

# REES' Pieces

## My May 9<sup>TH</sup>, 2016 and the NSBI

If you think bureaucracy is too large in Nova Scotia, read the following then formulate your own opinion.

As many of you have noticed, and I have written extensively on it, some of the largest and most profitable companies around have been accepted under NSBI's payroll rebate program, and in most cases, the jobs are located in Halifax. For instance last month, I reported about \$28-Million had been given to RBC, TD Insurance, Mobivity and Canadian Maritime Engineering (CME) during the past year.

It has always bothered me the Province's Payroll Rebate was not user friendly to smaller businesses, who could create jobs in smaller quantities in many of the communities around the province. It has been equally frustrating that either a lobby group; a regional development organization or a group of businesses had not banded together to get equal treatment for great locally owned, but smaller businesses dotting the entire province.

Meanwhile, as it continued to bother me, I started to formulate a plan, which might be acceptable to Laurel C. Broten, President & Chief Executive Officer. In 2015, she left the political and business scene in Ontario to help stimulate the economy in Nova Scotia.

On May 9<sup>th</sup>, after clearing away the emails, which has accumulated over the weekend, I set out on my mission to speak to Mrs. Broten. My first activity was to send an introductory email to the address listed on the NSBI home page. However, that didn't work as it kept bouncing back.

Then I called the switchboard, informed the receptionist of the bouncing emails, then was transferred to Mrs. Broten's executive assistant, whom I knew would be busy so I left a voice mail. Within an hour she called me back, took the details that I wanted to have a conversation with Mrs. Broten with the intent to set up a meeting to discuss what I thought would be an economic opportunity and job creator for Colchester County.

It was suggested, there was a regional person in Truro and they prefer people starting there and have things work their way up the chain. I stuck to my guns and expected the next call would be from Mrs. Broten, even if it took a couple of days.

But no, before the day was over, I received a call from the communications department wondering what the media inquiry was about. In detail, I explained it was not a media call, I wanted a call from Mrs. Broten and then set up a meeting.

In the days, when Frank McKenna was premier, he issued orders that phone calls were to be returned that day, and if not possible a staff member was to call advising the caller, they would be called the next day. In his first term it worked. He's the only premier on Canada to eliminate all opposition from the legislature with a 52-0 majority.

It's not rocket science to understand things have changed and the electorate is very upset. Just look at what is happening south of the border with Donald Trump and Bernie Sanders, basically destroying the "establishment" and "back rooms" of both parties.

Politicians and the public service in Nova Scotia should take notice. The public is not happy and often draws the conclusion those at the top hide behind a large staff, instead of being out front dealing with the general public. With directions of that nature from the top, it's no wonder down-line staff irritate taxpayers by calling with mis-information about the original request on the first call.

*Is the bureaucracy so large it is hindering economic development?*

**Maurice**

# Letters to the editor

*This is an open forum for your opinions and comments.*

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## OP-ED

### Time to Pull Together says Casey

MP Bill Casey says it is time to pull together and make sure Alberta feels our support out East.

"Alberta is a second home for many Nova Scotians," says Casey. "We all know neighbours who work a turnaround in Fort McMurray, or have a son or daughter, sister or brother who live in Alberta. A lot of oil patch money makes mortgage and car payments in Cumberland County."

The Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo, which includes the City of Fort McMurray, is in a state of emergency and under an evacuation order for the 3rd day as a wildfire rages through the area.

The Red Cross is providing emergency shelter, food and supplies to people displaced by the wild fire. Residents have evacuated to Lac La Biche, Edmonton and other communities. The Federal

Government has mobilized all available resources in response to Alberta's request for assistance with the emergency. This includes Public Safety, National Defence, Public Health and other agencies.

Evacuation was made challenging by the limited highway routes, and by the heavy smoke conditions, which make air evacuation impossible.

The fire is not under control, but everyone in harm's way has been safely evacuated.

Whatever we can do to help, adds Casey, we should do. "At the moment the best

thing we can do is donate to the Red Cross, because the Federal Government is matching our donations dollar for dollar."

Casey also praised the initiative of Harrison's Home Hardware in Parrsboro, Amherst and Pugwash, which is offering to ship donated clothing, toys and personal care items to Alberta.

Visit redcross.ca, text RED-CROSS TO 30333, or call 1-800-418-1111.

For more information about this release, contact: Bill Casey, M.P. - 902-397-1305.

## OP-ED

### Tidal energy is an opportunity for growth here in Nova Scotia

By Michel Sampson

With a force unmatched around the world the tides that flow through the Bay of Fundy can support the development of clean, renewable power and a new Nova Scotia industry, estimated to be worth up to \$1.7 billion to our economy.

Already tidal has launched new companies, created hundreds of jobs and attracted millions of dollars of local and international investment in research and development.

Our province is on the global forefront of tidal energy development. Opportunities like this don't come along every day. It's critical we get it right.

Since 2007, when the province first commissioned a strategic environmental assessment of the Bay of Fundy, we have sought input from communities, fishermen, small businesses, scientists and tidal developers to shape our plans. This input helped to inform Nova Scotia's Marine Renewable Energy legislation, a regulatory framework produced in advance, and in support of, commercial

development. Supporting regulations will set clear rules for any new development.

The World Wildlife Federation has called this work groundbreaking.

We believe the only way to capture the opportunity before us is to ensure it is sustainable. That means protecting our environment and another major part of our economy - our fisheries.

One of the benefits of tidal energy is that it can be scaled up or down as needed. Each developer has been given the right to test two or three devices within a defined area. By going slow, with only two devices to be deployed in the initial phase of the project, we can build our understanding and allow time to make adjustments.

The Fundy Ocean Research Center for Energy (FORCE), located in Parrsboro, is Canada's leading research centre for in-stream tidal energy and host to tidal technology developers.

FORCE is launching an enhanced environmental monitoring program to better understand any impacts tidal

energy might have on fish in the bay. Since its conception in 2009 this program has evolved as a result of input from government, Fisheries and Oceans Canada and FORCE's environmental monitoring advisory committee, which includes independent scientific experts, First Nations and fishery representatives.

What we learn through research and monitoring and from ongoing discussions with stakeholders, will continue to feed into decisions concerning any larger-scale projects.

Nova Scotia can be first. We can compete on an international scale, introduce Nova Scotian businesses to new markets, and boost our rural economies, all while respecting our natural resources and our environment.

Building a thriving tidal sector on innovation, research and collaboration can help us become a global leader and create a better future for ourselves and our children.

**Michel Sampson is Energy Minister for Province of Nova Scotia**

### Provincial Election Rules are Changing

By Maurice Rees

New rules around advertising and a maximum time period to hold an election were introduced in the house of Assembly on April 25th. The proposed changes include creating a maximum time period of 46 days to hold an election.

During an election, spending limits are fixed for parties and candidates, however, each week the period is extended, it comes with a significant cost to taxpayers totaling \$750,000 for an

election and \$15,000 for a by-election. The change will allow the premier to accommodate major events such as religious and statutory holidays, and will offer Nova Scotians access to timely elections.

Other proposed improvements to the act include: Banning advertising from within 60 meters of the entrance to all polling stations; allowing any candidate to vote in the electoral district where they reside or are running; new political

parties must submit an application to Elections Nova Scotia that includes the signatures of at least 25 electors in each of 10 different electoral districts.

All signatures must be collected within one year of the submission; unused tax receipts must now be returned to the CEO of Elections Nova Scotia within 30 days of Election Day and authorization will be given to add seeds or fictitious names to the list of electors in an effort to enhance the ability to uncover misuse of the list of electors for non-electoral purposes.

The Shoreline Journal (circ. 1650) is a monthly community newspaper serving communities along the Glooscap Trail from Truro to Parrsboro, Nova Scotia serving the communities of Belmont/Debert, Wentworth/Londonderry, Onslow/Masstown along the shore to Great Village, Bass River, Economy, Five Islands and Lower Five Islands. It is published on the last Wednesday of each month (earlier in December) with a deadline of the 20th of the month.

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