

Meeting of the Seniors' Advisory Council of Nova Scotia
Minutes, Thursday, September 24, 2020
Hampton Inn Halifax

ATTENDANCE:

Present:

Bill Berryman, *Retired Teachers Organization*
Alyson Hillier, *Retired Teachers Organization*
Bernard Conrad, *Nova Scotia Government Retired Employees Association*
Ernestine Gouthro, *Nova Scotia Government Retired Employees Association*
Ron Swan, *CARP Nova Scotia Chapter*
Bill VanGorder, *CARP Nova Scotia Chapter*
Carol Rogers, *Community Links* *Via Phone*
Peter Kerr, *National Association of Federal Retirees*
Michelle Langille, *National Association of Federal Retirees*
Claude Renaud, *Regroupement des Aînés de la Nouvelle-Ecosse*
Richard Malin, *Royal Canadian Legion, Nova Scotia /Nunavut Command*
Terry Donovan, *Federation of Senior Citizens and Pensioners*
Margaret Casey, *Senior and Retired Doctors Section of Doctors Nova Scotia*
Phil Bagnell, *Senior and Retired Doctors Section of Doctors Nova Scotia*
Nancy MacLellan, *Department of Seniors*
Faizal Nanji, *Department of Seniors*
Shalini Keel, *Department of Seniors*

Regrets:

Helen MacDonnell, *Community Links*
Véronique Legault, *Regroupement des Aînés de la Nouvelle-Ecosse*
Alma Johnston-Tynes, *Federation of Senior Citizens and Pensioners*

1. Welcome and Call to Order:

Bill B. called the meeting to order. Bill B. introduced the new Deputy Minister of the Department of Seniors, Nancy MacLellan to members. Deputy MacLellan gave a brief outline about herself. Nancy has worked for the Nova Scotia government since 1997 in a number of key areas. Her roles included Director of Service Delivery and Operations at Access Nova Scotia; Senior Policy Analyst at Treasury and Policy Board; Director of Court Services at Justice; Executive Director of Strategy, Registries, and Service Delivery at Service Nova Scotia/Access Nova Scotia, and the Associate Deputy Minister of the Department of Community Services.

Before accepting her current position, Nancy was the Deputy Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, the CEO of Housing Nova Scotia, and the Chair of the Municipal Finance Corporation.

Nancy is Vice Chair of the Public Sector Superannuation (Pension) Plan Trustee Inc. and is a member of the Pension Services Corporate Board. Nancy is also past president of the Institute for Citizen Centred Service, having been an active member since its inception in the late 1990's.

Nancy has a Bachelor of Arts Degree from Dalhousie University, a Masters in Business Administration from St. Mary's University, and holds the designation ICD.D from Institute of Corporate Directors.

2. Additions/Adoption of the Agenda:

MOTION: That the agenda be approved with the addition "Easing of restrictions in Long Term Care, Webinar Protecting your health this Flu Season, Traffic Safety Act regulations, Home Care document" added under New Business.

Bernie C./ Michelle L.

CARRIED

3. Approval of June 3, 2020 Minutes

MOTION: That the minutes of June 3, 2020 be approved as amended

Peter K./Terry D.

CARRIED

a. Action Items June 3, 2020

-**Submittee Established to develop a "Seniors Friendly Alternative Proposal" to CAP**
COMPLETED

-**High Dose Flu Vaccine:** Bill B. wrote letter to the Minister of Health and Wellness on June 21, 2020 and a response was received on July 8, 2020. Bill B. wrote a letter on July 13, 2020 in response to the July 8, 2020 letter. **Bill B. to provide letters to members.** Ron S. wrote a similar letter July 13, 2020 to Department of Health and Wellness, no response received.

-**Meeting with Bernie Miller and Dr. Strang** to provide Council's perspective on re-opening to economy. This item to be replaced with document from Terry D.

-**SHIFT 2.0:** Council provide feedback to Deputy Minister on new initiatives.
COMPLETED/ON-GOING

-**Credit Union** documents to be signed.
COMPLETED

4. Business Arising from Minutes

a) Develop NS – Accelerated Internet Project

Bill shared article with members. *See attached.*

b) Community Links Emergency Funding

Funding was appreciated. More funding is needed for those kind of initiatives

c) Brief on the Proposed Phasing Out of CAP

MOTION: That the brief on the Proposed Removal of the Capped Assessment Program be accepted by Council.

Ron S./ Peter K.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

5. Treasurer's Report

Claude provide Report to members. The balance on January 2020 was \$1,057 and on September 2020 was \$1,070. Bill B. asked if membership fees are due? Membership fee are only collected if the balance drops below \$1,000.

Claude R./ Terry D.

CARRIED

6. Update from Department of Seniors

a) SHIFT 2.0

July 15th meeting with the Advisory Committee. Members were asked three questions:

1. What lessons were learned from the experience of Covid-19?
2. How should those lessons influence Shift 2.0?
3. How does the experience of Covid-19 change how we work together?

DM MacLellan provided an update to members; the final progress report is in process. The department is reaching out to each department and compiling information on the progress. The department has a good go forward plan that are actionable and outcome based. (Example: Social Isolation, Unemployed Workforce, Digital divide, Vulnerable Groups, Caregivers at home, Caregivers in Long Term Care) New submission to Executive Council targeting December/January.

Members discuss having Zoom meeting going forward due to Covid-19. Members agreed.

b) Elder Abuse Awareness Day June 15, 2020

Information was sent to members; Proclamation signed and information sheet with contact information for Seniors Safety Coordinators and 211 as key point of contact.

c) Positive Aging Directory

The Deputy provided an update regarding the 2021/22 Positive Aging Directory. The distribution of the directory was limited this year. The department currently has 42000 copies of the directory. The contract with the publisher has ended and the department will be seeking requests for service for the next edition. The department has had discussions with 211. 211 has a database that has the most up-to-date information and 211 can provide a new service, "Directory on Demand", that allows them to print hard copy sections of their database based on a caller's needs and particular to their geographic area. Members understand the cost of producing this document but also feel the paper document is important. The Deputy agreed to provide members with a direct phone number for continuing care with the Department of Health and Wellness.

d) Seniors Week October 1-7, 2020

Deputy MacLellan shared a draft plan of activities for Senior Week 2020 "Seniors for Nova Scotia Strong"

October 1, International Day of the Older Person.

Innovate Care Conference October 5/6 (complimentary conference code available to member from Doctors NS)

October 1, CARP National Seniors day virtual meeting

e) Minister's Visit to Cape Breton

Trip postponed due to weather. To be rescheduled.

7. 11:00 AM COVID-19: Mike Davies – Nova Scotia Department of Health and Wellness
Insert Slides

8. 1:00 PM Dr. Kevin Orrell, Deputy Minister, Department of Health and Wellness
Deputy Orrell spoke to members of the Seniors Council regarding the review of nursing homes in Nova Scotia and acknowledged this is an issue across the country. As an orthopedic surgeon Deputy Orrell has seen the difficulties in navigating the current system. The Covid-19 pandemic has shown that better treatment for seniors in nursing homes is required. Building new facilities, adding more beds is not the solution. Going back to basics, requiring changes in legislation is needed.
Concerns/questions: Availability of the High Dose Flu vaccines for all seniors over the age of 65 and Shingles vaccines.
Deputy Orrell: The availability of this vaccine is not there and would not be provided this year. Recommends getting the flu vaccine and following Public Health guidelines.

Concerns/questions: Is there a Continuing Care Strategy document that can be shared with the Council?
Deputy Orrell: Not currently due to staff changes at the Department of Health and Wellness. Based on the review and recommendations seniors should be kept out of nursing homes and provided support services and homecare supports to keep seniors in their home as long as possible.

Concerns/questions: Members support National Pharmasave program and are asking government to push support for this program.
Deputy Orrell: This is a project that is not a 6-month fix. There are benefits for bulk buying but requires legislation.

Deputy Orrell thanked Dr. Margaret Casey for all her years of making a difference in Medical Education.

9. Northwood Review – My Conversation with Lynn Stevenson on August 28, 2020
Bill spoke to Dr. Lynn Stevenson regarding Northwood Review. In 2016 the government cut \$8.2 million from Long Term Care. Government was 4 days late calling for mask wearing in facilities, 3 days passed before testing was done on all residents, 2 weeks before the limitation to staff working in multiple homes. Bill recommended having a Canada Health Act for Long Term Care facilities. Bill mentioned to Dr. Stevenson a report by Janice Keefe on the Expert Panel on Long Term Care. A document “Enough Talk” the nursing homes of NS Association was also suggested to Dr. Stevenson. Spoke to Dr. Stevenson about the need for training and pay increases to Continuing Care Assistants in facilities.

10. Nominating Committee – Elections for Officers
Bill V. will be setting up committee for Election for officers and looking for 2 volunteers.

11. Federal Government Safe Restart Program: Bill B. shared 1 pager see attached.

12. New Horizons for Seniors Programs: Deadline to apply for funding is October 20, 2020. Grants available from \$5,000 up to \$25,000 supporting healthy aging, preventing elder abuse and fraud, combating ageism, celebrating diversity, and promoting inclusion, improving seniors' access to government services and benefits, and adapting community-based organizations to a more virtual environment.
13. Cambie Surgery Centre (Dr. Brian Day) Court Case
Bill B. shared document attached.
14. Manifold Canada Request (Kerry Knee)
Bill B. shared document attached. Looking to collaborate with Seniors Advisory Council of Nova Scotia and looking for endorsement. Members discussed and decided not to pursue this any further at this time.
15. COVID Recovery Measures for Seniors
Bill B. shared email from Terry D. September 19, 2020, regarding Clubs/Councils opening. See attached. Deputy MacLellan advised members that seniors clubs and councils do not need to submit plans to the Department of Health and Wellness for approval. It is strongly recommended that there be some documented guidelines about operational cleanliness and hygiene practices and following the Public Health Guidelines. Department of Seniors staff to share sample plans/guidelines to members to consider when re-opening.
16. New Business
 - Easing of restrictions in Long Term Care
Offsite visits are now allowed as of September 22, 2020

 - Webinar Protecting your health this Flu Season
September 30, 2020 by Canadian Frailty Network

 - Traffic Safety Act regulations
Sent out to members from Deputy MacLellan.

 - Home Care document
Bernie L. shared with members and Department of Seniors.
17. Documentation
See attachments
18. Future Meetings – October 22, 2020 via Zoom, November 26, 2020
19. Adjournment