

PROPERTY ASSESSMENT APPEALS

Property Assessment Notices will be mailed out by mid-January. There is now a 31 day official Appeal Period (Jan. 14th - Feb. 14th midnight) whereby property owners can review and perhaps refute their appraisals. If you feel it is not assessed properly, then you should contact the NS Municipality Agency - 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: 720-7872 or Fax: 720-7873 or Toll-Free: 1-800-667-5727. Property owners are encouraged to call and talk to an Assessor, prior to appealing an assessment. Perhaps this approach may answer and clear up some questions that you may have, hopefully avoiding the time and expense of an appeal. If not, you have the right to make a formal appeal, (in writing) either by letter or fax which must be received by their office on, or before the deadline date. Appeals by e-mail are not accepted. For more detailed information, please refer to your assessment notice or go to PVSC Appeal Guide: www.pvsc.ca/assessment-information/appeal-information/appeal-brochure. If you should have any further enquiries about property valuation, please refer to their web-site at: www.PVSC.ca.

EFFICIENCY NS HELPS HRM TO SAVE

Since October 2010, HRM retained the services of Efficiency Nova Scotia (ENS) approved contractors to perform energy audits at municipally owned facilities under the Small Business Energy Solutions (SBES) Program. The SBES Program is designed for buildings that use less than 350,000 kWh per year or approximately \$35,000 per year in electrical utility, and for financial incentives of up to 80% of total project costs. HRM currently has over 250 buildings that could qualify for this lighting retrofit program. Over the last two years, HRM has been participating in this program, 32 buildings have been completed with the lighting retrofit at a total project cost of \$274,279, with 70% of the cost shared by ENS (or at a net cost to HRM of \$81,067). The 2011 savings from these first 32 buildings was \$87,462 per year. Since then, another 21 buildings have been completed at a total project cost of \$174,279, with 43% of the cost shared by ENS (or at a net cost to HRM of \$98,036). The 2012 savings from this second batch of 21 buildings was an additional \$66,837 per year. This year another 35 facilities have had ENS energy audits. The total cost to implement the lighting retrofit for these buildings is \$199,516 and requires a contribution from HRM of \$98,414. These 35 facilities offer annual savings of 310,498 kWh or \$35,986 in 2012 electricity costs. About half of these buildings (17 in total) are in our District 2 area : Musquodoboit Harbour Library & Recreation, Moser River Community Hall, Ste Therese Center - Grand Desert, MacPhee House Museum - Sheet Harbour, and the following local fire stations.

- #19 – East Lawrencetown, #20 – Lawrencetown,
- # 22 – North Preston, # 23 – Chezzetcook,
- # 24 – Musquodoboit Harbour
- # 25 – Ostrea Lake, # 26 – Oyster Pond
- # 28 - Sheet Harbour, # 29 – Moser River
- # 30 – Tangier, # 31 – East Ship Harbour
- # 33 – West Quoddy, # 34 – Mushaboom

AREA DISTRICT NAME ADJUSTED

I recommended to HRM Regional Council that the district name given to us by the NS Utility Review Board be changed from Preston – Porters Lake – Eastern Shore to become Preston – Chezzetcook – Eastern Shore instead. Our districts should have some names that are more relevant to their particular areas. This name takes into account and recognizes the cultural aspects of the African-Nova Scotian and Acadian communities and our unique coastal communities with all of its natural beauty.

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? The Local Festivals component of the BCAH program of the DCH is accepting applications for festivals occurring between September 1 - December 31. The deadline is January 30th, 2013. Is there a significant local anniversary in your municipality or community in 2014? If the anniversary marks a 100th anniversary or greater, in increments of 25 years (e.g., 125th, 150th) and it 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 30th, 2013. 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 details, please contact Ginette Garand, Program Officer, at 426-7834 or by email ginette.garand@pch.gc.ca or more info at: www.pch.gc.ca/eng/1267799042836/1276800169608.

HRM COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS

As your Municipal District Councillor, I have been assigned extra duties and appointed to the following Committees: 1. HRM Appeals Committee for Dangerous & Unightly Premises / Minimum Standards / Taxi Licences; 2. HRM Transportation Standing Committee; 3. HRM Active Transportation Advisory Committee; 4. HRM Heritage Advisory Committee; 5. Halifax Watershed Advisory Board; 6. Halifax Regional Water Commission; 7. Halifax Harbour Bridges Commission. And Our district area has been aligned with the Harbour East – Marine Drive Community Council which includes Districts 3 (Bill Karsten), 4 (Lorelei Nicoll), 5 (Gloria McCluskey) and 6 (Darren Fisher).

SHORE ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION

Some local concerned citizens have formed a working group and named themselves “Shore Active Transportation” and their goal is to improve and enhance the local roads, paths and trail-ways to encourage more modes of safe active transportation such as walking, running, cycling, cross-country skiing. They will be looking at various things such as paving shoulders, study sidewalks options, groomed trails, marked paths and crosswalks in order to make it friendlier and safer for pedestrians and cyclists alike in the greater Porters Lake – Chezzetcook area. A web-site and Facebook Page will be created by them to keep the community apprised of their efforts. Anyone interested in being involved in this process should contact Mary MacDonald at marymac1771@eastlink.ca or Patricia Richards at patricia.richards@bellaliant.net or myself.

HERITAGE STATUS FOR OLD SCHOOL

The Old School Gathering Place Co-operative in Musquodoboit Harbour has applied for Municipal Heritage Status for their facility. On December 12th, 2012 the HRM Heritage Advisory Committee assessed their application. It met the threshold for heritage registration and possible designation. A public hearing at Regional Council will be set in the new year to determine if it should become a municipal registered site. For information on their application, check this link to the Heritage Advisory Committee report: www.halifax.ca/boardscom/hac/documents/heritage121212.PDF The Public Hearing date will be advertised in the Chronicle Herald and on the HRM web-site: www.halifax.ca under its City Hall Calendar or Council Agenda section.

GET HRM NEWSLETTER & UPDATES

HRM has launched its new electronic newsletter. The “Grand Parade” is the next step toward integrating e-mail, website, and social media platforms to proactively share relevant information about our municipality. Go to www.halifax.ca/grandparade to subscribe. HRM also has a Twitter account: @hfxgov or follow my updates on my Facebook and Twitter Pages.

PROPER SAFE 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 490-5546 or www.halifax.ca/fire. Keep yourself warm and safe this winter season.

ICE, SNOW & WINTER MAINTENANCE

The NS Dept. of Transportation & Infrastructure Renewal (NSDTIR) does most of the snow removal, ice control and winter road maintenance services in District 2. You can reach our local NS Highway Depots in Chezzetcook at 827-2544 and in Spry Bay at 885-2821. The communities of North Preston, Westphal, and all of the subdivision streets in the Lawrencetown area are done under the auspices of HRM. If you have any concerns about our Snow and Ice Control winter road maintenance, please call the HRM Contact Centre at 311. 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 424-3933 or on-line at <http://novascotia.ca/tran/winter/> and click on the Road & Weather Report Icon Button. The SNOW-line is updated regularly at 7 AM; 1 PM; and 5 PM or more frequently in case of a major storm event. For details about HRM Winter Road Maintenance: www.halifax.ca/snow/index.html Be sure to have proper tires on and emergency supplies on hand in your vehicle. Please drive very carefully this winter.

FESTIVALS & SPECIAL EVENTS FUND

Applications to apply for the 2013-14 HRM Festival & Event Grants are now available for community-based events. Preference will be given to events that are free to the public, run by not-for-profit organizations, and have a broad appeal. Deadline for the first intake of applications will be Friday, January 25th. www.halifax.ca/events/documents/FestivalandEventsApplication_2012_000.pdf For more details, contact HRM Civic Events Co-Ordinator Paul Forrest by e-mail: forrestp@halifax.ca or call 490-6979.



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