

# The Shoreline Tid-Bits Journal

Continued from page 7

## Province Invests in New Businesses, Innovation

The province is investing \$750,000 to help startup businesses seize opportunities emerging from COVID-19. Business incubators Volta, Ignite and the Organization for Nova Scotia Innovation-Driven Enterprise (ONSIDE) will receive funding to help new businesses get off the ground. Funding through Innovacorp will support startup activities in Cape Breton.

"COVID-19 has had a big impact on existing industry and startups," said Geoff MacLellan, Minister of Business. "As the province focuses on economic recovery, new startups and innovation-driven entrepreneurs will play an important role in restarting the economy. This investment will help drive the creation of new businesses and support innovative solutions as we adjust to the post-COVID reality."

Business incubators help startup companies through a variety of support services, including physical space, access to technology, coaching, shared services and networking. Volta, Ignite and ONSIDE will also provide programs and supports focused on issues and challenges raised by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The funding agreements are for one year, ending June 2021. Details include: \$500,000 for Volta to shift program offerings to help startups as Nova Scotia begins to re-open following COVID-19, and expand the reach of its events and programming. \$100,000 for Ignite to develop a virtual delivery model, create a personal protective equipment (PPE) portal to connect industry to the local PPE supply chain, design training opportunities for displaced workers, and deliver virtual training sessions and mentorship for startups to establish online and global strategies. \$100,000 for Innovacorp startup activities in Cape Breton, including an entrepreneur in residence, acceleration programs, training opportunities, a maker-space, mentorship and networking events and \$50,000 for ONSIDE to partner with others to provide organizational resilience training to early-stage companies and develop two investment education programs for early-stage investors.

## Support for Agriculture Sector Dealing with COVID-19

Nova Scotia's agricultural businesses continue to produce food and generate economic activity, even when faced with the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. The province is responding to the sector's immediate needs to help keep it strong. Agriculture Minister Keith Colwell said, "We need a strong agriculture sector and by taking these steps, we are helping our farm families improve their competitiveness, productivity and profitability at a time of significant change."

In partnership with the federal government, the assistance includes a new COVID-19 Response and Mitigation Program, funded under the Canadian Agricultural Partnership, that helps mitigate the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. The program will help food producers with the costs of meeting extra health requirements due to COVID-19, help producers get their crops to market, fund projects aimed at maintaining competitiveness, productivity, profitability, and support abattoir efficiency and development.

Nova Scotia and the Government of Canada have agreed to increase the 2020 AgriStability interim benefit payment percentage from 50 to 75 per cent for producers. The program supports producers experiencing a large decline in farm income. They are also providing a 10 per cent discount on producers' share of AgriInsurance premiums, saving farmers from making these payments during difficult times. AgriInsurance is an insurance against natural hazards to reduce the financial impact of production losses.

Agricultural businesses can apply for the assistance now. Victor Oulton, president, Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture said, "Farmers have faced a lot of challenges over the last three seasons. We continue to advocate on behalf of our members and are pleased to see the government releasing support programs for Nova Scotia agriculture. We look forward to our future discussions so that we can ensure the continued support for our food system."

For more information on support for individuals, families and businesses visit <https://novascotia.ca/coronavirus/#support>

continued on page 16

# Colchester May Borrow at 1.1% from MFC

By Maurice Rees

Colchester Council held two meetings on Thursday, May 7th. The first was continuation of a previous meeting at which several matters were not completed, while the second meeting was the weekly Special Meeting of council which will continue during the provincial State of Emergency during the CoVid-19 pandemic.

Colchester Council are asking staff to work with the province's Municipal Finance Corporation (MFC) to work out details whereby the municipality can borrow money at 1.1% as part of the province's plan for a municipality to borrow to protect itself against a deferral in remittance of residential and commercial taxes due to the CoVid-19 pandemic. The province has earmarked \$380-Million to assist municipalities for the amount of tax payments which will be deferred.

The taxpayer must retire the deferred amount plus 1.35% interest within 24 months. The municipality is not at risk on the amounts, because if the property is in foreclosure, amounts owed to the municipality are guaranteed under foreclosure sale activity. Normally the municipality would be paying interest rate of 3-4% on borrowings from the Municipal Finance Corporation.

Prior to the approval of the agenda for the May 7th special meeting of council Councillor Masters was advised discussion on the Low Income Policy would be added to the mid-month committee meeting on May 14th. Councillor Wade Parker added the Police Advisory Board to the agenda for the May 7th meeting.

During discussions on the county's community relief efforts Crawford MacPherson responded to Councillor Pash's request for an

explanation on family and resident's request to erect memorials to the April 18 & 19th tragic murders which started in Portapique. MacPherson stated he would work with families to ensure there was agreement on the location and with property planning they should not have to be moved in future.

Council requested the Mayor and CAO work with colleagues in Cumberland, East Hants and HRM concerning a \$5,000 amount to assist with funeral costs or other expenses for each of the 22 victims killed on weekend of April 18 & 19th. In other community relief efforts it was noted several people and groups are discussing and looking for sites for memorials. The Mayor and CAO will spearhead efforts to coordinate memorial site initiatives and to ensure wherever they are located it will be in an appropriate location and not subject to further requirement to be moved in future.

At a previous meeting council asked staff to write Department of Education expressing concern over a 2.9% increase for 2020/2021 in the allocation of tax revenues to be sent to the province to cover education costs. Council is of the feeling that due to CoVid-19 pandemic and schools being closed in the last month of the 2019/2020 fiscal year and into the start of a new fiscal year there are a variety of previously allocated expense categories, which were not spent and should be reflected in lower remittance payments.

It was suggested thousands of dollars should have been saved as a result of school closures for many items including: school bus vehicle costs; heating costs of schools; not having to hire substitute teachers; classroom educa-

tion assistants; staff layoffs for custodians, maintenance and other hourly and casual staff, plus other expense categories.

It is understood a similar request is being made by the Federation of Nova Scotia Municipalities (FNSM) on behalf of other municipalities which have been advised of an automatic

2.9% assessment increase. If it's request is successful, any reductions would not come as a rebate, or refund, but a reduction in future payments.

Council changed its earlier request asking that the outgoing letter be sent to the Minister of Finance in addition to Minister of Education.

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## Chiganois Elementary Notes

By Linda Harrington

The end of the school year was certainly not the norm, but students still received their report cards, graded, and the Grade Fives graduated on to Junior High.

Teachers had a few annual awards to present. The following awards were presented for 2019/2020: The Joy Stiles Award- Owen Landry, Rhileigh Clark; Jean Williams Award- Sugar-Daisy Torrens, Allister MacEachern; Carol Hewitt Award- Calliana Zwicker, Jacqueline Upham; Ryan Wynn Award- Cash Rushton; Most Improved Student- Jay Shreve, Haylee Lundie; Art Award- Chris Burris; French Award- Claire McMullen, Lincoln Scott; Music Award- Sierra Boyce, Dylan Stanley; Math Award- Jordan Graham, Madelyn Smith; Tech Award- Ian Eisses.

Congratulations to the following Grade Five Students and best wishes at CCJHS next year: Rhileigh Clark, Avelin Densmore, Connor Crossman, Hunter Manship, Sierra Boyce, Keira Chapman, Jordan Graham, James Johnson, Owen Landry, Ian Eisses, Allister MacEachern, Claire McMullen, Cash Rushton, Lincoln, Scott, Sugar-Daisy Torrens, Bella Adams, Dylan Stanley, Julia Welton, Chris Burris, Maddie Chiasson, Addison Cogswell, Owen Connolly, Eli Eisses, Quinn Faber, Aldon Farnell, Jacqueline Upham, Calliana Zwicker, Haylee Zwicker, Carter MacCallum, Sarah McSwain, Scarlette O'Brien, RJ O'Quinn, Jay Shreve, Madelyn Smith, Lyla Verheul.

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