

**Meeting of the Seniors' Advisory Council of Nova Scotia Minutes**  
**Meeting of the Seniors' Advisory Council of Nova Scotia**  
**Thursday, March 26 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM**  
**Teleconference**

**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*  
Bill VanGorder, *CARP Nova Scotia Chapter*  
Claude Renaud, *Regroupement des aines de la Nouvelle Ecosse*  
Helen MacDonnell, *Community Links*  
Carol Rogers, *Community Links*  
Peter Kerr, *National Association of Federal Retirees*  
Michelle Langille, *National Association of Federal Retirees*  
Ron Swan, *CARP Nova Scotia Chapter*  
Véronique Legault, *Regroupement des Aînés de la Nouvelle-Ecosse*  
Richard Malin, *Royal Canadian Legion, Nova Scotia /Nunavut Command*  
Simon d'Entremont, *Department of Seniors*  
Faizal Nanji, *Department of Seniors*  
Alma Johnston-Tynes, *Federation of Senior Citizens*  
Terry Donovan, *Federation of Senior Citizens*  
Margaret Casey, *Senior and Retired Doctors Section of Doctors Nova Scotia*  
Phil Bagnell, *Senior and Retired Doctors Section of Doctors Nova Scotia*  
Leo Glavine, *Minister of Seniors*

**Regrets:**

Paula Wedge, *CARP Nova Scotia Chapter*  
Rita Connors, *Royal Canadian Legion/Nunavut Command*

**Welcome and Call to Order:** Bill B. called the meeting to order.

**Additions/Adoption of the Agenda:**

Members Annual General Meetings was added to the agenda under New Business

MOTION: That the revised agenda be adopted

Bernie Conrad/Alma Johnston-Tynes

MOTION CARRIED

## **Approval of Minutes of February 27, 2020**

Edits to the Minutes

1. CAP Business – invite someone to give us more information.
2. Community Links – There are 5 new board members instead of “going to be”...

MOTION: That the corrected minutes of February 27, 2020 be approved.  
Bernie Conrad/Alma Johnston-Tynes MOTION CARRIED

## **ACTION ITEMS**

The seven action items were reviewed and marked as completed.

Peter questioned if members thought the document was useful and there was a discussion on the issue. The decision was for the Chair to continue to draw up action items after each meeting.

## **Business Arising from Minutes**

Bill spoke on the Minister of Health’s letter re: access to diabetes medications. Members were pleased that the Minister agreed with the implementation of the new form to streamline the approval process for SGLT-2 inhibitors, DPP4 inhibitors and GLP-1 receptor agonists.

Bill spoke on the letter to Minister of Municipal Affairs Chuck Porter re: CAP. Chair is to contact Nova Scotia Federation of Municipalities requesting a meeting with the All-Party Committee and Seniors Advisory Council.

Bill spoke on letter to Minister of Health and Wellness Randy Delorey re high dose flu vaccine. Waiting for a response. Phil Bagnell has been doing research from the National Advisory Committee on Immunization.

Bill spoke on the revised oral antidiabetic agent document. Bill VanGorder would like the Council to monitor the use of the form over the next 6 months. This form was recommended by Diabetes Canada.

Note: Let this outcome be highlighted as a win and accomplishment for the Council in advancing its priorities.

## **Treasurer’s Report**

Claude indicated the Chair, Vice-Chair and Treasurer have signed the Credit Union documents. Claude wants to do on-line banking and Bill VanGorder will send information on how to set this up.

## **Update from the Department of Seniors**

It is a top priority to bring together Advisory Committee, however, right now COVID-19 is the priority.

SHIFT 2.0 has received a 3 year commitment from government.

We received money for the social innovation lab to continue into this fiscal year.

Province announced emergency funding for vulnerable seniors with money going to Senior Safety Programs (\$180,000) and Community Links (\$50,000)

Barbara Adams asked Minister Glavine during budget estimates of the Department of Seniors why she was unable to meet with Seniors Advisory Council. Minister said he was not opposed to Council meeting with opposition parties, but that would be a Council decision.

## **Communications Nova Scotia presentation – Michelle Lucas (Manager), Carole Rankin and Dave Denny**

Overall approach from CNS: Michelle, Carole and Dave spoke to this. Dave spoke to the advertising approach that CNS is taking. Using multiple streams: radio, print, social media, etc. Specific senior section on government coronavirus website going live today. New public health announcements coming out and will find ways to share it with Council. Suggested that different medias are needed as not all seniors access websites. Discussion on providing I-Pads to long-term care facilities to allow residents to keep in touch with family.

**ACTION:** Any group that wants to be on distribution list to get releases directly, email Lyndsay

CNS is translating almost everything.

Minister Glavine came back on the line at 11:30. Simon asked the group to let him know if you are noticing unintended consequences, challenges, or dysfunction at the community level impacting seniors e.g., isolation, not being able to get groceries, not being able to get medications, etc.

Minister spoke to the Seniors Safety Coordinators on March 25<sup>th</sup> re: funding for community support and mobilization.

**ACTION:** Simon to check with Vickie Elliott Lopez (Department of Health and Wellness) to find out what the caregiver situation is at this time.

## **New Business – AGM Plans**

Alma – AGM postponed until September 21-23.

CARP – scheduled for May 28 conference, call tomorrow, no decision made yet.

Peter – regional meeting in April is cancelled, National meeting in June could be cancelled, no final decision made yet.

Bill B – Retired Teachers AGM postponed to September 23.

Helen – Planning for June 8. Most likely not going to host an in-person meeting in Truro.

RANE – October AGM. Will do it via video conferencing.

## **Dr. Rob Strang Spoke to COVID-19**

All cases are travel related; however, government fully expect to see community spread. We will be expanding testing with new lab capacity. We need to know if there is spread within NS (Therefore advising no travel). Everyone needs to do what we are telling them to do. No grouping and socializing. For Seniors groups, it is important to realize that they are at the highest risk. Asking to protect those by not going outside and socializing with people. Restrictions on visitors and activities coming to a halt is critical. We are sharing many community stories and how they are avoiding self-isolation, but still being safe. Government happy volunteers are getting seniors their groceries and medications and hope this continues during the crisis.

## Questions to Dr. Strang:

1. Bernie: **How far is it airborne? 2M? 6FT?**

*Answer:* This is droplet spread, it is big enough and heavy enough where it falls to the ground could still be spread. Smaller flus stay in the air. It is helpful to wear a mask if you are the sick person. Surfaces such as tabletops and counters are where the virus lives. Cleaning surfaces is very important.

2. Alma: **Cold vs Warm weather?**

*Answer:* We do not know much about its seasonality yet. H1N1 appeared 11 years ago and that first surfaced at the end of April in NS. So not sure how the warmer months will be a factor. It is a new virus, so there is no immunity in the population. First wave, people get infected, a few years before vaccine comes into play. Waves likely to be less severe, because this population that has it now, will be less for next round of population. Reduce putting our hands on things other people have touched.

3. Alyson: **What percentage are Seniors?**

*Answer:* 26 percent are over age 65. No cases over 80 years of age. No cases in long-term care facilities and we are working hard to minimize that because it would be very serious.

4. Bill B: **Thirty day maximum dosage at pharmacies causing two issues - cost and travel. Is there a chance there will be shortage of medications and prescripts?**

*Answer:* Not sure, not involved in that. Appropriate steps to balance the supply and minimize the shortage. College of Pharmacists worried over hoarding as a possibility and finding the right balance to avoid this kind of behavior.

5. Bill B: **State of emergency: what are your thoughts and advice of upcoming meetings in the late Spring?**

*Answer:* These kinds of meetings should be postponed until the Fall. We will be in this for another 6-8 weeks for sure. Or using Zoom/Skype is another option to host meetings virtually.

Bill thanked Dr. Strang for the effective job he was doing daily by giving voice to the science of the disease so that seniors and the public understand the complications of COVID-19.

Bill asked Dr. Strang to join us again at our April teleconference meeting.

ACTION: Send email to Kelly Dean to get it into Dr. Strang's calendar.

## **Documentation:**

None

**\*Future Meetings:** April 23, 2020 and May 28, 2020

MOTION: That the meeting be adjourned

Bernie Conrad/Alma Johnston-Tynes

MOTION CARRIED