

## **Halifax Field Naturalists – AGM Minutes (2026)**

**Museum of Natural History, March 17, 2026**

### **1. AGM Call to Order (7:45 pm)**

The AGM was held in person plus Zoom. The President's, Program and Membership Reports and Special Resolutions were posted to the HFN website under **About HFN/ AGM 2026**, and are also incorporated into these minutes.

### **2. Confirmation of Quorum**

Quorum confirmed

### **3. President's Report**

The Report was presented by Bernie McKenna, President.

### **6. Treasurer's Report (Financial Statement & Balance Sheet)**

The Treasurer, Ingrid Plache, presented the financial report. Ingrid then asked for a motion to approve the financial statements. The motion to adopt the financial report was made by Alan Robertson and seconded by Erick Greene. There were no questions from the floor about the Statement of Revenue and Expenditures 2025 and Balance Sheet, and the motion was carried in person and on Zoom. (Due its sensitive nature, the Treasurer's Report is not included with these minutes).

### **7. Election of Officers**

Janet Dalton, Vice President, chaired the presentation of the Current Board, followed by a list of Proposed Changes. The call for nominations from the floor did not bring any new names forward. The election process was duly conducted and the vote was carried.

## **8. Confirmation of New Board**

Janet Dalton then made a presentation of the new Board and the new Board was confirmed. The new President Don Flemming, Vice President Jennifer Hahn, Secretary Gillian Webster, and Director-at-Large Angela Miller were installed (see attached).

## **9. Special Resolutions – By-Law Amendments**

Proposed amendments were presented by the new President (Don Flemming)

A short discussion followed (there was a request for an example of a gender-neutral pronoun)

**Resolution #1 Amends all HFN By-Laws referencing gender-specific pronouns and replaces them with gender-neutral pronouns.**

A vote was called for and the amendment was passed by a majority vote.

**Resolution #2 Amends all HFN By-Laws by removing the word (Chairman) and replacing it with the word (Chair).**

A vote was called for and the amendment was passed by a majority vote.

**Resolution #3 Amends the HFN By-Laws by adding clarification to the following three By-Law headings:**

- **MEETINGS to read GENERAL MEETINGS**
- **CONDUCT OF MEETINGS to read CONDUCT OF GENERAL MEETINGS**
- **DIRECTORS to read DIRECTORS AND BOARD MEETINGS**

A vote was called for and the amendment was passed by a majority vote.

## **10. AGM Concluded**

The AGM section was concluded at 8:40 pm with a thank you to members from the new President, and there was a standing ovation by all members for the outgoing President (Bernie McKenna) for his outstanding and dedicated service to HFN.

*Gillian Webster, HFN Secretary*

## **2026 AGM YEAR END REPORT**

### **FROM THE PRESIDENT**

I am writing this, my final President's Report one year earlier than I had planned, however plans change so here I am. Late last fall I had let the board know that I would be resigning effective, March 17, 2026 and that we had to start searching for a replacement. Fortunately, we did extremely well in that regard, Don Flemming came forward as a candidate for President, Jennifer Hahn as Vice-president, Gillian Webster as Secretary and Angela Miller as Membership Committee Chair. Gillian and Angela are already installed as per HFN By-Law #33 until the March AGM election. All four are on tonight's election slate. Angela taking on the Membership Committee Chair responsibilities will take a load off of Don Flemming as he was fulfilling that position along with several other duties. This new board makeup will give HFN a decidedly lower median board age going forward.

Losing Doug Linzey a spell ago created a wide and gaping hole in our Membership Program that persisted for some time, one we have just recently climbed out of. Now, mainly due to Don Flemming's efforts, coupled with those of Jennifer Hahn and Ingrid Plache, the program is in very good shape. NOTE: a word here to all new and renewing members, the following complete and current information: name, mailing address, phone number and email address is necessary for the program's continued success.

The most anticipated event of 2025 was easily the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration which was so professionally organized by Anniversary Committee Chair, Janet Dalton and members Stephanie Robertson and Lesley-Jane Butters. Every aspect of the event from venue, catering, audio/video and guest speaker (Andrew Hebda) was first rate in every way and made it a memorable evening. The highlight of the evening was having founding members Anne Greene (Linton) and Scott Cunningham both present to do the Anniversary Cake cutting. Another notable event was the publishing of the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary HFN Newsletter by editor Stephanie Robertson. It's extensive reading and memory provoking content was assembled by Stephanie with the help of a small number of committed members. Stephanie is to be commended for producing this wonderful 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Newsletter. The outing of the year was definitely the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary MacCormack's Beach event, which was planned and organized, start to finish, by Clarence Stevens, and pulled off with the able help of a number of volunteers. He had an event to interest everyone, snorkelling, birdwatching, a viewing aquarium and a nature walk were just some of the ventures. It should be noted this was initially planned as a Martinique Beach event however, the province dashed that with the closure of Martinique Beach Park for major upgrades.

This report and the Treasurer Report will be the only two presented this evening. However, the membership and program reports are posted on the website.

Finally, in closing I want to express my sincere gratitude for having the opportunity of being president these past two years. It has been a wonderful experience from day one. It was made so by the generous sharing of expertise, time and knowledge of the Board, numerous individuals, and both member and non-member walk leaders and presenters. Two folks I have to specifically thank are Melanie Bedgood, Coordinator of Visitor Services and Gift Shop, Nova Scotia Museum of Natural History for her willing assistance, and my wife Heather for her constant support and patience.

Respectfully submitted

Bernie McKenna, President

## 2026 AGM PROGRAM REPORT

As mentioned in the 2026 President's Report, this year was an exercise in flexibility and adaptability. Between the weather, the Martinique Beach Closure, a speaker scheduling foul-up and the Dalhousie University Labour strike/lockout, it was a very challenging year. Despite all these factors we had excellent attendance at the events we held.

### TALKS

We hosted 10 events at the monthly museum meetings, the AGM included. There were some very memorable presenters who graced us with their knowledge, expertise and ease of presenting. The 10 talks completed were; Leach's Storm Petrels, Tree Identification, AGM Members Photo Night, Walking Across Scotland, Website Instruction (short notice substitution due to scheduling foul-up), Beavers, Mollusks, Environmental Action Committee, Nova Scotia Nature Trust and the Year End Review.

### Walks

We had 12 walks scheduled, of which only 10 were completed, the conditions and circumstances of the day often dictate whether the walk takes place and the actual walk attendance. Unfortunately, I do not have an accurate count of total attendance. We were doing well with 158 already counted before the MacCormack's Beach Anniversary Event in October. However, we quit counting at 94 at the beach with more people coming even as things were wrapping-up. A reasonable year's count would very easily be 250 plus. Completed walks were; The Annual HFN Bird Walk, the HRM Dartmouth Greenhouse tour, the Halifax Organics Management Facility, the Halifax Tree Identification Walk, the Drumlin Trail, the Shaw Wilderness Trail, the Musquodoboit River Run, the Tudor Trail, MacCormack's Beach Anniversary Walk and the Bell Park Loop. The 2 walks that we received the most feedback from were the MacCormack's Beach Walk and the Halifax Organics Management Facility tour. Both had excellent attendance and wide appeal.

Along with the walks we had 3 public display information events. One each at the Ivany and Institute of Technology NSCC campuses. The third display was held at the Dalhousie University Killam Library Atrium. These were arranged in an attempt to increase our visibility and bring new people out to our events.

Fortunately, we have a number of members who suggest different topics and locations for events, however, due to any number of reasons not all end up being used. This welcome sharing of possible topics and events is so very helpful and allows for the wide variety of events we are able to set up.

Respectfully submitted  
Bernie McKenna

## **Annual General Meeting 2026 Membership Committee Report**

The Membership Committee supports Halifax Field Naturalists in recruiting, engaging, and retaining members, and in strengthening the value of membership in support of the organisation's mission.

As of 13 March, for the 2026 membership year (1 January to 31 December), HFN has **108 paid memberships**, of which **27 are new** and **81 are returning**.

These 108 memberships can be further broken down as follows:

- 55 Individual
- 31 Family
- 17 Supporting
- 4 Life
- 1 Student

The Board appoints the Membership Committee Chair. For a number of years, that position was filled by Ron Arsenault, and, on behalf of the Board, I would like to extend our sincere thanks to Ron for his dedicated work in this role.

Over the past year HFN has transitioned to a new database for membership tracking and contact information. The information in this database is not shared with any third party outside HFN, and only those committee and board members with a 'need-to-know' have access.

I am pleased to report that Angela Miller was recently appointed as the new HFN Membership Committee Chair.

Reported by

Don Flemming  
(Interim Membership Committee Chair)

## **NEW HFN EXECUTIVE BOARD**

**President:** Don Flemming  
**Vice President:** Jennifer Hahn  
**Treasurer:** Ingrid Plache  
**Secretary:** Gillian Webster  
**Past President:** Bernie McKenna

### **Directors-at-Large:**

Janet Dalton  
Angela Miller  
Stephanie Robertson  
Allan Robertson  
Clarence Stevens, Jr

*(there are vacancies for two additional Directors-at-Large)*