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WCCDA Group Attracts Large Crowd

By Maurice Rees

The citizen's movement to form or rebuild an umbrella group to work with communities from Lower Five Islands to the Onslows attracted approximately 35 people who participated in three discussion

groups covering a variety of topics at the Peg on Wednesday, February 22. The meeting was the first of four open house community meetings to be held prior to selecting a new executive and directors.

The open house meeting

under the leadership of Annie Phillips, who had designed a series of questions for the groups. The meeting started with an overview by Jim Campbell, who detailed results of several meetings, that originally started about a year ago to

more formalize the RASCALS initiative started by Joy Laking.

Campbell explained at a number of meetings, it was suggested rather than start a new group it might be more advantageous to follow through on the nearly 20 years of work done by West Colchester Community Development Association (WCCDA), which had become dormant in recent years.

Campbell explained WCCDA financial statements were received and updating of its registry with the Registry of Joint Stock had taken place. Other activities had included refining and making minor changes to the Memorandum of Association and the existing WCCDA by-laws had been updated.

Prior to choosing area directors and an executive to move forward as a fledgling organization the small group decided take the initiative to the communities by hosting a series of community open houses. The additional meetings were

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Jim Campbell, Bass River, who spent his career working with communities to develop economic strategies provides an overview from several meetings to organize a new group or re-develop West Colchester Development Association into an umbrella organization to bring together all communities from Lower Five Islands to Masstown. (Rees Photo)

FRONT PAGE BRIEFS March 2017

Stress Relief: Brains of older people are slow because they know so much. While you are starting to smile, here's another reliever: I decided to stop calling the bathroom the "John" and renamed it the "Jim". I feel so much better saying I went to the Jim this morning.

Classic Country Music Show will be held Saturday, March 18th commencing at 7 pm at the Best Western Glengarry, Truro. The 5th Annual "HubTown" Concert Fundraiser will be host to The Elliott Brothers; Jim Richard & Rusty Cage; CJ & Bob Prest; The O'Brien's; and NSCMHF Inductees Don Haggart; Jo-Ann Newman and Floyd Spicer. Advance Tickets \$12 available at Mingo Music Sales, 590 Prince St. Truro. At Door night of show \$15. Everyone welcome. Concert fundraiser in support of NSCMHF. Need more info call: 902 897 9653.

Unveiling of a new plan to improve utilization of West Colchester United Arena will be held at the arena on Thursday, March 2nd commencing at 7:00 pm. Residents are encouraged to attend to provide their input and to learn about the vision being developed by Langille and Colburne hired by the Colchester Recreation Facilities Association to develop a new website with an online booking system. They also will help with marketing and promotion and some partnership development. They are now at the stage where it is time to reach out to the community for their input into the future of the West Colchester United Arena.

Weight restrictions were imposed on all provincial gravel roads at noon Friday, February 24. Gravel roads will be posted to a maximum of 15,000 kilograms until further notice. Unseasonably warm weather is softening gravel roads to the point where weight restrictions are necessary to avoid unsafe road conditions and expensive repairs. The department will continue to monitor road and weather conditions to determine when it is safe to remove the restrictions.

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During the 2017 Annual General Meeting of the Dairy Farmers of Nova Scotia, Brandon Detmers, Annelies Detmers, Elizabeth Biggs and Mary MacPhee enjoy light "roundtable" discussion over breakfast, which of course included milk and yogurt! DFNS Feature pages can be found on pages 13 to 16, exclusively here in the Shoreline Journal.

Truro Dispatch Centre Information Difficult to Access

Bill Casey is finding information about possible closure of RCMP's Truro Dispatch Centre is not forthcoming. Recently, rumours have surfaced that the RCMP may be seeking to move the centre to Halifax. Casey has been in contact with the offices of Commissioner Bob Paulson and H-Division Assistant Commissioner Brian Brennan, asking for a copy of a 2006 internal report resulting in several Nova Scotia dispatch centres consolidated in Truro.

He has also made an application through Access to Information and Privacy Branch of the RCMP, but almost 3 months later, he is still waiting for a reply.

The Truro Operational Communications Centre handles about half of all 911 calls in the province of Nova Scotia. A centre in Halifax, operated by HRM Police, handles the rest. The Truro centre takes overflow from HRM

through seamless telephonic integration. It can communicate with every police car, fire truck, ambulance and marine vessel instantaneously.

"I believe, somewhere in the 2006 report is a rationale for choosing to locate this critical communications infrastructure outside of HRM," says Casey. "If a catastrophic event happens in HRM, where our only other dispatch centre is located, Truro is the back-up. If both centres were located in Halifax, it could spell a double disaster, with communications knocked out for the entire province."

Casey believes the RCMP will release the report in due course, but wants to be sure he has it before a decision is made regarding the Truro facility. "These are more than 50 good paying jobs for this rural area. We don't want to lose them, and nobody wants to see public safety compromised."

Casey Complains to Information Commissioner

The RCMP's delay in providing information to Bill Casey has led the Cumberland Colchester MP to complain to the Information Commissioner.

In 2006, the RCMP produced an internal report providing justification for consolidating several Nova Scotia dispatch centres in Truro. Since rumours began circulating last fall the RCMP was considering relocating the centre to Halifax, Casey has been seeking a copy of that report.

Almost three months ago,

Casey's staff lodged a formal request with the Access to Information and Privacy Branch of the RCMP for a copy of the 2006 report. So far, all that the RCMP has said is that they are experiencing a "significantly high volume" of requests and cannot say when they will respond.

But Casey notes the federal Access to Information Act requires the RCMP to respond within 30 days and to file a notice with the Information Commissioner if they cannot meet the deadline. That has not happened, according to Casey, and prompted him to complain to the Information Commissioner, Suzanne Legault.

"In the era of fake news, I think it is more important than ever government agencies respond promptly to legitimate requests for information," says Casey. "We don't need rumours; we need facts, so let's get the facts out."



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