

Staff Report

March 10, 2020

CAO and Municipal Clerk– Alain Muise & Lori Murphy

Municipal Administration Building *Council Priority (multiyear)

The deadline for the Municipal Administration Building tender was March 6th. We received three bids, and Council is being asked to instruct staff and advisors in this meeting. Also, in other related news, we received confirmation for Accessibility funding from the Federal Government. We have been approved for \$97,500 in grants supporting our accessibility improvements for the new building!

Affordable and Alternative Housing *Council Priority (multiyear)

The Request for Proposal has not yet been released, it is expected to be released in the coming days. We will be recommending a long period of time for accepting proposals, in case there are other developers interested, but unaware of the opportunity.

Rural Internet – WREN *Council Priority (multiyear)

Nothing new to report on funding. According to the WREN, Argyle sitting around 57% coverage for high speed, according to one Internet Service Provider. Bell is also building their network in Wedgeport, so that might bring you up above that figure.

It is widely known that the highest density areas with the most need are Lower East Pubnico up to Pubnico, and Pubnico up to Tusket along Highway 3. West Pubnico is also included here.

The CRTC fund is presently active. An Internet Service Provider is planning to apply for Kemptville, North Kemptville and East Kemptville, and separately for Argyle Head through stopping just before Pubnico as those areas are eligible for CRTC support. Develop NS' RFP for Long-Term projects shall launch soon with awards being announced Summer 2020. Between these two funds, it is proposed that the coverage will move to 92% for MODA

Consolidation

As you are likely aware, the Municipality of the District of Yarmouth voted against consolidation at this time. They cited too little community engagement to move into this big decision. If the units are serious about structural change, it would be wise to initiate information sessions and public engagement sessions about options regarding structural modernization. As consolidation is a possible option to modernize regional government, it too should be part of the discussion in the future, that is, from an administrators' perspective.

Mariners Center expansion *Council Priority 2019-20

Nothing significant to report. The position of General Manager is still vacant, and the work is ongoing in this area.

YMCA

Nothing significant to report since our decision to fund the study.

Yarmouth International Airport Corporation *Council Priority 2019-20

The CBCL report on runway extension has been drafted, and the Board is meeting on Monday the 9th of March to discuss further. CAO Muise and Gushue met with the staff to discuss their issues and concerns, which was a very productive meeting. Kris Cann and I participated in an interview for a piece on the Yarmouth Airport that will go in a National magazine.

Land use bylaw and municipal planning strategy

The draft LUB/MPS shall be presented to Council and the PAC tonight!

Yarmouth Area Industrial Commission (YAIC)

Nothing significant to report at this time.

Provincial Work, AMA and other

The Grants to Organizations online application program is up and running effective Monday March 9th, 2020. As this is a new program, we expect to encounter some hiccups, but it is very user friendly and accessible in both French and English. We are advising people that the forms from last year are no longer being used, and the web site shall also indicate that. Any organization not able to access internet or computers may receive assistance here.

The application for funding for the East Pubnico Water Utility has been submitted. We are asking for 50% funding of a \$280,000 project. ACOA is in the deep assessment of the application.

The RFP for solid waste collection remains on the Provincial Procurement Site, with a deadline of March 12th, 2020. We had a pre-scheduled meeting date and time set for any applicants. The current solid waste collector attended the meeting and it was very productive.

Dealing with matters related to ongoing issues with the mobile dewatering truck.

Attended many meetings re: LUB/MPS, and the first Executive Committee meeting of REMO.

Finance Department – Marsha d'Eon

Our tax sale was held on February 13, 2020. 13 properties were brought to auction. We sold 12 and the remaining 1 property that did not sell was brought to tax sale tender with a closing date of March 20, 2020.

The 2020 Property tax exemption application forms are now available in our office and on our website and copies have been mailed to applicants who had received it last year. It will be advertised on our web page, in the Vanguard and Lobster Bay Shopper.

Reminders have been sent for all outstanding taxes in hopes of getting some payments on the outstanding accounts.

The Finance Department is coming up into busy time with year-end (March 31st) and budget season. Preparations for both have already started.

I am in the process of working on the HST Offset which is due on March 20, 2020.

Audit Committee training was held on March 4th at the Mariners Centre which had a lot of great information for committee members. I have also reached out to 2 residents of our municipality in hopes to find at least one community member to sit on this committee.

All services, including monthly reconciliations, accounts payable, and monthly financial reporting to staff and Council continues and is on schedule.

Department of Public Works – Hans Pfeil

West Pubnico Sewer Treatment Plant (WPSTP)

Plant Operations

The plant operates at a high level of efficiency and is compliant with NSDoE guidelines. The month of February was fairly quiet, and we did not come across any major issues. We're getting prepared to test a new dewatering technology and we made some minor adjustments to our dewatering plumbing.

We are actively working on the annual NSDOE report for the year 2019 as required by our operating license.

All 12 pumping stations are being monitored on a regular interval everything seems to work normal. We are still running the Pump station #10 on the Dennis Point Road on a temporary set up due to the accident back in December 2019. We are still dealing with the driver's insurance company in the attempt of recovering our losses. A replacement panel was ordered before

Christmas and was delivered just recently. Once the electrician is available, we will be installing the new panel and get the pump station up and running again.

Regarding the performance issues with the Dewatering Truck, ABCO Industries winterized the truck for us and it is parked at their facility in Lunenburg. Their attempt is to continue polymer testing as soon as the weather permits outdoor operation again. We communicated with a Polymer specialist that was consulted by ABCO and they indicated that a proper fitting polymer is key to the operation. It appears we could make adjustments on our mixing process to produce a slightly better sludge, but it is not a critical step for the overall performance of the truck. Our confidence in the operation of the truck is down due to a large gap between the actual and the required performance of this system. More info's will follow as soon as we know more. Nothing changed over the last month.

We initiated the process of testing an alternative dewatering process and the machine arrived last week and is installed. We started testing the machine on March 3rd, 2020 and can report very positive results. We are working with Trident Solutions and are looking at a Multi Disk Press that seems promising in exceeding our need for the dewatering process. More info's will follow as soon as we completed the test run and completed the lab testing on dryness and chemicals.

This month we didn't come across any sewer connections but are working with a developer to upgrade a lateral on Franks road to allow for a multi-unit development connection.

Past Initiatives

We are happy to report that the Solar system at the West Pubnico Sewer plant is working great and we are monitoring the production closely. Under this program we are selling 100% of the solar energy back to NS Power and this installation will generate some revenue for the Municipality. We are helping the finance department with investigations into sudden increased billing since the start of the solar panel operation. NS Power and the consultant are looking into the situation to determine how the new meters are read and if outgoing power is not accidentally added to our incoming power, which would explain the sudden increase in power consumption. More info's will follow once we have figured out the billing of the new solar panels.

Future Initiatives

We are still supporting the engineering team working on a solution for the development of a Vodka Distillery in West Pubnico and help a private developer connecting up to 10 units for a pocket community. The Engineering Company ABLE Engineering is helping the two residents in West Pubnico to produce viable options. We are actively supporting both initiatives with plan reviews and feedback of suitability to our system.

Tusket Sewer Treatment Plant

Plant Operations

The operation of this system continues in a relatively orderly basis, with our permit good until 2024. We are in compliance with NSDoE operating parameters.

The Tusket Sewer System was running smoothly over the last month and we did not experience any major break downs. Staff is performing further tank level inspections and preparing for the new season.

The Tusket Falls Brewery on site system for the brewing water disposal had some issues due to incorrect operation by the brewery. Operation has been improved and we continue to monitor the effluent values. We are testing the waste water values again and prepare for the field bed repairs. In addition we requested detailed recommendations from the Engineer about an operations manual and improvement opportunities to avoid further spending or investments in more infrastructure. After an internal discussion with staff and management we decided that the risk for testing ATU's is too high at this point and we will continue to monitor the current system if an improved operation will solve the issue. More info's will follow over the next few months.

We did not receive any connection requests in the last month.

With the development of the new road extension in Tusket, we finished the work and extended the sewer main line by 300m and offer 7 new connection spots along that new section.

Past Initiatives

The Mission Communication Module is working well for us and we are collecting valuable data each day and noticed reduced overtime on monitoring and troubleshooting of the plant and pump station already.

Future Initiatives

CBCL completed the design of a commercial grease interceptor for the Hatfield House Restaurant and we reached out to contractors for quotes but couldn't get a competitive result. We received one quote, which was 55% over estimate and not acceptable. The engineer is negotiating with the contractor to understand the high cost items but was not able to reduce the pricing. We will get in contact with the owner of the restaurant soon and continue to find a suitable contractor to install the grease trap. In the meantime, the owner had made some adjustments to his plumbing in the kitchen with the attempt of reducing the oils and grease entering the sewer tank. Once the restaurant continues with operation by end of April, we would allow for a short testing period and if the situation is unchanged, we would move forward with the installation. We came across the same issue at the Anchored Grounds Café/restaurant and are waiting if the restaurant will re-open or not. If operation continues, we will offer the same solution to them and try to implement the same system at this restaurant. We are also supporting a new development at the Tusket Ultramar and try to provide guidance to the developer in terms of sewer connection requirements.

East Pubnico Water Utility

System Operations

Staff continues to monitor and make repairs as necessary. Meter readings are performed on a regular basis. The Popes Road Well is performing better now and the contractor is done with the remaining upgrades. We are aware of a minor leak in the system and preparing for repairs soon. We also performed a system leak detection on the Middle East Pubnico System along Willet Road.

We had engaged a team of consultants from Bedford, NS and they provided very valuable feedback on-site and we are waiting for their report. They went above and beyond and reviewed items outside their scope and helped us to understand on how to repair certain valves at low costs and make operation easier and safer.

NSDoE approved our water withdrawal application and we were able to extend our allowance to produce water in East Pubnico. An audit is scheduled for this month and NSDoE will review both systems.

Past Initiatives

The well assessment was completed and revealed excellent data in order to continue with funding applications.

Future Initiatives

With the well assessment data and the leak detection report we are able to continue with the pursuit of funding and try to replace the large water tank on Willet road. We established a solid strategy in order to make repairs or improvements to the systems. We authorized a local electrician to perform upgrades on our electrical panel situation due to severe deterioration and unsafe operation of 3 panels. They're no longer waterproof and structural supports are not sufficient anymore.

We are still in pursuit of extra funding from a provincial department and are preparing to perform a wide variety of upgrades and renewals on pumps, valves and electrical components. Depending on the approval we are close to be ready to perform needed upgrades to the wells and distribution system.

Wedgeport Sewer Improvement Program

System Operations

All 42 systems are running smoothly. No issues to be reported.

Past Initiatives

42 Systems have been installed and are operational. All landscaping issues have been addressed and the sites are starting to look normal again.

Future Initiatives

We published a request for proposals (RFP) in order to attract a suitable consultant team to kick off the site investigation, detailed design and construction tender phase. The RFP is closing in early April and we hope to start the work soon after. It is our goal to roll out construction mid/late summer for another 50 sites.

Municipal Administration Building

The tender call on the Public Procurement Website closed on March 4th, 2020 and the Architectural team is performing the evaluation of the tenders. We received a total of 3

submissions. We will inform staff and council about the outcome as soon as we have official results. So far we are on schedule to potentially complete the project by summer 2021.

Tusket New Road Development

The new road in Tusket is substantially completed and we authorized surveyors to stake out the first 5 properties. In addition, we are awaiting quotes from NS Power to install power and phone lines in order to make the properties available for the housing market.

Paving of the first 100m will be finished in the spring/ summer 2020 and fully finalized in conjunction with the construction of the new admin. Building.

We are still waiting for the contractor to work on the stormwater pond, but weather has not been cooperative enough as of yet. You may see more activity on the property soon. The pond will help with storm water run-off management and catches the rainwater coming off the site before releasing it slowly into the ground or ditch along Hwy 308. It acts as a buffer and avoids flooding along the main road. It also acts like a filter and keeps dust, oils and other harming substances out of the ground water.

Policy and By-Law Working Group

Due to a high priority on construction projects we postponed the process of registering our By-Laws for the use of SOT's. We are still recommending reviewing our by-laws in close coordination of an experienced lawyer before starting the registration process. This task is scheduled for winter 2019/spring 2020.

The new procurement policy was approved during the last council meeting and is active now.

Improvements have been made to be in alignment with other Municipal's procurement activities and allow for a more flexible and attractive purchasing process. We also included a disqualification clause into the policy to protect our investments from potential legal issues due to dishonest business partners.

Further By-Laws and policies are under review and will be brought to council over the next few months.

Planning Department / GIS Work

Alix is actively working on the following projects and initiatives:

Aquaculture Development Area (ADA): Along with Charlene, I am a member of the ADA Steering Committee. We had a meeting on Feb 4, which I attended remotely from Tusket. Charlene and I created a list of ADA stakeholders and listed them in order of envisioned amount of engagement. I modified the area of analysis to approximate the sheltered waters within our municipality and sent that to Matt King of NS Fisheries and Aquaculture. Charlene and I discussed the process required to classify waters for shellfish aquaculture with David MacArthur of the Canadian Shellfish Sanitation Program, and I provided David with data for him to give us an estimate of the time involved to classify areas that are not already classified.

Regular Data Maintenance: I am responsible for the data flow from the province to my Mapping System (monthly) and the building permit software (LISA, weekly). I also send data to PVSC every two weeks from our building permit software that results in us not requiring to send permit data to Stats Can and CMHC.

Civic Addressing and Property Data: There is ongoing work to be done on creating new civic addresses, correcting civic address errors, suggesting changes to the Land Registry data, and working with Canada Post on identifying incorrect addresses on mail. The provincial civic address system that is maintained by me is named the Nova Scotia Civic Address File (NSCAF). The road sign and civics for a new named road in Springhaven called “Private Dr” have been installed thanks to Wayne and the NSCAF has been updated. I ordered a road sign and civic signs for a new road in East Quinan called “Gillfillan Lake Rd”.

MPS and LUB Review: Having previously created all of the maps as part of the review process that began a few years ago, I am working with WSP on this project. I incorporated new and more accurate data on salt marsh into our Coastal Wetland zone to better represent reality. There were also a few other minor zoning changes that I completed for the review.

Other: I reviewed the Work Safe Procedure that MoDA developed for boat operation and provided comments. I provided Alain with a map showing properties around the current Wedgeport school for further analysis in the sighting of the new school. I took photos at the Trail Guide launch at Pubnico Point on Feb 3. I updated the Land Use By-Law maps on our website with updated versions for a recent rezoning. I created a map for Janine Muise (EMO) showing all of the wharves in Yarmouth County to be used in evacuation plans for the Cat ferry.

Animal Control

SPCA is handling all of our domestic animal complaints and they had a few calls without major issues. With the loss of the Yarmouth Dispatch center we also lost the service for dog control issues. The SPCA can be directly reached under 902-307-0475 in case of any dog issues.

No other animal complaints were filed.

Garbage Handling

We posted a tender call for a new solid waste collection service contract and it will close on March 12th, 2020. We hope to have the results ready soon after and select a suitable contractor before the current contract runs out.

After recent discussion with the current contractor we started to receive all rejection notifications and are keeping track of residents that are not properly disposing their waste. WasteCheck and the Collection contractor have increased their activities in checking green bins for plastics due to severe issues at the composting facility. This will avoid cost increases due to fines.

All other collection activities are running as per schedule and weather permitted delays are being handled on time.

Building Inspection Report

To date in this calendar year, staff have issued 20 Building Permits with several more pending, as we wait for more information. Staff has also issued 9 development permits. Note, that a Demolition Permit is tallied under the Building Permit numbers. We have provided background information for several possible rezoning inquiries. Staff has received enquiries about rezoning land parcels but we are working with the planners, so as to not overlap items in the LUB review. The planners engagement with council during the LUB review will also include any requested re-zonings.

Fire Inspections

We are currently working on a shared service solution with neighboring municipalities to fill this position and offer the full range of service to our residents again. The CAO should have more information on this topic.

Sub-Division Activity

To date in this calendar year we have accepted 3 subdivision submissions with several more on the books. This compares to 20 sub-division files submitted in 2019. The type of subdivision, be it Instrument of Subdivision or Final Plan of Subdivision, is pretty well equal. There are no large multi lot subdivisions on the books, as the majority of activity, is 2-3 lot subdivisions or consolidation of existing lots.

Unsightly or Dangerous

Operations are back to normal and we are dealing with all incoming complaints. We have increased our activity on all open cases and followed up on outstanding issues. Most of these cases are near closing and owners are cleaning up.

Unfortunately, one of our most severe cases is still on our radar and we are working on obtaining legal advice before engaging in any further enforcement work.

The new dangerous and unsightly policy is active now and some residents are starting their applications.

Maintenance

Staff is handling the winter conditions pretty good so far. Staff had time to apply winter fertilizer at some of our Ball fields, which will help with good grass growth in the spring and great playing experiences. Staff is also working on preparing summer gear and performing oil changes, body repairs and preventative maintenance. We purchased a used Ford F-150 from Bruce Auto Group through an open tender process and took over ownership on March 4th, 2020. The additional vehicle will be used for the seasonal summer staff during the increased field maintenance work and in down time by the Building inspector and By-Law Enforcement team. Please check with the Public Works Team if there is need for using our fleet for travel.

Industrial Park

We continue to receive requests from interested buyers for the remaining lots. It appears that the medicinal processing plant will proceed and we are available to support the owner with the sewer

connection requirements. The Tusket Falls Brewery is reviewing their chances on re-zoning their lot and are looking into a possible food serving use. We still have 2 lots available for sale.

Staff

Staff is using the slower time to update necessary training certificates and work on work safety practices.

Louis Boudreau is participating in the NSBOA training by taking required courses to attain his entry level certification as a building inspector.

Marty and Wayne are working on updating their fall arrest and man lift certification in preparation of the summer season and upcoming repairs on the ball fields.

Marty started his NBCC Wastewater course in preparation of his Level 1 License exam.

Software

All software is up to date and working good for us. The PC at the WP Sewer Treatment plant was upgraded to Windows 10 and we experienced a few minor technical problems, which were fixed immediately with the help of KRC Controls.

Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee

The Municipality initiated a new Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee at the end of October 2018 as required by Provincial regulations. A special bulletin board has been established in the Kitchen of the Municipal Admin. Building and information about the regulations, local inspectors, committee members, first aid staff, agendas and meeting minutes are being posted on a regular basis. Any safety related issues should be reported immediately to your supervisor or committee member!

We were able to discuss the last sections of our program and are pleased to announce that our safety program is complete and active now. Copies of the program will be distributed to all work places and facilities. Next steps are to focus on our violence in the workplace procedures and we are actively working on the assessment and evaluation program. This will help us to determine steps towards a reduced risk of violent situations and how to handle them in a respectful matter.

We are also reviewing necessary training for some specialty items due to some innovative work performed by some of us. Work safe procedure will be established for these items to establish a first line of understanding the risks.

Our main goal of this program is to establish a healthy understanding of safety needs for all of our tasks and create a mindset that includes safe work practices at all time.

Miscellaneous

We hired WSP Canada Inc. from Dartmouth, NS to help us with the review and update of our MPS and LUB documents. The project will help us renewing our strategy in conducting business and guide residents in an easier and more understandable way.

The project is scheduled between October 2019 and March 2020. We are currently reviewing the first draft of the MPS and LUB. We hope to start the public engagement process in March 2020 and have everything approved and active by end of May 2020.

We made improvements on the housing type regulations and allow for more flexibility. We also aim for making the document easier to understand for readers that are not accustomed with the content. More info's will follow soon.

Director of Recreation Services- Natalie d'Entremont

Workplace Wellness Events

- 6 weeks weekday physical activity challenge – Last day is March 13
- Get over the Hump day: March 25 – Frozen fruit ice cream
- Noontime hike March 26
- Meeting March 5

Committee work

March 10: South Shore Female leadership network meeting in Birchtown

March 12: Tri-County Early y\Years Partnership meeting

March 24: Yarmouth County Substance use Partnership meeting

March 25: YSMRA meeting in Tusket

March 25 Argyle Minor soccer AGM

March Break Activities:

Sledge Hockey March 16 to 19 from 1 to 2pm at Mariners center

See Ginette's Report for other activities.

Run into Spring 5K /10K

This event has been postponed from March 8 at 10am, to March 29 due to uncertain trail conditions due to impending storm. The race will take place on the Tusket tracks.

Gender Equity in Recreation Facilities

Nicole Kenney, Sport Nova Scotia Regional Consultant and I will be presenting the Gender Equity Self-Assessment Tool to the Barrington Arena stakeholders on March 25.

Clinique de Santé

I will be attending this clinic at Par-en-Bas on March 11 as an exhibitor. This provides an opportunity to showcase what Argyle Recreation has to offer for our youth and families.

Budget: Ginette and I have been working hard to prepare the recreation budget for 2020-2021.

Director of Programming and Active Living - Ginette d'Entremont

Grant applications

I have been informed that we will be funded through Young Canada Works for 2 positions of 10 weeks for this summer. I'm still waiting to hear from Canada Summer Jobs.

South Shore Active Communities

I will be participating with the Before and After Pre-Primary Program session in Yarmouth on March 28 and 29.

Meetings attended

February 19 – Écoles Plus - PEB

February 20 – Argyle Recreation Commission

February 24 – Special Council meeting to discuss Provincial Volunteer

March 5 – MPAL (Municipal Physical Activity Leaders) in Shelburne

March 5 – SSAC (South Shore Active Communities) in Shelburne

March Break activities

We will have open family gym time at École Belleville from 10am – 12 noon March 16-20; Sledge try-it sessions from 1-2pm March 16-19 at the Mariners Centre; and open skating from 2:30-3:30pm at the Mariners Centre on March 17 and March 19. All activities are free of charge.

Municipal and Provincial Volunteer Banquets

Robert MacLeod has been selected as the Municipal Volunteer Representative who will attending the Provincial Volunteer Banquet in Halifax on April 27th.

Community Development Officer – Charlene LeBlanc

Period to Feb 6th to March 4th, 2020

- Attended the Minister's Conference for fisheries in Halifax. While there, I attended three meetings, one for a possible business development, one regarding the status of a lease applicant, and one for the ADA development.
- Worked on action items from the ADA steering committee.
- Distributed scholarship applications and guidelines to PEB and Drumlin students.
- Attended a WREN session regarding evaluating business.

- Assisting local fishermen, organizations, & business owners with various applications
- Editing the 50 Things to do Booklet for publication
- Poutine Week was held Feb 17-21. Over 100 poutine ballots were submitted.
- Doing Facebook Live faithfully
- Attended the WREN luncheon to thank connectors in the program.
- Gathering info for the newsletter
- Misc games, developers of Fishing North Atlantic which features Dennis Point, had a premiere at PAX East in Boston.

Senior Safety Coordinators Report – Peggy Boudreau

Overall Clients to date: Municipality of Argyle: 559 Municipality of Yarmouth: 339

New Clients for the Month of February: 4

Visits Overall to Date: 7471

Month of February: 118 Home Revisits: 56 Telephone Revisits: 62

Advocacy Letters written to Community Partners: 0

Referrals:

Referrals from RCMP to Date: 141 Month: 0

Referrals to RCMP to Date: 67 Month: 0

Outstanding Referrals to Date: 43 Month: 0

Town of Yarmouth Referrals: 204 Month: 0

Referrals to Other Agencies:

To Date:

Housing: Referrals: 80 Placements: 19 Month: 1

Continuing Care & Home Care: 210 Month: 1

Adult Protection: 87 Month: 1

Nursing Home/Boarding Home Placement from clients list: 44 Month: 1

Vial of Life Completed:

Month of February: 11

High Risk Active Files:

New Month of February: 1 MODA: 6 Overall High Risk: 216

MODY: 12

Other:

Feb 3 – Seniors Safety Coordinator Monthly Meeting

Feb 5 – MODY Staff Meeting

Feb 6 – Meeting with CAO (Performance Review)

Feb 12 – Choice Meeting

Feb 13 – EMO Meeting

Feb 18 – Senior's Expanded Team Meeting

Feb 19 – Caregivers Support Group Meeting with VON
Feb 20 – Caregiver’s Wellness Retreat Planning Committee Meeting
Feb 27 – MODY Staff Meeting
Feb 27 - MODA Staff Meeting

Community Presentations:

Feb 4 – Presentations at Holy Trinity Church on Senior Safety Program, Vial of Life, Frauds and scams. There were 12 people in attendance

Feb 20 – Presentation at Yarmouth Hospital to Stroke and Cardiac Support Group on Senior Safety Program, Vial of Life, Frauds and Scams. There were 12 people in attendance

Feb 25 – Presentation at NSCC Burrigge Campus to LPN and CCA students on the Senior Safety Program. Elder abuse, and the Vial of life. There were 50 people in attendance

Court House & Archives – HDO & Archivist Report - Judy Frotten

Funding Applications for Summer Staff – We submitted an application to Service Canada’s “Canada Summer Jobs” in Feb., which completed our funding applications for summer students. Typically, we receive results in April & May.

2020 Museum Evaluation Program (MEP) – Work continues on policy review/policy writing and improvements to the Court House, as we continue to work on our “Museum Best Practices.”

Climate Exhibit and Artistic Workshop Series 2020/21 – Work continues on this project with collaborative efforts with Francine Dulong (Co-Artistic Director of Blooming Ludus, England). We will be submitting a funding application to Province of NS’ Canadian Culture and Heritage program “One-time Emerging Culture and Heritage Initiatives Program.” We are communicating with Francine by teleconference (Zoom) and are also meeting with Virginia Smith of TREPA as a partner in this endeavor. Applications are being accepted through this funding stream from April 1st. We will meet again with Francine on March 19th and are working collaboratively on the application through Google docs. This project will see the Court House & Gaol museum provide an artistic workshop series and creation of a temporary exhibit, to enhance community engagement around climate change, with a focus on the Tusket River (focusing on stories across time of local relationships with the river, particularly crossroads where the Courthouse and Archives are located.)

Joint Occupational Health & Safety Committee – Judy participated in the JOHSC meeting on Feb. 18th and the next one is scheduled for March 12th at the Archives.

Council of Nova Scotia Archives (CNSA) – Kaitlin is on the CNSA’s Education Committee and continues to work with the committee to organize CNSA’s conference for May 2020.

Argyle Municipality Historical & Genealogical Society (AMHGS) – AMHGS had their last Board meeting on Feb. Feb. 18th and their next meeting is scheduled for Mar. 16th.

Young Canada Works (Peer Review) – Judy participated in YCW Peer Review once again this year, evaluating 37 applications from Canadian Museum Association (CMA).

The Argus – Spring 2020 issue is dedicated to “Kemptville and Its Beginnings: An Historical Sketch,” in celebration of their Bi-Centennial anniversary in 2020. The issue should be ready to go out to members later this month.

Two March events – We are hosting a free March Break event on March 18th at the Archives: Easter egg painting /decorating. We will advertise and open registration shortly. Kaitlin is working with Peter Crowell to put together a power point presentation for an event in Kempt March 20th & 21st.

Upcoming Conferences/Special Events – Lisette Gaudet of Yarmouth County Museum Archives is organizing a one-day Genealogy Conference on August 22nd and has asked Kaitlin to present one of the informational sessions. Kaitlin and Lisette met in Feb. for initial discussions.

Forum Acadien – The Acadian Conference originally scheduled in Oct. 2019 had been cancelled shortly before the date in 2019 due to the main organizer’s illness. The three partners met again on Feb. 19 and it was decided to re-offer for Oct. 2020. The partners are: Wedgeport Acadian Festival, Argyle Township Court House & Archives, Musée Acadien des Pubnicos. Much of the work has already been done, and the speakers have been confirmed for this year’s conference.

Book donations – We have received two large donations of books in February. Author Sally Ross donated a number of books, many on Acadian history, and also local history books. We have also received a large donation of books from the Western Counties Regional Library – Yarmouth branch, through Susan Young. These books are mostly local interest & historical books. Both donations are a significant contribution to our research library.

Volunteers – A special thank you to volunteers Peter Crowell, Leona Doucette and Allen Spinney. Kaitlin is away on holidays until March 17th and Judy had a death in the family and these three volunteers manned the office for much of 4 days, allowing Judy to work from home for a couple of those days (thus allowing the completion of YCW Peer Review responsibilities) and to be with family for the other two days. We are an organization that relies heavily on our volunteers, and they are an invaluable resource. Thank you also to MODA staff and Council for your understanding and support.