

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS WEEK

2025 Emergency Preparedness (EP) Week will be from May 4th - 10th. Everyone should be prepared and able to take care of themselves for a 72-hour period from any potential harm caused by a significant weather event or incident. Our district is very fortunate to have three Joint Emergency Management (JEM) Teams: Preston, Eastern Shore JEM (Cole Harbour to Ship Harbour) and Sheet Harbour JEM (East Ship Harbour to Ecum Secum). All of our JEM Teams are looking for volunteers. For more details about them please go to: www.halifax.ca/fire-police/fire/emergency-management/volunteer-during-emergency. The annual parade of EP Partners at the 'JEM Jamboree' will be on Saturday May 3rd from 10AM-1PM at the Porters Lake Atlantic Superstore parking lot. Here are a few EP websites:

www.getprepared.gc.ca

www.publicsafety.gc.ca

<http://novascotia.ca/dma/emo>

or on X @nsemo

www.halifax.ca/fire-police/fire/emergency-management/emergency-preparedness-checklists

REGONIZED LOCAL VOLUNTEERS

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. This year so many nominations were received by the municipality, HRM had to limit the list to 100 names. Here is the complete list of the local honourees from our district for 2025. These nine individuals were honoured at the Annual Volunteer Recognition Reception on Wednesday, April 30th in Burnside.

Beverly Smith – Sheet Harbour
Rod & Pam Lewis - Porters Lake
Courtney MacKinnon (Youth) – Porters Lake
Sharon Dykman – Mineville / Lake Echo
John Macfie – Lake Echo
Sandra Conrad - Lawrencetown
Florence Kimball – Lawrencetown
Jessica Warner - Lawrencetown

Congratulations & Many thanks to You All!

HRM SENIORS RECREATION SURVEY

HRM Parks & Recreation is in the process of developing a Seniors Recreation Services plan. They are inviting residents to provide feedback on recreation programming for seniors 60 years and older. This project is aimed at shaping the municipality's recreation programs and services for seniors over the next five years. Seniors' groups and individuals will be actively involved in creating this plan – and a Seniors' Recreation Advisory Group has been established to provide leadership and support to staff during the planning process. Residents are encouraged to complete the survey or attend one of the upcoming public engagement sessions:

- **Saturday, May 17th** 11 AM - 2 PM – Lake Echo Community Centre
- **Thursday, May 29th** 11:30 AM - 1:30 PM – Musquodoboit Harbour Rec Office / Library
- **Monday, June 2nd** 11 AM - 2 PM – Sheet Harbour Lion's Centre

The survey will remain open until Wednesday, June 4th www.halifax.ca/parks-recreation/programs-activities/seniors-recreation-services-plan

By completing the survey, you can be entered in a contest to win: Grand Prize: 1 of 2 \$100 grocery store gift cards and other prizes: 1 of 20 \$10 Tim Hortons gift cards. The draw will be on June 26th.

NEW SECOND UNIT INCENTIVE PROGRAM

HRM has introduced a new program to help property owners create more housing options across the region through non-repayable funding. The Second Unit Incentive Program offers financial grants to help offset costs associated with building new second units. Eligible residents can receive up to \$12,000 to help reduce building expenses related to water and wastewater. This program is part of the municipality's commitment with the assistance from the Federal Housing Accelerator Fund to increasing housing availability and supporting sustainable community development. The program is available to owner-occupants of a one-unit dwelling who are up-to-date on property tax payments, where land use by-laws allow. A building permit is also needed to apply. Applications will be open until June 1st, 2026 or until funding is fully allocated. More information on how to apply can be found at this link: www.halifax.ca/about-halifax/regional-community-planning/housing-accelerator-fund/second-unit-incentive

ESGSAR 50th ANNIVERSARY

Eastern Shore Ground Search & Rescue (ESGSAR) is a community-based organization made up completely of volunteers who believe in and share the common goals of serving their community and saving lives. Their purpose is to find and rescue lost person(s). ESGSAR's territory covers from Porter's Lake to Mooseland and up Meagher's Grant Road (Hwy #357) to the Crawford's Bridge that crosses over the Musquodoboit River. This team can also assist other GSAR teams outside their area when requested. ESGSAR base is at 5688 Hwy #7 Head of Chezzetcook where they have classroom facilities and store their command bus, support vehicles, boats and kayaks. To find out more about them: <https://esgsar.org/>. To contact them : esgsar.sec@gmail.com. This year is their 50th anniversary – Congratulations!

HWY #357 PAVED SHOULDERS AREA RATE

The Province is planning on repaving the Meagher's Grant Road (Hwy #357) from Hwy #7 up to the Paces Lake Road. In total 6 kms. This is an extraordinary opportunity for the Musquodoboit Harbour Community to improve some of its roadside infrastructure within the village core by having Paved Shoulders up to the Bayers Mill Road (1.6 km or 1 mile). This would support the local Chamber of Commerce Community Conceptual Masterplan by identifying the village core area as a place of activity that would connect the nucleus for the community; the Library & Recreation centre, the Rink and Peace Park, the Trans Canada Trail, the two baseball fields, the shopping centre, the RCMP Detachment, the New Horizons Seniors Clubhouse, and create a safer walking and cycling loop with the Musquodoboit Trailway, Bayers Lake Road and Hwy #357. Since Hwy #7 is getting paved shoulders at no additional cost to the community, I made the decision that the same community could make a contribution towards this roadside enhancement. HRM had to inform the Province to incorporate Paved Shoulders into this section of Hwy #357 by March 28th. Therefore, in order to make a financial commitment towards this project, I proposed a local area rate be established for the community of Musquodoboit Harbour as the

initial funding mechanism. The estimated cost is \$264,000. That equates to a \$40/year for 10 years. This was approved by Regional Council at its March 25th, 2025 meeting. I will be seeking other funding sources to reduce this commitment. However, the current Federal Rural Active Transportation funding program had closed and they will not consider retroactive funding for projects already in progress before an application is received. And this is also in advance of any HRM Rural Active Transportation Plan as we still await for that staff report about its community consultation. I will be holding a Public Information Session about this initiative in the near future. Please watch the local Facebook Pages for more information about that date.

HRM 2025-26 BUDGET APPROVED

HRM has approved its 2025/26 budget. The annual municipal budget funds all costs associated with servicing the growing region – including municipal operations, Regional Council-approved priority initiatives and investments to purchase, construct and rehabilitate municipal assets. The 2025/26 includes an operating budget of \$1.33 billion and a capital budget of \$314 million. The residential tax rate remains unchanged at 0.770. Due to higher assessment increases, commercial rates have decreased in each assessment tier and tax area. And with the increase in property assessment values, the municipal portion of the residential tax bill will increase by 4.7 per cent. The average residential tax bill (including provincial contributions and mandatory education tax) will increase by 5.2 per cent – or approximately \$117. This is based on the average single-family home assessment value of \$338,500. The residential rate and commercial rates for each tier and tax area will be updated on www.halifax.ca/taxrates.

Highlights from the 2025/26 municipal budget include:

- enhancing community safety by adding 20 new firefighters;
- addressing increased community policing needs by hiring 14 additional RCMP officers
- providing greater support to youth by expanding the Youth Advocate Program;
- enhancing transit services by extending the service life of 10 buses;
- ensuring effective management and planning of significant infrastructure projects by creating the Office of Major Projects and the Office of Strategic Infrastructure & Transportation Planning;
- increasing support to not-for-profit groups by an additional \$2 million;
- strengthening the municipality's response to mental health and crisis situations by establishing a community crisis diversion team; and
- approving the Windsor Street Exchange redevelopment project, with construction commencing in 2025/26 – a key infrastructure investment valued at \$150 million.

For more information on the 2025/26 municipal budget, including all associated budget resources, visit: www.halifax.ca/budget ..



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