

News from our Provincial Capital - Tom Taggart
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ing, sawmilling and chair making, played a significant roll in the lives of many of our families.

Some of the fondest memories of my youth were running, unchallenged, throughout the factory. Memories of being entertained in the boiler room by Floyd McIntosh; Jim Welton in the bending room; Earl Hollis and Bob Abbott in the paint room and Sidney Fulton in wrapping and shipping chairs. Now we will cross the bridge to the store, Walter Vance and Joyce Starritt along with Bob Taggart delivering wood and groceries. The very first money I ever made was selling used newspaper, by the pound to the chair company to be used to wrap the chairs for shipment across Canada and the World. They were way ahead of themselves with respect to recycling and reusing. I did not intend to go down memory lane, but these are great memories, maybe they should make a movie!! Imagine the stories that could be told about the people and the trials and tribulations of the workers, the families and the dynamics of a community whose existence at that time depended to a large degree on the Dominion Chair Company. A company that exported hand made chairs, by sailing ships to places like the West Indies in the late 1800's. I can still see that brochure hanging in the old office. I live in Bass River today because my Grandfather, Tom Taggart decided to walk from Parrsboro to Bass River to take a job tending a sluice which transported lumber from sawmills on the Mountain to sailing ships tied up down at the wharf. Unbelievable!

I do apologize, as usual this was not where I was headed, but they are great memories. I started out speaking about the naming the bridge. In my mind, I honestly have been wanting to call it the JS Creelman Bridge in memory of Mr Creelman who was the, I believe owner, at least the manager of the Company during my impressionable years as well as a neighbour.

Now, I wonder about the Dominion Chair Company Bridge! As this process unfolds, I invite folks to really think about the history of Bass River, the location of the bridge and the name which best represents our community

I am actually writing this as I set in the Legislature during budget

debate. Legislation requires 80 hours of debate on the budget. It gets long so I have lots of time to write. The 2024/2025 budget has expenses of 16.5 billion and projects a \$467.4 million deficit.

However, I do note we projected deficits in both of the previous 2 years and delivered surpluses. As the year proceeds there will be changes and updates but we will continue to deliver services to Nova Scotians. Clearly it is a large and detailed budget, too much to actually discuss in an article. The big four spending departments are Health, \$5.-Billion; Education and Early and Childhood Development, \$1.999-Billion, Community Services, \$1.579-Billion and Seniors and long term Care \$1.362-Billion. A few things standing out to me would be the \$7.2-Million to provide continuous glucose monitors and to take the age cap off of insulin pumps. I have had many calls from parents of young children living with diabetes and I am very pleased that we have delivered on this.

Another is \$18.8-Million this year to launch a new school lunch program. This program will roll out over 4 years with an estimated \$100 million annually by 2027-2028.

There are many different initiatives in health care. The one that stands out to me is the \$41.-Million to improve cancer care with new digital imaging technology and equipment which provides adaptive radiation treatment resulting in improved outcomes and increased survival. An additional \$27.2-Million in the More Opportunities for skilled trades tax refund to ensure Nova Scotians under the age of 30 do not pay provincial income tax on their first \$50,000 of annual income. A great way to encourage our young people to stay, put down roots and raise families in Nova Scotia.

The last mention will be more housing faster, 7 different funding streams will invest over \$175-Million on new housing. One personal goal, I have is to find a way for young people, just starting out, to find an affordable home and to start earning equity as opposed paying rent and allowing landlords to earn that equity.

Spring is here, Enjoy!!

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News from our Provincial Council - Dave Ritcey
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porting all Nova Scotian families and ensuring our children have access to the food they need to focus and learn in the classroom; investing \$18.8 million this year to launch a first-ever, province-wide universal lunch program for students in the public school system - the program will be built on the existing breakfast programs and will be phased in over four years to give our kids the strong start in life they deserve and help address childhood poverty.

Making life more affordable: Budget 2024-25 is focused on making life more affordable for Nova Scotians by: putting more money in Nova Scotians' pockets with a tax break by indexing tax brackets, providing the largest tax cut in Nova Scotia's history and supporting renters through an allotment of \$2.4 million to create 500 new rent supplements, contributing to a total investment of \$69.2 million. These supplements will benefit 8,500 Nova Scotian households. The budget will also deliver \$300 more per month to those living with disabilities who receive support through the Employment and Income Assistance programs

Building Up Housing: Introduced a 5-year housing plan with a \$1 billion commitment to create the conditions for more than 40,000 new housing units of which includes \$35 million to build

new public housing units and to maintain existing public housing: 25 new modular housing units will expand affordable housing options in ten communities for up to 88 new tenants and will be in place by the end of March. The private sector can take advantage of our decision to rebate ten percent of the provincial HST paid for the new construction of purpose-built multi-unit apartments. That's an investment that could reach \$80-100 million.

Long-term Care - The budget is committed to improving care for all Nova Scotian seniors by continuing to make progress on expanding transitional care options, with 5,700 new and replacement LTC spaces to be available by 2032; budget will allocate \$10.7 million to help them move closer to the new standard of providing 4.1 hours of care to each person every day. This includes investments in the following programs that will provide better care and allow our seniors to live with dignity: Seniors Care Grant; Home Repair Adaptation Program; Home Care and Home Support; Heating Assistance Rebate Program; Seniors Provincial Tax Rebate and The Property Tax Rebate.

Dave Ritcey is MLA, Truro-Millbrook-Bible Hill-Salmon River. He can be reached by telephone at 902-897-0884 or by e-mail at mlaritcey@bellaliant.com

Strategic Partnership with Eastward Energy

EverWind Fuels ("EverWind"), a pioneering developer of green hydrogen and ammonia production in Atlantic Canada, is proud to announce the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Nova Scotia-based energy distribution company Eastward Energy, marking a significant initial step towards making green hydrogen available in Nova Scotia.

One fact not commonly known about Eastward Energy is that in the 21 years since it started in 2003 it has grown significantly to almost one-quarter the size of Nova Scotia Power based on the amount of energy it delivers in the province.

The partnership between EverWind and Eastward Energy signifies a mutual commitment to sustainable energy solutions that reduce carbon emissions and promote environmental stewardship in Nova Scotia.

The MOU includes joint collaboration opportunities to develop and scale up the hydrogen value chain in Nova Scotia including building demand by blending hydrogen with natural gas to reduce emissions. Eastward Energy and EverWind will also collaborate to explore opportunities for the storage, transportation, and distribution of green hydrogen.

John Hawkins, President of Eastward Energy: "The future of energy is changing and we're changing with it. Our sights are set on developing sustainable energy solutions like green hydrogen that will support Nova Scotia's transition to net-zero emissions and lead to an energy future that's clean. Eastward Energy's hydrogen-ready gas distribution system, supported by large-scale green hydrogen projects like EverWind's, will enable an accelerated energy transition in Nova Scotia. We are looking forward to partnering with EverWind to deliver green hydrogen to decarbonize sectors that will be difficult to electrify such as heavy transportation, industrial facilities, and some large commercial, residential and institutional buildings".

Trent Vichie, CEO of EverWind Fuels: "We are excited to partner with Eastward Energy in our mission to accelerate the adoption of green hydrogen in Nova Scotia. This partnership will enable us to provide Eastward Energy's customers with green energy options and support the development of hydrogen infrastructure in the province. This is a first step toward setting up the supply chains necessary to transition Nova Scotia's energy sectors from imported fossil fuels to locally produced clean fuels."

Recognition of the Mi'kmaw & their Ancestral Territory

EverWind and Eastward Energy acknowledge the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaw people, and we acknowledge them as the past, present, and future caretakers of this land, Mi'kma'ki. Our work shares a core principle practiced by the Mi'kmaw: environmental stewardship. We are committed to working with the Mi'kmaw through consultation, engagement and delivering a comprehensive partnership on all aspects of the project.

About Eastward Energy: Eastward Energy, based in Dartmouth, Nova Scotia is the Province's natural gas distribution utility. Eastward has the exclusive right to distribute natural gas through almost 500 kilometres of pipeline infrastructure in seven counties in Nova Scotia that include the Halifax Regional Municipality, Amherst, New Glasgow, Pictou, and Oxford.

Since starting with a single customer in 2003 Eastward Energy has grown significantly to almost one-quarter the size of Nova Scotia Power based on the amount of energy it delivers in the province.

About EverWind Fuels: EverWind is North America's leading independent green hydrogen developer. EverWind received the first Environmental Approval in North America for a large-scale green hydrogen project, and is well progressed in design, engineering, and development for the first phase of both its green energy generation projects and the production facility which will convert this energy into green hydrogen and green ammonia. EverWind owns and operates the deepest ice-free berth on the East Coast of North America, with world class access to rail, roads, and pipelines. Our safety-first culture, evidenced through 18 years without a lost time injury, reflects a highly skilled and extensively certified workforce.

EverWind has three First Nations equity partners and is a champion for meaningful engagement with Rightsholders and the advancement of social and economic reconciliation. At a local level, the Company works closely with municipalities and stakeholder organizations.

EverWind is led by Trent Vichie, a co-founder of Stonepeak Infrastructure Partners, and a former Blackstone Partner. EverWind's development team consists of over 20 members who have previously held senior positions at various infrastructure, private equity, renewable power, engineering, and utility companies. EverWind is also supported by a world-class advisory team including Black & Veatch, ILF, RES, Strum Environmental, McInnes Cooper, King & Spalding, McKinsey, Morgan Stanley, CIBC, and Citi.

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Todd MacKinnon, Pharmacist Owner

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