



## AGENDA

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### Anti-Racism Special Committee

Thursday, April 29, 2021 at 6:00 p.m.

Council Chamber & Zoom Meeting ID# 934 5964 1382

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1. Call to Order – Councillor Duggan, Chair.
2. Acknowledgement of Mi'kma'ki the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq People – Councillor Duggan.
3. Agenda – *approval*.
4. Anti-Racism Special Committee March 25, 2021 meeting minutes – *approval*.
5. Unfinished Business
  - a. Membership – *status and introduce Vernon Simms;*
  - b. Tour of ARSC's Online Resource Folder – *staff*; and
  - c. Development of the Plan Discussion – *facilitated by Shakira Weatherdon*
    - i. Vision Statement revised
    - ii. Mission Statement revised
    - iii. Issues for Discussion
6. New Business

None.
7. Next Meeting – *proposed for Thursdays at 6:00 p.m.: May 20, June 24, and July 22, 2021.*
8. Adjournment

**ANTI RACISM SPECIAL COMMITTEE MINUTES**

**THURSDAY, MARCH 25, 2021 AT 6:00 P.M.**

**COUNCIL CHAMBER/ZOOM MEETING**

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**PRESENT:**

**Voting Members**

Councillor Melissa Duggan, Chair  
Deputy Mayor Peter Mosher  
April Hiltz  
Stephen Labrador  
Saundra Vernon

**Non-Voting Ex-officio Members**

Megan Meldrum  
Mayor Matt Risser  
Margaret Knickle

**Advisors**

Chavasse Bain, African NS Affairs  
Cynthia Dorrington, Black Loyalist Heritage Centre

**ALSO PRESENT:**

Heather McCallum, Assistant Municipal Clerk  
Arthur MacDonald, Heritage Manager  
Shakira Weatherdon, Facilitator

**ABSENT:**

Rebecca Fisk  
Piotr Luczak  
Jerin Kottakkal  
Yvonne Mosley

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1. Call to Order

The Chair called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

2. Acknowledgement of Mi'kma'ki the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq People

The Chair recognized Lunenburg's location on the unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq People.

3. Agenda

The agenda was approved by consensus.

4. Anti-Racism Special Committee March 4, 2021 meeting minutes

The minutes were approved by consensus.

## 5. Unfinished Business

### a. Council approval of Revised Terms of Reference

For information.

### b. Membership – introduce April Hiltz, Native Council of Nova Scotia

The ARSC's newest member, filling the vacant Indigenous seat, was introduced.

### c. Facilitation and guest speakers – introduce Shakira Weatherdon

Ms. Weatherdon will be working with the ARSC to facilitate discussions.

### d. Development of the Plan: Goals, Vision & Mission, Issues & Concerns, Segments

The Heritage Manager introduced the presentation to guide this evening's discussions, facilitated by Ms. Weatherdon (Schedule "A").

#### ➤ Vision Statement

The Heritage Manager presented a draft from the feedback of the last meeting.

Recommendations for editing included: shortening the length; explicitly stating "anti-racism" and "anti-discrimination"; and remove reference to "strive for". It was noted that a Vision statement illustrates what the end goal is.

#### ➤ Mission Statement

The Heritage Manager presented a draft from the feedback of the last meeting.

It was noted that a Mission statement should summarize the Town's approach to reach those objectives. Recommendations for editing included: explicitly state "anti-racism" and "anti-discrimination"; differentiate individual/interpersonal and systemic/structural racism; shortening the length.

It was noted that the document should actively use "plain speak" language to be more readily approachable.

#### ➤ Question 1: What is the role of underrepresented members of our Community (BIPOC, Acadian, etc.) in Lunenburg's history and growth and where has this been recognized?

The discussion centred on ensuring the story of Lunenburg starts at the beginning (i.e., before 1753) and recognizing that there is a shared history with underrepresented people that is not well known.

8:25 p.m. - 8:31 p.m. – Committee recess.

- Question 2: How can we highlight this diverse heritage more? And in this way show Lunenburg in a more diverse and open/inclusive light to the underrepresented members of our community, as well as those who are visiting and/or thinking about moving here?

The discussion centered on BIPOC people being BIPOC people 365 days a year, therefore changes are needed to be more inclusive and welcoming 365 days a year. An education/communications piece to the Municipal Action Plan will be needed for the community.

- Question 3: What policies/practices do we have in place to ensure full participation in all of the Town's programs and services for underrepresented people/groups? What new policies/practices are required?

The discussion centred on integrating a diversity lens into all Town policies and activities. Lunenburg can also align with other municipalities that have been doing this work.

## 6. New Business

- a. Tour of ARSC's Online Resource Folder

This item was deferred to the next meeting.

## 7. Next Meeting

It was agreed that the next meeting would be Thursday, April 22nd at 6:00 p.m. The meeting will be in-person in the Council Chamber and via Zoom for those who cannot attend in person.

## 8. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:03 p.m.

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Heather McCallum, Assistant Municipal Clerk

**From:** vsimms@ns.sympatico.ca [mailto:vsimms@ns.sympatico.ca]  
**Sent:** April 14, 2021 2:56 PM  
**To:** Heather McCallum <HMcCallum@explorelunenburg.ca>  
**Subject:** Vernon Simms Background Info

Heather Hi,

As requested, some background info:

- Originally from Digby NS, moved to Bridgewater in 1980 to work at Michelin Tire for 33 years
- Developed and facilitated a workshop titled "Building An Inclusive Work Place" from a Diversity perspective. I training personnel at all three Michelin Plants in Nova Scotia.
- Received the Nova Scotia Human Rights Order of Merit
- Represented "Ordinary Canadians" at the "Renewal of Canada" constitutional conference
- Past elected member of the Nova Scotia School Board, representing African Nova Scotians.
- Past member of the Provincial Advisory Committee on Education Transition Team.
- Past member of the Nova Scotia School Board of Directors
- Worked with Nova Scotia Special Olympics for over 25 years.
- I'm a certified auditor/assessor for Quality and Environment. Have audited companies and organization throughout North America and Europe
- Have volunteered and/or been a members of several Organizations and Committees in the South Shore

Regards,  
Vernon

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# MUNICIPAL ACTION PLAN FOR ENDING RACISM AND DISCRIMINATION

ANTI-RACISM SPECIAL COMMITTEE



DISCUSSION GUIDE  
(REVISED)  
April 22, 2021

# PLAN DEVELOPMENT



## **DRAFT Vision Statement:**

The Town of Lunenburg is committed to being an anti-racist and equitable community. We acknowledge our rich, diverse heritage and strive to create a safe, welcoming, and inclusive community.

# PLAN DEVELOPMENT



## **DRAFT Mission Statement:**

The Town of Lunenburg seeks to build and sustain a community that is anti-racist, equitable, and inclusive. The Town is committed to preventing and addressing discrimination and harassment in the Town's administration, programs, and services, in accordance with the Nova Scotia Human Rights Act\*.

*\*See excerpt on next slide.*

# Excerpt from NS Human Rights Act

## PART I

### DISCRIMINATION PROHIBITED

#### Meaning of discrimination

4 For the purpose of this Act, a person discriminates where the person makes a distinction, whether intentional or not, based on a characteristic, or perceived characteristic, referred to in clauses (h) to (v) of subsection (1) of Section 5 that has the effect of imposing burdens, obligations or disadvantages on an individual or a class of individuals not imposed upon others or which withholds or limits access to opportunities, benefits and advantages available to other individuals or classes of individuals in society. 1991, c. 12, s. 1.

#### Prohibition of discrimination

- 5 (1) No person shall in respect of
- (a) the provision of or access to services or facilities;
  - (b) accommodation;
  - (c) the purchase or sale of property;
  - (d) employment;
  - (e) volunteer public service;
  - (f) a publication, broadcast or advertisement;
  - (g) membership in a professional association, business or trade association, employers' organization or employees' organization,

discriminate against an individual or class of individuals on account of

- (h) age;
  - (i) race;
  - (j) colour;
  - (k) religion;
  - (l) creed;
  - (m) sex;
  - (n) sexual orientation;
  - (na) gender identity;
  - (nb) gender expression;
  - (o) physical disability or mental disability;
  - (p) an irrational fear of contracting an illness or disease;
  - (q) ethnic, national or aboriginal origin;
  - (r) family status;
  - (s) marital status;
  - (t) source of income;
  - (u) political belief, affiliation or activity;
  - (v) that individual's association with another individual or class of individuals having characteristics referred to in clauses (h) to (u).
- (2) No person shall sexually harass an individual.
- (3) No person shall harass an individual or group with respect to a prohibited ground of discrimination. 1991, c. 12, s. 1; 2007, c. 41, s. 2; 2012, c. 51, s. 2.

# ISSUES FOR DISCUSSION



A number of issues have been referred to the ARSC for consideration re: Action Plan recommendations.

These include:

- **Jessika Hepburn's petition requests**
- **Town government reforms**
- **Town culture and recreation activities**
- **Experiences of racism in the community**

# ISSUES FOR DISCUSSION



## **Jessica Hepburn petition** *(see handout)*

- Rename “Cornwallis” and “Creighton” streets and replace with Indigenous/Black names  
Replace/install heritage interpretive panels
- Make a public statement condemning racism in our community, recognizing historic and current systemic racism
- Staff report on systemic racism and racial violence; equity seeking projects; BIPOC representation in marketing and social media; systemic biases in elections, hiring, recruitment, and newcomer outreach
- Close gaps in Project Lunenburg by having draft documents reviewed by BIPOC anti-racism professionals prior to finalization or implementation
- Hire BIPOC anti-racism facilitators and consultants to provide training to Council, administration, and staff on identifying and addressing systemic racism
- Publicly recognize the colonial slaveholding past that led to violence against Mi’kmaq communities and enslaved Black people
- Create a culture of care and respect by taking these concerns seriously and acting with urgency

# ISSUES FOR DISCUSSION



## **Town government:**

- Anti-discrimination policy aligned with NS Human Rights Act (currently sexual harassment only)?
- Economic policy review: Hiring (currently in “selection process” section); Purchasing (in NS act)?
- Anti-racism and Diversity training for Council, Committees, staff (all departments), etc.?
- Equity lens on Town bylaws, policies, other major plans?
- Diversity in Town committees?
- Should Lunenburg join the Coalition of Inclusive Municipalities?

# ISSUES FOR DISCUSSION



## **Town culture and recreation activities:**

Diverse heritage + increasing diversity

- Reform street/building-naming policies?
- BIPOC storytelling – interpretive panels, public art, collaborations?
- Multicultural events?
- Special flag raisings – what will take to the next level?
- Marketing?

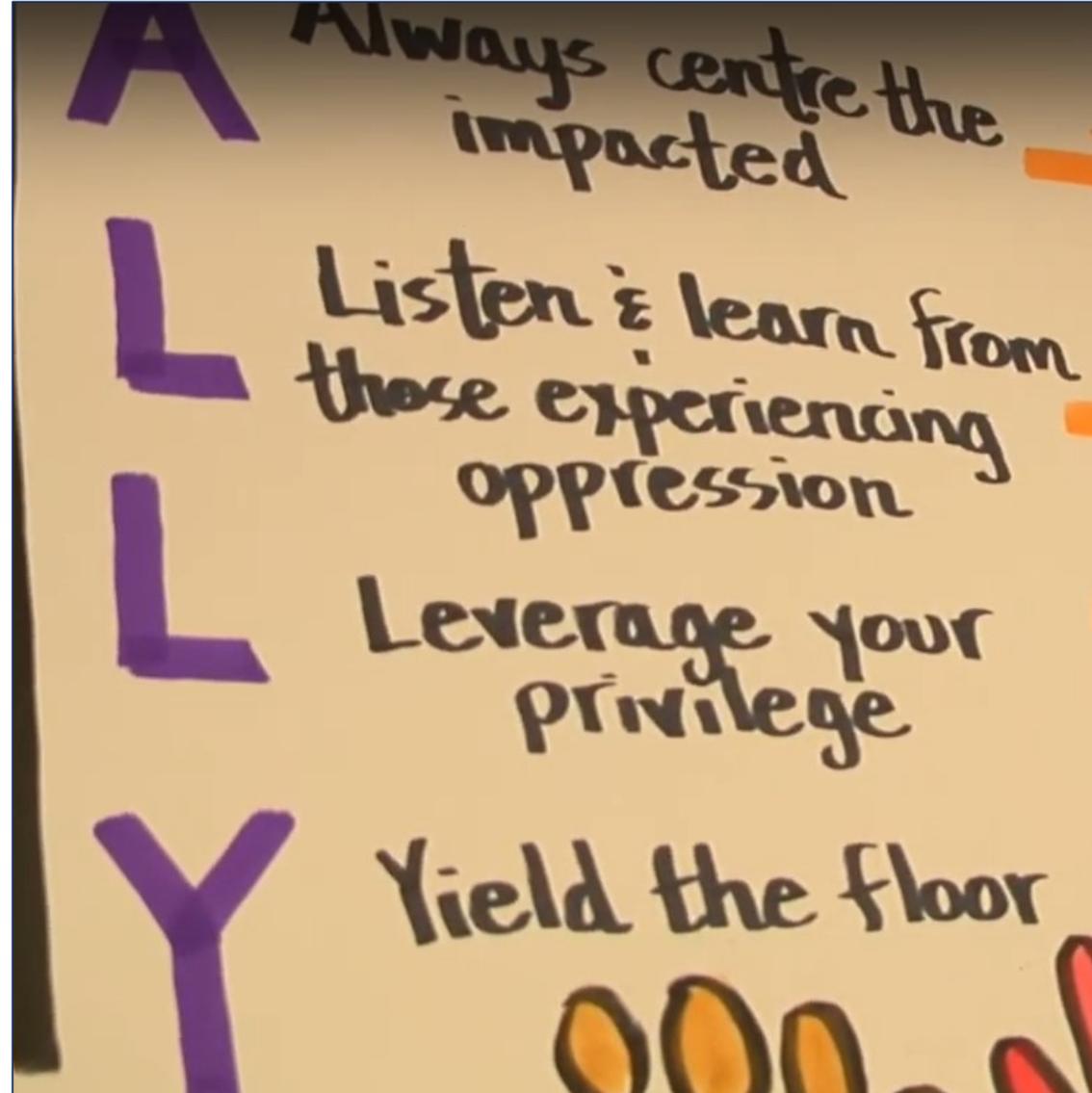
# ISSUES FOR DISCUSSION



## **Experiences with racism in the community:**

### Systemic/structural + individual/interpersonal

- BIPOC experiences with policing in Lunenburg
  - Town representatives meet with RCMP to include them in our journey?
- BIPOC experiences with organizations in Lunenburg
  - Lease agreements to include anti-discrimination clause – “not under our roof”?
- BIPOC experiences with micro-aggressions from individuals in Lunenburg
  - Awareness-raising for the public?



**- In light of the reaction to this petition I urge the Town of Lunenburg to do the following:**

- Make a public statement on the town website, social media, and to the press condemning racism in our community, recognizing historic and current systemic racism and committing to building an anti-racist community.
- Create an anti-racism initiative in Lunenburg led by BIPOC that are compensated for their time and supported by BIPOC organizations or representatives. This initiative must have a timeline of immediate steps and measurable outcomes.
- Create staff report on incidents of systemic racism and racial violence in the Town of Lunenburg including a review of allocation of budget to equity seeking projects or initiatives led by BIPOC residents, whether BIPOC are represented in town marketing or social media, and systemic biases in elections, hiring, recruitment, and newcomer outreach. Make this report and council meetings to discuss it public.
- Close major gaps in the Project Lunenburg consultation process <https://www.explorelunenburg.ca/comprehensive-community-plan.html> and draft document by having the draft reviewed by BIPOC anti-racism professionals and members of the community, prior to finalization or implementation, to ensure final drafts are anti-racist, accurately represent history, and created opportunity for input from marginalized residents.
- Hire BIPOC anti-racism facilitators and consultants to provide training to council, administration, and town staff on identifying and addressing systemic racism and creating a town that welcomes everyone equally. If budget is a concern this training can be made available to members of the Chamber of Commerce and the local community to offset costs or there are funds available through various government agencies to cover the creation of these programs as well as anti-racist policy development.
- Include a timeline for reviewing and updating Cornwallis and Creighton Streets and all interpretive signage to include Mi'kmaq and Black history created in consultation with those communities as called for in the initial petition.
- Publicly recognize the colonial slaveholding past that led to violence against Mi'kmaq communities such as E'se'katik by people like Cornwallis and enslaved Black people such as Sylvia by Creighton or Lydia Jackson by Dr Buhlman.

Honouring these stories is important to helping the community learn that they are also part of Lunenburg's history.

- Create a culture of care and respect by taking these concerns seriously and acting with urgency.
- **Resources for Canadian municipalities to address and commit to anti-racism have been available for decades, some of these resources and toolkits include:**
  - African Nova Scotian Decade for People of African Descent Coalition <https://www.ansdpad.ca/>
  - African Nova Scotian Affairs <https://ansa.novascotia.ca/>
  - Canadian Coalition of Municipalities Against Racism and Discrimination: Toolkit for municipalities, organisations and citizens [https://www.crrf-fcrr.ca/images/CCMARD\\_Toolkit.pdf](https://www.crrf-fcrr.ca/images/CCMARD_Toolkit.pdf) launched 2005
  - Coalition of Inclusive Municipalities, <https://en.ccunesco.ca/networks/coalition-of-inclusive-municipalities>
  - Ontario Human Rights Commission, Anti-Racism and Anti-Discrimination for Municipalities [http://www.ohrc.on.ca/sites/default/files/attachments/Anti-racism\\_and\\_anti-discrimination\\_for\\_municipalities:\\_Introductory\\_manual.pdf](http://www.ohrc.on.ca/sites/default/files/attachments/Anti-racism_and_anti-discrimination_for_municipalities:_Introductory_manual.pdf)
  - Anti-Racism Action Program Funding (Federal) <https://www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/services/funding/anti-racism-action-program.html>
  - Confronting Anti-Black Racism Initiative <https://www.toronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/97d4-community-conversation-guide-participants.pdf>
- It is incumbent upon elected leaders, administrators, and community stakeholders in positions of power and privilege to educate themselves about the resources available, identify budgets and allocate funding to anti-racism initiatives and expertise of BIPOC when creating such projects.
- It is also the responsibility of municipalities to actively seek out anti-racism and anti-oppression training by respected BIPOC professionals in their fields of expertise and ensure this training is available to all levels of government and administration. At no time should unpaid, or inexperienced educators be called upon to do this work for established organizations.

# Petition to Rename Cornwallis & Creighton Streets in Lunenburg to Honour Mi'kmaq & Black Communities

This petition calls on the Town of Lunenburg to do the following:

- Rename "Cornwallis St." to "E'se'katik St."
- Rename "Creighton St." to "Sylvia St."
- Replace "Merligueche" interpretive panel located at the Old French Cemetery with accurate information in consultation with the Mi'kmaq community including that the village of Merligueche was ordered destroyed by Edward Cornwallis and the area was originally called E'se'katik by the Mi'kmaq.
- Install interpretive panel in consultation with the Black Nova Scotian community beside current plaque recognizing Colonel Creighton to honour Sylvia of Lunenburg and acknowledge Lunenburg's slaveholding past.

The above are small steps towards demonstrating a commitment to anti-racism by recognizing how Mi'kmaq and Black communities have been negatively impacted by Lunenburg's colonial history and racism in our community as well as an opportunity for educating both visitors and local residents.

## Replace Cornwallis St. with E'se'katik St.

For over a hundred years, Lunenburg was a Mi'kmaq/Acadian village called Mirliguèche by the French but the region was originally known to the Mi'kmaq as E'se'katik, meaning 'at the place of clams'. In 1749 Governor Edward Cornwallis ordered Mirliguèche destroyed and sent troops led by Commander White to destroy the village. By 1753 one Mi'kmaq/Acadian family remained in the area, Paul Labrador (Guédry, dit LaVerdure), his wife Anne Mieuss who was half Mi'kmaq, and their children. Descendents of the Labrador family continue to live in the area and practice traditional ways of living passed on since time immemorial. Renaming Cornwallis St is a symbolic way for Lunenburg to recognize that all of Nova Scotia is in fact Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq People. This territory is covered by the "Treaties of Peace and Friendship" which Mi'kmaq and Wolastoqiyik (Maliseet) people first signed with the British Crown in 1725. The treaties did not deal with surrender of lands and resources but in fact recognized Mi'kmaq and Wolastoqiyik (Maliseet) title and established the rules for what was to be an ongoing relationship between nations.

In 2018 the City of Halifax removed the statue of Edward Cornwallis after more than thirty years of Mi'kmaq calling for the statue's removal on the grounds that a man

responsible for inciting genocide should not be publicly celebrated. Honouring Cornwallis with statues and streets is a constant reminder of the pain, suffering and colonization endured by Mi'kmaq to this day.

### **Replace Creighton St. with Sylvia St.**

Colonel John Creighton is best known for his conduct during the American privateer raid of 1 July 1782 on Lunenburg, he was also a slave owner. Sylvia was enslaved by Creighton during Nova Scotia's period of slavery. When the town was invaded by American soldiers Sylvia bravely shuttled cartridges of ammunition hidden in her apron from Creighton's house to the fort where he and his soldiers were engaged in battle. When the house came under fire, Sylvia threw herself on top of the colonel's son to protect him with her own body. During the battle she concealed Creighton's valuables in a bag that she lowered into a well for safe keeping, and also protected the home and possessions of Major Jessen, according to one source "tradition has it that she helped to load the muskets in the blockhouse and even fire them." Sylvia died in Halifax on 12 March 1824 age 70 and is buried in the Old Burying Ground.

While Creighton has been recognized and rewarded, to this day Sylvia has never been honoured, or publicly acknowledged. Children who go to school in Lunenburg do not learn about Sylvia or Nova Scotia's period of slavery, there are no plaques, statues, or tributes to her anywhere in the Town of Lunenburg. In the absence of a visibly diverse town council or administration this small acknowledgement of Lunenburg's long history with racism is a step towards an equitable future where all histories are equal.

Signed,

## The Common Commitments

The Coalition's Common Commitments cover areas of municipal responsibility – such as housing, service delivery, employment, and culture – to guide local authorities in developing policies and programs. The Common Commitments are structured around three areas of municipal responsibility.

### The municipality as a guardian that respects the public interest

- 1** Increasing vigilance against systemic and individual discrimination.
- 2** Monitoring discrimination in the municipality and taking action to address it.
- 3** Supporting individuals who experience discrimination.
- 4** Providing police services that are exemplary institutions for fighting discrimination.

### The municipality as an organization that upholds human rights

- 5** Providing equal opportunities as a municipal employer, service provider, and contractor.
- 6** Supporting measures that promote equity in the labour market.
- 7** Challenging discrimination and promoting diversity and equal opportunities in housing.

### The municipality as a community that promotes diversity

- 8** Involving citizens by giving them a voice in anti-racism initiatives and decision-making.
- 9** Challenging discrimination and promoting diversity and equal opportunities in education and other forms of learning.
- 10** Promoting the respect, knowledge, and appreciation of cultural diversity and the inclusion of Indigenous and racialized communities in the cultural fabric of the municipality.

When a municipal council signs the declaration to join the Coalition, it endorses the Common Commitments and agrees to develop a [Plan of Action](#). This process is flexible so that each municipality can address its own inclusion-related issues. The Plan of Action is a key tool for signatory municipalities; once adopted, it becomes integrated into the municipality's visions, strategies, and policies.