

The Shoreline Journal Tid-Bits

Doctors Nova Scotia reaches tentative agreements

Doctors Nova Scotia has reached tentative agreements with the Department of Health and Wellness on new four-year contracts for the province's doctors. The tentative agreements were reached after five months at the negotiations table. On June 19, the association's Board of Directors reviewed the details of the contracts and recommended they be presented to the province's physicians for ratification.

Physicians were informed of the tentative agreements on Monday, June 26. They had the opportunity to vote between July 7 and 20. If ratified, these four-year contracts will replace the 2019 Master Agreement and C/AFP Master Agreement, which expired March 31, 2023. The agreements impact more than 3,400 physicians.

New Mi'kmaw Native Friendship Centre

Wije'winen Centre, a new Mi'kmaw Native Friendship Centre in Halifax, is receiving more financial support with construction of the facility on the horizon. The Province is contributing \$10 million toward the new building. This is in addition to about \$1.7 million provided in 2022-23 for new programs and initiatives at the current centre.

"The friendship centre provides essential services for many community members," said L'nu Affairs Minister Karla MacFarlane. "This will be so much more than a new building - it will be a place to come together, host events and provide support to Mi'kmaw and other Indigenous people throughout the urban centre."

The new building will have additional space to continue programming for the urban Indigenous community. It will also showcase Mi'kmaw culture and heritage in the city and be a key location for community events.

New Pilot Program for Continuing Care Assistants

Nova Scotia is taking the next step in building long-term career advancement opportunities in the continuing care sector by offering a free, practical nursing diploma program for continuing care assistants (CCAs).

The pilot CCA-Practical Nursing Bridging Program will support 25 currently certified CCAs who have worked in a nursing home or home care agency for at least two years in becoming licensed practical nurses.

The program is two and a half years long and will start in January. Classes are online, with in-person labs at Nova Scotia Community College's Truro campus. Students will be required to sign a return of service agreement, committing to work full-time in continuing care in Nova Scotia for a minimum of two years after graduation.

The Department is providing employers details on eligibility criteria and the application process to share with their staff. Investing in education and training opportunities to ensure the health needs of communities are met has been identified as a solution in Nova Scotia's Action for Health plan.

CCAs will need to meet the community college's practical nursing program requirements to be eligible to apply for the pilot program. The Department is covering the costs of tuition, textbooks and the majority of fees for the 25 students. Tutoring and student services supports will be available. Students will be eligible to write the licensed practical exam when they successfully complete the program.

Lifeguard Supervision Started July 1

Lifeguard supervision at many Nova Scotia beaches began Saturday, July 1. About two dozen beaches in 12 counties are staffed each summer. Beaches are supervised daily from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., except for Mavillette Beach, Digby County, and Clam Harbour Beach, Halifax Regional Municipality, which are only supervised on weekends.

Most beaches will have lifeguards on duty until August 27. A list of supervised beaches and daily updates on conditions are available at: <http://www.lifesavingsociety.ns.ca/index.php/nsls-home/beaches>

continued on page 7

News from our Federal Capital - Dr. Stephen Ellis

Continued from page 5

of life are behind my Private Members Bill C-323, to amend the Excise Tax Act, eliminating GST and HST in two mental health sectors.

Publicly funded mental health services, such as counselling and psychotherapy, are not easily accessible or available when they are most needed. Consequently, Canadians seeking mental health services may have to pay for those services privately. Many patients can ill-afford the fees, let alone the taxes.

We know removing the GST and HST from psychotherapists and mental health counselors, will be of great benefit to patients, that in effect, will allow them to have one of every eighth session for free.

My Private Members Bill received second reading during the spring session. It will be moving forward in the Fall Sitting of Parliament.

Isthmus of Chignecto: Since coming to office, the rising of waters at the Isthmus of Chignecto in Cumberland County have been a daily concern for me. I have met with Dominic LeBlanc, federal minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, who is also my neighbouring MP for Beauséjour NB. LeBlanc steadfastly sticks to Ottawa's offer of 50-per cent federal financing and 25/25 from each for the two provinces.

A proposal to raise or replace the dykes is being discussed, which carries a price tag estimated to be \$400M, over a 10-year timeline.

Premier Tim Houston wants Ottawa to pay the entire cost of protecting the Chignecto Isthmus, which is more vulnerable to storms and flooding due to climate change. The Trudeau-Liberal government continues to battle with the Premiers of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick while waters continue to rise closer to the tops of the dikes.

To Cumberland-Colchester constituents, the federal govern-

ment is responsible for the dikes infrastructure and that it is their responsibility to protect them. An ounce of prevention...

En français: Je voudrais s'assurer tous les résidents de Cumberland Colchester que cette une priorité d'être bilingue. Je prends des leçons françaises deux fois chaque semaine. J'ai pris le français à l'école et aussi à l'université mais c'est beaucoup plus longtemps!

Je souhaite tous un bon été!

Carbon tax: At a time when many Cumberland-Colchester families are struggling to pay double-digit increases for food, and unmanageable hikes in mortgages or rents, the federal carbon tax which went into effect in the province July 1, added 18 cents per litre to the price of gasoline.

This is particularly crippling to our those of us who choose to live rurally due primarily to our lack of public transportation alternatives and dependence on the automobile.

I receive phone calls and emails daily from alarmed constituents. The solution is clear.

In the next federal election, vote for the Conservative Party, that will immediately axe the carbon tax, providing folks with more money in their pockets, as well as creating new economic opportunities fostered under a new federal government committed to real economic growth.

Grand sporting event: It was a great moment in time for me to represent us at the North American Indigenous Games grand opening in Halifax. NAIG featured athletes competing in 16 different sports with three traditional Indigenous sports including canoe/kayak, lacrosse, and 3D archery.

The indigenous games were the largest sporting event ever held in Nova Scotia, and I congratulate organizers for this tremendous achievement!

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News from our Provincial Council - Tim Houston

Continued from page 5

of paramedics who started training in July. They're part of more than 80 new paramedics currently training in the province.

We urgently need more paramedics. It's why we're providing an \$11,500 tuition rebate to paramedics who work here for three years. We also hired nearly 140 operators to handle routine transfers so our paramedics can be where they're needed most - responding to emergencies.

In February, we celebrated the halfway point to our goal to train 2,000 continuing care assistants (CCAs). Training more CCAs ensures seniors have the dignity and care they deserve. It means sup-

porting people in their communities and freeing up hospital beds. To our graduates and those starting their training - from the bottom of my heart, THANK YOU. You're part of the solution and we couldn't be prouder.

We'll continue to train more Nova Scotians and retain the incredible professionals we have. I wish it could happen overnight, but every day we're building a brighter future for healthcare.

Tim Houston, Premier of Nova Scotia

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

News from our Provincial Capital - Tom Taggart

Continued from page 5

along the shore, with the tides and the ever increasing number of unaware tourists, training and equipment for water rescue. The growing numbers of ATV's and growth of the local trail systems bring the need for additional training and equipment. Again, this was not where I was headed, but I really want to highlight and thank these Volunteers and the time and commitment they give to our communities.

This morning morning's causes me to think about the Bridge replacement slated for Bass River and the discussions around location. I recall my initial thoughts as I was being taken through the options and challenges. Required current National and Provincial guidelines to ensure infrastructure was constructed to meet future climate related challenges. The bridge had to span twice the current channel, and had to be, I believe 9 meters above the current stream bed. I thought that was a bit extreme! Well, during heavy rains in the past month, I went down and took some photo's of the bridge, with the water running less than a meter below the stringers. Additionally with the old bridge and the large center abutment and the large trees that often make their way downstream in these floods, we were very fortunate we did not end up with a jam at the bridge and the river going down through the community.

I have been asked many times about the delays at the Salmon River Bridge by Truro, why was there not a temporary bridge. The answer is because it is too long a span for a panel bridge. They

could have possibly created a center abutment but that would have triggered a full environmental assessment as well as a Federal Fisheries review which would delay at least 2 years. Second question. Why are they now closing the ramp leaving Truro on the weekends. They are trying to reduce the tremendous traffic back up for miles on Hwy 102 and allow the highway traffic free flow and avoid the delay caused by the merge off Robie Street.

Does it create trouble in Truro? Without doubt!

Which is worse, depends on who you are talking to or where they are sitting in traffic. As usual I will give my opinion on this. In my view, the biggest issue here is people not respecting other drivers, and I have sat and watched this! Drivers passing in the right lane coming down the ramp to Robie St thru the roundabout and up the ramp and merging at the top. So now instead of causing delays on the highway they are creating delays and congestion in Truro.

There is finally some good news on the Debert Overpass. The tender has closed and awarded with a completion in late fall.

On the healthcare front, the Province and Doctors have reached a new four year agreement which, from what I understand, will result in more folks getting a family doctor. I expect the full details will be available and widely reported soon.

That's it for now. Enjoy the rest of the summer.

Tom

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