

SUMMER 2021

Municipal bserver

The Magazine for the **Nova Scotia Federation of Municipalities**

**Municipality of Argyle
road trip**

Escape by water

Feeling the heat?

**Access-A-Beach this summer
in the District of Yarmouth**

THE SUMMER TRAVEL ISSUE



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(Cover Photo) Port Maitland Provincial Park

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Remember gratitude, especially for yourself

By Acting President Amanda McDougall

The theme of this issue is a timely one, getting out and enjoying our beautiful and exciting province! I know many of us are in the same boat, that we have been waiting for this moment to embrace the natural wonders and infinite adventures for almost a year and a half. Our residents, businesses, services organizations and community leaders have been strong throughout the pandemic – adhering to restrictions and taking care of one another – now it is time to safely come back together and embrace all that is Nova Scotia!

Our way forward is going to be through the support of our communities. The term ‘support local’ has never had so much meaning. We know the hardships that the pandemic presented to many local organizations and businesses. Now more than ever they need our support – and what better way to show that support than attending cultural events, buying from our local businesses and eating our way through the incredible list of tasty restaurants.

In this issue we’ve selected a few of the many options for activities that this province has in store. Whether you want to unwind on a beach, explore some new trails, try a fun new shopping experience, or carve out a little piece of nowhere to call your own for the weekend, there’s always a chance to find that close to home.

I would like to stress that not only is it important to do this to support our local communities, it’s important to carve out time for ourselves as public servants and human beings. This is an extremely important time for us to unplug, unwind, and get some much-

needed rest. Feel free to step back, and be sure to always make time for yourself.

It’s no secret that this is a hard job, adding in the stress of a pandemic and things can easily hit a tipping point. Keep in mind that you’re a person too, and you deserve the ability to rest as well. You can only work at full capacity for so long before things start to break down, so consider it an important part of your service to your community to find a moment of peace for yourself as often as you can.

I’d like to thank everyone so far for all they’ve done for their communities. The long hours, the sacrifices, the nonstop requests for virtual meetings and memos and important engagement pieces. When we step back and look at the bigger picture, the scope of the fantastic things we’ve accomplished over the past year really comes into focus. You’re all amazing at your jobs, and your communities thank you for going above and beyond for everyone.

I’d also like to extend gratitude and thanks to the members who have been attending the President’s Coffee Chats. The chance to hear from you, create a dialogue, and build a space for those conversations has been phenomenal, and I think we’ve all learned and grown from them. I look forward to continuing our chats and building a more inclusive culture for the entirety of NSFM.

I hope everyone has an incredible, relaxing, and restful summer. Looking forward to seeing you all in the Fall!



By CEO Juanita Spencer

Welcome Back to Business

It's no secret that Covid-19 has had a toll on our members. I've been amazed by our members who have found new ways to succeed while workloads stacked higher across the board. I'm pleased to think that all of this could be entering the rear-view mirror as we get shots into arms, and we could be looking at a renewed normal.

This summer we are seeing that we can and will return to normalcy, and this issue is what I believe to be a start. We can dig our way out through our own communities and by celebrating what we have close to home. While things are opening up, we encourage you to continue exploring the communities and businesses that are in your backyard. In every corner of our province, there is enough to fill an entire summer.

There is a lot to see and do and celebrate in Nova Scotia, and our members will be looked at to set the stage for excellence. We've had a lot to be proud of. We had all eyes on Nova Scotia while we squashed

the second and then the third wave, and I think it will be the same as we work with communities to rebuild stronger than before.

Changes aren't solely coming economically, either. By the time you're reading this we may have already learned the results of the August election, which NSFM prepared for in much the same way that we had through the entire Covid Crisis—remaining in touch, discussing our issues and all solutions, and remembering that our strengths come from our ability to collaborate.

We are guided by our resolutions, an engaged board, and a membership that has routinely gone the extra mile. Coming off of a very successful legislature sitting, the signing of the Provincial Municipal Partnership Framework, and with rejuvenated

partnerships almost everywhere, I think that we are in a great position to make some positive traction on the issues that are the most important to our members through the summer into the fall.

*Our way forward
is going to be
through the
support of our
communities.*

I want to take a moment to celebrate everything our members have been doing through Covid. They've reached out, collaborated, and moved mountains for each other and their residents. I could not be more proud when I look back on what we've accomplished together and as individuals.

With our partners at AMANS, we're going to work as a unit to demonstrate the value and importance of Nova Scotia Municipalities. We are a smaller province, with a history of making a big splash. I look forward to a well-earned summer, and what is sure to be a fall to remember.



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Double helping of Federal funding supports municipal infrastructure projects

Municipalities across the country will receive a doubling of funding under the federal Gas Tax Fund (GTF) for the second time in three years. In Nova Scotia, this will put approximately an extra \$56 million in the hands of our local municipalities to fund priority infrastructure projects like high-speed internet, public transit, active transportation routes, roads and recreational facilities. The GTF has also been renamed the Canada Community-Building Fund (CCBF) to better

reflect the program's purpose to support the shared objectives of productivity and economic growth, a clean environment and strong communities.

Since municipalities are responsible for more than 60% of core public infrastructure, this extra helping of funding will assist local governments in providing essential services to their communities, supporting a good quality of life for residents.

The CCBF is a predictable stream of funding that allows municipalities to budget and plan ahead to meet the needs of their communities. By putting the resources in the hands of local government, this fund empowers municipalities to address local infrastructure projects, while creating jobs and economic growth.

This summer, plan to visit local amenities to experience how Nova Scotia municipalities are putting the CCBF to good use in their communities. The following is a sampling of projects** you may wish to explore that were supported with an infusion of funding from the CCBF:

- Dickey Brook and Willow Street Trails in the Town of Amherst
- Bridgetown Regional Outdoor Sport Hub Park (with renovated facility washrooms and equipment storage) in the Municipality of the County of Annapolis



- North East Point Boardwalk in the Municipality of the District of Barrington
- Rainforth Park and Lou Chute Bike Park in the Town of Berwick
- Grand Lake Multi-Use Path in Cape Breton Regional Municipality
- Paved shoulders along Highway #3 for cycling and other non-motorized travel in the Municipality of the District of Chester
- Pit Pond Trail in Springhill in the Municipality of the County of Cumberland

- Seaside Heritage Hall in the Town of Clarke's Harbour
 - The railbed trail in the Town of Digby
 - Lantz skate park, Hants North splash pad and Mount Uniacke skate park in the Municipality of the District of East Hants
 - Salsman Park Marina in the Municipality of the District of Guysborough
 - Harvest Moon Trail connector at Lockhart Ryan Park in the Municipality of the County of Kings
 - River Ridge Common Park in the Municipality of the District of Lunenburg
 - Pugwash Harbourfront Centre in the Village of Pugwash
 - Avondale Boardwalk in the historic hamlet of Newport Landing, Region of West Hants
 - The Great Trail in the Town of Oxford
- **If your municipality has a CCBF project you would like to feature in a future issue of the NSFM's Municipal Observer, please contact Debbie at dnielsen@nsfm.ca.**







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Welcome to Canoe!

Renaming the trade programs alliance partnership, of which NSFM is a founding member, happened on June 1st, 2021. Our trade program alliance with multiple national sister associations gives our members the opportunity to access hundreds of pre-tendered trade programs that leverage the buying power of over 5,000 active members, which in turn saves both time and costs.

Tim Elms is still your contact for all things procurement! Reach out to him at tim@canoeprocurement.ca

For more reference, or to get a quote from our approved vendors, visit www.canoeprocurement.ca

Canoe Procurement is pleased to announce a new Waterworks Program for its members across Canada.

Reliable water supply is vital to communities and organizations of all sizes. Through the new Waterworks Program, members are able to access a wide variety of solutions for water transportation, distribution, and monitoring. The program features four approved suppliers, each awarded a contract following an open RFP process completed on behalf of the entire membership.

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ICONIX Water Products provides a huge range of waterworks products including piping, valves, pumps, geosynthetics, drainage, HDPE, metering, and engineered solutions.

To take advantage of the program, organizations must be registered members in good standing with Canoe. Contact your Client Relations Manager with any questions or to learn more about how the Food Services Program can help your organization.

Explore more Canoe programs, register online for membership, or contact Tim for more information!

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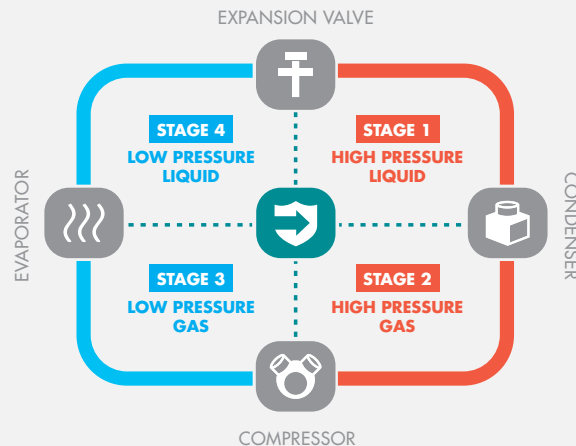
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SMART Transfer Maintenance Protection Process



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2. HOLD

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3. RETURN

Once the maintenance is complete, the refrigerant can be transferred from the SMART Transfer back into the system.



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2. TRANSFER

If the leak reaches a predetermined severity level, or if the operator chooses to activate the transfer manually, refrigerant isolation is initiated.



3. RETURN

Once the leak has been resolved, the refrigerant can be transferred from the SMART Transfer back into the system.

Nova Scotia's Regional Enterprise Networks (RENS) collaboration with Chambers of Commerce successfully rollout Rapid Screening Consortium across the Province

Since the Province of Nova Scotia announced its five-phase re-opening plan, the seven Nova Scotia Regional Enterprise Networks (RENS), along with the province's Chambers of Commerce have been hard at work rolling out the Creative Destruction Lab (CDL) Rapid Screening Consortium, a workplace screening program in an effort to protect Nova Scotia's economy, keep businesses open and workers safe.

The CDL Rapid Screening Consortium is a private-led, not-for-profit initiative formed in August 2020 with the goal of establishing a robust rapid screening system and operational implementation strategy to be delivered as a public good to Canada and the world. The Consortium is led by Creative Destruction Lab and has been rolled out across Canada with support by both the Government of Canada and provincial governments across the country. In Nova Scotia, the RENS and Chambers of Commerce took the lead to promote the program to businesses.

"Finding ways to adapt our businesses to living with COVID-19 is important in getting our economy and our communities back to a new normal," said Carla Arsenault, President & CEO of the Cape Breton Partnership, a private sector-led economic development organization which administers the Cape Breton Regional Enterprise Network (CB REN) and the Cape Breton Regional Municipality (CBRM) Regional Enterprise Network. "This initiative was important to support, as many businesses want the ability to provide regular screening for employees in order to stop the spread of the virus, and ultimately protect our economy and keep businesses safe in the long-term."

This was an unprecedented collaboration among businesses, researchers, and government working together on a singular public-interest objective, aimed at providing workplaces with self-administered screening kits for their employees. By providing regular screening, employers can help identify and stop the spread of COVID-19, while keeping their workforce safe.

The first cohort kicked-off on Friday, June 11 and saw 275 Nova Scotia businesses register to be part of the program. On Wednesday, June 23, 2021 the second cohort launched and will be the last cohort for the program in Nova Scotia.

"Thank you to the businesses who joined the consortium," said Sarah MacIntosh-Wiseman, CEO of the Pictou County REN. "The RENS were pleased to support businesses in implementing this program and the Nova Scotia business community stepped up to keep our economy open and their workplaces and employees safe."

The program was 100 per cent free, with the goal of finding infection in workplaces before an outbreak occurs. It will also help decrease the pressure on the healthcare system, as healthcare resources are able to focus their screening efforts on infected people. By rolling out rapid screening in and around Nova Scotia workplaces, we provided an efficient and strategic way to reopen our economy.

For more information, please visit CDL Rapid Screening Consortium's website at

cdlrapidscreeningconsortium.com.

NOVA SCOTIA REGIONAL ENTERPRISE NETWORKS

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Municipalities, First Nations, the Province of Nova Scotia, and regional business communities are all working together through the REN model, to strengthen regional economies.

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Municipality of Argyle road trip

Expecting another summer close to home? Happily, each of our members offers something unique and fun for the whole family that you can use to keep the doldrums of summer at bay!

Starting down south, in the Municipality of Argyle, you can see the first net zero municipal administrative building in Canada, learn about Acadien Heritage, and enjoy the wonders of being in a dark skies portion of the province.

“Having the first Net zero energy municipal administrative building in Canada is an honor and privilege,” said Argyle CAO Alain Muisse. “The Municipality of Argyle was home to the first wind farm in Nova Scotia, so it seemed apt that we would also lead in this energy conscious building. We want to send the message that no matter the size of a community, we all have a role to play to be more environmentally responsible.”



“We hope that these decisions encourage more investment of this nature in this area,” he added.

The project was a rather large undertaking, and Argyle went to great lengths to ensure that the public was apprised of the information that was in council’s hands as soon as they had it. This ensures that it was

a rather smooth running project, with lots of benefits for the municipality at the end.

“The biggest learning opportunity in our view was how we engaged the public,” explained Muise. “We decided the best approach was to do a thorough analysis of our options of repair or new construction.



Once Council knew they wanted to recommend new, instead of making that decision, it went out to the public in various ways. We had confidence that if the public was given the same information and time as Council, they would make the same decision – and they did.”

“The other lesson is to take a long look at funding opportunities for energy conscious projects – the FCM Green Energy Fund is the largest contributor, and the process and application is very technical, but worth it,” he added.

Other places of interest in Argyle include two major heritage museums. Village Historique Acadien de la Nouvelle Ecosse, which is an interactive museum that shows how Acadian ancestors lived and operates as

a living museum. The other is the Musee Acadienne in Pubnico-Ouest, where a very thorough genealogical history is documented.

Argyle also houses the oldest Courthouse and Jail in Canada, located in the village of Tusket, and the Wedgeport Tuna Museum, which hosts an annual tuna fishing tournament.

“The history of this tournament is rich, attracting famous people like Babe Ruth to participate,” said Muise. “Nova Scotians can embrace Acadian culture by immersing themselves in these communities, visiting historical museums such as the Village and others, enjoying some of our traditional foods like fricot or rappie pie; which are always better prepared in Acadian communities.





“As an Acadian myself I like to tell people that my rappie pie is the tastiest, but I have yet to win any competitions, so clearly it is a rigged event,” he joked.

If night skies interest you, Argyle has you covered. Approximately eight years ago an idea was forged by two former owners of Trout Point Lodge. The lodge is located in the Tobeatic protected region of South West Nova Scotia—which features some of the darkest night skies in the world. As a result, stargazing in Argyle is an incredible experience, which has lead to the birth of an Astrotourism industry.

“We created a team of municipal and community members who sought to register our skies as certified dark sky, and we succeeded,” explained Muise. “Besides Trout Point Lodge, we are also home to Tim Doucette, a local amateur astronomer who built a facility specifically for Astrotourism. Tim has a unique story. He is legally blind,

and his condition limits his sight during the day; but at night, he sees the sky in a way few can.”

“Doucette offers Astrotourism tours of the sky, and is a constant defender of the sky,” continued Muise. “He has encouraged and pushed us as a municipality to consider light pollution as a form of nuisance, and has tons of suggested ways where residents can protect the night sky, while saving money using better lighting techniques.”

As a small Municipality, Argyle is blessed with a combination of deep-rooted people; Acadian, Mi’kmaq and Anglophone influences which remain to this day.

“Our dependence on the sea has spanned generations, and has created a culture of innovation and a unique way of life,” concluded Muise. “We will soon host (along with the Municipality of Clare), the World Acadian Congress in 2024. This will bring thousands of Acadians across the globe to our backyard. This event will showcase Acadian music, food, and joie de vivre.”



Escape by water

About 20 minutes from the very best beaches this province has to offer, Bridgewater has long been known as a stopping point and a service centre on your way to somewhere else.

Times have changed – and so, too, has Bridgewater.

The downtown core along King and LaHave streets offers the most complete shopping experience in the southern half of the province.

“From the big-box stores to locally owned and inspired artisan shops and professional services, Downtown Bridgewater is the hub of the community,” said Patrick Hirtle Town of Bridgewater, Communications Manager “but it’s just a taste of what this emergent town has to offer.”

“Our gorgeous riverfront has been reborn over the last decade – with the most striking change being the demolition of a 50-year-old parkade on King Street in 2016 in favour of a new waterfront public space

known as Pijinuiskaq Park,” he continued. “Pijinuiskaq is the Mi’kmaw name for the LaHave River, meaning “river of long joints/river branches,” and was chosen in recognition and honour of the ancestral Mi’kmaw presence in the LaHave River Valley and all of Mi’kma’ki.”

Significant public and private investment has since spurred the growth of their downtown as a dining destination that features unique craft brewers and restaurants, catering everything from traditional pub fare to fine Italian and Chinese cuisine. Beyond the downtown, you won’t have to go far to find additional delights, including Indian dining, and traditional Maritime seafood.

“At night, and especially on weekends, King Street comes to life,” said Hirtle. “Sidewalk patios, courtyards, and gazebos are bathed in the soft, warm hues of summertime lanterns, while the sounds of live music waft through the air with regularity, energizing all within earshot.”

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“As you explore our community, you’ll want to be sure to include DesBrisay Museum in your itinerary,” he continued. “A longstanding repository of heritage and historical artifacts, the museum has likewise been reinvigorated over the last five years. Now it boasts not only a strong research facility and a collection of glimpses upon Lunenburg County’s past, but it’s also a hub of cultural activities and artistic endeavours – filling a void in Bridgewater’s offerings to visitors and residents alike that has long cried out to be filled.”

DesBrisay Museum isn’t the only destination for heritage, art, and culture in town either – Wile Carding Mill Museum is part of the Nova Scotia Museum network. Step through the rugged red doorway and back into a different time and place as you breathe in the sounds, sights, and smells of an authentic 1860s wool carding mill operation.





“If getting back to nature and immersing yourself in its splendor is on your agenda this summer, Bridgewater’s comprehensive network of trails and public parks offers whatever your heart may desire,” explained Hirtle. “Active walking trails and flora galore can be found at Woodland Gardens, Riverview Park, Glen Allan Park, and more. If you have your canine companion with you for the sojourn, they’re sure to enjoy the South Shore Vet Dog Zone, located at Generations Active Park. If you have young or young at heart in tow, the O’Regan’s Subaru Outdoor Swimming Pool and adjacent playground is the perfect destination to have fun and then cool off. Likewise, Bridgewater Skate Park and the Lunenburg County Lifestyle Centre, with its aquatic centre, arena, and public library, are premiere destinations at any time of the year.”

Interconnecting virtually all of these recreational destinations is the eight-kilometre Centennial Trail, a breathtaking walk in and of itself winding its way along the former railway bed that bisects Bridgewater,

taking you across the head of the LaHave River high above the roaring waters.

“For those up for a slightly heartier hike, go north off the Centennial Trail when it splits near the Trestle Bridge and venture on to the Arthur Young Trail, located just on the outskirts of town into the Municipality of the District of Lunenburg,” he said.

“From there, you can ascend a hillside through a series of switchbacks and turn to take in a view that captures all of Bridgewater nestled within the rolling green entirety of the LaHave River Valley.”

Have we caught your attention yet? We hope so – and we hope you’ll make time to come and spend a few days getting to know Bridgewater and our friends throughout Lunenburg County this summer.

For more information, visit bridgewater.ca or follow us on Facebook at @BridgewaterNS.



Feeling the Heat?

Access-A-Beach this summer in the District of Yarmouth

The Municipality of the District of Yarmouth (MODY) received funding from the Community Access-Ability Program to make one of the most popular beaches in Yarmouth County, Port Maitland Provincial Beach and Park, more accessible. Their project, a result of partnership established with the Department of Natural Resources, will include mobility mats and a mobility chair being made available for residents and visitors.

"I attended a presentation by Rick Hanson at an NSFM spring conference," explained Councillor Patti Durkee about the beginnings of the project. "They spoke about the mobility mats and mobility chairs and I believe it was Colchester County who had already installed them. I thought it would be a fantastic project for the Port Maitland Provincial Park. The beach is under-utilized but absolutely gorgeous—a wonderful asset for both locals and visitors.

"I presented to council and asked that we partner with Natural Resources to make it happen," she continued. "Originally, I was pushing for flush toilets at the park—we didn't get those, but we did get a new hut to store the mobi mats and chair and a new ac-

cessible washroom. After, Natural Resources offered to set up the infrastructure, house and maintain the equipment that we purchased with the help of a grant."

Mobility Mats are a firm, safe, cool and stable surface for users. Used as a sturdy and visible path, they can improve access on the beach to support people with disabilities or mobility challenges who generally cannot get on to the beach or struggle to move across the sand safely. A mobility chair is a high-quality floating beach wheelchair that provides a seamless transition from boardwalk-to-beach-to water.

"It is sad to think that the beach has not been accessible for all," said Durkee. "Everyone should be able to access this beautiful natural resource in our backyard. I am pleased that the province has moved forward with the Accessibility Act, and would like to use it again to have a provincial park located on a lake made equally accessible. The water there will be much warmer than the ocean!"

Port Maitland Provincial Beach and Park offers approximately one kilometer of sand beach backed by a

grassy picnic area and dunes. The park has supervised lifeguards during the summer months. It is open from May to October annually.

The beach is a very popular spot for locals, and now it's available for all to enjoy.

"Port Maitland Provincial Beach and Park is one of the most popular beaches in Yarmouth County and hosts a number of annual events: Beach sweeps, Family Beach Party, Fun Run," said Durkee. "The beach is used year-round for walking, beach combing, swimming, running, bird watching, weddings, picnics, star gazing, yoga and much more."

As for difficulties in deciding to undertake the project? Just another day at the beach.

"I would highly encourage municipal units who are interested in making their provincial parks accessible to partner on the project," concluded Durkee. "We have a lot of parks in Nova Scotia and by working together it will speed up the process. Unfortunately, our project was held up due to Covid. The mats were supposed to be installed and the wheelchair available last summer. They will be available when the lifeguards begin service on July 1st this year. I look forward to seeing the excitement of people being able to make their way down the beach to the water. To even put your feet in the water would be a real treat."

"We have received a lot of positive feedback on this project, and I am confident once the beach is accessible there will be plenty more," she added. "We encourage everyone to come and visit beautiful Port Maitland Beach, Yarmouth County!"



Caucus Chair Corner



Rural Caucus Chair

Carolyn Bolivar-Getson
Mayor, Municipality of the
District of Lunenburg

Trail use is up across the country and throughout the province as we seek to balance Covid-19 isolation, restrictions, and limitations with a healthy lifestyle.

According to a 2020 national Leger survey, commissioned by the Trans Canada Trail organization, Canadians are using trails in greater numbers since the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic, with usage up close to 50 per cent across all age groups.

In MODL, we had more than 900 residents participate in a physical activity survey and the overwhelming results confirmed that using the spaces around us and keeping activities outdoors (particularly during the pandemic) is a priority for our citizens.

Council listened and demonstrated its support in helping our citizens connect to nature through capital investment in recreation assets including parks and trails such as River Ridge Commons.

As a result, MODL Council awarded Trailflow Outdoors Adventures the contract to design and construct phase two of the River Ridge Commons singletrack trails. This includes a series of singletrack mountain bike trails. In addition, to accommodate the increase use of the facility, Council included funds in its Capital Budget to increase and upgrade the parking spaces at River Ridge Commons.

To further demonstrate the active lifestyles adopted by residents of the South Shore, I am very pleased to report that MODL users logged 1.5 million activity minutes in the Participaction Challenge ranking us third in Nova Scotia and in the top 50 in Canada.



Regional Caucus Chair

Waye Mason Councillor,
Halifax Regional Municipality

Being a municipal elected official is always challenging, but COVID, the creation of a new regional municipality, a new Premier and cabinet, and a provincial election made it even more interesting!"

We've had a lot of discussion about the composition of the Regional Caucus, historically just Halifax and Cape Breton regionals, with Queen's opting to caucus with the Rural Caucus. The new West Hants Regional is a member until and unless the NSFM bylaws are formally changed, but has caucused with both rural and regional the last two meetings. West Hants members are discussing where they want to caucus in the future.

"This is also tied to the biggest matter before Regional which is gaining more autonomy for Halifax and Cape Breton. Not all NSFM members want a more enabling Municipal Government Act, so should HRM and CBRM both have Charters?"

Share a Regional municipal government act? What does that mean for Queens and West Hants? Buried

in the semantical argument are real questions about the best way to govern the provinces two largest municipalities. I expect we will be debating this for some time, until after the next provincial election at a minimum.

Regional hopes to meet in Sydney early next year, just because we will be able to!



Towns Caucus Chair

Brenda Chisholm-Beaton
Mayor, Town of Port Hawkesbury

As Municipal leaders, we are the closest to the everyday lives of the people we serve. These elected positions are “on lend” and entrusted to us by the citizens who live in our municipalities. We use these borrowed positions for a limited time to do our very best to both manage and grow our communities.

The past year has certainly presented many challenges and opportunities. The global pandemic has taught us to be nimble during the uncertainty of fluctuating global and regional economies, public health lock-downs, and a Provincial State of Emergency. The discovery and recovery of unmarked mass graves at former Residential school sites have amplified the urgency for Truth and Reconciliation action with First Nation communities. Spikes in housing demands have intensified housing gaps and we must reimagine our roles as municipalities so we can help to create an enabling environment for housing solutions. There are many more challenges and opportunities that will impact municipalities and their future, these are but a few.

Although we can't know what the post-Covid municipal landscape will look like, we will have to continue to pivot as best we can to adapt to the new realities facing our communities. Solutions to the result-

ing challenges will vary, as will results, since no two municipalities look nor function exactly the same. As I reflect on the decade I have spent in municipal politics, I have come to believe in a few constants despite this pending uncertainty. I've come to believe that community growth and prosperity begin with a positive mindset, a willingness to be an agent of change, and a commitment to being a long distance thinker, planner, and doer.

An advertisement for Paul Grégoire Inc. featuring a large, ornate clock tower in the foreground. The background shows a historic building and trees. The text is in French and English. At the top, it says "Retour dans le passé! Journey back in time!". Below that, it says "CARRILLON DISPONIBLE" and "CHIME OPTIONAL". In the center, there is a logo for "Windmills Since 1888" and "AERMOTOR Windmills". Below the logo, it says "MADE IN U.S.A." and "Canadian Distributor 'AERMOTOR' Windmills". At the bottom, it says "Luminaires Paul Grégoire Inc", "Tel: 450 638 3866", "Fax: 450 454 7179", and "4820, Route 132 Sainte-Catherine (Québec) J5C 1V9".

Municipal Wellness Week 2021

The Municipal Wellness Program is committed to supporting and working with Municipalities, ensuring you have the resources available to help your employees and elected officials achieve their personal health goals.

This year we extended our Municipal Wellness Day celebration into a weeklong event from May 25th – May 28th, 2021. With a theme of getting moving and staying socially connected to combat the effects of the Nova Scotia COVID lockdown and pandemic fatigue, we hosted a variety of activities and events to encourage movement, connection and bring our attention back to our own health and wellness.

It was a successful week in which we saw our highest participation rate yet:

Over 200 employees participated in the Wellness Day BINGO Challenge.

170 employees participated in the 8-week Move More Challenge.

As well, our May 6th Introduction to Mindfulness webinar was attended by 77 participants from 35 municipalities.

We want to extend our appreciation to those who participated in the Municipal Wellness Week events. Your participation in these events helps contribute to the Municipal Wellness Program's vision of a healthy workplace environment with engaged employees and elected officials.

Languishing vs. Flourishing

As the intense fear and grief felt at the beginning of the pandemic has faded, some of us have been left with a feeling of stagnation, aimlessness, and lack of joy in our lives. This feeling, referred to as languishing, is the dominant emotion felt by many. On the opposite end of the spectrum is the feeling of flourishing, a positive state of mental wellness.

Your Mental Wellness

If you're looking for additional mental health support, check out some community resources below:

Provincial Mental Health and Addictions Crisis Line: 1-888-429-8167

30 Day Mindfulness Challenge – from NSHA (Nova Scotia Health Authority) and MindWell-U

Languishing – What does it feel like?

- Emptiness, lack of emotion, feeling numb
- Apathy and indifference
- Neither feeling happy nor sad
- Expressing a lack of purpose in life
- Continuing with the motions of life
- Weariness or dissatisfaction

Flourishing – What does it feel like?

- A strong sense of purpose and meaning in life
- Optimism about the future
- The ability to bounce back from setbacks
- Feeling engaged in work and life
- Finding joy in daily life

How do we move from Languishing to Flourishing?

While many factors that influence our emotional and mental wellness may feel out of our control during the pandemic, there are small, yet impactful steps we can take to bring back a sense of joy and novelty into our lives.

Practice Gratitude

At the end of the day, make a list of 5 things you are grateful for, both big and small moments. Check out this article on how to create a Gratitude List.

www.wikihow.com/Make-a-Gratitude-List

Move Your Body

Looking for new and easy accessible workouts? Sign up for free virtual fitness sessions from LIFT, available through the Employee and Family Assistance Program. To access, visit this link.

www.workhealthlife.com/?explicitSoftLogin=true search NSFM – then find your municipality. Find the LIFT Sessions link under the My Services tab.

Practice Mindfulness

Mindfulness is a proven way to create measurable changes in the regions of the brain associated with memory, sense of self, empathy, and stress. Get started by listening to this guided mindful breathing exercise. www.anxietycanada.com/articles/mindfulness-mindful-breathing/

Remember: it's okay to not feel okay.

Give yourself permission to feel your emotions. If the languishing feeling is interfering with your life and you can't see yourself flourishing, reach out to the Employee and Family Assistance Program for support:

1-844-880-9137



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In addition to this work, we are also implementing and testing innovative technologies to see how they can improve reliability for our customers. A couple of examples include:

- **Intelligent Feeder Project** – through this pilot we installed residential batteries and a grid-sized battery at the local substation in Elmsdale to better understand how batteries can help us use renewable energy more efficiently and provide back-up power during outages. Customers who took part benefited from improved reliability with the battery in their home backing up power during major outages including during Hurricane Dorian. Lessons learned and data collected from this project will be used to support future battery storage initiatives.

Smart Grid Nova Scotia Project – we are installing batteries for those taking part in our battery storage pilot and testing of our EV Smart Chargers are underway. This will allow us to learn how they can benefit both the electricity grid and customer. We are also getting ready to open our first Community Solar Garden in Amherst which will allow all Nova Scotians to participate in renewables no matter if they own a home or rent an apartment.

Our annual maintenance programs, combined with innovative technologies, are helping us maintain, strengthen and continue to improve the essential service we provide Nova Scotians. Our customers expect and deserve safe, reliable and affordable electricity and we are committed to delivering that. We know despite our best efforts outages can still occur. When they do, our only focus is getting the lights back on for every single customer, as safely and as quickly as possible. We look forward to continuing this conversation and our work together, as we meet with municipalities across Nova Scotia.

To learn more about reliability, please visit our website at nspower.ca/reliability

Strengthening Reliability Year-Round

Electricity powers our homes and communities across Nova Scotia every day. Delivering this essential service in a safe, reliable and affordable way to our customers, is a responsibility all 1700 employees at NS Power take very seriously. It's something we are committed to year-round. We are your neighbours. We live and work in the same communities and we rely on electricity too. As we enter storm season, we'd like to highlight some of the ways we work throughout the year to ensure we are not only maintaining our electrical system, but continuously looking at innovative ways to improve and strengthen it.

One of the first steps is modernizing our grid by installing smart meters across Nova Scotia. Once upgrades are complete later this year and we start turning the technology on, customers will be able to better understand and control when and how much energy they use. It will also allow us to respond faster when customers lose power and get their power back on sooner.

Accountability is important to all of us. Five years ago, we worked with the regulator, the Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board to establish Performance Standards. These standards keep us accountable to you, our customers. Last year we met the overall provincial system reliability targets. Results show over the last five years the average length of power outages has improved by 7 percent and the average frequency has improved by 16 percent. To put that in perspective, data shows last year on average, Nova Scotia customers experienced 2.7 outages and 6.6 hours without power. This includes outages during large weather events. It means on average customers had their power on 99.92 percent of the time. This does not diminish the challenges we know certain communities face. There are specific areas that experience more outages, that last longer and we are committed to improving that.

We are aggressively investing in our power system to improve reliability. With nearly 32,000 kilometres of power lines that run through forest, fields and rock, reaching every corner of the province, we need to be proactive and strategic as well as ready to respond to the unexpected. Our electrical grid is a complex system, one that is increasingly exposed to severe weather that continues to get more severe with time. High winds which exceed 80km an hour can weaken trees and stress wire connections over time. In 2019 we experienced more than

150 hours where winds exceeded 80km an hour. That's compared to just over 20 hours in 2009.

The decisions we make on how, where and when we invest are guided by outage statistics, proactively monitoring equipment and data. There are large scale reliability projects identified for each region and equipment replacement and repairs are also identified. Each year we invest approximately \$100 million in new equipment, maintenance and tree trimming.

Some of the reliability work we have been investing in this year includes:

- **Approximately \$20 million for tree trimming** along roughly 1000 kilometres of transmission and distribution. Some of that work includes clearing 17km of line in Waterloo, Lunenburg County; 61km from Orangedale to Mabou in Inverness County and 67km in Guysborough County (Sheet Harbour, Malay Falls, Highway 7, Naugler Settlement and New Chester). This work is critical as tree contacts are the single largest cause of power outages during weather events. We prioritize work based on areas that experience a larger number of outages caused by trees and the proximity of trees and branches to our power lines. We also appreciate the private landowners who work with us, allowing us to maintain the vegetation near our power lines.
- **About 15-20 multi-million-dollar large scale reliability projects** including:
- installing new protective devices in the Upper Musquodoboit area to improve reliability;
- upgrading existing lines and replacing poles in Ingonish along the Cabot Trail in the Cape Breton Highlands National Park;
- power line rebuilds along the Fundy Shore in River Hebert which will see the replacement of poles, wires transformers while improving access for future maintenance and faster response times.

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POWERING OUR COMMUNITIES. EVERY DAY.

We work throughout the year to strengthen our electrical system, and keep you connected.

Learn how we're using new technology and proactive planning to deliver safe and reliable electricity, every day.

nspower.ca/reliability





Essential to the Economy

Serving exporters, importers, retailers, farmers and manufacturers, CN's transportation services are integral to modern life, touching the lives of millions of Canadians every day.

\$250B

WORTH OF GOODS
TRANSPORTED

25%

OF WHAT WE TRANSPORT
IS EXPORTED

24,000

RAILROADERS

\$3B

CAPITAL INVESTMENTS
(2021)

