

COUNCILLOR PAUL RUSSELL

LOWER SACKVILLE DISTRICT 15 NEWSLETTER



HALIFAX REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY

SUMMER 2020



GREETINGS FRIENDS AND NEIGHBOURS

2020 started well for HRM. Many projects were moving forward, and our financial house was in order. Regional Council was working towards a budget where we were able to accomplish everything we wanted

and without having to borrow, use our reserves, or raise the tax rate. With the budget scheduled to be ratified at Regional Council on March 24, it was the easiest budget I had ever worked on.

As COVID-19 spread around the world we knew it would arrive on our shores by way of travel just as March Break was beginning. I wrote the Minister of Education requesting consideration of a requirement that those in the school system returning from March Break self-isolate for 14 days. On Friday, March 13, City Hall closed due to COVID-19 and the budget switched from being the easiest budget that I have ever worked on to the hardest.

Through the next few months we were in a state of emergency, working to ensure that the public, our staff and our facilities were safe. It was a daily challenge to keep HRM moving forward, responding to rapidly changing information and working on a revised budget. It was especially challenging since so many businesses had temporarily (or permanently) closed and many people were working from home or laid off.

2020 started as a good year and I hope it will return to be a good year. We've seen progress on many things, including crosswalks on Glendale, a new hotel, heavy traffic and pedestrian issues. Many housing matters are being addressed as well as concerns about First Lake.

There is a great deal happening in our community but there is much more to be done. I look forward to working with you and I am available to assist with any municipal issues you may have.

Sincerely,

Paul

HOW CAN WE HELP?

CALL CENTRE

Call 311 toll-free from anywhere throughout HRM and our friendly and knowledgeable agents can provide you with a wide variety of municipal information and services in over 150 languages using a telephone interpretation service. Hours of operation: 8:00am to 8:00pm Monday to Friday, 9:00am to 5:30pm on week-ends. Closed on Christmas Day and New Year's Day.

CALL MY OFFICE

For assistance with municipal issues, please contact my Constituency Coordinator, Linda Johnson by email at johnsol@halifax.ca or by calling 902.490.4086.

CONTACT ME

Cell: 902.240.0441

Fax: 902.490.4122

Email: Paul.Russell@halifax.ca

STAY CONNECTED

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/PaulRussellCPC>

Twitter: @SackvillePaul

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STAY INFORMED

Visit my web page for up-to-date information on HRM related issues at halifax.ca/District15

HALIFAX



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BUDGET

On June 9 Regional Council approved \$787-million in total municipal expenditures, provincial mandatory contributions of \$168-million and a capital plan of \$150-million as part of the 2020/21 municipal budget.

Given the impacts of COVID-19 on the municipality, all business units presented revised budget plans than those presented earlier in the year.

Council approved the residential tax rate to remain unchanged from 2020/21, acknowledging that the average residential tax bill will increase due to growth in property assessment. The average single-family home tax bill will increase by \$27, or 1.4 per cent in 2020/21 to \$2,003. The overall average commercial tax bill will also increase by 1.4 per cent. Capital debt will remain stable and should be as low as \$235.7-million in 2020/21.

Key programs and capital projects include:
Woodside Ferry Terminal Upgrades \$4.5-million
Ragged Lake Transit Expansion \$5-million
Access-A-Bus Replacement \$1.17-million
Active transportation projects \$7.5-million
HalifACT 2050 -Energy Efficiency \$2-million
Bridge and street improvements \$33.7-million
Windsor Street Exchange \$1.8-million
Downtown Dartmouth Infrastructure Renewal \$2-million
Halifax Common Upgrades \$600,000
Keshen Goodman Library \$2-million
Streetscaping \$400,000

One local change is that the customer service centre in Acadia School (the Sackville Library) has permanently closed.

PROPERTY TAX

The following tax rates were approved by Regional Council on June 9th: the general rates of taxation on residential and resource property be set at

- (i) \$0.670 for the urban area
- (ii) \$0.637 for the suburban area; and
- (iii) \$0.637 for the rural area per \$100 of taxable assessment;
- d) the general rates of taxation on commercial property be set at
- (i) \$3.000 for the urban area;
- (ii) \$3.000 for the suburban area; and
- (iii) \$2.658 for the rural area per \$100 of taxable assessment;

If you need assistance with property tax payments, please call 311 or email hrrmcollections@halifax.ca and request to speak with a tax analyst to discuss setting up a payment arrangement to repay the amount owing over a period of time (typically within 24 months). This option is available to commercial and residential customers.

For more detailed information on the 2020-21 municipal budget visit <http://www.halifax.ca/budget>

2020/21 CAPITAL WORK

Street Recapitalization

Coles Rd – Dickey to Chapais
Downsview Dr – Old Sackville to Canadian Tire
Polara Crt – Polara to Polara
Polara Dr – Quinn to Cavalier
Spinner Cres – Stokil to Saratoga

Planer Patching

Glendale Dr – Cobequid to McGee
Riverside Dr – Sackville to Glendale

Crack Sealing

Glendale Dr – Smokey to Rankin
Lennox Dr – Riverside to Lynnville
Riverside Dr – Civic 1530 to Lennox
Rogers Dr – Rankin to Smokey
Sackville Dr – Skyridge to Florence

Active Transportation

Sackville Greenway Accessible Trailhead
Sackville/Bedford Greenway Alignment
Sackville Lakes Park – Cobequid Connector Design (HRTA)

Walkways

Smokey Dr to Ecole Grand Portage (2019 Carryover)
Spinner Cres to Stokil Dr

Guardrail

Cobequid Road

GLENDALE CROSSWALKS

The two crosswalks, on Glendale Drive, are coming along well and may be complete by the time you read this. These have been in the works for a number of years and it took one final push to get them to happen.

MY SACKVILLE PRIORITIES

Sidewalks and Crosswalks

- Sidewalk on Stokil Drive between the two schools
- Sidewalk along all Old Beaver Bank Road
- Paving Sucker Brook, installing an Active Transportation sidewalk from there, along Cobequid Road, to First Lake Drive
- Crosswalk across Beaver Bank Road by Stokil

Traffic Priorities

- Advance left turn lane, from Stokil to Beaver Bank Road (now approved for future implementation)
- Identifying and calming traffic on multiple streets
- Making Exit 2 by the Windsor Highway safe for pedestrians
- Improving all other intersections along the Beaver Bank Road, up to Millwood/Stokil

Community Improvements

- Improving the condition of First Lake, especially the beach, to reflect the valuable and beautiful lake that it is
- Improving the housing situation in Sackville and across HRM. Low vacancy rates are creating challenges for anyone seeking housing and are a risk to those without a roof over their heads
- Ensuring Sackville remains a strong and vibrant community, where we support and take care of each other

HRM Wide

- Ensuring that HRM is fiscally strong and that taxes are only raised in conjunction with improvements in service or infrastructure
- Ensuring that our society is strong, which includes
 - taking care of those that need extra help
 - recognizing the equal value of everyone, regardless of age, race, religion, gender or ability



SPEED ON NEIGHBOURHOOD STREETS



Since becoming Councillor the main concern that I have heard repeatedly is speeding on residential streets. Nearly everyone reported that the speed on their street was extraordinarily fast. In February I obtained a portable speed radar, from the RCMP, that had been used by Citizens on Patrol. It records the speed and times of cars that approach it. It also reminds drivers how fast they are going. I have set up the speed radar on streets across Lower Sackville to record data. This data confirms trouble spots that require extra enforcement or traffic calming measures. In most cases it has shown that speed is an issue. In a few cases the data has shown that there is a perception of speeding, but that the actual incidents of speeding are far lower. If you would like the portable radar set up on your street, please let me know.

HRM VOLUNTEER AWARDS

Each year the municipality recognizes volunteers who are nominated by community groups and organizations for their significant contributions to our community. While the celebration must be postponed this year, I would like to recognize the volunteers from Lower Sackville who were selected to receive a 2020 Volunteer Award.

Congratulations to Tom Leblanc, Rainie Murphy and Youth Volunteer Award winner Alex Stapleton. Thank you for your service to our community.

SUMMER OUTDOOR RECREATION

The REC Van visits parks and greenspaces throughout the municipality in July and August providing free recreational sports and activities including arts and crafts, baseball, soccer, washer toss, giant checkers, music and more to children, youth, families and seniors. The REC Van will be visiting the **Sackville Splash Pad on Thursday, August 20 from 9:15 to 11:15 am.** Drop by and check it out!

SQUARE ROOTS PRODUCE DELIVERY

Square Roots is a social enterprise that purchases cosmetically imperfect food that would normally be thrown out and distributes it to families in need. The program is now available in Sackville. The deliveries occur every two weeks on a Saturday. For more information visit the SquareRootsSackville Facebook page or email squarerootssackville@gmail.com.

GRADUATION AND PATRIOT DAYS 2020



For 20 years graduation day has been my favourite day of the year. Young people walk across the stage having accomplished their first big milestone. I've also enjoyed Sackville's annual Patriot Days and Canada Day celebrations. From 2011 through 2019 I managed every parade and was disappointed that, due to Covid-19 restrictions, this year's festivities were unable to take place. To recognize the achievements of our graduates I was among several local politicians putting up signs across the community celebrating their success. The Sackville Community Development Association stepped up and organized a Graduation & Patriot Days 2020 Pop-Up Drive-In Theatre. This four-night event was held in the Sackville Arena parking lot. The show started with a music video, a video congratulating the graduates and talking about Patriot Days, and finally a different feature film each evening. We were thrilled to bring this to our community. 2020 was not a traditional year for either our graduates or Patriot Days events but we made it work and we hope that everyone had a great time.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

During the by-election last year, and in my last newsletter, I advertised a town hall and open house. These were to ensure that I know what your priorities are and how you would like me to represent you at City Hall. Then COVID hit so we couldn't (and still can't) get together in person. But we can get together, virtually, and have the same discussions. Over the past couple of months, I have sent out an e-newsletter every two weeks. The newsletter contains information about Regional Council meetings and the latest news on what's happening in Lower Sackville and across HRM. You'll have a clear opportunity to read my views on a whole host of issues. It also contains information about an online community meeting that I will hold on Sunday or Monday, following the publication of Regional Council's agenda the previous Friday. This is an opportunity, every two weeks, to get together online and talk about issues coming to Council or any municipal concerns you may have. We can connect even if we can't get together.

To sign up for the newsletter, please send me an e-mail or please visit my web site at paulrussell.ca.



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COUNCILLOR PAUL RUSSELL
 DISTRICT 15
 Lower Sackville
 902-240-0441
paul.russell@halifax.ca

Community Contact Information	
211	Community, Social, and Government Services Inquiries
311	Municipal issues (speeding, by-law enforcement, snow clearing, etc)
411	Directory Assistance
511	Provincial road conditions
611	Phone repair service
711	Message relay service for individuals who are hearing and/or speech impaired
811	Call a Nurse, 24 hours a day, including for COVID-19 assessment
911	Emergency number for police, fire, ambulance

Councillors Office	902-490-4050
Linda Johnson, Constituency Coordinator	902-490-4086
Mayor's Office	902-490-4010
MLA Steve Craig	902-864-6271
MP Darrell Samson	902-861-2311
RCMP, Sackville Detachment	902-244-7208
Non-Emergency for Police	902-490-5020
Fire	902-490-5530

Halifax Water	902-420-9287
Halifax Water Dispute Resolution Officer	902-225-0795
Sackville Sports Stadium	902-869-4141
Sackville Library	902-865-8653
Kids Help Phone	1-800-668-6868
Mental Health Mobile Health Crisis Team	1-888-429-8167
Victims of Human Trafficking Help Line	1-833-900-1010
IWK Children's Hospital	1-902-470-8888
NS Department of Community Services	1-877-424-1177
Poison Control	1-800-565-8161
National Suicide Prevention Support Line	1-833-456-4566
Red Cross Home Equipment Loan Program	902-423-3680
Nova Scotia Legal Aid	902-420-7921
Access Nova Scotia	902-424-5200
Halifax Central Library	902-490-5700
NS Public Health Services	902-481-5800
NS Occupational Health & Safety	1-800-952-2687
Nova Scotia Power	902-428-6230
NS Power Outage Line	1-877-428-6004
NS Property Valuation Services Corporation	1-800-380-7775