

## PAGE BRIEFS

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**At January's committee meeting,** Mayor Blair asked and received council's approval to write a letter to Minister Municipal Affairs to have government's decision to permit it to override municipal by-laws. The matter started when government was in a tiff with City of Halifax over housing decisions and mandated it would have approval to override the city's decision on matters it did not agree. Councillor Cooper mentioned to council to pay attention to a January 26 meeting of the Federation of Nova Scotia Municipalities would be holding a meeting which would involve making changes to its bylaws.

## The Shoreline Journal Tid-Bits

### Borrowing costs increase for NS Power

Premier Tim Houston's battle with Nova Scotia Power following his directive to the Utility and Review Board is already have a negative impact, which will provide long term trickle-down increased costs to MNS Power customers. DBRS Limited (DBRS Morningstar) downgraded Nova Scotia Power Inc.'s (NSPI or the Company) Issuer Rating and Unsecured Debentures & Medium-Term Notes rating to BBB (high) from A (low) and its Commercial Paper rating to R-2 (high) from R-1 (low). All trends are Stable.

The downgrades follow DBRS Morningstar's review of the deterioration in the regulatory environment for NSPI and discussions with management as to the Company's plan after the Province of Nova Scotia's (the Province; rated A (high) with a Stable trend by DBRS Morningstar) intervention during the ongoing General Rate Application (GRA) process under the Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board (NSUARB), and greater uncertainty on NSPI's plans and ability to meet renewable generation targets and to shut down its coal-fired generation plants.

### New Water, Wastewater Infrastructure in Kings County

The Province is investing more than \$3.5 million in water and wastewater infrastructure in Kings County. The Municipality of the County of Kings will receive more than \$2.7 million to improve wastewater treatment and collection facilities by adding screening systems, replacing four lift stations, and constructing a new lift station and a 1.35-kilometre gravity sewer infrastructure extension. The project will increase the overall efficiency of the system and support new higher-density housing developments.

The Village of Canning will receive \$818,667 to help replace more than 1,200 metres of water distribution main, more than 1,300 metres of sanitary sewer, and more than 800 metres of storm sewer. Funding will also cover reinstatement of the roadway and sidewalk infrastructure. The new system will maintain efficiency and ensure the village remains a modern and desirable place to live.

The federal government is contributing \$3,254,000 to the County of Kings project, with the municipality investing \$2,169,333. In Canning, the federal government is investing \$982,400, while the village is contributing \$654,933.

### Work Begins on Environmental Racism Panel

The Province has taken its first steps to set up the panel tasked with making recommendations to address environmental racism, which is one of government's commitments to diversity, equity and inclusion in the Environmental Goals and Climate Change Reduction Act.

Agassou (Augy) Jones has been appointed as the first panel member. His first duties are to make recommendations on the panel's work, through the development of draft terms of reference, and to recommend other panel members.

Mr. Jones is the principal of the Nova Scotia Community College, Akerley Campus. The son of civil-rights activists Rocky and Joan Jones, he has held leadership roles in the provincial Department of Education and Early Childhood Education and at St. Francis Xavier University. Mr. Jones will provide his recommendations to the Province by the end of February. The panel will make its recommendations by December 31, 2023.

### Most Popular Baby Names in Nova Scotia

Oliver is Nova Scotians' favourite baby name for 2022. The top 10 names for 2022 are Oliver, Jack, Charlotte, Violet, William, Emma, Owen, Henry, Olivia, and, Noah according to Nova Scotia's Registry of Vital Statistics.

The most popular names usually remain consistent over the years. There are a few new names gaining popularity such as Grayson and Beau, with some old favourites coming back like Emma and Charlotte. There were 6,828 registered births this year in Nova Scotia as of December 29. Nova Scotia began formally registering births on August 1, 1864 and the most popular names that year were Mary and John. Olivia was the top baby name for the province in 2021.

## News from our Federal Capital *Continued from page 5*

That same day, I met with Dr. Luca Salvador and Dr. Poornima Ravi of the Internationally Trained Dentists Association of Canada, to discuss accreditation reform. I have long believed the hidden key to solving our healthcare crisis, or at the very least easing the burden, will be the attitude we take toward internationally educated medical graduates. It would go a long way towards filling the many vacancies in our hospitals, clinics, and doctors' offices. If we can safely make it easier for these professionals to have their hard-earned qualifications recognized in their new country.

Like the rest of our community, I was shocked and horrified to hear of the tragic death of Allison Holthoff, just 37 years old, who

died after waiting seven hours at the Cumberland Regional Health-care center. Allison was a mother of three and a dedicated volunteer for the Tidnish Bridge Fire Department, and her loss will be deeply felt by all who had the joy of knowing her. I offer my heartfelt condolences to her friends and family in this difficult time.

I will be returning to Ottawa at the end of the month, but Cumberland and Colchester Counties will always be on my mind. I will continue to serve your best interests, and I am looking forward to each and every opportunity to make a difference. We will have town halls in the near future - watch for a date near you!

**Dr Stephen Ellis is MP for Cumberland Colchester. He can be reached at:**  
902-895-2683, or E-mail: stephen.ellis@parl.gc.ca

## News from our Provincial Council

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to note this will be rolled out very slowly with as much consideration as possible for landowners. This will in no way impact current permanent or seasonal homes. There will be no additional permits required should they move an existing dwelling back. Minor renovations will be permitted. Significant renovations and expansions will be subject to permitting. There will be a reasonable grace period given to those in possession of a building permit at the time of implementation.

Two closing points. First: I am writing this to give folks a heads-up so they can contact me with any concerns. Secondly: in West Colchester I have a pretty good understanding of the shoreline. I sat with this staffer and studied a virtual map that followed the shoreline and clearly designated the entire 100 meter zone from Lower Five Islands to Debert Beach. There appears to be very little impact along this shore.

Undoubtedly there will be some impact, but very few. It is worthy of note there is very little privately owned land along the shore that is not currently developed. I cannot comment about the North Shore as I do not have much understanding of that shoreline.

On another note, Minister Dunn announced the list of Fire Brigades and Community Organizations that received funding for generators to enable them to provide comfort centers in times of significant power outages. I am very pleased that Community organizations within Colchester North Received in excess of \$300,000 in funding.

I will close with Health Care. There is no doubt this past month has been challenging. It is very important that we recognize and

appreciate the work of our front line workers. Recent very tragic events have rightly drawn our attention to Emergency rooms. Understandably reporting has been extensive, public opinion and emotions have been running high. As a result, some members of the public have been disrespectful of these Doctors nurses and support staff. Two points I wish to make:

1. Whether you wish to blame our government for not doing enough, or years of inaction by the previous government, it is not the health care workers that caused this crisis and they deserve our support always.
2. Anyone who watches the news should be well aware that every Province in Canada is facing staffing challenges and shortages. These frontline professionals are an extremely valuable resource. We can not afford to lose them because of disrespect.

There is a tremendous amount of work to be done to fix Health Care. This crisis took years to create and it will take time to fix it. Premier Houston and Minister Thompson are absolutely committed! Over the next month I will put together a list of changes or initiatives that have been put in place over the past 18 months and report on them in my article.

In the meantime Minister Thompson and CAO Karen Oldfield will be at the Grace Jollymore Performing Arts Center in Tatamagouche for a public meeting on Feb 2 at 6pm. I believe you can register at the door but recommend doing so in advance as it may very well be a full house.

**Tom Taggart, MLA Colchester North can be reached at (0) 902-641-2335, or tom.taggartmla@gmail.com**

## Fiona Cleanup Woes Continue

### *By Maurice Rees*

The ongoing saga of cleanup from Fiona caused Councillor Benoit to bring to council's attention some residents in District 9, who are older and have asked for assistance to finish clean up. She suggested perhaps there is justification for a final cleanup in the spring.

Councillor Patton stated she has noticed some piles still exist at end of driveways and poses danger from snow plowing and high winds blowing debris onto the roadway. In defense of crews who had been doing the clean-up, Phil Redden who took on additional job of organizing the mammoth clean up, said a lot of current debris is not conducive to existing trucks and piles were not reachable at the

peak of cleanup. Redden continued the county has 2,210 Km of roads with 17,783 addresses. Even though the county has already spent \$463,000. Resources are limited and buildings at the Kemptown Waste Management Facility still have not been repaired even though there was considerable damage. A.H Kennedy Property Maintenance was the private contractor used during clean up. There still a lot of brush cleanup required. Total costs, including staff allocations are expected to reach \$600,000.

There was consensus around the council table for residents to contact their local councillor or the municipal office if further assistance is needed.

## Portapique Market Continues

Even though the weather is not conducive to gardening, The Portapique Market continues to operate. When cold weather was just around the corner, management at the Bass River Fire Department stepped up offering use of the firehall.

The market is held every Saturday from 9:30 to 11:30 with free hot drinks, fruits and vegetables, baked goods, homemade & knit items, Sauerkraut and more. Follow them on Facebook or call 902-957-9384.

## Council has Block Parent Information

Following Councillor Patton bringing a "block parent" matter to council, Colchester staff have complied the suggested requirements for establishing additional community groups. All Block Parent® Programs must follow the five basic criteria set down in the Bylaws of the Block Parent Program of Canada Inc. (BPPCI). Communities or

groups who express an interest in the program are encouraged to contact the councillor or the municipal office.



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