



## WAVE Committee Minutes

Tuesday, June 21, 2022

5:30pm - 7:30pm

Edmonton Public Library, Civic Employee Room 3

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Attendance: **Funmi** (she/her), **Julianne** (she/her), **olubusola** (she/her), **Echo** (they/them), **Angelika** (she/her), **Nadia** (she/they), **Charlotte** (she/her), **Areezah** (she/her), **Muno** (she/her) **Elli** (she/her), **Santana** (she/her), **Del** (she/her), **Maria** (she/her) **Thy** (she/her), **Kendra** (she/her, Social Media), **Councillor Rice** (she/her), **Mayor Sohi** (he/him), **Daria** (she/her, Mayor's Office)

City of Edmonton Admin: **Christine** (she/her), **Autumn** (it/her)

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### 1. Welcome (5:30-5:45pm)

#### a. Land Acknowledgement

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- i. [Land Acknowledgement schedule](#), please sign up

### 2. Approve Agenda [Approved]

### 3. Welcome Mayor Sohi (5:45-6:30pm)

- a. Mayor Sohi is interested in working on and removing identified barriers for women in Edmonton, particularly city transit. As a former bus driver he is familiar with how inaccessible the transit system is for women with children, as well as issues with not having proper lighting and security.
- b. The city is seeing direct results corresponding to the work of WAVE and similar organisations over the course of many years. City Council went from having two female counsellors to eight female counsellors, two of which are women of colour. WAVE provides deliberate leadership towards making changes in the city. Leadership is also coming about from the young people in the city, who are not afraid to challenge and grapple with concerns of equity, racism, colonisation. They are not satisfied to only acknowledge the past, we are seeing a movement to also correct the past before moving forward.
- c. **Q&A**
  - i. **Angelika:** During the presentation to City Council, [I] felt that you were willing to listen to WAVE regarding the Vehicle for Hire issues that we have been trying to bring to the City's attention. Vehicle for Hire is



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important for keeping Indigenous women, newcomers, and [2SLGBTQIAA+] people safe.

**Mayor Sohi:** Many at Council said that is the first time they have even heard of these problems, which is denial rather than a true statement.

- ii. **Thy:** What are two or three of your priorities for the City that WAVE can contribute towards?

**Mayor Sohi:** Focus on emerging from COVID 19 that supports equitable economic opportunities, improved childcare systems, localised climate change action, and Reconciliation and allyship.

**1) Equitable Economic Opportunities:** We can build economic opportunities/conditions that are inclusive to everyone to stimulate success in each individual.

**2) Childcare:** The economy is linked directly towards good childcare opportunities. We have many recreational facilities, libraries, etc, which are not being effectively utilised. How can we work with the private sector to open up these spaces for childcare? How do we build an agreement between the Province and the City Government to make childcare a priority?

**3) Climate Change:** We all have a responsibility to take climate change seriously. More women live in poverty when climate change affects the economy. Heatwaves affect poor people more, as they cannot afford air conditioning. These poor people [disproportionately] are racialized people, Indigenous people, and Women. If Edmonton could produce some local examples of change we can present them on a provincial or federal level.

**4) Reconciliation and Allyship:** We have seen many attacks on black and muslim women, and the blaming of certain communities for COVID-19. Working on Reconciliation will improve the community and the economy.

- iii. **Julianne:** How can we focus WAVE's efforts to make change when the barriers that we often run up against are that the City does not have the



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budget available? Should we be producing a budget plan with our ideas and work?

**Mayor Sohi:** We have a very tough budget. If we were to maintain services at the same level next year as this year we would need to raise taxes by roughly %3 to %4 every year moving forward to match inflation. We might be able to create better efficiencies to decrease wasted spending, but it is unlikely that we will find much more for funding. What we need to do is start prioritising what is important to the city. Edmonton has two modes of generating income: PropertyTax and User Fees. I do not like increasing User Fees as they disproportionately affect equity-seeking groups.

- iv. **Santana:** With the work I do with Autism Edmonton I was invited to sit in a budget planning session with the City for their 2023-2028 budget. Would it be appropriate to attend the session with the lens of what I do in my day job and tie it to the work we do in WAVE?

**Mayor Sohi:** Yes, I cannot see any reason why you couldn't.

- v. **Funmi:** The conversation with childcare has been ongoing for years, and I am happy that it is starting to gain traction with the city. WAVE should be granted access to be able to connect with those working on this policy to provide advice and feedback. As well for COVID recovery, Mental health and physical health recovery should be a priority, such as developing programs that are dedicated towards Edmontonians interacting with each other.

**Mayor Sohi:** We have allocated 1.2 million in funding to support equity-seeking artists and downtown recovery, as well as recovery in other areas of the city. More public arts events and popups happening will draw people out to interact with each other. There is a component for mental health in the *Community safety and Wellbeing Strategy* that was approved last month. There are two strategies involved and they are being put together and funded. I hope that we will be able to financially expand support to make recreational facilities available to refugee, low-income, and indigenous kids, such as with the Free Footie Program who provide soccer/football/and inclusive values to these children.



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**Funmi:** We will be working along with the *Safety and Security* framework.

- vi. **Nadia:** The opioid crisis has gotten much worse with COVID, especially with support facilities being closed down. Will these supports be reintroduced?

**Mayor Sohi:** It is heartbreaking to see what is happening. People are traumatised—they need interventions to just save their lives. The City cannot do much regarding this because the City does not have the legislative ability or funding to help. There has been a meeting recently trying to determine who should be required to offer support for this issue. Our houseless population has doubled since the beginning of COVID, and we are trying to figure out why. A lot of services on reservations were shut down during COVID so many of those populations moved to Edmonton, and it is our responsibility to help them as they belong to our city now. As well, when people are released from hospitals, or released from prison facilities on parole, or released from the care of the government at age 22, they have no place to go as there is no integration plan—many people end up on the street for this reason. Vulnerable people with trauma and histories of violence are being dropped off into the city without any services being provided to help them. So, we are working on trying to provide concrete reasoning and stress the importance as to why this is an issue that the provincial and federal governments need to support (The federal government is constitutionally responsible for people while they are on reserves, but once they are no longer on a reservation [the federal government does not care]).

- vii. **Angelika:** [Many] women end up assuming the role of caregiver for people in a mental health crisis, but we are afraid to call the police for mental health checks as mental health is often criminalised. It is illegal to be out on the street in psychosis. What would you like to see be done on policing and mental health?

**Mayor Sohi:** [We] need police to make sure that violence is controlled, gang violence is dealt with, and homicides are investigated. There are many things that we *want* police to do that police are not suited for. Rather, we need to build a social



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safety net, but our social sector is currently beyond capacity. We should be developing systems to divert police funding and resources towards systems that can better address these issues. We would be able to hire two social workers in place of just one police officer. Accountability is important, but it needs to be separated from budget as well as the movement of budget to social services.

**Councillor Rice:** Resources for mental health are in the process of being built.

**Mayor Sohi:** Work is being done to have social workers work alongside EPS. We wonder if we can expand the work being done by the Community Outreach Transit Team into non-transit facilities.

- viii. **Elli:** There is lots of talent in the community and non-profit organisations, but most of the time consultation goes to private consultants and small consultant companies are not diverse. When it comes to research and consultation at the local level non-profit organisations are working with social services and post-secondary institutions and should be utilised in favour of private consultants.

**Mayor Sohi:** We will follow up on this—it will take some changes, but we should be asking how consultation organisations represent diversity, and do these organisations that we are selecting have people with lived-experience regarding the issues we require consultation on.

**Elli:** You have the capability to bring multiple organisations together to bring in diverse responses.

**Sohi:** We often do not recognize lived-experience as expertise, but we should change this viewpoint because lived-experience is so much more insightful.

- ix. **Funmi:** We will follow up and send these ideas to your office.
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### 4. Reconciliation and Allyship Reflection (6:45pm-7:00pm)

#### a. Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women & Girls Report [MMIWG](#), Chapter 2

**Elli:** It was a learning moment for me. There is a fear in non-Indigenous leaders that power is being taken away from under them. Indigenous people have shown what needs to be done—it is not just about inviting [Indigenous people] to the table, [they] now need to be given the ability to make changes. These spaces need to be shared, [those in positions of authority] need to give up their power, and uphold that space for Indigenous people to provide answers.

**Angelika:** Representation without power is just tokenization. Saying that you will give people power without actually giving them power and autonomy, without believing them and giving them the ability to make changes, is just tokenization that allows us to pat ourselves on our back.

**Funmi:** Reclaiming power and place—understanding how Indigenous communities see women and 2SLGBTQAAI+ folks, the reading really fleshed out the deficit and loss, making the grief real for the people who are missing and the children that were killed. When you have that many people missing in a society of course things are going to fall apart. [Those in positions of authority] giving [their] power away challenges the status quo and challenges their ability to allow change.

**Thy:** It is cultural annihilation. This genocide is supported by the justice and health systems. Recognizing the negative impact on what is happening, we need to start changing these structures: police and health. At AHS we try to have equitable conversations; our health system is a settler construct—how we bring patients in is a settler construct.

**Muno:** I suggest that we have someone come to a future meeting, compensating them for their time, for an in-person learning exercise. It gave me a different appreciation to learn from a person instead of a movie.

**Julianne:** There was such a beautiful story to be told on how [Indigenous communities] uplift Indigenous women. The intersectionality of women in Indigenous culture was so beautiful and it is disgusting that this is missing from our culture—how much we could have learned. Medical and mental health were practices that existed [here] way before white people decided they did.



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**Del:** “Don’t view us as victims, you prescribed that to us.”

**Charlotte:** Currently how we operate WAVE is rooted in modes of colonisation and western ways of power with the usage of Robert’s Rules and chairs/co-chairs, and how we structure WAVE should reflect Indigenous ways.

**Christine:** I valued the stories on Indigenous culture, how the stories and spirituality are so integrated with their wellbeing and their lives. Women here in our society are all these things that the chapter talked about, but the type of [spiritual] storytelling present in their communities isn’t present in our society—that spirituality component that is a part of Indigenous laws is missing from our laws.

- b. Autumn will bring the book COVID COLLECTIONS to the Reconciliation and Allyship meeting on June 28th.
  - c. This Friday and Sunday Slash/Back Metrocinema.org
    - i. Christine will send this information out to everyone in an email.
  - d. We will continue to read, or take a break by instead doing a learning session or a Blanket Ceremony in the future.
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### 5. Business/Discussion Items (7:00-7:05)

- a. [Approve the WAVE Attendance Policy](#)
  - i. **Areezah:** Change “It has come to our attention that you have missed the following two regular meetings...” to “It has come to our attention that you have missed the following three regular meetings...” [Christine updated]
  - ii. **Funmi:** This is not meant to penalise anyone. It is to ensure that we reach out when we do not hear from you. Asking for resignation allows us to have a conversation.
  - iii. Motion to approve the WAVE Attendance Policy moved by [Funmi], [carried] by the presence of no objections.



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b. [City's Safety Strategy](#)

- i. Funmi met with Selinma to talk about engaging further with the City's Safety Strategy, as the strategy does not reference people who experience gender in a diverse way, 2SLGBTQAAI+ people, or mental health. We should invite them to a WAVE Committee meeting so that we can provide them feedback, as this is a whole-WAVE situation.
- ii. Please read the link and have comments ready for a presentation.

c. Ujima Fellowship Program Mentorship program

- i. With the Africa Centre, after leadership training they send folks to different committees. Would anyone in WAVE like to help take on a mentee? There will be two people coming to our meetings, the commitment will be one hour per month for eight months.
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6. Working Group Updates (7:10pm-7:30pm)

a. Projects Update (Julianne)

- i. Co-Chairs: Maria and Areezah
- ii. [ParityYEG partnership on policy competition](#)

**Julianne:** We heard back from Cindy, Julianne will send this information out to everyone in an email.

The Policy Competition is sponsored by the City of Edmonton, and it is happening in August. Our support for it is to help with social media sharing and make our official partnership announcement—as a collective we are percolating ideas to talk about in the future meetings. Please send ideas to the Projects Subcommittee even if you are not on the subcommittee, and please reach out to help with the Policy Competition if you are interested with the mentorship or judging components.





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### b. Policy Update

- i. Co-Chairs: Nadia and Santana
- ii. [Edmonton Affordable Housing Needs Assessment](#)
- iii. Vehicle for Hire

Focus on bylaw amendments, accessibility training, and human trafficking issues. We will be having Mike Chow attend the August 8th meeting to teach us about policy.

- iv. Policy training on Aug 8, 2022
  - 1. This will be recorded for anyone who cannot make it.

### c. Internal Update

- i. Co-Chairs: Charlotte
- ii. Five things that will be focused on:
  - 1. How are we going to onboard new members
  - 2. Education coordination
  - 3. Areas of growth for WAVE members
  - 4. How do we maintain knowledge management
  - 5. Volunteer management
- iii. Internal will be spending the next two months flushing out ideas and will come back with a big update in the September 20th meeting.
- iv. Talk about creating a group chat that is purely social in order to connect members together outside of WAVE.

### d. Social Media Update (Kendra)



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- i. WAVE's Voice and Opinions
    - 1. The Social Media Subcommittee had a discussion about whether or not WAVE can/should take a public stand on polarising issues regarding women/gender diverse rights.
    - 2. **Funmi:** There are a couple of things we need to talk about regarding this and we will be discussing them at the next WAVE Committee meeting.
  - ii. Bios and photo sessions
    - 1. Kendra will be sending out a survey for bios and headshot booking (there will be three different times in three different locations).
  - iii. The Social Media Subcommittee requests that each subcommittees send three to ten points from each meeting with a screenshot in order to maximise Kendra's time.
- e. Recruitment update
- i. Five new members to be discussed at City Council on July 4, 2022
    - 1. Five more folks will be joining to increase WAVE's numbers from 15 to 20 members. This increased capacity will give WAVE increased reach.
  - ii. Dawn Bailey Coty membership
    - 1. Dawn resigned and the resignation was processed. Dawn asked to come back but the return process was not successful. Dawn is invited to attend in a volunteer capacity but will not be able to contribute in a voting capacity. We will still have Dawn's voice but not as a full member of WAVE.
    - 2. The Bylaw Affecting Dawn's return: When you resign from WAVE you have to wait two years before you can return, and in two years one can choose to apply again. We are hoping to work on solutions to this through the Internal Subcommittee.



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- iii. New members will be onboarded throughout the summer and you will see them in September.
- 7. We will determine if meetings going forward should be held in-person, online, or continue with hybrid style in the September 20th meeting.
- 8. There will be social events set up throughout the summer. Please come and see the “real” Funmi.

**Have a good summer!**

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### **WAVE Committee Meetings for 2022:**

- September 20
- October 18
- November 15
- December 20

### **Information/Resources:**

- [WAVE Folder](#) to view Committee Agendas, Meeting Minutes
- WAVE’s Social Media Channels: [Instagram](#) [Facebook](#) [Twitter](#)
- [WAVE’s Contact List](#)
- [WAVE Working Group Folders](#)
- [Reconciliation and Allyship Meeting Minutes from Mar 22, 2022](#)