



**The Official Handbook  
of the  
Women's Institutes  
of Nova Scotia**

**Updated October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2007**

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## **Structure of the Organization**

**Members**

**Branches**

**Districts**

**Women's Institutes of Nova Scotia - WINS  
(Provincial Level)**

**Federated Women's Institutes of Nova Scotia - FWIC  
(National Level)**

**Associated Country Women of the World - ACWW  
(International Level)**

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

The Women's Institutes of Nova Scotia continue to provide opportunities to enhance the quality of life, through education and personal development, allowing us to meet the changing needs of our local and global communities.

## **VISION STATEMENT**

'Learning, Sharing and Improving the Quality of Life for All'

## **A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE WOMEN'S INSTITUTES OF NOVA SCOTIA**

The first Women's Institute in the world was organized at Stoney Creek, Ontario, on February 19<sup>th</sup>, 1897 by Mrs. Adelaide Hoodless, with the support and assistance of Mr. Erland Lee of the Farmers' Institutes. For a decade, Women's Institutes grew in Ontario. In 1906, the idea began to crop up in other provinces. A few years later, the Maritimes were eager to try out this wonderful idea of cooperation of government and homemakers.

The beginnings of Women's Institutes in Nova Scotia are also due to the influence of a man, Dr. Melville Cumming. In 1911, Dr. Cumming, then principal of the Nova Scotia Agricultural College and Secretary of Agriculture for the Province, visited Ontario. Upon returning to Nova Scotia, he recommended to the provincial Government that this organization be established here.

In 1913, Miss Jennie Fraser of New Glasgow and a graduate of MacDonald College, was appointed Superintendent of the Women's Institutes of Nova Scotia. With the assistance of Mrs. Laura (Rose) Stephen of Ontario, the first Institute was organized in Salt Springs, Pictou County on July 17, 1913. In 1919, Miss Helen J. MacDougall took over the position of Superintendant and remained with the organization for the next 26 years.

There are Women's Institutes in every province in Canada and in February 1919, The Federated Women's Institutes of Canada (FWIC) was organized and became the national voice for rural women in Canada. Women's Institutes was introduced to England by Mrs. Alfred Watt, A WI member who moved to England from British Columbia, organized the Associated Country Women of the World (ACWW). Members of ACWW are from Women's Institutes, Country and Farm Women's Groups with similar objectives from over sixty countries.

In 1959, the birthplace of Adelaide Hoodless at St. George, Ontario, was purchased by the Federated Women's Institutes of Canada. The house has been restored, furnished and maintained through the support of Women's Institutes across Canada. In 1962 it was declared an historical site by the National Historic Sites and Monuments Board and is so marked with a plaque. The plaque was unveiled on June 2, 1962 by the late Mrs. Keith Rand of Port Williams, Nova Scotia, a former President of FWIC.

For the complete history of the Women's Institutes of Nova Scotia and more information on Adelaide Hoodless, please contact the WINS office.

## **OUR AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

- To help rural and urban women acquire the knowledge and skills needed to meet the demands of life in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, including food and nutrition, education, consumer awareness, environmental awareness, balancing family and working life;
- To encourage and assist women in becoming aware of issues affecting them;
- To discover, develop and train potential leader;
- To encourage good citizenship through informative and stimulating programs and projects;
- To preserve traditional arts and crafts and to encourage the learning of new skills;
- To foster a feeling of concern and cooperation among women for the betterment of home and country and the world-wide community.

These objectives are accomplished through programs, projects, information exchanges, leadership training courses, national and international affiliations, submissions to all levels of government, service on Boards and Agencies, all with an effort to promote and improve the role of women in our society.

## **MOTTO**

The motto is “For Home and Country”. These four words outline the purpose of the organization.

“Home” is the first priority, assisting women to acquire the knowledge and skills needed to meet the demands of home, family and work.

“Country” starts with the community of which the organization forms a part, and extends throughout the nation and into the international field.

## **O CANADA!**

O Canada! Our home and native land!  
True patriot love in all thy sons command.  
With glowing hearts we see the rise,  
The true north strong and free,  
From far and wide, O Canada!  
We stand on guard for thee!

God keep our land, glorious and free!  
O Canada, we stand on guard for thee.  
O Canada, we stand on guard for thee.

## **THE QUEEN**

God save our gracious Queen  
Long live our noble Queen,  
God save the Queen.  
Send her victorious, happy and glorious,  
Long to reign over us,  
God save the Queen.

## **MARY STEWART COLLECT**

Keep us O Lord from pettiness,  
let us be large in thought, in word and deed.  
Let us be done with fault finding and leave off self seeking.  
May we put away all pretense and meet each other face to face,  
without self pity and without prejudice.  
May we never be hasty in judgement and always generous.  
Teach us to put into action our better impulses,  
straight forward and unafraid.  
Let us take time for all things;  
make us grow calm, serene, gentle.  
Grant that we may realize that it is the little things that create differences;  
that in the big things of life we are one.  
And may we strive to touch and know  
the great human heart common to us all,  
and O Lord God, let us not forget to be kind.

## **FLAG SALUTE**

(Stand at attention with arms at sides facing the Canadian Flag)

In purity, fidelity, truth,  
We pledge allegiance  
to Our Queen, Our Country and Our Flag.

## **INSTITUTE ODE**

A goodly thing it is to meet  
In friendship's circle bright  
Where nothing strains the pleasure sweet  
Or dims the radiant light,  
Nor unkind word our lips shall pass  
Nor envy sour the mind,  
But each shall seek the common weal  
The good of all mankind.

## **WOMEN'S INSTITUTES GRACE**

We thank Thee, Father for Thy care,  
Food, friends and kindness we share.  
May we forever mindful be of  
"Home and Country", and of Thee.

**BILL NO. 28**

Government Bill

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1<sup>st</sup> Session, 54<sup>th</sup> General Assembly  
Nova Scotia  
34 Elizabeth II, 1985

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**An Act Respecting  
The Women's Institutes of Nova Scotia**

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The Honourable Roger S. Bacon  
Minister of Agriculture and Marketing

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Halifax  
Printed by Queen's Printer for Nova Scotia

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**BILL NO.28**

**1985**

**AN ACT RESPECTING THE WOMEN'S INSTITUTES OF NOVA SCOTIA**

Be it enacted by the Governor and Assembly as follows:

1. This Act may be cited as the Women's Institutes Act.
2. (1) The Provincial Women's Institutes formed in accordance with Chapter 153 of the Acts of 1914 and known as the Women's Institutes of Nova Scotia is continued and hereby constituted a body corporate to be known under the name "Women's Institutes of Nova Scotia".  
  
(2) The Women's Institutes of Nova Scotia shall be composed of delegates as provided in the by-laws of the Women's Institutes of Nova Scotia, elected in accordance with such by-laws.
3. Subject to the by-laws of the Women's Institutes of Nova Scotia, eight or more persons may organize themselves as a branch Women's Institute for an area where;
  - (a) each person has paid a membership fee in an amount prescribed by the by-laws; and
  - (b) the boundaries of the area for which the branch Institute is formed are approved by the Women's Institutes of Nova Scotia.
4. (1) Subject to the by-laws of the Women's Institutes of Nova Scotia, each branch Women's Institutes formed pursuant to said Chapter 153 and registered with the Women's Institutes of Nova Scotia is hereby continued as a body corporate.  
  
(2) Each Women's Institute formed pursuant to this Act and registered with the Women's Institutes of Nova Scotia is a body corporate.  
  
(3) A certificate purporting to be signed by an officer of the Women's Institutes of Nova Scotia and certifying that a branch Women's Institute is registered with the Women's Institutes of Nova Scotia is conclusive evidence that the branch Women's Institute is a body corporate under this Act.
5. If any difficulties arise as to the boundaries of an area for which a branch Institute formed, the Women's Institutes of Nova Scotia shall define the boundaries.

6. A branch Women's Institute organized pursuant to said Chapter 153 or this Act ceases to be a body corporate upon being removed from the register of the Women's Institutes of Nova Scotia in accordance with the by-laws of the Women's Institutes of Nova Scotia.
7. The Women's Institutes of Nova Scotia and each branch Women's Institute organized pursuant to said Chapter 153 of this Act may exercise such powers as may be necessary to achieve its objects and, without restricting the generality of the foregoing, may
  - (a) acquire, by way of grant, gift, purchase, bequest, devise or otherwise, real and personal property and use and apply such property for its purposes;
  - (b) buy, own, hold, lease, mortgage, sell, convey, dispose of and deal with such real and personal property as may be necessary or desirable in the carrying out of its objects;
  - (c) borrow on the security of its real and personal property, or without security, all such money as it deems necessary to carry out its objects, and mortgage, pledge or otherwise charge its real and personal property or any part thereof for the purpose of securing the sum or sums of money so borrowed;
  - (d) Make by-laws to carry out the intent and purpose of this Act, and respecting its constitution, internal management and affairs, including by-laws respecting the manner in which documents may be executed by it.
8.
  - (1) All property which, immediately before the coming into force of the Act, is purported to be held by or in trust of the Women's Institutes of Nova Scotia is hereby vested in the Women's Institutes of Nova Scotia as continued and incorporated by their Act.
  - (2) All obligations and liabilities of the Women's Institutes of Nova Scotia immediately before the coming into force of this Act are the obligations and liabilities of the Women's Institutes of Nova Scotia as continued and incorporated by this Act.
9.
  - (1) All property which, immediately before the coming into force of this Act, is purported to be held by or in trust for a branch Women's Institute organized pursuant to said Chapter 153 is hereby vested in that Institute as continued and incorporated by this Act.
  - (2) All obligations and liabilities immediately before the coming into force of this Act of a branch Women's Institute organized pursuant to said Chapter 153 are the

obligations and liabilities of that Institute as continued and incorporated by this Act.

10. Nothing in Section 8 or 9 affects the rights acquired by a person from a judgement or order of a court given or made in litigation or proceedings commenced before the coming into force of this Act.
11. (1) The Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries may appoint two persons, who are in the public service of the Province and who are members of the staff of the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries, to assist the Women's Institutes of Nova Scotia and to perform such other duties as are assigned to them by the Minister.  
  
(2) The Minister may expend, from money appropriated by the Legislature, sums to
  - (a) assist in the organization of Women's Institutes.
  - (b) pay grants to the Women's Institutes of Nova Scotia
  - (c) promote and assist the objects and aims of the Women's Institutes of Nova Scotia.
12. Said Chapter 153 is repealed.

<b>Constitution of the Women's Institutes of Nova Scotia</b>
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**ARTICLE I            NAME**

The name of the Organization shall be the Women's Institutes of Nova Scotia and shall herein be referred to as the Organization.

**ARTICLE II            OBJECTS**

The objects of the Organization are:

1. To bring together Women's Institute branches to improve family living in Nova Scotia.
2. To guide Women's Institutes branches by establishing specific objectives to meet changing conditions.
3. To inspire, encourage and strengthen Women's Institute branches.
4. To conduct special projects which will be of benefit to all Women's Institute members in the province.
5. To plan and conduct an Annual General Meeting, and every third year the Provincial Convention shall include the Annual General Meeting.
6. To communicate with all Women's Institute branches by means of an official publication "Home and Country WINS" and such other means as are deemed necessary.
7. To speak for Women's Institute members on provincial, national and international issues.
8. To be a member of the Federated Women's Institutes of Canada.
9. To be a Category I Society, formerly known as Constituent Society, of the Associated Country Women of the World.
10. To co-operate with the Nova Scotia Department of Agriculture.
11. To acquire by way of grant, gift, purchase, bequest, devise or otherwise, real and personal property, and to use and apply such property to the realization of the objects of the organization.

**ARTICLE III MEMBERSHIP**

The following shall be admitted to membership:

1. Any woman residing in the province of Nova Scotia upon payment of the annual membership dues. No formal admission to membership shall be required and the entry in the Register of Members by the Women's Institute Branch Secretary of the name and address of any individual shall constitute an admission to membership in the Organization. Every member shall be entitled to attend any Special, General or Annual Meeting and to hold any office, but there shall be no proxy voting.
2. Members-At-Large without the power to vote.  
(See By-Law 12)

**ARTICLE IV OFFICERS**

The Officers of the Organization shall be the President, President Elect and Past President.

**ARTICLE V EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

The Executive Committee shall be the President, who chairs the Committee, the President Elect, the Past President (ex-officio and without power to vote), three Board members elected by the Board, and the Executive Secretary (ex-officio and without power to vote).

**ARTICLE VI PROVINCIAL BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

1. The Board of Directors shall have a maximum of eighteen members elected for a three year term.
2. Non-voting members of the Board may be the Executive Secretary (ex-officio) and Counselors appointed by the Nova Scotia Department of Agriculture.

**ARTICLE VII MEETINGS**

1. The Annual Meeting of the Organization shall be held within three months after the end of the fiscal year of the Organization, or at a Provincial Convention.

2. A Special General Meeting of the Organization may be called by the Directors if requisitioned in writing by at least twenty-five percent (25%) in number of the members of Organization.
3. Fourteen days notice of a meeting, specifying the place, date and hours of the meeting and, in case of special business, the nature of such business, shall be given to the members. Notice shall be given in writing to each Branch of the Organization at its last known address, or by notice printed in the official publications of the Organization. The non-receipt of any notice by any Branch shall not invalidate the proceedings at any general meeting.

## **ARTICLE VIII      AMENDMENT OF CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS**

The Constitution and By-Laws may be repealed or amended at an Annual General Meeting or Special General Meeting or Special General Meeting by a Special Resolution passed by two-thirds of the members who are present and entitled to vote, provided that notice specifying the intention to propose the Special Resolution has been given to the Branches three months before the date of such meeting.

<b>By-Laws of the Women's Institutes of Nova Scotia</b>
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### **By-Law 1.            DUTIES OF OFFICERS**

- 1.1 The President;
  - (a) shall have general supervision of the activities of the Organization,
  - (b) shall preside at all General Meetings, Board and Executive Committee meetings, and be a member (ex-officio) of all Committees,
  - (c) shall be the Board Member on the Federated Women's Institutes of Canada Board of Directors and represent the Women's Institutes of Nova Scotia at Associated Country Women of the World Council Meetings and Conferences,
  - (d) shall perform such other duties as may be assigned to her from time to time by the Board of Directors.

- 1.2 The President Elect shall at the request of the Board of Directors and subject to its direction perform the duties of the President during her absence. In the event that the position of President Elect becomes vacant, nominations shall be called to fill the position at the next Annual General Meeting. The Board shall have the power to appoint an interim President Elect from among the members of the Board.

**By-Law 2. DUTIES OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

- 2.1 The Executive Committee is responsible for the day to day activities of the Women's Institutes of Nova Scotia. It acts on matters that require immediate attention between Board meetings and reports such action at the next meeting of the Board.
- 2.2 The Executive Committee recommends Staff appointments to the Board for approval.
- 2.3 A quorum shall consist of four members of the Executive Committee.

**By-Law 3. PROVINCIAL BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

- 3.1 Any member shall be eligible to be a Board Director and must be nominated by a Branch or District and elected by a District for a three year term, and cannot serve for more than two consecutive terms (six years). A member who has served two consecutive terms as a District Director must wait one term (three years) before being eligible for nomination to the Provincial Board as a District Director.
- 3.2 (a) In the event that a Director resigns her office or ceases to be a member, the vacancy thereby created shall be filled for the unexpired portion of the term by the Board of Directors in consultation with the District of the resigning Director. This will not affect the replacement's eligibility to serve as a District Director for the period of time specified by these By-Laws ( By-Law 3.1).
- (b) In the event that the President-Elect resigns her office or ceases to serve as President-Elect, the vacancy thereby created shall be filled for the balance of the current fiscal year by the Executive Committee from members of the current board. An election to fill the balance of the term shall be held at the next Annual General Meeting. This will not affect the replacement's eligibility to serve as President-Elect for the period of time specified by these By-Laws.

- 3.3 Powers of the Board;
- (a) The management of the activities of the Organization shall be vested in the Directors who, in addition to the power and authorities by these By-Laws or otherwise expressly conferred upon them, may exercise all such power and do all such acts and things as may be exercised or done by the Organization in general meeting.
  - (b) The Directors shall have the power to engage an Executive Secretary and to determine her duties and responsibilities and her remuneration upon recommendation by the Executive Committee,
  - (c) The Board has the power to remove a District Director before the expiration of her term of office after consultation with the District.
  - (d) If any branch of the Women's Institutes of Nova Scotia acts against the aims and objectives of the organization or in a manner detrimental to the good of the organization, the Board has the authority to remove the name of that Branch from the Register. Striking the name of a Branch from the Register ends all rights and privileges of that branch and its members for the current fiscal year. Reinstatement at a future time shall be at the discretion of the Board.
  - (e) If an individual member of the Women's Institutes of Nova Scotia intentionally acts against the aims and objectives of the organization or in a manner detrimental to the good of the organization, the Board has the authority to remove the member's name from the Membership List. Striking the name of a member from the Membership List ends all rights and privileges of that member for the current fiscal year. Reinstatement at a future time shall be at the discretion of the Board.
- 3.4 Meetings of the Board of Directors shall be held at least three times a year or as often as required and shall be called by the President and Executive Secretary. Notice of such meetings specifying time and place thereof shall be given in writing to each Director within a reasonable time before the meeting is to take place. Non receipt of such notice by any Director shall not invalidate the proceedings at any meeting of the Board of Directors.
- 3.5 No business shall be transacted at any meeting of the Board of Directors unless at least one-third in number of the Directors is present at the commencement of such business.
- 3.6 The President shall be the Chair without a vote, except in the case of an equality of votes, when she shall have the casting vote.

3.7 Duties of Provincial District Directors

- (a) The Provincial District Directors shall become familiar with the activities of all branches in her District: identify problems, and in keeping with the objects of the Women's Institute of Nova Scotia suggest to the Provincial Board ways of overcoming these problems, so that the work of the Women's Institutes of Nova Scotia may be effective and efficient at all levels.
- (b) The Provincial District Directors shall attend the District Rallies in their District, if possible, and present a report of the activities and deliberations of the Provincial Board and the Annual General Meeting or Provincial Convention.
- (c) Each Provincial District Director shall present a written report of the District activities and deliberations to the Provincial Board.
- (d) Each Provincial District Director shall be appointed to at least one Special or Standing Committee of Women's Institutes of Nova Scotia.

**By-Law 4. EXECUTIVE SECRETARY**

- 4.1 The Executive Secretary shall be the Secretary of the Organization who shall keep the Minutes of all Board meetings, and shall perform such other duties as may be assigned by the Board.
- 4.2 The Executive Secretary shall serve as the Treasurer of the Organization to carry out such duties as the Board may assign.
- 4.3 The Directors may appoint a temporary substitute for the Secretary who shall for the purpose of these By-Laws, be deemed to be the Secretary.

**By-Law 5. MEETINGS**

- 5.1 At an Annual General Meeting or Special General Meeting every Women's Institutes Branch and District of the Organization shall have one vote and no more. Each member shall have one vote in her own Branch.

- 5.2 At each Annual General Meeting of the Organization the following items shall be dealt with and shall be deemed to be ordinary business:
- ◆ Minutes of the preceding Annual or any Special General Meeting
  - ◆ Consideration of the Annual Report
  - ◆ Consideration of the financial statements, including the budget, the balance sheet and operating statement and the report of the Auditor.
  - ◆ Resolutions and Recommendations
  - ◆ Election of President Elect
  - ◆ Declaration of President in office
  - ◆ Confirmation of the Directors
  - ◆ Appointment of Auditor
- 5.3 No business shall be transacted at any meeting of the Organization unless a quorum of members is present at the commencement of such business and such quorum shall consist of twenty-five percent (25%) of voting members. If within one half hour from the time appointed for the meeting a quorum of members is not present, the meeting shall stand adjourned to such time and place as a majority of the members then present shall direct.

## **By-Law 6. COMMITTEES**

The Board shall appoint the following Standing Committees:

Nominating  
Finance  
Program  
Resolutions

The Board may from time to time appoint Special or Ad Hoc Committees as required.

- 6.1 Nominating Committee shall:
- (a) consist of five members - the Past President (Chair), two provincial Board members and two Branch Presidents.
  - (b) provide the Districts and Branches with nomination forms and list of those who are eligible to be nominated for President Elect. Eligible for President Elect are those having served on the Provincial Board during the preceding six (6) years for at least one full term. Nominations for President Elect must be received by the Chair of the Nominating Committee six months prior to the Annual General

Meeting and must include the nominees qualifications and consent in writing. Past Presidents are not eligible for nomination.

- (c) present their Report to the Annual General Meeting to be voted on by the delegates. If there is only one candidate for President Elect, and further nominations from the floor have been called, the report will be adopted, or an election held.
- (d) provide Districts and Branches eligible to elect a District Director with Nomination Forms. Forms to be received by Districts and Branches prior to March 1<sup>st</sup>. If there is more than one nominee an election is held. The names of the newly elected Directors shall be forwarded to the Provincial Office immediately following the District Spring meeting at which elections took place.

6.2 Finance Committee shall:

- (a) consist of five members, the President Elect (Chair), two Board members, the President (ex-officio) and the Executive Secretary (ex-officio)
- (b) draw up the draft budget for presentation at the Annual General Meeting
- (c) make recommendations regarding finances

6.3 Program Committee shall:

- (a) consist of three Board Members
- (b) formulate and recommend programs and projects for the organization

6.4 Resolutions Committee shall:

- (a) consist of three Board Members
- (b) Receive resolutions from Branches, Districts and the Board
- (c) after consideration recommend the resolutions to the Annual General Meeting for acceptance or rejection.

**By-Law 7. ELECTIONS**

- 7.1 If the Nominating Committee brings in a report presenting more than one candidate for President Elect, an election will follow.
- 7.2 Elections shall be by secret ballot.
- 7.3 The Board shall appoint an Elections Committee which shall:
- (a) consist of a Chair and two members
  - (b) appoint two scrutineers (non-voting delegates)
  - (c) be responsible for ballots being prepared by the Office and ensure that all voting delegates receive a ballot.
  - (d) count the ballots
  - (e) announce the result of the vote
  - (f) entertain a motion that the ballots be destroyed.

**By-Law 8. FINANCES**

- 8.1 The fiscal year of the Organization shall be the period from June 1<sup>st</sup> to the 31<sup>st</sup> of May in the next year following
- 8.2 The annual membership dues which are approved by Special Resolution at an Annual General Meeting are due on the first of June each year.
- 8.3 The members shall at each Annual General Meeting appoint an auditor to review the accounts of the Organization for a report at the next Annual General Meeting.
- 8.4 If for any reason the operations of the Organization are terminated or dissolved, and there remains at that time, after satisfaction of all its debts and liabilities any property whatsoever, shall be placed in a trust account for a maximum of seven years, to allow sufficient time for the reorganization, the remaining property whatsoever, shall be paid to some other charitable organization or organizations in Canada having similar objects. The trustees for the trust fund shall be appointed by the Board of Directors in office at the time of the dissolution.

**By-Law 9.                   SIGNING AUTHORITY**

- 9.1     There shall be two signing officers, the Executive Secretary and the President, with only one (1) signature required. The Executive Secretary must have approval from the President to write cheques greater than one thousand dollars.
- 9.2     Contracts, deeds, documents or any instrument in writing requiring a signature may be signed on behalf of the Organization by the President or President-Elect and the Executive Secretary, or otherwise prescribed by resolution of the Board of Directors.
- 9.3     The borrowing powers of the Organization shall be exercised by Special Resolution of the members.

**By-Law 10.               RESOLUTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

A resolution is an official request made by one organization or body to another to follow a certain course of action.

- 10.1    Resolutions of a provincial, national or international nature may be passed by a Women's Institute Branch or District and directed to the Resolutions Committee by January 31<sup>st</sup> for consideration at the Annual General Meeting. The Board of Directors through any of its Committees may also submit resolutions. Any resolution of local (community or municipal) nature should be directed by a Branch to a District for support.
- 10.2    Special Resolution is a resolution passed by two-thirds of the members who are present and entitled to vote at a general meeting of which notice specifying the intention to propose the resolution as a Special Resolution has been given at least three months before the date of such meeting.
- 10.3    Urgency Resolution. Matters of an urgent nature may be dealt with by a resolution submitted to the Resolutions Committee and the Board, twenty-four (24) hours in advance of the General Meeting at which it is to be considered.
- 10.4    Recommendations are forwarded to the Resolutions Committee for presentation to the Annual General Meeting. If accepted by the voting delegates it becomes Women's Institute of Nova Scotia policy.

A recommendation is an official request made to the Women's Institutes of Nova Scotia by Branches or Districts.

**By-Law 11. LIFE MEMBERSHIPS**

11.1 Branch Life Memberships

Branch Life Memberships may be awarded to members having ten years membership in any Branch of the Women's Institutes of Nova Scotia, who have given outstanding service to their Branch. Branch Life Memberships carry no privileges other than those of an ordinary member (i.e. payment of membership dues). Branches may give only one Life Membership in any one year. (See page 43).

11.2 Provincial Life Memberships

The Women's Institutes of Nova Scotia may award Life Memberships to Women's Institute members having ten years membership, and who have given outstanding service to the Organization on the Branch, District and Provincial level. No more than two Provincial Life Memberships may be awarded in any one year.

**By-Law 12. MEMBER-AT-LARGE**

Interested Persons may become Members-At-Large by paying the current membership dues. Applications for Members-At-Large are forwarded to the Provincial Office to be reviewed by the Provincial Board of Directors. They will receive "Home and Country WINS" and other Women's Institute mailings of interest to them.

**By-Law 13. DISTRICT ORGANIZATION**

13.1 For the purpose of Women's Institute work the Province shall be divided into Districts.

13.2 Each District shall elect a Director to serve on the Provincial Board of Directors for a three year term.

13.3 Each Branch shall have two representative on the District Executive, a Senior and a Junior representative, but only one has the power to vote.

13.4 The District shall hold two general meetings a year, one of which will be the Fall Rally and annual meeting, when business relating to the District is discussed and programs of local interest are presented.

13.5 A new District may be formed in the event that three or more new Branches are established in an area of considerable distance from the nearest existing District. Each new branch must be in existence for a period of one term (3 years) before the development of a new District may be considered and approved by the Board of Directors. A District Director may be nominated for each new District with a limit of eighteen Directors nominated to the Provincial Board.

**By-Law 14. FEDERATED WOMEN'S INSTITUTES OF CANADA EXECUTIVE OFFICER**

The Federated Women's Institutes of Canada Executive Officer for Nova Scotia shall be the person who becomes Past President of the Women's Institutes of Nova Scotia at the Annual General Meeting of that current year. In the event she does not wish to serve, a Past President, who has served during the past three terms would be asked. If she declines, a Board Member who has served on the Provincial Board during the past two terms shall be appointed by the Board.

<p><b>Policy</b></p>
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**GENERAL INFORMATION**

The most current version of **Robert's Rules of Order** shall govern all meetings of the Women's Institutes of Nova Scotia.

Throughout this text, the acronyms (initials) WI (Women's Institutes) or WINS (Women's Institutes of Nova Scotia), FWIC (Federated Women's Institutes of Canada) and ACWW (Associated Country Women of the World) have been used. However, it is important that whenever Branches or individual members are writing or speaking about the organization they avoid the use of acronyms (initials) and use the complete words.

The Women's Institutes of Nova Scotia Shall be non-partisan, non-sectarian and non-racial in every phase of its work and the organization is carried on without financial gain to any of the members.

A listing of Branches and officers is not to be made public.

Branches should be cautious to ensure that programs are for the education of the members and not for the personal gain of the speaker.

## **CREST AND COPYRIGHT**

The WINS crest is registered and may only be used with the permission of the WINS Office. Branches wishing to use the crest should contact the WI office, preferably by written request. When used in publication of books, a copy of the book should be sent to the WI office.

## **OFFICIAL COLOURS**

The official colours of the WINS are royal blue and gold.

## **WINS OFFICE**

The Provincial office is located at the Nova Scotia Agricultural College in Truro, Nova Scotia. The address is: Women's Institutes of Nova Scotia, 35 Tower Road, Box 550, Truro, NS B2N 5E3

## **PRIVACY POLICY**

The Women's Institutes of Nova Scotia is committed to respecting the personal privacy of people who choose to share personal information with us. This includes protecting the privacy of the personal information of our members, employees, and other partners. It has been, and continues to be, the policy of the Women's Institutes of Nova Scotia, to ensure that personal information collected from our membership is not distributed.

Women's Institutes of Nova Scotia adheres to the Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act (PIPEDA) and other legislative requirements with respect to privacy as they pertain to non profit organizations.

## **FINANCES**

The membership dues collected and forwarded to the Provincial office are administered by the Board of Directors, and are allocated for the following purposes:

- To pay the Federated Women's Institutes of Canada and the Associated Country Women of the World affiliation fees;
- To provide assistance when possible to delegates representing WINS at National Conventions and International Conferences;
- To contribute to the upkeep of the International Peace Garden which is located on the border between Manitoba and North Dakota;
- To defray the expenses of the Board of Director's meetings;
- And, for such other expenses as may be determined by the Board of Directors in carrying out WI activities.

The fiscal year end is May 31<sup>st</sup>. Provincial membership dues are due June 1<sup>st</sup>.

## **WINS SPECIAL FUNDS (Restricted)**

Restricted funds are funds allocated for a special purpose, and only the income (interest) from these funds can be disbursed.

Special funds are maintained for the following:

**WINS Scholarship Fund** - Contributions will be received from WI branches or individual members to provide scholarships for students furthering their education. The amount of the scholarships, regulations for awarding, etc., will be approved by the Board of Directors on the recommendation of the Scholarship Committee.

**Watt Memorial Fund** - The Mrs. Alfred Watt Memorial Fund was established in 1984 to assist the ACWW Societies in Canada to be represented at ACWW Council Meetings. A legal document was drawn up and signed by all the ACWW Societies in Canada showing the ways and means of using this fund. This document is kept on file in the WI office.

## **PERIODICAL**

“Home and Country, WINS” is the official Women’s Institutes of Nova Scotia newsletter and is published by the WINS office. Members, for which membership dues have been paid, receive a copy at branch meetings.

## **MEMBERS-AT-LARGE**

Interested persons may become members-at-large (See By-Law 12). They may attend meeting and conventions, but they will not have a vote at Branch, District or Provincial level.

## **ALUMNI**

A WINS Alumni has been organized so that members who have served at least one term on the Board of Directors may keep in touch after completing their term. The Alumni meets annually, appoints a Chair, Vice-Chair and Secretary-Treasurer. The Alumni may be called upon from time to time to advise or assist the Board of Directors.

## **HISTORIAN**

A Historian/Archivist may be appointed by the Provincial Board. She will be responsible for maintaining records of the Women’s Institutes of Nova Scotia activities throughout the Province. District Directors are responsible for forwarding newspaper clippings, photographs and other information to the Historian.

## **FEDERATED WOMEN’S INSTITUTES OF CANADA**

The Federated Women’s Institutes of Canada (FWIC) is the umbrella organization for the Provincial Women’s Institutes. Organized in 1919, it represents Women’s Institutes on a national level and acts as a clearing house for their activities and initiates nation-wide programs.

The President of WINS is the Nova Scotia Board Member on the FWIC Board of Directors. The FWIC Executive Officer for Nova Scotia is the immediate Past President (See By-Law 14). A national convention is held every three years and WINS is entitled to ten voting delegates.

## **THE ASSOCIATED COUNTRY WOMEN OF THE WORLD**

The Associated Country Women of the World (ACWW) is the world's largest rural women's organization, with a multi-million membership in over seventy countries. Women's Institutes, Country and Farm Women's groups whose objectives are in harmony with those of ACWW are Member Societies.

Triennial Conferences are held, and as a Category 1 Society, the Women's Institutes of Nova Scotia is entitled to five voting delegates. ACWW Council meetings are held from time to time between Conferences and the Women's Institutes of Nova Scotia is entitled to two representatives.

<b>PROVINCIAL</b>
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## **PROVINCIAL BOARD OF DIRECTORS - ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES (See By-Law 3)**

Working together as a team, the Board of Directors provides leadership in planning, supervising and evaluating the work of the organization.

### **RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PRESIDENT**

- Drafts the agenda for Board and Executive meetings in consultation with the Executive Secretary;
- Calls meetings of the Executive Committee, the Board and Board Committees as deemed necessary;
- Attends all the District meetings at least once during her three year term of office, if possible;
- Performs specific duties as assigned by the Board;
- Chairs the Executive Committee;
- Is "ex-officio" member of all Board Committees;
- Serves as the Board Member for WINS on the Board of the Federated Women's Institutes of Canada and represents WINS at Council meetings and Conferences of the Associated Country Women of the World;
- Submits articles to "Home and Country" and "Federated News";
- Prepares a report for the WINS Annual Report;
- Initiates evaluation process with the Executive Secretary;
- If possible, the President should visit the WINS office once a month.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PRESIDENT ELECT**

- Attends all Board Meetings and serves on various committees of the Board;
- Serves on the Executive Committee;
- Represents the President, if requested, at meetings, WI events and other functions;
- Submits articles to "Home and Country";
- Chairs the Finance Committee and the Provincial Convention Committee;

## **RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PAST PRESIDENT**

- May serve as Executive Officer for Nova Scotia on the FWIC Board of Directors during her term of office as Past President;
- May serve on Committees of the Provincial Board;
- Chairs the Nominating Committee;
- Represents the President, if requested, at meetings, WI events and other functions.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY**

**General Accountability:** The Executive Secretary works in consultation with the President and carries out specific tasks assigned by the Board of Directors. The Executive Secretary contributes to the effectiveness of WINS by assisting with the development of programs, projects and services for the organization and its members.

The duties of the Executive Secretary are to carry out all the administrative work of the organization in consultation with the President and/or the Board of Directors including:

- The day to day operation of the WI office;
- The bookkeeping and accounting of all WINS funds;
- Acts as a liaison between the branches and the Board;
- Recording Minutes of all Board and Committee meetings as requested by the Board;
- Assisting in the organization of workshops, conventions, conferences, etc;
- Representing the organization at various meetings;
- Serving as Public Relations Officer;
- Serving as a liaison between all level of governments;
- Assisting in preparation of reports, briefs, etc.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE DISTRICT DIRECTORS**

- The District Directors shall become familiar with the activities of all branches in her District; identifying problems, and in keeping with the objectives of the Women's Institutes of Nova Scotia, suggest to the Provincial Board ways of overcoming these problems.
- The District Director shall be a member of the District Executive without voting power.
- The District Director shall keep in touch with the District Executive and assist it in very way possible to carry out that part of the Provincial Program which specifically meets the needs of the Women's Institute member in that District.
- Each District Director shall attend the District meeting in her District, if possible, and present a report of Women's Institute activities and deliberations of the Provincial Board.
- The Directors shall attend WINS Board Meetings, AGM's and Provincial Conventions.
- District Directors have a vote at the Annual General Meeting/Provincial Convention because they are a member of the Provincial Board and therefore cannot carry a vote for their District or Branch.
- A District Director shall be appointed to work on committees as the Provincial Executive decides.
- The District Director shall assist in the organizing of new Branches in her District.
- The District Director shall serve a three year term and no longer than two consecutive terms.
- The District Director shall present a report to the Board of Directors each year and submit a report for the WINS Annual Report.
- If a current District Director is elected as the new President Elect, then they remain as the District Director and also as the new President Elect. If a member, not from the current Board, is elected the new President Elect, then the new President Elect also assumes the position of the Director of her own District. The current District Director would step down.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICER**

The PRO position, filled by a board or non-board member, will be reviewed yearly by WINS Board of Directors. The Board has the option to discontinue this position or replace the PRO at its discretion. Maximum term of the PRO is five years. The PRO will be an active Women's Institute member in good standing and have an interest in promoting the work of the organization.

- The PRO will attend meetings of the Board and be asked to attend Membership and Editorial committee meetings
- The PRO, if a non-board member, does not have a vote at Board of Director meetings
- The PRO will assist the WINS office with the promotion of Women's Institute work through media, as required
- The PRO will assist the WINS office with the design of promotional brochures, displays and other advertising, as required
- The PRO will submit articles for Home and Country, as requested
- The PRO will assist with WINS promotional events, as requested
- The PRO will report verbally or in written form on a regular basis to the WINS Board during Board Meetings
- The PRO will compile a Public Relations Report for the WINS Annual Report

## **PROVINCIAL CONVENTIONS**

Provincial Conventions are held every three years in conjunction with the Annual General Meeting. Each WI Branch and District is entitled to send one voting delegate. It is extremely important that each Branch is represented at these meetings, and that in addition to the voting delegate, it is strongly recommended that as many members as possible attend. The coming together of Women's Institute Members from all parts of the Province to develop policy and discuss subjects of mutual interest is of lasting benefit to all who attend. It is important that every Branch is a part of the planning and decision making for the ongoing work of the Women's Institutes of Nova Scotia.

A registration fee is paid by each member in attendance to help defray Convention expenses.

## **PROVINCIAL LIFE MEMBERSHIPS**

Provincial Life Memberships shall be presented at the Provincial Convention or Annual General Meetings, with a biography of the WI member's service being read at the presentation.

An acceptable photograph and the biography of the person receiving the Provincial Life Membership shall be provided for the Life Membership Book.

Districts may recommend WI members for Provincial Life Memberships but the final decision will be made by the Provincial Board of WINS.

The cost of the Provincial Life Membership shall be paid by WINS.

Provincial Life Membership carries no privileges other than those of an ordinary member of WINS.

### **PROVINCIAL SPECIAL COMMITTEES**

**MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE:** This committee consists of five Provincial Board Members and with the option to add Non-Board Members. It is responsible for developing ways and means of increasing the membership.

**EDITORIAL COMMITTEE:** This committee consists of three Provincial Board Members. It is responsible for evaluating the material being printed in "Home and Country" and recommending any changes considered necessary. Ideas for new columns and other items and any concerns are to be dealt with by this committee.

**SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE:** This committee consists of three Provincial Board Members. It reviews the Scholarship guidelines and recommends any changes to the Provincial Board and selects the scholarship recipients.

**HANDCRAFT COMMITTEE:** This committee consists of two Provincial Board Members and the NS Department of Agriculture Liaison as an advisor. Following the Provincial Convention, guidelines will be recommended at the Fall Board meeting and will be printed in the next issue of the "Home and Country".

### **OTHER COMMITTEES**

WINS is also represented on other committees such as:

- Nova Scotia Agricultural Awareness Committee
- Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture (Council of Leaders)
- Nova Scotia Adopt-A-Highway Program
- Nova Scotia Farm Health and Safety Committee

## **RESOLUTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

**(See By-Law 10)**

A resolution may be defined as an official request made by one organization or body to another to follow a certain course of action.

Resolutions of a provincial, national or international nature may be passed by WI Districts or Branches and forwarded to the WI office for consideration by the Provincial Board of Directors. Anything of a local or municipal nature should be forwarded to a District for support.

When resolutions are sent to the Provincial Board, they are handled by the Resolutions Committee. These resolutions must be signed by the President and Secretary of the Branch and/or District with the date of the meeting at which it was passed. Concise background material must accompany the resolution with sources of information. The Board of Directors, through any of its committees, may submit resolutions.

If deemed necessary before presenting a Resolution to the Board, the Resolutions Committee may return the resolution for rewording or additional information or if it is not in harmony with the objects of the organization. This committee may make minor changes to the resolution providing they do not change the intent of the resolution. It then goes to the Convention/Annual General Meeting to be voted upon by the membership. The Branch or District submitting the resolution must have someone speak briefly at the Convention or Annual General Meeting in support of it.

Resolutions accepted at Conventions or AGM's are forwarded to the appropriate government department or agencies with the request that they be acted upon.

The deadline for submission of resolutions to the Resolution Committee is January 31<sup>st</sup>. It is advisable to send resolutions to the WI office immediately after they have been passed, so ample time is allowed for processing the resolution. Resolutions, except urgent ones, will be circulated to Branches so that they can be discussed prior to the convention.

Resolutions that have been presented and defeated or ruled out of order at two consecutive Annual General Meetings/Provincial Convention, cannot be re-introduced for three years.

Recommendations - (see By-Law 10.3 - 10.4)

<b>DISTRICT</b>
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## **DISTRICT ORGANIZATION**

For the purpose of Women's Institutes, the province has been divided into Districts. Each District Executive Committee shall consist of the District Officers and the Junior and Senior representatives of each Branch in the District.

The District shall hold two general meetings each year; the Annual meeting in the fall and the other meeting in the spring. The District Executive Committee (officers and Branch Senior and Junior Representatives) shall meet prior to the General Meeting to plan the agenda. Each Branch shall have two representatives, a Senior and a Junior. The Senior Representative shall vote for the Branch at all District meetings. In the absence of the Senior Representative, the Junior Representative votes for the Branch. It is preferable that the Senior and Junior Representatives be the Branch President and Vice President.

The District Officers shall be the Past President, President, one or more Vice Presidents, Secretary and Treasurer.

The Provincial District Director is a member, in an advisory capacity, of the District Executive Committee without voting power.

Voting shall be carried out by means of a voting card. The District President shall ascertain how many votes will be cast, i.e. the number of Branches plus District Officer. It is strongly urged that the District President does not cast a vote unless in the event of a tie.

It is advisable that Senior Representatives be advanced to District Officers.

Each District shall make its own financial arrangement and set its own District allotment to be paid by the Branches.

Each branch may nominate one member for the office of District Director on the Provincial Board. Those eligible for election should have served on the District Executive Committee, preferable as District President or Secretary or have previously served as a Provincial Board Member. Nominations are to be submitted to the District Nominating Committee at the Spring District meeting. The Nominating Committee will be responsible for an election to be held by secret ballot at the spring meeting if more than one nomination is received.

## **DISTRICT AMALGAMATION**

Ideally several Branches make up a District. However, if circumstances are such that only one or two Branches remain in a District, it might be advisable to consider amalgamation with another District. All requests for amalgamation of District must be approved by the Provincial Board.

Once approved, the District Directors for the Districts involved will convene a meeting of two representatives from each Branch, including the District Presidents of these Districts. This interim District Executive will appoint a Chair and Secretary/Treasurer at this meeting. A Nominating Committee will also be appointed to bring in a slate of officers for the fall meeting. The interim District Executive will plan a spring or fall meeting, whichever ever comes first, at which time the formal amalgamation will take place.

Each District will allocate an amount per member towards the funds of the newly amalgamated District. Remaining District funds to be equally divided between the Branches in that District.

## **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF DISTRICT OFFICERS**

### **DUTIES OF DISTRICT PRESIDENT**

- To preside at all District Meetings
- To keep in touch with the Branches. The President serves as a connecting link between District and Branch
- To plan, if possible, to visit the Branches and help them to realize that they are an important part of the District and Women's Institutes of Nova Scotia
- To encourage and assist in the organizing of new Branches

### **DUTIES OF THE DISTRICT SECRETARY**

- To send out meeting notices to the District Officers, the Branches in the District, District Director and the Executive Secretary of the Women's Institutes of Nova Scotia.
- To record the minutes of all District meetings.
- To draw up, in consultation with the District President, the agenda for all District meetings, and prepare voting cards.
- To prepare an up to date list of officers and Senior and Junior Representatives immediately after each District meeting. A copy of this list is to be forwarded to the WINS office with the date and venue of the next District meeting.

### **DUTIES OF THE DISTRICT TREASURER**

- To collect the District allotment from the Branches.
- To maintain all the District financial records and present an audited financial statement at the Fall meeting.

### **DUTIES OF THE DISTRICT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

- To plan the Fall meeting program, and the Spring meeting.
- To encourage activities in keeping with the Women's Institutes objectives.
- The Senior Representative is the liaison between the Branch and the District. She should attend all District meetings. She is responsible for reporting to her Branch on all the activities of the District Executive, including a list of the officers elected in the District.

### **DISTRICT NOMINATING COMMITTEE**

The District Nominating Committee is responsible for receiving the nominations for District Director every three years and holding an election if necessary at the Spring meeting. If the Nominating Committee brings in a report at the Spring meeting presenting more than one candidate, an election shall follow. Elections shall be by secret ballot.

District Officers should not hold the same office for more than three consecutive years, with the exception of the District Treasurer.

The Nominating Committee is responsible for preparing a list of the nominees for District Officers and two auditors to be presented to the Fall Meeting. These auditors should be from more than one Branch. If there are no further nominations the Nominating Committee's Report is moved, seconded and voted upon. A District Past President and two Branch members should make up the committee.

<b>BRANCH</b>
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## **GUIDELINES FOR WINS BRANCHES**

The Women's Institute is an educational and community organization with all members having equal right and privileges.

A Women's Institute Branch may be organized in any community, where there are eight women who express interest in the organization, and who are in sympathy with its objectives. More than one Branch is permitted in any community. Request for organizing a Branch shall be sent to the Provincial office.

As stated in By-Law 8.2 membership dues are due on the first of June of each year for the following twelve month period. Should a new member wish to join after December 1<sup>st</sup>, the payment of one-half the membership dues may be paid for the remaining period in the current year. This entitles the member to vote at meetings and receive "Home and Country", the Women's Institutes of Nova Scotia newsletter.

When a member moves away, the Branch Secretary shall write a letter of introduction to another Branch stating that the member is a paid-up member in good standing. This letter shall entitle her to membership in the WINS Branch to which she transfers for the remainder of the Branch year without payment of an additional fee. In making up annual reports and recording dues, such members shall be considered as belonging to the Branch of which she was a member during the first part of the Institute year.

The membership dues collected and forwarded to the WINS Provincial office are to be made payable to the Women's Institutes of Nova Scotia.

WI members may belong to two WI Branches if they wish. Membership dues must be paid to both branches, which entitles them to have voting privileges in both Branches.

Branches are encouraged to make a-contribution to special WINS funds, i.e., Scholarship fund. Branches should also consider making contributions to Federated Women's Institutes of Canada and the Associated Country Women of the World projects.

Branches are advised to hold monthly meetings on a given day each month, and shall hold their Annual Meeting before June 30<sup>th</sup>. In addition to the Annual meeting, each Women's Institute Branch shall hold at least six meetings each year, at which educational programs shall be

presented. Branches are encouraged to prepare a yearly program schedule. Each year, Branches should invite their Provincial District Director to attend a meeting, with the travel expenses of the District Director being the responsibility of the Branch. Monthly report forms (giving details of Branch meetings and activities) must be forwarded to the Provincial office immediately after Branch meetings.

Branches are represented at District meetings by their President, who is the Senior Representative and the Vice President, who is the Junior Representative. The names, mailing addresses and phone numbers of these representatives should be passed on to the District Secretary at the District meeting or earlier if requested.

## **ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF BRANCH OFFICERS**

### **BRANCH PRESIDENT**

Presides at all meeting of the Branch, as well as at all meetings of the Executive Committee. If special meetings are desired, the President shall direct the Secretary to call such meetings. She shall be an "ex-officio" member of all committees.

### **BRANCH VICE PRESIDENT**

The Vice President presides at meetings in the absence of the President, or when the President wishes to address the meeting. Should both the President and the Vice President be absent at any meeting, the Secretary calls the meeting to order, and a Chair for the meeting is appointed from the members present. She will perform such other duties as may be required of her by the President.

### **BRANCH SECRETARY**

The Secretary is responsible for the records of the organization. **THESE SHALL BE CAREFULLY PRESERVED** in a place such as museum, archives or some other safe and accessible place.

Her duties are to attend, if possible, every meeting of the Branch and Executive Committee, and to keep a careful and impartial record of the business transacted. If unable to be present, she shall send the Minute book, correspondence and all other papers pertaining to the business to be discussed, to the place of the meeting in order that a Secretary pro-tem may carry on in her

absence. The Secretary pro-tem writes the minutes she takes at the meeting.

The duties of the Secretary are:

- To provide the President, at the beginning of each meeting, with a detailed order of business (agenda), including a list of unfinished business, of committees which are to report, and of announcements.
- To read the Minutes of the previous meetings as requested by the President.
- To keep a written report of the Minutes and signs the Minutes.
- To keep a record of Branch Members
- To send a report of each meeting to the WI office immediately after the meeting, as well as an annual report on forms which are sent to her.
- To administer correspondence.
- To distribute literature addressed to her, as instructed
- To notify members of the place and date of meetings and other necessary information regarding those meetings.
- To turn over to the new Secretary, within two weeks of her election, all books and papers belonging to the Branch.
- To perform such other duties as may be required of her by the President.

## **BRANCH TREASURER**

The Treasurer is responsible for the financial records of the Branch. Her duties are:

- To keep a record of the finances and obtain receipts for all expenditures.
- To attend, if possible, every meeting of the Branch and to submit a financial report to the meeting.
- To pay all bills as voted for payment by the Branch.
- To present an audited statement of funds at the Annual Meeting.
- To turn over to the new Treasurer, within two weeks of her election, all books and accounts belonging to the Branch.

## **DUTIES OF THE BRANCH EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

The Executive Committee is the business committee of the WINS Branch and it may, at times, have to take action without consulting the Branch should unexpected business occur when it is not advisable to call a special meeting of all members. The action taken by the Executive should be reported and approved at the next regular meeting of the Branch. The President is chair of this

committee and the Secretary keeps a record of its meetings.

### **DUTIES OF THE BRANCH STANDING COMMITTEES**

Standing committees are permanent committees elected at the Annual Meeting, and their duties are indicated by their names. Each committee may consist of one or preferably, more members. The first named acts as chairman, calls committee meetings and reports to the Branch. At its first meeting, if they wish a committee may appoint a different chair from among their number.

### **DUTIES OF THE BRANCH NOMINATING COMMITTEE**

A Branch Nominating Committee shall be appointed to present a slate of officers at the Annual Meeting. Auditors shall also be appointed at that time. The Branch Nominating Committee should consist of a Branch Past President and two Branch members.

When the Nominating Committee has presented its report, the President then asks for further nominations from the floor (three times). Nominations need no seconder. If there are no further nominations, the Nominating Committee's report is moved, seconded and voted upon.

When there is more than one nomination for an office, an election will be held by secret ballot. In the event of an officer resigning during the year, the vacancy shall be filled at the next regular Branch meeting by the Nominating Committee.

The officers of a Branch shall consist of a President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer. The offices of Secretary and Treasurer may be combined if desired. Branch officers should not hold the same office for more than three years with the exception of the Treasurer. Two auditors, not Executive members, shall be appointed each year to audit the financial records of the Branch.

### **DUTIES OF THE BRANCH PROGRAM COMMITTEE**

The Branch may appoint a Program Committee to present educational programs relevant to current issues and member interest in keeping with the objectives.

## **DUTIES OF BRANCH SPECIAL COMMITTEES**

Special committees may be appointed for some special or definite purpose. When that is completed and the report given to the Branch, the committee automatically ceases to be. These committees may be appointed by the Chair, at the request of the Branch. The President is “ex-officio” member of all committees.

Committees to look after programs, places to hold meetings, invitations and membership, finances, etc., may be appointed by the Executive Committee as occasions arise. It is advisable to have an odd number of members on committees to avoid the danger of a “tie” when voting.

The Chair of each committee should report at regular monthly meetings.

Committees may be nominated by the meeting or appointed by the Chair and may be elected either by acclamation or by ballot. The Chair has the right to appoint a committee member only after a motion to that effect has been carried. Each person has the right to nominate only one member for any committee, until all other members have had a opportunity to nominate the members of their choice.

## **BRANCH LIFE MEMBERSHIP (See By-Law 11)**

Branches are allowed to give only one Branch Life Membership in any year. The only exception being a Branch celebrating a special occasion when they wish to honor members. If this is done, they may not award another until as many years as Life Memberships given have elapsed; i.e. if a Branch gives five Branch Life Memberships one year, they are not eligible to give another Branch Life Membership until five years have elapsed.

Branches wishing to give a Branch Life membership must purchase the certificate and the WINS Life Membership Pin from the WINS office. Branches are responsible for having the date engraved on the back of the pin. Names of the recipients of Branch Life Memberships shall be forwarded to the WINS office. Only the recipient of a Branch Life Membership Pin is entitled to wear it.

The Branch Life Membership may be awarded at an Anniversary observance or special function, with a biography of the WI member's service being read at the presentation.

Refer to the WINS Supplies price list in “Home and Country” for current cost.

## **EXPENDITURE OF BRANCH FUNDS**

The officers and members of a Branch have full control of the finances of that Branch.

## **GUIDELINES FOR CONDUCTING BRANCH MEETINGS**

There are three kinds of Branch meetings - regular, special and annual.

The order (agenda) of a regular monthly meeting is as follows:

Call to Order by the President or her alternate.

Opening exercises according to the wish of the Branch.

Roll Call is taken by the Secretary with attendance recorded in the Minute book. If answers to the Roll Call are to be part of the program it may be postponed until the time of the program.

The President calls for the reading of the Minutes of the last regular meeting. The Minutes are approved by the President after any errors or omissions have been recorded. If the members are not in agreement of any matter pertaining to the Minutes, this matter must be settled by a vote of the members. The President signs the approved Minutes.

Minutes of any special meeting held since the last regular meeting are read at this time and dealt with in the same manner as the Minutes of the regular meeting. Minutes are not called the "Report of the Secretary" and should not be signed "Respectfully submitted".

The Treasurer presents her financial statement showing the receipts and disbursements since the last meeting and the cash balance as of the date of the statement. The Treasurer moves the acceptance of her report and after it has been seconded and voted on, it is placed on file.

At the Annual Meeting the Treasurer presents her previously audited financial statement. The President asks for a motion to adopt the statement. If it is carried, it becomes the Branch Financial Statement for the current year.

At the request of the President, Standing and Special Committee reports are given by the Chair of the various committees.

Correspondence is read by the Secretary and dealt with by proper motion if necessary.

Any unfinished business arising from the Minutes should be noted and proper action taken.

New business will be brought to the meeting in the form of a motion and discussed and dealt with by the members. Adjournment takes place after a motion to adjourn is moved, seconded and voted upon.

SPECIAL MEETINGS are called by the President or the Executive to deal with special business which has arisen. Notice must be given to all members stating the business to be discussed. Only business stated in the Notice may be transacted at this meeting. The President presides and all proceedings must be recorded by the secretary. The Minutes of the last regular meeting do not need to be read, but the Minutes of this meeting must be read at the next regular meeting.

The ANNUAL MEETING differs from the regular meeting in that the yearly report of officers and Standing Committees are given. The Nominating Committee report is also given at this meeting and the election of officers and Standing Committees for the coming year is held.

THE ORDER OF THE MEETING MAY BE VARIED TO FIT THE NEEDS OF THE PROGRAM.

### **ORDER OF REGULAR BRANCH MEETING - Suggested Agenda**

Call to Order  
Opening Exercises  
Roll Call  
Reading and Approval of Minutes of last meeting  
Treasurer's Report  
Correspondence and Bills  
Business arising from the Minutes  
Report of Committees  
New Business  
Program  
Adjournment  
Social Time

Meetings should begin and close on time. Business should be conducted promptly and in an orderly manner. Discussion on motions should not be permitted to be unduly long.

## **ORDER OF AN ANNUAL BRANCH MEETING - Suggested Agenda**

Call to Order  
Opening Exercises  
Roll Call  
Reading and Approval of Minutes (last regular and previous Annual Meeting)  
President's annual address  
Report of the Secretary  
Report of the Treasurer  
Reports of the Committees  
Business arising from Minutes and from the reports of committees.  
Report of Nominating Committee  
Election of Officers  
New Business  
Program  
Adjournment

## **QUORUM**

A quorum of regular monthly, annual or specially called meetings of a WI Branch shall consist of one-fourth of the membership. Where the Branch membership is less than fifteen, four members shall constitute a quorum.

A quorum for meetings of the Branch Executive Committee shall be one-half of the members of the Executive. Where the number of members of the Executive Committee is an odd number, a quorum shall be as indicated: 3-2; if 5-3; if 7-4.

## **METHODS OF VOTING (Provincial, District and Branch Meetings)**

Election of Officers, appointment of committees, delegates, etc., as well as a decision on any question under discussion, is decided by voting. It is the means by which the opinion of the members present is obtained. **There shall be no proxy voting.**

Voting may be done by any of the following methods:

- **Voice**, by answering "aye" or "nay" at the call of the Chair. As this can leave the accurate number voting in doubt, a more careful method is -

- **Show of hands**, when the members raise their right hands for or against. The Chair and Secretary each count, and the former announces the result.
- To be still more accurate, she call for a - **Standing vote**, when the members rise to show their approval or disapproval. A Standing vote is often taken in connection with a motion of condolence or a resolution of thanks, to show unanimity.
- When secrecy is desired, a **Ballot** vote may be taken. Scrutineers are appointed by the Chair to distribute, collect and count the ballots.

At District Meetings and the Annual General Meeting/Provincial Convention, voting cards are to be used. If the Majority is in the affirmative, the motion is carried; if in the negative, it is lost. In a few cases, a two-thirds majority is required. (See Article VIII, By-Law 8 and By-Law 10.2)

## **MEETING MANAGEMENT**

Meeting Management means getting things done democratically; that is, every member must be allowed an equal chance to express her opinion, so that the right of both the majority and the minority be protected. One of the ways this can be achieved is by the use of motions.

<b>MOTIONS AND AMENDMENTS</b>
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## **THE USE OF MOTIONS**

The business of a meeting centers around motions. A motion is a formal statement of a proposal for action to be taken, or an opinion to be held, which is presented to the meeting for consideration and discussion and then voted upon. Once a motion has been placed on the floor it must be discussed. Only one motion can be dealt with at a time.

### **THE STEPS OF A MOTION:**

- To make a motion, stand and be recognized by the Chair, then state the motion as, "Madam Chair, I move that ..."
- Any member may second it by saying, "I second the motion."
- Once the motion has been moved and seconded, the presiding officer (the Chair), reports the motion and calls for discussion. A member should speak only once to a motion.
- After a reasonable length of time for discussion, the Chair repeats the motion, says that it has been seconded, and then puts the motion to a vote asking, "Are you ready for the question?" She then takes the affirmative and the negative vote.
- The result is announced, with "Motion Carried" or "Motion Defeated."

It is important that the mover gives only a brief explanation before making the motion, but discussion should not take place before the motion has been moved and seconded.

## **AMENDMENTS**

A motion may not be satisfactory to all members. An amendment is then in order, but not after the question is "put".

Amendments may propose to:

- Insert additional words;
- Leave out words;
- Leave out words in order to insert words.

The word "not" as an amendment is out of order since a negative vote gives the same effect. All amendments should be relevant to the motion and must not change the intent of the motion.

Amendments follow the same steps as motions.

If an amendment is not satisfactory, a motion to amend the amendment is in order. Only two amendments may be proposed at the same time. The amendment to the amendment is voted on first, the amendment as amended, and then the motion as amended. Members sometimes find amendments confusing. To avoid this, the original motion may be withdrawn and a new one formed.

### **WITHDRAWING A MOTION**

A motion which has been moved, seconded and stated can only be withdrawn with the consent of the meeting. the mover of the motion, with the consent of the seconder, asks permission to withdraw the motion. the presiding officer then asks the question, "Is it your pleasure that the motion be withdrawn?" If there are no objections, she announces "The motion is withdrawn." If there are any objections to withdrawing the motion, then to withdraw must be moved, seconded and put to the members.

Some ways of delaying action on a motion are to move to:

- ◆ Refer to a committee;
- ◆ Postpone to a definite date;

### **MOTION TO ADJOURN**

A motion to adjourn has the highest priority of all motions. It is not open for discussion; it cannot interrupt a speaker; it does require a seconder; it cannot be amended except as to the time, and in order to be adopted, it must receive a majority vote.

### **POINT OF ORDER**

The purpose of the Point of Order is to draw attention to an omission or a violation or mistake in procedure. It can interrupt a speaker because mistakes need to be rectified as soon as possible; it cannot be discussed and amended; it requires no vote; and it takes precedence over other motions.

## **PRIVILEGES OF OFFICERS**

The President is the head of the organization or society and the success of the meeting depends in part upon her knowledge of the rules of conduct, her tact and impartiality. She is addressed as “Madam President” or “Madam Chair”.

She stands when addressing the members, and when stating and putting a motion. She may sit when discussion is on, or when recognizing a member.

The Secretary may move and second a motion, if she so wishes. She stands when reading the Minutes and correspondence. An impartial record of all proceeding should be kept, with no personal bias recorded.

## **ADVICE TO MEMBERS**

Some of the common courtesies which are expected from the members during the meeting are:

- Refrain from conversation after the opening of the meeting, except to address the Chair.
- Be willing to abide by vote of majority, even though the decision does not coincide with yours.
- All members are encouraged to participate in the work and responsibility of the Institute Branch.

## **DEFINITIONS**

ACWW - Associated Country Women of the World

AGM - Annual General Meeting

FWIC - Federated Women's Institutes of Canada

PRO - Public Relations Officer

WINS - Women's Institutes of Nova Scotia