

## PAGE BRIEFS

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**All 13 Nova Scotia** Mi'kmaq chiefs attended a signing ceremony on March 24, to mark a health-care data-sharing agreement with the province. The ceremony took place at the Cunard Centre, 961 Marginal Rd., Halifax with Health and Wellness Minister Leo Glavine and Debra Keays-White, regional director of First Nations and Inuit Health Branch, Health Canada in attendance.

**Dynamic Systems Analysis Ltd.** (DSA), Halifax has led the launch of the EcoSPRAY platform in Grand Passage, in the Outer Bay of Fundy (Canada). The research program is designed to gain a better understanding of the impact of turbulent tides on moored floating structures, and will collect data into April 2016. Co-founder and Director of Operations for DSA, Dean Steinke, says the Natural Resource Canada ecoEnergy Innovation Initiative (NRCan ecoEII) project in collaboration with Acadia University (project lead), Dalhousie University and the University of New Brunswick is helping to reduce the cost of instream tidal energy through the development of comprehensive site assessment methods and technologies. The EcoSPRAY platform was collaboratively designed and built by DSA, Fundy Tidal, and local suppliers Clare Machine Works (Meteghan, NS) and Bear River Plastics (Cornwallis, NS). The experiment includes state of the art equipment to measure motion, mooring line loads, wind speeds, current and wave conditions. The platform is equipped with a drag plate to simulate the thrust created by an underwater turbine.

**The province** has reached a 10-year agreement with Bay Ferries Limited to manage and operate a high-speed ferry between Yarmouth and Portland, Maine.

Government will provide annual funding for the ferry service, including marketing, at \$10.2 million for the first season and \$9.4 million for the second. There will also be \$4.1 million for start-up costs that will include terminal upgrades and \$9 million towards the ferry's retrofit, in lieu of two years of charter fees.

"This long-term support for a solid ferry operator provides stability and predictability for Nova Scotia businesses and tourism operators from all across the province," said Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal Minister Geoff MacLellan. "The Yarmouth Ferry is a vital link in Nova Scotia's transportation system. It is as essential as the TransCanada highway."

"With this service in place, we will bring more visitors to our province - that means more jobs for the people of Nova Scotia."

The new service is Yarmouth-based, leaving Yarmouth in the morning, travelling to Portland, and returning to Nova Scotia that evening. It will increase overnight stays in the region and provide an economic boost to Nova Scotia businesses.

It will reduce the travel time in half and eliminate the need for vessel cabins and additional onboard staff. It will also be quicker than driving between Portland and Nova Scotia.

Bay Ferries Limited, who operated the Yarmouth-Portland ferry service until 2009, has secured a vessel from the Military Sealift Command of the United States navy for the service. The vessel is a high-speed ferry with a capacity of 282 vehicles and 866 passengers. It was built in 2007 as a civilian ferry and was used in the Hawaiian Islands.

"We are pleased to once again provide this important service between Nova Scotia and Portland," said Mark MacDonald, president and CEO of Bay Ferries Limited. "We're ready to aggressively market the ferry service to Americans and beyond and help boost tourism to Nova Scotia."

The 2016 season schedule is anticipated to run June 15 to Sept. 30, departing Yarmouth and Portland daily at 8 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. respectively and returning to Yarmouth at 9 p.m.

"A stable, long-term ferry operation in Yarmouth is great news for tourism operators all across Nova Scotia," said Graham Hudson, general manager of the Keltic Lodge and Highland Links Golf Course. "As the operator of a tourist destination in Cape Breton, the Yarmouth Ferry is a key transportation link in bringing US tourists to all parts of our province. We will all need to take advantage of the business opportunity this brings us."

Details of the ferry service can be found at [www.ferries.ca](http://www.ferries.ca)

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## Maritime Conference UCW

**Biennial - May 22-24**  
By Christine Urquhart

Truro Presbyterian UCW are hosting the Maritime Conference UCW Biennial Meeting on April 22nd to April 24th at Knox United Church in Brookfield. This meeting is always an interesting and educational experience for all those who attend.

There will be a Book Display on Friday and

Saturday until around 4pm. Anyone is welcome to stop in to buy books, or to attend any of the events except meals and the banquet, for which one needs to have prepaid. Applications are available on the UCW website.

The Truro Presbyterian UCW Spring Rally will be held on Tuesday May 10th at First United Church in Truro. All ladies welcome.

## Councillors Hold Successful Community Meeting

By Maurice Rees

It wasn't an overly large turn-out, but those residents who attended Councillors Taggart and MacInnes community meeting at the Peg on March 12th participated in the informal discussion. Mayor Bob Taylor also attended and was able to assist providing an overview of council's positions on certain matters.

In his opening remarks, Councillor MacInnes stated he is proud to be part of this council; proud of council's decisions regarding fracking wastewater, wind turbines and he plans on re-offering.

Tom Taggart, Councillor District 10 said he was interested to find out what residents had on their mind, wanted to discuss the Palliser property, littering, solar power and he enjoys his work on council more than anything else he has done in his entire life.

Mayor Taylor said he is proud of what council has achieved, particularly in flood mitigation work, since it's almost the only municipality in the province which has faced serious flooding problems. He also mentioned that as councillors, they get many calls to assist residents, when the matter is actually the responsibility of other jurisdictions.

Arthur Haskins, Great Village inquired about possible expansion of the Great Village sewer system. Years ago there was significant interest, but it got delayed because of more major problems in Brookfield. Mayor Taylor replied, when the new bridge was built, the design included the possibility of hanging sewer pipe to expand the system across the river.

Steve Mazur, head of the Great Village Community Association stated his group had held a public meeting with about 30 people in attendance and expanding the sewer system to the rest of the village was high priority.

Traffic problems on Plains Road, Debert was introduced by Walter Rodler, suggesting solutions might involve three lanes, or a roundabout, plus the high volume of heavy trucks causes problems with asphalt chipping of shoulders, etc.

Royden Yorke, speaking on behalf of his family and other residents of Shore Road asked councillors what they could do to help reduce or eliminate the dust problems from the road. He and his wife stated, it was impossible to hang out laundry, windows in houses had to be kept shut, and it's a health problem. Years ago the problem did not exist because early in the year, DOT used to lay down the calcium treatment early in the year, but more recently, they've only been making one application in front of houses, and are not curing the full width of the road.

The meeting suggested if the road was graded and an application on the full width of the road was done in late spring, when the road bed was still moist, the problem would not exist. Mayor Taylor and councillors said this is a prime example of an area out of their jurisdiction, but they do have regular meetings with Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal (NS TIR), and would bring up the matter. Apparently, some residents will be seeking a solution by approaching the Department of Health, as it's a major health concern.

A safety issue has evolved, since the new bridge was completed in Great Village. Arthur Haskins said there is a major dark area and it's so bad, it takes motorists by surprise and there is a lot of squealing tires as vehicles try to make the turn. Councillor Taggart made not of the problem and assured Mr. Haskins he would bring the matter before council.

Steve Mazur asked if it might be possible to get a more detailed explanation on the tax bill, what the various services were costing. This prompted Councillor MacInnes to mention council had just learned the approximately \$5-Million spent for RCMP services will be increasing by 3.9% which will add approximately \$195,000 to the municipalities cost.

Bruce Zwicker, representing the Great Village Legion informed the meeting, the Legion is considering an expansion, since it's the only game in town, now that the Masonic Lodge building, the Community Hall and St James United Church are no longer available for community meetings. On any given month there is something going on at the hall 18-28 times by community groups. The branch is one of the few Legion's without a Liguor License. Use of the hall by community groups is based on donation rather than a flat rental fee. He mentioned a few years ago, a new roof was installed at the cost of \$30,000 and they paid it off in about 18 months.

Someone mentioned sidewalks, and both councillors MacInnes and Taggart said they were not really supportive, because when sidewalks are installed, an area charge is added to the tax bills and it never comes off.

Amanda Langille asked about the Palliser Property. The meeting was informed, a committee comprising all the municipalities is active and have just hired a consulting firm, which will be holding public meetings for input prior to developing a plan.

On the subject of floor remediation, Arthur Haskins, said he was about 90% pleased with the work done on Great Village River. It sure made a difference, but there is one small dam in the river, which raises the water level and he still gets flooding on his property. He suggested another two feet higher above that dam would eliminate the flooding.

Many believe the vast amount of clear cutting has contributed to more serious flooding problems, because with any amount of moisture what used to take 2-3 days now occurs in 3-4 hours and is also causing other damage from higher levels of nitrates and phosphates causing algae in rivers and lakes. It has created such a major problem in Mattatall Lake that soon it will be classified as a "dead" lake of solutions are not found soon.

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