



**Draft Minutes  
Town of Westville  
Committee of The Whole  
Council Chambers  
May 16, 2022 – 6:00 pm**

**1. Call To Order**

Mayor White called the meeting to order at 6:05 pm.

**2. Territory Acknowledgement**

Mayor White read the Territory acknowledgement and acknowledged the history of African Nova Scotians.

**3. Roll Call**

Mayor Lennie White, Deputy Mayor Clarrie MacKinnon, Councillor Mitchell MacGregor, Councillor Meghan Bragg, Councillor Bernie Murphy, Chief Administrative Officer Scot Weeres, Recording Secretary Kristen Reed, GERALYN MacDONALD- Assistant director and co-ordinator Mentoring Plus, Esther Bejarano of North Shore LIP.

**4. Declaration of Conflict of Interest**

None

**5. Presentations**

**GERALYN MacDONALD, Mentoring Plus Strategy**

Mrs. MacDonald shared that Atlantic Canada's Aging Population has major issues facing our region. An increasing number of retirees, increased health costs, reduced labour force, the need to broaden our workforce, and a growing number of businesses looking for new owners. Organizations need to find ways to transfer knowledge from retired employees and people to the next generation.

In 2014 New Glasgow and the County developed an Age Friendly Action Plan. One of the Action items identified was to hold a Silver Economy Summit in Pictou County and focus on the economic opportunities of our aging population. Gordon Michael of Dalhousie University approached the Town of New Glasgow to partner on a pilot project at North Nova Education Centre where local retired people would group mentor high school students on career paths. There were 10 students working with 200 students. The pilot was a success and was the basis for the funding request from Dalhousie to the Federal Department of Seniors on a four-year Mentoring Plus project.

The Pictou County Mentoring Plus is a collaboration with the Town of New Glasgow. It is supported by the Town of Westville, Town of Trenton, Town of Pictou, Town of Stellarton and the Municipality of Pictou County. The Strategy draws upon the knowledge, experience, and skills of the retired and near retired (55+) population to

help support individuals 16 and up with personal growth, career exploration and economic development through a variety of knowledge exchange initiatives.

All municipalities are supposed to be accessible by 2030. Age friendly is the idea of making structures and services more accessible and inclusive for seniors with varying needs and capabilities. Age-friendly communities promote healthy and active aging. People in age-friendly communities are supported in maintaining their independence and have access to the community supports and services they need.

Mrs. MacDonald works for the Town of New Glasgow. The plan is to update the 2014 Age Friendly Plan designed to help people live safely, enjoy good health and stay involved. This will include the Mentoring Plus goals and be regional. This requires input from all Pictou County Municipalities that agree to participate and Mentoring Plus partners. A facilitator will be hired by Mentoring Plus on the Age Friendly Network will be engaged to manage this process.

Currently 4 of the 6 municipalities have agreed to participate. If Westville is interested Council needs to confirm by email by June 1.

At the discussion after the presentation it was discussed that there is no direct cost to be involved other than some staff and time to assist. The plan deals with ages 1 to 100 but focus on aging. The plan would identify needs of the Town and then it would be the Town that would approve and finance the changes. The plan would also list possible funding opportunities that could be used for the action plan items. There is currently funding available to do the plan so it can be done quickly once municipalities agree and community sessions are done.

All three high schools are involved and people from trades, businesses and the health sectors. Over 50 retired persons are very active with the Mentoring and will work with any school, group or entity that wants to get involved. There is a session coming up that will match first year med students and high school students with members from the health services.

Mayor White shared that he took part in the Silver conference and it is still one of the best sessions he has attended. He hopes that something similar could happen again.

### **North Shore LIP**

Esther Bejarano presented about the North Shore Local Immigration Partnership. It is run under the YMCA of Halifax umbrella. There are 60 LIPs including the North Shore one, which includes that includes the areas of Colchester, Pictou and Antigonish counties. Esther formerly worked with the YReach program. The Y has assisted settlement relocation for the past 25 years. She was from Mexico and as she learned what steps and services were needed, she was able to share with others. It is important to attract and retain immigrants.

North Shore includes Colchester, Pictou County and Antigonish. The Board is currently made up of one staff member and 30 reps which include REN, Police, government employees. They meet four times per year. The New comer advisory committee is made up of people that have been here for varying times and are in

different stages of immigration. They hold Pot lucks and other events to help create the social connection.

The 3 priorities for the North Shore LIP are Settlement and Integration, Collaboration and Coordination, and Welcoming Immigrants and Refugees tool kit. Working with groups to find support systems that are in place and not duplicate services. Groups don't have enough staff and duplication of what others are doing so some areas get neglected. Immigrants and refugees don't know the process or the etiquette. The Welcoming toolkit contains ideas on how to support this work and familiarize people with the Town. It is done in collaboration with Police. Every community is different.

Creating a centralized place for info with links to services. Some general info and some specific to each municipality. Partner with libraries as welcome centers to give newcomer kits. People are social on the street but don't truly connect and do things together. Introduce to others if kids connect then parents can relax and focus on themselves. When rural you don't have as many speak your language. The LIP has working groups that help with employment and languages.

LIPs focus on immigrants from other countries and foreign workers. Deputy Mayor MacKinnon mentioned there had been a number of Vietnamese that settled here but left for bigger communities. Esther agreed that is common but loves small communities because there is a community and you don't get lost in the shuffle of the city. Many leave thinking it will be better but when they get there they realize it's not.

Councillor Bragg asked about getting the word out to new comers for events happening in Town, such as the Music in the Park and art shows, etc. Esther mentioned word of mouth is best, and offering to pick someone up and go with them is even better. Posting on LinkedIn, the Multicultural association and the REN are groups with large networks. Friendly and welcoming are very different. Saying hi there is an event is friendly. Saying hi want to go to this event with me is welcoming.

The NorthShore LIP was established last year and is funded by the IRCC until March 2025. The Immigrants and Refugees have lower crime rates because they come for a better life, not to be criminals. In other provinces the YMCA teaches newcomers about voting. Even newcomers from other Provinces want to feel welcome. It's hard to penetrate the tight social circles.

## **6. Next Meetings**

### **a. Board of Police Commissioners Meeting**

Westville Council Chambers

May 17, 2022 – 6 pm.

### **b. Planning Advisory Committee**

Westville Council Chambers

May 18, 2022 – 6pm

**c. Dangerous & Unsightly Hearing**  
Westville Council Chambers  
May 30, 2022 – 6pm.

**d. Committee of the Whole**  
Westville Council Chambers  
May 30, 2022 – 6:30pm.

**7. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:23pm.

Mayor: \_\_\_\_\_

Chief Administrative Officer: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Approved: \_\_\_\_\_