

Staff Report for Council – February 2022

Chief Administrative Officer and Deputy Chief Administrative Officer – Alain Muise and Scott Surette

Return to Work:

I'm back. Three days a week may as well be 6. I want Council to understand that in my absence this organization had grown and improved. It has come better, thanks to all those that continued to work in my absence. We selected new leadership and they delivered with excellence but let us not forget the other staff that chose to take on more, in the interest of the organization. We have strategically added more staff where we were suffering the most. We cannot and will no longer rely on too few people to do too much work. As administrative head, I will state with confidence that the changes and improvements shall result in the strongest service delivery ever. I am blessed to be at the head of this work and committed to ensure that staff are trained and taught to do the best work possible. Finally, I would like to thank Council for their consistent commitment to value my recovery over short term projects. This was a consistent message received from the Warden and the entire Council. With health scares comes perspective, and with a commitment from Council comes a commitment from their CAO to ensure excellence in service from myself and the new team.

Boundary Review:

P'tit Scott, Alix and I met to discuss the work and initial issues we need Council input on. Staff has been instructed on their role, and we will present a preliminary report to Council as early as end of month. We need to submit a recommendation to UARB before Dec 31, 2022, and we intend to do so. We are considering WSP as a consultant in areas we require. Our internal staff has data and is capable to provide options to you at your request.

Mariners Center partnership

Now that Council has approved an ownership stake, we will now define our position as one of regional partnership. The CAO's from our partner orgs and our Interim leadership met, and further defined what the agreement should include. We focused on our need to address the future of Mariners on Main in the absence of a project, as well as how MC needs to address Councils on requests. Other factors of agreement included the need to create a multi year plan on capital investment, reconsider governance needs (improved already, but are we missing something), and distinguishing the difference between ownership (one time) and funding (over time). discussions are positive.

Training

The CAO is fully committed in training new staff and understanding their needs over time. Internal training is ongoing. Our HR Lead will ensure that evaluations and objectives are established professionally.

Affordable and Alternative Housing *Council Priority (multiyear)

Nothing significant to report.

Rural Internet – WREN *Council Priority (multiyear)

Confirmation that High Speed Internet is available in Surette's Island and Morris Island.

Wedgeport Wastewater project

This project is on schedule, see also Operations report.

ACOA funding applications

We have received confirmation that ACOA has approved our Trails Funding applications. Further details shall be provided once the actual press release has been released by ACOA. We are still working with ACOA for the Hipson Bridge application.

Municipal Innovation Program

The RFP to hire a consulting firm to review the regional planning services has been posted. Town of Lockport has also asked to be part of this partnership and will may be added to this group.

By-Law Enforcement and Fire Inspection – Mitch Colburn

Dangerous Or Unsightly

We had one new complaint come in and one complaint closed. We now have 11 pending files. I anticipate more files being closed this month as some cleanups are in progress. The latest update on receiving "Special Constable" certification is any day now. Once this happens, I anticipate files being acted upon more quickly.

Fire Inspections

The Fire Inspector Certification program is moving forward more quickly now. I am 65% done with the home study program and reports coming back from the Fire Marshal are so far at 100% correct. The certification classes have been posted and will be attending the first modules starting the first week of May.

Finance Department- Marsha d'Eon

Our tax sale is scheduled for Tuesday, March 22, 2022 at 10:00am at the West Pubnico Legion Hall. Currently, there are 26 properties still listed.

The 2022 Property tax exemption application forms are now available in our office and on our website and 120 copies have been mailed to applicants who had received it last year. It will be advertised on our web page, in the Vanguard on March 15th and the Lobster Bay Shopper on March 24th, 2022. Deadline to apply is April 22nd, 2022.

The Finance Department is coming up into busy time with year-end, budget, and tax season. Preparations for all are underway.

I am in the process of working on the HST Offset which is due on March 21, 2022.

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

Community Development Officer Report – Charlene LeBlanc (Submitted by Scott Surette)

Working with West Pubnico and Wedgeport legions in regard to setting up a veteran's banner program for the municipality. We are in the process of gathering information for cost, location, and responsibilities of each partner.

ATCHA – Heritage Development Officer Report – Judy Frotten

Ongoing Capital Projects / Budget time – Capital project for 2021/22 to rectify the water situation at the Court House is currently on hold. Excavating equipment is on site, waiting for ground to thaw sufficiently so the work can proceed. We are gathering information/quotes for capital projects slated for the Court House for the new fiscal period, including window replacement, roof replacement and a paint job. We are working with Deputy CAO and Property Dept. to assist with costing of the various projects. We will also work with the Historical Society (AMHGS) to assist with funding opportunities and fundraising campaigns to help defray costs associated with the windows.

La Société Touristique Bon Temps d'Argyle – Judy joined their board at the Jan. 25/22 virtual AGM, and she will have a zoom board orientation on March 7.

Accessibility Equipment from @NS – ATCHA received two desktop computer systems, two iPads, voice recorders, and a table with adjustable heights, all free from @NS (formerly C@P program). This is an accessibility initiative funded by Federal and Provincial governments. The equipment is centered around accessible technology, which will allow patrons to access computers and the internet regardless of visual, hearing and motor-skills impairments. The equipment will be available for public use as well as by seasonal staff & volunteers. ATCHA is excited to have been able to participate in this initiative!

Tourism Nova Scotia and Events Nova Scotia – Judy attended webinar "2022 Tourism Outlook, Provincial Marketing Plans, and Industry Opportunities Confirmation: Tourism NS Webinar Series" on March 2.

AMHGS & The Argus – Historical Society’s last meeting was held Feb. 22nd and the next one is scheduled for March 15th. The Society is working on a new format for The Argus, exploring various strategies to deal with rising costs of printing. The spring 2022 issue is well underway with expected delivery in March.

Other ongoing projects:

- A Halifax researcher is working on a (funded) project for the Congrès mondiale acadiens 2024 and has partnered with us to access our resources in this research. He has been at the archives a few times in the last couple of weeks and will return again later this spring.
- AMHGS is participating in a project with Patchwork Pals to create a quilt for the Congrès. We have engaged a local quilter to design and create a quilting square for the Court House as part of this project.
- Oral History project continues. Judy met with Pauline (Hubbard) Bourque on Feb. 23 for the first of a series of interviews, with content to form part of a future exhibit. Phil has conducted several interviews with local Veteran and Centenarian Charles Muise, and his wife Anne, and is writing a series of articles for The Argus, the first of which was shared in the fall/winter 2021 issue.
- Judy met with Francine Dulong of Blooming Ludus on March 2 to discuss our collaborative “Tusket River Reminiscing Project.” This has been put on hold due to the pandemic, but we are resuming in 2022/23.
- Local researchers are starting to return to the archives, increasing traffic to our research room in the past couple of weeks.
- We have provided 125 issues of The Argus to Ginette with Active Living to include with her upcoming senior programming kits.

Please note that Phil Cassidy is away for one month. Our retired Municipal Archivist, Peter Crowell, has been hired to assist Judy during this time, mostly with researchers and archival work, for 10 hours per week.

Director of Recreation Services – Natalie d’Entremont

Make Your Move at Work Pilot Project Update:

The workplace wellness team has been working hard to improve the wellness room for staff to use. We have seen an increase in usage since last month. Great to see. We are also working on more projects for the wellness room.

We have launched a bingo challenge for staff to help add more movement throughout their workday. The challenge will end on March 31. Great prize incentive to be won. These initiatives are funded by the province (CCTH).

We’ve also launched a “Gotcha Card” project. The wellness team is giving out “Gotcha Cards” whenever they see a staff adding movement to their day (i.e., using the standing desk, going to the water cooler, walking meetings etc.)

Active Transportation Plan refresh: I continue to work with WSP and MODA AT committee. The committee has been working on the community engagement piece. We have identified 10 key stakeholders for the initial workshop with WSP. This workshop will take place virtually on

March 10. The committee also decided that 2 Community Open Houses should take place instead of one to allow for more public engagement. These public Open Houses will take place at Drumlin School and at Plymouth School with a session in the afternoon and one in the evening at both locations. Dates to be determined.

Recreation & Health Partnership: South Shore and Valley Recreation staff joined individuals from Primary Health Care on a virtual meeting to open the discussion around the opportunities for partnership in the western zone. 48 individuals attended and great discussion was had. This is an initial step for recreation and primary health care to work together with a focus on physical activity.

Glenwood Park Project update: Still waiting to the approval from DNR. Received a response that there was still no word for approval.

Pickleball: Started at Plymouth School on Feb 28 and March 2 at École Pubnico Ouest.

Meetings:

Feb 1 - Recreation and Health Partnership meeting
Feb 1 – Staff Meeting
Feb 2 – AT meeting with WSP
Feb 3 - Starlight Trail meeting
Feb 8 - Workplace Wellness meeting
Feb 8 – Starlight Trail
Feb 9 - Recreation and Health Partnership
Feb 10 – Leadership team meeting
Feb 11 – Canva training
Feb 15 - MODA AT meeting
Feb 16 – Mariner’s expansion committee
Feb 17 – Recreation Commission meeting
Feb 23 – Make Your Move Pilot check-in with Healthy Tomorrow foundation
Feb 23 – Planning meeting for South Shore - Valley Rec meeting
Feb 23 – Complaint Management System
Feb 24 – Leadership Team meeting
Feb 25 – Make Your Move Pilot check-in with Healthy Tomorrow Foundation

Director of Programming and Active Living – Ginette d’Entremont

Seniors – There has been a delay in putting together the activity kits for the seniors. Once they are ready, we will advertise on Facebook that we have a painting kit and a puzzle kits. These kits are free to seniors 65+, one per family.

Winter Activities

We offered an evening snowshoe activity on February 16 at the West Pubnico Golf course. We had 10 women attend the activity.

PD Sessions

I am taking a Time Management priority setting course with other MPALs in the region. This course is offered over 3 sessions, Feb 23, Mar 2, Mar 30.

February 17- I attended an online PAPE session for MPALs. The topic was about the 2021 ParticipACTION Adult Report card – the background and highlights. We also had a discussion on trail development and trail maintenance.

February 24 – The MPALs met online to discuss Open Spaces and how to develop a Master Plan for these open spaces.

March Break

We will be partnering with Yarmouth Recreation to offer 2 free swims at Marines on Main (March 14 & 16 from 12-1pm) and 2 free skates at the Mariners Centre (March 15 & 17 from 1-2pm). We will also be organizing a bingo challenge for families to participate in during the week with prizes to be won in different categories of one line, two lines or a full card.

Meetings/Webinars

February 2 – meeting with Laura Comeau regarding surfing lessons for the summer

February 3 – Starlight trail meeting

February 8 – Workplace wellness meeting

February 8 – Starlight trail meeting

February 12 – Met with Tim Doucette to check on 2 trails to determine which location would be best to proceed with the Starlight Trail project

February 15 – Active Transportation committee meeting

February 16 – Healthy Active Living Webinar

February 17 – ARC meeting

February 23 – Make your move meeting

February 28 – SAC Drumlin

February 23 – Can Bike meeting with Ginny Smith, Yar Rec, Barrington Rec

February 24 – CEC Belleville

Operational Services – Kyle Boudreau

West Pubnico Sewer Treatment Plant

Currently, all systems are functioning well, all our test results are well within the parameters set by NSDOE. There has been a 10 Hp pump breakdown at the lift station and we are rectifying this problem now. The 10 HP pump has arrived and will be installed next week.

We have corroding copper in the Auger building. We have ordered the material to rectify this and will be installed by our internal staff.

Tusket Sewer Treatment System

This plant is operating well within regulatory guidelines.

The generator is in place and hooked up and will be commissioned by Nova Scotia Power at their earliest convenience. The generator is commissioned and functioning, we will now have a functioning wastewater system in Tusket during power outages. This was a great project and cost-effective with the repurposing of the Generator from the old Municipality of Argyle office building. This Generator worked as designed during the first power outage.

We are currently working on fully automating our pumps at the Tusket plant. We were able to complete this work internally with the hire of a Red Seal electrician and the savings on labor were the only way to get this project done. This will save us approximately 50-60 hours of overtime per year for our operators.

We had our NSDoE audit this past month and no issues were identified.

East Pubnico Water Utility

We had a power surge take out a pump on Willet Road. Luckily there are 2 wells, so we have been able to continue to serve our customers. We are looking at inline surge protection to reduce this risk in the future. We have ordered our inline surge protection for this problem and will be installed by internal staff.

Wedgeport Sewer System

Regular maintenance and pumping are being done on the existing sewers.

Expansion of this system is currently in the design phase with tender expected to go out in coming weeks.

Facility and Field Maintenance

Snow removal season is ongoing. With the addition to the new road and our new building taking the additional time, we are finding it hard to keep up with the few dumping of snow that we have had. We are brainstorming a way to rectify this. We are using a much larger amount of salt this season due to weather and the addition of the new office building and road.

Building Inspection Report – John Sullivan and Rene Jeddry

February was a more manageable month compared to January. Still receiving a high number of phone calls and emails inquiring about possible permits or building code questions. Staff issued 1 Building Permit with 3 permits pending as well, staff also issued 3 development permits (including electrical power hookups) for a total of 4 permits issued. Note: A Demolition Permit is tallied under the Building Permit numbers and the adoption of the new LUB require all development within the municipality to start with a Development Permit. Currently 4 subdivisions in progress.

Our department is currently looking at upgrading our permitting software to make the process available online and more accessible through e-permitting. This new software would still be able to process paper applications and staff would be able to accept in-person applications as well.

Report from Alix d'Entremont – GIS Technician

- Regular data and civic address maintenance
- Updates to Building Permit Software (LiSA)
- Created a Hike NS Badge sign for Ginette
- Produced a list of potential sites for a solar energy investor
- ADA Meeting on Feb 15, 2022
- Mapping of utility poles at sidewalks for potential signage project
- Updated a map of the Municipality for the CDÉNÉ
- Argyle Active Transportation meetings on Feb 2 and 15.
- Building Permit software presentation on Feb 8.

Senior Safety Coordinator– Peggy Boudreau

Zoom Meetings

- Zoom staff meeting
- Zoom presentation on Joint police advisory rules and regulations
- Zoom webinar on Mass shootings
- EMO zoom meeting
- Zoom training session on medical alert systems

Statistics:

New clients: 5

Home visits: 5

Phone visits: 35

Emails and texts from or to an agency and/or caregivers: 25

Referrals to RCMP: 1

Referrals from RCMP: 2

Referral to Adult Protection: 1

Referral to Home Care: 2

Referral for Housing: 1

Town of Yarmouth referral: 1

High risk Clients: 13