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## J-Class Roads Dominates Discussion

By Maurice Rees

In years of covering Colchester Council proceedings very few topics have occupied council's time, and punting the ball farther down the road, with no action. As we enter our second year under the pandemic the topic is coming back at a fever pitch.

The April 15th committee

meeting dealt with at least three motions, all defeated. First motion to be defeated was made by Councillor Boutillier, District 1 Bible Hill who moved the report from Director of Public works be received for information. Discussion continued for over an hour until there was consensus to next discussion would

be in May. District 5 councillor, Tim Johnson, elected last October, gives every indication he will continue to raise the repaving of 112 Km of J-class roads until he sees some action, even if it is only for his District.

He was adamant he would hang his political future on getting the Salmon River, District 5 enter a repaving program for the 11.8 Km J-class roads having an assessment of \$170.70-Million. He said, "I'll hang my political future on it, and at the next election if they don't like driving on new roads, they can find someone else to represent them".

A District 5 repaving plan based on 20 year rotation would have annual cost of \$38,386 if the county paid half the cost. This would increase tax bills for the district by \$44.00 based on property assessment value. However, he suggested the municipality take 25% of the cost from general tax revenues and apply an additional area rate throughout the district. Following his suggested formula a property of \$200,000 assessment would create an increase of \$22.00 for area rate per year. The province covers 50% of cost of J-Class repaving.

In pressing the case for Ice

Pond He said it is 21 years old. When sub-division developed all lots had paved road. He added, Ice Pond pays \$15,000 for active transportation which is used for sidewalks, but we don't have sidewalks.

The subject of repaving has been before council several times in recent years, but recently has been on the agenda for January, February and again April 15th committee meeting. A lengthy and sometimes intense discussion resulted in the matter will again appear on the agenda in May, with additional information and "how to" options from staff.

The 2021 discussions have grown from Johnson being the only councillor dedicated to the matter, who has gained support from some of the other councillors, especially District 11 councillor, Wade Parker.

Early in the committee meeting, Mayor Blair said, We need to make a decision. Need to find a solution. Get 50% from province. If we put some tax rate - 25% from residents and 25% from our own budgets. Need to discuss,

During part of the discussion, Parker stated conditions of the roads was the persistent topic during last fall's municipi-

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### Emotions Rawer One Year Later

A year ago everyone was dismayed, in shock and unable to think correctly. Family and friends, who learned who was killed in the Canada's largest mass murder has just received the worst news ever and wanted to be left alone.

We have made a lot of progress, thanks to neighbours, elected officials and the newly formed Nova Scotia Remembers Legacy Society. Unfortunately, emotions are rawer now and more pronounced even though just passed the first anniversary.

Thanks to the legacy society for organizing the memorial events, various classifications of races or walks, which has garnered national and international attention. One can not say enough about the many professionals and volunteers who have and are giving of their time to help in the healing process.

It truly was a "weekend of extreme sorrow" and there is a lot of healing yet to come. We must ensure the wishes of local citizens are respected, but everyone must do what they can to ensure the memory of those 22 people plus an unborn child is never forgotten. Not everyone will agree, but a "official" memorial but evolve. Consensus must be part of the process to ensure things are done properly, in good taste and with respect, without making the area a MECCA for the inquisitive.

Family and friends of those slain don't feel comfortable the way things have evolved. Only public outrage changed the official review / inquiry to a commission, when the provincial government and feds has suggested a reduced undertaking. There is a lot of emotion and empathy for local RCMP constables who ply the roads on daily basis.

However, as one ascends up the ranks, there is a lot of distrust with "higher up" RCMP decisions. Many feel there is too much effort spent on "CYA". Canada Revenue Agency is taking far too long to approve charitable status for the Legacy Society. There is no evidence the province has applied any pressure to get charitable approved, or for the federal government to step up to the plate in other ways including more funding.

If I wanted to be negative, there is a long list of items, which would demonstrate a lack of empathy and compassion once one leaves the immediate areas where the tragedy and slaying occurred. However, I feel much more can be accomplished by focusing on the positive.

Local councillors and the municipal governments in the affected areas have stepped up to the plate to the extent permitted without going on a rampage.

If it wasn't for the Truro Rotary Club, Colchester Municipal Council, the volunteer Legacy Society and citizens from the Portapique, Bass River and Great Village areas not much would have been accomplished. A special recognition should go to Karen Casey who worked tirelessly to do what needed including bringing in the Justice Department to do what was needed.

Yes, it was a "Weekend of Extreme Sorrow". However we must not permit memories to fade into the forgotten past. Keep up the pressure, or apply new, so this area of West Colchester is remembered for eternity for the large number of citizens it lost.

*Maurice Rees, Publisher*



This broken heart, Nova Scotia Remembers is part of the 1st Annual Memorial displays in Victoria Park. Built by legendary, Wayne Smith, the large broken heart contains the names of the 22 people, plus unborn baby contains the names those who perished on April 18 & 19, 2020. (Harrington Photo). For additional 1st Anniversary coverage, please see pages 11 to 14.

## \$50,459 Grants Approved

By Maurice Rees

Prior to starting Council's addition and deletions budget meeting, Deputy Mayor Stewart, who chaired the meeting asked for a moment of silence in honour of those who lost their lives on April 18 and 19, 2020. Following observation of silence, Mayor Blair said that in honour of 22, plus unborn, Taggart, Benoit and herself laid flowers on their behalf. She added the Lt-Gov commented on the support given to families and residences, and also because of the magnitude of

the incidents, there is a need for a significant memorial to last a long time.

During discussions on additions and deletions, council approved \$50,459 out of \$180,000 requested.

Council has a budget of Up to max of \$100,000 in grants for non Profits. Total request from applicants totaled \$180,000. For the benefit of new councillors, councillor Taggart pointed out the meeting could go above \$100,000 which would either up the tax

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## Taggart Offers for PC Nomination

By Maurice Rees

With the upcoming retirement of Karen Casey, MLA, who has announced she will not re-offer during the next election. Sources tell the Shoreline Journal Tom Taggart is attempting to become MLA for Colchester North having filed his papers seeking the Progressive Conservative nomination.

Taggart who worked with and supported Casey while she was a member of the conservative, was often heard to say he promised Casey, he would never run against her after she switched to the Liberals and was re-elected as a Liberal MLA in 2013.

Gary Burley, East Mountain, a retired educator, is president Colchester North PC Assn was unable to confirm who had filed papers, but did indicate one had filed so far. Sources tell the Shoreline, District 10 municipal councillor has filed his papers.

The association will be holding its AGM in a virtual format on May 12th and a new executive will be elected at

that time. Unless there is a need to move earlier, the date of the nomination meeting will be set by the new executive. Party leader, Tim Houston will be guest speaker.

Premier Iain Rankin must call an election by May 2022. He has not tipped his hand when an election will be called. During April there had been strong indication, he might sent us to the polls for mid-June. However, the rapid rise in identified CoVid cases in the last week has cast doubts.

During the winter people were guessing, who would go first, the Feds or Nova Scotia. During April with pandemic cases rising in most provinces from Quebec onward, it is improbable or not wise for Prime Minister Trudeau to pull the plug at this time. There is possibility should the pandemic be brought under control a fall Federal election could be a possibility.

Although with pandemic uncertainty for a June election up in the air, it is still pre-

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## Four Jobs Available in Economy

Anita MacLellan who is the tireless volunteer to the Geopark Welcome Centre, formerly

Economy Visitor Centre indicates she has 4 job opportunities available this summer. Applicants are to supply cover letter, resume and three references.

She describes the jobs as: GeoHeritage Assistant (1), must be registered for University or Community College in fall, starts May 31. There are 3 openings for Culture/Heritage Interpreter and can be non-tudent, 15 - 30 yrs of age starting in July at \$13.25/hr.

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