How will you measure your accomplishments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender based violence and intimate partner violence prevention • Mental health issues facing women • Public safety so that women in marginalized communities are safe and roads are safe for women • Women’s income (i.e., financial literacy, poverty, basic income, pay equity) • Active Transportation policy development 					<p><i>more efficiently under their mandate.</i></p> <p><i>WACH will provide information and resources about health, safety, wellness and quality of life issues facing women to the Executive Standing Committee.</i></p> <p><i>Particular attention will be paid to data concerning these issues that has been collected or should be collected in the future.</i></p>	<p><i>least 3 organizations concerned with health, safety, wellness and quality of life issues facing women.</i></p> <p><i>Committee Members will forward at least 3 motions for action to the Executive Standing Committee that emerge from issues raised by the above reviews or presentations.</i></p> <p><i>Where data pertaining to these issues are lacking, WACH will forward motions to the Executive Standing Committee regarding collection of data for evidence-based decision making.</i></p>
<p>Priority 2: Women’s involvement in non-traditional roles (including</p>	<p><i>Sections 5, 6, & 8</i></p>	<p><i>All Committee Members</i></p>	<p><i>Expertise of Committee Members, staff members of HRM, and</i></p>	<p><i>2024</i></p>	<p><i>Committee Members will become more</i></p>	<p><i>Committee Members will review at least 1 existing HRM policy or</i></p>

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Subcategories/Action	Alignment with Terms of Reference	Person/ Group Responsible	Resources required other service providers, Government, Funds, etc.	Time Frame	Desired Outcome	Performance Indicators: How will you measure your accomplishments
<p>employment and involvement in municipal Council boards and committees) and in the economic growth of the HRM, with a focus on Indigenous women.</p>			<p><i>Halifax community organizations with specialized knowledge about issues facing women re: participating in non-traditional roles in the HRM.</i></p>		<p><i>knowledgeable about i) efforts to encourage women's full participation in the work force and municipal boards and committees and ii) understanding the barriers that face women in doing so, to enable WACH to effectively perform its role as an Advisory Committee.</i></p> <p><i>Particular attention will be paid to data concerning these issues that has been collected or should be collected in the future.</i></p>	<p><i>procedure that women's involvement in non-traditional roles</i></p> <p><i>Committee Members will receive presentations from at least 3 organizations concerned with encouraging women's full participation in the work force and municipal boards and committees and understanding the barriers that face women in doing so.</i></p> <p><i>WACH will explore the possibility of hosting or co-hosting an event to encourage women's involvement in HRM's Council, Boards and Committees.</i></p> <p><i>Where data pertaining to these issues are lacking, WACH will</i></p>

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Subcategories/Action	Alignment with Terms of Reference	Person/ Group Responsible	Resources required other service providers, Government, Funds, etc.	Time Frame	Desired Outcome	Performance Indicators: How will you measure your accomplishments
						<i>forward motions to the Executive Standing Committee regarding collection of data for evidence-based decision making.</i>
<p>Priority 3: Housing and food security for women (homelessness, shelters, food and housing affordability)</p>	<p>Sections 5 (a) & (c), 6, & 8.</p>	<p>All Committee Members</p>	<p>Expertise of Committee Members, staff members of HRM, and Halifax Community organizations with specialized knowledge about housing and food security issues facing women in the HRM</p>	<p>2024</p>	<p>Committee Members will become more knowledgeable about housing and food security issues in the HRM so that they may effectively perform their role as an Advisory Committee.</p> <p>WACH will provide information and resources about housing and food security issues facing women to the Executive Standing Committee.</p>	<p>Committee Members will review at least 1 existing HRM policy or procedure that impacts women's housing and food security in the HRM.</p> <p>Committee Members will receive presentations from at least 3 organizations concerned with housing or food security issues affecting women (e.g., HRM Office of Public Safety re: UN Safe Cities program; HRM Regional Planning Office; Halifax YWCA, Affordable Housing Association of Halifax).</p> <p>Committee Members will forward at least 3</p>

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Subcategories/Action	Alignment with Terms of Reference	Person/ Group Responsible	Resources required other service providers, Government, Funds, etc.	Time Frame	Desired Outcome	Performance Indicators: How will you measure your accomplishments
					<p><i>Particular attention will be paid to data concerning these issues that has been collected or should be collected in the future.</i></p>	<p><i>motions for action to the Executive Standing Committee regarding the following presentations.</i></p> <p><i>Where data pertaining to these issues is lacking, WACH will forward motions to the Executive Standing Committee regarding collection of data for evidence-based decision making.</i></p>

[Terms of Reference \(Administrative Order 2019-004-GOV Respecting the Women’s Advisory Committee in the Halifax Regional Municipality\)](#)

Revised Women's Advisory Committee 2024 Work Plan

The duties of the Women's Advisory Committee of Halifax (WACH) are specified in sections 6-9 of Administrative Order-2019-004-GOV (AO 2019-004-GOV), as indicated below:

Duties of the Committee

6. *The Committee shall advise Council, through the Executive Standing Committee, on matters related to women as follows:
 - (a) receive and review municipal policies, priorities and decisions using a gender lens, for items directed to the Committee by Council or a Standing Committee of Council, or on its own initiative with direction from the Executive Standing Committee, and to make recommendations;
 - (b) advise on mechanisms to engage and empower women to fully participate in the political process at the municipal level;
 - (c) advise on mechanisms to promote community leadership development for women in the municipality;
 - (d) provide information and resources about women's gender-based issues to Council, including the use of Gender-Based Analysis Plus; and
 - (e) advise and make recommendations about strategies designed to achieve the objectives of the Committee.*
7. *The Committee shall advise business units, through the Chief Administrative Officer, in responding to gender-based issues and concerns of women when requested to do so by the Chief Administrative Officer.*
8. *The Committee may advise the municipality on matters relating to its participation in the UN Safe Cities and Safe Public Spaces Programme.*
9. *The Committee may develop an annual work plan for approval by Executive Standing Committee.*

Subcategories/Action	Alignment with Terms of Reference	Person/Group Responsible	Resources required	Time Frame	Desired Outcome	Performance Indicators
Priority 1: Health, safety, wellness and quality of life facing women, with particular emphasis on marginalized women						
Sub-priority 1(a): Addressing gender-based violence	<i>Sections 5(c), 6, 7, 8</i>	All Committee members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff time • May include external expertise (e.g., presentations) as needed 	2024	Reduction in the rate of gender-based violence in HRM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of proposed actions on gender-based violence in HRM in 2024-25 fiscal year. • Reduction in rates of gender-based violence in HRM at three- and five-year evaluation of actions taken.
The Committee will assess the current status of gender-based violence in HRM, including identification of (sub-)populations at particular risk	<i>Sections 5(c), 6, 7, 8</i>	All Committee members (Chair lead)	Staff time	Q1 2024	Identification of baseline and target indicators for rates of gender-based violence in HRM	
The Committee will explore options for addressing gender-based violence in HRM.	<i>Sections 5(c), 6, 7, 8</i>	All Committee members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff time • May include external expertise (e.g., presentations) as needed 	Q2 2024	Identification of potential actions to be recommended	

Subcategories/Action	Alignment with Terms of Reference	Person/Group Responsible	Resources required	Time Frame	Desired Outcome	Performance Indicators
The Committee will forward a motion to the Executive Standing with a recommendation for action on gender-based violence in HRM.	Sections 5(c), 6, 7, 8	Chair	Staff time	Q3 2024	Motion forwarded to Executive Standing Committee	
Sub-priority 1(b): Addressing mental health for women in HRM	Sections 5(c), 6, 7, 8	All Committee members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff time • May include external expertise (e.g., presentations) as needed 	2024	Reduced barriers to good mental health for women in HRM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of proposed actions on women's mental health in HRM in 2024-25 fiscal year.
The Committee will assess the current status of mental health for women in HRM, including barriers to good health and/or accessing mental health supports	Sections 5(c), 6, 7, 8	All Committee members (Chair lead)	Staff time	Q2 2024	Identification of baseline rates of mental illness, impacts of mental health concerns, and barriers to good health, and identification of targets for improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced rates of unmet mental health need in HRM at three- and five-year evaluation of actions taken.

Subcategories/Action	Alignment with Terms of Reference	Person/Group Responsible	Resources required	Time Frame	Desired Outcome	Performance Indicators
The Committee will explore options for improving women's mental health in HRM, for example by addressing barriers or providing additional supports.	Sections 5(c), 6, 7, 8	All Committee members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff time • May include external expertise (e.g., presentations) as needed 	Q3 2024	Identification of potential actions to be recommended	
The Committee will forward a motion to the Executive Standing with a recommendation for action on women's mental health in HRM.	Sections 5(c), 6, 7, 8	Chair	Staff time	Q3 2024	Motion forwarded to Executive Standing Committee	
Sub-priority 1(c): Addressing public safety risks for women in HRM, including road safety	Sections 5(c), 6, 7, 8	All Committee members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff time • May include external expertise (e.g., presentations) as needed 	2024	Fewer injuries and increased ability to access public spaces for women in HRM	

Subcategories/Action	Alignment with Terms of Reference	Person/Group Responsible	Resources required	Time Frame	Desired Outcome	Performance Indicators
The Committee will assess the current status of actual and perceived safety for women accessing public infrastructure in HRM	Sections 5(c), 6, 7, 8	All Committee members (Chair lead)	Staff time	Q3 2024	Identification of baseline rates of injury related to public infrastructure for women, self-reported comfort in accessing public infrastructure safely for women, and identification of targets for improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> using public infrastructure at three- and five-year evaluations of actions taken. Increased self-reported comfort in accessing public infrastructure for women at three- and five-year evaluations of actions taken.
The Committee will explore options for improving perceived and actual safety for women accessing public infrastructure in HRM	Sections 5(c), 6, 7, 8	All Committee members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff time May include external expertise (e.g., presentations) as needed 	Q4 2024	Identification of potential actions to be recommended	

Subcategories/Action	Alignment with Terms of Reference	Person/Group Responsible	Resources required	Time Frame	Desired Outcome	Performance Indicators
The Committee will forward a motion to the Executive Standing with a recommendation for action on improving public safety for women in HRM.	Sections 5(c), 6, 7, 8	Chair	Staff time	Q4 2024	Motion forwarded to Executive Standing Committee	
Priority 2: Women’s involvement in HRM governance, particularly Indigenous and racialized women.						
The Committee will assess actual participation rates for women in municipal boards, committees, employment, and political positions, with consideration to disaggregation by racial and ethnic background.	Sections 5, 6, 7, 8	All Committee members (Chair lead)	Staff time	Q1 2024	Identification of baseline rates of participation in political and civic life for women, particularly IBWOC and identification of targets for improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of proposed actions on women's civic and political participation in HRM in 2024-25 fiscal year. • Increased participation in citizen civic activities (e.g., boards, committees),

Subcategories/Action	Alignment with Terms of Reference	Person/Group Responsible	Resources required	Time Frame	Desired Outcome	Performance Indicators
The Committee will identify barriers to participation and options for improving participation in civic and political life for women in HRM.	<i>Sections 5, 6, 7, 8</i>	All Committee members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff time • May include external expertise (e.g., presentations) as needed 	Q2 2024	Identification of potential actions to be recommended	municipal employment, and political representation by women, particularly IBWOC, at three- and five-year evaluations of actions taken.
The Committee will forward a motion to the Executive Standing with a recommendation for action on improving women's participation in civic and political life in HRM, particularly for IBWOC.	<i>Sections 5, 6, 7, 8</i>	Chair	Staff time	Q2 2024	Motion forwarded to Executive Standing Committee	

Priority 3: Housing and food security for women in HRM.

Subcategories/Action	Alignment with Terms of Reference	Person/Group Responsible	Resources required	Time Frame	Desired Outcome	Performance Indicators
The Committee will assess the current status of housing and food (in)security for women in HRM, with careful attention paid to identification of (sub-)populations at particular risk.	Sections 5, 6, 7, 8	All Committee members (Chair lead)	Staff time	Q2 2024	Identification of baseline rates of food and housing insecurity for women in HRM and identification of targets for improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of proposed actions on food and housing insecurity in HRM in 2024-25 fiscal year. • Increased food and housing security for women in HRM at three- and five-year evaluations of actions taken.
The Committee will identify existing initiatives aimed at addressing this issue, and assess these from a GBA+ lens.	Sections 5, 6, 7, 8	All Committee members	Staff time	Q2 2024	Identification of any gaps in existing policy and programming impacting women	

Subcategories/Action	Alignment with Terms of Reference	Person/Group Responsible	Resources required	Time Frame	Desired Outcome	Performance Indicators
The Committee will identify specific barriers to food and housing security for women in HRM, and explore options to address those barriers.	Sections 5, 6, 7, 8	All Committee members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff time • May include external expertise (e.g., presentations) as needed 	Q3-4 2024	Identification of potential actions to be recommended	
The Committee will forward a motion to the Executive Standing with a recommendation for action on improving food and housing security for women in HRM.	Sections 5, 6, 7, 8	Chair	Staff time	Q4 2024	Motion forwarded to Executive Standing Committee	

[Terms of Reference \(Administrative Order 2019-004-GOV Respecting the Women’s Advisory Committee in the Halifax Regional Municipality\)](#)