Halifax & Area Human Rights Committee Minutes
Remote Meeting
May 28, 2026 @1800

Facilitator / Staff Advisor:	Nancy MacLean
1st Co-Chair:	Maria Legault
2nd Co-Chair:	Mary Lynn Elms
Vice Chair:	Barbie Henneberry
Treasurer:	Nicole Brown
Secretary:	Danielle Brown
Attendees:	Alicia Nlgie-Day Guillaume Legault Doreen Brown (HR National Committee member) Erin Scott Japna Sidhu-Brar Moe Gautreau Olivia Baker Rob Silver Suilah Susan Enta William (Sulian) Johnson
Absent:	Nil
Guest:	Nil

Call to Order & Welcome

1. Mary Lynn called the meeting to order at 1806.

Land Acknowledgement

2. Read my Mary Lynn.

Harassment Statement

3. Ready by Maria

Participant Introduction

4. Was led by Mary Lynn, everyone introduced themselves.

Updates & Discussion of previous minutes dated April 9, 2026

5. Maria confirmed she will be attending the PSAC Atlantic Conference taking place in Halifax in July 2026.

6. Nancy & Maria highlighted the successful African Heritage Month event held at the PSAC office, food catered by R&B Kitchen. Guest speaker was Trevor Silver owner of Trev Clothing. And the committee present Doreen Brown with a recognition of service plaque for her work/contribution with Human Rights locally and on national levels.

7. **Bargaining Team Update / Education & Library Services** - The committee welcomed Guillaume Legault, who is a member of the Education and Library Services (EB) bargaining team. Last meeting Guillaume provided updates on bargaining activities and advised that the bargaining team was preparing to meet with the employer in June 2026 to present proposals and priorities for the next collective agreement.

8. **Key Bargaining Issues** - EB bargaining team has been addressing issues related to discrimination and harassment with the employer. While unable to disclose specific details of negotiations, was emphasized the importance of ensuring that commitments made at the bargaining table are incorporated directly into the collective agreement rather than relying solely on employer policies, which can be changed without union agreement.

9. **Member Engagement and Solidarity** - discussed the importance of demonstrating support for bargaining teams through visible acts of solidarity, such as wearing bargaining support pins or badges. Participating in awareness activities and showing public support for bargaining initiatives.

10. **Young Workers Convention** - scheduled for November 7–9, 2026. Members were encouraged to promote participation and engagement among young workers.

11. **Regional Updates** - Members received updates regarding upcoming town halls and meetings taking place across various groups and committees. Nicole inquired about opportunities for participation in provincial rallies or protests related to budget issues and other public concerns. Nancy clarified that members may participate in such events as private citizens; however, they should not present themselves as representatives of PSAC unless officially authorized to do so.

Adoption of last minutes

12. Rob noted an error in previous records regarding his local number and advised that the correct local number is Local 80829, and two names spelled incorrectly.

13. **Adoption of Minutes:** Moved by Maria and seconded by Rob that the minutes be adopted with amendments. Carried unanimously.

Adoption of Agenda

14. Maria moved the adoption of the agenda. The motion was seconded by Rob and carried unanimously by the committee.

Area Council BBQ Event

15. Members discussed the annual committee barbecue, which serves as an opportunity to recognize the work of committee members, connect with colleagues, and learn about ongoing committee activities. The event is being organized by the Halifax Area Council and will take place on August 8, 2026, from 1200 to 1600. Anyone interested in volunteering can reach out to one of the committee members.

Reflection on May Day/Works and International Workers' Day

16. Members participated in a discussion regarding May Works and the historical significance of International Workers' Day on May 1. This remembrance has been pushed to September in North American to distance the holiday from the Haymarket Riot of 1886. The conversation focused on labour history. Members expressed support for increasing education and awareness about May 1 and discussed opportunities to promote its significance within the labour movement and the broader community.

17. Moe proposed the development of a longer-term educational strategy, including guest speakers and educational sessions, to provide members with an understanding of the history and significance of May Day/May Works. Members agreed that increased education and awareness would help promote greater engagement with labour history and workers' rights issues. More to follow.

Terms of Reference (ToR) Review

18. The ToR subcommittee is formed by Japna Sidhu-Brar, Nicole Brown, and Barbie Henneberry.

19. A draft of the subcommittee's proposed ToR was presented for discussion. Members were advised that the working group began the process from scratch and reviewed the ToR to identify best practices and frameworks that could be adapted to meet the committee's needs. It was emphasized that the document presented is a draft and not a final version. Feedback and recommendations from committee members were welcomed before a final version is brought forward for approval.

20. Part 1 (reflected the name of the committee) - The committee reviewed Article 1, which outlines the official name of the committee and establishes its identification within the organization's governance framework.

21. Park 2 (Discussion on Bylaws vs. Terms of Reference language) - A member asked whether the committee would vote on each bylaw separately or approve the document once finalized. Chris noted that committees typically operate under Terms of Reference rather than bylaws, as they provide greater flexibility. Members discussed the differences between the two formats and considered whether the draft could be adapted into a Terms of Reference document. The committee agreed to continue reviewing the draft and defer a decision on its final format and approval process until a later meeting.

22. Part 3 (Membership and Policy Statement) - The committee reviewed the policy statement affirming support for equal opportunity for all members regardless of socioeconomic status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, disability, race, colour, creed, ethnic or national origin, religion, political belief, marital or family status, or pardoned conviction. The statement reflects the committee's commitment to equity, diversity, inclusion, and human rights.

23. Part 4 (Membership and Policy Statement, cont.) - Members noted that the purpose of this section is to ensure the committee remains inclusive and welcoming to all individuals who identify with following equity-seeking groups while acknowledging the evolving nature of language and identity:

    a. Indigenous Peoples of Turtle Island (North America, Central America, and the Caribbean;

    b. Indigenous Peoples from regions outside of Turtle Island;

    c. Persons of African descent;

    d. Racialized persons (sometimes referred to as persons of colour or racially visible persons), including but not limited to East Asian, South Asian, Southeast Asian, West Asian/Arab, Latin American, Central American, Caribbean, and other racialized communities;

    e. Persons with disabilities, including those with chronic, long-term, episodic, recurring, physical, sensory, mental health, learning, developmental, and/or intellectual disabilities and conditions; and

    f. 2SLGBTQIA+ individuals, including Two-Spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, asexual, and other diverse gender identities, gender expressions, and sexual orientations.

24. Part 5 (Harassment and Respect) - The committee reviewed the section affirming its commitment to maintaining a safe, respectful, and non-judgmental environment for all members.

25. Part 6 (Committee Jurisdiction) - acknowledges that the committee works, organizes, and meets in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq people (Kjipuktuk, Mi'kma'ki known as Halifax, Nova Scotia). The committee welcomes allies and guests from outside those equity-seeking groups and from outside the Halifax area. While guests may participate in discussions and Committee activities, voting rights are limited to Committee members.

26. Part 7 (Executive Composition and Terms of Office) - The Executive Committee shall consist of a Chairs, a Vice-Chair, a Treasurer, and a Secretary. Each elected Executive Member shall serve a term of two (2) years or until their successor is elected. The Committee may determine the election cycle and implementation schedule as required. Members discussed whether the Committee should maintain its current structure of two Co-Chairs or transition to a more traditional Chair and Vice-Chair model. It was suggested that, if the Committee retains a Co-Chair structure, consideration should be given to eliminating the Vice-Chair position to avoid unnecessary overlap in responsibilities.

27. Part 8 (Executive Elections and Eligibility) - The committee reviewed the sections relating to executive elections, nominations, and eligibility requirements. States that Executive members shall be elected either by secret ballot or by acclamation at the Annual General Meeting (AGM). The nominations must be moved and seconded by voting members of the Committee. Written nominations must be signed by the nominee, mover, and seconder to be considered valid.

    a. Self-identify as a member of one or more of the equity-seeking groups;
    b. Reside in or work within the Halifax Regional Municipality;
    c. Have attended at least one previous Committee meeting;
    d. Be willing to let their name stand for election; and
    e. Be a member in good standing.

    Side bar – Chris Di Liberatore noted that t was noted that affiliated committees are generally entitled to one voting delegate per affiliated local. Members further clarified that individuals holding elected office within PSAC attend as delegates by virtue of their elected position rather than through their affiliated local.

28. Part 9 (Executive Elections / Executive Vacancies) **-** when an election for an Executive position is called, the nominee, nominator, or seconder may address the committee on behalf of the nominee for a period of up to three minutes. Simple majority vote (50% + 1) of voting members in attendance shall determine the successful candidate for each Executive position. In the event a vacancy occurs, notice shall be provided to the membership as soon as possible (minimum 14 calendar days), and an election to fill the position shall be held at the next meeting. Any member elected to fill a vacancy shall serve until the next regularly scheduled Executive election.

29. Part 10 (Executive Duties & Responsibilities):

Chair (or Co-Chair(s)) –

a. Conduct and lead meetings in accordance with the PSAC Constitution and committee governing documents;
b. Uphold the committee's bylaws/terms of reference;

c. Prepare meeting agendas and provide them to the PSAC staff representative at least one week prior to the next meeting for distribution;

d. Review meeting minutes for accuracy before distribution to members;

e. Ensure transparency and fairness at all meetings; and

f. Work with the PSAC staff representative to ensure information related to the committee's mandate is communicated to members.

Vice-Chair –

a. Support the Chair in the performance of their duties;

b. Act in the Chair's place when the Chair is unavailable;

c. Assume duties assigned by the Chair as required; and

d. In the event of a vacancy in the Treasurer or Secretary position, temporarily fulfill the responsibilities of that position until an election is held to fill the vacancy.

Treasurer -

a. Accurately record discussions, decisions, motions, and other business conducted during meetings;

b. Maintain the official records of the committee;

c. Prepare and distribute draft minutes within three weeks of the meeting date;

d. Forward approved draft minutes to the Executive within 30 days of the meeting of next meeting;

e. Bring motions involving expenditures or financial commitments to the Treasurer's attention;

f. Ensure action items are clearly communicated to the individuals responsible;

g. Maintain organized and accessible meeting records; and

h. Prepare correspondence as directed by the Executive.

30. Part 11 (Union Guidelines) - The committee shall hold a minimum of **four meetings per year** in accordance with the PSAC Constitution. One of these meetings shall be the Annual General Meeting (AGM), which is typically held in the fall. Meetings may be conducted in person or virtually to maximize participation and accessibility for members. Members presenting **solicited written reports** may provide a verbal summary at meetings, limited to a maximum of 10 minutes. Unsolicited reports presented at meetings shall be limited to 5 minutes. Reports intended for presentation at a meeting shall be submitted in writing at least one week prior to the meeting date. More to follow.

31. Part 12 (Meeting Quorum) - A quorum shall consist of at least two (2) Executive Committee members and two (2) Committee members, representing no fewer than three (3) Component Locals or Directly Chartered Locals (DCLs). Executive Committee members may be counted toward the Local/DCL representation requirement.

32. Part 13 (Notice of Meetings) – Shall be posted on the PSAC Atlantic Website and distributed by email to Committee members at least 14 days prior to the meeting date.

33. Part 14 (Notice of AGM) – Shall be posted on the PSAC Atlantic website and distributed by email to individuals within the Committee's constituency at least 30 days prior to the meeting date.

34. Part 15 (Voting Guidelines) - Voting shall be limited to **one** (1) Committee Member per Local Branch or Directly Chartered Local (DCL) in Nova Scotia, who self-identifies as a member of one or more of the equity groups represented by the Committee.
Each eligible Local Branch or DCL shall be entitled to one (1) vote.

Side Bar - committee members will include Annapolis Valley, South Shore and HRM

Side Bar - The elected Officers of the Committee, namely the Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer, shall be members and delegates of the Committee by virtue of their office (*ex officio*). These Officers shall retain full participation and voting rights unless otherwise provided in these Bylaws.

Side Bar - Each Local Branch or DCL has one vote. A delegate must be designated to cast that vote; and The Chair must be informed of the delegate's identity before voting occurs.

Side Bar - Delegates must be elected, not simply appointed by the Executive.
The election should occur between 6 and 12 months before the Convention.
All eligible voting members present should have the opportunity to participate in the election.

35. Part 16 (Finances) - There shall be three (3) signing authorities for the Committee's account at any given time. The signing authorities shall be Chair, Vice-Chair, and Treasurer.

36. Part 17 (Amendments to Bylaws / Terms of Reference) - These Bylaws shall be reviewed every two (2) years and amended as required to ensure they remain current and reflective of the Committee's needs and objectives. Amendments to, or the adoption of, these Bylaws shall require the approval of all Executive Members present and a minimum of X Committee Members, provided quorum has been established.

Saved Rounds

- Member discussed the proposed two-year terms for Executive positions and whether terms should be staggered to promote continuity within the Committee.
- One member shared that the Area Council staggers Executive elections so that approximately half of the Executive is elected in alternating years.
- It was suggested that, under a staggered model, the Co-Chair positions and other Executive roles could be elected in alternating years, while still maintaining two-year terms for all Executive members.
- Several members noted that they had not previously encountered staggered Executive terms within committee structures and expressed concerns that annual elections for portions of the Executive could create additional administrative complexity.

Meeting adjourned at 2016