

NEW MUNICIPAL AUDITOR GENERAL

HRM welcomes Andrew Atherton as its new Auditor General. He is an accomplished audit professional and leader with over 25 years of experience in performance auditing and over 15 years in leadership roles within legislative audit and public service. Recently he was the Executive Director of Municipal Affairs with the Department of Municipal Affairs and Housing, a key role helping to connect all 49 municipalities province-wide with the provincial government. Previously, Mr. Atherton spent over 20 years with the Nova Scotia Office of the Auditor General where, most recently, he served as Audit Principal in 2007-2016 and then as Assistant Auditor General from 2016-2022. Mr. Atherton graduated from Acadia University in 1997 with a BBA and obtained his Chartered Accountant designation in 2000. Mr. Atherton officially joined on December 5, 2023. For more information about the HRM Office of the Auditor General, please visit: www.hrmauditorgeneral.ca.

HRM GETS 'A' GRADE FROM CDP

HRM received an 'A' grade from the Carbon Disclosure Project (CDP) for our commitment to climate action and environmental protection. CDP is a global, non-profit charity that runs the world's disclosure system for investors, companies, cities, states and regions to assess their environmental impact. Only 13 per cent of cities got an 'A' for their efforts in 2023. Being in CDP's top tier means that our ambitious climate action plan HalifACT is being recognized internationally for its emphasis on transparency and its bold climate leadership. CDP reporting is a commitment that we are going to keep working to sharply reduce our greenhouse gas emissions as a way of protecting our residents from the effects of climate change and ensuring the health of our economy. Getting an 'A' from an organization like CDP is an important sign that we are on the right track. To learn more about HalifACT www.halifax.ca/about-halifax/energy-environment/halifact-2050-acting-climate-together. Be sure to read the Plan, its Special Projects, Awards, and Community Updates.

PROPERTY ASSESSMENT APPEALS

Property Assessment Notices will be mailed out in mid-January. Then there is a 31-day official Appeal Period from that date whereby property owners can review and perhaps refute their appraisals. You can now access your property file online. Your Notice will provide you with an AAN – Assessment Account Number with a PIN to view your data. 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 representative. PVSC Assessment Office is located at Park Place Two, 238-A Brownlow Avenue, Suite 200, Dartmouth, NS, B3B 2B4. Toll-free phone: 1-800-380-7775 or by fax: 1-888-339-4555. Their offices are not open to the public. They are available to answer questions and discuss assessments Monday to Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at 1-800-380-7775 or inquiry@pvsc.ca.

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. For more info, refer to your notice or go to: www.pvsc.ca/pvsc-forms-and-guides. If you should have any further enquiries about property valuation, please refer to their website at: www.PVSC.ca for more details.

LOCAL AREA RATE FOR SIDEWALKS

HRM staff are conducting a couple of community engagement sessions to determine residents' position on adding an area rate to communities around and including Porter's Lake and Musquodoboit Harbour. The area rate will make these areas eligible for a new sidewalk or multi-use pathway on their Main Street portion of Hwy #7, helping improve walkability and create additional safe, sustainable, and accessible connections within these communities. Information received from residents will be compiled into a report for HRM Regional Council who will make the final decision on implementing the area rate and setting the boundaries. If approved by HRM Council, the sidewalk or multi-use pathway will then enter planning and design phases, followed by construction. Residents can expect more communications, and a Shape Your City survey on its webpage portal: www.shapeyourcityhalifax.ca/shape-your-city-halifax, that will begin in early January prior to, and to help promote the engagement events.

Porter's Lake Engagement:

Date: Monday, January 22, 2024
With Open house format and presentation
Session One: 1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.
Session Two: 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.
Porter's Lake Community Centre (Bingo Hall)
4693 Highway #7, Porters Lake.

Musquodoboit Harbour Engagement:

Date: Wednesday, January 31, 2024
With Open house format and Presentation
Session One: 1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.
Session Two: 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.
Old School Community Gathering Place
7962 Highway #7, Musquodoboit Harbour.

To learn more about the role sidewalks and multi-use pathways play in the municipality's transportation network, visit: www.halifax.ca/integratedmobility.

For more detailed information about HRM Rural Active Transportation Infrastructure Priorities: <https://cdn.halifax.ca/sites/default/files/documents/city-hall/regional-council/230207rc1511.pdf>.

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 31, April 30, and October 15, 2023. Is there a significant local anniversary in our municipality or in your community in 2024? 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 by visiting: www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/services/funding/building-communities/festivals.

The deadline is January 31 for festivals starting between September 1 and December 31 of the same calendar year, April 30 for festivals starting between January 1 and June 30 of the next calendar year, and October 15 for festivals starting between July 1 and August 31 of the next calendar year. For details, please contact them via email at: pch.enligne-online.pch@canada.ca or call toll-free 1-866-811-0055 or TTY 1-888-997-3123.

The Legacy Fund component which 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 about the Legacy Program, visit: www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/services/funding/building-communities/legacy-fund.html, email them at: PCH.bcah-dcap.PCH@canada.ca or call them at the same phone numbers listed above. There is no established deadline date to submit a funding application under Legacy Fund component, as applications are accepted on a continuous basis. However, you must submit your application no later than the date of the anniversary being celebrated. You are encouraged to submit your application at least 12 months prior to the proposed start date for your project (or six months prior for smaller projects with total costs of 200K or less).

MORE OPEN DATASETS AVAILABLE

As part of HRM's commitment to improving citizen engagement and enhancing transparency and accountability to its residents, the municipality is pleased to provide public access to its data. Open Data is a permanent service provided to citizens and businesses access to data for download, while still respecting privacy and sensitivity concerns. A wide range of data can be sourced for free through the catalogue, such as transit routes and schedule data, solid waste collection schedules, building applications, development permits, land-use applications and area rates. New data releases occur several times throughout the year. For more information on the municipality's Open Data program, and to access all the data sets, visit: www.halifax.ca/opendata or contact them via email at: opendata@halifax.ca.

HRM VOLUNTEER NOMINATIONS

The deadline to nominate a deserving volunteer in our communities is January 11, 2024. Nominate an individual or an organization to show appreciation for the work that they do.

Nominations must be submitted in one of three award categories: adult, youth (ages 13-19) and community group. For more details and online applications, visit www.halifax.ca/volunteerawards.



Councillor David Hendsbee
Councillor—Counciller municipal—Comhairlaiche—Wunaqapeme'
District 2: Preston—Chezzetcook—Eastern Shore

Railway Museum – #7895 Highway #7
P.O. Box 2, Musquodoboit Harbour, NS, B0J 2L0

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