

REPORTS FILED SUPPORTING PARRSBORO'S DISSOLUTION

Parrsboro, December 22, 2015 – A number of reports were filed yesterday, Dec. 22, with the Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board in support of the Town of Parrsboro's application for dissolution.

The reports were prepared for the Parrsboro/Cumberland Transition Committee. They are required as part of the Utility and Review Board's process to consider the town's application to dissolve and become part of the Municipality of the County of Cumberland effective Nov. 1, 2016.

The reports address all aspects of municipal responsibilities, such as fire and police services, solid waste, wastewater, streetlights, roads, and town's future financial condition if it remains a town or if it joins the County of Cumberland. They also consider human resources and the social impact on residents and community organizations.

"The transition team has done a tremendous amount of collaborative work to compile all of this information as we work toward a new governance structure that will benefit the residents of both Parrsboro and Cumberland County," said transition coordinator John Leefe.

One of the financial reports outlines potential tax rates and capital budget for the merged municipality. The rates for Cumberland County could remain the same at \$1.04 for residential and \$2.63 for business. In Parrsboro, the residential rate could see a 23-cent drop from \$1.75 to \$1.52 and the commercial rate could hold at \$3.85. These rates assume that previous user fees for solid waste, fire and streetlights in Parrsboro will be eliminated and these services will be paid for as part of the tax rates.

"The potential capital budget could include a new \$5-million wastewater system for the community that will eliminate raw sewage going into the bay. This would require increased sewer fees, most of which could be offset for businesses through the elimination of the solid waste user fee," said Mr. Leefe. "Even with the increased sewer rate, it is anticipated that homeowners could see savings from the elimination of the fire and solid waste user fees and a potential reduction in the tax rate."

Should dissolution be approved, the new council will make final decisions on the tax rates and budget beginning in 2017.

One more financial report will be prepared by Grant Thornton and submitted in mid-January to provide an independent analysis of the town's financial reports and the financial models for combining the municipal units.

All reports are available on the Utility and Review Board website at nsuarb.novascotia.ca (search case number M07110 under Matters and Evidence). More information about the dissolution process is available www.cumberlandcounty.ns.ca.

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Media contact:

John Leefe, Parrsboro/Cumberland Transition Coordinator
902-354-5553
j.leefe@bellaliant.net