

# FRONT PAGE BRIEFS

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**Dr Karen Ewing**, chair, Veterans Memorial Park, Bass River and several board members appeared before Colchester Council at a presentation meeting to update council on recent park activities and to request the grant received upon application annually, be added as a line item in the budget.

**Alexis MacLaughlin**, on behalf of Economy Recreation Centre appeared before council to explain in recent years nearly all fund raising activities has been to pay the heating bill, rather than expanding programs. During the presentation she requested assistance and guidance on installing heat pumps, or solar panels to get off furnace oil and then concentrate on expanding programs and services to the community.

**The County of Colchester** invites qualified and experienced vendors to submit proposals for the provision of an Alternative Voting Electronic Voting Services (E-voting) solution for its 2024 Municipal Election. The tender call closes at 3:00 pm April 11, 2024.

## The Shoreline Journal Tid-Bits

### Agreements with Universities Prioritize Needs

New one-year funding agreements with the province's 10 universities will cap tuition increases and spur more action on student housing.

The 2024-25 agreements include: a two per cent cap on tuition increases for all Nova Scotian undergraduate students, compared with the three per cent cap under the previous agreement; requirement to fill health program seats to an average enrolment rate of at least 97 per cent; requirement for institutions to develop international student sustainability plans outlining how these students will be recruited, housed and connected to the labour market; requirement for universities in Halifax Regional Municipality and Cape Breton Regional Municipality (areas where student housing needs are highest) to begin to increase student housing

Other agreements include: requirement for institutions to work together to develop an inter-university plan to reduce administrative expenses by a minimum of five per cent and minimum tuition increase of nine per cent for first-year international undergraduate student tuition (except for Dalhousie University and the University of King's College, because of an increase in the previous year).

The agreements also provide a two per cent increase in annual operating grants for most universities, up from one per cent in the expiring MoU signed in 2019. Dalhousie's grant will be the same as in 2023-24.

### New Bail Court Established

Nova Scotia's first bail court will improve efficiency and reduce backlogs and delays in the provincial court. Nova Scotia's first bail court. The new bail court will be established in Halifax Regional Municipality and will be able to hear cases from across the province virtually.

"Reducing the backlog and keeping our courts running efficiently is a high priority for the Department, the judiciary and our partners," said Brad Johns, Attorney General and Minister of Justice. "Moving bail to a specialized court will help streamline matters heard in other courtrooms and enable more trials to be held sooner, reducing the possibility of cases being dismissed without a trial."

Eight new Justice Department positions will be dedicated to operating the bail court and four additional presiding justices of the peace will be appointed.

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### News from our Federal Capital - Dr. Stephen Ellis

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Meanwhile, Corrections staff at the Nova Institution for Women say it's just a matter of time before the drone-dropping of drugs and other contraband, catches on at the Truro facility.

There is a needle exchange program, where drugs that are illegally brought into the prison, can be injected into women prisoners as well.

These drug-related and ceramic knife occurrences endanger correctional officers' lives.

A Conservative government will move swiftly to rectify drone dropping!

**Nicotine pouches:** In July 2023, Imperial Tobacco was issued a Health Canada permit to market orally ingestible flavoured nicotine pouches, as a smoking cessation product. Almost overnight, the unrestricted bags became the rage among young people across the nation, creating a new generation of youth exposed to nicotine.

Opposition from the Conservative Party and the health community has been intense.

Health Minister Mark Holland has finally come out from hiding to announce he'll seek extra authority to restrict the marketing and sale of flavoured nicotine pouches to youth - but he's not sure how he's going to do it!

Holland has said "we were duped" by Imperial Tobacco into believing the nicotine pouches were intended to be a smoking cessation tool for adults.

It has come to pass that the health minister has changed his tune, knowing that in his absence of action, pharmacies across the country have been voluntarily taking the flavourful pouches off store shelves.

A new generation of children is being poisoned by nicotine, and all he has done is issue a public advisory warning Canadians about nicotine pouch use!

It's been nine months since this sickening story was first revealed and the minister's inability to take strong, effective action is evident; Holland is a horrible health minister.

A Conservative government, on the other hand, will be decisive. When elected, we will move swiftly to ensure the health and safety of our youth by banning such Big Tobacco products.

**The money fraud continues:** Yet another severe case, costing Canadian taxpayers millions of dollars, has beset the Trudeau

government. This time, three files of suspected invoice fraud by IT contractors have been handed to police by Procurements Minister Yves-Jean Duclos. The department says there are more to come, and there isn't an estimate of how much money is involved!

The IT sub-contractors in the cases that are now being investigated, submitted timesheets, and billed departments under separate contracts. The scheme allegedly involved 36 federal departments, agencies, and Crown corporations. This is incredible!

A Conservative government, when elected, will make it a priority to clean up the rampant lack of accepted accounting practices in the federal public service.

**Blue Seal Program:** I went to PEI to meet with the College of Physicians and Surgeons regarding the Blue Seal Program. Blue Seal would remove bureaucratic red tape and give thousands of internationally trained professionals an opportunity to work in their chosen field here in Canada. This remains one of my top priorities, to quickly solve the shortage of healthcare professionals in Cumberland-Colchester, and all of Canada. I will continue to promote this program.

**Small business ignored:** Small businesses in Canada are owed an estimated \$2.3 billion in carbon tax refunds by the federal government, and the Trudeau Liberals show no intention of meeting this obligation, according to the Canadian Federation of Independent Business.

At the Cumberland-Colchester levels, the rebate payables amount to more than \$1,000 per business that in this economic climate, is significant.

**Medical Assistance In Dying:** The Conservatives were able to at least force the government to delay legislation enabling people from ending their lives solely because they have mental health issues. Who can determine that existing therapy and medical programs cannot help those people, and who can say they cannot get better over time?

Common sense Conservatives believe that those struggling with their mental health deserve support and treatment, not death. We know that recovery is possible, and this is why we will never give up hope.

**Dr Stephen Ellis is MP for Cumberland Colchester. He can be reached at: 902-895-2863, or E-mail: stephen.ellis@parl.gc.ca**

### News from our Provincial Council - Tim Houston

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prove patient experiences. More support for cancer care. More funding to improve the working conditions for our dedicated healthcare professionals and to recruit more of them. All guided by our Action for Health plan. All in this budget.

One of the many healthcare highlights is a significant investment that will make a difference in the lives of people living with diabetes. The Province will help cover the cost of sensor-based glucose monitors and remove the age cap on the insulin pump program. Considering a person with diabetes pays up to \$4,000 per year for a sensor-based glucose monitor, more than \$6,000 for an

insulin pump and \$4,000 for supplies, this is an important investment in the health of many Nova Scotians.

It means building - literally.

New housing. New schools. New hospitals. New roads and highways. This budget supports them all and so much more.

Budget 2024-25: Building Nova Scotia, Faster invests in a brighter Nova Scotia. I encourage you to learn more about how it supports communities across the province at <https://novascotia.ca/budget/>

**Tim Houston, Premier of Nova Scotia can be reached at premier@novascotia.ca**

### News from our Municipal Council - Victoria Lomond, District 10

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it is needed.

If you are in a position to help here is a list of the top 10 requested items at our local food bank: body wash, hand soap, conditioner, shampoo, toothpaste, toilet paper, all purpose cleaner, dish detergent, laundry detergent, cooking oil.

I travel to Truro 5 days a week, if you have any of these items

you would like to donate I would be happy to pick them up and drop them off for you, just let me know. Have a great month everyone!

**Victoria Lomond is District 10 Councillor, Municipality of Colchester. She can be reached at: (902) 890-1493 or vlomond@colchester.ca**

The Shoreline Journal

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