NOVA SCOTIA
THERAPEUTIC RECREATION
ASSOCIATION

2026
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 2ND, 2026

VIRTUAL VIA ZOOM

11:30AM – 1:00PM

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Reviewed by Indigenous Treaty Partners

We would like to acknowledge that the Nova Scotia Therapeutic Recreation Association (NSTRA) operates in Mi’kma’ki, the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territory of the Mi’kmaq people. This territory, along with all of its First Nations within Nova Scotia, is governed by the Treaties of Peace and Friendship, which continue to be relevant today.

NSTRA is dedicated to respecting and safeguarding the land, water, and all forms of life in partnership with the Mi’kmaq people. We commit to the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action and fostering relationships grounded in peace, honesty, and friendship. We acknowledge the value of Indigenous wisdom and knowledge, as highlighted in Call to Action 22, and are dedicated to shifting our perspectives towards decolonization.

We acknowledge that we benefit from the wisdom and knowledge of the Indigenous people (Call to Action 22), and we commit to decolonizing our mindsets by taking accountability and following the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action. In our commitment to Truth, Reconciliation, and community relationships we are committed to the promise of living in peace and friendship. We are active in the process of unlearning colonial mindsets and practices (Calls to Action #23-3 and 57). We are working to grow our knowledge, and adapting ways of working in the field of recreation and leisure.

We are all Treaty people.

VISION STATEMENT

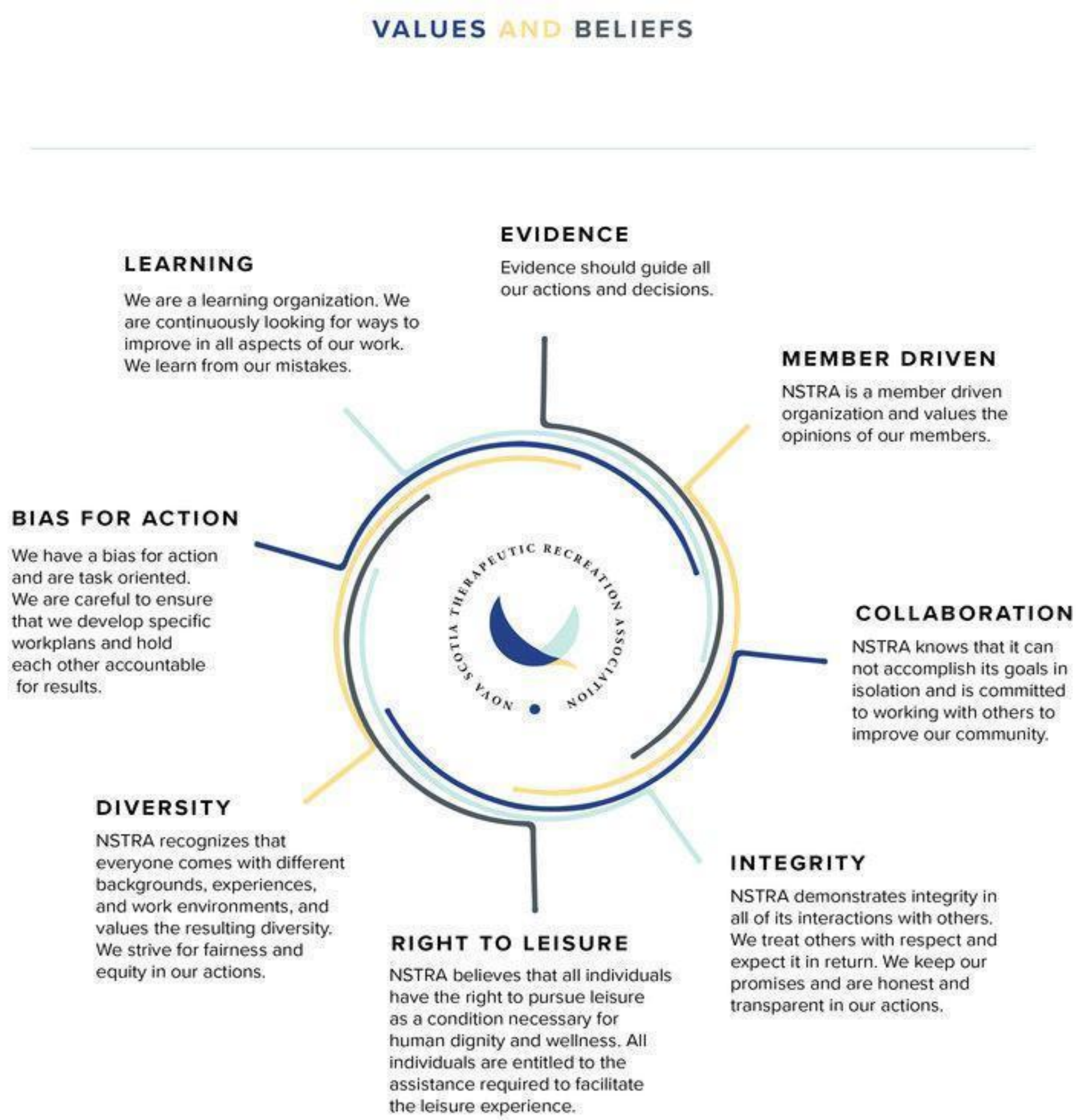
Therapeutic Recreation is vital to the health and well-being of Nova Scotians and is accessible to all.

MISSION

NSTRA is the professional association for the field of therapeutic recreation in Nova Scotia. It exists as a community of recreation therapy professionals; supporting, guiding and enhancing practices for therapeutic recreation.

IN PURSUIT OF THIS NSTRA FOCUSES ON:

- Advocacy to government and other organizations;
- Education and learning;
- Building connections within and around the profession;
- Standards of service and practice.



2025 NSTRA
8TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
MINUTES
OCTOBER 24, 2025
VIRTUAL VIA ZOOM

1. **Call to Order and Introductions.** Brittany MacKeen called the meeting to order at 2:10pm.

Attendees: Andrew Ritcey, Amy Rizzuto, Brianne Saunders, Kate Stewart, Jenny Dunphy, Jenelle d'Entremont, Madison Hodgins, Danielle Gagne, Brad MacMillan, Charlotte Sabean, Lynette Stevens, Catherine Lubberts, Dawn MacDonald, Dana Mills, Rachel Skanes, Marisa Doucette, Jocelyn Barbier, Emily Flinn, Andrea King, Gary Comeau, Colleen Bateman, Rob Grandy, Selena Parent, Rebecca Hill, Jerry Singleton, Nicole Martell, Kate Giles, Qi Lao, Crystal Watson, Thi Ai Diem, Brittany MacKeen, Shelley Smith, Tara Harnish, Kennedy Peters, Jayden Stimson, Jessica Murphy, Marlee McNaughton, Cassady Yochoff, Sarah Blanchard, Danielle Bilodeau, Jess Seward, Chloe Baldwin, Stevie Grant, Kim Woodford, Natalie Baglole, Alyssa Kiss, Jennifer Loucks, Shelly Luddington

Regrets: Anne Parks

2. **Approval of Agenda.** Approved by Marisa Doucette, seconded by Jessica Murphy.

3. **Minutes from previous AGM (October 16th, 2024).** Approved by Danielle Bilodeau, seconded by Crystal Watson.

4. **NSTRA Highlights for 2024 - 2025 membership year.**
- Brittany presented the following highlights for the 2024 -2025 membership year:
  - Development of orientation/onboarding documentation for new board members
  - Met with Ministers Michelle Thompson, Brian Comer, & Barbara Adams for TR Month Proclamation
  - In-person board meeting held to conduct in depth policy review
  - Hosted Virtual Student Networking Event
  - Development of Financial Committee to act as a working group with terms of reference to support and advise the portfolio of Treasurer
  - Development of "Cheers from Peers" member highlight
  - Hosted NSTRA Education Session: Recreation Therapy in Non-Traditional Roles
  - Continued partnership with Therapeutic Recreation Centre of Excellence (TRoCE)
  - EDIA committee co-chair & NSTRA President attended Recreation Nova Scotia Anti-Racism Summit

5. **Board Reports.**

a. President – Marisa Doucette accepts the chair. Brittany MacKeen read her report in its entirety. Brittany moved the acceptance of the President report as circulated, seconded by Kate Giles. No Discussion. Vote: 83% in favor, 3% abstaining, 14% non-vote. Motion passed. Brittany accepts the chair.

b. Treasurer – Dana Mills acknowledged the memo she sent out re: the financial report. For the AGM, she will be reviewing key highlights received from our accountant, Catherine Madgett.

- Dana reported that the balance sheet is a snapshot from September 1st, 2024 – August 31st, 2025. It reviews what we have in the bank, who owes you money and who we owe money to.
- Investments – We have two GIC's - $5000 for the VISA account is invested in a one-year, non-redeemable account. $73,377 is invested in a one-year, cashable GIC. Dana noted that cashable GIC's earn less and we can access it quickly if needed for licensure purposes.
- Our total revenue increased slightly to almost $1500. There was a small decrease in total membership fees compared to fiscal 2024; however, total conference revenue increased by almost $2900.
- Dana reported that NSTRA's share from the CTRA conference is not currently available. It will be communicated to membership in the next financial report. We are also considering providing a mid-way financial statement to membership.
- Our total expenses decreased over the previous fiscal year by approximately $40, 700. While most of our expenses stayed the same, there were large decreases in expenses related to advertising and licensure.
- Total net income for the year (before transfers to the various internally restricted accounts) was $6895.
- Overall, we have a cumulative net loss of $10, 272. Dana acknowledged that this seems like a large amount, but our accountant has reassured her that our net loss can be overcome in the next year or two. It serves as a warning to start looking at revenue and expenses and how we can start rebuilding to a positive balance. Dana reported that operations have been quite lean this year. The board and committees were aware of their spending habits but there is always room for improvement. Dana acknowledged that if we reduce expenses, this can impact our service to members. It is important for us to consider things like increasing membership rates, fundraising initiatives, etc. to off-set costs. We are considering fundraising initiatives, and this is something we will continue to explore. Dana reported that although last year's conference only had a small net income, the conference committee will be looking at the next year's conference budget as it is another source of fundraising revenue.
- Dana Mills moved the acceptance of the Treasurer's report as circulated, seconded by Andrew Ritcey.

<u>Discussion</u>:

- Crystal Watson asked if as part of strategic planning, will there be a specific strategy around revenue generation? Dana felt this was an excellent idea.
- Crystal Watson said that it's challenging for not-for-profits to sustain a budget. We have the monopoly on Therapeutic Recreation in Nova Scotia, and we need to look at what that strategy could look like over time.

Vote: 86% in favor, 14% non-vote. Motion passed.

c. Past President – Jocelyn Barbier moved the acceptance of the Past President report as circulated.
d. Recording Officer – Lynette Stevens moved the acceptance of the Recording Officer report as circulated.
e. President-Elect – Marisa Doucette moved the acceptance of the President-Elect report as circulated.
f. Communications Director – Emily Flinn moved the acceptance of the Communications Director report as circulated.
g. Membership Director – Kate Giles moved the acceptance of the Membership Director report as circulated.
h. Central Zone Director – Colleen Bateman moved the acceptance of the Central Zone Director report as circulated.
i. Cape Breton Zone Director – Dawn MacDonald moved the acceptance of the Cape Breton Zone Director report as circulated.
j. Northeastern Zone Director – Marisa Doucette, on behalf of Elise Fisher, moved the acceptance of the Northeastern Zone Director report as circulated.
k. South Shore Zone Director – Marisa Doucette moved the acceptance of the South Shore Zone Director report as circulated.
l. Southwestern Zone Director – Jenelle d'Entremont moved the acceptance of the Southwestern Zone Director report as circulated.
m. Annapolis Valley Zone Director – Brianne Saunders moved the acceptance of the Annapolis Valley Zone Director report as circulated.
n. Dalhousie Student Director - Danielle Bilodeau moved the acceptance of the Dalhousie Student Director report as circulated.
o. NSCC Student Director – Tess Campbell moved the acceptance of the NSCC Student Director report as circulated.
All board reports were seconded by Dana Mills. No Discussion. Vote: 88% in favor, 12% non-vote. Motion passed.

6. **Committee Reports.**

Marisa Doucette accepts the chair.
a. Advocacy – Shelley Smith moved the acceptance of the Advocacy report as circulated.
b. Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, Accessibility (EDIA) – Jessica Murphy moved the acceptance of the EDIA report as circulated.
c. Licensure – Shelley Smith moved the acceptance of the Licensure report as circulated.
d. Marketing – Jocelyn Barbier moved the acceptance of the Marketing report as circulated.
e. Education – Brittany MacKeen moved the acceptance of the Education report as circulated.
f. Finance – Dana Mills moved the acceptance of the Finance report as circulated.
Seconded by Danielle Bilodeau. No discussion. Vote: 86% in favor, 3% abstaining 11% non-vote. Motion passed. Brittany accepts the chair.

7. **Election of Officers and Directors.** Jocelyn Barbier accepts the chair and facilitated the Election of Officers. Nominations were accepted from the floor.

a. President Elect (3-year term) Jocelyn Barbier called for nominations from the floor x 3. There were no nominations. Jocelyn closed the nominations. Brittany encouraged those present, that if they know someone who may be interested not in attendance, to reach out. We can appoint someone after the AGM.

b. Communications Director (2-year term) Emily Flinn self-nominated. Jocelyn Barbier called for nominations from the floor x 3. Shelley Smith nominates Nicole Martelle. Nicole accepts the nomination. After a vote, the position is awarded to Nicole Martelle.

c. Treasurer (2-year term) Cassady Yochoff self-nominated. Jocelyn Barbier called for nominations from the floor x 3. The position is awarded to Cassady Yochoff.

d. Annapolis Valley Zone Director (2-year term) Jocelyn Barbier called for nominations from the floor x 3. There were no nominations. Jocelyn closed the nominations. Jocelyn encouraged those that may know someone in the area to contact NSTRA if interested.

- Colleen Bateman reported that the Cape Breton Zone Director position is currently listed as a 1-year term. There was a by-law change in the past that if a Zone Director resigned and someone new was elected that they would automatically enter a 2-year term. Jocelyn acknowledged this error and updated both the Cape Breton Zone Director and Northeastern Zone Director positions to 2-year terms.

e. Cape Breton Zone Director (2-year term) Jocelyn Barbier called for nominations from the floor x 3. There were no nominations. Jocelyn closed the nominations. Jocelyn encouraged those that may know someone in the area to contact NSTRA if interested.

f. Northeastern Zone Director (2-year term) Elise Fisher was appointed to this position. We received confirmation that she will let her name stand for this position. Jocelyn Barbier called for nominations from the floor x 3. There were no further nominations. The position is awarded to Elise Fisher.

g. South Shore Zone Director (2-year term) Jocelyn Barbier called for nominations from the floor x 3. Jenelle d'Entremont nominates Catherine Lubberts. Catherine accepts the nomination.

- Charlotte Sabean reported that Catherine is in the Southwestern Zone.
- Catherine Lubberts said she works in the Southwestern and South Shore Zone because she works in both Yarmouth and Shelburne. She inquired if the Southwestern Zone Director position was open because it is not listed.
- Jenelle d'Entremont clarified that she had stepped in to the Southwestern Zone Director position after it was vacated. She clarified that she would be on the board for another year. Jocelyn confirmed this was correct.
- Kate Giles asked if people have to be residents of the area or can they work in the area? Jocelyn said you can usually pick one if the person is back and forth.
- Charlotte Sabean reported that Digby, Yarmouth, and Shelburne are considered Southwestern Zone in terms of NSTRA. Catherine is thinking of recent changes within the NSHA zones which are different.

- Amy Rizzuto asked for clarification that if you live in one zone but work in a different zone are you eligible to apply as a Zone Director in either zone. Jocelyn said we can clarify this moving forward, but it is something that needs to be looked at in our policies.
- Brittany MacKeen reviewed the AGM minutes from 2024. In the minutes, it reflected that Jenelle d'Entremont accepted a 1-year term as Southwestern Zone Director. According to our minutes, her term is complete. Due to this, we will add a Southwestern Zone Director 2-year term to the nominations.
- Catherine Lubberts withdrew her name from nominations for the South Shore Zone Director.
- Jocelyn Barbier called for nominations for the South Shore Zone Director again x 3. There were no nominations. Jocelyn closed the nominations. Jocelyn encouraged those that may know someone in the area to contact NSTRA if interested.

h. Southwestern Zone Director (2-year term) Jocelyn Barbier called for nominations from the floor x 3. Catherine Lubberts self-nominated. The position is awarded to Catherine Lubberts.

i. NSCC Student Director (1-year term) Jocelyn Barbier called for nominations from the floor x 3. Shelley Smith nominates Alyssa Kiss. Alyssa accepts the nomination. The position is awarded to Alyssa Kiss.

j. Dalhousie Student Director (1-year term) Danielle Gagne self-nominated. Jocelyn Barbier called for nominations from the floor x 3. The position is awarded to Danielle Gagne.

- Jocelyn thanked all out-going NSTRA board members for their hard work the past year. Brittany accepts the chair.

8. **New Business**

a. By-law Amendments

- Brittany MacKeen reported that we will be voting on by-law amendment #7 by itself because it deals directly with money. All other by-law amendments will be voted on together.

Membership

7. The following shall be admitted to membership in the Association: Any individual who upholds the objectives of the Association and contributes to the support of the Association in one of the following categories:

Voting	Professional Member (CTRS)	175.00
Voting	Professional Member (Non-CTRS)	100.00
Voting	Affiliate Professional Member (now closed to new members)	75.00
Non-Voting	Supporting Member	75.00
Non-Voting	Emeritus	75.00

Non-Voting	Student Membership	15.00 (for one year) 30.00 (for two years) 45.00 (for three years) 60.00 (for four years)

Rationale: NSTRA has one of the lowest professional membership rates in Canada. NSTRA will continue to maintain 50% from each CTRS membership in GIC and the pursuit for licensure. Costs are increasing, paying for opportunities for membership such as the TR Centre of Excellence, education sessions, training such as Anti-Racism, overhead fees etc.

- Brittany MacKeen asked for approval of the by-law #7 amendment.

Motion: Dawn MacDonald moves the approval of the by-law #7 amendment. Seconded by Andrew Ritcey.

Discussion:
- Dawn MacDonald suggested that NSTRA ask for proof of enrollment as student members. After people have graduated and are working in the field, it's not fair for them to sign up as a student member. Other professionals are paying the professional membership fee. It's different if people have transferred into a degree program. She acknowledged that this does not affect the by-law moving forward but is something to be considered.
- Crystal Watson recommends that this becomes the standard for students. Brittany MacKeen said that the board will be looking at more policies at an in-person board meeting on November 8th. We could look at this suggestion then.
- Amy Rizzuto reported that a two-year student membership is not always concurrent with TR courses and internship. She suggested a one-year option. Brittany confirmed that there is currently a one-year option available for students.
- Kim Woodford suggested having a two-year decreased professional membership fee for recent TR graduates who are still looking for work or for those that are pursuing post-graduate work. It can be challenging for students first starting out financially to pay the professional membership fee. Brittany MacKeen acknowledged this was a good point.
- Andrew Ritcey said that if a person is a full-time graduate student they would be eligible for a student membership.
- Kim Woodford said that post-graduate students often still pay the professional membership fee because they want the option to collect CEU's. At past conferences, she thought when you clicked on the student option to attend the conference, you could not select to pay the CEU processing fee. She acknowledged she could be mistaken.
- Colleen Bateman reported that for the last few conferences we have not collected a CEU processing fee. It was free as a benefit to members. If someone was a student member, they would still be able to receive CEU's; but they could not vote at the AGM.

- Marisa Doucette reported that a member brought forward that the professional membership fee should be $200. The rationale is because NSTRA recently updated their policies to state that 50% of professional membership fees will go to the licensure college fund. When looking at a $175 professional membership fee, $87.50 goes to the GIC for licensure and only $87.50 goes to membership. We had been trying to make it fair so that all professionals were paying the same fee. She wanted to propose this as a potential option.

Revised By-Law Amendment Motion: Marisa Doucette moves to amend the proposed by-law #7 change to include $200 professional membership fee, in addition to the remainder of proposed by-law changes as circulated, following discussion here today. Seconded by Andrew Ritcey.

Discussion:
- Jerry Singleton acknowledged that Crystal raised a point earlier about generating revenue. He feels this membership fee increase could deter CTRS's from becoming members. Only 80 - 90 CTRS's in Nova Scotia join the association. He feels membership fee increases should be done gradually. The only revenue currently coming in is through membership and conference fees. Jerry said he would be willing to sit on a revenue generation committee if one was developed.
- Dana Mills agrees with Jerry but recognizes that we have been paying the same membership fees for quite some time. Due to this, we have had many challenges. She referenced the number of volunteer hours that the board and committee members contribute which is a huge savings. We need to look at generating revenue. Our finance reviewer also suggested raising membership fees is something we should look at.
- Andrew Ritcey agreed with the comments made and suggested the finance committee could possibly look at a new professional membership for 1 – 2 years. From a licensure perspective, one of the major barriers is do we have the financial means to stand on our own two feet. We are going to be delayed more if we don't get our financial standings in order. We need to make a financial commitment as CTRS's. People need to think about that and consider the motion being put forth.
- Brittany MacKeen acknowledged conversation in the chat looking at an option for a discounted fee for a multi-year professional membership. Unfortunately, at this time, a multi-year professional membership is not something we've explored. This would involve re-looking at our policies and by-laws.
- Brittany MacKeen reminded everyone that we are voting on the amended by-law motion put forth by Marisa Doucette.
Vote (Amended By-law #7 Motion): 69% in favor, 11% contrary minded, 3% abstaining, 17% non-vote. Motion passed.
- Jerry Singleton stated that we still had to vote on the other membership fee increases in the original motion according to "Robert's Rules of Order". Andrew Ritcey agreed that this was correct.

Vote (By-law Amendment #7 – All Other Categories): 79% in favor, 6% abstaining, 15% non-vote. Motion passed.

<u>Membership</u>

8. Current annual membership fees paid within 25 business days of registration form being submitted. If a member is not registered as a paid member, a follow up email will follow, and the account will be deactivated.

Rationale: To ensure clear communication around the expectant and timely processing of flow of payment transactions that vary PayPal, e-Transfer coordinated and managed by a volunteer.

<u>Meeting of Members</u>

18. Fourteen days prior notice shall be given to each Member of any Annual or Special General Meeting of the members. Notice shall be given in writing, by e-mail, or social media. The non-receipt of any notice by any member shall not invalidate the proceedings at any General Meeting.

Rationale: We do not communicate via Canada Post.

<u>Directors</u>

29. Unless otherwise determined by General Meeting, the number of Directors shall be not less than 5 and not more than 15 persons.

Rationale: Growth and development of NSTRA, transition post dissolution is complete.

33. The Board of Directors shall consist of the persons elected or appointed by the Members to the following positions:
o. Six (6) Zone Directors

Rationale: Consistent language: Zone Directors, not Regional Representatives

34. President, if not elected as President Elect, and appointed or voted into position, must have served a minimum of one year on the NSTRA Board of Directors.

Rationale: for the President to have a basic understanding of job descriptions, policies, by laws, and organizational priorities of the NSTRA.

36. A retiring Director shall remain in office until the dissolution or adjournment of the meeting at which their successor is elected and handover to the new Director is complete.

Rationale: Support a smooth transition to the incoming Board, including handover of email passwords & resets, review of job descriptions and to support any current or ongoing tasks

45. In the event a Regional Representative becomes vacant the Professional Member appointed to the Board of Directors must be from the assigned zone. The Board shall appoint a Professional Member as a Director and/or Officer to fill a vacancy on the Board should one occur. b. The Professional Member so appointed shall serve until the next Annual General Meeting. c. In the event a Zone Director becomes vacant, the Professional Member appointed to the Board of Directors must be from the assigned zone.

Rationale: Consistent language: Zone Directors not Regional Representatives.

53. The Nova Scotia Therapeutic Recreation Association hereby acknowledges that each and every Director and Officer of the Association shall be deemed to have assumed Office on the express understanding and agreement and condition that every Director and Officer of the Association and their heirs, executors, administrations and estate and effects respectively shall from time to time and at all times be indemnified and saved harmless out of the funds of the Association which such Director or Directors or Officer or Officers sustains or incurs in or about any action, suit or proceeding which is brought, commenced or prosecuted against them for or in respect of any act deed, matter or thing whatsoever may, done or permitted by them in or about the execution of the duties of their office or Officers, and also from and against all other costs, charges or damages which they sustain or incur in or about or in relation to the affairs of the Association except cost, charges, expense or damages as are occasioned by or arise from their own willful negligence or default.

Rationale: Inclusive language

Miscellaneous

75. Contracts, deeds, bills of exchange and other instruments and documents may be executed on behalf of the Association by the President or President Elect and the Treasurer, or otherwise prescribed by resolution of the Board of Directors.

Rationale: Treasurer is often involved in these business dealings, and it would be in good interest of the Association to add along with Executive Committee members of the Board of Directors - Recording Officer, President, and President Elect.

77. The Association may only borrow money from a financial institution as approved.

Rationale: To clarify that reputable borrowing practices are the best business approach.

- Brittany MacKeen asked for approval of all remaining by-law amendments.

<u>Motion</u>: Marisa Doucette moved the approval of the remaining by-law amendments. Seconded by Kate Giles.

<u>Discussion</u>:
- Amy Rizzuto inquired if we are allowed to vote on all the amendments together or do they have to be voted on individually.
- Andrew Ritcey said that it's up to the board if they want to vote on the amendments together. If membership requests it, they can be voted on individually. During discussion, the Chair can tell if there are concerns with certain by-law amendments. Perhaps, those by-laws need to be updated and voted on separately. Boards vote on by-laws together to make the voting process more efficient.
- Amy Rizzuto expressed appreciation of Andrew's explanation and said she was ok with voting on the amendments together.
Vote: 81% in favor, 19% non-vote. Motion passed.

I. Withdrawal of By-Law #12
   - Brittany MacKeen explained the rationale behind withdrawing By-Law #12. We had members bring feedback around processes for the by-law. The intent of the by-law change was to include all membership categories. However, there were larger issues around the by-law itself and what it would look like to protect us as members and as an association. As a result, we are putting this by-law under review. While we hope that this by-law is something we never need to use, we need to have proper processes in place if necessary. Brittany offered the opportunity for discussion; however, there wasn't any.

b. NSTRA Awards Announcements – Congratulations to our winners!

Legacy Award – Brianne Saunders
Trailblazer Award – Rob Grandy
Innovation Award – Rachel Skanes
Crystal Award – Hailey Hilchey
Academic Achievement – Jacqueline Wojciechowski (DAL) and Chang Lu (NSCC)

- Brittany congratulated all nominees and acknowledged that we had many wonderful nominations.

c. NSTRA 2026 Conference – Marisa Doucette reported that next year's NSTRA conference is being held on October 22nd and 23rd in Liverpool. The conference theme is: "Therapeutic Recreation: Lighting the Route to Health and Wellbeing." Marisa acknowledged Lisa Leahey who is a NSTRA member and local artist. Lisa created the logo which represents a local lighthouse in Liverpool.

9. **Adjournment and next meeting** – Brittany Mackeen adjourned the meeting at 4:20pm. Seconded by Shelley Smith.

Respectfully submitted,

Lynette Stevens, CTRS (she/her)
NSTRA Recording Officer

TOWNHALL AND SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
JUNE 5, 2026
VIRTUAL VIA ZOOM

Attendance: Marisa Doucette, Olivia Pliner, Brittany MacKeen, Stevie Grant, Charlotte Sabean, Jocelyn Barbier, Shelly Luddington, Emily Flinn, Jessica Murphy, Alicia Dobranowski, Dawn MacDonald, Colleen Bateman, Avril Wilson, Kevin Stairs, Cassady Yochoff, Brittany Naugler, Tara Harnish, Andrea King, Kate Giles, Jenelle d'Entremont, Brad MacMillan, Shelley Smith, Brianne Saunders, Dani Bilodeau, Jerry Singleton, Natalie Baglole, Jennifer Fischer, Ashley Penton, MacKenzie Lefebvre, Lynette Stevens, Andrew Ritcey, Sun Lee, Kirsten Lockwood, Sarah Blanchard, Kathleen MacDougall, Colleen Lawlor, Nicole Hill, Kim Woodford

Regrets: Catherine Lubberts, Danielle Gagne, Danielle Taylor

1. **Call to Order** – Marisa Doucette called the meeting to order at 11:39am. She noted that we currently don't have quorum. We will monitor this and can proceed with a vote or motion if quorum is reached.

2. **Approval of Agenda** – The agenda was approved by Emily Flinn, seconded by Sun Lee. Marisa acknowledged that we would review and approve the minutes from both the 2025 AGM and this special meeting at our AGM in the fall.

3. **Introduce and Updates on Board of Directors** – Marisa introduced the current NSTRA board of directors and current NSTRA committee co-chairs. She referenced the vacancies that are currently on the board and the EDIA committee co-chair vacancy.

4. **Townhall**

- Marsia Doucette asked if Brittany MacKeen accepted the chair. Brittany accepted the chair.
- Brittany reviewed how the NSTRA Guiding Principles and Standards of Practice (SOP) draft were developed. NSTRA developing their own SOP was first discussed at NSTRA's conference in Digby. The Standards of Practice task force met eight times from December 2023 – October 2025. The co-chairs of the task force presented a preliminary draft of the Guiding Principles and Standards of Practice at the 2024 NSTRA conference in Cape Breton and presented an update to membership in October 2025. NSTRA members were provided the opportunity to give feedback during both opportunities. Several draft documents were developed and edited based on their response. An external editor was employed by NSTRA in September and October 2025 to review and create the draft document. The Standards of Practice task force was then dissolved so the Advocacy committee could pursue other projects. The NSTRA Guiding Principles and Standards of Practice was shared with membership on May 5th with the opportunity to ask questions and provide further feedback.
- Brittany reported that while a lot of feedback was regarding concerns about the current draft; there was a lot of acknowledgement of the hard work and dedication that went into creating the current Guiding Principles and Standards of Practice document by a group of volunteers.
- Brittany provided a summary of the concerns noted in the current document:

- The roles of Therapist and RTA are not separated in the standards. There needs to be clearly identified differences between the roles. If not, will this affect our pursuit for licensure?
- It is not within the scope of the RTA/RTP to complete comprehensive assessments, but the document reads that it is.
- Risk mitigation has been a key factor in our pursuit of licensure, and the document doesn't support the skills and knowledge required in this area by the CTRS.
- Many of the competencies are not measurable. We need to have strong, clear, and measurable standards as the profession moves forward.
- The proposed standards do not reflect the minimum requirements expected of CTRS's and RTA's.
- The role of Therapeutic Assistant is not outlined in the standards of practice. This is an important role in many zones.
- Why do we have a plain language description? The language used in the document should be clear and easy to read. These statements make it confusing.
- Concerns around consistent language throughout the document (ie. client vs. individual served, RecT vs. CTRS, etc.).
- Some parts of the document are wordy and unclear. The document doesn't always represent what practice is like in real life.
- Why we have Guiding Principles as well as Standards of Practice? Is this necessary?
- Question re: why a CPP is a competency? The current structure of CPP is a narrow perspective and doesn't represent how practice has changed.
- The competency around research is limiting. We should be contributing to research ourselves not only "participating or supporting" research.
- The importance of making sure this is a robust document and that it outlines the many roles that a person may work in as a RT professional.
- There aren't any credentials for the RTA listed making it difficult when advocating for those with a two-year diploma.
- Each role (ie. CTRS, RTA and TA) have distinct expectations and competencies. While they all have minimum qualifications the CTRS must maintain their credentials as well.
- The need for clear standards has been highlighted through the implementation of the One Person One Record (OPOR) online documentation system at the IWK and in the Central Zone. Brittany reported that this system will be provincewide in November. Brittany noted that there has been conversation around how the RT role is defined in OPOR and the extra education that needs to be done due to this.

- Brittany acknowledged that there has been lots of discussion about how to address these concerns; particularly at the executive level. She again acknowledged the huge amount of work completed by the original task force over the past two years. We acknowledge the concerns and feedback from membership and understand that there is still work to be done.
- If we reach quorum, Brittany reported that we are looking to see if membership wants to make a motion re: the Standards of Practice. There is not one currently on the table and it will likely look different than what we originally planned.

- Brittany acknowledged that establishing NSTRA's Standards of Practice is something we still want to work towards, but we need to put a timeline on when the work must be completed. A new working group will need to be established under the Licensure Committee to ensure any revisions align with our pursuit for licensure.
- Brittany reported that previous members of the committee are welcome to come back. She also encouraged those members that submitted feedback to step up and to help update the document so that there are people looking at it through a different lens. Brittany acknowledged that there would be a quick turnaround for this new working group. Any revisions would need to be sent to the board for approval before being sent out to membership for review within 30 days of the AGM. This is the next time a large group of us will be together to vote on the Guiding Principles and Standards of Practice.
- Marisa Doucette thanked Brittany for the overview and reviewed some of the work the Licensure committee is currently doing. They have developed a scope of practice document re: the CTRS role and are looking at developing a scope of practice document for the RTA role.
- Jerry Singleton acknowledged appreciating what work has been done with the Standards of Practice. He suggested that the current standards could be passed for those NSTRA members that are CTRS's. We could then develop separate standards for the RTA's based on their lived work experience. Only RTA's should be on this committee. He acknowledged that associates are different from assistants. Dawn MacDonald provided a good explanation of how the RTA role cooperates in their work environment and that it is different than in other provinces. The difference between a RTA role and a CTRS should be acknowledged.
- Marisa Doucette reported that RTA's were part of the original working group when the Guiding Principles and Standards of Practice were developed.
- Dawn MacDonald expressed that a great job was done by those involved. She acknowledged that people brought up great points that she had not considered. She feels the current standards are representative of what we do as CTRS's and RTA's and it's not necessary for there to be a separation. This would be more part of the scope of practice document that is being developed. She referred to the standards that were developed for RN's/LPN's and feels that the CTRS/RTA role differentiation is similar. She feels it's hard to make the standards measurable because they need to fit into a variety of work settings with different clients, etc. We need to look at the minimal competencies of new graduates and what we expect their skills and abilities to be related to the standards. The competencies of both positions do need to be separate, but the current document covers the specifics. She feels it makes sense to have united standards and guiding principles and then a scope of practice document re: each position's different responsibilities. She reported that she would love to help with this work.
- Andrew Ritcey also acknowledged the great job and that he was glad to see a final document. He asked if the previous task force looked at current competencies and the ATRA and CTRA Standards of Practice?
- Kate Giles reported that the task force did use them as guiding documents but did not reference them because they did not cover what the task force wanted as an outcome.
- Andrew Ritcey reported that ATRA has interesting standards re: risk and safety and the CPP although they do not use that term specifically. They incorporate that into their plan of operation.
- Andrew Ritcey reported that the Licensure committee has two scope documents developed for the CTRS and the RTA. Andrew and RTA's only were involved in the development of the RTA document. Both are evolving documents and continue to be worked on.

- Kate Giles spoke to the concern re: the Therapeutic Assistant (TA) role not being acknowledged in the current Guiding Principles and Standards of Practice draft document. When the task force wrote their terms of reference they thought about the TA's and how they are working. The task force wanted this document to account for minimum requirements for entry into practice. Currently this is a 2-year diploma for RTA's and the CTRS designation for RT's. The current requirement for the TA position is Grade 12 and only 1-year of the diploma program. For the task force, this was an incomplete entry to practice and is why the TA position was not included. This could be looked at in the future and feedback is appreciated by those currently working in TA positions.

5. **New Business**

a. Approval of Standards of Practice

- Brittany MacKeen asked if we were ready to move forward re: a motion about the proposed Standards of Practice document.

Motion: Andrew Ritcey moves that we table the proposed Standards of Practice document and assign the Licensure Committee to establish a new working group to report back to membership no later than the annual meeting in October. Seconded by Jerry Singleton.
- Brittany acknowledged that we reached quorum and can proceed with a vote on Andrew's motion re: the proposed Standards of Practice document.

Discussion:
- Jessica Murphy asked for clarification if we are looking to develop a supporting document re: role scope or re-working this document to include role differentiation through the TR process. Brittany confirmed that we would be looking at re-working the current Standards of Practice document.
- Kim Woodford reported that she hopes a member from the original task force will be involved in the new group for context of the process and development of the document. She would volunteer but is uncertain if she can commit at this time.
- Tara Harnish reported that she is willing to rejoin the new working group.
- Shelley Smith told those present that if they want to be involved in the new working group, they should email the Licensure Committee at licensure@nstra.info. She will reach out to previous members of the working group as well. She reiterated that there will be a quick turnaround for anyone considering joining. We will be looking for a commitment from people, and the work might be a bit heavier during the summer.
- Colleen Bateman noted a comment in the chat confirming that we are voting on the current motion made by Andrew Ritcey. It was confirmed that we were.
- Vote: In Favour (32/37) 87%, Contrary-minded (1/37) 3%, Abstaining (2/37) 5%, Non-voting (2/37) 5%. Motion passed.
- Brittany MacKeen asked if Marisa Doucette would accept the chair. Marisa accepted the chair.

b. Update on Exploration of New Professional Membership Category Following Feedback at Annual General Meeting

- Marisa Doucette reported that at the Annual General Meeting last fall there was discussion about looking at a new membership category. The board is currently exploring this; looking at new professionals that have graduated. There will be a specific timeline outlining this and it must be from a TR program. This membership category is looking to reduce the membership rate; specifically, in the CTRS and Non-Professional CTRS membership categories. The board is developing what this will look like in writing and the rationale. It will be forwarded to the board of directors and Finance Committee before being circulated to membership. Marisa reported that any by-law amendments must come back to membership for a vote. Any by-law amendment changes must be sent out to membership 60 days prior to the AGM. She acknowledged that any changes will not affect the membership year starting in 2026. They would come into effect the following membership year in 2027.

c. <u>Update on Review of By-law #12</u>

- Marisa Doucette reported that the original by-law amendment was to include all membership categories, but it drew attention to larger issues with the by-law. We withdrew the amendment and the by-law is currently under review. Marisa reviewed the current by-law wording (which can be viewed on NSTRA's website) and reiterated it's important to protect members and the association. We hope this is a by-law we never have to use but we need to have proper processes in place if needed. This work is in the initial stages. There may be a shift in focus as we complete our strategic plan and Standards of Practice by the AGM. But work on this by-law remains on our radar.

6. **Adjournment** – Marisa Doucette thanked everyone for coming. Jerry Singleton moved the meeting be adjourned at 12:36pm. Seconded by Dani Bilodeau.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lynette Stevens, CTRS (she/her)
NSTRA Recording Office

President	**Marisa Doucette**
President Elect	**Olivia Pliner**
Past President	**Brittany MacKeen**
Treasurer	**Cassady Yochoff**
Membership Director	**Kate Giles**
Communications Director	**Nicole Martelle**
Recording Officer	**Lynette Stevens**
Cape Breton Zone Director	***Vacant Position***
Northeastern Zone Director	**Elise Fisher**
Central Zone Director	**Colleen Bateman**
Annapolis Valley Zone Director	***Vacant Position***
South Shore Zone Director	***Vacant Position***
Southwestern Zone Director	**Catherine Lubberts**
Student Director NSCC	**Alyssa Kiss**
Student Director Dalhousie	**Danielle Gagne**

A message from the President:

As I reflect on the past year, I am proud of the work that has been done by the board, committee chairs, volunteers, and every member who has contributed towards our mission of enhancing recreation therapy here in Nova Scotia. There have been countless hours poured into this association. We have seen a lot of transitions of committee chairs over the past year. I want to take a moment to thank the committee chairs who have transitioned from their roles and welcome the new (co-) chairs as they step up and lead important work that supports the mission, vision, and values of the association.

Members, thank you for your engagement; in education sessions, TR Month events, zone meetings, social media posts, surveys, upcoming conferences, etc. It is important to the board that our voice as an association reflects us as a membership. This work takes all of us, and each of us brings something unique to the table. Your engagement means more than you know to those working behind the scenes to deliver the value to members that the association strives for.

As we look ahead, NSTRA remains committed to implementing our strategic priorities, continuing to advocate and strengthen our voice as a profession, and continue to provide opportunities and enhance value for members.

A special thank you to all the board members transitioning to the end of their term – Brittany MacKeen, Lynette Stevens, Kate Giles, Colleen Bateman, Danielle Gagne, and Alyssa Kiss; and to those stepping down to pursue professional development in their own career in recreation therapy – Nicole Martelle.

2026 NSTRA
9TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
AGENDA
OCTOBER 2, 2026, AT 11:30AM

1. **Call to Order and Introductions.**

2. **Approval of Agenda.**

3. **Approval of Minutes from Previous AGM (October 24th, 2025).**

4. **Approval of Minutes from Townhall and Special Meeting (June 5th, 2026).**

5. **NSTRA Highlights for 2025 - 2026 membership year.**

6. **Board Reports.**
   a. President
   b. Past President
   c. President-Elect
   d. Treasurer
   e. Recording Officer
   f. Communications Director
   g. Membership Director
   h. Central Zone Director
   i. Northeastern Zone Director
   j. Southwestern Zone Director
   k. Dalhousie Student Director
   m. NSCC Student Director

There are no reports for the Annapolis Valley Zone Director, South Shore Zone Director, or Cape Breton Zone Director due to vacancies this past year.

6. **Committee Reports.**
   a. Advocacy
   b. Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, Accessibility
   c. Licensure
   d. Marketing
   e. Education
   f. Finance

8. **Election of Officers and Directors.**
   a. President Elect (3-year term)

b. President (2-year term)
c. Recording Officer (2-year term)
d. Membership Director (2-year term)
e. Communications Director (2-year term)
f. Annapolis Valley Zone Director (2-year term)
g. Cape Breton Zone Director (2-year term)
h. Central Zone Director (2-year term)
i. South Shore Zone Director (2-year term)
j. NSCC Student Director (1-year term)
k. Dalhousie Student Director (1-year term)

9. **New Business**
   a. By-law Amendments
   b. Standards of Practice
   c. NSTRA Awards Announcements
   d. NSTRA Conference 2027

10. **Adjournment**

Achievements:

- Nova Scotia Therapeutic Recreation Association (NSTRA) Board and Committee Work:
    - Attended NSTRA Board of Directors (BoD) transition meeting in-person and accepted the chair from Brittany MacKeen
    - Reviewed recommendations from BoD and committees from 2025 AGM
    - Chaired 9 BoD meetings (8 online and 1 in-person in April 2026)
    - Co-chaired Townhall and Special Meeting in June 2026
    - Ensured all board members sat on at least one committee
    - Co-Chair of Conference Planning Committee for 2026 Conference
    - Attended 13 committee meetings (minimum 1 per) for:
        - Advocacy
        - Long-term Care Taskforce
        - Education
        - Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Accessibility (EDIA)
        - Finance
        - Licensure
        - Standard of Practice Working Group
        - Marketing
    - Supported transitions of chairs in EDIA, Marketing and Advocacy
    - Attended both Licensure Townhalls in November 2025
    - Met bi-monthly with Past President and President Elect
    - Facilitated onboarding of President Elect (December 2025) and South Shore Zone Director (January; resignation received in April due to unforeseen circumstances)
    - Met with various board members, committee chairs and a few members for various purposes over the year to support the work of the association
    - In collaboration with the President Elect, Past President and the board, proposed the by-law amendments as circulated to membership in July 2026
    - Engaged in both Strategic Planning sessions
    - Developed newsletter for members and shared with membership in August 2026
    - Developed President handover working document to support future onboarding to the President role

- Community and Social Engagement:
    - Met with Caregivers Nova Scotia around Social Prescription in November 2025
    - Email communication with provincial government regarding Therapeutic Recreation (TR) Month Proclamation for February 2026 (received in January 2026)
    - Attended Student Networking Event and Virtual Trivia Night during TR Month
    - Attended Dalhousie University Program Advisory Council meetings
    - Created TR Month communication document to support and advertise provincial and national opportunities for members
    - Provided a video for TR month for marketing initiative and one for Dalhousie student presentation
    - Met with organizers for Dalhousie Rec-O in June to coordinate NSTRA involvement in September 2026

- Education Opportunities:
    - Co-facilitated education session with other NSCC and Dalhousie University Placement Coordinators in April 2026 on “What You Want and Need to Know About Supervising a Recreation Therapy Student”
    - Attended NSTRA Education Session, “Advancing LGBTQ+ Whole Person Health in TR: An Anti-Oppressive Practice Model”, in June 2026
    - Continued partnership with and engagement in sessions on the Therapeutic Recreation Centre of Excellence (TRCoE)

- Canadian Therapeutic Recreation Association (CTRA) and Provincial Partners Engagement:
    - Attended 2 Provincial Partners Meetings as NSTRA Representative
    - Attended 6 National TR Month planning meetings from November to March
    - Actively engaged in preparations for the National TR Month Social in February 2026
    - Working alongside a group of provincial partners and two members of a working group through the National Council of Therapeutic Recreation Certification (NCTRC) to advocate regarding the language in the Canadian National Occupational Codes
    - Met with Therapeutic Recreation Ontario (TRO) Executive Director and President Elect in June 2026

Recommendations:
- Large focus on the implementation of the new strategic plan, delegating tasks to ensure association work is aligning with the strategic priorities.
- Work alongside Treasurer and Finance Committee to support development of operational budget, consider innovative ideas regarding revenue generation (explore a revenue generation taskforce)
- Determine next steps regarding by-law #12

Respectively submitted,

Marisa Doucette, CTRS (she/her)
NSTRA President 2025/2026

Achievements:

- Nova Scotia Therapeutic Recreation Association (NSTRA) Board and Committees:
    - Attended 9 of 10 Board of Directors Meetings
    - Chaired November in-person board meeting
    - Active member of NSTRA Conference Planning committee
    - Active member of Social Committee
    - Active member of Licensure Committee
    - Active member of Education Committee
    - Participated in NSTRA TR Month planning
    - Chaired 3 Past President Council meetings
    - Co-Chaired Special Meeting and Town Hall
    - Attended bi-monthly meetings with President and President Elect
    - Sent Regulation of RTA/RTP survey to membership

- Strategic Planning:
    - Developed Strategic Planning presentation to share with Board and membership
    - Facilitated NSTRA Strategic Planning session with Board
    - Facilitated NSTRA Strategic Planning session with membership
    - Emailed NSTRA Strategic Planning Survey to membership
    - Sent Strategic Planning Update to NSTRA Board

- Meetings & Social Engagements:
    - Attended Licensure Town Halls
    - Attended Central Zone TR Month Social
    - Co-Hosted NSTRA TR Month Virtual Trivia Night
    - Attended Central Zone Curling Try-It
    - Attended Virtual Central Zone meeting
    - Attended NSTRA Virtual Networking Event
    - Met with President Elect and Donna White, Nova Scotia Community College (NSCC) Manager of Health & Human Services
    - Met with President Elect and Catherine Butler, President & Chief Executive Officer of Health Association Nova Scotia (HANS)

- Education Opportunities:
    - Attended NSTRA Education Session "What you want and need to know about supervising a Recreation Therapy Student"
    - Attended NSTRA Education Session "Advancing LGBTQ+ Whole Person Health in TR: An Intersectional Anti-Oppressive Practice Model"
    - Registered for NSTRA 2026 Conference "Lighting the Route to Health & Well-Being"

Recommendations:

- Work towards restructuring of the Board, to help reduce the number of vacant positions and strengthen work of the committees.
    - Addition of a Conference Planning Director and Education Director on the Board to help support the identified need for more education opportunities by membership.
- In depth review of NSTRA's partnerships, including the value and benefit of these partnerships to membership. Develop a document of the same to be shared with membership.
- Consider accommodation support for the President, Treasurer, and Recording Officer at the annual conference when held outside their respective zones.

Respectfully Submitted,

Brittany MacKeen, CTRS (she/her)
Past President, NSTRA
2025-2026

PRESIDENT ELECT'S REPORT

Achievements (December 2025 - September 2026):

- Attended all monthly NSTRA board meetings on Zoom and in-person on April 26th
  - Reviewing minutes and board reports submitted
- Attended virtual Student Networking Event
- Attended Central Zone Curling Try-it for TR Month
- Attended Virtual Central Zone meeting
- Facilitated Academic Achievement Awards
- Facilitated NSTRA Awards
- Met with Past President and Donna White, Nova Scotia Community College (NSCC) Manager of Health & Human Services
- Met with Past President and Catherine Butler, President & Chief Executive Officer of Health Association Nova Scotia (HANS)
- Active member of NSTRA Licensure Committee
- Chaired 7 NSTRA Advocacy Meetings
  - Support LTC and Job Responsiveness Task Forces
- In-depth policy review and development with President and Past President (ongoing)
  - Drafted new policy for External Organization Information Sharing
- Reviewed by-laws with Past President and President.
- Attended bi-monthly meetings with President and Past President

Recommendations:

- Continue policy development
- Continue with work identified in the new strategic plan

Respectfully Submitted,

Olivia Pliner, CTRS (she/her)
President Elect

Achievements:

- Attended Association Board or Executive meetings and reported on finances as required.
- Served on EDIA Committee, Conference Committee, and Finance Committee.
- Deposited funds as received, arranged for payments as required.
- Checked the post office box weekly.
- Arranged for licensure funds plus accrued interest to be moved into GIC for college fund.
- Utilized Sage software to maintain financial history and current records.
- Utilized PayPal option for receiving credit card payments and maintaining e-transfer/cheque processing of payments received.
- Met with the Association's accountant to organize financial information and prepare a 2025-2026 Financial Report.
- Participated in Strategic Plan work of the Association.
- Reviewed Bylaws of the Association and submitted edits for approval.
- Revised/established financial policies and procedures for various aspects of NSTRA.

Recommendations:

- Establish a budget for 2026 – 2027.
- Continue to explore opportunities with accountant support to enhance efficiencies in the tasks of the portfolio.
- Research alternative online payment methods and associated costs.

Respectfully Submitted,

Cassady Yochoff, Treasurer (2025 – 2026)

COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Achievements:

- Attended 2025 AGM
- Attended Board of Directors meetings and reviewed all meeting minutes
- Initiated and attended Advocacy Committee meetings as Co-chair
- Initiated the reestablishment of the Job Responsiveness Task Force for Advocacy Committee
- Sent job postings with improper qualifications to Job Responsiveness Task Force
- Co-lead and attended some LTC Task Force meetings
- Connected new board members to email access and log in
- Provided bio for website
- Created graphics for and promoted new Board of Directors on social media
- Created graphics for and promoted Licensure Town Hall through social media & email correspondence
- Created graphics for, recruited, and promoted LTC Task Force/Advocacy Committee
- Attended various Central Zone meetings
- Attended TR Month Planning Committee meetings
- Provided communication, created graphics for, and promoted TR Month events on social media and through email
- Led the Cheers for Peers initiative during TR month, which involved 1:1 email communication with members nominated
- Attended TR Month Virtual Networking and moderated Acute Care room
- Shared visuals for the marketing committee to Instagram: Indigenous Veterans Day, Remembrance Day, Transgender Awareness Week, Transgender Day of Remembrance, International Day of Persons with Disabilities, National Day of Remembrance & Action on Violence Against Women and International Day of Persons with Disabilities
- Attended Southwestern Zone meeting in relation to supporting members within Nova Scotia Health
- Shared and encouraged members to participate in the "Embrace Your Voice" membership survey
- Promoted NSTRA public Facebook and members only Facebook page
- Managed and promoted Instagram account
- Managed LinkedIn NSTRA account
- Posted various appropriate jobs to NSTRA Members Only Facebook page
- Participated in "working lunches" with President Elect in relation to BoD & Advocacy Committee
- Shared information on education events for Education Committee
- Helped delegate emails to proper members of the board
- Posted information on Call for Papers on all social media accounts
- Shared Conference posts seeking students for a poster presentation to all socials and through email correspondence
- Shared/pushed emails and social media posts for Special Meeting held June 2026
- Provided phone interview for a prospective TR student at NSCC

- Sent various Advocacy letters regarding improper qualifications directly to employers
- Promoted NSTRA awards through social media postings
- Shared information through email and visuals on social media regarding NSTRA Conference 2026
- Updated registration sheet for NSTRA Conference 2026
- Resigned as Advocacy Co-Chair effective June 2026
- Submitted resignation (to be effective following handover to new Communications Director at AGM)

Recommendations:

- Incoming Communications Director to explore using TikTok as a medium to disseminate some information
- Expand reach on LinkedIn and use the platform for connecting more

Respectfully submitted,

Nicole Martelle
Communications Director, NSTRA
2025-2026

Achievements:

- Attended 9 meetings out of 10 with the NSTRA Board of Directors
- 2026 NSTRA Conference Program Committee Member, attended regular meetings, Programs Committee
- Attended Central Zone meetings and Socials
- Provided materials to Dalhousie Student Director and NSCC Student Director to promote the work of NSTRA
- Ongoing communication with NSTRA members re: membership via email, how to use the website, Two-Factor Authentication issues, communication with IT/Blair.
- Completed all Board Reports and Annual Report
- Met with TR Planning Month working group (January-February 2026)
- Attended two NSTRA Networking events
- Co-Chair, Standards of Practice Working Group
- Member, Standard of Practice Working Group 2.0
- Received membership forms and regularly updated membership list, zone lists, and mailing list
- Confirmed memberships with 2026 NSTRA conference committee
- Confirmed memberships with Treasurer
- Confirmed mailing lists with IT
- Confirmed membership via email with members

NSTRA Membership Statistics (2025/2026)

NSTRA Professional Members: 139

CTRS: 89
Non-CTRS: 43
Affiliate Members: 4
Supporting: 3

NSTRA Student members: 122

Nova Scotia Community College: 62
Dalhousie University: 44
University of Lethbridge: 8
Other: 8

Total NSTRA members 2025-2026: 261

Break down of members per zone (2025/2026):

- Cape Breton Zone: 38
- Northeastern Zone: 19
- South Shore Zone: 42
- Southwest Zone: 14
- Valley Zone: 12
- Central Zone: 127
- Undeclared: 9

Recommendations:

- Continue to promote student engagement with NSTRA.
- More virtual meetings with NSCC and University campuses
- Better communication and collaboration between Student Directors and Membership Director. Promotion of NSTRA membership and Networking events should be a joint effort.
- Engagement with Educators - collaboration re: NSTRA presentation in class and Rec-O/Student orientations.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kate Giles
Membership Director, NSTRA

RECORDING OFFICER'S REPORT

In 2026, the NSTRA Board met 10 times, 2 in-person meetings in Central Zone and 8 using a paid Zoom account. Zone Representatives and Committee Chairs also used the association's Zoom account to hold their meetings.

A key aspect this year was the development of NSTRA's new strategic plan. For the first time, NSTRA facilitated our strategic planning sessions independently without external consult. The strategic planning sessions included NSTRA membership through both virtual sessions and the use of a Google form for those unable to attend. As a membership-driven association, it was important to the Board of Directors to include its members' thoughts and opinions in the development of our new strategic plan. Many thanks to Brittany MacKeen, Past President, for her leadership during this process.

Our association continues to grow, and our board and committee members are dedicated to this work. The following highlights are snapshots of their activities:

October 2025
Facilitated virtual education sessions prior to the AGM – "A Year in Review: NSTRA Committee Updates" and "NSTRA Standards of Practice: An Overview"
November 2025
New board members were welcomed and onboarded; In-person transition board meeting was held at the NSCC Ivany Campus; the Licensure Committee facilitated two Town Halls for NSTRA membership
December 2025
TR Month brainstorming and discussion; the Marketing Committee planned for the "Recreation Therapy" swag fundraiser
January 2026
Welcomed new President Elect to the NSTRA Board; Academic achievement award nominations for NSCC Lunenburg Campus opened; TR Month planning
February 2026
TR Month Proclamation; Provincial Virtual TR Month Networking Event; "Practice What You Preach" Contest; "Virtual Trivia Night" for all NSTRA members; Promoted "Cheers from Peers" nominations; "Recreation Therapy" swag fundraiser kick-off
March 2026
EDIA survey re: Calendar of Acknowledgement feedback; Developed outline for strategic planning sessions with NSTRA membership; Re-established the "Job Responsiveness Taskforce"; Adopted the EDIA Committee's "Anti-Racism/Anti-Oppression Action Plan"
April 2026
Past President facilitated two virtual strategic planning sessions (one with past and current board of directors and one for all NSTRA membership); Virtual education session with TR Educators titled: "What You Want and Need to Know About Supervising a Recreation Therapy Student"; In-person board meeting was held at the NSCC Ivany campus

May 2026
Academic achievement award nominations for Dalhousie University and NSCC Ivany Campus opened; Strategic planning questions emailed to NSTRA membership for those unable to attend a virtual session
June 2026
Distribution of NSTRA academic achievement awards; Special Meeting of NSTRA membership was held including a Town Hall session; NSTRA Guiding Principles and Standards of Practice document was tabled and NSTRA membership voted that a new working group be established to continue work on the Guiding Principles and Standards; Virtual EDIA education session titled: "Advancing LGBTQ+ Whole Person Health in TR: An Intersectional Anti-Oppressive Practice Model"; Survey was sent to NSTRA membership re: their interest in RTA/RP self-regulation; "Benefit of Membership" letter was finalized and posted on NSTRA's website as suggested by some NSTRA members
July 2026
NSTRA by-law amendment review; NSTRA award nominations opened; "Strategic Planning and Future Conferences" Survey was sent to membership; Early-bird registration opened for NSTRA's annual conference in Liverpool; Membership renewal also opened one week early; Proposed by-law amendments were emailed to NSTRA members
August 2026
Communication re: "NSTRA's Honour our History" initiative for website; Summer Newsletter was sent to NSTRA membership; NSTRA Award voting launched
September 2026
Planning for NSTRA 2026 AGM in October; Final preparations for NSTRA 2026 Conference - "Therapeutic Recreation: Lighting the Route to Health and Wellbeing (Lighthouse Route)" in Liverpool, Nova Scotia

<u>Recommendations</u>:
• Create a better process and template to be shared with board members for consistency and to ease the development of the Annual Report.
• Support the implementation of NSTRA's new strategic plan when developed.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lynette Stevens (she/her)
Recording Officer, NSTRA
2025-2026

Achievements:

- Attended NSTRA Board of Directors monthly meetings with the exception of December and July meetings
- Responded to emails from Central Zone members
- Hosted TR month social event
- Hosted curling try-it session for TR month
- Co-hosted virtual trivia for all members during TR month
- Hosted 3 zone meetings virtually
- Researched fundraising opportunity for Central Zone based on member suggestion
- Attended NSTRA conference planning meeting to support their work and continue to develop conference planning manual
- Acted as co-chair for Education Committee and completed related duties
- Participated on Licensure Committee and completed related duties

Recommendations:

- Continue to host zone meetings, social events, and zone engagement
- Explore fundraising/revenue generating opportunities outside membership and conference fee

Respectively submitted,

Colleen Bateman (she/her)
Central Zone Director, NSTRA
2025/2026

Achievements:

- Between October 2025 and September 2026, the NE Zone held four hybrid meetings (in-person and Zoom option). Meetings focused on standing agenda items as well as educational components, including guest speakers on topics such as music therapy and grief.
- Held a Zone 'Fun Day' in June in Truro which comprised of painting pottery and a short meeting.
- Promoted NSTRA memberships, identified potential members and connected via email.
- Attended monthly BOD meetings via Zoom and one in-person.
- Participated as a member of the NSTRA Marketing Committee.
- Participated in creating a document to advocate NSTRA membership/engagement to employers.
- Participated in board of directors' roundtable on standards of practice.

Recommendations:

- Continue to communicate with NE zone members and promote NSTRA membership benefits to potential new members.
- Seek out new topics/presenters for future educational components at zone meetings.

Respectfully Submitted,

Elise Fisher
Northeastern Zone Rep, NSTRA
2025-2026

Achievements:

- Held 5 zone meetings on MS Teams
  - Nov 24th
  - Jan 26th
  - Mar 23rd
  - May 1st
  - June 12th – Speaker, Kristan Sabean, Pharmacist, DGH, Title "Medication Properties in Older Adults"
- Provided education opportunities and suggestions
- Continued in role of Education Committee member and attending all five meetings, held on Zoom
- Attended monthly NSTRA BOD meetings via Zoom, and one in-person meeting

Recommendations:

- Continue to communicate with SW zone members
- Continue to reach out to others who do not have a Zone Director and allow them to join our meetings and be kept up to date on what is occurring in NSTRA
- Update, and keep updated the contact list of members and roles in the SW area

Respectfully Submitted,

Catherine Lubberts
Southwestern Zone Director, NSTRA
2025-2026

Achievements:

Nova Scotia Therapeutic Recreation Association Board and Committee Work:

- Attended NSTRA BoD transition meeting - October 2025
- Attended 10 BoD meetings, 8 online, two in-person (November 2025 & April 2026)
- Onboarded to EDIA committee co-chair role - August 2026
- Active member of the Long-Term Care (LTC) Task Force
- Supported LTC Task Force data collection
- Active member of Marketing Committee
- Attended all Therapeutic Recreation Month planning meetings
- Created infographic for conference committee targeted for students and posted same on Dalhousie Brightspace (Online Learning Platform) and School of Health and Human Performance (HAHP) newsletter
- Attended Licensure Townhall - November 2025
- Attended Central Zone Virtual Trivia Night - February 2026
- Attended NSTRA Strategic Planning Session - April 2026
- Developed custom NSTRA Slide Deck - Pending BoD approval September 2026

<u>Student Director Role-Specific Work</u>:

- Co-planned, facilitated, and evaluated TR Month Student Networking event - February 2026
- Active member of Therapeutic Recreation Program Advisory Committee (TR PAC)
- Co-developed Virtual Student Networking Event SPP to aid future Student Directors - Approved by BoD July 2026
- Co-updated/developed Student Director Handbook
- Developed "TR Student Networking Event Debrief Form" to be used after TR student networking events and to inform future events

<u>Speaking Engagements</u>:

- Co-facilitated NSTRA education, "Advancing LGBTQ+ Whole Person Health in Therapeutic Recreation through Intersectionality and Anti-Oppression" session - June 2026
- Spoke at Dalhousie Virtual Open House event on behalf of the TR students, promoted NSTRA - November 2025
- Presented to Dalhousie University "Intro to TR" class to discuss importance of joining professional organizations such as NSTRA and market Student Networking Event - January 2026
- Engaged in the Dalhousie Recreation Association Instagram Takeover showcasing my internship and involvement in the NSTRA - April 2026
- Was highlighted in National Council for Therapeutic Recreation Certification (NCTRC) Student Spotlight Series and promoted NSTRA in the same - July 2026
- Currently organizing presentations to three Dalhousie University TR classes

(spanning multiple years of study) to promote NSTRA and Dalhousie Student Director Role

Recommendations:

- Develop a pre-survey to disseminate in December/Early January that determines student needs and wants for the TR Month Student Networking Event
- Create Canva posts outlining the benefits of joining each NSTRA committee, from a student perspective
- Create a social media post or letter to disseminate to NSTRA student members after TR Month Student Networking event, to show what you learned and overall appreciation
- Formally write down and appropriately organize each BoD related task you do, to inform future Student Directors and update Student Handbook as you learn new things
- Speak to TR students in the first and second year of study in September (before the AGM) to promote NSTRA and the Student Director role
- Have bi-montly meetings OR a consistent communication platform with the NSCC student director to facilitate collaboration and idea-sharing
- Have a scheduled debrief after the Student Networking Event with team members involved in planning/facilitating (using the "TR Student Networking Event Debrief Form") 1-2 weeks after the event
- Perhaps include demographic information on the initial registration form for networking event to gain a better understanding of who we are serving (i.e., year of study, race, gender, sexuality, zone)

Respectfully Submitted,

Danielle Gagne (they/them)
Dalhousie Student Director, NSTRA
2025-2026

Achievements:

- Attended the 2025 AGM.
- Attended 8 of 10 board meetings and shared information with peers from the NSCC class of 2026.
- Completed Board Reports and the Annual Report.
- Planned and facilitated a Student/Professional Virtual Networking event with Danielle Gagne (Dalhousie Student Director), supported by other board members.
- Attended Dal PAC Zoom meeting.
- Completed TR month at the Ivany Waterfront Campus run by the students. Also attended Curling Try It and Virtual Trivia Night during TR month.
- Attended Marketing Committee meetings.
- Attended Central Zone meeting.

Recommendations:

- Attend meetings and be open to engaging in and sharing ideas.
- Connect with your instructor and students to see how to support them best and relay information to them during your time in this position.
- Encourage students to join subcommittees or task forces.
- Encourage students to continue their memberships once graduating.
- Stay organized and reach out to other board members if you have questions or need support.
- This is a wonderful opportunity to learn about our association and have a voice within it.

Respectfully submitted,

Alyssa Kiss (she/her)
NSCC Student Director
2025-2026

Purpose

The purpose of this working group is central to the work of the Nova Scotia Therapeutic Recreation Association (NSTRA). We will generate momentum for achieving intervention and treatment by increasing political commitment to recognizing the profession of therapeutic recreation (TR) and by mobilizing resources for investment in health and well-being. We will increase demand for TR as a vital service to be accessible to all, by engaging stakeholders and service providers and enabling better access to such services. By drawing on the strengths of all members of NSTRA, the working group seeks to position therapeutic recreation at the heart of health and community services.

Highlights:

- Re-established task-force momentum.
- Connected with the Health Association of Nova Scotia to establish more support for NSTRA Members including newsletters, education sessions, and access to supporting documentation.
- Working with Nova Scotia Community College to advocate for more accessible educational opportunities.
- Connecting with employers to advocate for Recreation roles within LTC, and to have NSTRA membership as a requirement for employment.
- New established connection with the DSP program to advocate for the role of Recreation Therapy.

Long Term Care Task Force Annual Report

The Long-Term Care Task Force has been fully re-established and meeting monthly to collect and discuss LTC data. Data collection has been completed and presented to the NSTRA Board of Directors at the September 9th board meeting to determine next steps. As well, during the Long-Term Care union strike, the task force collaborated with a variety of LTC Recreation employees to assess how NSTRA can support its members throughout this situation. With plans to make changes within NSTRA this coming year to support future situations such as this.

Respectfully submitted,

Jenelle d'Entremont

Standards of Practice Task Force Annual Report

The Standards of Practice working group was formed in the fall of 2023 with the aim of creating a document outlining practice standards for recreation therapy professionals in Nova Scotia. In early 2026, their final document was presented to the NSTRA Board of Directors and the task force was dissolved. Edits to the document are now being completed by another working group that falls under the Licensure Committee led by Shelley Smith.

Respectfully submitted,

Olivia Pliner

Job Responsiveness Task Force
This year, the Job Responsiveness Task Force was re-established thanks to the leadership of Alicia Dobranowski. The goal of this task force is to identify job postings that are incorrect, outdated, and/or inappropriate and connect with those employers to provide recommendations. A small group of members have sent several letters this year to employers on behalf of NSTRA.

Respectfully Submitted,

Olivia Pliner

On behalf of the Advocacy Committee, we want to thank the members of both the LTC, Job Responsiveness, and SoP Task Forces for their work and dedication.

Looking Ahead:

- Recruit more members to the Advocacy Committee
- Identify new Strategic Plan for Advocacy Committee based on the new NSTRA Strategic Plan
- Continue to support the ongoing work of the task forces as needed

Respectfully Submitted,

Olivia Pliner, CTRS
Advocacy Working Group/ Sub-Committee Chair

EQUITY, DIVERSITY, INCLUSION, AND ACCESSIBILITY COMMITTEE'S REPORT

Purpose

The purpose of the Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Accessibility (EDIA) Committee is to ensure an intentional approach to identifying, advocating, educating, and reconciling the Association's equity, diversity, inclusion and accessibility priorities/goals. NSTRA is a reflection of the students and professionals whose lived experiences, diverse backgrounds, and individual perspectives impact the health and well-being of the community. We strive for representation as a profession that is sensitive to cultural gifts in order to have a stronger capacity to serve in health and human service settings.

Committee Members: Dr. Austin Oswald (Co-Chair), Danielle Gagne (Co-Chair), Dana Mills, Qi Lao, Dani Bilodeau, Cassady Yochoff, Sun Lee

Highlights:

- Anti-Racism & Anti-Oppression Action Plan developed and approved by BoD in March 2026.
- Calendar of Acknowledgement Membership Poll initiated, and results are currently in review.
- "Embrace Your Voice" survey closed and results are currently in review.
- Continuing the development of the EDIA Resource Bank, now located on the "Members Only" section of the NSTRA website.
- Engaged in NSTRA policy review and amendment through an EDIA lens.
- CEU-approved education session "Advancing LGBTQ+ Whole Person Health in Therapeutic Recreation through Intersectionality and Anti-Oppression" co-facilitated by Dr. Austin Oswald, Danielle Bilodeau, Sydney Mullen, and Danielle Gagne.
- New Co-Chairs Dr. Austin Oswald and Danielle Gagne onboarded in August 2026. Call for new members to occur before, during, and after AGM.

Recommendations:

- Continue to review and update/create NSTRA policies from an EDIA lens.
- Reflect on the current EDIA Action Plan, as well as past and current initiatives, to determine the EDIA committee's next steps.
- Review and update the EDIA Terms of Reference.
- Review and then begin to delegate tasks that meaningfully engage the NSTRA Anti-Racism & Anti-Oppression Action plan.
- Move the Event Planning Guide to an accessible place, to encourage use.

Respectfully Submitted,

Danielle Gagne, CTRS
EDIA Committee Co-Chair, 2025 – 2026

Purpose

The purpose of this committee is to establish regulation practices for Recreation Therapy professionals, including CTRS' and non-CTRS' in the province of Nova Scotia. Phase one will focus on establishing licensure for Recreation Therapists through government processes. Phase two will focus on establishing a regulatory process for all other Recreation Therapy professionals.

Chair: Shelley Smith

Membership: This committee has been working diligently to establish regulation practices for Recreation Therapy professionals, including CTRS'; and non-CTRS'; in the province of Nova Scotia. We would like to acknowledge the committee members and their efforts towards this goal; Andrew Ritcey, Rhonda Booth, Gary Comeau, Brittany MacKeen, Colleen Bateman, Dawn MacDonald, and Olivia Pliner, as well as our President Marisa Doucette. Thank you all for your belief in this undertaking.

Highlights:

- The committee continues to meet on a regular basis and as need arises. Outside of the monthly meetings, committee members are involved in a variety of other meetings with key stakeholders to move our mandate further toward completion. This year saw continued work on a number of documents related to scope of practice and risk of harm. The provincial government's Regulated Health Professions Act has formed the basis of the committee's work and the committee continues to work with our lawyer, health care partners, policy analysts and other officials in our quest for licensure.
- In November 2025, the committee hosted a number of Town Halls which informed members and non-members on the status of our application and projected costs for regulation. More information can be found by visiting Licensure – Nova Scotia Therapeutic Recreation Association.
- In June 2026, the Licensure Committee was tasked with leading a working group to incorporate feedback from members regarding the Proposed NSTRA Standards of Practice and Guiding Principles document. Working group members met weekly over the summer months to prepare a final draft to be presented to members in the Fall 2026. Thank you to Dawn MacDonald for leading the group and members Andrew Ritcey, Tara Harnish, Jacqueline Cook, Andrea King, Jessica Reid, Kate Giles, Danielle Taylor and Alicia Dobranowski for the dedication to this work over the summer (as well as Emily Flinn, Ashley McMullin and Kim Woodford for providing input at the beginning).

Looking Ahead:

- At this time, we know that if we are approved for self-regulation, we will become a co-regulated college with an existing regulated college. The NS government continues to work toward the migration of all regulated health professions. Our next meeting with the Department of Health and Wellness is expected to be in September and as our committee continues to strive for regulation, we will update members on progress as we have information.

Respectfully Submitted,

Shelley Smith, CTRS
Licensure Committee Chair

MARKETING SUBCOMMITTEE’S REPORT

Purpose

The purpose of this working group is to provide promotional engagement and support to aid in the work of the Nova Scotia Therapeutic Recreation Association. We will recognize the work of the association and recreation therapy professionals within the province of Nova Scotia. We will work to create opportunities to share information about the NSTRA, creating materials to be shared to engage with stakeholders, rights holders and service providers. We will support other subcommittees, working groups and zones, in need of promotional engagement to aid in advocating for recreation therapy services, increasing membership and promoting the work of membership and the association.

Highlights:

This year, the Marketing Committee focused on advancing NSTRA's strategic communications priorities identified through the 21FSP. Committee initiatives supported ongoing improvements to the association's branding, website, member engagement, accessibility, and merchandise while laying the foundation for future advocacy and communications initiatives. Handover of committee to Danielle Bilodeau complete.

<u>Website and Digital Communications:</u> Aligned with the 21FSP priority to refresh the NSTRA website with improved navigation, updated content, and clearer organization, the committee continued compiling website revisions submitted by Board members. The committee also recognizes the importance of establishing an ongoing website maintenance process to ensure information remains current and relevant.

<u>Branding and Social Media:</u> The committee continued expanding NSTRA's visual identity and social media presence, supporting the 21FSP priority to expand social media strategy and create consistent branding across platforms. Efforts included maintaining access to Canva, exploring visual accessibility best practices, identifying areas of focus, growth and purpose for the Public FB page, and planning future communications in collaboration with the student directors.

<u>Merchandise and Brand Recognition:</u> The committee continued developing NSTRA's merchandise program as an opportunity to increase visibility, member engagement, and fundraising. The committee also explored strategies to increase fundraising by expanding merchandise promotion and integrating conference pre-order opportunities. The committee continues to investigate other fundraising opportunities such as creating new stickers for purchase or a 50/50 draw.

Area of struggle with communication from the owner in regards to answering emails, providing us with forms needed from a financial perspective.

Advocacy and Communications: The committee has begun planning initiatives to collect member testimonials for use on the website and social media after a meeting in the spring of 2026. These stories will help communicate the impact of Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialists (CTRSs), supporting several 21FSP priorities, including:

- developing and communicating NSTRA's unique value proposition;
- educating healthcare professionals about the role of CTRSs; and
- building messaging around collaborative care and social prescription.

Additional marketing materials and advocacy-focused communications will continue to be explored as these initiatives develop.

Recommendations / Upcoming Areas of Focus:
Over the coming year, the Marketing Committee will continue to advance the priorities by:

- Completing the website refresh and establishing an ongoing website maintenance (including the new strategic plan, and testimonials once developed) and content review process.
- Expanding accessible, consistent, and engaging social media communications that strengthen NSTRA's brand.
- Launching the updated merchandise collection and promotional campaign with membership feedback regarding sizing, in person observation.
- Supporting advocacy efforts by collaborating with the Advocacy Committee to collect and share member testimonials across the website and social media platforms.
- Exploring sustainable funding opportunities to support communications initiatives, including professional video production and the translation of key communications and resources into Mi'kmaq to improve accessibility and inclusion.
- Building a sustainable communications infrastructure by developing a library of authentic images featuring NSTRA members and therapeutic recreation practice settings for use across the website and promotional materials.
- Strengthening collaboration across committees by recommending the Communication Director be on the Marketing Committee to ensure consistent messaging, branding, and posting on social media platforms.
- Recruit new co-chair and members to the committee.

Respectfully Submitted,

Danielle Bilodeau (supported by Jocelyn Barbier)
Marketing Committee Chair
2025 - 2026

EDUCATION COMMITTEE'S REPORT

Purpose

The purpose of this working group is central to supporting the continued education of the members of the Nova Scotia Therapeutic Recreation Association (NSTRA). We will increase the accessibility of TR specific education opportunities to our members. In addition, we have the potential to create revenue for the NSTRA to support the continued efforts of the association.

Committee Members: Colleen Bateman (co-chair), Lynette Stevens (co-chair), Catherine Lubberts, and Brittany MacKeen.

This upcoming year we are happy to welcome Catherine Lubberts into the role of co-chair on this committee. We express gratitude for Colleen Bateman's dedication over the last several years as she steps down from her co-chair duties. We are grateful that she will remain an active member of the committee.

Highlights:

- Committee met five times this year
- Committee hosted two CEU approved education sessions in 2026:
  1. "What you want and need to know about supervising a Recreation Therapy Student"
  2. "Advancing LGBTQ+ Whole Person Health in TR: An Intersectional Anti-Oppressive Practice Model"
- Completed and submitted CEU application for upcoming education session – "A Year in Review": NSTRA Committee Updates" being planned for September 23rd, 2026.
- Ongoing collaboration with our website support person to investigate how our website could host recorded sessions and provide CEU certificates once completed. Website to be updated to make this possible.

Recommendations:

- Creation of education session protocol for succession planning.
- Circulate a new survey to members in the spring of 2027 for new areas of interest for education.

Respectfully Submitted,

Colleen Bateman (she/her)
Lynette Stevens (she/her)
Education Committee Co-Chairs, 2025 - 2026

Purpose

The purpose of this committee for the Association is to support the Board of Directors (BOD) by assisting, guiding, and enhancing financial practices of the Association.

- *To provide short- and long-term financial oversight for the Association.*
- *To remain committed to good stewardship; is actively building and preserving the financial resources necessary to support the accomplishment of its mission; and to establish a process that will assist the work of the Association to be fiscally responsible.*

Committee Members:
Many thanks to Cassady Yochoff (Treasurer), Andrew Ritcey, Brianne Saunders, Natalie Baglole, and Jennifer Kirby who have served diligently and supportively on this committee for the past year. This committee welcomes other members who have financial related skills or a willingness to grow in learning in this area of association operations.

Highlights:

- The committee has exceeded its goal to meet 4 times a year, with constant communication patterns via email as needs arise.
- Annual review of the terms of reference.
- Annual review of finance policies: Licensure Policy, Regional Zone Fundraising & Designated Funds, Conference Attendance, Travel, Cash Transaction.
- Development of new policies: Investment, Procurement, Reserves, Budget/Financial Planning, Credit Card, Expense Reimbursement, and Internal Controls.
- Providing directions to the Board for fiscal responsibility.
- Ongoing review of the organizations' revenue and expenditure, balance sheet, investments and other matters related to its continued competence.
- Ensuring the maintenance of an appropriate capital structure.
- Ongoing communication with Financial Reviewer, Cathleen Madgett.

Recommendations:

- Establishing an annual budget and submitting it to the Board for approval.
- The committee will establish a financial calendar for renewals of accounts.
- The committee will explore and establish other financial policies and procedures connected to the operational management of the Association.
- The committee will explore other avenues of revenue that can support the life and work of the Association in pursuit and with focus on advocacy to government and other organizations; education and learning; building connections within and around the profession; and standards of service and practice.

Respectfully Submitted,

Dana Mills, Finance Committee Chair, 2025 - 2026