

Rushton Pushes For More Open Hours

By Maurice Rees

Tory Rushton, MLA, Cumberland South stated he represents one of the largest geographic constituencies in the province commented on this year's Annual Accountability Report on Emergency Departments noting the emergency room in Parrsboro's South Cumberland Community Care Centre was closed for 2,249.5 hours accounting for 30 per cent of all the closure time in the northern region.

He continued by asking Hon Zach Churchill, Minister of Health "When can all the residents of the Fundy Shore region expect to be treated like other parts of the province and receive 100 per cent coverage at their collaborative care centre?"

Part of Churchill's response was "We're training more doctors here in Nova Scotia than we ever have before. We're recruiting more internationally-trained doctors than we ever have before. We now have the highest-paid remuneration plan for emergency department physicians. We do have a lot of doctors here in Nova Scotia, and we're trying to find the right incentives to ensure

that they are servicing our communities where they're most needed".

Rushton then asked "When can the people of Cumberland South expect emergency services to come back to a full percentage at the CEC in Parrsboro? Churchill responded "The Health Authority has put more money into addressing some of our emergency department closures as well, somewhere close to \$6.5 million invested to increase locums and to create more incentives to get practising medical professionals in these communities. That work is ongoing"

Churchill continued "We are setting the stage for the conditions, we believe, for success here. We have the highest-paid physicians in Atlantic Canada and that includes ones that are working in the emergency departments. We're training more doctors, we're recruiting more doctors and we're working with Doctors Nova Scotia to find ways to increase patient attachment to family physicians as well, which will take some pressure off of our emergency departments.

Ship's Company Announces 2021 Season

By Maurice Rees

Ship's Company Theatre, Parrsboro has been an artistic hub of activity since 1984. Artistic Director Richie Wilcox is ecstatic to be opening the venue back up after last year's digital season, saying "I cannot fully describe how excited I am to announce an in-person season for 2021 where you can safely gather as a community at our amazing venue and join us for a jam-packed season of live theatre, music, and more!" The program features world premieres, second-ever productions of shows, emerging works, innovative shows for the family, school productions and a stellar concert series featuring some of Atlantic Canada's best musicians.

Ship's Company Theatre is producing two original Atlantic Canadian shows this summer that are not-to-be-missed! The season starts off with the truly rural and truly funny comedy Half-Cracked written by Ship's Company favorite Mary-Colin Chisholm. This hilarious show features two spinster sisters who have their world turned upside down when folklorist Scott randomly shows up at their door! Half-Cracked runs from July 7 to 25.

Good Grief, the second Ship's production of the season, is a bittersweet comedy written by Artistic Director

Richie Wilcox. This world premiere features Danni staging a quirky tribute to a beloved pet cat, Jamie facing the pressure of singing at a funeral and Parker learning a lesson from wrestling star Andre The Giant. Follow this charming trio on a heartwarming journey as they embrace the coping mechanisms of music and dance to move forward through their troubles. Good Grief is running from August 4 to 22.

Ship's will also offer a special treat by presenting the Watermark Theatre production of Cottagers & Indians on Labour Day weekend (September 2 to 5). This witty political satire follows the battle between summer cottager Maureen and local man Arthur as they spar over environmentalism, land ownership, racism and more. This timely piece written by the prolific Drew Hayden Taylor is based on real life events in the Kwartha Lakes region in Ontario but speaks to tensions between Indigenous and non-Indigenous folks right here in Nova Scotia.

The summer season Concert Series will feature three Atlantic Canadian music acts over the course of six concerts. Each artist will do two concerts at Ship's throughout a weekend so you can join us for some drinks and music on your Friday or Saturday night!

The concert series will feature the Juno nominated Celtic duo Jessie Periard and Rowen Galant, the Juno award-winning guitarist and bluesman Garrett Mason and the award-winning powerhouse vocalist Christina Martin.

Thanks to Masstown Market, this summer Ship's Company Theatre will be bringing back the Shipwright Sessions and, like last year, it will be free and on Facebook! From published dramatic poetry to still-in-development musicals, the Shipwright Sessions give you the opportunity to hear excerpts of these works from the playwright themselves combined with an up-close look at the writer through mini-interviews led by Ship's artistic director Richie Wilcox. This season, the Shipwright Sessions will feature Into the Fire by Natasha Thomas on July 13, Matriarch by Mary-Fay Coady on July 20, and Daring to Hope by Elizabeth Glenn-Copeland on August 10.

In addition to this, Ship's will also bring back the

Masstown Market Shipwright Residency where an Atlantic Canadian BIPOC artist is given time and space in Parrsboro to create/write/be inspired at the same time as getting to know the region. The residency also comes with dramaturgy, mentorship and a workshop! Thank you to Masstown Market for joining with Ship's and sponsoring this important work.

Finally, the season also features plenty for families and youth including weeklong drama camps, a week of Picnic Plays where Ship's brings puppet plays to parks in our community and neighbouring towns and in September, Ship's presents the new show Mikmaq Stories: Past & Present to audiences for schools throughout the region

Ship's Company Theatre is grateful to acknowledge their funding bodies: The Canada Council for the Arts, Arts Nova Scotia, Canadian Heritage, and the Municipality of Cumberland along with their sponsors O'Regan's, Archway Insurance, RBC, Masstown Market, Riverview Cottages and Sunshine Inn.

Springhill Elementary School Funds in Budget

By Maurice Rees

Labi Kousoulis, Finance and Treasury Board Minister's first budget, tabled on March 25th, includes funding for construction of the Cumberland Regional Health Care Centre, plus several other allocations including increasing the standard household rate for adults who receive income assistance by \$100 per month; funding for construction at Springhill Elementary School and other budgetary items contained in the overall provincial stats.

The \$100 per month increase is the single largest increase in income assistance in the province's history and other investments in key sectors that will benefit Northern Nova Scotia, including the hospitality industry, long-term care, public health, mental health and the environment.

"Our government strives to improve the lives of all Nova Scotians and defines progress through economic growth as well as well-being and quality of life," said Mr. Kousoulis. "The province's next chapter is being written right now and it tells the story of a modern Nova Scotia on the path to balance.

The 2021-22 budget estimates a deficit of \$584.9 million with revenue of \$11.8

billion and expenses, after consolidation adjustments, of \$12.4 billion.

Budget 2021-22 highlights that will benefit Northern Nova Scotia include:

- \$35.2 million in additional funds to increase the standard household rate for adults who receive income assistance by \$100 per month;
- \$24.2 million to distribute COVID-19 vaccines to Nova Scotians, including locations in Amherst, Antigonish, Truro, New Glasgow, Pictou and East Hants;
- \$95.5 million for construction, repair and renewal of hospitals and medical facilities across the province, such as the Cumberland Regional Health Care Centre;
- \$467 million for Nova Scotia's roads, highways and bridges and equipment, including continued construction on Highway 104 from Sutherlands River to Antigonish;
- funding for construction at Springhill Elementary School and funding to purchase the P-3 Antigonish Education Centre;
- \$12.3 million increase for new mental health programming, including single brief intervention sessions to provide rapid access to

mental health supports, withdrawal management hubs to support Nova Scotians with substance-related harm and addictions, and e-mental health options to increase access

Other budget allocations include:

- \$26 million for new Green Fund climate change programs - a new climate change strategy for clean growth, a Nova Scotia regional climate representative at the Atlantic Data Hub and funding for climate change research and risk assessment;
- a total of \$1.02 billion for long-term care and home care this year;
- \$22.6 million increase to implement findings of the Expert Panel on Long Term Care;

- \$2 million to create six positions at the new Office of Equity and Anti-Racism Initiatives to address systemic racism, promote diversity and improve the economic, social, educational and health outcomes of all Nova Scotians;
- \$320,000 increase for the Accessibility Directorate, for a total of \$2.2 million this year, to support the goal of an accessible Nova Scotia by 2030;
- \$252,000 to expand the Office of Immigration and Population Growth to attract and retain more newcomers, adding to our record high population and,
- Reduce government regulatory burden on business by \$10 million in 2021, in addition to the \$50 million in savings achieved since 2017.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARINGS:

DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT

A Public Hearing regarding a Development Agreement with Municipality of the County of Cumberland will be held at 6:00pm Wednesday, April 7, 2021 via teleconference.

The purpose of the development agreement will be to permit the development of 48 Grouped Dwellings at **14 Chambers Boulevard, Parrsboro, PID 25223686.**

All written submissions for the Public Hearings must be received by January 5, 2021.

Copies of hearing documents can be viewed online at plancumberland.ca/hearings or by contacting our office at 902-667-2313. Public Hearings are open to the public. You may participate as follows:

Submit comments by email to: Planning@cumberlandcounty.ns.ca with "Public Hearing" in the subject line; or by mail to: Planning Dept, Upper Nappan Service Centre, 1395 Blair Lake Road, Upper Nappan, NS B4H 3Y4. Written submissions for the Public Hearing must be received eight days before the Public Hearing.



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