

New Brunswick
Women's Council



Conseil des femmes
du Nouveau-Brunswick

Annual Report

2019-2020

**New Brunswick Women's Council
Annual Report 2019-2020**

Province of New Brunswick
PO 6000, Fredericton NB E3B 5H1 CANADA

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Transmittal letters

From the Minister to the Lieutenant-Governor

The Honourable Brenda Murphy
Lieutenant-Governor of New Brunswick

Your Honour:

It is my privilege to submit the annual report for the New Brunswick Women's Council for the fiscal year April 1, 2019 to March 31, 2020.

Sincerely,



Honourable Lyne Chantal Boudreau
Minister responsible for Women's Equality

From the Co-chairs to the Minister

Honourable Lyne Chantal Boudreau
Minister responsible for Women's Equality

Dear Minister,

We are pleased to present to you the annual report for the New Brunswick Women's Council for the fiscal year April 1, 2019 to March 31, 2020.

Sincerely,



Michèle Nadeau and Jennifer Richard
Co-chairs of the New Brunswick Women's Council

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The New Brunswick Women’s Council is an independent public advisory body on women’s equality issues.

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2019-2020 in New Brunswick

April 2019

- Regulations on workplace violence and harassment [take effect](#).
- Minimum wage [increases](#) to \$11.50 per hour.
- The [50th anniversary](#) of the *Official Languages Act*.
- Government [announces](#) a 75 cent per hour wage increase for some trained early childhood educators. Within days, the increase is [extended](#) to all trained educators.
- Government [cancels](#) a non-taxable monthly benefit of \$106.25 for primary informal caregivers of individuals receiving in-home services through the Department of Social Development's Long-Term Care or Disability Support Services programs.
- The 100-year anniversary of *New Brunswick Electors Act* being amended to include women as voters; this change did not include Indigenous women.

May 2019

- Workers in the human services sector (home support, family support, attendant care, special care home, and youth group home workers) receive hourly wage increases ranging from 50 cents to \$2 per hour. [Government states](#) that this raises the average hourly wage for these workers to more than \$14.
- Government [announces](#) that in the coming months it will adopt a third gender marker (X) as a non-binary gender identifier on birth certificates (the X marker became available for driver's licenses in November 2017).
- The Legislative Administration Committee approves a [Respectful Workplace and Harassment Policy](#) for the legislative assembly.
- Government launches the ["Now You Know"](#) campaign on sexual violence.

June 2019

- The [Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls](#) is released.

July 2019

- The federal Minister of Health [writes to all provinces and territories](#) to address "persistent barriers to access for abortion services across the country" and signals to New Brunswick that "any patient charges for surgical abortions would be considered extra-billing and user charges under the Act, and would result in penalties."

August 2019

- The Women's Summit of the 6th World Acadian Congress takes place in Prince Edward Island (the Congress takes place in both New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island).

September 2019

- The Honourable Brenda Murphy, ONB is [sworn in](#) as Lieutenant-Governor. She is the first person who is openly part of the LGBTQIA2S+ community to serve in the role in New Brunswick.

October 2019

- The province's only non-hospital provider of surgical abortions, Clinic 554, [announces](#) an impending closure and that its building will be put up for sale due to funding challenges stemming from government's refusal to publicly fund surgical abortions outside of hospitals.
- The board of Horizon Health passes a motion to "advocate to the government of New Brunswick for payment to physicians to provide abortion services in a quality and safe environment outside of hospitals."
- Government [begins consultation](#) on family law reform related to amendments to the federal *Divorce Act*.

November 2019

- Indigenous people in New Brunswick can now use eagle feathers for affirmations or swearing oaths in provincial court.

December 2019

- The 30th anniversary of the December 6th École Polytechnique shooting in Montreal.
- The New Brunswick Human Rights Commission [issues](#) a new guideline on pregnancy discrimination.
- [Amendments to the Residential Tenancies Act](#) become law but do not come into effect. Amendments will allow individuals to terminate leases early if they or their dependent are the victim of domestic violence, intimate partner violence, sexual violence or criminal harassment and they believe that their safety is at risk if the tenancy continues.
- The Premiers of the Atlantic provinces [announce](#) the creation of the Atlantic Domestic Homicide Review Network.

February 2020

- Government [announces](#) that the minimum wage will increase to \$11.70 per hour on April 1st.

March 2020

- For the first time, the federal government deducts funds (\$140 000) from its annual health transfer payments to the province due to patients being charged for abortion services outside of hospitals (i.e., at Clinic 554). Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, [the funds are ultimately transferred to the province](#).
- The Economic and Social Inclusion Corporation [releases](#) *Overcoming Poverty Together 3: The New Brunswick Economic and Social Inclusion Plan*.
- Government [states](#) that, for the first-time, departments were required to include a gender impact assessment in their budget submissions.
- Measures to address COVID-19 begin. A state of emergency is declared and non-essential government services shut down temporarily.

This timeline is focused on public policy changes as well as historic dates and developments in New Brunswick. It is not exhaustive and excludes bills that are introduced by opposition parties that did not become law. Except for a minimum wage increase, funding announcements made at the end of 2019-2020 for 2020-2021 are not included.

Message from the Co-chairs

Throughout 2019-2020, the Council continued to respond to emerging issues relevant to women's equality and to build its internal governance capacity. We are pleased to provide you with this account of the Council's work during this time. As is our practice, this report also captures important information about the changing landscape of women's equality in New Brunswick beyond the work of the Council.

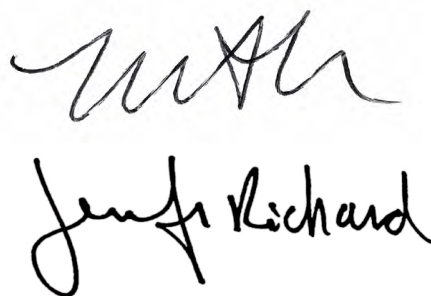
The Council participated in multiple consultations, providing advice and recommendations on a dementia strategy and action plan, the renewal of the poverty reduction strategy, the budget for the upcoming 2020-2021 fiscal year, and regulations to define how changes to the *Residential Tenancies Act* would support victims and survivors of violence, including stalking and harassment. You can read more about our public policy work in the Issues section of this report.

The Council also continued to uplift the findings of its public engagement initiative, Resonate. The Council's submission to the poverty reduction strategy, in particular, shared many findings from Resonate as well as stories directly from participants, as told in their own words. The Council also continued to work with the data that it gathered through Resonate and produced two supplementary information sheets, one focusing on violence and the other focusing on Indigenous women.

The Council also worked to clarify its long-term vision and approach. Staff and members explicitly affirmed that the Council's approach is grounded in intersectional feminist analysis. Within that context, issues of rising white supremacy and authoritarianism were discussed and confirmed to be relevant to the mandate of the Council.

Finally, in March 2020 the COVID-19 pandemic began in New Brunswick. A state of emergency was declared and non-essential government services shut down. Child care for essential workers quickly became an important issue that government responded to. Unfortunately, the impact of "stay home" messaging on people experiencing violence in their homes—disproportionately women—was not immediately addressed. Council members and staff discussed what the agency was uniquely positioned to do in response to COVID-19 and began gathering information on gender-based impacts of the pandemic and measures to mitigate it.

Thank you for taking the time to read this report.



Michèle Nadeau and Jennifer Richard
Co-chairs, New Brunswick Women's Council*

*Co-chairs at the time of publication of this report.

Public engagement: Resonate

In 2019-2020, the Council continued to share insights and stories gathered through its Resonate initiative.

The Council created supplementary information sheets on one demographic group ([Indigenous women](#)) and one topic ([gender-based violence](#)) from the data stream for women as respondents had provided enough data to support further analysis. In addition to providing further analysis, the information sheets also published more stories that women had shared in their own words. The Council released these information sheets in November and December 2019, respectively.

The Council also developed guidelines for use of Resonate data by organizations and government departments that requested data or quotes from participants that hadn't been published by the Council as part of report-backs to date.

Throughout the year, the Council continued to highlight the findings and stories from Resonate with government when providing advice or bringing issues to government's awareness.

On gender diversity

Gender minorities include individuals who are trans, non-binary, agender, genderqueer, Two-Spirit, and much more. Some individuals, like trans women, are both women and gender minorities.

Individuals who belong to gender minorities face challenges that are rooted in gender-based inequality. That's why Resonate was open to—and strengthened by—the participation of all gender minorities.

To facilitate this work, the Council offered two versions of our online survey: one with women-focused language and one with language that was gender inclusive. Individuals could fill in whichever version of the survey they were comfortable with.

Background on Resonate

Launched in 2017-2018, the Council's Resonate initiative collected data from more than 1 400 individuals and 35 organizations and initiatives in New Brunswick. Data collection occurred between October 2017 and February 2018 and took place via an online survey, a limited number of focus groups, and an in-person engagement day with organizations and initiatives. In 2018-2019, the Council released its findings in three batches: the women-focused data collection stream, the data stream focused on individuals belonging to gender minorities, and the organizational data stream.



Background on Resonate

All findings were shared via a microsite, resonatenbresonances.ca. The microsite provides a full demographic breakdown of the participants in the data collection streams for women and for individuals belonging to gender minorities, including additional findings specific to different demographics. The microsite also shares information on the initiative's methodology.

Partners on this initiative were Erin Whitmore, Beam Diversity Consulting, Bitfox Consulting, Forté Communications, Han Martin Associates, and Polygon Graphics.

Issues

The Council provides advice to government on issues relevant to women's equality through meetings, correspondence, participation in consultations, and by submitting briefs for consideration. The Council brings issues to public awareness by making submissions to consultations and its briefs available on its website, through media releases and interviews, and through online posting (blogging and social media). Below is an account of the Council's issues-based work in 2019-2020. This section also includes some information on work that the Council monitors, notably government plans and frameworks and Opposition bills relevant to women's equality.

100-year anniversary of some women getting the right to vote

April 17, 2019 was the 100-year anniversary of the *New Brunswick Elections Act* being amended to include women as voters. This change did not include all women, as Indigenous women didn't gain the right to vote provincially until 1963 unless they served in the armed forces. The Council advised various individuals and entities to avoid simplifying the narrative around the anniversary and to avoid downplaying or erasing the fact that the 1919 amendment did not provide universal suffrage to women in New Brunswick.

The Council published [a post](#) on its blog explaining the anniversary and the importance of explicitly discussing its exclusion of Indigenous women.

Conversion therapy

In March, the *Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Protection Act* addressing conversion therapy was tabled as a Private Member's Public Bill by a member of a Third Party. The Council had previously (in response to a Third Party motion on the issue in 2018-2019) advised government to prohibit the practice of conversion therapy in New Brunswick as well as the use of public funds for out-of-province conversion therapy. To be effective, legislation would need to respond to the ways in which conversion therapy may be disguised as traditional therapeutic intervention.

Access to primary care and mental health care

The Council advised government to increase the availability of primary care and mental health care. This would relieve pressure on family practices, community health centres, walk-in clinics, and hospitals. On mental health care, the Council advised that early-intervention, ongoing maintenance, and crisis services must all be available.

The Council shared its recommendations on health care access with the public via a [blog post](#) published

in advance of the 2019 throne speech and by publishing its submissions to consultations on the renewal of the poverty reduction strategy and the 2020-2021 budget on its [website](#).

Midwifery

The Council advised government that it was disappointed to learn that government did not intend to expand midwifery services beyond the demonstration site in Fredericton. The standstill on midwifery care is surprising given government's platform commitment to women's health care as well as its priorities around fiscal responsibility and improving health care delivery. Midwifery care saves money and reduces stress on hospitals and specialists by moving low-risk pregnancies into a community health care setting.

The Council also advised government that it is concerned that the current midwifery demonstration site in Fredericton is under-resourced. The site continues to face issues related to an inadequate number of staff. This is, in part, because the wages offered are not competitive with those in other jurisdictions. Since the practice started, there has been an open waitlist with over 100 families. The site must be properly resourced not only to serve the local community, but also to generate data required for evaluating the site and planning for an expansion of midwifery services to more regions of the province.

The Council shared its recommendations on midwifery with the public via a [blog post](#) published in advance of the 2019 throne speech and by publishing its submission to the 2020-2021 budget on its [website](#).

Pharmacists

The Council recommended that government allow pharmacists in New Brunswick to bill Medicare for diagnosing and treating urinary tract infections. The current system (in which individuals can pay out of pocket for diagnosis from a pharmacist)

creates unequal access between those who can pay the fee and those who cannot. The Council also recommended that government explore expanding pharmacists' regulated scope of practice to allow them to prescribe hormonal birth control (and to ensure that pharmacists can bill the cost of prescribing to Medicare).

The Council shared its recommendations on health care from pharmacists via a [blog post](#) published in advance of the 2019 throne speech and by publishing its submission to the 2020-2021 budget on its [website](#).

Abortion access

The Council continued to recommend that government improve abortion access. Access to surgical abortion remains unbalanced regionally and surgical abortions outside of hospitals are not publicly funded. In October, Clinic 554 announced that the impact of this funding restriction as well as underfunding for its LGBTQIA2S+ services is forcing the closure and sale of the clinic. Clinic 554 is the only non-hospital surgical abortion provider in New Brunswick, the only surgical abortion provider of any kind in Fredericton, and a family practice with a specialization in serving LGBTQIA2S+ individuals. A closure of Clinic 554 would limit access to surgical abortions and primary care for LGBTQIA2S+ populations and other patients in the region.

The Council advised government once again to review Regulation 84-20 Schedule 2 (a.1) to allow for surgical abortions outside of hospitals to be billed to Medicare (this would also require enabling community-based surgical abortion providers to bill ultrasounds to Medicare). The Council also advised government to work with Clinic 554 to co-create a solution to prevent their impending closure.

Via its [blog](#), the Council published a primer for the public on the history of the surgical abortion funding restriction, how it currently works, and

why it should be removed. The Council shared its recommendations on abortion care via a [blog post](#) published in advance of the 2019 throne speech and by publishing its submission to the 2020-2021 budget on its [website](#).

Care work

The Council welcomed [the announcement](#) that home support workers, family support workers, attendant care workers, and staff at special care homes and group homes would receive wage increases ranging from 50 cents to two dollars an hour. The Council noted, however, that these increases did not bring wages to an equitable level and asked government to provide a plan to address this. The Council further advised government that it needs to address other challenges that homecare workers in particular face, including paying for client-related mileage costs out of pocket and unpredictable hours of work.

The Council also requested that government provide information on how the informal caregiver benefit program was deemed to be ineffective and whether there are plans for supporting informal caregivers. The rationale that government provided was that fewer than half of those people who were eligible for the benefit applied for it and government determined the budget could be used in other ways for clients and their families.

The Council reminded government that unpaid caregiving labour is disproportionately provided by women and that this impacts their participation in the workforce and their health. The Council advised government that as it addresses challenges like the province's aging population, it must consider how reductions in services or increased reliance on community, family, and individuals will likely result in increased unpaid caregiving labour from women.

The Council made its requests for information and concerns about the wage increases and cancellation

of the informal caregiver benefit public via a [media release](#) that is available on its website. The Council made its concerns and recommendations on caregiving wages and conditions of work with the public via a [blog post](#) published in advance of the 2019 throne speech and by publishing various submissions on its [website](#).

Dementia care

The Council participated in government's consultation on a dementia strategy and action plan. The Council provided an overview on dementia's impact on women as both patients and caregivers. The Council recommended improving access to home care, increasing institutional resources for individuals with dementia and those who care for them professionally, and providing concrete support to unpaid caregivers (such as respite care and financial support). The Council also reiterated its existing recommendations around pay equity and improving gender-based analysis in policy-development and budgeting (and making the findings of these analyses public).

The Council made its submission to the consultation public by publishing it on the Council's [website](#).

Early learning and child care action plan

Throughout 2019-2020, government continued the rollout of its early learning and child care action plan. The plan ("[Everyone at their best... from the start](#)") was first announced in January 2018 and based on a three-year federal-provincial agreement. In April, government shared that more than 330 facilities and more than 90 homes had become designated under the plan.

The Women's Council reiterated to government that while it largely supports the plan, it needs enhancements in a few areas. This includes factoring the cost of afterschool care in subsidy calculations; incentives to create more spaces for 0-15 month old infants; and shifting toward a not-for-profit child care sector.

The Council made these concerns and recommendations public by publishing its submissions to consultations on the renewal of the poverty reduction strategy and the 2020-2021 budget on its [website](#).

Wages for early childhood educators

Government [announced](#) early in the year that Early Childhood Educators (ECEs) with a two-year college diploma or a bachelor's degree in early childhood or a related field would receive a 75 cents an hour increase. The Council advised government that it was concerned that the increases would benefit less than 25 per cent of the sector's educators. The Council also advised that even for those who would receive the increase, wages would still not be at an equitable level. The Council asked government if it had a plan for further increases and advised that without such a plan workers in this sector will understandably feel even further devalued and overlooked by government.

After outcry from the sector, government [extended](#) the increase to educators with a one-year diploma as well. Under the changes, all early childhood educators in the province would earn at least \$17.25 per hour (based on the minimum wage and government wage top-up).

The Council made its concerns and request for information public via a [media release](#) that is available on its website. The Council also made its concerns and recommendations on early childhood educator wages public via a [blog post](#) published in advance of the 2019 throne speech and by publishing its submissions to consultations on the renewal of the poverty reduction strategy consultation and 2020-2021 budget on its [website](#).

Immigrant women in the workforce

The Council advised government that as it works to grow the population and workforce through

immigration, immigrant women require tailored supports to enter the workforce. The Council recommended working with organizations like the New Brunswick Multicultural Council and its partner agencies to increase employment opportunities for women immigrants and newcomers in all fields and at all levels of work.

The Council made its recommendation public by publishing its submission to the 2020-2021 budget consultation on its [website](#).

Pay equity

The Council continued to advise government that private sector pay equity legislation should be created and reiterated its concerns about the methodology used to determine pay equity adjustments for [the four private-sector jobs that government contributes funding to](#) (child care workers, home support workers, transition house workers, and community residence workers) as well as lack of pay equity maintenance exercises for those groups.

The Council made its recommendations public by publishing its submissions to the consultations on a dementia strategy and action plan, the renewal of the poverty reduction strategy, and the 2020-2021 budget on its [website](#).

Minimum wage

The Council recommended that government move the minimum wage toward a living wage. This would improve women's economic security and also contribute to addressing the systemic undervaluing of women's labour (as the majority of minimum wage jobs are for labour that is traditionally considered to be "women's work" such as retail, customer service, office or sales support, hospitality and food service) which would support broader effort to address gender-based discrimination.

The Council made its recommendation public by publishing its submissions to consultations on the renewal of the poverty reduction strategy and the 2020-2021 budget consultation on its [website](#).

Social assistance rates

Social assistance rates in New Brunswick are below the Market Basket Measure, Canada's official poverty line. These low rates not only fail to meet the needs of recipients, they also do not make fiscal sense given the long-term costs to government that result from individuals living in poverty. The Council recommended that government schedule increases to bring social assistance rates to the Market Basket Measure levels.

The Council made its recommendation public by publishing its submissions to consultations on the renewal of the poverty reduction strategy and the 2020-2021 budget consultation on its [website](#).

Sexual violence

The Council advised government to prioritize multi-year funding for activities tied to [Preventing and Responding to Sexual Violence in New Brunswick: A Framework for Action](#). The Council shared that implementation of the framework is critical for organizations that address sexual violence and support survivors as they are facing increasing demands on their services since the #metoo movement gained public traction.

The Council also continued to participate in a multi-sector and -agency stakeholder group led by the Department of Public Safety on improving police response to reports of sexual violence. This group was convened in 2017 after a 20-month investigation by the Globe and Mail determined that 32 per cent of all sexual assaults reported in New Brunswick were classified as unfounded by law enforcement. This was the highest rate in Canada and nearly double the national rate of 19 per cent.

The Council made its recommendations on the framework public via a [blog post](#) published in advance of the 2019 throne speech and by publishing its submission to the consultation on the 2020-2021 budget on its [website](#).

Violence in the workplace

The Council provided advice on government's internal respectful workplace and prevention of workplace violence training module as well as a tool for managers to use in workplace safety planning with employees experiencing domestic or intimate partner violence.

Residential Tenancies Act

The Council reiterated its recommendation to government that the *Residential Tenancies Act* be amended to allow individuals to terminate leases early if they or their dependent are the victim of domestic violence, intimate partner violence, sexual violence or criminal harassment and they believe that their safety is at risk if the tenancy continues. The issue had been previously raised by a Private Member's Public Bill in 2018-2019.

Government brought amendments forward and they became law, though they did not immediately come into effect as regulations had to be developed. Draft regulations were published for feedback and while the Council largely supported them, it did recommend that they be revised to expand the classes of persons who may verify that a tenant has been subjected to violence or harassment. The regulations were not finalized in 2019-2020.

The Council shared its recommendations on the *Residential Tenancies Act* with the public via a [blog post](#) published in advance of the 2019 throne speech. The Council's submission to the review of the draft regulations is available on its [website](#).

Support for community-based organizations

The Council recommended that government move to longer-term, sustainable operational funding models for community-based not-for-profit organizations and initiatives. This would support service delivery, internal capacity-building, and improve wages for workers. Government should also improve their engagement with these entities and incorporate their recommendations and advice into policy and budget development.

The Council made these recommendation public by publishing its submission to the 2020-2021 budget consultation on its [website](#).

Gender-based analysis

The Council continued to recommend that government expand its use of gender-based analysis (GBA) in decision-making and to also share more information with the public on the use of and findings from those GBAs.

The Council reiterated its recommendation that government integrate gender budgeting into the main estimates process with the goal of ensuring that the budget is gender-responsive. The Council recommended that government share details with the public on how GBA is used in the budget process. The details should include information on the budget's potential differential impacts on various demographics of New Brunswickers and how those impacts were mitigated.

The Council shared its recommendations on GBA with the public via a [blog post](#) published in advance of the 2019 throne speech and by publishing its submission to consultations on the dementia strategy and action plan, the renewal of the poverty reduction strategy, and the 2020-2021 budget on its [website](#).

Social deficits and debts

The Council advised government to account for social deficits and debts in its work. Social deficits are the gap between what people need in terms of services and what is available to them (these services may be offered publicly or by the community sector). Like fiscal deficits, social deficits do not simply disappear at the start of a new year; they become debt with interest. The interest looks like problems becoming more entrenched and complex, both in individuals' lives and as public policy issues, the longer that adequate services are missing. Social deficits and debt are not gender neutral. These service shortfalls disproportionately affect women and slow progress toward women's equality.

The Council made this recommendation public by publishing its submission to the 2020-2021 budget consultation on its [website](#).

Co-creation

The Council advised government to engage in co-creation and foster the conditions necessary for co-creation. Co-creation is when people and communities who are impacted by a situation are involved in the process of identifying the problem, designing the services that will address it, and establishing how the services will be evaluated. Co-creation will not only result in better services but will also increase public trust in government.

The Council made this recommendation public by publishing its submission to the 2020-2021 budget consultation on its [website](#).

Members and staff

Members

The Council's work is directed by its volunteer membership, which includes organizations (represented by a woman staff member or volunteer) and individual women committed to women's equality.

Members shape the Council's issue-based work by collaborating with staff to identify and analyze priority issues and propose solutions. Members also ensure that the voices of women from diverse identities, communities, and experiences are represented within the Council. The members also have a governance role that includes developing policies to direct the Council's operations at a high level.

2019–2020 membership

Organizations

- Fredericton Sexual Assault Centre (represented by Jennifer Richard)
- New Brunswick Aboriginal People's Council (represented by Amanda LeBlanc)
- New Brunswick Coalition for Pay Equity (represented by Jody Dallaire)
- New Brunswick Multicultural Council (represented by represented by Madhu Verma and Myriam Mekni)
- Regroupement féministe du Nouveau-Brunswick (represented by Nelly Dennene)
- Saint John Women's Empowerment Network (represented by Joanne Britton)
- YWCA Moncton (represented by Michèle Nadeau)

Individuals

- Darlene Doiron
- Mayme Lefurgey
- Martine Marchand
- Patricia Morris
- Madeleine Nickerson
- Noëlla Richard
- Louisa Seales
- Constance Sewell

Ex officio members

- Jocelyne Mills, assistant deputy minister, Women's Equality Branch
- Beth Lyons, executive director, New Brunswick Women's Council

Notes on membership

Co-chairs

The 2019-2020 year began with Jody Dallaire continuing in her second term as co-chair and Jennifer Richard continuing as interim co-chair. In May, Ms. Richard was appointed to a regular co-chairing term (extending until spring 2021). As per the Council's guiding document on membership, the end of Ms. Dallaire's co-chairing term was moved from spring 2020 to fall 2020 to accommodate the Council's 2020 call for membership process.

Changes in membership

In April, Myriam Mekni replaced Madhu Verma as the representative of the New Brunswick Multicultural Council. This change was reflected in an Order in Council in September. The same Order in Council also reflected that Michèle Nadeau was the representative for YWCA Moncton and Amanda LeBlanc was the representative for the New Brunswick Aboriginal People's Council (Ms. Nadeau and Ms. LeBlanc had begun representing these organizations on the council in 2018-2019). The Order in Council also extended the appointments of the New Brunswick Multicultural Council and YWCA Moncton until May 2020.

Staff

- **Beth Lyons** – executive director
- **Linda Landry-Guimond** – office manager
- **Jennifer Dickison** – director of research and policy
- **Melissa Wah** – public affairs strategist
- **Kylie Bergfalk** – research assistant (until April)

Governance

Members are engaged year-round in the work of the Council via regular email communications and committee work. They also meet multiple times a year in-person and via teleconference. In-person meetings allow members to discuss issues and develop policy positions in real-time, as well as provide opportunities to connect with communities in the province.

In 2019–2020, the Council held four meetings:

- May in Dieppe;
- October in Fredericton; and
- Two conference call meetings in March.

Minutes for all meetings (excepting those portions or entire meetings that are in camera) are available on the Council's website at nbwomenscouncil.ca or by contacting the Council.

The Council uses standing and ad hoc committees to advance various pieces of work between meetings and ensure accountability. Staff and members sit on committees; special contributors may be invited to join as well. In 2018–2019, the following committees were active:

- Finance (standing);
- Governance (standing);
- Issues advisory (standing); and
- Membership recommendation (ad hoc).

During 2019-2020, the Council:

- adopted a guiding document on decision-making;
- updated its guiding document on membership; and
- conducted a membership self-evaluation.

In May, the Council reviewed its compliance with its internal operating standards for the previous year (2018-2019). Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Council did not review its compliance with its internal operating standards for the 2019-2020 year.

Call for membership

In January 2020, the Council launched a call for membership. The Council prepared and executed the call with the support of Executive Council Office. The Council received all expressions of interest directly and delegated their review to a committee comprised of three Council members: Jennifer Richard (co-chair), Nelly Dennene, and Darlene Doiron. The executive director served as an ex officio member. In addition to the strength of applications, the committee considered the following when reviewing submissions:

- that the Council's membership is intended to be primarily composed of organizations; and
- the current composition of the Council's membership and whether an applicant's addition to it would contribute to linguistic and regional balance and/or enhance representation of voices from marginalized identities, experiences, and communities.

The committee did not provide its recommendations for appointment to the Women's Equality Branch until 2020-2021.

Mission, vision and strategic directions

Mission: To further gender equity in New Brunswick by strategically addressing ongoing and emerging issues through research, informed and committed membership, and engagement with government and the public.

Vision: A diverse and inclusive New Brunswick of real and deeply-rooted gender equity.

Strategic directions:

Become a leading voice on issues of importance to women and relating to gender equality in New Brunswick.

- Establish clear positions and, where appropriate, recommendations on key issues.
- Become a leading resource for research, analysis, commentary, and recommendations.
- Be able to identify and respond nimbly to emerging issues and opportunities.

Be engaged with and informed by the women of New Brunswick in their full diversity.

- Membership and analysis reflect the diversity of women's identities, experiences, and communities.

- Provide opportunities for women to identify and share priorities, needs, and solutions.
- Build connections with equality-seeking and women-focused groups throughout all regions.

Develop robust membership and internal processes centred on consensus-building, inclusion, and anti-oppression.

- Foster a committed membership in which members experience solidarity, trust, and respect with one another.
- Develop policies and processes that are sound, equitable, and reduce barriers to participation.

Advocate, educate, and partner strategically.

- Focus on systems-level change.
- Take a collective impact approach.
- Identify strategic roles for the Council given its unique mandate, resources, and relationship to government.

Finances

Expenditure status report by primary fiscal year ending March 31, 2020.

	Budget	Actuals
Personnel services	349 900	324 600
Other services	76 800	79 600
Materials and supplies	4,800	5 100
Property and equipment	0.00	700
Total	431 500	410 000