

HRM 2013-14 BUDGETS APPROVED

HRM 2013-14 Operating and Capital Project Budgets have been approved. The \$823 Million gross Operating and \$165 Million gross Capital project budgets include a tax rate decrease of 1% for the commercial rates, no increase to the transit tax rate, and a nominal increase of 1% for the urban and suburban residential rates to accommodate the removal of local area rates to provide snow clearing in urban and suburban communities within 1 km of a sidewalk.

The tax rates on residential properties will be:

- \$0.668 for urban HRM areas;
- \$0.635 for suburban HRM areas;
- \$0.629 for rural HRM areas.

The tax rates on commercial properties will be:

- \$3.054 for urban & suburban HRM areas;
- \$2.691 for rural HRM areas.

The other HRM Services Tax Rates will be:

- \$0.051 for Regional Transportation Services and \$0.105 for Local Transit Service.

HRM remains committed to reducing the tax burden in the commercial sector by absorbing \$4 Million in lost revenue from the final phase out of the Business Occupancy Tax, and changing the calculation of the commercial tax rate by linking commercial tax revenue with Halifax's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) index instead of the residential tax rate. This approach increases total commercial tax revenues by 1.8% with the increase largely attributable to new construction. This new budget captures various efficiencies to help manage unavoidable spending increases from inflation and wages. The budget allows the municipality to maintain a state of good repair for its urban streets, suburban roads and local facilities, and appropriately increase service delivery for transit, public safety, and sidewalk snow clearing, advance initiatives for a more open government, and focus a much needed reinvestment on the downtown core. HRM is also streamlining its approach to development approvals and permitting in order to help reduce bureaucratic red tape for developers and business owners. Over the next year, there will be significant investment in transit technology along with new and expanded bus and ferry services, extension of HRM sidewalk snow clearing to all urban communities, funding for specialized police investigations, increased access to youth programming, and public engagement opportunities on the Regional Plan, Solid Waste Resource Management Strategy, and the next strategic plan for Metro Transit. For more information on the approved 2013-14 HRM budget, please visit: www.halifax.ca/budget

BIKE WEEK 2013: MAY 31st - JUNE 9th

Bike Week aims to celebrate, educate and increase participation in all types of cycling throughout the region. It's an exciting, community driven event encouraging people of all ages and abilities to get outside and be more active. There will be plenty of events organized by local individuals and groups to encourage bicycling for sport, recreation, and active transportation. For more details and event programs about HRM Bike Week, please go to: www.halifax.ca/bikeweek/index.html and for more information about safe cycling throughout our municipality visit the website: www.halifax.ca/cycling/index. New legislation has been passed that requires motorists to yield to cyclists. The NS Motor Vehicle Act was amended by adding rules respecting bike lanes and now requires motorists to leave one metre of space between a vehicle and a bicycle in order to pass by safely

CURBSIDE GIVEAWAY: JUNE 8th & 9th

Residents are encouraged to participate in HRM's Curbside Give Away Weekend - June 8th & 9th. Help discover the "Hidden Treasures" in your neighbourhood and our communities. HRM is looking for ideas on how to make this event even better! Please take a short survey at www.halifax.ca/surveys/index.html and your name will be entered into a draw for HRM prize packs, backyard composters and kitchen mini-bins or if you prefer to send comments by e-mail, drop a line at WasteLess@Halifax.ca

SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORTATION PLAN

Nova Scotians will have more opportunity to walk, bike, share rides and access public transit because of a new provincial initiative: "Choose How You Move" Sustainable Transportation Strategy which commits \$6 Million in funding over the next 3 years to help communities develop sustainable transportation plans including seniors, people with physical disabilities and youth, with more active, sustainable and cost-effective transportation options. The NS Sustainable Transportation Strategy will help governments, businesses, communities and individuals to develop transportation solutions that result in a healthier and better connected province. Sustainable transportation includes walking, biking and community transit, community design, cleaner vehicle technologies and cleaner, renewable fuels, energy conservation and efficiency, including car-sharing, tele-commuting and car-pooling. The province consulted with, and incorporated feedback, from a number of municipalities, environmental organizations and transit-oriented community groups to design and ensure the strategy is responsive to community needs. The second round of the NS Moves Grants program is now open for applications until June 22nd. For more information, visit: www.novascotia.ca/sustainabletransportation.

ENVIRONMENT WEEK: JUNE 2nd - 8th

The United Nations has designated the year 2013 as the International Year of Water Cooperation. In addition to this, Canadian Environment Week (CEW) will promote the theme: Water - Working Together. CEW 2013 will be held from June 2nd - 8th. During that same week there will also be the Great Commuter Challenge, World Environment Day (June 5th), Clean Air Day (June 5th) and World Oceans Day (June 8th). For more details visit: www.ec.gc.ca/sce-cew/. During CEW and throughout the year, we are urged to reflect on the many ways we can take action to protect and preserve our natural surroundings. After that it will be "Rivers to Oceans Week" June 8th -14th which is an opportunity to work together to create an understanding of watersheds, our connection to fresh and salt-water environments and what everyone can do to protect and keep watersheds healthy for people and wildlife.

RESPONSIBLE DOG OWNERSHIP

HRM Animal Control By-law A-300 www.halifax.ca/legislation/bylaws/hrm/documents/By-LawA-300.pdf is intended to promote responsible pet ownership. Be sure to have your dog licensed. However, there have been some complaints about untidy owners who are not picking up after their dogs. Sections 7 (1c) & 9 (1d) of the by-law specifies that a dog is not to defecate on any public or private property other than that of its owner's property, without the dog owner immediately removing the defecation. Please be respectful and clean up the doggie doo and do not kick it into the roadside ditches because that can lead to other environmental run-off problems. If any residents see a dog running at large, they should contact the owner if they recognize the dog or contact HRM Animal Services at 311. When reporting a dog running at large, residents should provide a description of the dog, and the time and location where the dog was last seen running at large. For more details: www.halifax.ca/AnimalControl/index.html

RURAL MAIL BOX SAFETY REVIEW

Canada Post is doing a Rural Mailbox Traffic Safety Review in the communities of Tangier, Sheet Harbour and Port Dufferin. The national Rural Mailbox Safety Review started in response to traffic safety complaints and refusals from its rural mail drivers. Since 2007, Canada Post has assessed over 700,000 rural mailboxes nationally using a set of criteria developed by outside traffic safety experts. The affected residents will receive a customer letter, brochure and an Adcard. If a rural mailbox meets the traffic safety criteria and no adjustments are needed, a letter of explanation will be delivered to the customer and delivery will continue as usual. If a rural mailbox fails the traffic safety criteria or adjustments are needed, Canada Post will meet with those customers to explain the results and discuss their options. Some customers may have the opportunity to relocate their rural mailbox to a safer location so delivery can continue, while others who cannot, will be given the option of changing to either a Community Mailbox (CMB) in

the area or a free PO Box at any post office or postal outlet of their choice. When it comes to installing CMBs, Canada Post will work closely with the NS Dept. of Transportation to obtain the necessary approvals and permits. If you have any questions about this review, please call Canada Post Customer Service line at 1-866-501-1669.

CHB COMMUNITY HEALTH SURVEY

The Eastern Shore Musquodoboit Community Health Board (ESM-CHB) and the Southeastern Community Health Board (SE-CHB) are embarking on another Health Planning Process to ask the general community to determine what health issues matter most to individuals and families. Their last Health Plan connected with over 400 people from each Community Health Board (CHB) area and determined what health priorities should be the focus for their health plan and recommendations to the Capital District Health Authority. The issues focused on healthy eating, physical activity, mental health and access to information and services. This health plan has provided guidance to many people in Capital Health to understand what really matters to people in our district. One key result of the health plan was that CHB's have advocated for a 211 service here and now this service is available to our communities. They are hoping to gather information again on what matters to people with regard to their health. Please help them to identify health concerns and to make recommendations to Capital Health through their Health Planning process via an on-line survey at: www.oursurvey.ca The survey takes approximately 10 minutes and it will assist to improve health in our communities. The CHB's can also come to discuss health matters with you and any group that would be interested in hearing more about this health planning process. If you have further questions, please contact Anna Jacobs at 460-6888 or anna.jacobs@cdha.nshealth.ca

FREE SWIMMING LESSONS BY HRM

HRM is offering all swimming lessons, and Bronze Medallion, Bronze Cross, and junior lifeguard programs running at HRM's supervised outdoor beaches free to the public for the upcoming summer session. Registration is required in order to take part in these classes. Registration will start at 10 AM on June 5th, and will continue until classes are filled. You can register on-line at HRM's "Rec Connect": <https://eservices2.halifax.ca/reconnect/Activities/ActivitiesAdvSearch.asp>. Click on "Beach" for more information or call 490-6666. Lifeguard supervision is from July 1st to August 30th.. HRM has a variety of beaches, lakes and outdoor pools. Our district has six locations: Orenda Beach in Lake Echo, Kinap Beach in West Porters Lake, Pleasant Drive in Gaetz Brook, Old Government Wharf in West Petpeswick, Webber's Beach in Lake Charlotte/Upper Lakeville and at Malay Falls Beach in Lochaber Mines/Sheet Harbour. All of these have some level of HRM supervision including daily maintenance and weekly water testing. For more details, call HRM Beach Line at 490-5458.

GRADUATION CONGRATULATIONS

At this time I wish to congratulate all High School, Community College, and University Students on your achievement of graduating. May each of you have many life successes and best of luck in your future endeavours.



Happy
Father's
Day



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