

INT'L HUMAN RIGHTS DAY—DEC. 10TH

Human rights are rights inherent to all human beings, whatever our nationality, place of residence, sex, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, language, or any other status. We are all equally entitled to our human rights without discrimination. These rights are all interrelated, interdependent and indivisible. Become informed! Learn what your human rights are, as well as your responsibilities. Many people can solve their own human rights disputes. Often all it takes to solve a problem is the right information, support and the courage to speak out. To help prevent and address Sexual Harassment in the workplace, the NS Human Rights Commission (NSHRC) has created a "Safe Places Make Great Workplaces" Campaign www.safespacesns.ca or on Twitter #SafespacesNS They have free Online Resources for employers & employees alike. Also yearly the NSHRC announces recipients of its Human Rights Awards. For more information, e-mail: HRCinquiries@novascotia.ca or call 902-424-2637 or visit their website: <https://humanrights.novascotia.ca/>

2019 VOLUNTEER AWARD NOMINEES

Each year HRM recognizes the extraordinary contributions of individuals and groups who volunteer their time and skills to provide services and programs in our communities. Nominations are now being accepted in three categories: adult, youth (ages 13-19) and community group. Successful nominees will be notified in March 2019. An awards ceremony will coincide with, and is in celebration of, National Volunteer Week in April 2019. The deadline for nominations for the 2019 awards is Monday, December 17th. To find out more information about the awards, nomination criteria and to nominate someone in your community, go to: www.halifax.ca/about-halifax/volunteering/volunteer-awards-halifax. Submit nominations by fax 902-490-4535 or by regular post to PO Box 1749, Halifax, NS B3J 3A5. If you have questions, contact Shauna Shirley by telephone: at 902-869-4202 or 902-456-9683 or send a message to hrmvolunteerservices@halifax.ca.

HRM & NS PROPERTY TAX PROGRAMS

HRM has a variety of programs to aid homeowners with their property tax obligations. There are various options for payment plans, property tax rebates, or deferral of property taxes (payment is put off to a later date). A homeowner with a LIC—local improvement charge can also apply for a deferral of these charges. It is important that you know what choices exist. Please refer to this guide: www.halifax.ca/sites/default/files/documents/home-property/property-taxes/TaxExemp_Newsletter_2018_fileforPrintCentre%20%281%29.pdf.

Some of these programs are available to homeowners with a combined household income of \$33,000 or less a year. Deadline to apply is December 31st. The link for an application form to this HRM program is: www.halifax.ca/sites/default/files/documents/home-property/property-taxes/TaxExemp_Form_Fillable_2018.pdf.

[ca/sites/default/files/documents/home-property/property-taxes/TaxExemp_Form_Fillable_2018.pdf](http://www.halifax.ca/sites/default/files/documents/home-property/property-taxes/TaxExemp_Form_Fillable_2018.pdf).

Also seniors should be aware of the NS Provincial Property Tax Rebate for Seniors Program. This program is for those seniors who have been receiving the Guaranteed Income Supplement in January of the application year. Criteria requires you to have paid your property taxes from the prior year in full. A receipt from HRM showing property taxes are paid in full is required. Applicants to this program can receive a rebate on half of their taxes paid to a maximum of \$800. More details about this provincial program can be found by calling (902)424-5200 or 211 or toll-free at 1-800-670-4357 <https://novascotia.ca/sns/access/individuals/consumer-awareness/property-tax-rebate-for-seniors.asp>. Deadline to apply is also December 31st. Application form can be downloaded from: <https://novascotia.ca/sns/pdf/consumer-rebate-seniors-application-2018.pdf>.

RESULTS OF HRM CITIZENS SURVEY

In alignment with HRM Council's Priority Outcomes of Public Engagement and Fiscal Responsibility, and to support citizen-centred service delivery, the 2018 Citizen Survey was conducted during August and September 2018. The findings help identify municipal priorities and inform future decisions. The HRM Citizen Survey acts as a gauge of the satisfaction of residents and taxpayers with the services provided by their municipal government, and to help identify the mix of programs and services to best meet their expectations. An Invitation Survey was mailed to 12,000 randomly selected households across the municipality. Approximately 500 were returned as undeliverable, meaning that about 11,500 households received the invitation to participate. A total of 1,097 invitation surveys were completed, which results in a response rate of 9.5%. Among those completed surveys, 980 (89%) were completed online, 48 were completed by telephone (4%), and 69 were completed by mail (6%). The margin of error for this study is of $\pm 2.9\%$ (19 times out of 20 or at the 95% confidence level). In 2014, 592 invitation-based surveys were completed. Afterwards, an open survey, (identical to the invitation survey) was hosted by PRA Inc. In total, 1,567 respondents completed the open survey in whole or in part (compared to 1,087 in 2014). The results of the open survey cannot be considered as scientifically valid due to a lack of control over the sample and the possibility of residents completing multiple copies of the survey and impacting results, however results were similar to the invitation responses, and add value in understanding residents' perception of municipal service delivery. Results from both surveys are available at www.halifax.ca/citizensurvey. The summary report to HRM Council can be found at: www.halifax.ca/sites/default/files/documents/city-hall/regional-council/181113rc131.pdf. The survey contained approximately 200 unique components across 67 questions, ranging in topics

from quality of life, value for taxes, customer service satisfaction, satisfaction with and funding for services, community priorities, public safety, recreation and leisure, parks, public libraries, transportation, and key issues of focus for municipal leaders. Thanks to those who have participated in the process.

HRM COMMUNITY MUSEUM GRANTS

Back on June 5th, HRM Council approved Administrative Order 2018-010-ADM Respecting Interim Grants to Community Museums. The program includes annual operating and project-specific grants to eligible non-profit and charitable organizations. The focus of this funding is on recurring core museum expenditures that if unpaid could jeopardize daily operations with consideration for smaller museums operated by volunteers. On Nov. 13th, HRM Council approved the following annual operating grants for the next three years:

Acadia House Museum, Chezzetcook—\$4,000
NS Sports Hall of Fame, Halifax—\$6,000
S.S Atlantic Park, Terence Bay—\$7,000
Musquodoboit Harbour Railway Museum—\$7,000
Fultz House Museum, Lower Sackville—\$8,000
Atlantic Canada Aviation Museum, Goffs—\$8,000
Africville Heritage Museum, Halifax—\$8,000
Army Museum Halifax Citadel Hill—\$12,000
Cole Harbour Heritage Farm Museum—\$15,000
Memory Lane Heritage Village, Lake Charlotte—\$20,000.
For Special Project funding, the Lake Charlotte Heritage Society was granted \$5,000 towards the purchase of specialized equipment to enhance archival access and interpretive programming. For more information on this municipal museum program, go to: www.halifax.ca/sites/default/files/documents/city-hall/regional-council/181113rc1432.pdf.

GOODWILL & PEACE ON EARTH

My wife Susan and I want to wish everyone the very best of this Holiday Season. During this joyful time of year there are many types of spiritual and cultural celebrations: Merry Christmas, Joyeux Noel, Season's Greetings, Happy Hanukkah, Al Hijra, and Kwanza. The message for Peace on Earth and Goodwill to All is universal. Have yourself a blessed time with your families, friends and neighbours. May we all strive for peace, tranquillity and harmony in our daily lives. Remember those who may be less fortunate or are experiencing hardship and despair. Please give to your local food bank, or better yet; give the gift of life and donate blood. May all of us be blessed with good health and happiness throughout the New Year ahead.



Councillor David Hendsbee
Councillor—Councillor municipal—Comhairlaiche—Wunaqapeme'
District 2: Preston—Chezzetcook—Eastern Shore

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