

HRM STRATEGIC PRIORITIES 2020–21

Back on November 12th HRM Regional Council approved its 2020–21 Strategic Priorities Plan. The Strategic Priorities Plan reflects the municipality's key areas of focus, and results, in making a difference in the lives of its residents. In June 2019, HRM Regional Council directed staff to produce a report that would help increase transparency of the business planning and budget process—while also improving clarity, reducing inefficiencies in the reporting and presentation process, and ensuring continuity of information over the duration of Council's mandate. The report consolidates the work of nine Council and Administrative Priority Areas into one document providing for an unified view of Regional Council's 2017–21 Strategic Plan. This will be extended to the development of the 2020–21 Municipal Budget and Business Plan Book. To review the 2020–21 HRM Strategic Priorities Plan, please go to this link: www.halifax.ca/sites/default/files/documents/city-hall/budget-finances/Strategic_Priorities_Plan_Report_2020-21_FINAL.pdf

A couple of the Strategic Objectives are focused on Rural Economic Development. One of the current and planned initiatives is the Musquodoboit Harbour Community Development Plan. A key focus of the HRM Rural planning groups this year will be to advance the Musquodoboit Harbour Community Conceptual Masterplan. The community and local Chamber of Commerce feels implementation of the recommendations within this plan will lead to both population growth as well as economic development in the area. Furthermore the municipality will continue to develop a rural land use management framework which considers both planning applications and policy, and acts as a window to the region on issues facing the residents and businesses of rural areas.

2020 VOLUNTEER AWARD NOMINEES

Each year HRM recognize 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 2020. An awards ceremony will coincide with and is in celebration of National Volunteer Week in April 2020. The deadline for nominations for the 2020 awards is Wednesday, December 18th. 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 or by Fax 902-490-4535 or by regular post to PO Box 1749, Halifax, NS B3J 3A5. Or contact Shauna Shirley at telephone: 902-869-4202 or 902-456-9683 or send a message to hmvvolunteerservices@halifax.ca

NS SPORTS HALL OF FAME INDUCTEE

On November 15th, Justine Colley-Legere from East Preston was inducted in the NS Sports Hall of Fame Class of 2019. Ms. Colley has the distinction of being the all-time leading scorer in the history of Canadian Interscholarship Sport (CIS) women's basketball. Her impressive play earned her two CIS National Player of the Year awards and she led the Saint Mary's University Huskies to four consecutive Atlantic University Sport (AUS) championships and CIS silver and bronze medals. She was also a two-time AUS MVP, four-time All-Canadian and five-time AUS first team All-Star, while playing more than 40 games with the Canadian national team. *Congratulations Justine!*

INT'L DAY PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

HRM is proud to celebrate the 2019 International Day of Persons with Disabilities on December 3rd, with this year's theme being "promoting the participation of persons with disabilities and their leadership". To honour the day, all are welcome to join a flag raising ceremony at 9:30 A.M. on Monday, December 2nd at the Grand Parade with reception to follow in City Hall at 1841 Argyle Street in Halifax. This event is presented in partnership between the HRM Office of Diversity and Inclusion and the NS League for Equal Opportunities. To confirm your attendance, e-mail Melissa Myers, Accessibility Advisor, at: diversity@halifax.ca. More info about this UN Day: www.un.org/en/events/disabilitiesday/

INT'L HUMAN RIGHTS DAY—DEC. 10TH

We are all equally entitled to our human rights without discrimination. Human rights are inherent to all human beings, no matter our nationality, place of residence, sex, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, language, or any other status. These rights are all interrelated, interdependent and indivisible. Learn what your human rights are, as well as your responsibilities. It has now been 71 years since the United Nations made the UN Declaration of Human Rights. Here are some global campaigns to promote our rights: www.standup4humanrights.org/en/campaigns.html

SHEET HARBOUR CAREGIVERS GROUP

Caregivers Nova Scotia is starting a new Caregiver Support Group in Sheet Harbour. This support group will meet monthly on the THIRD Tuesday from 1–3 PM beginning December 17th Meetings will be held at the Eastern Shore Memorial Hospital Boardroom #22637 Hwy # 7. The focus of this group is the caregiver. The group will provide a friendly, confidential, non-judgemental atmosphere for caregivers to find support, a place to share information, stories and to listen to others with similar experiences. Support groups are free and open to ALL caregivers, regardless of age or health condition of the care recipient. This peer support group will be facilitated by Catherine Parent, Caregiver Support Coordinator. 902-402-0452 or 1-877-488-7390. For more info: www.CaregiversNS.org

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 future 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. Some of these programs are available to homeowners with a combined household income of \$34,000 or less a year. Deadline to apply is December 31st. The HRM application form can be found at: https://www.halifax.ca/sites/default/files/documents/about-halifax/AffordableAccessApplicationForm_2.pdf

Furthermore seniors should know that there is a NS Provincial Property Tax Rebate for Seniors Program: This program is for those 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://beta.novascotia.ca/sites/default/files/documents/2-1781/property-tax-rebate-seniors-application-form-en.pdf>

GOODWILL & PEACE ON EARTH



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 of 'Peace on Earth and Goodwill to All' is universal. Have yourself a blessed time with family, friends and neighbours. May we all strive for peace, tranquility 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 we all be blessed with good health and happiness throughout the New Year ahead.



Councillor David Hendsbee
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