

ANIMAL CONTROL BYLAW AMENDED

Halifax Regional Council approved a new animal control bylaw that will simplify the administrative framework for registering a pet and includes amendments to help keep animals and the public safer. One of the biggest changes in the new bylaw (A-700 – Animals and Responsible Pet Ownership), is a restriction on the leash length for pets. Leashes can now no longer exceed three metres (10 feet). The leash also must be held securely by a person. There was previously no limit on the length of a leash. The municipality is also introducing the option of a lifetime licence for an animal with a microchip. The one-time cost is \$200, with a reduced rate of \$75 for spayed/neutered animals and a 50% discount for seniors. The option still exists to renew pet licences annually. The annual licence will now expire 12 months from the date of purchase, rather than expiring every year at the end of March and being charged at a pro-rated cost if the licence is purchased throughout the year. Registering your pet provides the peace of mind in knowing compliance officers will attempt to return lost pets to their owners before resorting to dropping the animal off at a shelter, which comes with an added cost and stress to the animal. Other changes adopted in the updated animal control bylaw include new rules for tethering, muzzles, noise, and the issue of stray livestock, including poultry. Specifically, wherever livestock is currently permitted in the municipality the owner must ensure the animals are prevented from running at large. Bylaw A-700 also gives authority to issue orders to build and/or repair a structure to contain the livestock. The following link contains the FAQs relative to the new A-700 By-law: http://www.halifax.ca/animalservices/?output=xml_no_dtd&site=NSMUN_HRM&client=NSMUN_HRM&proxystylesheet=NSMUN_HRM&q=Animal+Services.

LOCAL PLAYGROUND UPDATES

Over the past construction season, HRM was able to install new playground equipment at some of our local playgrounds: East Preston Recreation Centre, Lawrencetown Keltic Gardens Subdivision and Mineville Werner Park. The latter two sites had their playground equipment removed due to safety reasons.

NS HEATING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

The Provincial Heating Assistance Rebate Program (HARP) provides help with the cost of home heating to lower-income Nova Scotians. You qualify for this program if you pay a heating bill for oil, propane, or electricity at your current residence and meet ONE of the following criteria:

- ~ live alone with an income of \$27,000 or less;
- ~ live with others and have a combined household income of \$42,000 or less;
- ~ receive Income Assistance from the Department of Community Services, OR;
- ~ receive the Guaranteed Income Supplement from Service Canada.

Please find the HARP 2015-16 application form at: www.novascotia.ca/sns/pdf/ans-individuals-harp-application-2015.pdf
You must apply by March 31st to receive a rebate.

LITTLE SALMON RIVER – WESTPHAL

The Little Salmon River neighbourhood is officially in the Westphal community. HRM Council has accepted a Civic Boundary Report that confirms this reality and is consistent with the local Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS) for the area. Civic Signs will be erected this Spring. Canada Post will be recognizing this change effective Feb. 1st, 2016.

MOOSELAND COMMUNITY HALL

Back in October 2015 HRM Council voted and passed an amendment to its proposed Administrative Order 50 - Disposal of Surplus Municipal Properties – and removed the old Mooseland fire hall from that list. In doing so this will allow the Mooseland & Area Community Association to seek a FLA - Facility Lease Agreement - arrangement to keep this asset as a Municipality owned/Volunteer operated (MO/VO) property. This way HRM will retain capital upkeep responsibility, and the community group will oversee the daily operating aspects and seek some assistance from an HRM Community Facility Contribution Fund to aid with some of the operational burden. Now we just await a final agreement.

PROPERTY ASSESSMENT APPEALS

Property Assessment Notices will be mailed out by mid-January. There is now a 31 day official Appeal Period from the date of the mailed notice, whereby property owners can review and perhaps refute their appraisals. If you feel it is not assessed properly, then you should contact the Property Valuation Services Corporation (PVSC) and speak with an Assessment Services representative. The PVSC Assessment Office is located at Park Place Two, 238-A Brownlow Avenue, Suite 200, Dartmouth, NS, B3B 2B4. Telephone: 902-720-7872 or Fax: 902-720-7873 or Toll-Free: 1-800-667-5727. Property owners are encouraged to speak with an Assessor prior to appealing an assessment, as this approach may answer and clear up some questions and avoid the time and expense of an appeal. If you still wish to make a formal appeal it must be in writing and must be received by their office on or before the deadline date. Appeals may be faxed or mailed. Appeals by e-mail are not accepted. For more details please refer to your assessment notice or go to the PVSC Appeal Guide: www.pvsc.ca/site/media/PVSC/Documents/Appeal%20Brochure%20December%202012_final.pdf. Should you have any further enquiries about property valuation please refer to their website at: www.PVSC.ca for more information.

FESTIVALS & SPECIAL EVENTS FUND

HRM supports events that foster good community relations, support culture, develop the local economy and tourism industry, and enrich the quality of life of all residents and visitors. The 2016 Festival & Event Grant Applications are now available for community-based events. Preference will be given to events that are free to the public, are run by not-for-profit organizations, and have a broad appeal. Application deadline is 12 Noon on Friday, January 29th. An application form can be mailed to you. For further details contact HRM Civic Events Co-ordinator Paul Forrest at 902-490-6979 or e-mail: forrestp@halifax.ca or fax 902-490-5950 or visit the website: www.halifax.ca/events/grants/index.php.

PROPER DISPOSAL OF ASHES

HRM Fire & Emergency Service wants to remind all citizens that numerous fires occur every year within HRM due to the improper disposal of ashes from fuel burning appliances such as wood stoves, fire places, pellet stoves and wood furnaces. Never discard ashes into your green bin or other plastic containers or cardboard boxes. Ashes should be placed in a metal can with a tight fitting lid and stored outside the home away from structures and other combustibles. Ashes can smolder for several days and re-ignite. For more helpful information about fireplaces, wood stoves and fire safety throughout the year, contact the Halifax Regional Fire & Emergency division of Fire Prevention at 902-490-5546. For more Fire Prevention Safety Information tips go to: www.halifax.ca/fireprevention/FireSafetyInformation.php. Please keep warm & safe this winter.

FEDERAL ARTS & CULTURE GRANTS

The Federal Department of Canadian Heritage (DCH) has a Building Communities Through Arts and Heritage (BCAH) Program. Does your community organize a local festival? There are three intake period deadlines for applications under the Local Festivals component of the BCAH program: January 31st, April 30th and September 30th. Is there a significant local anniversary in our municipality or your community in 2016? If it marks a 100th anniversary or greater, in increments of 25 years (e.g., 125th, 150th) and commemorates a significant local historical event or pays tribute to a significant local historical personality, consider applying to the Community Anniversaries component of BCAH. The deadline is also January 31st. The Legacy Fund component provides funding for community capital projects that commemorate significant anniversaries and involve the restoration, renovation or transformation of existing buildings and/or exterior spaces with local community significance; encourage arts and heritage activities in your community; and are intended for and accessible to the general public. For more information, please contact Ginette Garand, Program Officer, at 902-426-7834, email: ginette.garand@pch.gc.ca or at: www.pch.gc.ca/eng/1267799042836/1276800169608.

ICE, SNOW & WINTER MAINTENANCE

The NS Dept. of Transportation & Infrastructure Renewal (NSDOT&IR) does the majority of the snow removal, ice control and winter road maintenance services in District 2. Their local Highway Depots are situated in Chezzetcook at 902-827-2544 and in Spry Bay at 902-885-2821. Drivers can get up-to-date road conditions across Nova Scotia by calling the SNOW-line: 1-800-307-SNOW (7669) or 511 or 1-888-432-3233 or 902-424-3933 or on-line at <http://novascotia.ca/tran/winter/>. The SNOW-line is updated regularly at 7AM; 1PM; and 5PM or more frequently in case of a major storm event. Last year the Province introduced an on-line "plow tracker" tool that allows citizens to track snowplows simply by zooming in on a provincial map: <http://novascotia.ca/tran/winter/plowtracker.asp>. To see current highway conditions go to this website for access to several roadside cameras <http://novascotia.ca/tran/cameras/>. If you have any concerns or complaints about snow removal service in your area, please contact your respective MLA office: Kevin Murphy (murphyke@gov.ns.ca) or 902-281-3005; Lloyd Hines (hineslp@gov.ns.ca) or 902-533-2280; Keith Colwell (colwelkw@gov.ns.ca) or 902-433-1494. The exceptions are the District 2 communities of North Preston, Westphal, and all of the subdivision streets in the Lawrencetown area, which are done under the auspices of HRM with Performance Based Contracts (PBC) awarded to Ocean Contractors. If you have any concerns about our Snow and Ice Control winter road maintenance please call me or the HRM Contact Centre at 311. For info about HRM Winter Road Maintenance, please go to: www.halifax.ca/MunicipalOps/Winter/index.php. Be sure to have proper tires on and emergency supplies on hand in your vehicle. Please drive carefully this winter season.

