African Nova Scotian Community Strategy Committee
Meeting Minutes
April 2nd, 2026

A meeting of the African Nova Scotian Community Strategy Committee of the Town of Truro was held on Thursday, April 2nd, 2026, at 12:00pm at the Douglas Street Recreation Centre.

Present: Councillor I. McGrath, N. Jackson, Councillor W. Talbot, T. Tynes Powell, B. Borden, T. Drummond, and N. Gray.

In attendance: A. Grant, N. Gillis, and M. Burgess

Regrets: A. Paris and C. Kifle

Approval of the Agenda
On motion of B. Borden and N. Jackson the agenda was approved as circulated.

Review of Minutes
The Committee reviewed the minutes from the January 14th, 2026, meeting. It was requested that it be noted in the minutes that J. Collins and K. Borden attended the meeting on behalf of the Community Enhancement Association and that F. Collins attended the meeting on behalf of the Zion United Baptist Church.

The minutes were approved as amended.

Young Street / Fairview Drive Property Issue
N. Jackson introduced J. McCready to the Committee and informed them that he was connected to the Young Street / Fairview Drive Property Issue.

J. McCready explained to the Committee that the portion of land bordering Young Street and Fairview Drive that was being discussed was purposely landlocked by another individual that owned the small strip of land on Fairview Drive. This small section of land prevents access to the property being discussed.

J. McCready explained that the developer that owned the small strip of land had conversations with his Mother, Mrs. McCready. The developer noted that they landlocked the property so no new 'shacks' could be built.

J. McCready stated the small strip of land was purchased during a tax sale.

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J. McCready explained that J. Willis currently pays the taxes on the landlocked property. J. McCready also mentioned that there are multiple people on the deed of the landlocked property.

In order for the Young Street / Fairview Drive Property to be usable the small strip of land would need to be migrated to it.

T. Tynes-Powell explained that ANSA had a land titles division that could potentially help support the process of looking into this land issue.

J. McCready agreed to put J. Willis in contact with W. Talbot to move this process forward.

It was agreed that once W. Talbot connected with J. Willis they would get in touch with T. Tynes-Powell to bring forward a request to work with ANSA's Land Titles Division.

N. Jackson stated that the Town working together with ANSA on this project would create a positive relationship for this type of work moving forward.

N. Jackson stated that at a recent event he was at, elders in the Community were talking about the historic protests that took place regarding the developments on Fairview Drive.

N. Jackson explained how the front portion of land being discussed on Young Street is part of the Traditional African Nova Scotian Neighbourhood.

The Committee agreed that it was crucial to work together with the affected families to move forward.

W. Talbot explained that the injustice faced by these families needed to be addressed.

Community Garden / Stan Chook Maxwell Memorial Park

T. Drummond stated that the Stan Chook Maxwell Memorial Park needed a complete renovation. T. Drummond explained that community members felt that the basketball court needed some upgrades. He stated that the asphalt needed maintenance and the nets needed to be switched out for regulation sized nets. T. Drummond also explained that the court needed to be widened because if you were taking a shot from behind the three-point line you would be out of bounds.

T. Drummond stated that ideally a whole revamp would be done of the park, including a new playground.

M. Burgess explained that currently there was money budgeted for routine maintenance for the Park, but a complete renovation of the park would be a capital project.

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T. Drummond questioned whether it would be possible for the Community to help fundraise for the project.

T. Drummond included that a Community member was involved in helping with the re-design of the playground at Harmony Heights Elementary so they could help with the re-design of the Stan Chook Maxwell Memorial Park Playground.

T. Drummond questioned where the golf course was at with the Driving Range modifications and if shared hours would be improved for the upcoming season.

N. Gray stated that the last she heard the Truro Golf Course was waiting for confirmation on whether the funds were approved and allocated to the driving range project.

M. Burgess shared the MOU between the Town of Truro and the Truro Golf Course regarding the shared hours of the park to give Committee Members some background on the matter.

It was agreed that A. Grant would meet with M. Dolter and A. Simms, the Director of Parks, Recreation and Culture to first discuss the process internally regarding the renovation of Stan Chook Maxwell Memorial Park and bring back some information to the Committee at a future Committee meeting.

As requested at the last meeting, M. Burgess looked into the status of payment for the Community Garden Boxes at the Stan Chook Maxwell Memorial Park. M. Burgess informed N. Gray that the Community Garden Boxes had not yet been paid for the 2025 season.

N. Gray explained that funding from her department helped pay for seeds and the remaining garden plots at the Stan Chook Maxwell Memorial Park.

N. Gray stated that she had hit a wall again in regards to the Greenhouse. She explained that she was waiting to hear back from the engineer that the Department of Agriculture recommended to look at the project.

A. Grant agreed to reach out to the engineer for an update on the plans. N. Gray agreed to send A. Grant the contact information for the engineer.

N. Gray recommended that if getting the plans for the greenhouse stamped by an engineer continued to be a problem that it may make sense for the Town to go out and buy a greenhouse that complies with the local building inspection code.

Updates

ANSA Update

T. Tynes-Powell explained that ANSA was expanding their Land Titles Initiative outside of Halifax Regional Municipality.

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T. Tynes-Powell stated that she would be bringing forward Mr. McCready's concern regarding the Young Street and Fairview Drive Property as they would have legal supports available.

T. Tynes-Powell also explained that the budget cuts by provincial government affected the Office of African Nova Scotian affairs. She noted that the department was still working through how the cuts would affect the department.

T. Tynes-Powell informed the Committee that the Communities, Culture, Tourism, and Heritage Truro office was currently under renovations. She explained that there would be an open house for the public once the renovations were completed.

N. Jackson stated that it would be beneficial for land that comes up for tax sale in traditional African Nova Scotian neighbourhoods to be purchased to secure the land and ensure that it stays within the African Nova Scotian Community. N. Jackson explained that it would need to be a unified approach.

N. Jackson questioned whether the Land Titles Initiatives department within ANSA could help with this.

It was questioned whether the local land trust would also have funding to help with this initiative.

It was also questioned if there have been any recent updates on the local Down the Marsh Land Trust.

N. Gray explained that the last Community meeting she was involved in was back in 2022.

W. Talbot explained that L. Smith was appointed to the Nova Scotia Black Community Housing Council as the Executive Lead to advance the African Nova Scotian Housing Strategy. N. Jackson agreed to reach out to L. Smith to invite him to a future meeting of the African Nova Scotian Community Strategy Committee.

Town of Truro EDIA Initiatives Update

N. Gillis informed the Committee that Senior Staff have completed the first set of 3 Modules for the *Foundations of Belonging* course offered through P4G. This is an 11-module course that senior staff, a few managers, and N Gillis started back in the fall. The first 3 Modules covered:

a. Module 1: Introduction and Acknowledgement
b. Module 2: Disrupting Bias
c. Module 3: Privileged Aggressions

N. Gillis explained that they are now working to complete the next set of Modules:

a. Module 4: Stereotyping
b. Module 5: Privilege and Power

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c. Module 6: Creating Accessible Workplaces

N. Gillis stated that each module is followed with reflection questions sent by her where people can respond to her by email, in person, or just reflect personally. N. Gillis explained that we just launched this course to the remaining Managers and Coordinators as well on March 30, with the first three courses to be completed in 9 weeks.

N. Gillis explained that under the Regional Equity and Anti-Racism Strategy, the Town of Truro was asked to create an "Equity" Tool Kit. Throughout N. Gillis' first year she reached out to other municipal EDIA leaders to learn what gaps they had, as well as spoke internally to staff and through an anonymous survey to understand what would be needed within our organization. Through this she created an EDIA Resource Guide that includes plain-language checklists, glossary, and inclusive terminology. This was reviewed by AMANS (Association of Municipal Administrators Nova Scotia) to ensure it was municipally accurate.

For African Heritage Month, in collaboration with the Village of Bible Hill, the Town of Truro hosted a panel called *Come Sit With Us*. 4 members of the African Nova Scotian Community Strategy Committee served as panelists, and something that came from this was that ANS history be included on our websites. N. Gillis explained that she has conducted her own research as well as reached out to the Historeum, and once complete, she hoped to send back to the panelists to ensure she is on the right track. While the concept of Reconciliation is typically reserved for our Indigenous communities, the idea that we cannot reconcile until the truth has been told has resonated with N. Gillis, and she explained that her hope was that people would better understand what ANS communities have gone through, and why they ask for the support that they do.

Because of the success of *Come Sit With Us*, N. Gillis has been asked to support the moderation of another panel for Access Awareness Week at the beginning of June in partnership with the Lemonaid Stand Society. Similar to *Come Sit With Us*, the idea is to share the real truth about what the disability community goes through in our region so that we can better understand how to collaborate and support. N. Gillis explained that she hoped to do another one for Mi'kmaw Heritage Month in October.

Through the Regional Accessibility Advisory Committee, where Ian McGrath is chair, N Gillis explained that she hears initiatives that are needed in community and brings them back to the Town. One is the idea of parking spaces, and she explained that she has spoken to the Town's Director of Public Works, Oliver, to do a walkthrough of our lots to review accessibility. Michelle Wood of Lemonaid Stand Society has agreed to attend to ensure the spaces are accurate and reviewed from a lived experience lens.

Truro Black Cultural Development Association (TBCDA)

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N. Jackson explained that members of TBCDA meet with new to the area African Canadians. N. Jackson explained that they were hoping to have a resource sharing session between both groups on May 23rd at the Bible Hill Fire Hall.

N. Jackson explained that TBCDA would be requesting funds for the resource sharing session. It was agreed that M. Burgess would send N. Jackson the Committees Grant Application for him to complete.

N. Jackson noted that when meeting with the newcomer African Canadians something that came up was that they felt excluded during people acknowledgments when African Nova Scotians was stated.

T. Tynes-Powell explained that during a lecture she was watching the professor used the term Foundational Blacks.

TPAC Sub-Committee
T. Drummond explained that the 5 names had been submitted to the Town's Director of Planning and Development, J. Fox.

Black Youth Planting Their Futures Program
N. Gray explained that the Black Youth Planting Their Futures Summer Program was aiming to have twenty-five students employed through the program this year. N. Gray explained that job applications would be due mid-April.

Questions from Members
It was agreed by the Committee that M. Burgess would send a poll to Committee members to select the best day of the week for reoccurring monthly meetings.

Adjournment
The meeting was adjourned by W. Talbot.

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