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## TENANT ADVISORY COMMITTEE (TAC)

### MINUTES

Date Tuesday, September 12, 2023  
Time 9:30 AM – 12:00 PM  
Location Headquarters - 1815 Sir Isaac Brock Way, Thorold, L2V 3Z3  
Room CE 308

**TAC Members:** Wendy Thompson, Michelle Mellen, Norman Hill, Annie Du Toit, Patricia Scott, Carol Chapple, Lynda Sim

**Guests:** Lindsay Avard, Josie del Grand, Julia Chikombero, Chelsea Smith (minutes)

**Regrets:** Alisha Forstinger, David Mole, Karen Littlewood

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*“Niagara Region is situated on treaty land. This land has a rich history of First Nations such as the Hatiwendaronk, the Haudenosaunee, and the Anishinaabe, including the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation. There are many First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples from across Turtle Island that live and work in Niagara today.”*

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### REGULAR MEETING

1. Welcome, Introductions & Land Acknowledgment (Recurring) Michelle
  - Patricia and Michelle must ALWAYS sit together!
2. New TAC Applicant(s) Approved! Michelle
  - Welcome Carol Chapple, Patricia Scott & Lynda Sim!

3. Review Minutes of Last Meeting (Recurring) Michelle

- Make sure to send and post minutes to ALL buildings
- Annie - #2.3 – Inspection is for life safety devices – inspectors need to be more thorough, not just focus on smoke detectors. Need to check window stoppers etc.
- Annie - #2.4 – You can run a business... - When Annie moved in, she was told tenants couldn't run businesses out of unit. There are people running businesses (i.e., baking) in public housing – please bring these issues up with your Property Manager. You shouldn't be running a business out of your apartment, but people may be self employed.
- Annie - #5 – Smoking – Annie can smell smoke – she feels she must prove it, but that is on us, not the tenant. Proving it can be difficult – we have gone to court in the past with smoke-free buildings. Can take photos or video if the smoker is in a public space or on their balconies, but don't put yourselves at risk. Some smokers are grandfather-ed in. Keep in mind, although they know the building is smoke-free, they may be desperate to get into housing with the intention of quitting. Josie – looking into a “smoke sensor”. Michelle says we are looking into sensors. In terms of marijuana, it is difficult since some people require it for medicinal purposes. Wendy – the benefit of being in one of our buildings is WE TRY and are present although we are limited by the burden of proof and humanitarian rights. Josie – filling out the complaint forms and submitting it to PM, helps PM to build a case.
- Michelle – do not rely on inspections if you have concerns over maintenance issues –

4. NRH Update & Staff Update (Recurring) Michelle

- New Staff Member(s) (Chelsea Smith - Temporary Program Assistant)

5. Housing Herald Topics Wendy

- Along with the HH, there was a decision made to add a calendar – some may not have seen it. Instead of having HH twice a year, the calendar will be monthly. Everyone loves the idea of a calendar. The calendars are Region wide with general reminders, snow-clearing, fun things, pet photos, recipes etc. Only newbuilds now have the digital notice boards – which we hope to incorporate into all the buildings.
- Wendy - Any recommendations for the HH? –
  - solar eclipse
  - seasonal maintenance reminders and requirements
  - tax reminders and clinics for spring
  - Wendy - Tax clinics at communities? – Pilot Project - we are hoping to get enough response from tenants, that we will be able to convince the clinics to come to our buildings. MPPs and Libraries provide tax services for free.

6. Tenant Scholarship

Wendy

- NRH Board approved three (3) x \$2000 scholarships for tenant students pursuing post-secondary education. We've just awarded the first three scholarships – not based on marks, this is a lottery. Doesn't have to be kids – can be adult students furthering their education.

7. Communications (Recurring)

Wendy

- Website – OUR WEBSITE NEEDS HELP! We are in the midst of moving some of our content over to the Region's website. We are looking for some fresh eyes and constructive criticism. Please let us know your thoughts about the content on nrh.ca.
- We do understand that not everyone has access to the internet (roughly 60%).

- We are trying to get more computers, digital notice boards, access to online courses and wi-fi in the common rooms. Until then, we continue to provide paper versions of all communications.
- Carol – do we have strong Firewall protection? - there should be a notice beside the computers to remind you (with instructions) to clear your browser. Wendy will ask the library to see what their Firewall protocols are. We will contact Rob.

8. New Online Application for Community Housing Michelle

- You can now apply online!
- There are still the paper versions.
- Carol – if you don't finish your application online in one sitting, you lose all your information. There isn't an option to save at the moment. In order to save an online working document, you would need the ability to create an account, username and password. Right now, you also cannot attach anything. You will receive a letter from Housing with further instructions for required documents.

9. TAC Composition and Recruitment (Recurring) Wendy

- We would love to be recruiting from the family buildings. If you know anyone in the following municipalities, we would love to fill the seats!

Up to Eleven (11) Members

<b>Municipality</b>	<b>Per Terms of Reference</b>	<b>Actual</b>
St. Catharines	Three (3)	Four (4)
Niagara Falls	Two (2)	One (1)
Welland	Two (2)	0
Fort Erie	One (1)	0
Lincoln/Grimsby	One (1)	One (1)
Niagara-on-the-Lake	One (1)	0
Port Colborne	One (1)	0

10. Terms of Reference and Code of Conduct (Attached)

Wendy

- Would be reviewed;
  - A) When you start as a new member and
  - B) At the beginning of the year in January.
- Please first give us a chance to fix any problems. Please go to your Property Manager (PM) first and/or your Community Program Coordinator (CPC).
- Your building is your team's responsibility. TAC is responsible for everything else.
- Michelle – can we create a TAC Box/Email that the Program Assistant could manage and filter?
- Remove TAC member personal contact information from website.
- Please remember that the NRH department must prioritize. Because of privacy issues, you will only ever know that we are on it. We cannot be more specific.
- Carol – does it state anywhere what the TAC representatives can and cannot do?
- Your unit number and personal contact information will never be in the minutes.
- Regarding issues that you are presented with, don't ask any questions.

11. Diversity (Recurring)

- Truth & Reconciliation Day - September 30th
- The Government of Canada responded to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's call to action #80 by creating a day of observation called the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, which seeks to honour First Nations, Inuit and Métis Survivors, their families, and communities, and to ensure that public commemoration of their history and the legacy of residential schools remains a vital component

Wendy

of the reconciliation process. “For the child taken, for the parent left behind”.

- Canada’s federal government enacted legislation on June 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2021, that establish that each year, on September 30<sup>th</sup>, the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation would be observed.
- **WEAR ORANGE!** National Truth & Reconciliation Day coincides with Orange Shirt Day, a grassroots movement in recognition of Phyllis Webstad, a residential school survivor.
- This is an opportunity for us to educate ourselves and those around us about Indigenous History we were, unfortunately, not taught in school.
- There are many events being held throughout the Region on and around September 30 – Please see Appendix A.

12. New Business (Recurring)

All

- Patricia - parking issue – signs posted for speed limit (Tammy said no) Michelle –speed bumps can be more effective. Michelle will speak with Tammy, especially with delivery people. Add to handbook when tenants move in – please be mindful of fellow tenants, drive carefully, seniors present.
- Annie – parking signs Michelle – met with accessibility rep (Tammy), spoke about different options (# of cars per unit, medians, access spots etc.), Melissa is planning line painting now that we know the current requirements.
- PMs need to be aware of these issues (extra vehicles per unit, working on vehicles etc.) so they can follow up.

13. Determine Next Date for Remaining TAC Meetings

All

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Next meeting:

Wednesday, November 8 – 10:00AM @ Steele Street Location in Port Colborne  
Wednesday, January 10 – 11:00AM @ Region Headquarters with Lunch!

In January, we will establish the schedule for the year.

Dietary: no restrictions

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## APPENDIX A

### TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION

There were 140 federally run residential schools in Canada that operated between 1867 and 1996. Survivors advocated for recognition and reparations and demanded accountability for the intergenerational impacts of harm caused. Their efforts culminated in:

- the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement
- apologies by the government
- the establishment of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission
- the creation of the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission ran from 2008 to 2015 and provided those directly or indirectly affected by the legacy of the residential school's policy with an opportunity to share their stories and experiences. The Commission released its final report detailing 94 calls to action. The National Day for Truth and Reconciliation is a direct response to Call to Action 80, which called for a federal statutory day of commemoration.

The National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation has become the permanent archive for the statements, documents and other materials the Commission gathered. Its library and collections, as well as its National Student Memorial Register, are the foundation for ongoing learning and research.



## NATIONAL DAY FOR TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION

### What's Happening Throughout the Region?

Monday, September 25 to Friday, September 29	1:30PM – 2:20PM	National Centre for Truth & Reconciliation FREE VIRTUAL SESSIONS	Registration: See below
<p>Registration: <a href="https://trweeklunchandlearns.eventbrite.ca">https://trweeklunchandlearns.eventbrite.ca</a></p> <p>These daily sessions (50mins) will feature a range of speakers and will provide audience members with the opportunity to ask questions and engage in further conversations. * Also being offered to all educators in schools across Canada.</p> <p>Days 1 – 5: Virtual Lunch and Learns!</p> <p>Topics include:</p> <p>Day 1: Indigenous peoples and the History of Residential Schools            Day 2: Unconscious bias and debunking stereotypes            Day 3: Intergenerational impacts and ongoing systemic discrimination            Day 4: Indigenous peoples' rights and the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples            Day 5: Taking action toward Reconciliation</p>			

Thursday, September 28	7PM	Niagara Falls History Museum UNDERSTANDING THE TRUTH & RECONCILIATION REPORT – WHAT IT IS ALL ABOUT?	Zoom registration link: <a href="https://rb.gy/dy3uu">https://rb.gy/dy3uu</a>
<p>The Truth and Reconciliation Report was released in 2015. It was a comprehensive report completed by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and led by Dr. Murray Sinclair. The report included significant and important recommendations intended to address the devastating legacy of the residential school system on generations of indigenous children, their families, and communities. This presentation is intended to provide a greater understanding of the report and developments in the years since its release toward Honoring the Truth and Reconciling for the Future.</p>			

Friday, September 29	10AM – 11AM	City of Niagara Falls PLAQUE UNVEILING	Niagara Parks Power Station
<p>Plaque unveiling to commemorate Phyllis Webstad and Prime Minister Trudeau visit for Orange Shirt Day 2022.</p>			

Friday, September 29	3PM	Niagara Falls History Museum IS INDIGENOUS NATIONHOOD STILL POSSIBLE?	Zoom registration link: <a href="https://t.ly/JLqB-">https://t.ly/JLqB-</a>
<p>Reflections on Indigenous Law, Treaties and Nationhood in response to the Universal Declaration of Indigenous Rights, Government Policies and Haudenosaunee Tenacity. The Haudenosaunee are attempting to be the first Indigenous nation to be part of the Olympic family. As the game of lacrosse is being considered for the 2028 Olympic Games in Los Angeles, the Haudenosaunee are seeking recognition of their nationhood on the international stage in order to play a game they invented. Win, lose or draw, it will be a great test about the survivability of Haudenosaunee nationhood.</p>			

Saturday, September 30		Live from Parliament Hill	Check your local listings
<p>A live national broadcast that will commemorate National Day for Truth and Reconciliation and Orange Shirt Day on Parliament Hill in Ottawa. Watch the broadcast online to memorialize the children lost to the residential school system and honour Survivors and their families. Learning and commemorating the truth of our history from First Nations, and Inuit and Métis knowledge keepers is an important part of the path to reconciliation.</p> <p>Buildings across Canada will be illuminated in orange from September 30 at 7:00PM to sunrise October 1. This will include federal buildings such as the Peace Tower on Parliament Hill.</p>			

Saturday, September 30	8PM – 11PM	City of Niagara Falls INDIGENOUS DRUMMING CEREMONY	Base of Murray Hill
<p><b>NIAGARA FALL WILL TURN ORANGE</b> on each hour for fifteen minutes. Indigenous community members will be drumming and singing at the base of Murray Hill.</p>			

Saturday, October 7	Mid-day	City of St. Catharines POW WOW	Meridian Centre
<p>Niagara Regional Native Centre Pow Wow. During the event, multiple types of dancing including jingle, fancy feather, grass and smoke dance will be performed in tandem with honour song. There will also be speakers and vendors.</p>			

A Few Resources

- <https://nctr.ca> National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation
- <https://www.rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca/> Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada
- [Indian Residential Schools Class Action Settlement-Settlement Agreement](https://www.residentialschoolsettlement.ca/)
- <https://nrnc.ca> Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement
- <https://fenfc.org> Niagara Regional Native Centre
- <https://ncnw.ca> Fort Erie Native Friendship Centre
- <https://niagararegionmetisCouncil.org> Niagara Chapter – Native Women Inc.
- <https://empathictraditions.ca/> Niagara Region Métis Council
- <https://empathictraditions.ca/> Empathic Traditions – Niagara’s Indigenous Legacy