

2025 NSGEU CONVENTION



MEET YOUR NEWLY ELECTED NSGEU PRESIDENT AND EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

THE UNION STAND

A PUBLICATION OF THE N.S. GOVERNMENT & GENERAL EMPLOYEES UNION

Post-Convention 2025

Dear members,

This is the first issue of the STAND since NSGEU Convention 2025. I want to welcome back the re-elected executive, Hugh Gillis (1st VP), Tammy Gillis (2nd VP), Peter Perry (3rd VP), and Darren McPhee as Secretary Treasurer. I look forward to working with all the executive and full board during this new term.

I am also grateful to be returned as union President. It

is a position that holds great responsibility. I am humbled to represent over thirty eight-thousand members and being accountable to all members is something I take very seriously.

Thank you to all the delegates who entrusted me with the privilege of serving all members with a second term.

I also want to thank all members who put their names forward and ran for a seat on the union's executive committee. The strength of our union is built on the commitment and dedication of our members.

As we move on from Convention 2025, NSGEU locals began the process of holding their own Triennial meetings to elect their own local executives and committee positions. Our locals form the foundation of our union, and I want to acknowledge and thank all those individuals who put their names forward to serve their local members.

Convention 2025 included over 370 delegates, and many were in attendance for the first time. This is another positive development for the future of our union.

Believe it or not planning for Convention 2028 is already underway!

As you will see from the articles contained in this issue

of the STAND a lot has happened since the end of Convention 2025. Civil Service Bargaining reached an impasse and will move to binding arbitration in October. The Houston government is gathering public opinion on where alcohol can be sold and consumed in the province. This has serious implications to our members working for the NSLC and will have additional impacts for those working in law enforcement and health care.

The Nova Scotia Community College was the first post-secondary institution to address their financial deficits by attacking working people. The NSCC contracted out all food services for their campuses to a private American company eliminating twenty-seven good jobs. Some of these members were close to retirement and all have lost their health benefits.

This Premier seems intent on attacking public servants. The Premier can now fire people without just cause and

in this round of civil service bargaining he is trying to eliminate job security protections for unionized workers. He is also offering a lower wage package than other collective agreements were given.

Privatization and contracting out was a topic of discussion at Convention and this will be a major focus of our work as a public sector union going forward. The union takes this threat seriously and will continue to advocate and be proactive in protecting the rights of our members.

In solidarity,




NSGEU President Sandra Mullen after being acclaimed President for a second term in May, 2025.

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CONNECT WITH US!

We want to hear from our members. If you have thoughts on this issue of The Stand, or ongoing union issues, send us your feedback! You can email us at inquiry@nsgeu.ca or connect with us:

 facebook.com/nsgeu

 [@thensgeu](https://www.instagram.com/thensgeu)

 [nsgeu.bsky.social](https://bsky.social/nsgeu)

Hugh Gillis, 1st Vice-President, NSGEU.

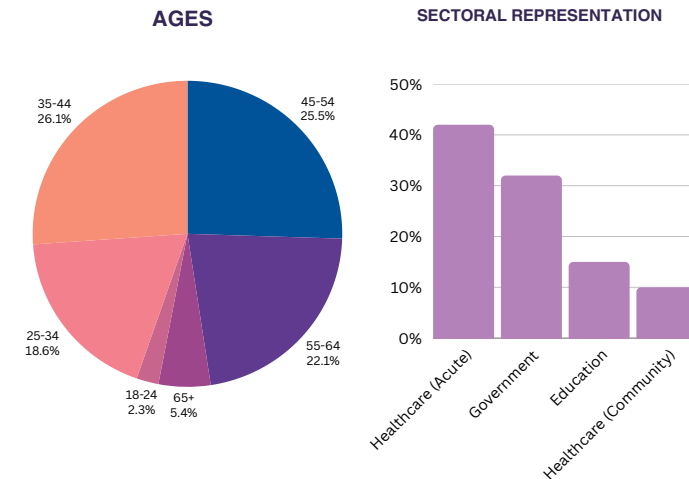
The role of 1st Vice President is to assist the President and work directly with local executives to strengthen the membership and move the unions agenda forward.

If you have any questions, you can contact Hugh at:

hgillis@nsgeu.ca



YOUR UNION AT A GLANCE



NSGEU STAFF



NSGEU HAS 71 PEOPLE ON STAFF THAT WORK TO SERVICE THE UNION MEMBERSHIP

MEMBERS

38,041

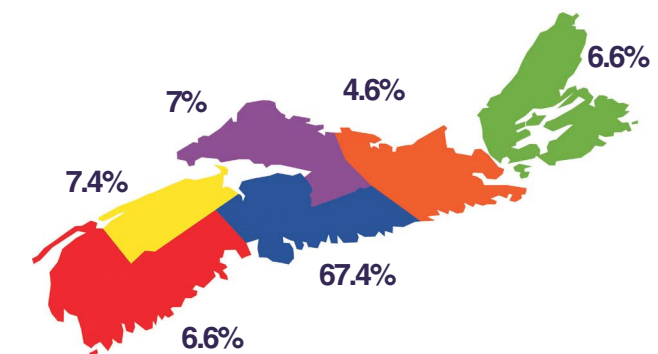
SIGNED MEMBERS

80.4%

FUN FACT

The total number of NSGEU members are equal to more than the populations of Richmond, Inverness and Guysborough Counties combined. Our memberships is large enough to span three counties; that's strength in numbers!

MEMBERS BY REGION



THE STAND

is a publication of the Nova Scotia Government and General Employees Union
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The NSGEU is affiliated with the Canadian Labour Congress, the Nova Scotia Federation of Labour, and the National Union of Public and General Employees.



The Union Stand is proudly produced by NSGEU with the help of members of IAMAW Local 2797.



Premier Puts NSLC Jobs at Risk with Potential Expansion of Where Alcohol Can Be Purchased

On May 29, the province announced they would be initiating a consultation process and public opinion poll to gather input into expanding where alcohol can be purchased and where it can be consumed.

The government said that due to the tariff war with the American government and the move to eliminate interprovincial trade barriers it was a good time to explore where people can buy and consume alcohol.

The move towards privatization of alcohol sales in Nova Scotia is not a new idea. However, it has generally been dismissed because of the strength and efficiency of the Nova Scotia Liquor Corporation (NSLC).

The NSLC is a crown corporation that ensures the safe and responsible sale of alcohol in the province. It also provides good paying jobs, with pensions and benefits to people in communities throughout Nova Scotia.

The NSGEU represents individuals working in both the main distribution center and in NSLC stores. Any move by government to privatize alcohol sales puts these good jobs at risk.

Groups begin lobbying N.S. government over potential booze sale changes

Consultation runs until the end of June on whether to expand sales points



Michael Gorman · CBC News · Posted: Jun 06, 2025 6:00 AM ADT | Last Updated: June 6



The Nova Scotia government is spending \$300,000 on a public opinion survey and stakeholder consultation this month about the potential of expanding sales locations for alcohol. (Josh Hoffman/CBC)

Nova Scotia

Doctors Nova Scotia joins voices opposed to expanding booze sales in N.S.

Province has completed consultations on whether to allow alcohol to be sold in more places



Carolyn Ray · CBC News · Posted: Jul 03, 2025 3:39 PM ADT | Last Updated: July 3



In Nova Scotia, alcohol is sold mainly at NSLC stores and agency stores in rural communities. (Craig Paisley/CBC)

public health with ID checks and ensures the safe and responsible sale of alcohol in our communities. They also offer a wide and expansive choice of products to select from. People can buy the wines, beers, and

liquor they want. Access to alcohol is not a barrier for people. Then there is the issue of good jobs. The NSLC is a good employer that provides its employees with pension and benefits, and these aren't just Halifax based jobs. The NSLC employs people in communities throughout the province. Good rural jobs will be put at risk under a model of privatization.

The thrust of the campaign is that Nova Scotians benefit greatly from the NSLC and moving away from that model puts NSLC jobs, public health, and provincial revenue at risk.

The NSLC is a crown corporation which means that all profits go back into provincial revenue. That money is used to fund health care, education, build infrastructure and invest in the priorities of Nova Scotians. The NSLC puts over \$280 million annually into the provincial bank account. Moving towards a model of privatization puts that revenue at risk.

The NSLC also provides the public with trained staff who protect the

liquor they want. Access to alcohol is not a barrier for people.

Then there is the issue of good jobs. The NSLC is a good employer that provides its employees with pension and benefits, and these aren't just Halifax based jobs. The NSLC employs people in communities throughout the province. Good rural jobs will be put at risk under a model of privatization.

The NSGEU took part in the consultation process.

On June 20, NSGEU President Sandra Mullen, First VP Hugh Gillis, Executive Director Nicole McKim and other staff meet with the consultation team. During this meeting the NSGEU laid out the arguments against privatization and advocated on behalf of the members working at the NSLC.

There is currently not a barrier to access for people to purchase alcohol in the province. Through NSLC stores, NSLC Express locations and the use of smaller agency stores people can purchase their choice of liquor close to home.

In a time of economic uncertainty why would the government give up a consistent and reliable revenue

Union representing NSLC employees speaks out against potential privatization of liquor sales

By Jesse Hunt

Published: June 24, 2025 at 10:42AM EDT



An NSLC store on Kearney Lake Road in Halifax is pictured on May 29, 2025. (Jesse Thomas/CTV Atlantic)



released publicly.

Regardless of the results the union will advocate to keep liquor sales public and will stand up to protect these jobs. The union views the NSLC as a good employer and a socially responsible partner in the sale of alcohol. The union is ready to hold government accountable and ensure that all Nova Scotians continue to benefit from responsible alcohol sales. ■

stream? All money raised by the NSLC goes back into public spending. Under this system all Nova Scotians benefit. Selling off that revenue stream means profits go into corporate bank accounts and only the corporation benefits.

This is really a time when the province can afford to reduce revenue and put good jobs at risk?

The government public opinion survey and stakeholder consultation closed on June 30. The

province is now waiting for the reports and results.

This government has earned a reputation for withholding these kinds of reports and data so it will be interesting to see how much is

Premier Allows NSCC to Privatize Jobs to American Company

On July 3, twenty-seven NSGEU members, located in campuses around the province, lost their jobs in the food services sector because the Nova Scotia Community College chose to contract out their jobs to Aramark, a privatize American company.

These impacted workers, some of whom were only a few years from retirement, were caught off guard from this change. The NSCC, like many post-secondary institutions, are facing significant financial challenges.

It is disappointing that the NSCC decided to try and balance their own finances on the backs of dedicated and long serving, workers. It is even more disappointing that they contracted out this work to a private American company.

NSGEU President Sandra Mullen said in media release that, "These are good, public-sector jobs that are being eliminated, and replaced by positions with no pension, severely reduced benefits, and less favorable sick time and vacation provisions."

Nova Scotia

NSCC to contract out food services, laying off 27 employees

Nova Scotia Community College says it was losing \$800,000 per year on in-house services



Frances Willick · CBC News · Posted: Jul 09, 2025 12:04 PM ADT | Last Updated: July 9

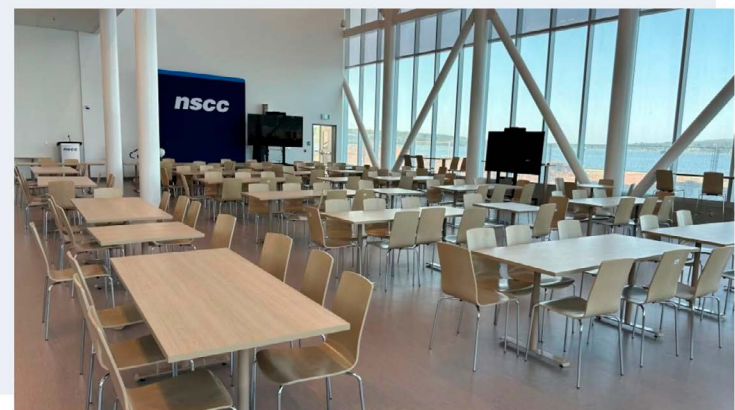


The Nova Scotia Community College is laying off 27 food services workers at campuses across the province. (NSCC)

Nova Scotia | News

Union says dozens of jobs lost as NSCC switches to single food services partner

By Sean Mall
Published: July 14, 2025 at 2:39PM EDT



The cafeteria in the NSCC Sydney Waterfront Campus is seen. (CTV Atlantic/Ryan MacDonald)

This comes at a time when the country is facing economic uncertainty because of the unprovoked tariff war initiated by the American government. During this tariff war, Premier Houston promised that work would not be contracted out to American companies and that his government would stand up and protect Nova Scotia workers. In this case the government has failed in both promises.

There are also questions around the apparent lack of transparency surrounding the awarding of this contract. The NSGEU questioned how Aramark was selected without a new, competitive tendering process, with the NSCC acknowledging they are "leveraging a former procurement process."

The NSGEU obtained documents through a freedom of information request that showed it was Aramark that approached the NSCC with a proposal to take over food services at the college campuses. The documents state:

"Aramark has approached NSCC to discuss food service

opportunities. Based on a prior tendering process, we were able to negotiate a sole-source contract with Aramark."

What is not disclosed is how much Aramark will receive from the contract. What will be done to ensure the contract is a good value for money?

The NSGEU issued two media releases and President Mullen did multiple media interviews. The union called on the Premier to stand up for working people and direct all post-secondary institutions not to cut, reduce, or eliminate low paying jobs to balance their budgets. The union also called on the Premier to honour his word and not allow private American companies from getting contracts for work that can be done locally.

Many of the former NSCC food servicing staff have been offered jobs with the new service provider, but at less hourly wage, without a pension and reduced health benefits. The union has put all post-secondary institutions on notice that they will advocate for their members against further contracting out or privatization of public services. ■

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Union slams province over community college food service job cuts



Sandra Mullen NSGEU president/NSGEU Website

No Tenders As US Firm Wins NSCC Cafeteria Deal

July 9, 2025
Brian Flinn

The **Nova Scotia Community College** is handing an untendered food services contract to **Aramark**, a **Pennsylvania**-based company known for operating in schools, hospitals and prisons.



NSCC's Ivory Campus, where food has been served by Chartwells. (Zane Woodford)

Documents show the arrangement is supposed to end financial losses at the cafeterias, but the **Nova Scotia Government & General Employees Union** said employees will lose pensions and benefits.

"It's just unfortunate that the employers decided to balance the books on the backs of these lower-paid employees," president **Sandra Mullen** said in an interview.

Premier **Tim Houston** declared in a March 4 statement that **American** firms can no longer bid on provincial contracts. It was part of the province's response to **U.S.** tariffs.

Community college administration said it's entering into a deal with subsidiary **Aramark Canada**, which has an office in **Mississauga**.

"Aramark Canada is an established food services partner for many Canadian post-secondaries," the college said in a statement attributed to **Lynn Hartwell**, VP of campuses and communities.

Aramark Canada is led by CEO **Steven Prisco**, a graduate of **Dalhousie Law School**.

McNeil Legacy Update: Hearing Takes Place for Bill 148

Ten years in preparation and waiting the hearing on the legitimacy of Bill 148 took place on June 2, 3, and 4. The joint legal action was brought on behalf of members of the NSGEU, CUPE, NSNU, Unifor, CUPW STTP, SEIU, Canadian Labour Congress, IUOE NS Paramedics, the NSTU and the unions interests are represented by Pink Larkin. Each side was allowed to present their case, and the matter is now before the courts for a ruling. This process, already ten years in the making, will continue to take time and the union understands and thanks all members for their patience.

Background:

In 2015 Stephen McNeil's Liberal government passed Bill 148 and proclaimed it in 2017. The legislation froze the long service award and legislated five years of low wage increases including two zero per cent increases for thousands of public sector workers. NSGEU, in solidarity with other impacted unions, has been working to have this dangerous piece of anti-worker legislation repealed as a breach of Section 2(d) of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. The union knew that pursuing



Nova Scotia

Nova Scotia's top court to look at controversial sections of Bill 148

Province has asked Appeal Court to examine bill's language on long-service award

Susan Bradley - CBC News - Posted: Oct 04, 2017 2:54 PM ADT | Last Updated: October 5, 2017



Protesters gather in front of Province House in 2016 to protest Bill 148. (Catharine Tunney/CBC)

legal action would be a slow process, and that continues to be true, especially since the government is delaying every step of the way. Initially, this challenge was delayed when then Premier McNeil referred the legislation to the Court of Appeal for an opinion. The province then made a series of preliminary objections to material being sought by the unions. Once those matters were resolved, the Court of Appeal concluded in 2022 that it was not the appropriate forum to decide whether the legislation breached the Charter.

Change in Government From Liberal to Tory – Same Old Story:

There was some reason for optimism in 2021 when Tim Houston and the Conservatives formed government. In a survey sent to the union the Conservatives committed to repealing Bill 148 if elected.

Once in government the Houston government did a U-turn on this commitment and said the legislation is redundant and does not need to be repealed. This forced the unions to continue the court process.

Hearing took place in June:

After ten years the unions made their case to the court in a series of hearings that took place June 2, 3, 4 and 5. It continues to a long process but Bill 148 cannot be allowed to create a precedent for future governments to use as leverage against working people.

As you will recall Bill 148 did three things that directly interfered with your right to full, free, collective bargaining:

- It imposed a non-negotiated wage pattern on the entire public sector (0%, 0%, 1.0%, 1.5% & an additional 0.5% on the last day of the agreement);
- It removed long-standing articles from various collective agreements (ending the retirement allowance/public service award as of April 1, 2015);
- Prohibiting an arbitrator from awarding anything above the above-noted wage pattern.

Even before government proclaimed the Bill into force, the threat of legislation hobbled the unions' bargaining power and prevented us from being able to freely conclude the collective bargaining process, because it took away the leverage of wages and monetary items like the service award off the table completely. The unions' argument is that Bill 148 breaches Section 2(d) of the Charter, which guarantees Canadians Freedom of Association and protects the right to collective bargaining and the right to strike.

Members will be updates once there is a ruling or decision from the court.



Nova Scotia court grants intervenor status to unions in Bill 148 review

By Alexander Quon • Global News
Posted January 19, 2018 3:37 pm • Updated January 19, 2018 4:16 pm • 2 min read



A photo taken from a rally against Nova Scotia's Bill 148 on Sept. 21, 2017. Alexander Quon/Global News



Health Care Support Ratifies New Collective Agreement

After eight days of bargaining and three days of conciliation, the Council of Health Support Unions bargaining committee brought forward a tentative agreement for ratification by the members. Health Care Support is bargained through the Council of Health Support Unions which was led by Unifor and included representatives from NSGEU and CUPE.

The new agreement included overall wage increases, wage adjustments for building trades, and retroactive shift premium increases.

On June 13, members from Nova Scotia Health and IWK voted in favour to ratify the new two-year agreement. Bargaining began in September 2024 and were put on hold during the summer general election called by Premier Houston. Talks restarted in February 2025 and both sides agreed to file for conciliation in March. The new contract is a two-year agreement that is mostly retroactive as it begins November 1, 2023, and expires on October 31, 2025.

The Council of Health Support Unions represents 4,600 workers in acute health care and supports patients as utility workers, mechanics, skilled trades workers, power engineers, dietary aids, porters, laundry workers and more.

Contract highlights include:

General Economic Adjustments applying to all classifications:

- November 1, 2023: Three per cent (3%) Special Bargaining Unit Adjustments applying to all classifications in the Bargaining Unit:
- November 1, 2023: Two and one-half per cent (2.5%)

General Economic Adjustment applying to all classifications:

- November 1, 2024: Two per cent (2.0%)

Shift Premium:

Effective November 1, 2024, for all hours worked, including overtime hours worked, on shifts where half or more of the

hours are regularly scheduled between 6:00 P.M. and 6:00 A.M., Employees shall receive a shift premium of four dollars (\$4.00) per hour.

Weekend Premium:

Effective November 1, 2024, for all hours worked between the hours of 12:01 A.M. Saturday and 7:00 A.M. Monday. Employees shall receive a weekend premium of four dollars (\$4.00) ■

N.S. Health Support workers ratify collective agreement by 58%



Civil Service Bargaining Goes to Binding Arbitration

On March 6, the civil service bargaining unit overwhelmingly rejected the employers tentative contract offer. Once the offer was rejected both sides agreed to move the process to mediated arbitration in hopes of resolving all the final issues.

Both sides met with the mediator on June 5 and 23. Progress was being made and there was reason to be optimistic that a tentative agreement could be reached. An additional two days of mediation was planned for June 25 and July 2.

At the June 25 meeting the employer derailed the progress by making it clear they wanted to roll back important job security language and refused to offer the civil servants the established wage pattern.

In summary, the government offered less money and continued to keep the proposal on the table that would roll back workers job security protections. It was a surprising turn of events as the union felt like the mediation process was working. However, with the employer determined to attack workers job security and the disrespectful wage offer the bargaining committee agreed negotiations were stalled and the remaining mediation date was cancelled.

The process will now move to binding arbitration. The earliest dates available to continue this process is October 20 and 21. The decision of the arbitration panel will be final and enforced on both sides.

This is another example of the Houston government attacking civil servants. The government spins these

actions by claiming they are attempting to build a more responsive and effective civil service. This shows a complete misunderstanding of how the public sector operates and what motivates people to do their best.

The way to build cohesion and efficiency in any workplace is to show workers they are appreciated, treat them with dignity and respect and pay them a fair wage. Threatening their jobs creates fear and uncertainty. Every contract the province has settled with a minimum wage pattern tabled by union. Every contract except this one. Offering the public service less than others does not build trust and is disrespectful to those working to deliver services to those who need them.

The union and bargaining committee are currently preparing

for the arbitration hearing in October. This has been a long and complicated round of bargaining. The October hearing dates also has implications for other active bargaining as all sides will want to know the ruling of the arbitrator to see how the issue of wages is resolved.

The NSGEU thanks all members of the civil service bargaining unit for their continued patience and support of the bargaining committee throughout this process. Updates will be sent to the bargaining unit as necessary. ■

Nova Scotia

Contract talks with N.S. public service break down over job protection

The union is also calling on the government to follow wage pattern

Michael Gorman · CBC News · Posted: Jun 27, 2025 4:34 PM ADT | Last Updated: June 27



Hugh Gillis is first vice-president of the Nova Scotia Government and General Employees Union. (CBC)

NSGEU Convention 2025

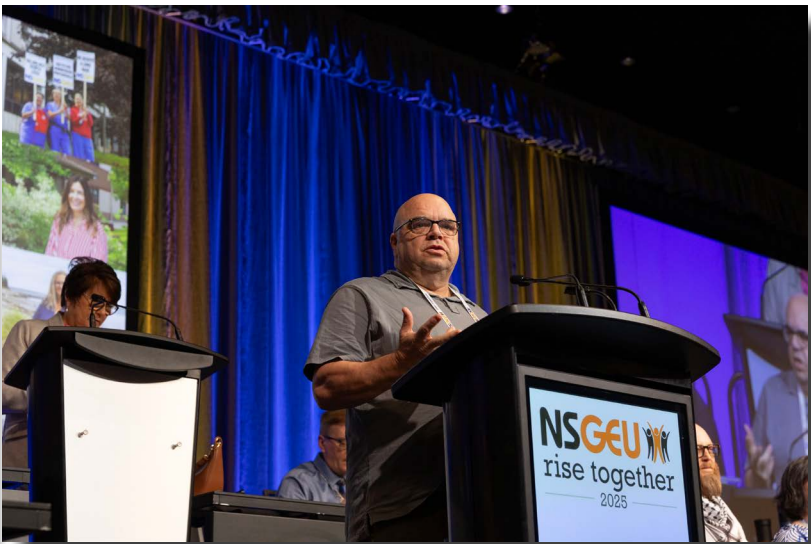
Day one of the NSGEU Triennial Convention kicked off with a New Delegates Seminar, followed by greetings from NSGEU President Sandra Mullen, a blessing and teaching by Elder Geri LeBlanc, the honour song performed by Muin Paul, a choir performance by the NS Mass Choir, guest speaker Siobhan Vipond, EVP of the CLC, and union business.



Day two of NSGEU Convention started with the President's report, followed by distinguished recognition awards, greetings from the President of the Nova Scotia Federation of Labour Danny Cavanaugh, NSGEU ED Nicole McKim gave the Executive Director's report. A group photo was taken outside the Convention Centre, greetings from President of NUPGE Bert Blundon, union business concluded for the day followed by keynote guest speaker Big Daddy Tazz.



Day three of NSGEU Convention concluded with elections, union business and resolutions. Sandra Mullen, was re-elected as NSGEU President, Hugh Gillis was re-elected as 1st VP, Tammy Gillis was re-elected as 2nd VP, Peter Perry was re-elected as 3rd VP and Darren McPhee was re-elected as Secretary-Treasurer.



Halifax Pride

NSGEU participated in Halifax Pride this July, with NSGEU President Sandra Mullen and the Executive in attendance. This was the first year the NSGEU electric vehicle drove in the parade. Thanks to all members who participated and walked with us to celebrate Pride!



NSGEU Family Picnic

Saturday, July 26, 2025 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Oakfield Provincial Park, 366 Oakfield
Park Rd, Grand Lake, NS

You're invited to the free NSGEU Family
Picnic. Join us for hot dogs, pizza, ice
cream and games for the kids. Rain
date: Sunday, July 27, 2025 same time.



NSGEU

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