



A recent hike along the Skyline Trail in Cape Breton provided this photographer with more than just scenic vistas. The cow and her calf were very relaxed, grazing not more than 20 feet from onlookers, before sauntering into the bush. (Harrington Photo)

## OP-ED

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properties experiencing an assessment increase greater than, for example, 10 per cent, would be able to phase in the increase.

Averaging of assessments over three years should also be considered. And there should be lots of time to make the adjustment from the current program to a new program.

Other options should also be included in the review.

The current system is not working for people buying a home, whether they be new families, or seniors looking to downsize. They at least deserve to have their experiences considered and the province is the only entity that can help.

**Geoff Stewart, representing District 3, was first elected to Colchester council in 2012 and was elected president of the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities at its 2017 AGM, Halifax, November 7-10th.**

## PAGE BRIEFS

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**On December 7<sup>th</sup>** Nova Scotia set the legal age for marijuana use at 19 and with less than 24 hours advance notice advised NSLC, it will be the province's retailer distributing weed through its liquor outlets and online sales.

**Canada's climate plan** will help industry and all levels of government take firm strides towards meeting 2030 climate commitments while fostering clean economic growth. As implementation proceeds, governments will continue to build stronger partnerships with Indigenous Peoples, based upon the recognition of rights, respect, co-operation and partnership, and draw upon the views and expertise of Canadians in taking action on climate change. The Government of Canada is collaborating with First Nations, Inuit, and the Métis Nation on climate action through three separate tables. The Prime Minister and national Indigenous leaders have committed to creating these permanent tables, which will each prepare periodic reports to provide updates, perspectives and proposals.

**The Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM)** will be holding its 2018 Annual Conference in Halifax. Colchester council has approved all Council members wishing to attend 2018 Conference be permitted to do so.

**Centre for Local Prosperity**, inspired by the original 1957 Pugwash conference on nuclear disarmament, gathered a group of international and regional Thinkers to engage in intense reflection and dialogue on what is now the most serious threat facing humankind – global warming and its impacts on small rural communities. The "Roadmap for Small Rural Communities" begins to outline a way forward for local communities. A documentary of the Thinkers Retreat is due to be released in early 2018. To view the report go to: <http://centreforlocalprosperity.ca> and follow the appropriate links. Additional information about the centre can be obtained by sending an email to: [Info@localprosperity.ca](mailto:Info@localprosperity.ca)

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### News from our Federal Capital

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say the problems some remote Indigenous communities face are not daunting—but nor are they insurmountable.

Of course there is dire poverty right here in our own non-Indigenous communities as well, and we will not waiver from working to address those issues. But the community-wide conditions faced by Indigenous peoples in some parts of Canada are extraordinary and must be addressed. Suicide among Indigenous youth

runs at more than 5 times the rate for non-Indigenous; diabetes, tuberculosis and blood-borne diseases are present at higher rates; accessing medical care is cumbersome and slow, in ways that people a 40 minute drive from a hospital cannot imagine.

I welcome the implementation of UNDRIP and the good it will do for all Canadians.

**Bill Casey is MP for Cumberland-Colchester.**

### News from our Provincial Capital

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to continue to represent you in the Provincial Legislature.

I am truly honoured to be the MLA for Colchester North, the Minister of Finance and Deputy Premier. Together we are making a positive difference in our province.

I would like to wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year for 2018.

**Karen Casey, MLA, Colchester North also serves as Minister of Finance and Deputy Premier.**

### News from our Municipal Council - District 10

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before they could expect to get a family doctor. They decided not to make the move. This is just another of the struggles we face in supporting our communities. I am not pointing fingers, provincially, as I too am guilty of this.

The example would be my support of the Rath Eastlink Community Centre which has been great for recreation and has provided significant economic benefit for the business located in the urban core. However, because of distance, really less benefit to West Colchester. Just want to make the point that these issues are not deliberate, but we must be more conscious and vocal in our support of small communities.

Next, I need to move on to my favourite subject, garbage and recycling. For the past 20 years we have been asking the public and educating our children to recycle. For the most part residents have bought into this; in fact most are proud of these efforts and the fact that Nova Scotians are leaders in Waste Management.

Unfortunately, we are in a situation where there is "No Market" for some of these recycled products, in particular low grade plastics, most notably film wrap and single use plastic bags. It is reported these single use, mostly grocery bags, make up 90 percent of this product.

To give you some sense of the magnitude of this problem I would note Colchester currently has at least 300 tonnes of this material in storage. Our storage is at capacity. Staff have been working on this and brought forward some options to council at the December 14th council meeting.

One suggested solution is to build a temporary storage building at a cost of \$89,000. I will not support this. A second solution would be to temporarily bury in the landfill until hopefully markets open back up. However, this is banned by the Provincial Dept of Environment.

I am certain Environment will be reluctant to approve as they

will see his as a regression in our efforts to meet their goal of 300 kg per person per year going to landfill. This is a goal I support. However, it cannot be at all cost. The third option staff has presented, and the one I prefer, is to write to the Dept of Environment and ask for their direction. After all it is their ban that has put us in this position and they must be part of the solution.

This is not just a Colchester problem. On Thursday of this week HRM asked for permission to temporarily landfill their low grade plastics. If Colchester has 300 Tonnes, imagine what HRM with half the population of Nova Scotia has in storage.

In case you are wondering, we are told this cannot be stored outside as the plastics begin to break down and as a result they cannot be recycled. Also please note this is just the low grade plastic. Plastic containers and better quality plastic recyclable products are still in demand.

There is a silver lining in this current situation; it has raised the topic of single use bags. Nova Scotia is not alone in this. I am sure this is the driving force in why, cities like Boston recently banned and Montreal is in the process of banning. Personally, prior to this situation, I had not really considered the impact of these bags when at the grocery store. All the times I have been in the media ranting about litter and garbage, and here I am helping to create this problem. So I will change and I ask you consider doing the same and using the reusable tote bags.

In Closing, I fully support Maurice in his effort to take Bell Aliant to task as they refuse to take cash as payment. To me this comes down to a lack of consideration of their customers.

Once again, Zylpha and I would like to wish you and yours a Very Merry Christmas and a Happy, Healthy and Prosperous New Year. Enjoy the season; spend some quality time with family.

Tom

**Tom Taggart is councillor for Colchester District 10**

## Public Washrooms Tenders Taken In-House

**By Maurice Rees**

The cost of installing public washrooms at the Fundy Discovery Site appears to be costing a lot more than the \$165,000 originally projected. On a related matter of getting water and sewer services to the site, at the October meeting, bids were also above the budgeted projections. With regard to the water and sewer tender, the municipality and Town of Truro are investigating if they can complete the water and sewer work significantly lower than tender submissions.

Paul Smith informed council at the November 30th meeting staff are currently examining a number of cost reduction options that will hopefully bring the project closer to the budgeted amount. In order to move the project forward, Council authorizes Council Committee at its meeting on December 14, 2017, to consider options and decide on an approach to establish a public washroom facility at the Fundy Discovery Site.

Updating to December 14th committee meeting council authorizes municipal staff to assume duties to self-contract the public washroom project at the Fundy Discovery Site and further re-allocate an additional \$75,000 from the project's capital budget to be used as a contingency to manage any costs over the existing \$165,000 budget."

At the meeting of November 16, Council Committee discussed the lack of street lights on the re-aligned portion of Granville Drive and referred the item to staff for review. On motion by Councillor's Cavanaugh and Gregory, Council directed staff to have a street light installed at the intersection of Granville Drive and

West North River Road, on the existing pole east of West North River Road, with source of funds being the existing street light area rate for Granville Drive and surrounding areas.

Authority to award a tender to purchase a new half tonne truck to be used by water utility services as well as Debert maintenance activities was granted to the committee meeting on December 14th on motions by councillors Stewart and Pash.

Councillor Ron Cavanaugh was appointed chair of the Dangerous / Unsightly Premises committee, while Councillor Eric Boutilier was appointed vic-chair.



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