

Nova Scotia

## Halifax Pride silent as queer community questions status of 2023 festivities

Parade scheduled for July 23, but organization has provided few details

[Andrew Sampson](#) · CBC News · Posted: Jul 08, 2023 6:00 AM ADT | Last Updated: 12 hours ago



Thousands of people lined the streets during the 2022 Halifax Pride Parade, but the status of this year's parade is unclear. (Maddi Tang photo)

Halifax Pride is less than two weeks away but some members of the local queer community are beginning to question if the parade will happen, after hearing very little from the festival's board in recent months.

Back in May, Halifax Pride [announced the festival would take place from July 20 to July 30](#), with official pride events planned for the Garrison Grounds, and the parade set for Sunday, July 23 at 2 p.m.

The organization has provided no further details about this year's festival since then.

A community meeting planned for Monday was supposed to provide an update on "where matters stand currently with the 2023 festival." But it was postponed ["due to unforeseen circumstances,"](#) and the community was left with more questions than answers about the status of this year's parade.

"We seriously don't know, because pride has been singularly incommunicative," says Daniel MacKay, who runs [Halifax's Queer Encyclopedia](#) and publishes [Wayves Magazine](#).

As of Friday, the meeting has not been rescheduled, and there have been no further public statements from Halifax Pride.

"A lot of people look forward to this as a really fun event, and we have hundreds of organizations that plan to be in the parade ... and to not know whether they're doing it or not is quite distressing," MacKay said.

While the official calendar of events for Halifax Pride on the organization's website remains blank, MacKay is quick to point out that if the official parade doesn't happen, queer people will still have plenty of pride festivities borne at the grassroots level to choose from.

"If you look at the [Halifax gay events calendar](#), you'll see 90 events scheduled for July already, and more being added every day," he said. "Everybody's been stepping up and we're going to have a fantastic time."

## **Calls for transparency**

Kevin Kindred is an activist and longtime member of Halifax Pride who regularly attends its meetings.

He logged on for June's virtual gathering, where he said the board shared details on this year's parade route. But Kindred was surprised they didn't yet have more specific details to share about this year's planned events.

After this week's meeting was postponed, Kindred is growing increasingly worried the parade won't go ahead.

"It already was really concerning that we were into July, and still not hearing information from Halifax Pride as to what the plans were," he said. "And then for the meeting, where we were supposed to hear that information to be cancelled, I think really started raising some serious alarm bells."

## Unusually high turnover

In September, [Halifax Pride's executive director and operations manager — the organization's only two paid staff members](#) — both stepped down.

Neither role has been filled, said Kindred, and Halifax Pride now has an entirely different board of directors than it had at this time last year.

"I have to give the board credit because they're brand new people who stepped into a really tough point in time for Halifax Pride, and so it doesn't surprise me that they're having struggles," said Kindred. "But there's a lot of frustration about the lack of certainty this close to the festival."

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What he wants, more than anything, is for the board to be transparent about what's happening.

"Right now, they just need to be open with everyone about what's going to happen in 2023, for better and for worse," said Kindred.

A spokesperson for the Halifax Regional Municipality said the city "is under the understanding a parade will be held on July 23 at 2 p.m."

Halifax Pride also has a booking for the Garrison Grounds, the city said, "but the municipality does not have information on exact programming at the time."

CBC News contacted Halifax Pride to ask if the parade and events planned at Garrison Grounds would be going forward.

As of Friday at 5 p.m, the organization had not responded.

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