

approved Minutes  
NSGREA Region 3 (HRM)  
General Meeting

Thursday, March 20, 2025

Held at St. Andrew's Centre 3380 Barnstead Lane. Halifax, NS.

Executive in Attendance: Kathleen Bugbee, Patricia Murray, Judy Ritchie, Matthew Dubois, Don Goss, Nancy Muise, Cameron MacNeil and Bonnie Halliday  
Attendees: 37 members and 8 guests (2 interpreters, 4 presenters)

- 1. Welcome and Call to Order: 1:31 PM.** The Executive was introduced.
- 2. Regrets:** One given via email
- 3. Moment of Silence** for deceased or ill members. (held at 1:33 pm)
- 4. Land acknowledgement:** given by Kathleen B - We begin by acknowledging that we are in 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, Wolastoqiyik, and Passamaquoddy People first signed with the British Crown in 1726.
- 5: Self introduction** of members present.
- 6. Approval of Agenda** with one addition M/S/Carried (Pat M/Matt D)
- 7: Approval of Minutes** - Jan. 16, 2025 M/S/Carried (Judith R/Sharon B)  
with one amendment
- 8. Business Arising:** Elections next meeting in May - the positions of President, Treasurer and two members-at-large are up for election. Please contact any member of the Region #3 Executive if you are interested in volunteering for one of these positions. The position descriptions are available in the NSGREA Constitution and By-laws tab at NSGREA.ca.
- 9: Region 3 President's report:** Given by Kathleen B at the Regional President's meeting held February 26, 2025

**Covering from June 2024 to January 2025**

Region 3 held meetings on May 25, 2023; October 17<sup>th</sup>, December 12<sup>th</sup> (Christmas Luncheon), and January 16<sup>th</sup>. When available, we hosted a ZOOM link for members unable to attend in-person. Zoom meetings had between five and twelve members signing in with the ZOOM application.

The 2024 May meeting was busy and productive. Review of the executive positions for Region 3 – Kathleen presidency ends May 2025; Patricia VP

position ended May 2024 and she was re-elected with term ending May 2026; Matt's position of Secretary ends May 2025; Judy's position as treasurer ended May 2024 and she was re-elected with term ending May 2026; two member-at-large positions end May 2025 (Cameron and Nancy); one member-at-large still vacant in May but was finally filled in October 2024 by Bonnie Halliday. Those attending the meeting developed and discussed ten resolutions for the Fall 2024 Convention and eight were submitted to the Provincial Office.

The 2024 October meeting had discussions regarding the Christmas luncheon (December 12<sup>th</sup>). It was approved to have the Christmas luncheon catered at the NSGEU Building. This will allow for more socialization between members; also there were door prizes. All comments regarding the luncheon were positive and agreed to do a catered luncheon again next Christmas.

The 2025 January meeting offered a presentation from lawyer Alexander Silvester from Kennedy Schofield Lutz Lawyers on estate planning. There were nine members who joined the meeting via ZOOM. There was an interesting question and answer time during and after the presentation.

As President of Region 3 I am glad that we now have a NSGREIA license for ZOOM and the fact that the NSGEU has a great room for meetings and facilitating those meetings through the ZOOM software. There have been some comments from Region 3 members about having meetings on the Halifax side of the bridge so the 2025 March meeting will be at the St. Andrew's Centre off Bayers Road on the Halifax side of the bridge.

Region 3 members continue to have serious questions and issues regarding the lack of cost-of-living increases (will raise this issue at the Presidents' meeting), the raises received by the Pension Board managing staff and the fact that retired health care workers are getting cost-of-living increases.

A big issue for Region 3 is not always being able to secure sign language interpreters for our meetings.

**10. Treasurer's Report: M/S/Carried (Kathleen B/Nancy M)**

Balance brought forward	\$ 692.38
Proceeds of 50/50	<u>+ 52.50</u>
Present Balance	\$ 744.88

Respectfully submitted by Judy Ritchie

**11. Provincial Executive Report: Pat M reported -**

Removal of the Grievance & Complaints section from the constitution will be presented at Convention, Processing the resolutions dealt at convention, sending out the large advert package to members, installing e-Transfer function (very popular), holding of the regional president's meeting via Zoom, moving of head quarters to a more accessible location and the Executive positions up for election at next convention.

**12. Pension Report:**

Fred Morley noted the 5 committee members present at the Region 3 meeting.

- The first meeting of the committee was held on March 4, 2025, at NSGREAA offices in Sackville.
- The discussion at the SCPI (Standing Committee on Pension Indexing) meeting dealt with:
  - Returns on the pension fund were below benchmark levels and below levels in neighbouring provinces.
  - Most government pension plans in Canada enjoy indexing of some form, sometimes partial indexing, sometimes full indexing. NSPSSP and the Nova Scotia Teachers Pension Plan are national outliers. The NSPSSP indexing has been 0.0% since the end of 2020. The last 5 years have had the worst inflation in 45 years. Spending power of NSPSSP retirees has declined by 17% since February 2021.
  - It was noted that a good pension plan has three contributors for every retiree. The ratio for the NSPSSP is closer to 1:1. Decisions made by government that shifted members out of NSPSSP to NSHPP and other poison pills over the past 15 years largely contributed to this problem.
  - Lack of awareness among current contributors and retirees on risks and problems with the plan is a challenge. The committee suggested more needs to be done to communicate with and educate members on their pension risks.
- The next meeting of the committee is on April 2, 2025.

A Q&A followed. The pension fund is at 105% so we may be able to return a small cost of living increase. This should be set by May or June. Our investment portfolio should be able to resist the market flux being caused by US President Trump. There would be a great challenge to changing the legislation that created the pension plan. Amalgamating with other pension plans is our best solution to making the plan healthy.

Break from 2:26 pm to 2:38 pm  
50/50 draw was for \$78.00 and won by Keiran Tomkins.

### **13: New Business:**

Resolutions: We will be hosting a meeting in April (9/10) to discuss resolutions to bring forward to Convention such as looking at public relations at the Provincial level, constitution language, having a Strategic Plan.

We had 2 presentations regarding funeral services. There was a Q&A after each presentation.

Wayne Hatcher and Andrii Lapin from Sunrise Park Inter-Faith Green Cemetery spoke on the options and services available for a 'Green' burial. They held a draw for a \$1000 plot discount and there is a service discount for any attendees.

Names drawn were: Rosemary Mooney, Judy Ritchie and Agnes Young

Trevor Tracey and Josh Crawford spoke on the services and costs available at their independant funeral home and crematorium, T.J.Tracey Burial Specialist. Planning guides were handed out along with a check list of `After Care' estate duties.

**14. Next Meeting: May 15, 2025**

To be held at NSGEU board room

**15. Adjournment:** was called at 3:37 PM