

Nova Scotia Federation of Municipalities Municipal Autonomy Advisory Committee

Terms of Reference

Approved by Committee November 29, 2023

Committee Name

Municipal Autonomy Advisory Committee (herein referred to as “the Committee”)

Authority

The Nova Scotia Federation of Municipalities (NSFM) Board of Directors (herein referred to as “the Board”) pursuant to subsection 7 b) of the NSFM By-laws.

Mandate

To advise and guide responses to requests and issues delegated by the Board of Directors or CEO to generate advocacy priorities for NSFM.

Committee Objectives

Committee Objectives are to:

- Produce a Statement of Municipal Interest regarding the Committee’s respective Area of Municipal Interest within six (6) months of being struck, for approval by the Board.
- Pursuant to Subsection 5 h) of the Advocacy Prioritization Policy, apply a screening and prioritization process to requests delegated by the Board or CEO.
- Facilitate the research and discussion on the respective Area of Municipal Interest.
- Recommend responses to all requests and issues delegated by the Board or CEO using one of three forms of response outlined in subsection 5 k) with a brief justification.

Committee Composition

The composition of the Committee will be:

- 5 elected municipal official positions;
- 1 Chief Administrative Officer;
- the NSFM President, or their designate, and NSFM CEO, or their designate, will serve as non-voting, ex-officio members;
- NSFM staff will provide support to this committee.

Only the five (5) appointed elected municipal officials shall have a vote on the Committee.

A committee Chair and Vice-Chair will be chosen by the Committee members. The Chair will be chosen from among the voting member positions.

From time to time, the Committee may invite subject experts and specialists to aid the committee in meeting its mandate. Persons other than Committee members may, with permission of the Chair, attend any meeting for the purpose of providing information, making a submission, or providing feedback.

Term

Each appointed member will have a three (3) year term on the Committee.

Each appointed member may apply for a second term.

For the purpose of maintaining institutional memory, the Board will endeavour to maintain a balance between re-appointed and newly appointed members.

If no new expressions of interest are received, the Board may approve additional terms for existing committee members.

Meetings

Advisory Committees shall meet at a minimum of four (4) times per calendar year.

In the beginning of a new term, Committees will decide on meeting dates for the next twelve (12) months.

When unscheduled meetings are called, they will be called with a minimum notice of seven (7) days.

Meetings will primarily take place on online platforms. In-person meetings may occur at the discretion of the Chair, in consultation with the NSFM CEO.

If Committee members are unable to attend, they must notify the Chair.

Removal from Committee

If the Board finds a committee member has:

- breached the NSFM Code of Conduct; or
- missed more than three (3) consecutive meetings without being excused by the Chair,

the Board may remove that member from the Committee.

Vacancies

As vacancies on the Committee arise, a call for expressions of interest may be reissued to fill that vacancy.

Quorum

Quorum shall be half of the filled voting member positions of the Committee.

Role of Committee Chair

The Role of the Chair is to:

- Ensure that the work of the Committee is in keeping with the mandate as outlined in this Terms of Reference;
- Preside over the meetings of the Committee;
- Set the agenda for each meeting;
- Assign work to committee members;
- Update the NSF Board of Directors on committee activity upon request;
- Ensure that all members at meetings have an opportunity to participate in discussions;
- Ensure that responses to all delegated requests are delivered to the Board.

Role of Committee Vice Chair

The Role of the Vice Chair is to:

- Assume the role of Chair when the Chair is absent or unable to participate;
- Perform other duties as requested.

Role of Committee Members

Committee members will be expected to:

- regularly attend meetings;
- stay informed about committee matters, be prepared for all meetings and review minutes, agenda and supporting materials;
- actively participate in a respectful and engaged manner;
- be committed to the work and mandate of the Committee;
- volunteer for and accept assignments deemed necessary to complete the application of the screening and prioritization process;
- complete assignments sufficiently and on time;
- respect and support Committee actions through a unified voice, once the Committee has made its recommendations and reports;
- not miss more than three consecutive meetings, unless permission is granted by the Chair;
- notify the Chair if they cannot attend a meeting.

Minutes

Committee members will identify someone on the committee who will be charged with recording meeting minutes.

The meeting minutes shall:

- Contain all resolutions and motions passed;
- Mention all delegated requests that were received and/or reviewed;

- Not be verbatim but may include bulleted summarized accounts of the major points for and against an issue from the debate;
- Focus on the Parliamentary Principle that recording what was done is more important than what was said during debate.

Decision Making

The members of the Committee shall make every effort to come to consensus regarding any recommendations and reports. The Committee will use consensus decision making by:

- prioritizing the general interest of all municipalities;
- including the input of all Committee members;
- including and respecting all parties, and generating as much agreement as possible;
- promoting an atmosphere that fosters group cohesion and interpersonal connection.

When the Committee members cannot reach a consensus, the Committee may have a motion put forth which requires a vote to be taken.

Recommendations to the Board of Directors will be made by motion of the Committee.

Communications

The Chair of the Committee, or their designate, will act as a spokesperson to the Board.

Reporting Structure

The Chair, or their designate, shall submit a report on meeting frequency, progress, and new recommendations on responses to member requests to all regular meetings of the Board of Directors.

The Chair, or their designate, shall make themselves available to the Board for discussion of issues that arise within the scope of the Committee's mandate.

Terms of Reference Approved by NSFM Board:

December 1, 2023