

COUNCILLOR PAUL RUSSELL

LOWER SACKVILLE DISTRICT 15 NEWSLETTER



HALIFAX REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY

FALL 2021



GREETINGS, FRIENDS AND NEIGHBOURS

COVID has changed our way of life completely. Last September, as school returned, I thought things would return to normal. I am hoping for the same thing again this year.

As I write this I don't know when we will be able to get together, but I hope it will be soon. COVID has affected all of us, and it has been very hard. Since COVID arrived, many of us have needed help. Please remember that "It's OK to not be OK", and please ask for help if you need it. The back page has places that you can call if you need help.

Since being elected I've been doing what I can to help move Sackville forward. I've worked on hundreds of individual concerns, many community concerns, and some big projects to improve our little corner of the world.

This year we saw progress on many projects including The Den (the multi-service youth centre in the basement of the library) and Exit 2 (where many people walk across the highway). I've also brought water testing back to First Lake and have started the process for a refresh of the Sackville Sports Stadium.

There are larger municipal issues, like transit concerns and the state of our roads. We need to make sure our systems work to support us, and balance that with keeping taxes affordable.

We have been working on societal concerns, like housing and food security. We have new apartment buildings coming, and we have also worked with those who have no place to go. I also fully support Freedom Kitchen and Square Roots, and the Sackville Area Warming Centre.

I'm happy to live in such a great community, and I also recognize that some areas could be improved. I look forward to talking with you, getting together when possible, and moving our community forward.

Sincerely, *Paul*

HOW CAN WE HELP?

311 - HRM CUSTOMER SERVICE

Call 311 toll-free from anywhere in 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 weekends. Closed on Christmas Day and New Year's Day.

CALL MY OFFICE

For assistance with municipal issues, please contact my Constituency Coordinator, Quentin Hill by email at hillq@halifax.ca or by calling 902.490.1463.

CONTACT ME

Cell: 902.240.0441

Fax: 902.490.4122

Email: Paul.Russell@halifax.ca

STAY CONNECTED

Facebook: www.facebook.com/SackvillePaul

Twitter: @SackvillePaul

The information or opinions on these sites are not necessarily endorsed by the Halifax Regional Municipality

STAY INFORMED

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

HALIFAX



DISTRICT 15 NEWSLETTER

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311 – HRM CUSTOMER SERVICE

311 is the HRM customer service line. You call 311 or you can visit halifax.ca/311.

I recommend using e-mail to contact 311. Please visit halifax.ca/311 and click on the "email" link. This will open a new message, fill in the basic information, and you can fill in the details. You will need your name and contact information, the location of the concern, and a description of it. You can also add pictures or other attachments, which is one of the real benefits.

Finally, if you CC me (paul.russell@halifax.ca), then I'll also be aware of your concern and will be able to help.

CONSTRUCTION IN SACKVILLE

We've seen a lot of construction in Lower Sackville. There are projects in progress that will bring us 12 new or replacement apartment buildings.

We now allow secondary and backyard suites across HRM, and many are building "in-law" suites. These will help with the housing crisis, but there is much more to do.

We've had a lot of roadwork going on this year:

- Coles Road is being rebuilt from the water lines up
- Howland Drive and Howland Court are also being rebuilt
- Stokil Drive is being partially repaved, and is getting a new set of lights at Beaver Bank Road (with an advance left turn on to Beaver Bank Road)
- Speed humps are being installed on Old Beaver Bank Road and Old Sackville Road
- Planer patching is planned for sections of Glendale Drive, Sackville Drive, and Cobequid Road
- An asphalt overlay is planned for Chapais Drive, Sackville Cross Road, and another section of Sackville Drive

For active transportation

- We have been building the new path along First Lake by Chandler and Johnston
- The Great Oak Trail (Sackville Lakes Park) is being started
- Section A of the Sackville Greenway Trail is moving forward

Hopefully in next budget season*

- Resurface Cobequid Road from Sucker Brook to First Lake
- Rebuild Phoenix Crescent
- A replacement washroom / store room / spectator building on Met Field

What I'm working towards

- An advance left turn off Riverside on to Glendale
- Highway 101, Exit 2, safe pedestrian infrastructure
- Sidewalks along Cobequid, Old Beaver Bank Road, and Stokil (between the schools)

(What I'm working towards - continued from last page).

- Paving Sucker Brook Road
- A sidewalk along Riverside, to narrow it and slow cars down
- A crosswalk or set of lights on Beaver Bank at Boxwood

*Until the 2022/23 budget is finalized we can't say for sure what will be in it.

MY WEB SITE

My web site, www.paulrussell.ca, can be a helpful resource with:

- Recent and relevant blog posts. I keep these updated with current information.
- Sign up for my e-newsletter mailing list. I typically send out an e-newsletter a few days before each Council meeting with updates from around Sackville and HRM and details about upcoming meetings.
- My calendar. Please check my calendar for any available times and let me know when you'd like to get together.
- My Facebook and Twitter feeds.

The web site menu also has shortcuts to a number of very helpful pages, including important contact info, and:

- HRM Department info, including live maps
- Commissioner of Oaths information
- District Activity and Capital Request information and form

KEEPING YOU (AND ME) INFORMED

50 years ago, most people had a newspaper going to their house and or would watch the 6 o'clock news. If the county wanted to get a message out they sent it to the paper and to both TV stations.

Things have changed and it has become a lot harder to make sure that we get the word out to everyone. Today most people don't get the newspaper, and many don't watch TV. We have been reaching out as much as possible, and I always look to make sure we reach you effectively. Sending out a message is easy, but if you never receive it then it doesn't do much good. Here are some of the ways that we reach out:

- HRM posts to Facebook and Twitter as @hfxgov (and others)
- HRM publishes community announcements in The Herald
- HRM sends direct mail to houses affected by nearby development or planning concerns
- Halifax Water posts to Facebook and Twitter, and regularly issues targeted public service announcements about specific projects
- I post to Facebook and Twitter as @SackvillePaul regularly
- I regularly send out an e-newsletter to my mailing list (you can sign up for it on my web site)
- Twice a year (as budget permits) I send out a paper newsletter to every home in Lower Sackville
- I monitor, but don't often post to, other community web sites like nextdoor.com. *Continued on next page.*



KEEPING YOU (AND ME) INFORMED

Continued from last page.

If there is another way that HRM or that I could reach you then please let me know. If you have a question or concern, related to the municipality or how to make Sackville an even better place to live, then please contact me:

- By e-mail (most preferred, especially since it retains the conversation)
- By phone
- In person at a coffee shop or a community event, or anywhere else
- Social media (I try to keep up, but may miss your message)

FIRST LAKE WATER QUALITY

First Lake is one of the gems of Lower Sackville. For years the Kinsmen Beach has had a high e.coli count which led to it being closed for most of the summer. It got so bad that HRM stopped supervising the beach and then stopped testing the water. Sackawa continued testing the lake and it came back clear. This showed that the e.coli problem may be localized.

I am working with the Friends of First Lake - Water Stewardship Committee. We have started testing the lake again. I provided funding, and have committed funds every year as long as I am the Councillor.

This year the testing is being done in five locations. Testing will determine the e.coli count and will tell us how much of a problem there is, but it won't tell us what the problem is.

This year, Council agreed to spend \$150K to perform an analysis of the e.coli so that we could look at the biological markers and determine the source. It could be human, pet, waterfowl, or something else. The results of that test will tell us what the problem is, and we can then work to fix it.

Sackville residents not being able to use Kinsmen Beach is one of the reasons that I wanted to be the Councillor. I'm moving forward with that in a significant way.

HOUSING

Housing security affects all of us. The housing crisis is too big and too complex to describe in this newsletter. I've written a blog post about it at <http://www.paulrussell.ca/housing> that looks at it from a lot of different perspectives, including what happened on August 18th. Please have a look.

SACKVILLE SPORTS STADIUM

The Lake District Recreation Association (LDRA) built the Sackville Sports Stadium in 1990. Since then, in 2000, it received one addition. Our community has grown, and it's time for the Sackville Sports Stadium to grow with it.

Continued on next page.

SACKVILLE SPORTS STADIUM

Continued from last page.

I have asked for a staff report for a refresh of the Sackville Sports Stadium. This would look at:

- Accessibility, structural, and design challenges in and around the building
- Emergency shelter space and support systems
- A new indoor track / court / gymnasium / field space
- A new water or pool feature and
- Programming opportunities on First Lake

HRM staff has had a chance to consider this and estimate that a staff report will be ready in the next year or two.

HALIFAX TRANSIT

Transit already has a lot of good things happening but there are also things that can be improved. We need to have a transit system that people can rely on. It has to go to the right places, be paid the right way, you have to be able to get on the bus or the ferry, and it has to be on time.

On Time

"On Time" means that a bus will arrive at a stop between one minute early and three minutes late. When you go to work or to school then that becomes very important, especially if the next bus isn't for 30 or 60 minutes. On my web site, under the HRM Information menu, I have a link to the 2020/21 Q4 Halifax Transit performance report. This report talks about on-time performance starting on page 29. The industry target is 85-90% (according to page 29 of the PDF) and, for this report, we are at 89%. That looks good. When we look at the individual routes, in the pages that follow, we'll see that many of the routes fall below that in 2020/21 (in COVID) and were worse in 2019/20 (non-COVID).

We have a number of things that could improve this, like dedicated bus lanes and buses being able to get through a set of lights before other traffic. We need to do more, and we are working on that.

Bus Payment Types

We have talked a lot about how to pay for the bus and ferry. HRM is looking at a new system where riders will be able to pay with a smartphone app or a debit/credit card. These are great, and I look forward to them.

There was also a discussion about transit going cashless. As soon as I heard about this I spoke against it, and I will continue to speak against transit going cashless at every opportunity. We need to have a transit system that is accessible by all. Many don't have cars, or cell phones, or data plans, or credit cards. Some don't have homes and they live on the money that they get on a day-to-day basis. The bus is their way to get to work or to school or to the grocery store or the doctor to anywhere else that they need to get to. We can't limit this. I will continue to ensure that our transit system is, first and foremost, reliable and accessible.



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

211	Community, Social, and Government Services Inquiries
311	Municipal issues (speeding, by-law enforcement, snow clearing, grass cutting, 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
Paul Russell, District 15 Councillor	902-240-0441
Quentin Hill, Constituency Coordinator	902-490-1463
Mayor's Office	902-490-4010
MLA Steve Craig	902-864-6271
MP Darrell Samson	902-861-2311
RCMP, Sackville Detachment	902-244-7208
Police, Non-Emergency	902-490-5020
Fire	902-490-5530

COMMUNITY CONTACT INFORMATION

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