

NOT-FOR-PROFIT TAX EXEMPTIONS

HRM can help some non-profit organizations reduce their level of property tax through the Tax Exemption for Non-Profit Organizations Program. It is available only to actively registered non-profit and charitable organizations located within HRM. New applicants must submit by the deadline of November 30th for the 2016 year. www.halifax.ca/boardscom/bccgrants/TaxExemptionforNon-ProfitOrganizationsReview.php

Any late applications after November 30th, to the program (new applicants or to add a property) may be denied consideration. A reminder that it is mandatory for all previously registered entities already enrolled in this program to re-apply annually in order to maintain their tax exemption status. The deadline for Renewals is March 1st, 2016. Late applications from renewals, after March 1st, 2016, will be notified and may be pro-rated as of April 1st, 2016 to deduct one day for each day late. If you have any further questions about getting tax relief for your community organization, it is recommended that inquiries be referred to Grants & Contributions staff Peta-Jane Temple at templep@halifax.ca, phone # 902-490-5469 or Fax 902-490-5950 or call the HRM Contact service centre at 311.

WE CHOOSE NOW: 1NS 10 YEAR PLAN

One Nova Scotia (1NS) will be sharing its 10-year Collaborative Action Plan: "We Choose Now: A Playbook for Nova Scotia's" Leadership and collaboration will be key to turning our province around. 1NS believes the actions in their plan will make our province stronger - economically, demographically, socially and culturally. It is seen as a plan for leaders in all sectors and requires Nova Scotians to work together- in communities, in sectors, in regions - to create sustainable, long-term change and measurable results. They focused on how to maximize three of our important opportunities in Nova Scotia: Youth, Immigration and our Ocean sector. You are encouraged to read more about these areas at www.wechoosenow.ca. You can also follow 1NS on Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, or on the web at: <http://onenovascotia.nationbuilder.com/>

LAKE CHARLOTTE LAUNCH UPDATE

Finally the public boat launch site in Lake Charlotte is complete. It has been well over a decade since it was first conceived. There were several delays due to securing funding and getting environmental permits and then the weather did not help much over the past couple of construction years. HRM was granted extensions to its permits so it was permitted to construct the concrete slipway into the wintertime. Then last years prolonged winter weather delayed getting a reasonable start in the Spring of 2015. By the Victoria Day weekend, the launch was in place for use. Since then, the local boat launch committee has negotiated with HRM to accept a floating dock with mooring wharf and walkway as a gift to the municipality. They awarded that dock work to PEL (Partridge Enterprises Ltd) Contractors to construct and install it. Now it will be much easier for all boaters to launch or haul out their pleasure crafts. There are still some more enhancements that need to be done such as paving the driveway, erect signage and add some parking lot lighting for safety and security.

It has been a very long process, but I want to personally thank community volunteers Ted Webber, Wayne Webber and Peter Coleman for their patience, perseverance and commitment and to all local politicians prior to my term (HRM Councillor Stephen Streatch, MLAs Bill Dooks, Sid Prest, Kevin Murphy, MP Peter MacKay & Senator Tom McInnis) who had helped out in making this critical infrastructure possible. Now let's use it wisely.

SENIORS SNOW REMOVAL PROGRAM

This is a last minute reminder that there is a snow removal program available to seniors (65 years of age or older) and for persons with disabilities throughout all areas of HRM. The program is NOT available to landlords. You must reside in a single dwelling home that you own or rent. Its mandate is to provide a resource to clients for the removal of snow for safe access. The program is limited to those households with a combined total income not exceeding \$30,000. To make more enquiries about this program, please call the 311 HRM Contact Centre, the YMCA at 902-483-3678, or go to these web-sites for further details: www.halifax.ca/snow/seniorssnow.php and/or www.ymcahrm.ns.ca. Look under its Community Outreach Program section. Registration deadline is December 1st or sooner depending upon the demand. Applicants will be placed on a list based on a first come, first serve basis, so apply now before the snowfall.

AFRICAN HERITAGE MONTH EVENTS

To honour the 100th year anniversary of the No. 2 Construction Battalion and to continue to create awareness about the Decade for People of African Descent; the African Heritage Month Information Network is pleased to present as the theme for African Heritage Month 2016: The Black Battalion: Legacy of Commitment - Fighting the Fight. In December 2014 the UN declared the next ten years to be the Decade for People of African Decent with the theme: Justice, Recognition and Development. In 1916 the formation of the No. 2 Construction Battalion was completed. They were trail blazers who broke the color barrier in the Armed Forces. To have your event included in the official African Heritage Month 2016 Calendar of Events, please complete this form: www.ansa.novascotia.ca/content/event-submission and return to African Nova Scotian Affairs by Friday, December 18th. Submit this form via email to ansa@novascotia.ca or by fax to 902-424-7189. Event sheets can also be mailed or delivered to: African Heritage Month Information Network c/o African Nova Scotian Affairs - 1741 Brunswick Street, 3rd Floor, PO Box 456, STN Central, Halifax, NS, B3J 2R5. More details are at : www.ansa.novascotia.ca

1917 EXPLOSION GRANTS PROGRAM

December 6th, 2017 will mark the 100th Anniversary of the Halifax Explosion. In recognition of this significant date, HRM is pleased to announce a new grant program in support of community-based projects undertaken by local non-profit organizations and charities to commemorate the centennial. The Halifax Explosion 100th Anniversary Grants Program is now accepting applications. The deadline for applications is on or before: Friday, December 18th, 2015. An application form and program guidebook is available through the Halifax Call Centre by dialing 311, www.halifax.ca/boardscom/bccgrants/grants.php or at any Halifax Customer Contact Centres:

- Alderney Gate, Dartmouth
- Acadia Centre, Lower Sackville
- Musquodoboit Harbour
- 7071 Bayer's Road, Halifax
- Scotia Square Mall, Halifax

Inquiries should be directed to HRM Finance: Grants & Contributions at 902-490-7310 Mondays to Fridays: 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM.

CONGRATULATIONS TO NEW MP'S

May I convey my best wishes to the 2 newly elected Members of Parliament (MP) that will serve our area: Sean Fraser for Central Nova and Darrell Samson for Sackville - Preston - Chezzetcook. I'm looking forward to working with you both in advancing the needs of our communities. And I want to thank Peter MacKay and Peter Stoffer for their many years of dedicated service to us.

CLEAR BAG FOR LEAF & YARD WASTE

Due to a shortage of large brown kraft paper bags in the marketplace, clear and orange plastic bags will be accepted for the roadside collection of excess leaf and yard waste materials until Spring 2016. At that time, HRM will reintroduce the requirement to use only large paper bags. This will allow more time for our retailers to ensure they can maintain an adequate supply of bags for sale throughout the region. For more information on proper preparation of leaf and yard waste materials, please visit: www.halifax.ca/recycle.

PUBLIC INPUT ON CENTRE PLAN

The Centre Plan is phase three of HRMbyDesign, following the establishment of the overall Regional Centre vision and principles in phase one and the creation of the Downtown Halifax Plan in phase two. Taken as a whole, the three phases present a vision of a dense, livable and prosperous Regional Centre (downtown Dartmouth inside of the #111 Circumferential Highway and Peninsula Halifax) that will create sustained social, economic and environmental benefits across the entire municipality. The objective of the Centre Plan is to consolidate existing municipal planning strategies and land use by-laws for the Regional Centre into one combined policy and by-law set. Many of these documents are out of date, and do not reflect existing or forecasted social, environmental and economic conditions. New policies will protect the scale and character of existing neighbourhoods while removing existing barriers to well-designed and appropriately scaled development. Residents from across the municipality are invited to engage in this phase of the Centre Plan public consultation process by visiting: <http://shapeyourcityhalifax.ca/centre-plan>. Through this on-line portal, the general public can review project background and research material, and provide feedback through questions and answers and comments in the discussion forum section of the survey web-site. More details on the broader public consultation program will be available in the coming weeks, with the first events anticipated in early 2016. Stay tuned into the web-site for the most up-to-date project information. HRM is looking forward to listening to its residents' ideas and feedback throughout this project as we shape new, clear and predictable policies that will allow us to collectively build better communities. Let's make sure that a rural perspective is given about population density and mobility. What's good for downtown should be for the benefit of all of HRM.

PEACE ON EARTH & GOODWILL TO ALL

My wife Susan and 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 for Peace on Earth, and Goodwill to All is universal. Have yourself a blessed time with your families, friends, and neighbours. May we all strive for peace, tranquillity and harmony in our daily lives. Remember those that may be less fortunate who are experiencing hardship and despair. Please give to your local food bank or give the gift of life and donate blood. May all of us be blessed with good health, happiness and prosperity throughout 2016.

