

Regional Meeting Planning Committee

Committee members: Richard Bowley (Chair), Alicia Walls (Secretary), Elizabeth Stevenson (President Elect), Sheila Gallant (Past President), James Kennedy (President), Andrea Rogers, Faith March-MacCuish (EM), Melaney Matheson, Jennifer Whittemore (Staff)

The RMPC has met regularly throughout the past year, making great use of Zoom to coordinate and plan for the upcoming Regional meeting in May, 2023.

The initial focus of the committee was discerning a location for the 2023 meeting, since it would be our first in-person meeting since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic and our first in-person meeting as the Fundy St. Lawrence Dawning Waters Regional Council on our own. The primary factors that played a part in our choosing UPEI as our destination were:

- Cost
- Accessibility
- Technology

In previous years, both as the Maritime Conference, and as the combined meeting of RC 15 and FSLDW RC, we met in Sackville at Mount Allison with the bulk of our meeting taking place at the arena. Our needs were such that a change in how we do our meetings had to take place. With this in mind, and with a lot of scouting work on the part of Jennifer Whittemore, we reviewed several options to strive to meet within our means, and ultimately decided that UPEI met our requirements.

With the location settled, much of the work over many meetings was focused on the shape of the meeting. Early on there was discussion around the feasibility of creating a fully hybrid experience. While this is an admirable goal, the committee felt that, for the first meeting back in person, there was enough work to starting again without adding a layer of technological complexity. This was not ruled out for future meetings, and will be a part of the discussion moving forward.

The rest of the work centered on the content of the meeting:

- Time for business
- Integration of youth programs
- Selecting a theme and theme speaker (Looking forward With Hope and Murray Pruden respectively)
- Finding the right person for our land acknowledgement piece (Julie Pellissier-Lush)
- Workshops
- Retirees' and Jubilarians' banquet
- Balancing worship, business, and social time

These are just some of the detail-oriented pieces that were a part of our regular discussions over the last year. While some of the work has meant "reinventing the wheel" for our new experience as a region on our own, we drew much from past meetings as a conference.

We, as a committee, look forward to watching the 2023 regional meeting unfold, and will be watching closely for ways to improve for the 2024 meeting.

Respectfully Submitted, Richard Bowley, Chair