

October 28, 2022

The following information was released in response to a Freedom of Information request:

RE: Request for Records

Records in the Custody of the Municipal of the County of Antigonish pursuant to your request under Part XX of the Municipal Government Act have been collected and compiled into a digital format, as requested. Records that are subject to solicitor-client privilege or matters discussed in a closed meeting have not been included in the records provided for this request.

As noted in our letter to the OIPC office on September 15, 2022, the Municipality has waived additional fees beyond the initial processing fee for this application.

Due to the size of the files created when the records were scanned, they will need to be sent in several emails to accommodate server limitations on message sizes.

If you have any further questions, please feel free to contact me at 902.863.1117, or by email at beth.schumacher@antigonishcounty.ns.ca.

Sincerely,



Beth Schumacher
Deputy Municipal Clerk

Glenn Horne

From: Glenn Horne
Sent: January 3, 2022 4:12 PM
To: Owen McCarron; mayor@townofantigonish.ca; Willie Cormier; Hughie Stewart
Cc: Jeffery Lawrence; Alisha Bowie
Subject: No Consoidation Steering Committee Meeting Tomorrow

Good evening & Happy New Year!

Please note there will be no steering committee meeting tomorrow morning. We will resume meetings next week.

Thanks!
Glenn

Glenn Horne
CAO
Municipality of the County of Antigonish

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: January 6, 2022 10:37 AM
To: Beth Schumacher
Cc: Owen McCarron; Glenn Horne; Council
Subject: RE: Draft Agendas for Tuesday, January 11, 2022

Beth;

I suggest we have a standing agenda item for "Consolidation" as council needs information to answer questions from residents. For example, I was asked by a fire chief over the holidays what it means to them, do they lose control or is it centralized, I couldn't answer him. According to the projected timeline we will be voting before we know it.
Harris

From: Beth Schumacher <beth.schumacher@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Sent: January 5, 2022 10:23 AM
To: Council <council@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Cc: SLT <slt@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; John Bain <jdbain@edpc.ca>
Subject: Draft Agendas for Tuesday, January 11, 2022

Good morning everyone, and Happy New Year!

I'm sending along the draft agendas for our meeting next week, and asking that if you have any items that you would like to add to the agenda, please contact me before the end of the day tomorrow (Thursday) with information about the item that you are looking to add.

Cheers,

Beth

Beth Schumacher
Deputy Municipal Clerk

Municipality of the County of Antigonish
285 Beech Hill Road, Beech Hill B2G 0B4
902-863-1117
www.antigonishcounty.ns.ca

Honour Yesterday, Act Today, Inspire Tomorrow

Glenn Horne

From: Glenn Horne
Sent: January 6, 2022 10:46 AM
To: Harris McNamara; Beth Schumacher
Cc: Owen McCarron; Council
Subject: RE: Draft Agendas for Tuesday, January 11, 2022

Good morning, Councillor McNamara –

We are working with the consultants on a progress update we hope to be able to share at next Tuesday's CoW meeting. However, we haven't received the materials yet. If we get it in time it will be on the agenda. Otherwise, it will be on the agenda for the following meeting.

We have noted the question about the affect on volunteer fire departments as one for Council to discuss.

Thanks!
Glenn



Glenn Horne | Chief Administrative Officer
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To: Beth Schumacher <beth.schumacher@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Cc: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Glenn Horne <glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Council <council@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
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Harris McNamara

From: Mary MacLellan
Sent: January 6, 2022 11:05 AM
To: Harris McNamara; Beth Schumacher
Cc: Owen McCarron; Glenn Horne; Council
Subject: RE: Draft Agendas for Tuesday, January 11, 2022

I agree with Harris and considering present circumstances I suggest we review the time line. Mary

From: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Sent: January 6, 2022 10:37 AM
To: Beth Schumacher <beth.schumacher@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Cc: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Glenn Horne <glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Council <council@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
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Honour Yesterday, Act Today, Inspire Tomorrow

Glenn Horne

Subject: Consolidation Steering Committee Meeting
Location: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85049397980?pwd=cGkvWnp0NlFbnJEbktVM2ZkZXhhQT09>

Start: Tue 2022-01-11 8:00 AM
End: Tue 2022-01-11 9:30 AM
Show Time As: Tentative

Recurrence: (none)

Meeting Status: Not yet responded

Organizer: Glenn Horne
Required Attendees: [omccarron](#); Hughie Stewart; Laurie Boucher; Willie Cormier; Jeffery Lawrence; Alisha Bowie; Shirlyn Donovan; kgorman@townofantigonish.ca

zmMeetingNum: 85049397980

Good afternoon, folks –

Please find attached the agenda and supporting materials for our Consolidation Steering Committee meeting on Tuesday, January 11 at 8am. It will be held via Zoom due to current gathering restrictions.

Please let me know if you have any questions of issues with the materials or links.

Thanks

Glenn

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85049397980?pwd=cGkvWnp0NlFbnJEbktVM2ZkZXhhQT09>

Meeting ID: 850 4939 7980

Passcode: 189381



Glenn Horne | Chief Administrative Officer
Municipality of the County of Antigonish | 902.863.1117
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Consolidation Steering Committee – Zoom Meeting
Tuesday, January 11, 2021 @ 8am
Meeting Agenda

- 1) Update on Critical Path
- 2) Feedback on Process Logo & Best Practices Document
- 3) Discussion of Joint Council Session
- 4) Update on RCMP Contract Discussions
- 5) Additions:
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.

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Our Community

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One Community. One Vision. One Voice.

ANTIGONISH
One Vision. One Voice

Beth Schumacher

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: January 6, 2022 4:34 PM
To: Glenn Horne
Subject: Accepted: Consolidation Steering Committee Meeting

Beth Schumacher

From: Beth Schumacher
Sent: January 7, 2022 12:39 PM
To: Council
Cc: SLT; Dianne Wilson
Subject: Notice of Upcoming Joint Council Meeting - Thursday January 20th

Hi Everyone,

As noted in the consolidation memo in the Committee of the Whole agenda, I'd like to provide advance notice of a Joint Council meeting being scheduled with our consultants for **Thursday, January 20 from 6-8pm via Zoom**. The link for the Zoom meeting is here: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88034917083?pwd=NWt5Tk9sU0Zzc1lzSDhFNXpqaFVNUT09>

Here is the meeting information if you're joining from the Zoom webpage instead of using the link:

- Meeting ID: 880 3491 7083
- Passcode: 571469

Cheers,

Beth

Beth Schumacher
Deputy Municipal Clerk

Municipality of the County of Antigonish
285 Beech Hill Road, Beech Hill B2G 0B4
902-863-1117
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Beth Schumacher

From: Glenn Horne
Sent: January 7, 2022 11:44 AM
To: Mombourquette, Meghan (Kelloway, Mike - MP)
Cc: Fraser, Sean - Riding 1; Owen McCarron; mayor@townofantigonish.ca; Jeffery Lawrence
Subject: RE: Virtual Meeting Request

Good morning, Meghan – We can make these times work if Minister Fraser is available as well.

Thanks!
Glenn



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Honour Yesterday, Act Today, Inspire Tomorrow

From: Mombourquette, Meghan (Kelloway, Mike - MP) <meghan.mombourquette.201@parl.gc.ca>
Sent: January 5, 2022 12:48 PM
To: Glenn Horne <glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Cc: Fraser, Sean - Riding 1 <Sean.Fraser.C1@parl.gc.ca>; Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; mayor@townofantigonish.ca; Jeffery Lawrence <jlawrence@townofantigonish.ca>
Subject: RE: Virtual Meeting Request

Good morning,

MP Kelloway is available next week on **January 12th at 1:00PM** or **January 13th at 11:00AM** - please let me know if either of these will work.



Meghan Mombourquette

Constituency Office Manager
Mike Kelloway, M.P. Cape Breton – Canso
Office: 1-866-282-0699
Cell: 1-902-578-9878

From: Glenn Horne <glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Sent: January 5, 2022 11:43 AM
To: Fraser, Sean - Assistant 2 <Sean.Fraser.A2@parl.gc.ca>; Fraser, Sean - Riding 1 <Sean.Fraser.C1@parl.gc.ca>; Kelloway, Mike - Personal <>; Kelloway, Mike - M.P. <Mike.Kelloway@parl.gc.ca>

Cc: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; mayor@townofantigonish.ca; Jeffery Lawrence <jlawrence@townofantigonish.ca>

Subject: Virtual Meeting Request

Good morning, Minister Fraser & MP Kelloway –

Happy New Year! On behalf of the Warden & Mayor I'd like to request a virtual meeting with you both to provide an update on the County and Town's progress in exploring consolidation. Specifically, we'd like to share with you one of the challenges that has emerged concerning our RCMP contracts and efforts to date to address it.

If you are both available in the coming week or so for a 30 minute virtual meeting, we would greatly appreciate it.

Cheers,
Glenn



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Honour Yesterday, Act Today, Inspire Tomorrow

Beth Schumacher

From: Robinson, Teena <Teena.Robinson@novascotia.ca>
Sent: January 7, 2022 4:16 PM
To: Glenn Horne
Cc: Barr, Nick; jlawrence@townofantigonish.ca; Owen McCarron;
mayor@townofantigonish.ca; Kiley, Bruce A; Carvery, Kim
Subject: M10417 - Municipal Boundary Review - Municipality of the County of Antigonish
(MB-21-01)
Attachments: NSUARB-#290447-v1-Let_Mun_Antigonish_Mun_Bound_Review_2022.pdf

Mr. Horne,

Please find attached correspondence from the Board regarding your request for an extension.

Thank you,

Teena Robinson

Administrative Assistant
Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board
3rd Floor, 1601 Lower Water Street
Halifax, NS B3J 3P6

Tel: (902)424-4448 Ext. 9289

Fax: (902)424-3919

Email: teena.robinson@novascotia.ca

Confidentiality Notice - *Not the person who was intended to receive this message? My apologies.*

This message and any attachments and other information it contains may be confidential. Here's what to do:

- *Reply to me to let me know about the mistake.*
- *Do not communicate the content.*
- *Delete this message, first in your inbox and then in your trash.*

Thank you for your cooperation



Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board

Mailing address

PO Box 1692, Unit "M"
Halifax, Nova Scotia
B3J 3S3
board@novascotia.ca
<http://nsuarb.novascotia.ca>

Office

3rd Floor, 1601 Lower Water Street
Halifax, Nova Scotia B3J 3P6
1 855 442-4448 (toll-free)
902 424-4448 t
902 424-3919 f

January 7, 2022

glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca

Glenn Horne
Chief Administrative Officer
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
285 Beech Hill Road
Beech Hill, NS B2G 0B4

Dear Mr. Horne:

M0417 - S. 369 of the Municipal Government Act - 2022 Municipal Boundary Review – Municipality of the County of Antigonish (MB-21-01)

The Board has reviewed your letter of December 10, 2021, in which the Municipality requests an extension for its municipal boundary review to at least June 30, 2023. The Municipality correctly observes that this review must be completed in advance of the October 2024 municipal election. The request was considered by Roland A. Deveau, Q.C., Vice Chair.

The request is made to accommodate the investigation and consideration of a consolidation of the Town of Antigonish and the Municipality, in conjunction with the Department of Municipal Affairs.

The Board grants the request for an extension until June 30, 2023. In the circumstances, the Board provides a similar extension to the Town of Antigonish, if required. The Board directs that the Municipality provide a status update by January 31, 2023.

Yours very truly,

Bruce Kiley
Chief Clerk of the Board

- c. Owen McCarron, Warden, Municipality of the County of Antigonish
Nick Barr, Director Governance & Advisory Services, NS Department of Municipal Affairs and Housing
Laurie Boucher, Mayor, Town of Antigonish
Jeff Lawrence, CAO, Town of Antigonish

Harris McNamara

From: Gary Mattie
Sent: January 10, 2022 10:36 PM
To: Mary MacLellan
Cc: Harris McNamara; Glenn Horne; Council
Subject: Re: Special District Grants

Many people have small community causes has reached out to me looking for a response moving forward will they have the same support that has been given to them since many years.

Sent from my iPad

On Jan 10, 2022, at 3:31 PM, Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca> wrote:

I have shared this concern that Harris addressed as one of the major concerns residents in District one have concerning the possible consolidation . The many volunteer groups in this area heavily depend on this funding, which is easy to access, is dependable and does not require complicated, time consuming application forms. Mary

From: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Sent: January 10, 2022 3:14 PM
To: Glenn Horne <glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Cc: Council <council@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Special District Grants

Glenn;

I was putting together priorities in District 9 for 2022 and as part of the plan thought about the Special District Grants and where best to put resources. District 9 and most districts have carry over for funds from last year in their Special District Grants. Here is my question and it pertains to most councillors, if a vote is held according to timeline projected for consolidation, will these built up funds in our Special District Grants be able to be directed for use by individual councillors after the vote, assuming positive vote? What happens to Special District Grants? I look forward to discussing this with you and with council.

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Location: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85049397980?pwd=cGkvWnp0NlplFbnJEbktVM2ZkZXhhQT09>
Start: Tue 2022-01-11 8:00 AM
End: Tue 2022-01-11 9:30 AM
Show Time As: Tentative
Recurrence: (none)
Meeting Status: Not yet responded
Organizer: Glenn Horne

Good morning – Resending meeting link and materials.

-----Original Appointment-----

From: Glenn Horne
Sent: January 6, 2022 3:38 PM
To: Owen McCarron; Hughie Stewart; Laurie Boucher; Willie Cormier; Jeffery Lawrence; Alisha Bowie; Shirlyn Donovan; kgorman@townofantigonish.ca
Subject: Consolidation Steering Committee Meeting
When: January 11, 2022 8:00 AM-9:30 AM (UTC-04:00) Atlantic Time (Canada).
Where: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85049397980?pwd=cGkvWnp0NlplFbnJEbktVM2ZkZXhhQT09>

Good afternoon, folks –

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Meeting ID: 850 4939 7980

Passcode: 189381



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Honour Yesterday, Act Today, Inspire Tomorrow

From: [Glenn Horne](#)
To: [Gary Mattie](#); [Mary MacLellan](#)
Cc: [Harris McNamara](#); [Council](#)
Subject: RE: Special District Grants
Date: January 11, 2022 8:37:33 AM

Good afternoon, Councillors –

These are very good questions. I'd suggest Council discusses them further and provides perspectives so we can best assess how grants fit into the larger picture. We will find time so you can chat about this further, if not on Tuesday, then soon.

Thanks!
Glenn



Glenn Horne | Chief Administrative Officer
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To: Glenn Horne <glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>

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Subject: Special District Grants

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Harris

Beth Schumacher

From: Glenn Horne
Sent: January 11, 2022 9:15 AM
To: Council
Cc: SLT; Shirlyn Donovan
Subject: 2022 Boundary Review Extension
Attachments: County of Antigonish.pdf; 2021 - December 10 - UARB Boundary Review Extension Request.pdf; NSUARB-#290447-v1-Let_Mun_Antigonish_Mun_Bound_Review_2022.pdf

Good morning, Councillors –

I will speak to this item tonight during the Consolidation update, but sharing with you now in case you have time to review it prior.

The Municipal Government Act requires every municipality to apply to the Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board (NSUARB) every eight years to “confirm or to alter the number and boundaries of polling districts and the number of councillors.” We last reviewed district boundaries in 2014. This is set to be done throughout Nova Scotia again in 2022.

Given we are in the midst of a process to explore consolidation with the Town of Antigonish, a process that could have significant effect on the number and boundaries of polling districts, I have requested the NSUARB grant the Municipality of the County of Antigonish an extension to complete this review until June 30, 2023. This will provide time to answer the consolidation question and then complete the boundary review if the answer is to remain as two separate municipalities. If consolidation occurs a separate process will be undertaken to determine the number and boundaries of electoral districts in the consolidated municipality.

This request has been granted by the NSUARB. Please see the attached correspondence for your information.

If you have any questions please let me know.

Thanks,
Glenn



Glenn Horne | Chief Administrative Officer
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Honour Yesterday, Act Today, Inspire Tomorrow



Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board

Mailing address

PO Box 1692, Unit "M"
Halifax, Nova Scotia
B3J 3S3
board@novascotia.ca
<http://nsuarb.novascotia.ca>

Office

3rd Floor, 1601 Lower Water Street
Halifax, Nova Scotia B3J 3P6
1 855 442-4448 (toll-free)
902 424-4448 t
902 424-3919 f

December 10, 2021

glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca

County of Antigonish
c/o Chief Administrative Officer
285 Beech Hill Rd
Antigonish, NS B2G 2L4

Dear Mr. Horne:

S. 369 of the Municipal Government Act – 2022 Municipal Boundary Review

Section 369 of the *Municipal Government Act* requires councils of every town and municipality to apply to the Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board in 2022 to “confirm or to alter the number and boundaries of polling districts and the number of councillors.” All councils must conduct a study into the number of councillors and into the reasonableness and fairness of the number and boundaries of polling districts before making the application to the Board.

Enclosed is a copy of a User Guide prepared by the Board to provide guidance to towns and municipalities in the preparation of their applications. This information is also available on the Board’s website: <https://nsuarb.novascotia.ca/> under the Municipal Boundaries page.

Also, enclosed is a copy of Board’s *Municipal Government Act Rules (Rules)*. *Rule 27* sets out the information that is required to be filed by towns and municipalities which have polling districts or wards (to be completed on Form C). *Rule 28* sets out the requirements for towns which have no polling districts or wards (Form D).

If you have questions about the application process, please contact the undersigned. Please confirm receipt of this letter.

Yours very truly,

Bruce Kiley
Chief Clerk of the Board

Encl.

December 10, 2021

Bruce Kiley, Chief Clerk of the Board
Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board
3rd Floor, 1601 Lower Water Street
Halifax, Nova Scotia B3J 3P6
Via email: board@novascotia.ca

Dear Mr. Kiley,

RE: Request for Extension: 2022 Municipal Boundary Review

Thank you for your correspondence of Friday, December 10, 2021, bringing my attention to the need to complete the Municipality's mandated municipal boundary review in 2022. On behalf of the Municipality, I respectfully request an extension for the completion of this review.

In September 2021, the councils of the Municipality of the County of Antigonish and the Town of Antigonish approved the following motion:

The Committee [of the Whole] recommends that the Town of Antigonish and the Municipality of the County of Antigonish work with the Department of Municipal Affairs to explore consolidation of the two municipal units.

Since September we have been working with our partners in the Town and Municipal Affairs to explore the opportunities associated with consolidating the Town and County into one municipal unit, using the recent example of the merger between the Town of Windsor and District of West Hants. With the support of Municipal Affairs, we have recently engaged a firm to assist us with coordinating the activities associated in making such a decision. Based on my understanding of the expected timelines a decision on consolidation will be made by both municipalities in the late spring 2022.

In my opinion, it makes little practical sense to undertake a review of the number and boundaries of existing electoral districts prior to this larger question of consolidation being answered. Further, if public engagement activities were undertaken for a boundary review prior to the consolidation question being answered it would create confusion for both processes.

If consolidation takes place an application will be made to the NSUARB to approve electoral districts associated with the new municipality. If consolidation does not take

place the Municipality would undertake the mandated review at its earliest opportunity. However, I would respectfully request that an extension of at least six months, to June 30, 2023, be granted to allow for sufficient time to complete appropriate consideration and public engagement. This would still be well in advance of the October 2024 municipal election.

If you would like to discuss this request further, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,



Glenn Horne
CAO

Cc: Owen McCarron, Warden, Municipality of the County of Antigonish
Nick Barr, Director Governance & Advisory Services, NS Department of
Municipal Affairs and Housing
Laurie Boucher, Mayor, Town of Antigonish
Jeff Lawrence, CAO, Town of Antigonish



Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board

Mailing address

PO Box 1692, Unit "M"
Halifax, Nova Scotia
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902 424-4448 t
902 424-3919 f

January 7, 2022

glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca

Glenn Horne
Chief Administrative Officer
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
285 Beech Hill Road
Beech Hill, NS B2G 0B4

Dear Mr. Horne:

M0417 - S. 369 of the Municipal Government Act - 2022 Municipal Boundary Review – Municipality of the County of Antigonish (MB-21-01)

The Board has reviewed your letter of December 10, 2021, in which the Municipality requests an extension for its municipal boundary review to at least June 30, 2023. The Municipality correctly observes that this review must be completed in advance of the October 2024 municipal election. The request was considered by Roland A. Deveau, Q.C., Vice Chair.

The request is made to accommodate the investigation and consideration of a consolidation of the Town of Antigonish and the Municipality, in conjunction with the Department of Municipal Affairs.

The Board grants the request for an extension until June 30, 2023. In the circumstances, the Board provides a similar extension to the Town of Antigonish, if required. The Board directs that the Municipality provide a status update by January 31, 2023.

Yours very truly,

Bruce Kiley
Chief Clerk of the Board

- c. Owen McCarron, Warden, Municipality of the County of Antigonish
Nick Barr, Director Governance & Advisory Services, NS Department of Municipal Affairs and Housing
Laurie Boucher, Mayor, Town of Antigonish
Jeff Lawrence, CAO, Town of Antigonish

Glenn Horne

From: Glenn Horne
Sent: January 13, 2022 3:39 PM
To: Owen McCarron
Subject: FW: Agenda
Attachments: 2022-01-20 Agenda for Joint Councils.pdf

How does this look to you?



Glenn Horne | Chief Administrative Officer
Municipality of the County of Antigonish | 902.863.1117
285 Beech Hill Road, Beech Hill, NS | B2G 0B4
www.antigonishcounty.ns.ca | [@AntigonishCo](https://www.facebook.com/AntigonishCo) | [facebook](#)

Honour Yesterday, Act Today, Inspire Tomorrow

From: Shirlyn Donovan <shirlyn.donovan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Sent: January 13, 2022 3:03 PM
To: Glenn Horne <glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: FW: Agenda

Here is the agenda for the Joint Council session.

Shirlyn

Shirlyn Donovan
Strategic Initiatives Coordinator
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
285 Beech Hill Road
Antigonish, NS B2G 0B4
902-863-1117

 www.antigonishcounty.ns.ca
 www.twitter.com/antigonishco

Honour Yesterday, Act Today, Inspire Tomorrow

From: Chrystal Fuller <chrystal@brighterplanning.ca>
Sent: Thursday, January 13, 2022 2:54 PM
To: Shirlyn Donovan <shirlyn.donovan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; kgorman@townofantigonish.ca
Cc: smithrsx@yahoo.ca
Subject: Agenda

Shirlyn and Kate,

Here is our agenda for the Joint Council meeting.

Chrystal

Chrystal Fuller, LPP, MCIP
Principal, **Brighter Community Planning & Consulting**
80 Water Street
Windsor, NS
902-790-0664



<http://www.brighterplanning.ca>



Antigonish Joint Councils Workshop Agenda January 21, 2022

- 6.00-6.15 Introduction of Consulting Team and Council members
- 6.15 - 6.30 Review of the consulting team's timelines - Presentation and questions
- 6.30-7.00 Review of Best Practises Backgrounder - Presentation and discussion
- 7.00-7.10 Break
- 7.10-7.40 Engagement Plan and Communication Plan discussion - May involve small break out groups
 - o The consolidation decision and what is needed from the public to make it
 - o Objectives of the engagement and communication plan
 - o Stakeholder and issue identification
- 7.40-7.45 Wrap Up and timing for Guiding Principles development

Workshop objectives

The objectives of the session are to:

- Review the Best Practises Backgrounder (to be circulated in advance of the Joint Council meeting)
- Assess and document what information Councils require from the public for the decision-making process regarding consolidation. (provide examples, decision making framework)
- Seek high level input into the engagement and communication planning

Beth Schumacher

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: January 13, 2022 5:29 PM
To: Glenn Horne
Subject: Accepted: Consolidation Steering Committee Meeting

Beth Schumacher

From: Glenn Horne
Sent: January 14, 2022 3:33 PM
To: Owen McCarron; Hughie Stewart; mayor@townofantigonish.ca; Willie Cormier; Jeffery Lawrence; Alisha Bowie; Shirlyn Donovan; kgorman@townofantigonish.ca
Subject: RE: Consolidation Steering Committee Meeting
Attachments: Best Practices Final.pdf

Hi folks –

The Background document has been updated. Please review this copy.

Have a great weekend!
Glenn



Glenn Horne | Chief Administrative Officer
Municipality of the County of Antigonish | 902.863.1117
285 Beech Hill Road, Beech Hill, NS | B2G 0B4
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Honour Yesterday, Act Today, Inspire Tomorrow

-----Original Appointment-----

From: Glenn Horne
Sent: January 13, 2022 4:00 PM
To: Owen McCarron; Hughie Stewart; Laurie Boucher; Willie Cormier; Jeffery Lawrence; Alisha Bowie; Shirlyn Donovan; kgorman@townofantigonish.ca
Subject: Consolidation Steering Committee Meeting
When: January 18, 2022 8:00 AM-9:00 AM (UTC-04:00) Atlantic Time (Canada).
Where: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81757722176?pwd=T3lPQnBHSXJZbEtsRk00UmxPdIUQT09>

Good afternoon, folks –

Please find attached the agenda and supporting materials for Tuesday's Consolidation Steering Committee meeting. This meeting will again be held via Zoom; the meeting link is below. If you have any questions or concerns prior to the meeting please let me know.

Cheers,

Glenn

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81757722176?pwd=T3lPQnBHSXJZbEtsRk00UmxPdIUQT09>

Meeting ID: 817 5772 2176
Passcode: 663921



Glenn Horne | Chief Administrative Officer
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Honour Yesterday, Act Today, Inspire Tomorrow

ANTIGONISH

Our Community

Community Engagement Liaison Project
Exploring Consolidation with
the Town & County of Antigonish

JANUARY 2022



This report as part of the process to engage with the residents and stakeholders of Antigonish regarding potential consolidation.

This report was prepared by: Brighter Community Planning & Consulting and BTS Management Consulting



January 2022



Best Practises Backgrounder

Introduction: The Town of Antigonish and the Municipality of the County of Antigonish have been working together for some time now on initiatives to improve the region as a whole. This positive experience, and some creative forward thinking, have led both Councils to agree to explore the merger process known generally as “consolidation”. Consolidation is a newer approach to municipal merger for communities and councils than the better-known Nova Scotian examples of amalgamation and dissolution. With consolidation, the province would create special legislation to empower a “Transition Committee” that represents both municipal units. The Transition Committee would have the authority to determine what the new Regional Municipality would look like. The NS Utility and Review Board would still be involved in reviewing electoral district boundaries, but much of the detailed work of the merger would be coordinated locally.

Nova Scotia municipalities and the provincial government have learned a lot about “best practises” in exploring a possible merger. This Backgrounder is intended to quickly summarize some of this history and highlight some observations that should inform the Steering Committee established by the Antigonish Town and County to explore the option of consolidation.

A cautionary note: This backgrounder may be seen as being critical of some historical events and council initiatives. These circumstances reflected the hard work and best intentions of the Councils, staff, community leaders and regulatory authorities at the time. Times have changed, and we are able to look at these events through a new lens.

Look for comments from the author in italics, at the end of each example provided below.



SECTION A: THE HISTORY OF NOVA SCOTIA MUNICIPAL MERGERS AND LESSONS LEARNED

2001 – 2006 Antigonish Annexation and Amalgamation Experience: Not a “best practise”

The Town and County of Antigonish have a piece of municipal history that provides a good opportunity to learn what to avoid when undertaking a municipal merger. In 2001, the Town made an application to the NS Utility and Review Board (NSUARB) to annex about 3814 Acres of the Municipality adjacent to the Town boundaries. Relations between the Town and the Municipality were strained at the time, and the Municipality responded a few weeks later by making application to amalgamate the Town and County. The UARB considered both applications together, and initially proposed amalgamation, pending the results of plebiscites in both municipal units. There were active “NO” campaigns, accusations of misrepresentation of the facts, and general anger within the communities involved. The plebiscites produced a strong “no” from Town residents, and very limited support from residents in the Municipality.

After several years of this process, the NSUARB decided upon maintaining the status quo, leaving the Town and County as separate organizations. Its decision is very clear about the need for a comprehensive regional approach to move the communities forward. “The Board expects that the public will not tolerate a continuation of these conflicts over the long term.” Enclosed as Appendix A are excerpts from that decision.

For the purposes of this Backgrounder, it is important to recognize that the decision-making about the proposed merger was within the NSUARB regulatory process, the community communications and engagement were adversarial from the outset, and engagement occurred only after firm positions were taken by both Councils. Unfortunately, the use of a plebiscite fed into the strong position taken on both sides of the issue.



1990's Amalgamations: Halifax-Dartmouth, Industrial Cape Breton, Liverpool-Queens

The Liberal Government of John Savage took a strong leadership role with respect to municipal structure, forcing a merger on the City of Sydney, County of Cape Breton and six towns to form the Cape Breton Regional Municipality in 1995. Halifax Regional Municipality was established by the province in 1996, bringing together the Cities of Halifax and Dartmouth, the Town of Bedford and the surrounding County of Halifax. Coordinators were appointed with broad powers to create both new municipalities, Councils and communities were engaged in terms of “how to”, but the result was pre-determined in legislation and driven by the appointed Coordinator. The province had acted in response to problems with regional decision-making in greater Halifax. In the case of Industrial Cape Breton, the issue was similar, and was complicated by the declining economic health of the region.

The amalgamation of Liverpool and Queens County that occurred roughly at the same time as Halifax and Cape Breton was very different, initiated and guided by the Town, County and two villages from the outset. This had as much to do with the leadership of the Town and County as it did with the merger initiatives coming from the Province.

Twenty-five years later, the community leadership in Queens is still recognized across Canada when looking for good examples of municipal mergers. The Province of Nova Scotia has not taken a policy position to encourage amalgamations since 1996, but it has encouraged “innovation” in service delivery and invested in transition funding.



2012-2016 Town Dissolutions: Canso, Bridgetown, Hantsport, Springhill, Parrsboro

The economic and regulatory changes early in the twenty-first century produced dramatic failures for several historic Nova Scotia Towns. Canso agreed to dissolution in 2012 when it lost its major employer, the National Sea Products fish plant. A few years later, Bridgetown Town Council resigned, unable to cope with their financial issues. Hantsport lost several major industrial taxpayers and had to dissolve. Springhill was faced with serious infrastructure and management issues, and Parrsboro had become just too small to continue as a separate government. As was the case with the amalgamations outlined above, provincial coordinators were appointed, but in the decision-making about all aspects of the dissolutions was directed to the NSUARB.

Consultation with communities and Councils during these dissolutions was for the purpose of the NSUARB hearings. The future of all the Towns was decided by the UARB, based on their review of the evidence presented.



2014-2016 Proposed Amalgamation of Pictou County, Pictou, Stellarton and New Glasgow

Pictou County is governed by 5 separate Towns and the County of Pictou. In late 2014, Pictou, Stellarton, New Glasgow and the Municipality of the County signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to establish a new regional municipality in advance of the next round of municipal elections in 2016. The concept of an MOU was developed at a time when the Province was reticent to introduce special legislation to support a merger. This Pictou MOU was very thorough in terms of the financial and related analysis and steps to be included, including an application to the NSUARB. Studies were completed over the course of 2015 and the UARB held a hearing and public input sessions in Stellarton and Scotsburn in March of 2016. These public sessions were crowded, well documented by local media, and there was considerable skepticism about the financial research provided to the Board and criticism of the communications leading up to the hearing. The Initial Decision from the UARB favoured amalgamation and the concept of a single government leading the region forward. The Board requested public consultation, including a plebiscite in May of that year. Considerable opposition remained within the local communities, and the results of the plebiscite were generally negative except for residents of the Town of New Glasgow. Several of the municipal partners immediately withdrew from the UARB application, and the Board dismissed the application in June.

Once again, the focus of decision-making was with the NSUARB and its hearing process, and the municipal communications process was unable to achieve broad support for the proposed merger. Although the results of the plebiscite were not binding on the UARB the Board had to take into account the strong opposition to the proposed merger. Plebiscites are a blunt tool to engage the community, they may polarize residents instead of listening to their concerns and addressing them effectively in the decision making process.



2020 Windsor West Hants Consolidation

The Windsor West Hants “consolidation” is the model of this new approach to municipal mergers, replacing amalgamation or dissolution with something that is more collaborative for the municipal partners. This consolidation was facilitated by special transitional legislation, passed upon request from the municipal councils involved. Before speaking to the consolidation process itself, it is important to look at what preceded it, beginning in 2016.

Windsor and West Hants had a long history of intermunicipal conflicts, the most recent of which was a dispute over funding of the joint fire service provided by the Windsor Volunteer Fire Department. Reacting to this situation, a local citizens group, the Avon Region Citizens Coalition, was formed. This Coalition activated Section 358 of the Municipal Government Act, which provides an opportunity for a group representing ten percent of the population of the area to ask the UARB for amalgamation. Through a petition, they were able to demonstrate that at least 18% of the citizens of Town and County combined supported their proposal, which they filed with the UARB in February 2016. The application was supported by the Town of Windsor, and provided 11 reasons for amalgamation, including:

- A respectful merger of the two units
- More efficient governance through the removal of duplication
- Financial stability
- Vision and growth continuity
- Alignment with goals outlined by the Ivany Commission (One Nova Scotia)

The Avon Region Citizens Coalition application for merger was eventually withdrawn, after the Fall 2016 municipal elections and a MOU between the Town and Municipality in February 2017 that led to the consolidation process itself. But it is important to recognise how engaged some of the citizens were at the early stages of the process. When elected officials canvassed their communities prior to the 2016 municipal elections, they found lots of interest in the structure of local government in the area.



Turning to the process of consolidation itself, that February 2017 Memorandum of Understanding struck a Steering Committee with clear responsibilities and expectations about collaboration. Here is an excerpt from the February 2017 joint media release about the MOU:

The agreement between Windsor and West Hants outlines a framework for a new relationship that will see the two working cooperatively on shared areas of interest that will benefit all the citizens in their respective communities. The initial objectives are intended to focus on broad areas that will serve to improve access and use of resources, services and programs while generating maximum cost benefits for both municipal units.

In the months that followed, the joint Steering Committee completed research, consultation and discussions that resulted in both Windsor and the Municipality of West Hants Councils meeting jointly in July, August and September of 2018 to request the Department of Municipal Affairs provide special legislation to consolidate the two units. Again, the media release for that decision is helpful in terms of understanding their approach and citizen engagement: Councils agreed that the Queens County amalgamation will be used as the model for our region and after a successful evening of discussion and debate agreed to the following statements:

- Our Councils are committed to moving forward together to create a new regional government for a stronger community.
- Our public will be engaged in a continuous and responsive way to inform our decision-making.
- Coherent communication messages will be agreed to in a timely manner by all three parties, the two municipal units and the Province, before being made public.
- It will be made clear by the two municipal units what they can change or influence and what they cannot.
- No individual Councillor or municipal unit will speak on behalf of the group.
- Councils understand that all questions will not be able to be answered as of yet, but lack of details does not equal a lack of commitment.

Bill 55, the special legislation to Incorporate the Region of Windsor and West Hants Municipality facilitated the creation of a new regional municipality by April 1, 2020. It included the appointment of a transition coordinator and the creation of a transition committee with equal representation from Town and County to oversee the process.



Once the legislation was in place, the joint transition committee put the pieces in place to establish the new municipal unit over a few months. They hired experienced municipal lawyer Kevin Latimer as the Transition Coordinator, recruited a new CAO, Mark Phillips, and completed significant research and consultation with the communities involved. Their meetings and agendas were posted publicly, and residents could observe Transition Committee meetings through Facebook Live. For the purposes of this “best practises” report, one of the most important early steps was the establishment of clear guiding principles for the consolidation process. These Guiding Principles for Consolidation directed a process that would follow the existing tax structure in both units, that would be fair in terms of communities paying for services provided, that would treat staff fairly, and that would adopt a strong regional approach. **The Windsor West Hants Guiding Principles** are included with this backgrounder as **Appendix B**.

The Regional Municipality of West Hants has been operating now for three fiscal years, it has established itself as a new organization, and produced policies and practises across the larger municipal unit. In combining the previous municipal organizations and recognizing the regional approach to be taken, the Municipality has been engaged in such things as:

- Reviews of human resource policies, union contracts.
- Reviews of fire service financing, policies, and the emergency management plan.
- Combining public works in terms of staffing, cross training, and better asset management.
- Regional provision of recreation services and completion of a new regional sports facility.
- Establishing a new regional Planning Strategy and by-laws.

Two important things to note here: The municipal partners made the actual decision to merge before the special legislation was created. The Province accommodated the municipal request directly in the Legislature as opposed to having the matter adjudicated by the NSUARB. The UARB was utilized to review the electoral boundaries as proposed by the Transition Committee.



SECTION B: RECOMMENDED APPROACHES FOR EXPLORING MUNICIPAL CONSOLIDATION

All this municipal experience with annexation and mergers in Nova Scotia provides a basis to identify what are the “best practises” to be considered in the exploration of municipal consolidation by the Town and County of Antigonish. Fortunately, the two units have changed significantly in terms of their recent history of cooperation when compared to the annexation/ amalgamation situation that existed twenty years ago. This is documented in the Terms of Reference for this study:

Over the past few years, the Town and County have made significant strides and strengthened their relationships, establishing a trusted partnership that builds on that history of success and service between the two municipal units.

Together, the Town and County have been able to invest and build new infrastructure, host large events like the 2018 National Special Olympics and the Provincial 55+ Games, as well as improve municipal services and programming through greater coordination. The Town and County have seen their joint success grow with the relationships they have built with St. FX University, St. Martha’s Regional Hospital Foundation, as well as with community groups like Antigonish Community Transit, Antigonish Affordable Housing, Keppoch Mountain, and the People’s Place Library, to name a few.

This is a great starting point for exploring municipal consolidation, and the following list of Recommended Approaches is intended to support the Steering Committee from the two municipal units in completing that exploration process:



Recommended Approaches:

1. Be clear about the objective of possible combination of the two municipal governments.

For residents who have strong attachment to their Town or County community, understanding the “why” is critical.

2. Establish clear Guiding Principles for the Steering Committee and possible consolidation.

Guiding Principles set the direction for “how” questions and provide a framework to develop answers.

3. Engage the public and stakeholders across Antigonish County in two-way consultation.

Go beyond “communication” to learn the issues and questions of a variety of groups and organizations. Provide a variety of methods to understand and feed into the process.

4. Broaden the consultation and engagement process to include under-represented groups and recognize Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DE&I).

Consult with the Paqtnkek Mi'kmaw Nation and find ways to reach out for opinions of underrepresented groups. Seek different perspectives and identify needs to be addressed.

5. Provide clear and consistent messaging for the public throughout the process.

Create a single point for the Steering Committee to generate and receive communications about the process. This will help address misinformation or confusion within the community.

6. Support, communicate regularly with municipal Councils and Staff.

Support members of Council and staff in responding to issues arising from a potential transition to a single organization.

7. Identify the anticipated tax rate impacts of a possible merger early in the process.

Tax structures, debt and related financial issues should be managed in a manner that minimizes rate changes for the communities served. This is important information for all stakeholders.

8. Consider the potential benefits of regional decision making that supports the improvement of local assets and services.

There should be greater opportunity to achieve things like economic development and recreation across the larger municipal unit, while supporting individual communities, their unique assets and opportunities.

9. Proposed electoral districts should foster a balance between rural and urban communities in the creation of a new Council.

The traditional boundaries between town and county should not be used in a new, more regional municipal council.



APPENDIX A

Excerpts from 2006 NS Utility & Review Board Decision on Town of Antigonish Annexation, County of Antigonish Amalgamation: DECISION NSUARB-MB-01-01/02 2006 NSUARB 112

Key comments are in bold:

[32] **While the Board had formed the preliminary view that amalgamation would be in the best interests of the inhabitants of the area, the Board concludes that the benefits of amalgamation cannot be achieved in the face of the continuing animosity which exists between the respective municipal governments, especially given the public support which each municipal unit enjoys for its position.** The Board considers that the continuing discord related to amalgamation could impact the area's strong community of interest, the region's ability to attract business, and even the ability of local businesses to reconcile their individual business plans within the economic plan of the area (particularly in the corridor of the proposed realignment of the Trans Canada Highway). Any potential benefits from amalgamation might well be outweighed by such negative impacts. These are potential social and financial implications which weigh heavily against the application.

[36] However, the Board would be remiss if it did not observe that many of the issues raised by the parties during the hearing will likely persist under the status quo. Such issues include, but are not limited to, the need to accommodate growth within the Town, the need to adopt a comprehensive planning and development approach with respect to the impending realignment of the Trans Canada Highway corridor adjacent to the Town, the sharing of water, sewer, and electric systems, and making more efficient use of scarce tax dollars. **Without exception, all who testified at the hearing (on both sides of the issues) also asserted that the well-being of the entire County depends on the health of the urban core comprising the Town, but in a way which does not jeopardize the future of the surrounding Municipality. These issues must be addressed in a fashion which will benefit the residents of the Municipality and the Town.**

[37] **A common theme raised throughout the hearing was that the public is both frustrated and disappointed with the lack of cooperation, and often conflict, which exists between their respective municipal governments in addressing the important issues facing the region.** The Board found in its preliminary decision that the confrontational approach taken



by the opposing municipal units has cost the Town and Municipality a combined amount of almost \$240,000 over the past 10 years (see paragraph 312). It is fair to assume that this amount represents a minimum of the cost actually incurred, with these figures ignoring the resources committed by staff for each municipal unit on such conflicts, which involve matters respecting planning, utilities, or other issues. This has taken away from their ability to further the well-being of their respective residents. The Board expects that the public will not tolerate a continuation of these conflicts over the long term. Further, any lack of significant progress on such issues may indeed cause a shift in public opinion on the ability of both councils to address these matters, rekindling a demand for another application to the Board.



APPENDIX B

Windsor West Hants Consolidation Process Guiding Principles for the Co-ordinating Committee

- 1. Boundaries:** When looking at boundaries, ensure equitable representation for both urban and rural communities for the new council. It is essential that the culture and identities of both the urban and rural communities are retained in the new consolidated community.
- 2. Taxation:** When developing a taxation model for the consolidated community, the existing tax system should serve as a base. Business as usual, services as usual. The electoral boundaries should not impact taxation.
- 3. Debt:** When addressing debt from the former communities, area rates should be used to ensure the repayment of the debt is paid in the spirit it was incurred. By way of example, if the debt was incurred for the benefit of the taxpayers in Windsor, the debt should be area rated to the taxpayers of Windsor.
- 4. Administrative Structure:** When developing the blended administrative structure of the consolidated community, all efforts should be taken to ensure there is no job loss as a result of the consolidation. Any planned efficiencies should strive to be achieved through attrition and maintaining corporate knowledge should be prioritized.
- 5. Regional Service Strategy:** An overall strategy for regional service delivery and regional infrastructure prioritization should be informed by an inventory of existing assets.
- 6. Regional Planning:** Regional planning should be a priority for the consolidated community to ensure that the strengths of the urban and rural communities are being leveraged appropriately.
- 7. Public Engagement:** A Public Engagement Plan should focus on transparency and provide diverse ways to inform and engage the public and stakeholders.
- 8. Decisions:** All pertinent decisions should be reviewed with the lens of looking for economic development growth and opportunities.

Beth Schumacher

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: January 14, 2022 4:07 PM
To: Glenn Horne
Subject: Accepted: Joint Council Meeting on Consolidation

Beth Schumacher

From: Glenn Horne
Sent: January 18, 2022 7:00 AM
To: Owen McCarron; Hughie Stewart; mayor@townofantigonish.ca; Willie Cormier; Shirlyn Donovan; kgorman@townofantigonish.ca; Alisha Bowie; Jeffery Lawrence
Subject: Consolidation Steering Committee Link

Good morning -

Resending the link for this mornings meeting. I'm not feeling well and won't be attending.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81757722176?pwd=T3lPQnBHSXJZbEtsRk00UmxPdJlUQT09>

Meeting ID: 817 5772 2176

Passcode: 663921

Cheers,
Glenn

Glenn Horne
CAO
Municipality of the County of Antigonish

Glenn Horne

Subject: Consolidation Steering Committee Meeting
Location: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81757722176?pwd=T3lPQnBHSXJZbEtsRk00UmxPdIUQT09>
Start: Tue 2022-01-18 8:00 AM
End: Tue 2022-01-18 9:00 AM
Show Time As: Tentative
Recurrence: (none)
Meeting Status: Not yet responded
Organizer: Glenn Horne
Required Attendees: omccarron; Hughie Stewart; Laurie Boucher; Willie Cormier; Jeffery Lawrence; Alisha Bowie; Shirlyn Donovan; kgorman@townofantigonish.ca
zmMeetingNum: 81757722176

Good afternoon, folks –

Please find attached the agenda and supporting materials for Tuesday's Consolidation Steering Committee meeting. This meeting will again be held via Zoom; the meeting link is below. If you have any questions or concerns prior to the meeting please let me know.

Cheers,

Glenn

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81757722176?pwd=T3lPQnBHSXJZbEtsRk00UmxPdIUQT09>

Meeting ID: 817 5772 2176

Passcode: 663921



Glenn Horne | Chief Administrative Officer
Municipality of the County of Antigonish | 902.863.1117
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**Consolidation Steering Committee – Zoom Meeting
Tuesday, January 18, 2021 @ 8am
Meeting Agenda**

- 1) Debrief on Council Discussions
- 2) Feedback on Final Background Document Draft
- 3) Review of Frequently Asked Questions
- 4) Preparation for Joint Council Session
- 5) Update on RCMP Contract Discussions
- 6) Additions:
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. What is Consolidation?

Consolidation is a newer approach to municipal merger for communities and councils than the better-known Nova Scotia examples of amalgamation and dissolution. With consolidation, the province would create special legislation to empower the “Transition Committee” that represents both municipal units. The Transition Committee would have the authority to determine what the new Municipality would look like. The Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board would still be involved in reviewing elector district boundaries, but much of the detailed work of the merger would be coordinated locally.

2. Why are the Town and County considering consolidation?

Over the past few years, the Town and County have partnered on many projects that have resulted in significant successes for our whole community. The relationships and collaboration between the two municipalities have increased to the point where it is worth exploring the option of consolidation.

We have seen the benefits of working together with examples like hosting the National Special Olympics, construction of the Antigonish Skatepark and community Dog Park, Holiday Events, Regional Emergency Management, and Physician Retention just to name a few.

Consolidating may be a more efficient use of existing resources to provide a high level of service to residents living in Antigonish’s urban and rural areas. Many of the issues facing our communities, such as climate change, economic development, infrastructure planning, accessibility and housing, require or would significantly benefit a regional approach.

3. Is this happening because one or both parties are in financial trouble?

Both Municipalities are financially healthy, with a track record of maintaining stable tax rates, investments in community infrastructure and programs, and saving for the future. Our property tax rates have been reasonable when compared with other municipal governments in Nova Scotia, in spite of the rising costs of delivering services and maintaining and improving infrastructure.

We are willing to explore the option to consolidate to make municipal government more efficient, to better serve the communities in which we live, and work and create a more sustainable community.

One municipal government in the Antigonish area would allow us to work more collaboratively and leverage more opportunities, instead of competing for funding from other levels of government and investment opportunities.

4. What is the process for determining whether we will consolidate?

Infographic starting with what has already been done.

The two municipalities are exploring an approach to merger similar to those used in Windsor West Hants and Liverpool and Queens County. This involves gathering and assessing information about both municipalities, reflecting on what is important to our communities, consulting with the communities involved across the Town and County and making a decision to proceed or not, planned for June of this year.

Commented [RM1]: Will need some info from both of you. Perhaps we can meet this week to get this rolling?

Should a decision to proceed be made then, the municipalities would approach the Province for support in terms of special legislation and transition funding with a view to creating a joint municipality beginning in April of 2024.

If the Joint Council decision in June is not to proceed with the merger, then the Town and County would continue to exist in the present form.

5. How will the public be engaged?

There will be many avenues for public feedback. To the extent possible while following public health guidelines, we will hold public meetings in every municipal district and the Town. We will also meet with residents at “pop-up” events at places like the arena, farmers’ market, legion events, etc.

We understand the hesitancy to come out to public meetings as there is still COVID present in our community. To overcome these challenges and to ensure we meet residents where they are safe and comfortable, there will also be virtual sessions, a website created that will serve as an information hub and a place to submit questions and collect feedback.

We will include information in local newspapers, in mail outs, social media and radio ads and both the Mayor and Warden are committed to speaking with media as a way to update residents. Residents can also contact the municipal office or Town Hall with any questions or concerns. The goal is to create avenues where all residents feel comfortable giving their feedback.

6. What is the purpose of the public engagement? How will our input be used?

The public engagement process is vital piece of the process before Councils can make a decision on whether to proceed with consolidation or not. The purpose is to provide residents the opportunity to let the Steering Committee and both Councils know what is important to them as we look at consolidation. If there are questions about the merger that might impact or benefit local communities and individuals, it is important to get them into the process early.

Public input will be used to help the Councils understand the values and issues that are important to residents and give everyone an opportunity to reflect on how municipal government is organized and whether a consolidation would be beneficial.

7. How will a decision be made and by who?

A report will be presented to both Councils containing all of the input from the public engagement. Municipal staff and the communications consultants will also prepare information about questions raised and potential responses. Council members from the Town and the County will take time to reflect on the findings and decide on whether to move forward with consolidation or remain as separate entities.

Commented [GH2]: Once a firm decision is made, this may be the place for the Plebiscite question to live.

8. When will a decision be made?

We expect the joint Councils will vote on a decision by June of this year, once the engagement process is complete. Refer to Question 3 for the next steps if that decision is for or against the potential merger. Should it proceed, the target date to being the new municipal unit is April of 2024. XX.

Commented [KG3]: Instead of when will a decision be made could it say, What happens once a decision is made? And then detail that either we continue as the status quo or we proceed and make a special legislation to the provincial government.

9. What happens once a decision is made by Town and County Councils?

Commented [RM4R3]: I think the "when" question may be one that is asked frequently so recommend it stays. I like the question above too about "what happens" and will add.

If a decision is made to consolidate, a request for special legislation under the *Municipal Government Act* to consolidate is made to the province. Based on other municipal mergers, there would also be a request for provincial transition funding, intended to support the Town and County with the coordination and preparation for creating a joint municipal unit. If the decision is to remain as separate entities, it is status quo.

10. How do I get information if I live in an area without strong Internet?

We are planning public meetings in every municipal district and the Town. To the extent possible, and following public health guidelines, in-person meetings will be held in all municipal districts and the Town and there will be “pop ups” where people naturally gather. Anyone who cannot participate in a public meeting and whose contact the municipal office or town hall

Commented [BS5]: Delete, repeats in second sentence.

11. If I’m not hearing about consultations, who should I contact?

You can contact Shirlyn Donovan or Kate Gorman at info@antigonish.ca.

Consolidation Questions – *Recommend saving these and adding after website launches and engagement starts.*

What would the District Boundaries of a consolidated Municipality look like?

Should a decision by Joint Councils in June result in a decision to move forward with consolidation, the creation of new electoral boundaries would be one of the tasks for a Transition Steering Committee to be established under provincial special legislation. The Nova Scotia Utilities and Review Board would make this decision, and their review process would determine the number of districts and their boundaries with input from the Transition Steering Committee and residents.

Council size would be determined based on the optimum number of representatives needed to provide effective and responsive governance. Establishing new boundaries is based on a balance of community, geographic and population factors and ~~and~~ there will be more opportunities for public feedback if we get to that stage. At this point, based on experience in Queens and West Hants, we can say there would be an emphasis on providing equitable representation of rural and urban areas in creating the proposed boundaries.

Commented [GH6]: I think we were using the word “balanced” but I may be wrong.

Will there be staff redundancy and job losses?

The intent of consolidation is not to reduce staff, but to make better use of the existing resources in one combined organization. Any staff who wants a position with the newly formed government would have one. Staffing changes would be made through retraining, improving capacity in some service areas and attrition. The organizational structure will likely look different but the provision of high-quality services would not change. Existing union contracts would continue in effect in the successor organization.

Commented [BS7]: We can't say this at this stage in the process.

Will the Province be providing financing for the transition phase?

There is typically funding available from the Department of Municipal Affairs and Housing to aid in the transition phase if Councils vote to move in that direction. There are also municipal innovation funds provided now to support the exploration and research phase of this exercise.

How will representatives be elected?

A consolidated Municipality would have elected Councillors by districts and a mayor elected at-large who represents the whole municipality. The number and territory for all districts would be determined as part of the transition process.

What will happen to my tax rate?

We do not expect any significant changes in rates for the municipal services communities use now. Based on past municipal mergers that have taken place in Nova Scotia, it is likely to expect that a base property tax rate would be established along with a series of area rates based on the services provided in that specific area. This decision would ultimately be up to the new council elected if the consolidation takes place. The current councils would not determine the tax rates for the consolidated municipality. Water rates are regulated by the NS Utility and Review Board, based on periodic reviews of infrastructure and safety requirements, and there is nothing in the consolidation process that should trigger a change in these rates.

Will rural areas lose their voice to the more urban areas?

The role of any municipality is to put the structures in place that support individual community identities to ensure they remain intact. These communities

are what make our area so unique and vibrant. Elected officials represent the voice of their districts and would continue to do so within a new municipal structure.

The Municipality of the County of Antigonish already manages urban and rural services and concerns on a daily basis. We are a municipality that values and understands and needs and service requirements of rural communities. The communities in a consolidated municipality would remain as they are.

What is the state of each Municipality's infrastructure?

Since 2019, both the Town and County worked with the Province of Nova Scotia to do an inventory of all linear infrastructure. This included all water and sewer lines, and roads and sidewalks. Part of the transition process will be to review the inventory and state of all infrastructure. Infrastructure investments are constantly being made by both municipalities, and this process is anticipated to continue should the two units become one in the future.

Commented [GH8]: I wouldn't describe it as a common Asset Management system. Better coordination of infrastructure planning and systems is one of the goals for this process.

Will there be a plebiscite?

It is very early in the process of exploring consolidation to answer this question. Plebiscites are a tool used to engage the community. However, plebiscites do have a history of polarizing residents instead of listening to their concerns and addressing them effectively in the decision-making process.

The At this point in our process, the intention is to engage the community in a thorough consultation process that gives residents ample opportunity to share concerns, learn, and give feedback that will help councils in the final decision making.

Commented [KG9]: Should we say something like 'At this time, there are no plans to engage the community in a plebiscite.'

I don't want to be too blunt, because what if Councils do come back and put a motion forward for a plebiscite.

Beth Schumacher

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: January 19, 2022 4:00 PM
To: Shirlyn Donovan
Subject: Accepted: Consolidation Video Shoot

Beth Schumacher

From: Shirlyn Donovan
Sent: January 20, 2022 9:24 AM
To: Owen McCarron
Subject: Script for Consolidation Video
Attachments: Introduction to Consolidation Video Script FINAL.docx

Good morning,

Please see attached the script for the consolidation welcome video for the Howspace online engagement portal.

This is what we will be filming Monday at 1:30pm on the Town Hall Council Chambers.

Thanks,
Shirlyn

Shirlyn Donovan
Strategic Initiatives Coordinator
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Introduction to Consolidation Video Script

OWEN: Hello my name is Owen McCarron, Warden of the Municipality of the County of Antigonish and I am joined by Mayor Laurie Boucher from the Town of Antigonish.

We are pleased to give a brief overview of our exploration of the consolidation of the Town and County of Antigonish and our plans for community engagement.

LAURIE: In September both the Town and County announced that we would explore consolidating our two municipalities into one regional government.

We came to this decision because, we have come a long way in strengthening our relationship to build a stronger community that better serves our residents.

Following that announcement, both Councils met with other municipal leaders from across the province to get a first-hand perspective on their experience with consolidation. Both councils got great information about consolidation from Queens and Liverpool as well as Windsor and West Hants.

OWEN: The next step is to hear from you, the residents of Antigonish. We need your feedback, questions, and concerns to make this decision. With the support of the province, we have hired Brighter Community Planning and Consulting to support this community engagement process.

We have started by launching a website: Antigonish dot ca. This is your one stop shop for all things consolidation, including a link to an online forum where you

can ask questions, submit feedback, and participate in discussions. You will also find FAQ and regular consolidation updates on this webpage.

We will also have a special phone line set-up for those who would like to leave a voicemail with any questions. Calls will be returned by staff in as timely a manner as possible.

LAURIE: We are adapting our plans and hope to conduct in person engagement later this winter and into the spring as the COVID-19 pandemic allows. We will be sure to share more information on Antigonish.ca in the coming weeks.

To get started, we invite you to go to Antigonish.ca to participate.

Beth Schumacher

From: Shirlyn Donovan
Sent: January 20, 2022 2:58 PM
To: Owen McCarron
Subject: Introduction for tonight

I would like to thank everyone for joining tonight for this Joint Council Session as we continue to explore consolidation. Before Christmas we issued an RFP to help lead us through the Community Engagement Process and development of the Guiding Principles. Tonight we have Brighter Community Planning and Consulting here with us who were awarded the contract. I will allow them to introduce themselves in a moment.

Also here with us tonight is Ross MacDonald, our Municipal Advisor from the Department of Municipal Affairs who is here to observe the meeting.

So welcome to everyone and without further ado I will hand it over to Chrystal, Brian and Robyn.

Feel free to add anything.

Thanks,
Shirlyn

Shirlyn Donovan
Strategic Initiatives Coordinator
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902-863-1117



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Harris McNamara

Subject: Joint Council Meeting
Location: Zoom

Start: Thu 2022-01-20 6:00 PM
End: Thu 2022-01-20 8:00 PM
Show Time As: Tentative

Recurrence: (none)

Meeting Status: Not yet responded

Organizer: Beth Schumacher
Required Attendees: Council; Dianne Wilson
Optional Attendees: SLT

The meeting will be virtual, and the link is here:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88034917083?pwd=NWt5Tk9sU0ZZc1lzSDhFNXpqaFVNUT09>

If you are logging in from the Zoom webpage, here are the meeting details:

Meeting ID: 880 3491 7083

Passcode: 571469

The agenda and best practices report are attached for easy reference.

Glenn Horne

Subject: Joint Council Meeting on Consolidation
Location: Zoom

Start: Thu 2022-01-20 6:00 PM
End: Thu 2022-01-20 8:00 PM
Show Time As: Tentative

Recurrence: (none)

Meeting Status: Not yet responded

Organizer: Glenn Horne
Required Attendees: omccarron

From: Beth Schumacher <beth.schumacher@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Sent: January 14, 2022 3:47 PM
To: Council <council@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Cc: SLT <slt@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Dianne Wilson <dwilson@townofantigonish.ca>
Subject: Agenda and Report to January 20, 2022 Joint Council Meeting

Good afternoon everyone,

Please find attached an agenda as well as the backgrounder report that Glenn had noted would be sent to you before the end of this week.

The meeting will be virtual, and the link is here:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88034917083?pwd=NWt5Tk9sU0ZZc1lzSDhFNXpqaFVNUT09>

If you are logging in from the Zoom webpage, here are the meeting details:

Meeting ID: 880 3491 7083

Passcode: 571469

I'll also send along a meeting invite for your Outlook calendars shortly after I send this along. Dianne, could you please share this with your Council and team if you haven't already?

Cheers,

Beth

From: Owen McCarron
To: Beth Schumacher
Subject: Accepted: Joint Council Meeting
Start: January 20, 2022 6:00:00 PM
End: January 20, 2022 8:00:00 PM
Location: Zoom

Beth Schumacher

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: January 21, 2022 8:22 AM
To: Glenn Horne
Subject: Accepted: Consolidation Steering Committee Meeting

Beth Schumacher

From: Shirlyn Donovan
Sent: January 21, 2022 2:35 PM
To: Council; SLT
Subject: Shirlyn Donovan shared the folder "Consolidation" with you.




Shirlyn Donovan shared a folder with you

Please see attached the documents from the presentation last evening. The audio and video recordings as well as the chat log are included in the folder as well.

Please let me know if you have difficulty accessing the folder.

Thanks,
Shirlyn



 This link will work for anyone.

Open

Glenn Horne

Subject: Consolidation Steering Committee Meeting
Location: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87262552425?pwd=MmVCU3ZlZjE9G96bGdBZjJpRHd1T0RWZz09>

Start: Tue 2022-01-25 8:00 AM
End: Tue 2022-01-25 9:00 AM
Show Time As: Tentative

Recurrence: (none)

Meeting Status: Not yet responded

Organizer: Glenn Horne
Required Attendees: omccarron; Hughie Stewart; Laurie Boucher; Willie Cormier; Jeffery Lawrence; Shirlyn Donovan; kgorman@townofantigonish.ca; Alisha Bowie

zmMeetingNum: 87262552425

Good morning, folks –

The agenda for our meeting on Tuesday is attached and the Zoom link is below.

Thanks!

Glenn

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87262552425?pwd=MmVCU3ZlZjE9G96bGdBZjJpRHd1T0RWZz09>

Meeting ID: 872 6255 2425

Passcode: 517621



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Glenn Horne

From: Glenn Horne
Sent: January 27, 2022 10:47 AM
To: Owen McCarron
Subject: FW: Locations for Community Engagement Sessions

Any thoughts?



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From: Shirlyn Donovan <shirlyn.donovan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Sent: January 27, 2022 10:11 AM
To: Glenn Horne <glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Jeff Lawrence <jlawrence@townofantigonish.ca>;
kgorman@townofantigonish.ca
Subject: Locations for Community Engagement Sessions

Good morning,

Here are the locations we are thinking for the community engagement sessions:

1. Havre Boucher
2. Tracadie
3. Pomquet
4. Heatherton
5. St Andrews
6. Paqntkek First Nation
7. Arisaig
8. Lakevale
9. Lochaber
10. St. Josephs
11. The People's Place Library
12. Antigonish Legion
13. St. Andrew Junior School

There would be pop up sessions as well at places like the Farmers Market, Arena, Grocery Stores etc. Any feedback would be appreciated.

Thanks,
Shirlyn

Shirlyn Donovan
Strategic Initiatives Coordinator

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Antigonish County

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Harris McNamara

From: Carol MacEachern <
Sent: January 29, 2022 10:28 AM
To: Shirlyn Donovan
Cc: Harris McNamara
Subject: Amalgamation
Attachments: Amalgamation.pages

Good morning,

I have attached questions which are concerns I have as a taxpayer in the county of Antigonish.

I feel this decision to Amalgamate has already been made. This is very unfair as we, the taxpayers haven't even been given any information. If covid is the reason please do newsletters, pamphlets or something. I would like to see something in place so that people can reach out and ask questions. Online is good for many but there are a lot of people who do not have computers. We need to make sure EVERYONE has an opportunity to voice their concerns. ASAP!

We do have a right to know. At this time I feel this is already progressing without taxpayers having any say. I also feel that Districts in the county will be totally forgotten if Amalgamation happens. District 9 is close to forgotten already and this will finish us.

I would like to see all municipal representative's show the people in their district that they are concerned and listen to their people. This is a serious matter.

Sincerely,
Carol MacEachern



Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Re: Amalgamation

1 message

Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Sat, Jan 29, 2022 at 4:21 PM

To: Carol MacEachern <>

Carol;

Could not open the file, how about printing a copy for me, I can pick up Tuesday evening.

Harris.

On Sat, Jan 29, 2022 at 12:14 PM Carol MacEachern <

> wrote:

Begin forwarded message:

From: Carol MacEachern
Date: January 29, 2022 at 10:27:50 AM AST
To: Shirlyn Donovan <shirlyn.donovan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Cc: hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca
Subject: Amalgamation

Good morning,

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Sincerely,
Carol MacEachern

Glenn Horne

From: Glenn Horne
Sent: January 31, 2022 9:29 AM
To: Owen McCarron
Subject: FW: Amalgamation
Attachments: Amalgamation.pages

FYI – Shirlyn shared this with me this morning. I will draft a response that either you or I can send back.

Thanks!
Glenn



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From: Shirlyn Donovan <shirlyn.donovan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Sent: January 31, 2022 9:14 AM
To: Glenn Horne <glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: FW: Amalgamation

Shirlyn Donovan
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Honour Yesterday, Act Today, Inspire Tomorrow

From: Carol MacEachern <carol.maceachern@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Sent: Saturday, January 29, 2022 10:28 AM
To: Shirlyn Donovan <shirlyn.donovan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Cc: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Amalgamation

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I would like to see all municipal representative's show the people in their district that they are concerned and listen to their people. This is a serious matter.

Sincerely,
Carol MacEachern

Harris McNamara

From: Shirlyn Donovan
Sent: January 31, 2022 10:20 AM
To: Harris McNamara
Subject: Carol's Questions

Amalgamation

**Amalgamation is a process to merge the
single body.**

1. What are the benefits of amalgamation for E
2. What are the reasons The Antigonish Town &
amalgamate?
3. Will amalgamation increase taxes?
4. How will amalgamation affect Volunteer Fire
5. Will there be a plebiscite?
6. How are tax payers who will be affected by
information on it?
7. How will taxpayers voice their concerns?
8. What is the timeframe of people knowing wh
it being passed?

Sent from my iPhone

Glenn Horne

From: Glenn Horne
Sent: January 31, 2022 11:07 AM
To: Owen McCarron; Hughie Stewart; Laurie Boucher; Willie Cormier; Alisha Bowie; Jeffery Lawrence; Shirlyn Donovan; kgorman@townofantigonish.ca
Subject: No Consolidation Steering Committee Meeting This Week

Good morning, folks –

We will not be holding a steering committee meeting this week.

Thanks,
Glenn



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From: [Glenn Horne](#)
To: [MCA Staff](#)
Cc: [Owen McCarron](#)
Subject: Consolidation Update & Staff
Date: February 1, 2022 2:15:25 PM
Attachments: [2022-01-20 Agenda for Joint Councils.pdf](#)
[Best Practices Final.pdf](#)
[Joint Council meeting Master Presentation Jan 20 2022.pdf](#)
[Critical Path Jan 7 2022.pdf](#)

Good morning, everyone –

It has been some time since we've provided an update on the process to explore consolidation with the Town of Antigonish. In early December we retained Brighter Communities Planning (the team of Chrystal Fuller, Brian Smith and Robyn MacIsaac) to help plan and organize this process. Shortly after we retained our consulting team, COVID intervened yet again and our priorities shifted through the month of December.

After Christmas we got back on track and have a few things to share with you now:

- A timeline has been developed that will take us from today to a Council decision on consolidation, which we intend to have in June 2022. The “critical path” is attached and shows when each stage of this process is intended to take place. I say “intended” because as we have seen multiple times COVID has caused us to change our course or adjust timelines. Specifically:
 - Research in December (done).
 - Discussions with Council and staff in January / February (one Council discussion took place in January, staff and remaining Council discussions to take place in February).
 - Community engagement planning & communications in February.
 - Community engagement after March break.
 - Final report presented in May.
 - Council decision in June.
- A Joint Council Workshop was held on January 20, 2022, to introduce our consulting team, review this timeline, discuss best practices in municipal mergers and discuss community engagement. The workshop power point presentation and best practice for municipal mergers document is attached.
- www.antigonish.ca will soon be launched and will host the most up-to-date information on the consolidation process and provide a venue for staff and residents to ask questions, receive information and provide comments.
- On Wednesday, February 9, staff workshops will be held with Brighter Communities Planning, providing you an update on the process and giving you an opportunity to ask questions. A separate email and invitation is forthcoming.

As always, if you have any questions or thoughts about consolidation and this process, please let me know.

Debbie: Please print and post copies of this email and attachments for those who don't have email.

Thanks!

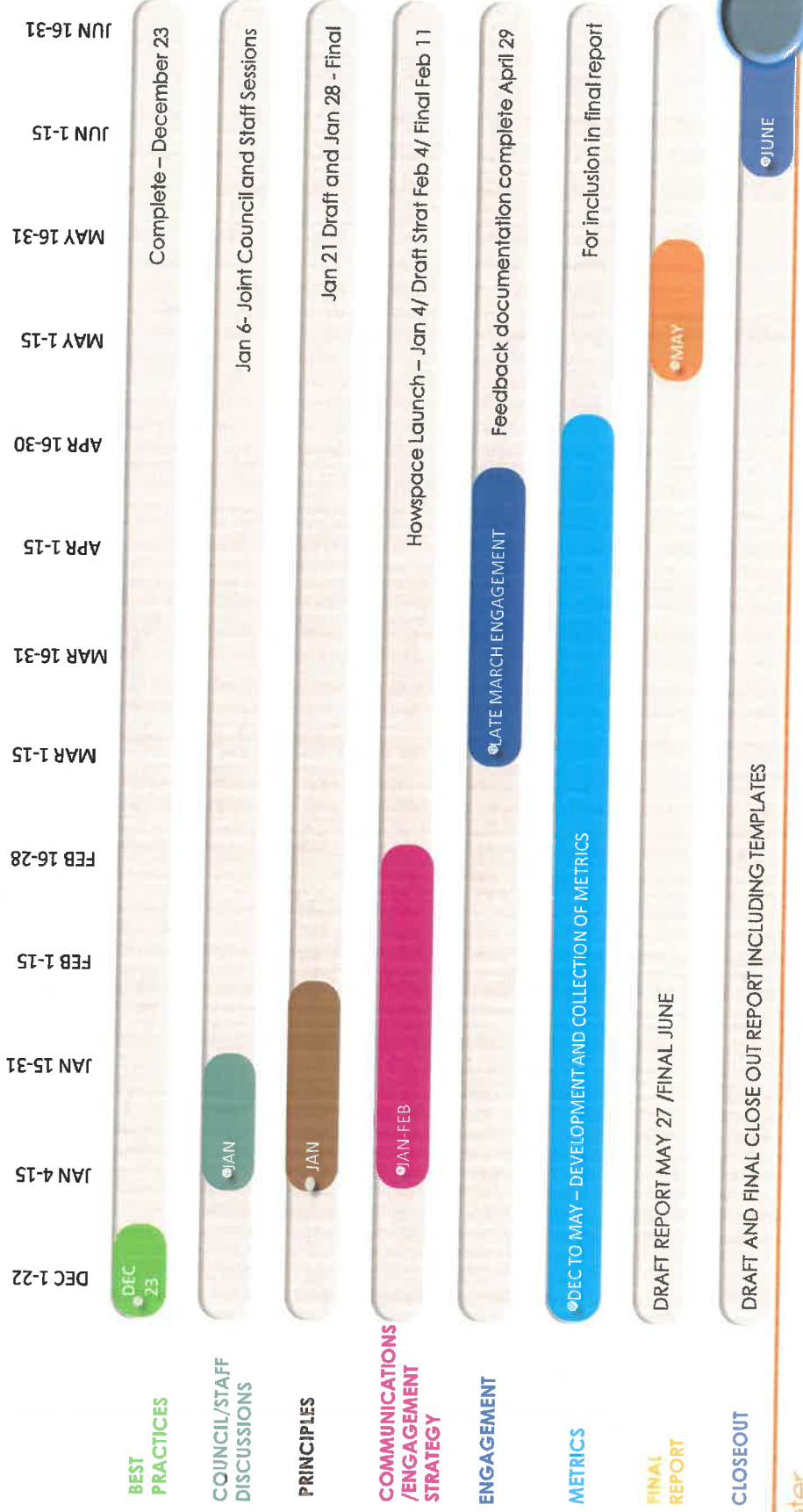
Glenn



Glenn Horne | Chief Administrative Officer
Municipality of the County of Antigonish | 902.863.1117
285 Beech Hill Road, Beech Hill, NS | B2G 0B4
www.antigonishcounty.ns.ca | [@AntigonishCo](https://www.facebook.com/AntigonishCo) | [facebook](https://www.facebook.com/AntigonishCo)

Honour Yesterday, Act Today, Inspire Tomorrow

Proposed Timeline



ANTIGONISH

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Joint Council Meeting

[Click to add text](#)

January 20, 2022
Via Zoom



Introductions



Chrystal Fuller

Brighter Community Planning
Project Manager/Engagement
lead



Brian Smith

Independent Consultant
Governance Specialist



Robyn McIssac

PR Hive
Marketing and Communications





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Poll Questions

Breaking the ice





ANTIGONISH
Our Community

Timeline and Scope



ANTIGONISH

Our Community

DEC 1-22
JAN 4-15
JAN 15-31
FEB 1-15
FEB 16-28
MAR 1-15
MAR 16-31
APR 1-15
APR 16-30
MAY 1-15
MAY 16-31
JUN 1-15
JUN 16-31

Complete – December 23

BEST PRACTICES

COUNCIL/STAFF DISCUSSIONS

PRINCIPLES

COMMUNICATIONS /ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

ENGAGEMENT

METRICS

FINAL REPORT

CLOSEOUT

DEC 23

JAN

JAN

JAN-FEB

LATE MARCH ENGAGEMENT

DEC TO MAY – DEVELOPMENT AND COLLECTION OF METRICS

DRAFT REPORT MAY 27 /FINAL JUNE

DRAFT AND FINAL CLOSE OUT REPORT INCLUDING TEMPLATES

Jan 20- Joint Council/ Staff Sessions date not set

Jan 21 Draft and Jan 28 – Final - Delayed

Howspace Launch – Jan 4/ Draft Strat Feb 4/ Final Feb 11

Feedback documentation complete April 29

For inclusion in final report

MAY

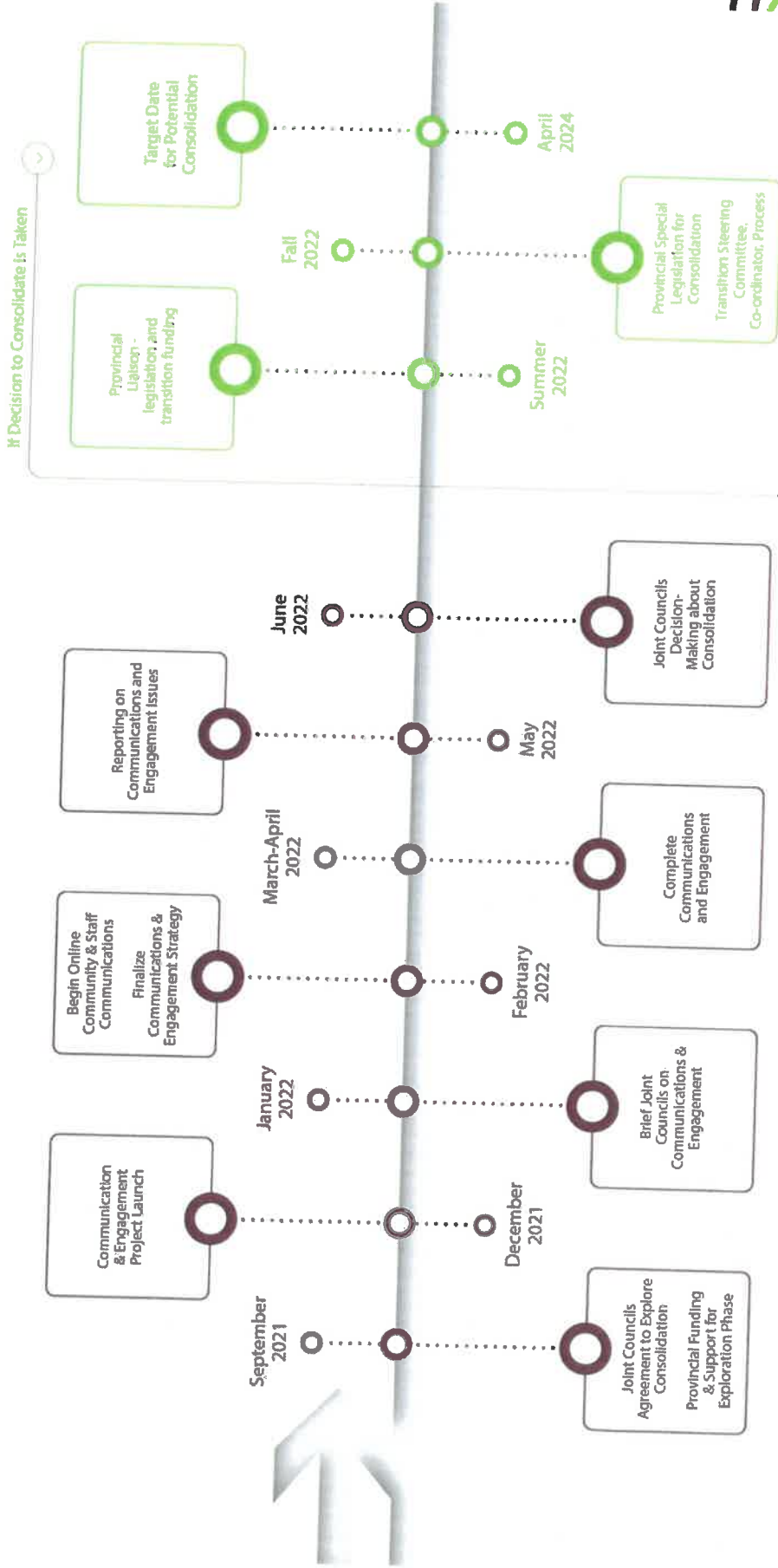
JUNE





The Steps: Overall Timeline for Potential Consolidation in Antigonish

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Review of Best Practices



ANTIGONISH

Our Community

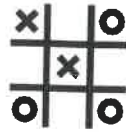
Municipal Mergers Background & Recommended Approaches



First Steps: Exploring "Consolidation"



Lessons Learned from Municipal Mergers



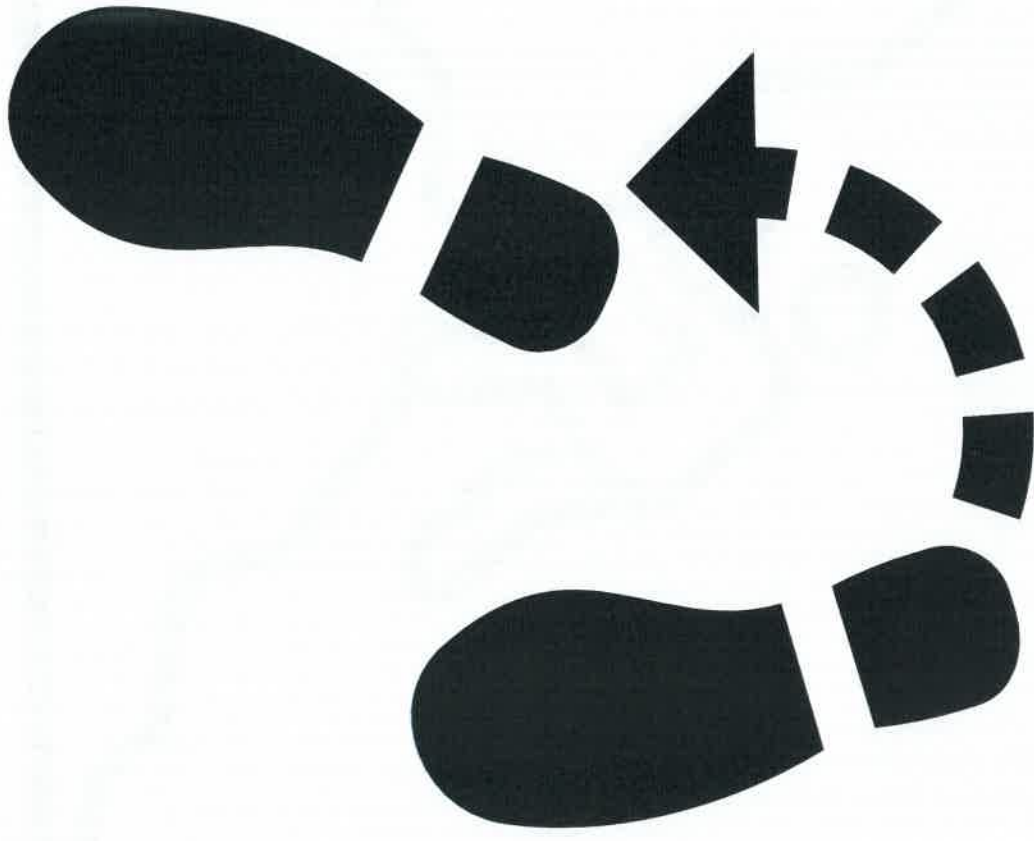
Our Recommended Approaches





First Steps

- Long & proud history of Antigonish Town & County success
- September 2021 Councils – Joint exploration of consolidation
- Together: significant strides, joint infrastructure, partnerships with community
- Community consultation and engagement to begin now



Lessons Learned

- Antigonish: UARB choice
Decision, Adversarial Councils • 2014-16 Failed Pictou County Amalgamation: UARB process, organized community objections, plebiscite
- 1980's Amalgamations: Province led, except for Queens
- 2012-16 Town Dissolutions: UARB Decisions, no real



Lessons Learned

- **Windsor-West Hants Consolidation – A New Model** • 2018 Councils chose “Consolidation”, special legislation “Queens model”, Steering Committee vs. UARB, clear Guiding Principles
- **History of conflicts, Fire issue, Citizens Application to UARB**
- **2016 New Councils, new MOU, Steering Committee**



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Our Community



West Hants
something inspiring awaits

Windsor West Hants Guiding Principles

- 1. Taxation:** The existing tax system should serve as a base
- 2. Boundaries:** Equitable representation for urban and rural communities for the new unit.
- 3. Debt:** Area rates to ensure repayment of debt in the spirit incurred.
- 4. Administrative Structure:** Ensure no job loss resulting from consolidation
- 5. Regional Service Strategy:** Service delivery and infrastructure priorities should be based on inventory of existing assets
- 6. Regional Planning:** A priority for the new unit, to leverage strengths of urban and rural communities.
- 7. Public Engagement:** focus on transparency, diverse ways to inform and engage the public.
- 8. Decisions:** Decisions to be reviewed with an economic growth lens.

Sidebar A: Mergers and Property Tax Rates

Year	Annapolis County	Bridgetown	Cumberland County	Springhill	Parrsboro	West Hants	Hantsport	Windsor
2012	\$ 0.98	\$2.10	1.04	2.25	2.00	0.94	1.69	1.96
2013	\$ 0.98	\$2.13	1.04	2.25	1.99	0.92	1.66	1.96
2014	\$ 0.98	\$2.13	1.04	2.25	1.80	0.97	1.66	1.90
2015	\$ 0.98	\$1.71	1.04	1.90	1.75	1.01	1.66	1.90
2016	\$ 0.98	\$1.71	1.04	1.90	1.75	1.02	1.66	1.90
2017	\$0.99	1.72	1.04	1.90	1.50	1.02	1.66	1.90
2018	\$0.99	1.74	1.17	2.03	1.63	1.02	1.66	1.88
2019	\$1.015	1.74	1.19	2.05	1.67	1.03	1.66	1.88
2020	\$1.015	1.74	1.19	2.05	1.67	1.05	1.66	1.90
2021	\$1.015	1.75	1.19	2.05	1.67	1.03	1.66	1.88



What About Plebiscites?

Two examples suggest plebiscites polarize residents instead of listening to concerns and addressing them effectively.



Plebiscites are a blunt tool to engage the community – Plebiscites are not useful for complicated issues.

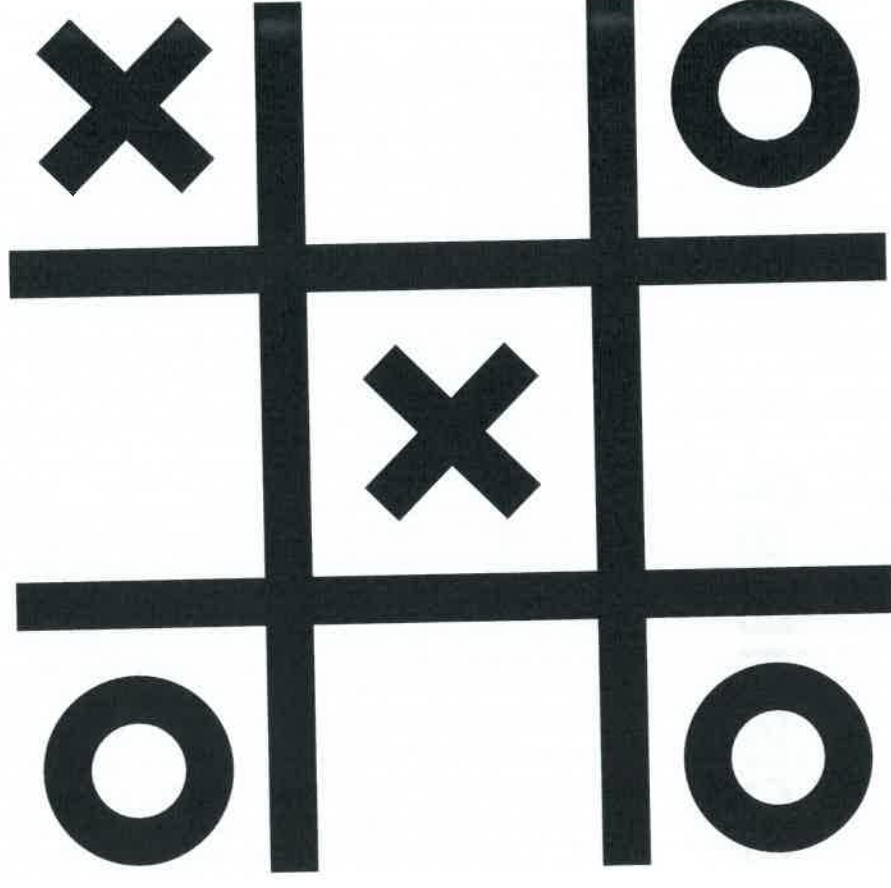


A plebiscite would shift the focus of decision-making away from the local councils and cause confusion regarding who is actually making the decision.



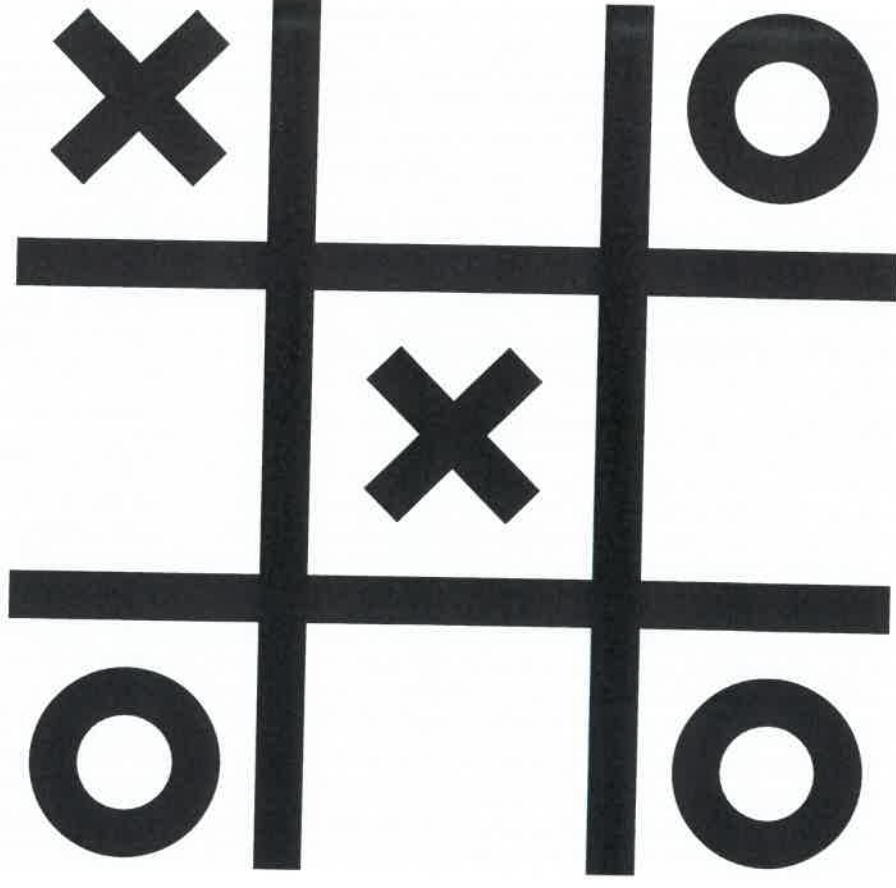
Our Recommended Approaches

- Be clear about the objective – Why merge? • Broaden consultation, recognize Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
- Establish Guiding Principles early
- Engage the public in effective two way consultation



Our Recommended Approaches

- Support, Communicate regularly with Councils and Staff
 - should benefit local assets, services
 - Design of electoral districts should balance rural and urban communities.
- Identify anticipated tax rate impacts early
- Regional decisions





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Engagement Plan and Communications Plan



Key Messages

List of materials

Schedule for engagement

Advertising tools and schedules

COVID protocols

Risks and mitigations

Principles for engagement

Speaking Points

FAQs

Audience identification/stakeholder mapping



Browser interface showing the URL antigonish.in.howspace.com/welcome. The address bar includes navigation icons (back, forward, refresh, home) and search engines (POL NS, Startup Pictures | Downl...). The browser toolbar contains icons for Home, Online Consulti..., My Drive - Google Drive, Other bookmarks, and Reading list.

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Welcome [Project Management](#) [Staff](#)

Our Community

☰ Path mode

Land Acknowledgement

The Town & County acknowledge that we are in Mi'kma'ki, the traditional unceded territory of the

Mi'kmaw people

Welcome and How to Use this Site

Welcome! This is a place to discuss, learn about and provide input to the Council of the Town and County of Antigonish. In the

fall of 2021, both Council decided to welcome the idea of consolidation of the two municipalities into one

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Our Community

We are listening to learn
and understand

Decisions will come
later

Data and information
will help inform future
decisions

Respect and trust are
the foundations of our
engagement with you

We want to hear from
everyone and will make
efforts to reach those
who have barriers to
participating



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Our Community

The Question

For Councils to decide if residents, businesses and the overall community would be better served if the Town and County became one municipal unit.



Small Groups

1

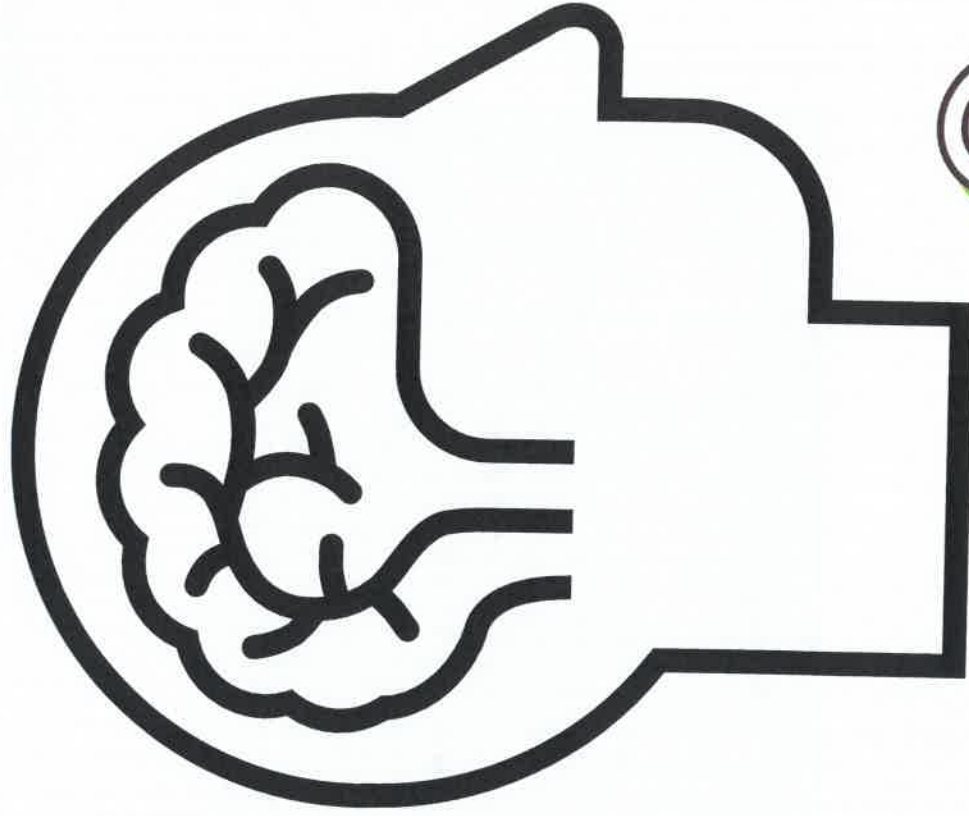
What information is each Council looking for to assist in answering this question?

2

What issues do you think will be top of mind for your constituents?

3

In June, what will success look like for you? For your Council?



Next Step: Guiding Principles

▶▶ In the chat, please share with the group broad issues the Guiding Principles should address.

▶▶ There will be a follow up session with you to co-create the Guiding Principles.

What is a Principle?

“a fundamental truth or proposition that serves as the foundation for a system of belief or behavior or for a chain of reasoning.”



ANTIGONISH

Our Community

Community Engagement Liaison Project
Exploring Consolidation with
the Town & County of Antigonish

JANUARY 2022



This report as part of the process to engage with the residents and stakeholders of Antigonish regarding potential consolidation.

This report was prepared by: Brighter Community Planning & Consulting and BTS Management Consulting



January 2022



Best Practises Backgrounder

Introduction: The Town of Antigonish and the Municipality of the County of Antigonish have been working together for some time now on initiatives to improve the region as a whole. This positive experience, and some creative forward thinking, have led both Councils to agree to explore the merger process known generally as “consolidation”. Consolidation is a newer approach to municipal merger for communities and councils than the better-known Nova Scotian examples of amalgamation and dissolution. With consolidation, the province would create special legislation to empower a “Transition Committee” that represents both municipal units. The Transition Committee would have the authority to determine what the new Regional Municipality would look like. The NS Utility and Review Board would still be involved in reviewing electoral district boundaries, but much of the detailed work of the merger would be coordinated locally.

Nova Scotia municipalities and the provincial government have learned a lot about “best practises” in exploring a possible merger. This Backgrounder is intended to quickly summarize some of this history and highlight some observations that should inform the Steering Committee established by the Antigonish Town and County to explore the option of consolidation.

A cautionary note: This backgrounder may be seen as being critical of some historical events and council initiatives. These circumstances reflected the hard work and best intentions of the Councils, staff, community leaders and regulatory authorities at the time. Times have changed, and we are able to look at these events through a new lens.

Look for comments from the author in italics, at the end of each example provided below.



SECTION A: THE HISTORY OF NOVA SCOTIA MUNICIPAL MERGERS AND LESSONS LEARNED

2001 – 2006 Antigonish Annexation and Amalgamation Experience: Not a “best practise”

The Town and County of Antigonish have a piece of municipal history that provides a good opportunity to learn what to avoid when undertaking a municipal merger. In 2001, the Town made an application to the NS Utility and Review Board (NSUARB) to annex about 3814 Acres of the Municipality adjacent to the Town boundaries. Relations between the Town and the Municipality were strained at the time, and the Municipality responded a few weeks later by making application to amalgamate the Town and County. The UARB considered both applications together, and initially proposed amalgamation, pending the results of plebiscites in both municipal units. There were active “NO” campaigns, accusations of misrepresentation of the facts, and general anger within the communities involved. The plebiscites produced a strong “no” from Town residents, and very limited support from residents in the Municipality.

After several years of this process, the NSUARB decided upon maintaining the status quo, leaving the Town and County as separate organizations. Its decision is very clear about the need for a comprehensive regional approach to move the communities forward. “The Board expects that the public will not tolerate a continuation of these conflicts over the long term.” Enclosed as Appendix A are excerpts from that decision.

For the purposes of this Backgrounder, it is important to recognize that the decision-making about the proposed merger was within the NSUARB regulatory process, the community communications and engagement were adversarial from the outset, and engagement occurred only after firm positions were taken by both Councils. Unfortunately, the use of a plebiscite fed into the strong position taken on both sides of the issue.



1990's Amalgamations: Halifax-Dartmouth, Industrial Cape Breton, Liverpool-Queens

The Liberal Government of John Savage took a strong leadership role with respect to municipal structure, forcing a merger on the City of Sydney, County of Cape Breton and six towns to form the Cape Breton Regional Municipality in 1995. Halifax Regional Municipality was established by the province in 1996, bringing together the Cities of Halifax and Dartmouth, the Town of Bedford and the surrounding County of Halifax. Coordinators were appointed with broad powers to create both new municipalities, Councils and communities were engaged in terms of "how to", but the result was pre-determined in legislation and driven by the appointed Coordinator. The province had acted in response to problems with regional decision-making in greater Halifax. In the case of Industrial Cape Breton, the issue was similar, and was complicated by the declining economic health of the region.

The amalgamation of Liverpool and Queens County that occurred roughly at the same time as Halifax and Cape Breton was very different, initiated and guided by the Town, County and two villages from the outset. This had as much to do with the leadership of the Town and County as it did with the merger initiatives coming from the Province.

Twenty-five years later, the community leadership in Queens is still recognized across Canada when looking for good examples of municipal mergers. The Province of Nova Scotia has not taken a policy position to encourage amalgamations since 1996, but it has encouraged "innovation" in service delivery and invested in transition funding.



2012-2016 Town Dissolutions: Canso, Bridgetown, Hantsport, Springhill, Parrsboro

The economic and regulatory changes early in the twenty-first century produced dramatic failures for several historic Nova Scotia Towns. Canso agreed to dissolution in 2012 when it lost its major employer, the National Sea Products fish plant. A few years later, Bridgetown Town Council resigned, unable to cope with their financial issues. Hantsport lost several major industrial taxpayers and had to dissolve. Springhill was faced with serious infrastructure and management issues, and Parrsboro had become just too small to continue as a separate government. As was the case with the amalgamations outlined above, provincial coordinators were appointed, but in the decision-making about all aspects of the dissolutions was directed to the NSUARB.

Consultation with communities and Councils during these dissolutions was for the purpose of the NSUARB hearings. The future of all the Towns was decided by the UARB, based on their review of the evidence presented.



2014-2016 Proposed Amalgamation of Pictou County, Pictou, Stellarton and New Glasgow

Pictou County is governed by 5 separate Towns and the County of Pictou. In late 2014, Pictou, Stellarton, New Glasgow and the Municipality of the County signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to establish a new regional municipality in advance of the next round of municipal elections in 2016. The concept of an MOU was developed at a time when the Province was reticent to introduce special legislation to support a merger. This Pictou MOU was very thorough in terms of the financial and related analysis and steps to be included, including an application to the NSUARB. Studies were completed over the course of 2015 and the UARB held a hearing and public input sessions in Stellarton and Scotsburn in March of 2016. These public sessions were crowded, well documented by local media, and there was considerable skepticism about the financial research provided to the Board and criticism of the communications leading up to the hearing. The Initial Decision from the UARB favoured amalgamation and the concept of a single government leading the region forward. The Board requested public consultation, including a plebiscite in May of that year. Considerable opposition remained within the local communities, and the results of the plebiscite were generally negative except for residents of the Town of New Glasgow. Several of the municipal partners immediately withdrew from the UARB application, and the Board dismissed the application in June.

Once again, the focus of decision-making was with the NSUARB and its hearing process, and the municipal communications process was unable to achieve broad support for the proposed merger. Although the results of the plebiscite were not binding on the UARB the Board had to take into account the strong opposition to the proposed merger. Plebiscites are a blunt tool to engage the community, they may polarize residents instead of listening to their concerns and addressing them effectively in the decision making process.



2020 Windsor West Hants Consolidation

The Windsor West Hants “consolidation” is the model of this new approach to municipal mergers, replacing amalgamation or dissolution with something that is more collaborative for the municipal partners. This consolidation was facilitated by special transitional legislation, passed upon request from the municipal councils involved. Before speaking to the consolidation process itself, it is important to look at what preceded it, beginning in 2016.

Windsor and West Hants had a long history of intermunicipal conflicts, the most recent of which was a dispute over funding of the joint fire service provided by the Windsor Volunteer Fire Department. Reacting to this situation, a local citizens group, the Avon Region Citizens Coalition, was formed. This Coalition activated Section 358 of the Municipal Government Act, which provides an opportunity for a group representing ten percent of the population of the area to ask the UARB for amalgamation. Through a petition, they were able to demonstrate that at least 18% of the citizens of Town and County combined supported their proposal, which they filed with the UARB in February 2016. The application was supported by the Town of Windsor, and provided 11 reasons for amalgamation, including:

- A respectful merger of the two units
- More efficient governance through the removal of duplication
- Financial stability
- Vision and growth continuity
- Alignment with goals outlined by the Ivany Commission (One Nova Scotia)

The Avon Region Citizens Coalition application for merger was eventually withdrawn, after the Fall 2016 municipal elections and a MOU between the Town and Municipality in February 2017 that led to the consolidation process itself. But it is important to recognise how engaged some of the citizens were at the early stages of the process. When elected officials canvassed their communities prior to the 2016 municipal elections, they found lots of interest in the structure of local government in the area.



Turning to the process of consolidation itself, that February 2017 Memorandum of Understanding struck a Steering Committee with clear responsibilities and expectations about collaboration. Here is an excerpt from the February 2017 joint media release about the MOU:

The agreement between Windsor and West Hants outlines a framework for a new relationship that will see the two working cooperatively on shared areas of interest that will benefit all the citizens in their respective communities. The initial objectives are intended to focus on broad areas that will serve to improve access and use of resources, services and programs while generating maximum cost benefits for both municipal units.

In the months that followed, the joint Steering Committee completed research, consultation and discussions that resulted in both Windsor and the Municipality of West Hants Councils meeting jointly in July, August and September of 2018 to request the Department of Municipal Affairs provide special legislation to consolidate the two units. Again, the media release for that decision is helpful in terms of understanding their approach and citizen engagement: Councils agreed that the Queens County amalgamation will be used as the model for our region and after a successful evening of discussion and debate agreed to the following statements:

- Our Councils are committed to moving forward together to create a new regional government for a stronger community.
- Our public will be engaged in a continuous and responsive way to inform our decision-making.
- Coherent communication messages will be agreed to in a timely manner by all three parties, the two municipal units and the Province, before being made public.
- It will be made clear by the two municipal units what they can change or influence and what they cannot.
- No individual Councillor or municipal unit will speak on behalf of the group.
- Councils understand that all questions will not be able to be answered as of yet, but lack of details does not equal a lack of commitment.

Bill 55, the special legislation to incorporate the Region of Windsor and West Hants Municipality facilitated the creation of a new regional municipality by April 1, 2020. It included the appointment of a transition coordinator and the creation of a transition committee with equal representation from Town and County to oversee the process.



Once the legislation was in place, the joint transition committee put the pieces in place to establish the new municipal unit over a few months. They hired experienced municipal lawyer Kevin Latimer as the Transition Coordinator, recruited a new CAO, Mark Phillips, and completed significant research and consultation with the communities involved. Their meetings and agendas were posted publicly, and residents could observe Transition Committee meetings through Facebook Live. For the purposes of this “best practises” report, one of the most important early steps was the establishment of clear guiding principles for the consolidation process. These Guiding Principles for Consolidation directed a process that would follow the existing tax structure in both units, that would be fair in terms of communities paying for services provided, that would treat staff fairly, and that would adopt a strong regional approach. **The Windsor West Hants Guiding Principles** are included with this backgrounder as **Appendix B**.

The Regional Municipality of West Hants has been operating now for three fiscal years, it has established itself as a new organization, and produced policies and practises across the larger municipal unit. In combining the previous municipal organizations and recognizing the regional approach to be taken, the Municipality has been engaged in such things as:

- Reviews of human resource policies, union contracts.
- Reviews of fire service financing, policies, and the emergency management plan.
- Combining public works in terms of staffing, cross training, and better asset management.
- Regional provision of recreation services and completion of a new regional sports facility.
- Establishing a new regional Planning Strategy and by-laws.

Two important things to note here: The municipal partners made the actual decision to merge before the special legislation was created. The Province accommodated the municipal request directly in the Legislature as opposed to having the matter adjudicated by the NSUARB. The UARB was utilized to review the electoral boundaries as proposed by the Transition Committee.



SECTION B: RECOMMENDED APPROACHES FOR EXPLORING MUNICIPAL CONSOLIDATION

All this municipal experience with annexation and mergers in Nova Scotia provides a basis to identify what are the “best practises” to be considered in the exploration of municipal consolidation by the Town and County of Antigonish. Fortunately, the two units have changed significantly in terms of their recent history of cooperation when compared to the annexation/ amalgamation situation that existed twenty years ago. This is documented in the Terms of Reference for this study:

Over the past few years, the Town and County have made significant strides and strengthened their relationships, establishing a trusted partnership that builds on that history of success and service between the two municipal units.

Together, the Town and County have been able to invest and build new infrastructure, host large events like the 2018 National Special Olympics and the Provincial 55+ Games, as well as improve municipal services and programming through greater coordination. The Town and County have seen their joint success grow with the relationships they have built with St. FX University, St. Martha’s Regional Hospital Foundation, as well as with community groups like Antigonish Community Transit, Antigonish Affordable Housing, Keppoch Mountain, and the People’s Place Library, to name a few.

This is a great starting point for exploring municipal consolidation, and the following list of Recommended Approaches is intended to support the Steering Committee from the two municipal units in completing that exploration process:



Recommended Approaches:

1. Be clear about the objective of possible combination of the two municipal governments.

For residents who have strong attachment to their Town or County community, understanding the “why” is critical.

2. Establish clear Guiding Principles for the Steering Committee and possible consolidation.

Guiding Principles set the direction for “how” questions and provide a framework to develop answers.

3. Engage the public and stakeholders across Antigonish County in two-way consultation.

Go beyond “communication” to learn the issues and questions of a variety of groups and organizations. Provide a variety of methods to understand and feed into the process.

4. Broaden the consultation and engagement process to include under-represented groups and recognize Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DE&I).

Consult with the Paqtnkek Mi'kmaw Nation and find ways to reach out for opinions of underrepresented groups. Seek different perspectives and identify needs to be addressed.

5. Provide clear and consistent messaging for the public throughout the process.

Create a single point for the Steering Committee to generate and receive communications about the process. This will help address misinformation or confusion within the community.

6. Support, communicate regularly with municipal Councils and Staff.

Support members of Council and staff in responding to issues arising from a potential transition to a single organization.

7. Identify the anticipated tax rate impacts of a possible merger early in the process.

Tax structures, debt and related financial issues should be managed in a manner that minimizes rate changes for the communities served. This is important information for all stakeholders.

8. Consider the potential benefits of regional decision making that supports the improvement of local assets and services.

There should be greater opportunity to achieve things like economic development and recreation across the larger municipal unit, while supporting individual communities, their unique assets and opportunities.

9. Proposed electoral districts should foster a balance between rural and urban communities in the creation of a new Council.

The traditional boundaries between town and county should not be used in a new, more regional municipal council.



APPENDIX A

Excerpts from 2006 NS Utility & Review Board Decision on Town of Antigonish Annexation, County of Antigonish Amalgamation: DECISION NSUARB-MB-01-01/02 2006 NSUARB 112

Key comments are in bold:

[32] **While the Board had formed the preliminary view that amalgamation would be in the best interests of the inhabitants of the area, the Board concludes that the benefits of amalgamation cannot be achieved in the face of the continuing animosity which exists between the respective municipal governments, especially given the public support which each municipal unit enjoys for its position.** The Board considers that the continuing discord related to amalgamation could impact the area's strong community of interest, the region's ability to attract business, and even the ability of local businesses to reconcile their individual business plans within the economic plan of the area (particularly in the corridor of the proposed realignment of the Trans Canada Highway). Any potential benefits from amalgamation might well be outweighed by such negative impacts. These are potential social and financial implications which weigh heavily against the application.

[36] However, the Board would be remiss if it did not observe that many of the issues raised by the parties during the hearing will likely persist under the status quo. Such issues include, but are not limited to, the need to accommodate growth within the Town, the need to adopt a comprehensive planning and development approach with respect to the impending realignment of the Trans Canada Highway corridor adjacent to the Town, the sharing of water, sewer, and electric systems, and making more efficient use of scarce tax dollars. **Without exception, all who testified at the hearing (on both sides of the issues) also asserted that the well-being of the entire County depends on the health of the urban core comprising the Town, but in a way which does not jeopardize the future of the surrounding Municipality. These issues must be addressed in a fashion which will benefit the residents of the Municipality and the Town.**

[37] **A common theme raised throughout the hearing was that the public is both frustrated and disappointed with the lack of cooperation, and often conflict, which exists between their respective municipal governments in addressing the important issues facing the region.** The Board found in its preliminary decision that the confrontational approach taken



by the opposing municipal units has cost the Town and Municipality a combined amount of almost \$240,000 over the past 10 years (see paragraph 312). It is fair to assume that this amount represents a minimum of the cost actually incurred, with these figures ignoring the resources committed by staff for each municipal unit on such conflicts, which involve matters respecting planning, utilities, or other issues. This has taken away from their ability to further the well-being of their respective residents. The Board expects that the public will not tolerate a continuation of these conflicts over the long term. Further, any lack of significant progress on such issues may indeed cause a shift in public opinion on the ability of both councils to address these matters, rekindling a demand for another application to the Board.



APPENDIX B

Windsor West Hants Consolidation Process Guiding Principles for the Co-ordinating Committee

- 1. Boundaries:** When looking at boundaries, ensure equitable representation for both urban and rural communities for the new council. It is essential that the culture and identities of both the urban and rural communities are retained in the new consolidated community.
- 2. Taxation:** When developing a taxation model for the consolidated community, the existing tax system should serve as a base. Business as usual, services as usual. The electoral boundaries should not impact taxation.
- 3. Debt:** When addressing debt from the former communities, area rates should be used to ensure the repayment of the debt is paid in the spirit it was incurred. By way of example, if the debt was incurred for the benefit of the taxpayers in Windsor, the debt should be area rated to the taxpayers of Windsor.
- 4. Administrative Structure:** When developing the blended administrative structure of the consolidated community, all efforts should be taken to ensure there is no job loss as a result of the consolidation. Any planned efficiencies should strive to be achieved through attrition and maintaining corporate knowledge should be prioritized.
- 5. Regional Service Strategy:** An overall strategy for regional service delivery and regional infrastructure prioritization should be informed by an inventory of existing assets.
- 6. Regional Planning:** Regional planning should be a priority for the consolidated community to ensure that the strengths of the urban and rural communities are being leveraged appropriately.
- 7. Public Engagement:** A Public Engagement Plan should focus on transparency and provide diverse ways to inform and engage the public and stakeholders.
- 8. Decisions:** All pertinent decisions should be reviewed with the lens of looking for economic development growth and opportunities.



Antigonish Joint Councils Workshop Agenda

January 21, 2022

- 6.00-6.15 Introduction of Consulting Team and Council members
- 6.15 - 6.30 Review of the consulting team's timelines - Presentation and questions
- 6.30-7.00 Review of Best Practises Backgrounder - Presentation and discussion
- 7.00-7.10 Break
- 7.10-7.40 Engagement Plan and Communication Plan discussion - May involve small break out groups
 - o The consolidation decision and what is needed from the public to make it
 - o Objectives of the engagement and communication plan
 - o Stakeholder and issue identification
- 7.40-7.45 Wrap Up and timing for Guiding Principles development

Workshop objectives

The objectives of the session are to:

- Review the Best Practises Backgrounder (to be circulated in advance of the Joint Council meeting)
- Assess and document what information Councils require from the public for the decision-making process regarding consolidation. (provide examples, decision making framework)
- Seek high level input into the engagement and communication planning

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: February 4, 2022 11:19 AM
To: Gary Mattie
Subject: FW: Amalgamation
Attachments: Amalgamation.pages

Gary

Have a look at email sent to Shirlyn by a resident of District 9. She runs the fire hall in Auld's Cove and her husband is fire chief. She called me for answers first, I didn't have any answers and told her as directed to by Glen to send to Shirlyn. I suspect there is going to be a influx of these kind of comments. We need to get real answers to questions.
Harris

From: Carol MacEachern
Sent: January 29, 2022 10:28 AM
To: Shirlyn Donovan <shirlyn.donovan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Cc: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Amalgamation

Good morning,

I have attached questions which are concerns I have as a taxpayer in the county of Antigonish.

I feel this decision to Amalgamate has already been made. This is very unfair as we, the taxpayers haven't even been given any information. If covid is the reason please do newsletters, pamphlets or something. I would like to see something in place so that people can reach out and ask questions. Online is good for many but there are a lot of people who do not have computers. We need to make sure EVERYONE has an opportunity to voice their concerns. ASAP!

We do have a right to know. At this time I feel this is already progressing without taxpayers having any say. I also feel that Districts in the county will be totally forgotten if Amalgamation happens. District 9 is close to forgotten already and this will finish us.

I would like to see all municipal representative's show the people in their district that they are concerned and listen to their people. This is a serious matter.

Sincerely,
Carol MacEachern

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I feel this decision to Amalgamate has already been made. This is very unfair as we, the taxpayers haven't even been given any information. If covid is the reason please do newsletters, pamphlets or something. I would like to see something in place so that people can reach out and ask questions. Online is good for many but there are a lot of people who do not have computers. We need to make sure EVERYONE has an opportunity to voice their concerns. ASAP!

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I would like to see all municipal representative's show the people in their district that they are concerned and listen to their people. This is a serious matter.

Sincerely,
Carol MacEachern



Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Consolidation Articles

1 message

Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

To: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>

Fri, Feb 4, 2022 at 12:59 PM

Owen

Now that internet is back up (land line works also) after nearly 3 weeks, I wanted to send the two articles I was talking to you about last week.. The amalgamations article is interesting.

2 attachments

 **West Hants - Plebicite Consideration Article.pdf**
6725K

 **amalgamations.pdf**
116K



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Non-binding plebiscite being considered for West Hants residents on amalgamation issue

If approved, a plebiscite could be held in December

Carole Morris-Underhill · Journalist | Posted:
Sept. 26, 2018, 1:27 p.m. | Updated: Sept. 26, 2018,
2:52 p.m. | 8 Min Read



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WENTWORTH CREEK, N.S. — West Hants residents could be going to the polls just days before Christmas to cast a ballot for

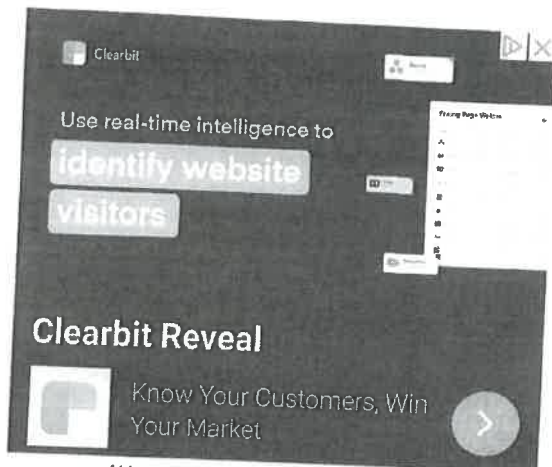
or against amalgamation.

On the same day special legislation was introduced to see the consolidation of Windsor and West Hants municipal units remove forward, West Hants councillors re-opened talks about holding a plebiscite.

Coun. David Keith, who represents the Brooklyn area, made a motion Sept. 25 at the municipality's committee of the whole meeting requesting a plebiscite be held to better gauge public support and interest in merging with nearby Windsor.

It's an issue that has come up several times in the past — but this time, Keith wasn't dropping it until it went to a vote.

"Where we sit now today is all because of a petition. I hate to keep repeating myself but how do you ever compare the public having a say (via a plebiscite) to a petition for God's sakes? We're talking about something major here — major," said Keith.



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The councillor was referencing the petition that started the ball rolling on municipal reform. The petition, launched by the Avon



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Region Citizens Coalition, was created in response to what residents felt was a municipal government that wasn't listening to its constituents, with the fire services issue being one of the primary areas of concern. Once ARC received enough signatures on the petition, council for the Town of Windsor partnered with them and in early 2016, an application was submitted to have the Nova Scotia Utilities and Review Board get involved in consolidating the two units. West Hants council was adamantly opposed. Earlier this year, in order to circumvent the UARB ruling on municipal reform, the two councils agreed to get involved with the Province of Nova Scotia to create special legislation that would help them consolidate equitably and with more input than what would be allowed via the UARB.

ATLANTIC CANADA

Obituaries & Announcements



Linda COLE

It is with saddened hearts that we announce the passing of our beloved wife, sister and aunt, Linda Cole, who passed ...



Betty Ann GOWER

In loving memory of my wife, our mom and grandmother, Betty who left us on January 20, 2019. Although you cannot hear ...



Deborah Anne WILSON

At the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, after a brief illness, on Monday, January 17, 2022 of Deborah A. Wilson (nee McInnis) ...

"All I want is the public involved in it, plain and simple. That's what I think a councillor's job is to keep the public involved in this thing," said Keith as he pitched the plebiscite to his fellow

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councillors.

Municipal clerk Rhonda Brown said she estimated the cost to hold the plebiscite would be around \$50,000.

Coun. Robbie Zwicker, of Hantsport, said he agreed a plebiscite should be held.

"The ARC group were a crafty bunch and relatively intelligent and they looked through the Municipal Government Act and said 'how do we get what we want?'" he said, noting they had people sign the petition who were busy, who were on their way to get groceries and liquor.

"We had a group that used a little wrinkle on the bottom of a paragraph in the back of the book to force this upon us," said Zwicker. "Maybe people need to be heard; \$50,000 isn't a lot of money."

He wasn't alone in wanting to see the public have a say. Several councillors offered their support, including Coun. Tanya Leopold.

"I admire the ARC group for their intelligence and their ability to push through a piece of legislation — it's in the MGA that allows 10 per cent to take on this type of option. For that reason, I totally admire that group for getting it to this point," said Leopold.



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However, she took issue with the process, noting she knows people who signed the petition not realizing the full scope of what ARC was seeking.

"I understand why this is a contentious issue but I appreciate the need for a plebiscite because of the way it unfolded," said Leopold. "I know you can say it doesn't matter how we got here, we're here, but I'll tell you, it was wrong."

A done deal?

Coun. Kathy Anroee was opposed to holding a plebiscite on the issue, noting it was a waste of taxpayers' money, in her eyes.

"The consolidation is in motion. This action, being a plebiscite, would only serve to create further division in our community while placing us in a possible position contrary to true leadership, rather than being out there to educate the municipality as to what was initiated today in the legislature," said Anroee.

"We're now going to go back to them and ask them a yes or no question and I'm not

sure why. What will it do? What will it lead to other than spending money and creating division? It doesn't show leadership. It doesn't take us forward down the road. It satisfies one councillor's need to have a yes/no vote in front of him but... what does it do? What does it serve? What's the positive end of this? That's what I want to know."

The plebiscite that has been proposed is non-binding, meaning that even if the majority of residents vote against amalgamation, it doesn't mean the merger between the two municipalities will be called off.

"All we're going to do is irritate the province. It was my understanding that doing this would cause them to be less considerate of our financial needs," said Monroe, following an in camera (private) session where council discussed the impact holding a plebiscite could have on the workload of West Hants employees.

"I believe that we're voted in for our ability to lead and our ability to do the right thing. I believe that we're in a process. We've voted on it more than once. We need to step in front of this and get going, support it," said Monroe.

"It's a waste of money, it's a waste of our time and poor leadership all the way around."

READ MORE

- [Windsor and West Hants one step closer to consolidation via provincial legislation](#)
- [Mantua resident wants plebiscite before Windsor, West Hants join together as one unit](#)
- [Windsor, West Hants consolidation effort moving forward without plebiscite - for now](#)
- [Windsor, West Hants councils vote to consolidate municipal units by Dec. 31, 2020](#)
- [Avon Region Citizens Coalition pleased to see county, town moving forward with municipal reform](#)
- [Windsor and West Hants councils trade barbs over amalgamation issue](#)
- [It's official: amalgamation application sent requesting merger of Windsor, West Hants](#)
- [Lengthy road ahead for Windsor,](#)

Warden Abraham Zebian said he would represent whatever stance council takes, but was confused with why they're backtracking on the issue.

"At this point, here we go flip-flopping again. I'm not sure where we are or why we do things; why we make decisions and then go back and try to change decisions," said Zebian.

"I support wholeheartedly people having a voice. I thought we were going to consult with them and gauge their interest and gauge their opinions and have free-flow dialogue. That's what I was under the impression that we were going to do. I was quite excited for that. I'm a little bit lost right now."

Monroe reminded councillors that holding a plebiscite wouldn't change things.

"I think we have councillors at this table who are holding out hope that a plebiscite somewhere during the consolidation process will somehow end the

Municipal amalgamations in Atlantic Canada and beyond: Why amalgamate?

A talk to the Annual Meeting of the BC Municipal Finance Authority
by Brian Lee Crowley, President, Atlantic Institute for Market Studies
29 March 2001, Victoria, BC

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Thank you for the kind invitation to be here with you today.

I was asked to speak to the Maritime experience of municipal amalgamation but, I protested, there have only been a few of any consequence, such as the Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM), the Cape Breton Regional Municipality and the creation of Miramichi City in New Brunswick (although such amalgamations have been mooted as well in Saint John, Moncton and St. John's). Of the ones that have already occurred, only one (the HRM) has been studied intensively, as I shall relate in a moment. This could be the world's shortest talk.

So, I said, let me use the HRM experience as a springboard for talking about the principles behind the amalgamation movement, and what the evidence is telling us about how well founded that movement's assumptions are and what the outcomes have been generally.

Now that could easily be the world's longest talk, so I will strive to be brief.

The first section of my talk is called "The Chief Cause of Problems is Solutions"!

To understand the HRM experience, you have to understand three particular circumstances.

1) The amalgamation of metropolitan Halifax was caused by the Price Club big box retailer. This is only a slight exaggeration. The old municipalities of Halifax and Dartmouth got in a destructive bidding war with each other to attract the Price Club store that had been announced for the metropolitan area. They got into a destructive and pointless competition, since the benefits of the Price Club went well beyond the boundaries of each municipality (the catchment area for a Price Club store is usually quite vast, and would certainly cover much of mainland Nova Scotia). In the end, Halifax won the right to have the store built within its boundaries at a cost of about \$1-million. That amount was a direct gift from the taxpayers of Halifax to the shareholders of Price Club for zero public benefit, other than sticking it to the municipality of Dartmouth across the harbour.

It was events like this that raised great suspicion of the rivalry between these municipalities and convinced many, including in the provincial government, that a single municipality would be cheaper and more efficient because it would abolish such wasteful behaviour.

2) The discovery of natural gas off the shores of Nova Scotia triggered a huge flurry of public spending on the assumption that the revenue to pay for it was just around the corner. Except the corner turned out to be 2 decades away. By the early 90s, the province was in desperate fiscal shape — more so than virtually any other province — and they were desperate to cut costs.

3) The third circumstance is that we have in Nova Scotia a culture of what I call executive personalism in government — the policy formulation process is excessively weak, and fashionable ideas that get into the heads of premiers and powerful cabinet ministers are not subjected to searching analysis. If an idea sounds good to the right people, things happen — heavy water plants, steel mills, and municipal

amalgamation being only a few examples.

The Premier and his minister of finance got it into their heads that there were major efficiencies to be had in amalgamating the municipalities. Now if they had actually wanted to test these ideas properly, if they had wanted to engage in that dangerously radical practice known as evidence-based policymaking, they could easily have consulted the literature on local government and amalgamation, a literature which is now quite vast. Had they done so, they would have discovered the following:

First, they would have discovered that local government is not merely a device for supplying municipal services, but also for finding out what services people want and how much they are prepared to pay for them. The smaller the government unit, the better they are at discovering this, because the empirical evidence is very strong that local government is closest to the people. Amalgamation tends to undermine this relationship and therefore can only really be justified if there are pretty remarkable efficiencies to compensate for dilution of responsiveness and democratic accountability.

But, second, they would have discovered that the evidence is quite strong that creating single-tier local government monopolies doesn't reduce costs — it increases them. It levels costs up to the highest common denominator in the pre-existing units, and seems to result in higher trends of cost growth over time. This is especially true where amalgamation has eliminated competition between pre-existing municipalities both in terms of attracting residents and industry and in terms of tax and service levels. It seems that the most dynamic force helping to keep costs down is not a highly centralised and bureaucratic monopoly provider of public services, but a decentralisation of authority and decision-making within several municipalities within an urban area where residents cannot vote themselves benefits at the expense of other taxpayers in other parts of the city. This ensures that people only demand services that they're prepared to pay for, and municipalities have powerful incentives to keep costs low and satisfaction high, or risk the erosion of their tax base as people and businesses vote with their feet.

Third, they would have discovered that it is a fairly small part of public services where there are significant returns to scale — in other words where the bigger you are, the cheaper it is to produce a unit of a given service. The evidence says pretty unambiguously that the lowest observable level of per unit costs for most services are compatible with very small municipal units (on the order of 5,000-10,000 residents). Moreover, there are significant diseconomies of scale beyond relatively small population numbers — on the order of 250,000 residents. And, finally, that the supposed savings from smaller councils and elimination of several city halls and other trappings of multiple local governments, is so paltry as to be not even worth mentioning.

But of course, given the culture of executive personalism that I mentioned, they didn't consult the literature. Had they done so, they, like California under Ronald Reagan, would likely quickly have abandoned their amalgamation policy.

Instead they committed a nearly always fatal mistake — they hired a consultant. And instead of asking this consultant to review what is now known about the dynamics of local government, they asked him to write an abstract report about all the ways one could, theoretically, save money if you were an omniscient manager and there were economies of scale in the provision of most municipal services.

The consultant duly told them that there were significant savings to be had at very low cost. This is not hard to do since any outsider can look at any organisation and identify ways that things could be done "better". In 1996, the municipalities of Halifax, Dartmouth, Bedford, Sackville and the dozens of towns and villages in the old Halifax County, were duly amalgamated into the HRM, with a population of

around 350,000.

Now what is interesting to note is that the HRM is an extremely valuable test case, because it is the only large scale amalgamation North America to have been studied from the outset by a team of academics, a team, moreover, that received high levels of co-operation from the authorities of the new municipality. Bob Bish, of the University of Victoria was a key member of the team, which was headed by Dale Poel of the Dalhousie School of Public Administration. Their study, which covered 1996-2000, was financed largely by the Donner Canadian Foundation, a private foundation which supports important public policy work in this country.

Now before I report on their findings, let me emphasise that these are preliminary, and the research team themselves now recognise that the 5 years they gave themselves to study the new entity was not enough for it, and its procedures, to be fully formed.

Still, certain things are clear. The consultant's implementation study underestimated the cost of amalgamation by a very significant margin. The final tally, including a new financial management system and labour agreements, is expected to reach \$40-million, whereas the estimate was under \$10-million. No cost savings or economies of scale are observable yet, and it is not obvious that they ever will be, or where they might come from. Both taxes and other charges, as well as debt increased significantly. User charges rose and average residential property taxes went up about 10% in urban areas and by as much as 30% in suburban and rural areas. Polling data show low levels of satisfaction with post-amalgamation services, although again it may be premature to make a strong judgement here.

Recalling the Price Club fiasco, it is interesting to note that the HRM doesn't even engage in such economic development activities anymore — although there are obviously areas, such as land swaps and zoning that Council deals with. HRM contributes a minority share of the funding of a highly innovative public-private partnership that handles promotion of the HRM as a place to work and invest. It is worth noting, as an aside, that those US cities with the highest rates of economic growth count many with the most fragmented local government structure.. There is no observable correlation between amalgamation and economic growth.

There is a structure for community councils within the HRM, but these are not widely used nor understood, and it is not at all clear that they will gain much power and prestige as against the HRM Council or the permanent central bureaucracy. In other places where conflicts have arisen between such community councils and the senior centres of authority, it is the community councils that have generally ended up the losers.

There is still a very high degree of monopolistic in-house provision of services, although there are exceptions, in areas like solid waste collection. An innovative public-private partnership process for the construction of a waste water treatment system is teetering on the brink of collapse, because the new mayor, again, favours in-house monopoly provision.

Where should local government be headed?

I've already remarked on some of the advantages of local government, and in particular the fact that it is the level of government most able to be relatively aware of the real concrete circumstances of their populations, and to be able to see and correct the damaging and undesirable consequences of their policies. But the small scale of local governments and the large number of them that exist, has other advantages. Chief among these is the possibility they create of carrying out a great number of experiments with different types of policies. This has some important consequences.

For example, organised minorities and pressure groups benefit from centralised political power because that means that they can concentrate their lobbying power on a central point of authority, in the national or the provincial capital. When power is widely dispersed to many small units of government, however, that reduces their lobbying power because it is spread so thinly. Amalgamation in a large urban area, however, restores the bargaining power of organised minorities in local government affairs.

In the same vein, this decentralisation reduces significantly the ability to pass the costs of local decisions along to larger communities, which forces voters to be more fiscally responsible. When governments cover relatively small geographical areas, it reduces significantly the cost of “voting with your feet”. It is much cheaper to move from one town to the town next door than it is to move to another country.

The third consequence of the existence of a large number of local government units is that it allows the benefits of successful experiments to be copied by other local and even more senior governments, and obtains the information about which experiments are successful at lower cost than when entire provinces or countries must try out policies to see if they work.

A good example is the London borough of Wandsworth in central London. According to the Deputy Leader of the borough council, Maurice Heaster, “Our public housing was a disgrace: more than 100 high-rise apartment blocks where no one wanted to live. They needed money spent on them and they needed occupants with a new, more house-proud attitude.

“As long ago as 1978, we began to sell council-owned flats and houses to the tenants.... [O]ver the years, we have sold 20,000 of our original 40,000 properties. Every estate, every block, now has a healthy mix of home owners and tenants. We have generated £500 million in capital receipts.”

It was from Wandsworth that Mrs. Thatcher drew the inspiration for her famous (and hugely popular) programme of council house sales.

Without that successful local experiment, it would have been far more difficult to “sell” such a policy at the national level, which leads to my fourth and final point: decentralisation, when linked to a high degree of competition between localities, increases the likelihood of spreading local policies and practices when these are successful, and getting rid of them when they are not. Imitation is a powerful force.

But none of these positive effects can or will be realised without a vital element of competition. Because of the ignorance of municipal officials about their own population, the true costs of various services, and the potential of new methods to deliver efficiencies and improved service levels, we need a framework for local government that spurs competition, which is really only another way of talking about maximising experimentation and ending rigid monopolies in the supply of local government services. Competition is a discovery procedure.

At the local level, competition takes place on two dimensions:

First, there is competition within municipalities. By this I mean that the most successful municipalities, places like Charlotte, North Carolina, Phoenix, Arizona, and Indianapolis, Indiana, are more and more getting out of the game of directly supplying traditional local government services where local government employees under a rigid contract supply individual services, such as garbage collection or sewer and water services, to the residents of an entire city as a typical public sector monopoly. Note that this is consistent with structures such as BCs regional districts, that permit pooling and sharing of services and purchasing across units.

Instead, the model that is emerging is of a much smaller local government that acts as a kind of buyer's co-op on behalf of the residents of the locality. Service standards are set, and contracts are let on the basis of those standards, to competitive bidders. The winning bidder is then held accountable for his success or failure in reaching the agreed standards. The question of whether the service is provided by public sector or private sector workers and managers is actually becoming irrelevant.

Naturally the monopolists are the ones who resist the most, and especially large centralised service provision bureaucracies and their associated public sector unions, but the benefits are so great from contracting out and privatisation – as Jim McDavid at the University of Victoria Local Government Institute has been instrumental in documenting with respect, for example, to garbage collection — that the momentum is clearly with the reformers.

The other kind of competition that it is vital to preserve is that between municipalities on the local level. One of the things that drives local government toward reform is the ease with which people vote with their feet. One strategy for frustrating this crucial means of disciplining and controlling the quality of local policy and holding local officials accountable, is to expand the boundaries of local government to such an extent that the costs of exit become prohibitive.

This movement toward what we call municipal amalgamation is driven, ironically, in many cases by the business community, who believe that we have “too many governments”, resulting in “overlap and duplication”. Surely, it stands to reason that having only one mayor, one council, one city hall, and one public works department would save money and promote efficiency.

But as Gordon Tullock, a prominent economist, argued in a recent book, “There is much more centralisation in governments than in the economy. This is in spite of the fact that there do not seem to be any very obvious economies of scale outside a few special areas like the military and, possibly, diplomacy.” Tullock is properly drawing our attention to the fact that in both government and the economy, small and large organisations exist, and both can be efficient in those things where they enjoy advantages. But being large in itself is no guarantee of anything.

In fact, there are good reasons for thinking that bigger government will be less efficient and responsive, not more. Certainly in the private sector thinking is running the other way, as the break up of giants releases hidden value in their assets. We have seen this recently, for example, in the decision of Telus to sell many of its large office buildings, because the company argues that they are in the telecommunications business, not the property management business. BCE's spinning off of Nortel created new value for shareholders in both organisations. And of course we all know that the experience of amalgamation has been to drive costs up to the highest level, rather than down to the lowest.

The other danger, of course, is that of cartelisation. This is what happens when local governments refuse to compete, but simply agree that they will all aim for the lowest common denominator. It is not unusual, in practice, for cartels of local governments to complain about outliers who do engage in vigorous competition, accusing them of "raiding", "unfair practices", "social dumping", provoking a "race to the bottom" and so forth.

This is where senior governments can usefully play the role of stimulator of competition, through actions such as those taken in New Zealand and Australia. Here, for example, there are laws obliging local governments to use compulsory competitive tendering for all services. Local governments undergo regular audits, where service levels and taxation levels are compared, permitting the publication of league tables and other instruments of accountability that grant to local voters much greater insight into the performance of their local government and hence more means to hold them accountable. Research indicates that people and businesses that move from one municipality to another are actually quite knowledgeable about the conditions in both their old and new municipalities.

Public sector competition, like private sector competition, is not "wasteful", but is a healthy discipline that promotes efficiency, accountability and good service. Such competition, where it has been introduced into local government, has transformed it for the better.

Thank you.

Harris McNamara

From: Glenn Horne
Sent: February 4, 2022 1:34 PM
To: carolmaceachern.
Cc: Owen McCarron; Harris McNamara; Shirlyn Donovan
Subject: RE: Amalgamation

Good afternoon, Mrs. MacEachern –

I know you've been back and forth with Shirlyn this week and are still waiting for answers to the questions you've raised. I appreciate your patience.

Many of the questions you've raised will be addressed by a set of "frequently asked questions" we are in the process of finalizing. Before they are shared with the public they have to be shared with Municipal and Town Councils. Whatever questions you have that are not covered in those FAQs will address directly to the best of our ability.

You can expect to receive these FAQs and response to your questions from Warden McCarron mid-next week. I have copied Warden McCarron and Councillor McNamara on this email for their awareness.

Thank you again for your patience and I hope you have a great weekend.

Glenn



Glenn Horne | Chief Administrative Officer
Municipality of the County of Antigonish | 902.863.1117
285 Beech Hill Road, Beech Hill, NS | B2G 0B4
www.antigonishcounty.ns.ca | [@AntigonishCo](https://www.facebook.com/AntigonishCo) | [facebook](#)

Honour Yesterday, Act Today, Inspire Tomorrow

From: Shirlyn Donovan <shirlyn.donovan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Sent: January 31, 2022 9:14 AM
To: Glenn Horne <glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: FW: Amalgamation

Shirlyn Donovan
Strategic Initiatives Coordinator
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
285 Beech Hill Road
Antigonish, NS B2G 0B4
902-863-1117

 www.antigonishcounty.ns.ca
 www.twitter.com/antigonishco

Honour Yesterday, Act Today, Inspire Tomorrow

From: Carol MacEachern <carol@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Sent: Saturday, January 29, 2022 10:28 AM
To: Shirlyn Donovan <shirlyn.donovan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Cc: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Amalgamation

Good morning,

I have attached questions which are concerns I have as a taxpayer in the county of Antigonish.

I feel this decision to Amalgamate has already been made. This is very unfair as we, the taxpayers haven't even been given any information. If covid is the reason please do newsletters, pamphlets or something. I would like to see something in place so that people can reach out and ask questions. Online is good for many but there are a lot of people who do not have computers. We need to make sure EVERYONE has an opportunity to voice their concerns. ASAP!

We do have a right to know. At this time I feel this is already progressing without taxpayers having any say. I also feel that Districts in the county will be totally forgotten if Amalgamation happens. District 9 is close to forgotten already and this will finish us.

I would like to see all municipal representative's show the people in their district that they are concerned and listen to their people. This is a serious matter.

Sincerely,
Carol MacEachern

Harris McNamara

From: Glenn Horne
Sent: February 4, 2022 3:14 PM
To: Shirlyn Donovan; Owen McCarron; Harris McNamara
Subject: Fwd: Amalgamation

FYI - Mrs. MacEachern's response below.

Cheers,
Glenn

Glenn Horne
CAO
Municipality of the County of Antigonish

From: Carol MacEachern <
Sent: Friday, February 4, 2022 3:12:14 PM
To: Glenn Horne <glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Re: Amalgamation

Thank you,

Looking forward to this information.

Carol

On Feb 4, 2022, at 1:33 PM, Glenn Horne <glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca> wrote:

Good afternoon, Mrs. MacEachern –

I know you've been back and forth with Shirlyn this week and are still waiting for answers to the questions you've raised. I appreciate your patience.

Many of the questions you've raised will be addressed by a set of "frequently asked questions" we are in the process of finalizing. Before they are shared with the public they have to be shared with Municipal and Town Councils. Whatever questions you have that are not covered in those FAQs will address directly to the best of our ability.

You can expect to receive these FAQs and response to your questions from Warden McCarron mid-next week. I have copied Warden McCarron and Councillor McNamara on this email for their awareness.

Thank you again for your patience and I hope you have a great weekend.

Glenn



Glenn Horne | Chief Administrative Officer
Municipality of the County of Antigonish | 902.863.1117
285 Beech Hill Road, Beech Hill, NS | B2G 0B4
www.antigonishcounty.ns.ca | [@AntigonishCo](https://www.facebook.com/AntigonishCo) | [facebook](#)

Honour Yesterday, Act Today, Inspire Tomorrow

From: Shirlyn Donovan <shirlyn.donovan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Sent: January 31, 2022 9:14 AM
To: Glenn Horne <glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: FW: Amalgamation

Shirlyn Donovan
Strategic Initiatives Coordinator
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
285 Beech Hill Road
Antigonish, NS B2G 0B4
902-863-1117



www.antigonishcounty.ns.ca
www.twitter.com/antigonishco

Honour Yesterday, Act Today, Inspire Tomorrow

From: Carol MacEachern <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Sent: Saturday, January 29, 2022 10:28 AM
To: Shirlyn Donovan <shirlyn.donovan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Cc: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Amalgamation

Good morning,

I have attached questions which are concerns I have as a taxpayer in the county of Antigonish.

I feel this decision to Amalgamate has already been made. This is very unfair as we, the taxpayers haven't even been given any information. If covid is the reason please do newsletters, pamphlets or something. I would like to see something in place so that people can reach out and ask questions. Online is good for many but there are a lot of people who do not have computers. We need to make sure EVERYONE has an opportunity to voice their concerns. ASAP!

We do have a right to know. At this time I feel this is already progressing without taxpayers having any say. I also feel that Districts in the county will be totally forgotten if Amalgamation happens. District 9 is close to forgotten already and this will finish us.

I would like to see all municipal representative's show the people in their district that they are concerned and listen to their people. This is a serious matter.

Sincerely,
Carol MacEachern

Beth Schumacher

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: February 4, 2022 7:48 PM
To: Glenn Horne
Subject: Accepted: Consolidation Steering Committee Meeting

From: [Glenn Horne](#)
To: [Council/SLT; Shirdyn Donovan](#)
Subject: Consolidation Frequently Asked Questions
Date: February 5, 2022 12:42:16 PM
Attachments: [Antigonish-FrequentlyAskedQuestions Feb 5 2022.pdf](#)

Good afternoon, councillors –

Please find attached the first batch of Consolidation FAQs, which have been reviewed by staff and the steering committee and prepared in consultation with Brighter Communities.

These FAQs are reflective of the best information we have at this time. As Councils learn and discuss more, and after you've had an opportunity to develop guiding principles, they will be updated and added to.

We plan to post this document on www.antigonish.ca early next week. If you have any questions or concerns please let me know.

Thanks,
Glenn



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ANTIGONISH

Our Community

Frequently Asked Questions

What is Consolidation?

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Why are the Town and County considering consolidation?

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We have seen the benefits of working together with examples like hosting the National Special Olympics, construction of the Antigonish Skatepark and community Dog Park, Holiday Events, Regional Emergency Management, and Physician Retention just to name a few.

Consolidating may be a more efficient use of existing resources to provide a high level of service to residents living in Antigonish’s urban and rural areas. Many of the issues facing our communities, such as climate change, economic development, infrastructure planning, accessibility and housing, require or would significantly benefit from working together.

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Is this happening because one or both parties are in financial trouble?

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We are willing to explore the option to consolidate to make municipal government more efficient, provide more value for tax dollars, and to better serve the communities in which we live, and work and create a more sustainable community.

What is the process for determining whether we will consolidate?

The two municipalities are exploring an approach to merger similar to those used by the Town of Windsor and District of West Hants and the Town of Liverpool and Queens County. This involves gathering and assessing information about both municipalities, reflecting on what is important to our communities, consulting with the communities involved to proceed or not. Councils are gathering and assessing information now. Community consultations will take place after March Break. We anticipate a decision by Councils in June 2022.

Should a decision to proceed be made then, the municipalities would approach the Province for support in terms of special legislation and transition funding with a view to creating a joint municipality beginning in April of 2024.

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There will be many avenues for public feedback. To the extent possible while following public health guidelines, we will hold public meetings in every municipal district and the Town. We will also meet with residents at “pop-up” events at places like the arena, farmers’ market, legion events, etc.

We understand the hesitancy to come out to public meetings as there is still COVID present in our community. To overcome these challenges and to ensure we meet residents where they are safe and comfortable, there will also be virtual sessions, a website created that will serve as an information hub and a place to submit questions and collect feedback.

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What is the purpose of the public engagement? How will our input be used?

The public engagement process is vital piece of the process before Councils can make a decision on whether to proceed with consolidation or not. The purpose is to provide residents the opportunity to let both Councils know what is important to them as we look at consolidation. If there are questions about the merger that might impact or benefit local communities and individuals, it is important to get them into the process early.

Public input will be used to help the Councils understand the values and issues that are important to residents and give everyone an opportunity to reflect on how municipal government is organized and whether a consolidation would be beneficial.

Frequently Asked Questions



How will a decision be made and by who?

A report will be presented to both Councils containing all of the input from the public engagement. Municipal staff and the communications consultants will also prepare information about questions raised and potential responses. Council members from the Town and the County will take time to reflect on the findings and decide on whether to move forward with consolidation or remain as separate entities.

When will a decision be made?

We expect the joint Councils will vote on a decision by June of this year, once the engagement process is complete.

What happens once a decision is made by Town and County Councils?

If a decision is made to consolidate, a request for special legislation under the *Municipal Government Act* to consolidate is made to the province. Based on other municipal mergers, there would also be a request for provincial transition funding, intended to support the Town and County with the coordination and preparation for creating a joint municipal unit. If the decision is to remain as separate entities, the Town and County will continue to operate as they do now.

How do I get information if I live in an area without strong Internet?

We are planning public meetings in every municipal district and the Town. To the extent possible, and following public health guidelines, in-person meetings will be held in all municipal districts and the Town and there will be “pop ups” where people naturally gather. Anyone who cannot or does not feel comfortable participating in a public meeting can get information or their questions answered by phoning 1-833-563-2786 or 1-833-563-2787. Please leave a voice mail and staff will get back to you.

Frequently Asked Questions

What would the District Boundaries of a consolidated Municipality look like?

If consolidation takes place the entire new municipality (former Town and County) would be divided into districts, similar to how the County is divided into districts now. A separate public review process would determine the number of districts and their boundaries with input from all residents.

As part of that separate public review process options for the number of districts & council size as well as the district boundaries will be developed for public consultation. Council size would be determined based on the optimum number of representatives needed to provide effective and responsive governance. Establishing new boundaries is not a precise science and there will be more opportunities for public feedback if we get to that stage.

While specifics like the number of districts and their boundaries are not known at this stage, Councils have stated that any options developed will be provided for balanced representation of rural and urban areas and boundaries would NOT reflect the existing boundary between the Town and County.

Once options through the public engagement process are developed, the Transition Committee for the consolidated municipality would recommend one of the options to the Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board for approval. The NSUARB would complete another public process before ruling.

How would representatives be elected if the Town and County Consolidated?

A consolidated Municipality would have elected Councillors by districts and a mayor elected at-large who represents the whole municipality. The number and territory for all districts would be determined as part of the transition process.

Frequently Asked Questions



Will there be staff redundancy and job losses?

The intent of consolidation is not to reduce staff, but to make better use of the existing resources in one combined organization. Every effort would be made to retain staff. Staffing changes would be made through retraining, increasing capacity in some service areas and attrition. The organizational structure will look different, but the provision of high-quality services would not change. Existing union contracts would continue in effect in the merged organization.

Is the Province providing financial support through this exploration phase as well as through the transition phase if the decision is made to consolidate?

Yes. The Province has awarded the Town and County the funds needed to complete the exploration phase which includes community engagement.


There is typically funding available from the Department of Municipal Affairs and Housing to aid in the transition phase if Councils vote to move in that direction.

What will happen to my tax rate?

We do not expect any significant changes in rates for the municipal services communities use now. Based on past municipal mergers in Nova Scotia, it is likely to expect that a base property tax rate would be established along with a series of area rates based on the services provided in that specific area. This decision would ultimately be up to the new council elected if the consolidation takes place. The current councils would not determine the tax rates for the consolidated municipality.

Water rates are regulated by the NS Utility and Review Board, based on periodic reviews of infrastructure and safety requirements, and there is nothing in the consolidation process that should trigger a change in these rates.

Frequently Asked Questions



Will rural areas lose their voice to the more urban areas?

The role of any municipality is to put the structures in place that support individual community identities to ensure they remain intact. These communities are what make our area so unique and vibrant. Elected officials represent the voice of their districts and would continue to do so within a new municipal structure.

The Municipality of the County of Antigonish already manages urban and rural services and concerns on a daily basis. We are a municipality that values and understands and needs and service requirements of rural communities. The communities in a consolidated municipality would remain as they are.

What is the state of each Municipality's infrastructure?

Since 2019, both the Town and County worked with the Province of Nova Scotia to do an inventory and assessment of all linear infrastructure. This included all water and sewer lines, as well as roads and sidewalks. Part of the transition process will be to review the inventory and state of all infrastructure. Infrastructure investments are constantly being made by both municipalities, and this process is anticipated to continue should the two units become one in the future. In many instances our infrastructure is already intimately linked.

If I'm not hearing about consultations, who should I contact?

You can contact Shirlyn Donovan or Kate Gorman at info@antigonish.ca.

From: [Mary MacLellan](#)
To: [Glenn Horne](#); [Council](#); [SLT](#); [Shirlyn Donovan](#);
Subject: RE: Consolidation Frequently Asked Questions
Date: February 5, 2022 3:44:07 PM

Glenn, Thanks for the material on the Consolidation process. I have read the document and feel it is a clear comprehensive overview of the Consolidation process providing explanation on the path forward regarding many of the most frequently asked questions and concerns of residents. A practical start to complicated process.

I did notice what I believe is a slight typo on the Boundaries section- Should "provided" be "provide"
? Mary

From: Glenn Horne <glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Sent: February 5, 2022 12:42 PM
To: Council <council@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; SLT <slt@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shirlyn Donovan <shirlyn.donovan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Consolidation Frequently Asked Questions

Good afternoon, councillors –

Please find attached the first batch of Consolidation FAQs, which have been reviewed by staff and the steering committee and prepared in consultation with Brighter Communities.

These FAQs are reflective of the best information we have at this time. As Councils learn and discuss more, and after you've had an opportunity to develop guiding principles, they will be updated and added to.

We plan to post this document on www.antigonish.ca early next week. If you have any questions or concerns please let me know.

Thanks,
Glenn



Glenn Horne | Chief Administrative Officer
Municipality of the County of Antigonish | 902.863.1117
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Harris McNamara

From: John Dunbar
Sent: February 5, 2022 11:07 PM
To: Harris McNamara
Subject: Consolidation

Hi Harris,

There's something I want to ask you in advance of Tuesday's meeting. I have a number of concerns about consolidation, as I feel you do as well. In that vein, I would like to ask you to keep this conversation between us before the meeting.

As you know, Council was sent a list of frequently asked questions on the topic on Saturday. There's some good information in there; some of it came word for word from the consultants' report we were given for the Joint Council meeting a few weeks back. One part that stood out for me was this:

"While specifics like the number of districts and their boundaries are not known at this stage, Councils have stated that any options developed will provided for balanced representation of rural and urban areas and boundaries would NOT reflect the existing boundary between the Town and County."

When did our Council have this discussion? When did we state this? Because if this is from the last Joint Council meeting, my recollection is that any discussion of boundaries was lead by the consultants. Joint Council can't pass motions. If a consensus on something is agreed on, it still has to come back to each Council to be ratified. I can't speak for Town Council, but I don't think our council has had this discussion.

Interested in your thoughts here.

John Dunbar

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: February 7, 2022 8:42 AM
To: Shirlyn Donovan
Subject: Accepted: Joint Council Guiding Principles Session

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: February 7, 2022 8:56 AM
To: John Dunbar
Subject: FW: Amalgamation
Attachments: Amalgamation.pages

John

Email we spoke about last evening. She is the wife of the fire chief who looks after hall and did run for councillor in last municipal election. She will not let this go.

Harris

From: Carol MacEachern <
Sent: January 29, 2022 10:28 AM
To: Shirlyn Donovan <shirlyn.donovan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Cc: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Amalgamation

Good morning,

I have attached questions which are concerns I have as a taxpayer in the county of Antigonish.

I feel this decision to Amalgamate has already been made. This is very unfair as we, the taxpayers haven't even been given any information. If covid is the reason please do newsletters, pamphlets or something. I would like to see something in place so that people can reach out and ask questions. Online is good for many but there are a lot of people who do not have computers. We need to make sure EVERYONE has an opportunity to voice their concerns. ASAP!

We do have a right to know. At this time I feel this is already progressing without taxpayers having any say. I also feel that Districts in the county will be totally forgotten if Amalgamation happens. District 9 is close to forgotten already and this will finish us.

I would like to see all municipal representative's show the people in their district that they are concerned and listen to their people. This is a serious matter.

Sincerely,
Carol MacEachern

I have attached questions which are concerns I have as a taxpayer in the county of Antigonish.

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Sincerely,
Carol MacEachern

Beth Schumacher

From: Shirlyn Donovan
Sent: February 8, 2022 8:57 AM
To: Owen McCarron; Hughie Stewart
Subject: Media Training

Good morning,

Are you both available Friday at 1pm for Media Training with Robyn from the Consolidation Team?

Thanks,
Shirlyn

Shirlyn Donovan
Strategic Initiatives Coordinator
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
285 Beech Hill Road
Antigonish, NS B2G 0B4
902-863-1117



www.antigonishcounty.ns.ca
www.twitter.com/antigonishco

Honour Yesterday, Act Today, Inspire Tomorrow

Glenn Horne

Subject: Consolidation Steering Committee Meeting
Location: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85351005469?pwd=UXZQWVlkSW1kaVJOaGpjL3E5NHZqZz09>

Start: Tue 2022-02-08 8:00 AM
End: Tue 2022-02-08 9:00 AM
Show Time As: Tentative

Recurrence: (none)

Meeting Status: Not yet responded

Organizer: Glenn Horne
Required Attendees: Owen McCarron; Hughie Stewart; Laurie Boucher; Willie Cormier; Jeffery Lawrence; Shirlyn Donovan; kgorman@townofantigonish.ca; Alisha Bowie

zmMeetingNum: 85351005469

Good afternoon, folks –

Please find attached the agenda for Tuesday morning's meeting and the link below.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85351005469?pwd=UXZQWVlkSW1kaVJOaGpjL3E5NHZqZz09>

Meeting ID: 853 5100 5469

Passcode: 781931

Have a great weekend & keep your stick on the ice 😊!

Glenn



Glenn Horne | Chief Administrative Officer
Municipality of the County of Antigonish | 902.863.1117
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ANTIGONISH

Our Community

**Consolidation Steering Committee
Municipal Council Chamber – 285 Beech Hill Road
Tuesday, March 8, 2022 @ 8am
Meeting Agenda**

- 1) Review of Map with Household Numbers
- 2) Review of Staff Fact Sheets
- 3) Review of Guiding Principles
- 4) Review of Invitation List for Community Leaders and Organizations Sessions
- 5) Sharing of Working Engagement & Communications Plan
- 6) Council Logistics for June Decision
- 7) Additions:
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.

Glenn Horne

From: Glenn Horne
Sent: February 9, 2022 8:03 AM
To: Owen McCarron
Cc: Shirlyn Donovan
Subject: FW: Email to Carol
Attachments: Antigonish-FrequentlyAskedQuestions.pdf

Hi Owen –

As discussed last week, below is a proposed response to Carol MacEachern's questions. Take a look and make any changes you'd like. Once you're happy with it the email can be send to [redacted] with a cc to Shirlyn, Harris and I and the FAQs attached. Feel free to give me a call if there is anything you'd like to discuss.

Thanks,
Glenn



Glenn Horne | Chief Administrative Officer
Municipality of the County of Antigonish | 902.863.1117
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Honour Yesterday, Act Today, Inspire Tomorrow

From: Shirlyn Donovan <shirlyn.donovan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Sent: February 7, 2022 2:15 PM
To: Glenn Horne <glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Email to Carol

Good afternoon Carol,

Thank you for your patience over the past week or so as we have worked to finalize our first set of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs). Many of the questions you've raised we have heard from different parts of the County. They are good and reasonable questions and we wanted to make sure we captured and responded to them properly. I've attached those FAQs to this email. You'll also be able to find them on www.antigonish.ca when the website is launched in the coming days.

These FAQs are reflective of the best information we have at this time. As Councils learn and discuss more, and have an opportunity to develop guiding principles, they will be updated and added to. These FAQs should answer the majority of your questions. For the few that aren't address through the FAQs, I will address them below:

In regards to your question about the affect on Volunteer Fire Departments: we have no intention to make any changes to fire departments. Fire Departments are an important part of our communities and we have a lot of respect for their contributions. Fire Departments will be consulted directly as the County and Town explore consolidation and if they feel there are any specific issues that we should be aware of they can raise them at any time.

Regarding your question on plebiscite. We do not intend to hold a plebiscite. The community will be extensively consulted and have multiple opportunities to ask questions and get answers. Residents can share their perspectives in

any of the ways referenced in the FAQs and with their councillor. Municipal and Town Councils will make a final decision on whether or not to move forward with consolidation.

An engagement plan is being developed to share information with the community and get their feedback. This plan will be finalized in the coming weeks. While details are still coming together, we expect there to be in-person sessions held in every district throughout the County and the Town. There will also be pop-up sessions at local events and a website (www.antigonish.ca) is being developed and we hope to have it launched later this week. Information will be shared via social media, in the Casket and Reporter as well as mailed out to all residents. Phone lines have been set up for people to call with their questions or concerns and residents can reach out to their councillor or our office at any time. Everyone who wants to will have an opportunity to have their voice heard.

I can assure you that the decision to consolidate with the Town of Antigonish has not already been made. As described in this email a great deal of effort has and will go into getting the appropriate information and consulting with residents before a final decision is made. I hope between the answers here and those existing in the FAQs it brings to address some of your questions and concerns.

Please feel free to reach out anytime throughout the process.

Sincerely,
Owen

Owen McCarron, Warden
Municipality of the County of Antigonish

ANTIGONISH

Our Community

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Frequently Asked Questions



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Once options through the public engagement process are developed, the Transition Committee for the consolidated municipality would recommend one of the options to the Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board for approval. The NSUARB would complete another public process before ruling.

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Yes. The Province has awarded the Town and County the funds needed to complete the exploration phase which includes community engagement.

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If I'm not hearing about consultations, who should I contact?

You can contact Shirlyn Donovan or Kate Gorman at info@antigonish.ca.

Harris McNamara

From: Glenn Horne
Sent: February 9, 2022 4:40 PM
To: Carol MacEachern
Cc: Shirlyn Donovan; Owen McCarron; Harris McNamara
Subject: RE: Amalgamation
Attachments: Antigonish-FrequentlyAskedQuestions.pdf

Good afternoon, Mrs. MacEachern –

Warden McCarron has asked that I forward you his response to your questions. If you have further questions please feel free to follow-up with Warden McCarron, Councillor McNamara, Shirlyn or myself.

Regards,
Glenn

Wednesday, February 9, 2022

Good afternoon Carol,

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to call with their questions or concerns and residents can reach out to their councillor or our office at any time. Everyone who wants to will have an opportunity to have their voice heard.

I can assure you that the decision to consolidate with the Town of Antigonish has not already been made. As described in this email a great deal of effort has and will go into getting the appropriate information and consulting with residents before a final decision is made. I hope between the answers here and those existing in the FAQs it brings to address some of your questions and concerns.

Please feel free to reach out anytime throughout the process.

Sincerely,
Owen

Owen McCarron, Warden
Municipality of the County of Antigonish

Municipality of the County of Antigonish

From: Carol MacEachern <carol.maceachern@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Sent: Friday, February 4, 2022 3:12:14 PM
To: Glenn Horne <glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Re: Amalgamation

Thank you,

Looking forward to this information.

Carol

On Feb 4, 2022, at 1:33 PM, Glenn Horne <glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca> wrote:

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You can expect to receive these FAQs and response to your questions from Warden McCarron mid-next week. I have copied Warden McCarron and Councillor McNamara on this email for their awareness.

Thank you again for your patience and I hope you have a great weekend.

Glenn



Glenn Horne | Chief Administrative Officer
Municipality of the County of Antigonish | 902.863.1117
285 Beech Hill Road, Beech Hill, NS | B2G 0B4
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Honour Yesterday, Act Today, Inspire Tomorrow

From: Shirlyn Donovan <shirlyn.donovan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Sent: January 31, 2022 9:14 AM
To: Glenn Horne <glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: FW: Amalgamation

Shirlyn Donovan
Strategic Initiatives Coordinator
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
285 Beech Hill Road
Antigonish, NS B2G 0B4
902-863-1117



www.antigonishcounty.ns.ca
www.twitter.com/antigonishco

Honour Yesterday, Act Today, Inspire Tomorrow

From: Carol MacEachern <cmaceachern@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Sent: Saturday, January 29, 2022 10:28 AM
To: Shirlyn Donovan <shirlyn.donovan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Cc: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Amalgamation

Good morning,

I have attached questions which are concerns I have as a taxpayer in the county of Antigonish.

I feel this decision to Amalgamate has already been made. This is very unfair as we, the taxpayers haven't even been given any information. If covid is the reason please do newsletters, pamphlets or something. I would like to see something in place so that people can reach out and ask questions. Online is good for many but there are a lot of people who do not have computers. We need to make sure EVERYONE has an opportunity to voice their concerns. ASAP!

We do have a right to know. At this time I feel this is already progressing without taxpayers having any say. I also feel that Districts in the county will be totally forgotten if Amalgamation happens. District 9 is close to forgotten already and this will finish us.

I would like to see all municipal representative's show the people in their district that they are concerned and listen to their people. This is a serious matter.

Sincerely,
Carol MacEachern

ANTIGONISH

Our Community

Frequently Asked Questions

What is Consolidation?

Consolidation is a newer approach to municipal merger for communities and councils than the better-known Nova Scotia examples of amalgamation and dissolution. Whereas amalgamation or dissolution is a process where the NSUARB makes the decisions. With consolidation, the province would create special legislation to empower the “Transition Committee” that represents both municipal councils. The Transition Committee would have the authority to determine what the new Municipality would look like. The Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board would still be involved in reviewing elector district boundaries, but much of the detailed work of the merger would be coordinated locally.

Why are the Town and County considering consolidation?


Over the past few years, the Town and County have partnered on many projects that have resulted in significant successes for our whole community. The relationships and collaboration between the two municipalities have increased to the point where it is worth exploring the option of consolidation.

We have seen the benefits of working together with examples like hosting the National Special Olympics, construction of the Antigonish Skatepark and community Dog Park, Holiday Events, Regional Emergency Management, and Physician Retention just to name a few.

Consolidating may be a more efficient use of existing resources to provide a high level of service to residents living in Antigonish’s urban and rural areas. Many of the issues facing our communities, such as climate change, economic development, infrastructure planning, accessibility and housing, require or would significantly benefit from working together.



Frequently Asked Questions



One municipal government in the Antigonish area would allow us to work more collaboratively and leverage more opportunities, instead of competing for funding from other levels of government and investment opportunities.

Is this happening because one or both parties are in financial trouble?

Both Municipalities are financially healthy, with a track record of maintaining stable tax rates, investments in community infrastructure and programs, and saving for the future. Our property tax rates are reasonable when compared with other municipal governments in Nova Scotia, in spite of the rising costs of delivering services and maintaining and improving infrastructure.

We are willing to explore the option to consolidate to make municipal government more efficient, provide more value for tax dollars, and to better serve the communities in which we live, and work and create a more sustainable community.


What is the process for determining whether we will consolidate?

The two municipalities are exploring an approach to merger similar to those used by the Town of Windsor and District of West Hants and the Town of Liverpool and Queens County. This involves gathering and assessing information about both municipalities, reflecting on what is important to our communities, consulting with the communities involved to proceed or not. Councils are gathering and assessing information now. Community consultations will take place after March Break. We anticipate a decision by Councils in June 2022.

Should a decision to proceed be made then, the municipalities would approach the Province for support in terms of special legislation and transition funding with a view to creating a joint municipality beginning in April of 2024.

If the Joint Council decision in June is not to proceed with the merger, then the Town and County would continue to exist in the present form.

Frequently Asked Questions



How will the public be engaged?

There will be many avenues for public feedback. To the extent possible while following public health guidelines, we will hold public meetings in every municipal district and the Town. We will also meet with residents at “pop-up” events at places like the arena, farmers’ market, legion events, etc.

We understand the hesitancy to come out to public meetings as there is still COVID present in our community. To overcome these challenges and to ensure we meet residents where they are safe and comfortable, there will also be virtual sessions, a website created that will serve as an information hub and a place to submit questions and collect feedback.

We will include information in local newspapers, in mail outs, social media and radio ads and both the Mayor and Warden are committed to speaking with media as a way to update residents. Residents can also contact the municipal office or Town Hall with any questions or concerns. The goal is to create avenues where all residents feel comfortable giving their feedback.

What is the purpose of the public engagement? How will our input be used?

The public engagement process is vital piece of the process before Councils can make a decision on whether to proceed with consolidation or not. The purpose is to provide residents the opportunity to let both Councils know what is important to them as we look at consolidation. If there are questions about the merger that might impact or benefit local communities and individuals, it is important to get them into the process early.

Public input will be used to help the Councils understand the values and issues that are important to residents and give everyone an opportunity to reflect on how municipal government is organized and whether a consolidation would be beneficial.

Frequently Asked Questions



How will a decision be made and by who?

A report will be presented to both Councils containing all of the input from the public engagement. Municipal staff and the communications consultants will also prepare information about questions raised and potential responses. Council members from the Town and the County will take time to reflect on the findings and decide on whether to move forward with consolidation or remain as separate entities.

When will a decision be made?

We expect the joint Councils will vote on a decision by June of this year, once the engagement process is complete.

What happens once a decision is made by Town and County Councils?

If a decision is made to consolidate, a request for special legislation under the *Municipal Government Act* to consolidate is made to the province. Based on other municipal mergers, there would also be a request for provincial transition funding, intended to support the Town and County with the coordination and preparation for creating a joint municipal unit. If the decision is to remain as separate entities, the Town and County will continue to operate as they do now.

How do I get information if I live in an area without strong Internet?

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Glenn Horne

From: Glenn Horne
Sent: February 10, 2022 12:29 PM
To: Shirlyn Donovan; Owen McCarron; Harris McNamara
Subject: FW: Amalgamation

FYI – Carol's response.



Glenn Horne | Chief Administrative Officer
Municipality of the County of Antigonish | 902.863.1117
285 Beech Hill Road, Beech Hill, NS | B2G 0B4
www.antigonishcounty.ns.ca | [@AntigonishCo](https://www.facebook.com/AntigonishCo) | [facebook](#)

Honour Yesterday, Act Today, Inspire Tomorrow

From: Carol MacEachern <carol.maceachern@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Sent: February 9, 2022 5:54 PM
To: Glenn Horne <glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Re: Amalgamation

Thank you for the answers to most of my concerns. I look forward hearing your information in the community. Feel free to contact me if you want to use the Auld's Cove firehall for sharing the info in .

Carol

On Feb 9, 2022, at 4:39 PM, Glenn Horne <glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca> wrote:

Good afternoon, Mrs. MacEachern –

Warden McCarron has asked that I forward you his response to your questions. If you have further questions please feel free to follow-up with Warden McCarron, Councillor McNamara, Shirlyn or myself.

Regards,
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Wednesday, February 9, 2022

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Sincerely,
Owen

Owen McCarron, Warden
Municipality of the County of Antigonish

Municipality of the County of Antigonish

From: Carol MacEachern <carol.maceachern@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Sent: Friday, February 4, 2022 3:12:14 PM
To: Glenn Horne <glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Re: Amalgamation

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Thank you again for your patience and I hope you have a great weekend.

Glenn



Glenn Horne | Chief Administrative Officer
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Honour Yesterday, Act Today, Inspire Tomorrow

From: Shirlyn Donovan <shirlyn.donovan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Sent: January 31, 2022 9:14 AM
To: Glenn Horne <glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: FW: Amalgamation

Shirlyn Donovan
Strategic Initiatives Coordinator
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
285 Beech Hill Road
Antigonish, NS B2G 0B4
902-863-1117



www.antigonishcounty.ns.ca



www.twitter.com/antigonishco

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From: Carol MacEachern <carol@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Sent: Saturday, January 29, 2022 10:28 AM
To: Shirlyn Donovan <shirlyn.donovan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Cc: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
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I feel this decision to Amalgamate has already been made. This is very unfair as we, the taxpayers haven't even been given any information. If covid is the reason please do newsletters, pamphlets or something. I would like to see something in place so that people can reach out and ask questions. Online is good for many but there are a lot of people who do not have computers. We need to make sure EVERYONE has an opportunity to voice their concerns. ASAP!

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Sincerely,
Carol MacEachern

Glenn Horne

From: Glenn Horne
Sent: February 10, 2022 8:01 PM
To: mayor@townofantigonish.ca; Owen McCarron; Hughie Stewart; Willie Cormier; Jeff Lawrence; Shirlyn Donovan; kgorman@townofantigonish.ca; Alisha Bowie
Subject: Steering Committee Meeting Cancelled

Hi folks -

We don't have sufficient material for an agenda this week so we will not be holding a steering committee meeting this coming Tuesday.

Cheers,
Glenn

Glenn Horne
CAO
Municipality of the County of Antigonish

Harris McNamara

From: Shirlyn Donovan
Sent: February 17, 2022 12:01 PM
To: Council
Subject: Soft Launch of Website and Howspace

Good morning,

We have done a soft launch of the website which has been developed to house information on the exploration of consolidation. We have not advertised it publicly yet, we will be doing this in the coming days, so I'd ask to not share at this time.

Please feel free to visit and check it out:

www.antigonish.ca

Once on the website there is a "Participate Now" link which will take you to the online public engagement platform, Howspace. You will receive a formal invitation in the coming days from Chrystal to check out Howspace but feel free to check in out now.

If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out.

Thanks,
Shirlyn

Shirlyn Donovan
Strategic Initiatives Coordinator
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
285 Beech Hill Road
Antigonish, NS B2G 0B4
902-863-1117



www.antigonishcounty.ns.ca
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Honour Yesterday, Act Today, Inspire Tomorrow

Harris McNamara

From: Chrystal Fuller (via Antigonish) <howspace@in.howspace.com>
Sent: February 18, 2022 3:01 PM
To: Harris McNamara
Subject: Welcome to Antigonish workspace

Hi Harris,

Good afternoon Mayor, Warden and all Councillors,

Here is your personal invitation to the online engagement platform that we are going to use as part of your consolidation engagement process. Please feel free to take a look around.

We are doing a soft launch of it so you can see it. Next week we will be talking more about the engagement process so you can see how it all fits together.

[Log in to Antigonish workspace as Harris McNamara](#)

Best regards,
Chrystal, Robyn and Brian

Please note that this email contains your personal <https://antigonish.in.howspace.com/1/g133782/hmcnamara> access link. Don't forward this email to anyone.

Powered by [Howspace](#)

Glenn Horne

From: Glenn Horne
Sent: February 18, 2022 4:31 PM
To: Owen McCarron; Hughie Stewart; Laurie Boucher; Willie Cormier; Jeff Lawrence; Alisha Bowie; Shirlyn Donovan; kgorman@townofantigonish.ca
Subject: Consolidation Steering Committee Agenda
Attachments: Committee Agenda_Feb 22 2022.pdf; 2022-02-23 Joint Councils Guiding Principles Session.pdf

Hi folks –

Please find attached the agenda and supporting materials for Tuesday's meeting. We will begin meeting in-person once again – now in the Council Chamber, which provides more room for physical distancing. If anyone needs to participate via Zoom please let me know and I will make those arrangements.

Cheers,
Glenn



Glenn Horne | Chief Administrative Officer
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Honour Yesterday, Act Today, Inspire Tomorrow

ANTIGONISH

Our Community

**Consolidation Steering Committee
Municipal Council Chamber – 285 Beech Hill Road
Tuesday, February 22, 2022 @ 8am
Meeting Agenda**

- 1) Preparation for February 23, 2022, Joint Council Workshop
- 2) Review of Draft Guiding Principles
- 3) Update on RCMP Contract
- 4) Additions:
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.

ANTIGONISH

Our Community

Antigonish Joint Councils Workshop Agenda

February 23, 2022

5.00 PM	Welcome and project update
5.15-6.15	Council's Guiding Principles
6.15-6.30	Break
6.30-7.45	Engagement and Communications Plan proposed approaches and schedule for community sessions.

Workshop objectives

The objectives of the session are to:

- Have Councils provide guidance on draft Guiding Principles
- Understand the Engagement and Communication Plan proposed approaches and schedule

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Our Community

Memorandum

To Joint Councils, Antigonish Town & Council
From Brighter Community Planning & Consulting
Subject Working Draft of Guiding Principles
Date February 17, 2022

Introduction

One of the most important issues for Joint Councils in the Communication and Engagement Process is setting in place the Guiding Principles that would be applied to the potential consolidation process, should Councils decide in June to do so. To facilitate a productive discussion at the February 23rd Joint Council Workshop, we have developed a Working Draft of Guiding Principles to share in advance of that session.

Your Own Guiding Principles:

This Working Draft is based on what we heard at the January 20th Joint Council workshop and the staff briefings on February 9th and 10th. To respond to anticipated questions about “Why?” and “Why Now?”, we have also proposed a DRAFT Objective for the possible consolidation of Town and County. We have also enclosed a copy of the Windsor West Hants Guiding Principles for information.

Our objective for the February 23rd Joint Council Workshop will be to discuss, edit and complete your own Guiding Principles.

What is a Guiding Principle?

- Guiding Principles are not values or actions.
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Homework for the February 23rd Joint Councils Meeting:

Please read through the Working Draft and see if it captures the things that you think are important. Bring it along to the meeting, with your notes and questions.

Should there be additions or editorial changes that would improve the document?

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Working Draft for Discussion with Joint Councils Consolidation Objective and Guiding Principles

Objective for the Potential Consolidation of Town and County:

Consolidation is being considered to create a stronger local government and a single voice to improve municipal services, community development, economic opportunities, and quality of life for everyone in Antigonish.

Guiding Principles for Consolidating Antigonish Town and County:

Take a regional approach to municipal services: Work creatively, deliberately, and visibly to improve municipal services, economic development, and community infrastructure for all residents and businesses in the Antigonish region.

Build strong individual communities: Promote community identity in both rural and urban areas - the whole municipality will be stronger because of vibrant individual communities.

Communicate regularly about progress and decisions: Throughout the possible consolidation process communications with councils, staff, residents, and businesses should be frequent, transparent, and inclusive.

Continue fair taxation and user pay approaches: Residents and businesses should only be taxed for services and infrastructure they have access to or benefit from. Property tax rates and infrastructure costs should utilize the area tax rates and utility fee approaches that exist today to the greatest degree possible.

Value our existing municipal staff: Our staff are our source of strength. The blending of Town and County employees will recognize the value, knowledge and dedication of our current staff and every effort will be made to avoid job loss.

Ensure Fair Representation for Urban and Rural Residents: District boundaries should ensure every voter has the same electoral power as every other voter, balance rural and urban interests and recognize local communities of interest.

Prioritize the enhancement of environmental sustainability: Maintaining ownership of the Town's electric utility is central to expanding green energy options and reducing our carbon footprint. Build upon the success of initiatives through the Alternate Energy Resource Authority and the Municipality's Energy Management Plan.

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Windsor West Hants Consolidation Process Guiding Principles for the Co-ordinating Committee

1. **Boundaries:** When looking at boundaries, ensure equitable representation for both urban and rural communities for the new council. It is essential that the culture and identities of both the urban and rural communities are retained in the new consolidated community.
2. **Taxation:** When developing a taxation model for the consolidated community, the existing tax system should serve as a base. Business as usual, services as usual. The electoral boundaries should not impact taxation.
3. **Debt:** When addressing debt from the former communities, area rates should be used to ensure the repayment of the debt is paid in the spirit it was incurred. By way of example, if the debt was incurred for the benefit of the taxpayers in Windsor, the debt should be area rated to the taxpayers of Windsor.
4. **Administrative Structure:** When developing the blended administrative structure of the consolidated community, all efforts should be taken to ensure there is no job loss as a result of the consolidation. Any planned efficiencies should strive to be achieved through attrition and maintaining corporate knowledge should be prioritized.
5. **Regional Service Strategy:** An overall strategy for regional service delivery and regional infrastructure prioritization should be informed by an inventory of existing assets.
6. **Regional Planning:** Regional planning should be a priority for the consolidated community to ensure that the strengths of the urban and rural communities are being leveraged appropriately.
7. **Public Engagement:** A Public Engagement Plan should focus on transparency and provide diverse ways to inform and engage the public and stakeholders.
8. **Decisions:** All pertinent decisions should be reviewed with the lens of looking for economic development growth and opportunities.

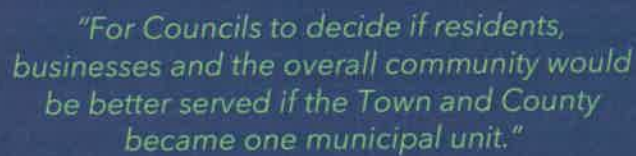
www.strongerregion.ca

Memorandum

To Joint Councils, Antigonish Town & Council
From Brighter Community Planning & Consulting
Subject Engagement and Communications Plan
Date February 23, 2022

Introduction

The Engagement and Communication Plan (ECP) will guide the next phase of our work, and will provide important information to help Councils answer this question:



"For Councils to decide if residents, businesses and the overall community would be better served if the Town and County became one municipal unit."

The ECP includes how we plan to engage and what the key messages will be. We plan to use a variety of tools to engage with stakeholders.

The full Engagement and Communications Plan will be provided to the Steering Committee for a detailed review. This memo provides an overview to assist Council to understand the general approach and schedule.

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The approach:

We will be using a combination of online and in-person sessions, culminating in a “What We Heard Report.” Communication materials, advertising, fact sheets, radio ads, website and Howspace will all be used to push information out in advance of the face-to face engagement sessions. The general scheduling for engagement is as follows:

March	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Launch Webpage and Public Howspace•Mail out and newspaper inserts;•Prepare for Open House Session; radio and print ads•Finalize and share Fact Sheets
April	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Hold 13-15 Community Information Session•Mayor/Warden meetings with Patnqkek Mi'Kmaw Nation•Organizations meeting/community leaders session•Youth meetings and other engagements as required•Howspace activity for both the public and staff
May	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Hold remainder of engagement sessions•Coalate data•Fill in any blanks left by previous engagement•Close out survey•Draft the What We heard Report and receive comment

The main tools that will be used to engage with the public are:

HowSpace - This online engagement platform will be constantly updated and refreshed, with the aim of engaging in conversation and pulling useful measures out for Council’s consideration.

During March, April and May Howspace will have weekly updates of new information revolving around the fact sheets and FAQ questions.

The fact sheets will cover the following topics:

- Fact Sheet #1 - Representation, Council Size and District Boundaries.
- Fact Sheet #2 - Property Taxation and Potential Consolidation.
- Fact Sheet #3 - The Municipal Consolidation Process
- Fact Sheet #4 - Community Identity and Possible Consolidation.
- Fact Sheet #5 - Water, Electricity and Alternate Energy Leadership
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- Fact Sheet #7 - Volunteer Fire Services

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- Fact Sheet #8 - Police Services

Community Information Sessions - These will follow an open house format where there will be poster boards based on a series of fact sheets. People can drop in to review the information and discuss with the Brighter Team issues related to consolidation. The Mayor or Warden will be at each session to welcome participants and be accessible to the attendees.

Workshops - We will hold two sessions. An organizational session online and a community leaders forum in person. These sessions will be held in advance of the community information sessions.

Pop-Up - Working with staff, two pop up opportunities will occur to reach people who may not be interested or able to participate in the Community Information Sessions or the online tools.

Phone Line - Municipal Staff have set up a phone line where residents and interested parties can call to provide input or ask questions. All calls into this phone line will be logged.

Sentiment Survey – The sentiment survey will be done twice. One before the engagements and one after the engagement sessions. Both surveys' will be conducted through connection to an online tool.

The schedule for community sessions are:

	Date	Location	Time
Group 1 Sessions	11-Apr	Library	1pm -3pm
	11-Apr	St. Josephs	7pm-9pm
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Group 3 Sessions	02-May	Library	12pm-3pm
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Group 4 Session	09-May	Pomquet	6-8pm

*some sessions will include a child care or child program option. Recreation staff will determine which sessions will

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have this option.

••Group 1 and Group 3 sessions will include pop up engagement opportunities.

From: [Glenn Horne](#)
To: [Shirlyn Donovan](#); [Council](#); [SLT](#); [Kate Gorman](#); [Chrystal Fuller](#); [Robyn McIsaac](#); [Brian Smith](#)
Cc: [Owen McCarron](#); [Beth Schumacher](#); [smithrsx@gmail.com](#); [Donnie MacDonald](#); [Remi Deveau](#); [Tammy Feltmate](#); [Harris McNamara](#); [Marlene Melanson](#); [Allison Duggan](#); [Mary MacLellan](#)
Subject: RE: Joint Council Guiding Principles Session
Date: February 18, 2022 4:36:20 PM
Attachments: [2022-02-23 Joint Councils Guiding Principles Session.pdf](#)
Importance: High

Good afternoon, councillors –

Please find attached our agenda and supporting documentation for the Joint Council Workshop on Wednesday, February 23.

Have a great weekend!

Glenn



Glenn Horne | Chief Administrative Officer
Municipality of the County of Antigonish | 902.863.1117
285 Beech Hill Road, Beech Hill, NS | B2G 0B4
www.antigonishcounty.ns.ca | [@AntigonishCo](#) | [facebook](#)

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-----Original Appointment-----

From: Shirlyn Donovan <shirlyn.donovan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Sent: February 3, 2022 5:57 PM
To: Shirlyn Donovan; Council; SLT; Kate Gorman; Chrystal Fuller; Robyn McIsaac; Brian Smith
Cc: Glenn Horne; Owen McCarron; Beth Schumacher; smithrsx@gmail.com; Donnie MacDonald; Remi Deveau; Tammy Feltmate; Harris McNamara; Marlene Melanson; Allison Duggan; Mary MacLellan
Subject: Joint Council Guiding Principles Session
When: February 23, 2022 5:00 PM-8:00 PM (UTC-04:00) Atlantic Time (Canada).
Where: StFX Conference Rooms

We have a change in date of the Joint Council session due to a conflict with the RK Board Meeting. The Joint Council Session to Develop the Guiding Principles will now be Wednesday, February 23 from 5-8pm in the Conferences Rooms at the Keating Centre, StFX University.

Supper will be provided. If you have any dietary restrictions or preferences, please let me know by Tuesday, February 15.

Proof of vaccination will be required.

Thanks,
Shirlyn

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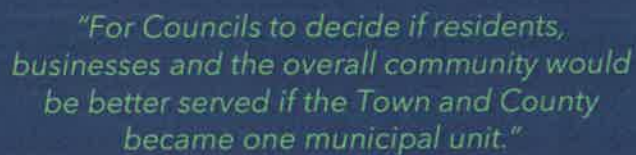
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*Group 1 and Group 3 sessions will include pop up engagement opportunities.

Beth Schumacher

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: February 18, 2022 5:25 PM
To: Glenn Horne
Subject: Accepted: Consolidation Steering Committee Meeting

Glenn Horne

Subject: Consolidation Steering Committee Meeting
Location: Council Chambers

Start: Tue 2022-02-22 8:00 AM
End: Tue 2022-02-22 9:00 AM
Show Time As: Tentative

Recurrence: (none)

Meeting Status: Not yet responded

Organizer: Glenn Horne
Required Attendees: omccarron; Hughie Stewart; Laurie Boucher; Willie Cormier; Alisha Bowie; Jeffery Lawrence
Resources: Council Chambers

Hi folks –

This is a new recurring calendar invitation for our weekly Steering Committee meeting. It will now take place in the Council Chamber, as there is more room for physical distancing. Agendas will be circulated weekly as usual.

Cheers,
Glenn

Beth Schumacher

Subject: Canceled: Consolidation Steering Committee Meeting
Location: Council Chambers

Start: Tue 2022-02-22 8:00 AM
End: Tue 2022-02-22 9:00 AM
Show Time As: Free

Recurrence: Weekly
Recurrence Pattern: every Tuesday from 8:00 AM to 9:00 AM

Meeting Status: Not yet responded

Organizer: Glenn Horne
Required Attendees: Owen McCarron; Hughie Stewart; Laurie Boucher; Willie Cormier; Alisha Bowie; Jeffery Lawrence

Importance: High

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Cheers,
Glenn

Beth Schumacher

From: Glenn Horne
Sent: February 22, 2022 10:49 AM
To: MacDonald, Ross
Cc: Owen McCarron; mayor@townofantigonish.ca; Jeff Lawrence; Shirlyn Donovan; kgorman@townofantigonish.ca
Subject: RE: Consolidation Update

Hi Ross – The sessions are not formal meetings, but rather workshops for Councils to develop their guiding principles. They aren't open to the public and are not advertised. While the session will be in-person we've prepared a Zoom link in case of last minute changes for individuals. If you'd rather you're welcome to observe by Zoom.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83454761064?pwd=SlltYjRhY2hOZzFDanZmMUtSdXRrZz09>

Cheers,
Glenn



Glenn Horne | Chief Administrative Officer
Municipality of the County of Antigonish | 902.863.1117
285 Beech Hill Road, Beech Hill, NS | B2G 0B4
www.antigonishcounty.ns.ca | [@AntigonishCo](https://www.facebook.com/AntigonishCo) | [facebook](https://www.facebook.com/AntigonishCo)

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From: MacDonald, Ross <Ross.MacDonald@novascotia.ca>
Sent: February 22, 2022 10:39 AM
To: Glenn Horne <glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: RE: Consolidation Update

I may be interested in attending to observe but I am not seeing information about the session on either website. What time and where?

Thanks

Ross

From: Glenn Horne <glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Sent: February 22, 2022 10:18 AM
To: MacDonald, Ross <Ross.MacDonald@novascotia.ca>
Subject: RE: Consolidation Update

**** EXTERNAL EMAIL / COURRIEL EXTERNE ****

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Hi Ross - Meeting in-person with COVID protocols in place.

Thanks!
Glenn



Glenn Horne | Chief Administrative Officer
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From: MacDonald, Ross <Ross.MacDonald@novascotia.ca>
Sent: February 22, 2022 9:55 AM
To: Glenn Horne <glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: RE: Consolidation Update

Hi Glenn – thank you for the update. Are your councils meeting tomorrow in person or virtually?

Ross

From: Glenn Horne <glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Sent: February 17, 2022 3:55 PM
To: Barr, Nick <Nick.Barr@novascotia.ca>; MacDonald, Ross <Ross.MacDonald@novascotia.ca>
Cc: Peck, Mark A <Mark.Peck@novascotia.ca>; Jeff Lawrence <jlawrence@townofantigonish.ca>; Shirlyn Donovan <shirlyn.donovan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; kgorman@townofantigonish.ca
Subject: Consolidation Update

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Good afternoon, DMAH friends -

While the flurry of work continues here on the ground, I thought it might be helpful to send along an update to you folks to share with whoever may be interested. We are holding our joint council session to review the engagement plan and develop guiding principles next Wednesday, February 23. We expect to have the engagement plan approved by the end of the month. Both the plan and our principles will be shared with you when complete.

Our website is now active (<https://antigonish.ca/>) and features our first iteration of FAQs. The "Participate Now" tab will bring you to the HowSpace application we are using for online engagement. In-community engagement is scheduled to take place throughout April and into early May. We are still driving to a Council decision in June.

If you have any questions on specifics please let us know.

Cheers,
Glenn

Glenn Horne
CAO
Municipality of the County of Antigonish

Beth Schumacher

From: MacDonald, Ross <Ross.MacDonald@novascotia.ca>
Sent: February 22, 2022 1:07 PM
To: Glenn Horne
Cc: Owen McCarron; mayor@townofantigonish.ca; Jeff Lawrence; Shirlyn Donovan; kgorman@townofantigonish.ca
Subject: RE: Consolidation Update

Sounds great. What time does the session take place?

Thanks

Ross

From: Glenn Horne <glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Sent: February 22, 2022 10:49 AM
To: MacDonald, Ross <Ross.MacDonald@novascotia.ca>
Cc: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; mayor@townofantigonish.ca; Jeff Lawrence <jlawrence@townofantigonish.ca>; Shirlyn Donovan <shirlyn.donovan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; kgorman@townofantigonish.ca
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From: MacDonald, Ross <Ross.MacDonald@novascotia.ca>
Sent: February 22, 2022 10:39 AM
To: Glenn Horne <glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: RE: Consolidation Update

I may be interested in attending to observe but I am not seeing information about the session on either website. What time and where?

Thanks

Ross

From: Glenn Horne <glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Sent: February 22, 2022 10:18 AM
To: MacDonald, Ross <Ross.MacDonald@novascotia.ca>
Subject: RE: Consolidation Update

**** EXTERNAL EMAIL / COURRIEL EXTERNE ****

Exercice caution when opening attachments or clicking on links / Faites preuve de prudence si vous ouvrez une pièce jointe ou cliquez sur un lien

Hi Ross - Meeting in-person with COVID protocols in place.

Thanks!
Glenn



Glenn Horne | Chief Administrative Officer
Municipality of the County of Antigonish | 902.863.1117
285 Beech Hill Road, Beech Hill, NS | B2G 0B4
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Honour Yesterday, Act Today, Inspire Tomorrow

From: MacDonald, Ross <Ross.MacDonald@novascotia.ca>
Sent: February 22, 2022 9:55 AM
To: Glenn Horne <glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: RE: Consolidation Update

Hi Glenn – thank you for the update. Are your councils meeting tomorrow in person or virtually?

Ross

From: Glenn Horne <glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Sent: February 17, 2022 3:55 PM
To: Barr, Nick <Nick.Barr@novascotia.ca>; MacDonald, Ross <Ross.MacDonald@novascotia.ca>
Cc: Peck, Mark A <Mark.Peck@novascotia.ca>; Jeff Lawrence <jlawrence@townofantigonish.ca>; Shirlyn Donovan <shirlyn.donovan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; kgorman@townofantigonish.ca
Subject: Consolidation Update

**** EXTERNAL EMAIL / COURRIEL EXTERNE ****

Exercice caution when opening attachments or clicking on links / Faites preuve de prudence si vous ouvrez une pièce jointe ou cliquez sur un lien

Good afternoon, DMAH friends -

While the flurry of work continues here on the ground, I thought it might be helpful to send along an update to you folks to share with whoever may be interested. We are holding our joint council session to review the engagement plan and develop guiding principles next Wednesday, February 23. We expect to have the engagement plan approved by the end of the month. Both the plan and our principles will be shared with you when complete.

Our website is now active (<https://antigonish.ca/>) and features our first iteration of FAQs. The "Participate Now" tab will bring you to the HowSpace application we are using for online engagement. In-community engagement is scheduled to take place throughout April and into early May. We are still driving to a Council decision in June.

If you have any questions on specifics please let us know.

Cheers,
Glenn

Glenn Horne
CAO
Municipality of the County of Antigonish

Glenn Horne

From: Glenn Horne
Sent: February 24, 2022 3:50 PM
To: Owen McCarron
Subject: Speaking Notes
Attachments: Owens Chamber Speaking Notes.docx

Hi Owen –

Please find some notes attached. Please feel free to make any changes you see fit.

Thanks!
Glenn



Glenn Horne | Chief Administrative Officer
Municipality of the County of Antigonish | 902.863.1117
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1) Removal of Restrictions in Nova Scotia

- It's been a long and turbulent two years.
- Similar to the Premier's comments, I expect the public sentiment is a mix of excitement, relief and anxiety.
- I'd like to take the opportunity to thank the Premier, and Dr. Strang, as well as Premier's Rankin and MacNeil for their leadership over a very difficult period. It can't have been easy to lead the province through this pandemic and they've all done it well.

2) Affordable Housing

- The Municipality has identified affordable, accessible and seniors housing as one of its priorities for the current Council term.
- As a first step, we have organized a housing symposium for County and Town officials to learn more about the existing programs, supports and challenges in our community.
- Unfortunately, that symposium was delayed due first to COVID and then to weather but is now scheduled for March 11.
- This event will give us an opportunity to learn more from those directly involved with affordable, accessible and seniors housing before determining our next steps.
- In addition to this, the County has provided financial support to the AAHS of approximately \$200,000 between its two housing developments on Hope Lane and Appleseed Drive, as well as donating the Appleseed property.

3) Consolidation

- As you're all undoubtedly aware, the County and Town are exploring consolidation. Essentially, we are assessing if residents, businesses and the overall community would be better served if the County and Town became one municipal unit.
- Councils have now met multiple times to learn more and assess this opportunity, including meetings with other municipal units that have gone through a similar process already, like the Region of Queens and the Region of West Hants, to learn from their experiences.
- We have met to discuss how we will consult with the community and start to develop our guiding principles.
- If you'd like to learn more about consolidation, we now have a website you can visit at www.antigonish.ca and beginning in April we will be holding public sessions throughout the County and Town to

share more information and speak with residents about your thoughts and questions.

- The partnership between the County and Town has seen many successes in the past few years. Our councils are working well together. Our staffs are working well together. There may be no better time to assess this opportunity than now.
- A decision has not yet been made and there are still a lot of questions to answer. Both Councils are committed to exploring consolidation with an open mind and the public's input.
- We hope to make a decision one way or another in June 2022.

4) General Comments re: Business

- At the County we try to maintain a business-friendly culture.
- We maintain the lowest commercial property tax rate in the province.
- We are working with our partners at the Eastern District Planning Commission to extend municipal planning regulations throughout the entire county to give business and residents more protection and certainty surrounding their investments.
- We feel our planning regulations do well to balance business needs with those of our community.
- We've also invested heavily in infrastructure to enhance the reliability of our water systems improve municipal roads, and community infrastructure to make this area an attractive place to live.
- We value the investments made in our area by business, as they not only create employment and economic activity, but make our community more vibrant.
- If the business community feels there is a gap or issue, I feel we are very accessible and responsive. Please pick up the phone and in relatively short order we can have the appropriate people available to investigate whatever the issue may be.

Beth Schumacher

From: Glenn Horne
Sent: February 24, 2022 4:00 PM
To: Owen McCarron; mayor@townofantigonish.ca; Hughie Stewart; Willie Cormier; Jeff Lawrence; Alisha Bowie; kgorman@townofantigonish.ca; Shirlyn Donovan
Subject: Consolidation Steering Committee Agenda
Attachments: Committee Agenda_Mar 1 2022.pdf

Hi folks –

Please find the agenda for our Steering Committee meeting on Tuesday, Mar 1 attached. There may be additions closer to the date if I get materials back from the EDPC re: population numbers in time, as well as specific follow-up from Brighter Communities such as fact sheet drafts.

Cheers,
Glenn



Glenn Horne | Chief Administrative Officer
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**Consolidation Steering Committee
Municipal Council Chamber – 285 Beech Hill Road
Tuesday, March 1, 2022 @ 8am
Meeting Agenda**

- 1) Debrief of the February 23, 2022, Joint Council Workshop
- 2) Debrief of the February 24, 2022, Staff Sessions
- 3) Update on RCMP Contract
- 4) Additions:
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.

From: [Shirlyn Donovan](#)
To: [Council](#)
Cc: [Kate Gorman](#)
Subject: Joint Council Guiding Principles Session
Date: February 25, 2022 2:43:38 PM
Attachments: [2022-02-23 Joint Councils Guiding Principles Session.pdf](#)
Importance: High

Good afternoon,

A friendly reminder to please send any feedback you have on the Guiding Principles to me by Wednesday, March 2 at 12pm. I have attached the original documents which does not capture the recommended changes from Wednesday nights session. Those changes will be incorporated into the final edit.

Also, if there is any feedback or date change requests for the public consultations sessions, can you please let me know ASAP?

Thanks and have a great weekend,
Shirlyn

Shirlyn Donovan

Strategic Initiatives Coordinator
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
285 Beech Hill Road
Antigonish, NS B2G 0B4
902-863-1117



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Antigonish Joint Councils Workshop Agenda February 23, 2022

5.00 PM	Welcome and project update
5.15-6.15	Council's Guiding Principles
6.15-6.30	Break
6.30-.7.45	Engagement and Communications Plan proposed approaches and schedule for community sessions.

Workshop objectives

The objectives of the session are to:

- Have Councils provide guidance on draft Guiding Principles
- Understand the Engagement and Communication Plan proposed approaches and schedule

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Memorandum

To Joint Councils, Antigonish Town & Council
From Brighter Community Planning & Consulting
Subject Working Draft of Guiding Principles
Date February 17, 2022

Introduction

One of the most important issues for Joint Councils in the Communication and Engagement Process is setting in place the Guiding Principles that would be applied to the potential consolidation process, should Councils decide in June to do so. To facilitate a productive discussion at the February 23rd Joint Council Workshop, we have developed a Working Draft of Guiding Principles to share in advance of that session.

Your Own Guiding Principles:

This Working Draft is based on what we heard at the January 20th Joint Council workshop and the staff briefings on February 9th and 10th. To respond to anticipated questions about "Why?" and "Why Now?", we have also proposed a DRAFT Objective for the possible consolidation of Town and County. We have also enclosed a copy of the Windsor West Hants Guiding Principles for information.

Our objective for the February 23rd Joint Council Workshop will be to discuss, edit and complete your own Guiding Principles.

What is a Guiding Principle?

- Guiding Principles are not values or actions.
- They are guidelines that help decision making.
- When issues come up, they provide direction.
- They set the conditions for success at the start
- They explain to others what is important to you.

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Homework for the February 23rd Joint Councils Meeting:

Please read through the Working Draft and see if it captures the things that you think are important. Bring it along to the meeting, with your notes and questions.

Should there be additions or editorial changes that would improve the document?

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Working Draft for Discussion with Joint Councils Consolidation Objective and Guiding Principles

Objective for the Potential Consolidation of Town and County:

Consolidation is being considered to create a stronger local government and a single voice to improve municipal services, community development, economic opportunities, and quality of life for everyone in Antigonish.

Guiding Principles for Consolidating Antigonish Town and County:

Take a regional approach to municipal services: Work creatively, deliberately, and visibly to improve municipal services, economic development, and community infrastructure for all residents and businesses in the Antigonish region.

Build strong individual communities: Promote community identity in both rural and urban areas - the whole municipality will be stronger because of vibrant individual communities.

Communicate regularly about progress and decisions: Throughout the possible consolidation process communications with councils, staff, residents, and businesses should be frequent, transparent, and inclusive.

Continue fair taxation and user pay approaches: Residents and businesses should only be taxed for services and infrastructure they have access to or benefit from. Property tax rates and infrastructure costs should utilize the area tax rates and utility fee approaches that exist today to the greatest degree possible.

Value our existing municipal staff: Our staff are our source of strength. The blending of Town and County employees will recognize the value, knowledge and dedication of our current staff and every effort will be made to avoid job loss.

Ensure Fair Representation for Urban and Rural Residents: District boundaries should ensure every voter has the same electoral power as every other voter, balance rural and urban interests and recognize local communities of interest.

Prioritize the enhancement of environmental sustainability: Maintaining ownership of the Town's electric utility is central to expanding green energy options and reducing our carbon footprint. Build upon the success of initiatives through the Alternate Energy Resource Authority and the Municipality's Energy Management Plan.

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Windsor West Hants Consolidation Process Guiding Principles for the Co-ordinating Committee

1. **Boundaries:** When looking at boundaries, ensure equitable representation for both urban and rural communities for the new council. It is essential that the culture and identities of both the urban and rural communities are retained in the new consolidated community.
2. **Taxation:** When developing a taxation model for the consolidated community, the existing tax system should serve as a base. Business as usual, services as usual. The electoral boundaries should not impact taxation.
3. **Debt:** When addressing debt from the former communities, area rates should be used to ensure the repayment of the debt is paid in the spirit it was incurred. By way of example, if the debt was incurred for the benefit of the taxpayers in Windsor, the debt should be area rated to the taxpayers of Windsor.
4. **Administrative Structure:** When developing the blended administrative structure of the consolidated community, all efforts should be taken to ensure there is no job loss as a result of the consolidation. Any planned efficiencies should strive to be achieved through attrition and maintaining corporate knowledge should be prioritized.
5. **Regional Service Strategy:** An overall strategy for regional service delivery and regional infrastructure prioritization should be informed by an inventory of existing assets.
6. **Regional Planning:** Regional planning should be a priority for the consolidated community to ensure that the strengths of the urban and rural communities are being leveraged appropriately.
7. **Public Engagement:** A Public Engagement Plan should focus on transparency and provide diverse ways to inform and engage the public and stakeholders.
8. **Decisions:** All pertinent decisions should be reviewed with the lens of looking for economic development growth and opportunities.

www.strongerregion.ca

Memorandum

To Joint Councils, Antigonish Town & Council
From Brighter Community Planning & Consulting
Subject Engagement and Communications Plan
Date February 23, 2022

Introduction

The Engagement and Communication Plan (ECP) will guide the next phase of our work, and will provide important information to help Councils answer this question:

"For Councils to decide if residents, businesses and the overall community would be better served if the Town and County became one municipal unit."

The ECP includes how we plan to engage and what the key messages will be. We plan to use a variety of tools to engage with stakeholders.

The full Engagement and Communications Plan will be provided to the Steering Committee for a detailed review. This memo provides an overview to assist Council to understand the general approach and schedule.

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The approach:

We will be using a combination of online and in-person sessions, culminating in a "What We Heard Report." Communication materials, advertising, fact sheets, radio ads, website and Howspace will all be used to push information out in advance of the face-to face engagement sessions. The general scheduling for engagement is as follows:

March	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Launch Webpage and Public Howspace•Mail out and newspaper inserts;•Prepare for Open House Session; radio and print ads•Finalize and share Fact Sheets
April	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Hold 13-15 Community Information Session•Mayor/Warden meetings with Patnqkek Mi'Kmaw Nation•Organizations meeting/community leaders session•Youth meetings and other engagements as required•Howspace activity for both the public and staff
May	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Hold remainder of engagement sessions•Coalate data•Fill in any blanks left by previous engagement•Close out survey•Draft the What We heard Report and receive comment

The main tools that will be used to engage with the public are:

HowSpace - This online engagement platform will be constantly updated and refreshed, with the aim of engaging in conversation and pulling useful measures out for Council's consideration.

During March, April and May Howspace will have weekly updates of new information revolving around the fact sheets and FAQ questions.

The fact sheets will cover the following topics:

- Fact Sheet #1 - Representation, Council Size and District Boundaries.
- Fact Sheet #2 - Property Taxation and Potential Consolidation.
- Fact Sheet #3 - The Municipal Consolidation Process
- Fact Sheet #4 - Community Identity and Possible Consolidation.
- Fact Sheet #5 - Water, Electricity and Alternate Energy Leadership
- Fact Sheet #6 - Guiding Principles for Potential Consolidation
- Fact Sheet #7 - Volunteer Fire Services

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- Fact Sheet #8 - Police Services

Community Information Sessions - These will follow an open house format where there will be poster boards based on a series of fact sheets. People can drop in to review the information and discuss with the Brighter Team issues related to consolidation. The Mayor or Warden will be at each session to welcome participants and be accessible to the attendees.

Workshops - We will hold two sessions. An organizational session online and a community leaders forum in person. These sessions will be held in advance of the community information sessions.

Pop-Up - Working with staff, two pop up opportunities will occur to reach people who may not be interested or able to participate in the Community Information Sessions or the online tools.

Phone Line - Municipal Staff have set up a phone line where residents and interested parties can call to provide input or ask questions. All calls into this phone line will be logged.

Sentiment Survey – The sentiment survey will be done twice. One before the engagements and one after the engagement sessions. Both surveys’ will be conducted through connection to an online tool.

The schedule for community sessions are:

	Date	Location	Time
Group 1 Sessions	11-Apr	Library	1pm -3pm
	11-Apr	St. Josephs	7pm-9pm
	12-Apr	Online Engagement Session	4pm -6pm
	12-Apr	Mini Trail	7pm-9pm
	13-Apr	Library	11am-1pm
	13-Apr	Arisaig	7pm-9pm
Group 2 Sessions	25-Apr	Lochaber	7pm-9pm
	26-Apr	Legion Business/Organization	11am-1pm
	26-Apr	Antigonish Legion	7pm-9pm
	27-Apr	John Paul Centre - Community Groups	11am-1pm
	27-Apr	Havre Boucher	7pm-9pm
	28-Apr	John Paul Centre - Community Groups	11am-1pm
Group 3 Sessions	28-Apr	St. Andrews	6pm-8pm
	02-May	Library	12pm-3pm
	02-May	Heatherton	7pm-9pm
	03-May	Junior School	4pm-7pm
Group 4 Session	04-May	Tracadie	6-8pm
	09-May	Pomquet	6-8pm

*some sessions will include a child care or child program option. Recreation staff will determine which sessions will

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have this option.

•Group 1 and Group 3 sessions will include pop up engagement opportunities.

Beth Schumacher

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: February 28, 2022 12:42 PM
To: Glenn Horne
Subject: Accepted: Consolidation Steering Committee Meeting

Harris McNamara

From: Shirlyn Donovan
Sent: February 28, 2022 2:06 PM
To: Harris McNamara
Subject: Community Consultation Date

Good afternoon Harris.

Are you able to please let me know the dates you plan to be away and I can make adjustments to the Community Engagement Schedule?

Thanks,
Shirlyn

Shirlyn Donovan
Strategic Initiatives Coordinator
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
285 Beech Hill Road
Antigonish, NS B2G 0B4
902-863-1117



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Beth Schumacher

From: Lindsay E. Ross <
Sent: March 1, 2022 11:22 AM
To: mayor@townofantigonish.ca; Owen McCarron
Subject: Town Consolidation

Hi Folks,

Thank you so much for your time this week. I think the event was a great first in person event of the year!

As you both mentioned we hope to have more information on the town and county consolidation as an event. We are thinking in May we could host a breakfast with the two of you. We are hoping this would be in line with your other consultations around the area. We liked the Friday breakfast as we felt people didn't mind heading into work a bit late, so hoping to keep that format.

Is there a day in early may that would work for both of you?

Kindest Regards,
Lindsay Ross (she/her)
Recruitment & Retention Manager
MacLeod Group Health Services....It's what we do!

P: 1
E:
1 Main St.
Antigonish, NS
B2G 2C1



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Beth Schumacher

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: March 1, 2022 12:59 PM
To: Lindsay E. Ross
Cc: mayor@townofantigonish.ca
Subject: Re: Town Consolidation

Hi Lindsay,

The event seemed to have been well received by everyone I had the opportunity to chat with! The first 2 Fridays of May are good for me at this time.

Regards

Owen
Sent from my iPhone

On Mar 1, 2022, at 11:21 AM, Lindsay E. Ross < > wrote:

Hi Folks,

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P:

E:

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Antigonish, NS
B2G 2C1



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Beth Schumacher

From: Lindsay E. Ross
Sent: March 1, 2022 1:00 PM
To: Owen McCarron
Cc: mayor@townofantigonish.ca
Subject: RE: Town Consolidation

Excellent! Thanks Owen!

Will circle back to you both later!

Kindest Regards,
Lindsay Ross (she/her)
Recruitment & Retention Manager
MacLeod Group Health Services....It's what we do!

P:
E: lindsay.ross@macleodgroup.ca
Main St.
Antigonish, NS
B2G 2C1



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Follow us on Facebook and LinkedIn

From: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Sent: Tuesday, March 1, 2022 12:59 PM
To: Lindsay E. Ross <

Cc: mayor@townofantigonish.ca

Subject: Re: Town Consolidation

CAUTION: This email originated from *outside* of the **MacLeod Group** organization. Do not reply with confidential information, click links, or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

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Lindsay Ross (she/her)
Recruitment & Retention Manager
MacLeod Group Health Services....It's what we do!

P:

E: _

) Main St.

Antigonish, NS

B2G 2C1



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From: [Shirlyn Donovan](#)
To: [Council](#)
Cc: [Kate Gorman](#)
Subject: Guiding Principles Feedback
Date: March 1, 2022 1:12:53 PM
Attachments: [Guiding Principles Edited Wednesday February 23 at Joint Council.docx](#)

Good afternoon Councillors,

I have attached an updated version of the Guiding Principles that captures the suggestions that were made during the Joint Council session last Wednesday. If you have any further edits or suggestions, please let me know by noon tomorrow (Wednesday).

Thank you,
Shirlyn

Shirlyn Donovan

Strategic Initiatives Coordinator
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
285 Beech Hill Road
Antigonish, NS B2G 0B4
902-863-1117



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Consolidation is being considered explore the creation of ~~to create~~ a stronger local government and a single voice to improve municipal services, community development, economic opportunities, and quality of life for everyone in Antigonish.

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Build strong individual communities: Promote community identity in ~~both~~ rural, ~~and~~ urban ~~areas~~ and First Nations communities - the whole municipality will be stronger because of vibrant individual communities.

Communicate regularly about progress and decisions: Throughout the possible consolidation process communications with councils, staff, residents, and businesses should be frequent, transparent, and inclusive.

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Value our existing municipal staff: Our staff are our source of strength. The blending of Town and County employees will recognize the value, knowledge and dedication of our current staff and every effort will be made to retain staff. ~~avoid job loss.~~

Ensure Fair Representation for Urban and Rural Residents: District boundaries should ensure every voter has the same electoral power as every other voter, balance rural and urban interests and recognize local communities of interest.

Prioritize the enhancement of environmental sustainability: Maintaining ownership of the Town's Antigonish electric utility is central to expanding green energy options and reducing our carbon footprint. Build upon the success of

initiatives through the Alternate Energy Resource Authority and the Municipality's Energy Management Plan.

Beth Schumacher

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: March 1, 2022 4:22 PM
To: Glenn Horne
Subject: Accepted: Consolidation Update - Antigonish Town and County

Beth Schumacher

From: Glenn Horne
Sent: March 3, 2022 4:56 PM
To: Owen McCarron; Hughie Stewart; mayor@townofantigonish.ca; Willie Cormier; Jeff Lawrence; Shirlyn Donovan; kgorman@townofantigonish.ca; Alisha Bowie
Subject: Consolidation Steering Committee Agenda
Attachments: 2022-02-28 Final Second Staff Fact Sheet.pdf; 2022-02-28 Final First Staff Fact Sheet.pdf; Final Engagement Plan - Working copy.pdf; Businesses Organizations to Consult Revised March 2.docx; Committee Agenda_Mar 8 2022.pdf

Good morning, folks –

Please find attached your agenda and supporting materials for Tuesday, March 8. Please note that this agenda is a little bigger than usual so we may be closer to 1 & ½ or 2 hours than our typical 1 hour meeting.

Supporting the agenda, you'll also find attached:

1. Staff Fact Sheets
2. Working Engagement & Communications Plan, which includes the Fact Sheets completed to date
3. Working List of Community Leaders / Organizations to invite to engagement sessions

Here again is the link to give you a better sense of where our population resides:

<https://edpc.maps.arcgis.com/apps/instant/basic/index.html?appid=d677c22a47c8401ca2712972cd0f8220>. The numbers reflected on the map are of households. On average Antigonish County has 2.4 people per household. This should give you a better sense of where the population currently resides. Please do not share this link as it contains the names and addresses of individual property owners when you drill down into the detail.

The revised Guiding Principles will be shared tomorrow.

Cheers,
Glenn



Glenn Horne | Chief Administrative Officer
Municipality of the County of Antigonish | 902.863.1117
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Second Staff Fact Sheet

Consolidation and Union Labour Relations

Revised February 28, 2022

The question: How will the two organizations be combined in terms of union and non-union staff?

The Timing: Should the Town and County decide to move forward with consolidation there will be a detailed Human Resources Analysis early in the Transition Co-ordinating Committee work program.

Using Windsor West Hants as an example, this Human Resource Analysis would include this key element:

“Analyze and identify options for effective municipal service delivery involving unionized and non-unionized workers, taking into consideration the current situation of Windsor and West Hants and all legal statutory and contractual obligations.”

It is not possible at this early stage where Councils are just in the process of considering consolidation to suggest what those “options for effective service delivery” might be, or whether there is a need to change anything in terms of existing Public Works staff groups. Those decisions would not be made until after Council decides to move forward or not.

The consolidated organization might want to maintain several separate work teams under public works, in the same way that the Town has maintained separate Electric Utility, Water Treatment, and Public Works teams.

Those answers on the structure of a new organization would be based on the findings from the Human Resources Analysis and will fall under the discretion of the new CAO and new Council of the merged unit.

Are existing union contracts protected in a consolidation process?

The special transition legislation, in the Windsor West Hants example, includes specific provisions to protect unionized staff:

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16 (1) *In this Section, "employee" means an employee as defined in Section 2 of the Trade Union Act, excluding those described in subsection 2(2) of that Act.*

(2) *The Regional Municipality is a transferee for the purpose of Section 31 of the Trade Union Act and, for greater certainty,*

(a) *the Regional Municipality is bound by successor rights as determined pursuant to the Trade Union Act; and*

(b) *subject to the Trade Union Act, the Regional Municipality and the employees, who are covered by collective agreements, of a municipal government are bound by the collective agreements as if the Regional Municipality were a party to them.*

(3) *Where an employee of a municipal government is employed by the Regional Municipality, the period of employment and seniority of that employee with the municipal government at the time of the incorporation of the Regional Municipality is deemed to have been employment and seniority with the Regional Municipality and the continuity of employment and seniority is not broken.*

(4) *Where an employee of a municipal government is employed by the Regional Municipality in a position which becomes a bargaining unit position, the employee's right to employment in the position is not affected by whether that employee was previously employed pursuant to a collective agreement and the employee is deemed to have seniority credits with the Regional Municipality equal to the employee's service with that municipal government.*

(5) *No provision of a collective agreement with a municipal government that purports to favour the employees of one municipal government in obtaining employment with the Regional Municipality over those of another municipal government has any force or effect. (Region of Windsor and West Hants Municipality Act, 2018)*

How are union/non-union issues addressed in a consolidation process?

The process of merging existing work teams may or may not require significant changes in existing bargaining units such as the two IBEW Locals in the Town of Antigonish.

Using Public Works staff as the example, there are currently different work groups in both Town and County supported by combined management, supplies, and equipment management systems. From the management perspective, it would be important to consider the options for different methods of integrating union and non-union teams before deciding how to proceed.

The Nova Scotia Trade Union Act provides an independent review process, should

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management, union or both groups want to change the membership of existing unionized groups in any workplace.

The Nova Scotia Labour Board would consider any change in certification for the two IBEW Locals, based on a history of other mergers of union and non-union workplaces. The Board would review evidence about the impact of a merger on:

- The history of the existing locals;
- the number of union and non-union staff;
- how significant the intermingling of staff might be in a merged organization; and
- whether employees are in favour of collective bargaining and representation by a particular union.

The Labour Board can order a representation vote among an employee group if needed to complete their review of the issue.

Summary: The question of how to combine union and non-union staff in Town and County would not be resolved during the exploration process. If the decision is made by Councils to move forward, then the structure will become clearer when options are presented through the Human Resource Analysis.

Special Transition legislation would protect existing collective bargaining and representation arrangements for Town Public Works, Water Treatment, and Electric Utility employees. Should either management or union representatives want to change existing arrangements, there is a well-established review process through the Nova Scotia Labour Board.

Special Note: The information in this Fact Sheet is intended to be objective and helpful to all staff, but it does not take the place of consultation between the Town of Antigonish and IBEW about potential consolidation.

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First Staff Fact Sheet - Consolidation and Staff

Revised February 28, 2022

The question: How will the two organizations be combined in terms of staffing?

The Timing: Should Town and County decide to move forward with consolidation, there will be four key stages for that are important for staff engagement:

- a) The passing of special transition legislation to establish a merged municipality.
- b) Creating a joint Transition Committee, appointment of a Transition Coordinator and commencement of a comprehensive merger work plan.
- c) Retaining third-party HR expertise to help assess the staffing structure of a merged municipality through a Human Resources Analysis and to support existing staff in the transition.
- d) Recruiting a Chief Administrative Officer to manage and staff a merged municipality.

Special Note:

Looking at the Windsor and West Hants consolidation as a benchmark, in terms of the actual recruitment process, the special transition legislation to establish a merged municipality provided the following important requirement:

Preference in employment by the Regional Municipality shall be given to an employee of a municipal government where that employee meets the basic requirements for a position. (Region of Windsor and West Hants Municipality Act, 2018 Section 9 (2))

What is a Human Resource Analysis?

In the example of Windsor West Hants, very soon after the establishment of a Transition Coordinating Committee, the CAO's of the Town and County developed a Request for Proposals (RFP) for a Human Resources Analysis. Gerald Walsh & Associates Inc. was hired to provide a comprehensive analysis of both Town and County human resource elements. Following the analysis, Gerald Walsh & Associates Inc. recommended a merged system, and worked with the Committee and Staff during the transition process.

One of the consultant's first steps was to hold one-on-one meetings with all staff members. This was an opportunity to gain a better understanding of their perspectives and provide staff with a connection point for questions and answers during the transition.

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The Human Resource Analysis included the following:

- Develop an organizational structure that would include a role for current staff.
- Review and update existing job descriptions for all positions within the new structure.
- Identify any positions that would overlap or change significantly and provide recommendations for new positions, training, or options for attrition and severance.
- Attrition and severance options would be shared with staff who indicate interest in these options.
- Complete a salary comparison and market review, recommending new salary bands and scales.
- Complete a benefits comparison and market review, recommending options to merge programs.
- Recommend the placement of Departments and staff in terms of space, shared work, effectiveness.
- Assess implications of alternate forms of municipal service delivery, such as working from home, etc.
- Analyze and identify options for effective service delivery involving unionized and non-union workers, considering all legal and contractual obligations.
- Review and develop combined Human Resources manuals, policies, and procedures.
- Provide an evidence-based structure and methods for employee performance reviews.
- Develop an implementation plan with timelines to achieve consolidation of staff.

In practise, this process provided a mechanism to support staff throughout the merger. The early meetings with every staff member were a key element in the process, and they were followed up with things like organizing several half day workshops on resume writing and interview skills to support individuals going through the process. In many cases staff would provide a resume and sit down for an interview before new positions would be assigned to existing staff. The details of this process can vary depending on arrangements made by the new CAO.

The Transition Co-ordinating Committee and the new council of the merged municipal unit would be responsible for the approval and adoption of new policies, benefits packages, changes to service delivery, etc. The new CAO would work with the Coordinating Committee and council on the adoption of all elements needed for a new organizational structure.

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Summary: Existing staff in the Town and County, and the human resource management systems that exist today are critical considerations in developing a consolidated municipal organization. The Human Resource Analysis would build upon current human resource manuals, policies, and procedures. As important as the technical elements of this work are, so are the opportunities to speak with and work with existing staff along the way. There are several steps and considerations to make before determining a new staffing structure. If both councils decide to move ahead with consolidation, the tentative start date for a new merged municipality would be April 1, 2024.

List 1:

Andy Hakin - StFX
Steve Smith - Nova Capital
Lindsay Ross - Chamber & MacLeod Group
Jeff Dee - GFL
Ron MacGillivray - Ron MacGillivray Group of Businesses
Donald Chisholm - Nova Construction
Shannon Stephenson - Highcrest
Joan MacLellan - Brownstone
Stephen Jewkes - 5 Cents to Dollar
Ken Farrell - 989 XFM
Credit Union – Sally vendeWiel
Agriculture Federation – Alisha Baxter King
Rhonda MacDougall – 4H
Brian and Louise Brennan - Candid
Joe Jellow – Monastery Petro Can & Hawthorne Convenience
Ronnie Chisholm – Ron Chisholm Hydroseed
Heather Murphy - MacDonald Murphy
Bill Fraser – Fraser & Hoyt
Tarek Hadhad – Peace By Chocolate
Len Robertson – Killam and Community
Hugh O’Neill - HB Community Centre
Clarence DeYoung
Terry Taylor
Lowell MacLaughlin
Malcolm MacKinnon – Heatheron Community Centre
Angus Bowie
Frank Macnik
Brendan Brothers
Alan MacDonald
Lloyd Tate
Joe MacDonald
Rick MacInnis
Thomas Melong and Laura Anderson
Marc Champoux
Chandra & John Gavin
Ian MacDonald
Alisha and Miranda Teasdale
Michelle MacDonald (Trendys)
Greg Stewart
Paul Landry - SRCE
Garrett Jurrlink
Richelle MacLaughlin
Women’s Centre
Nicole Mann
Bob Chisholm - Developer

List 2: Glenn and Jeff to meet with

Warren McBeath
John Bain
David Muise
Bud MacInnis

List 3:

Kristel Fleuren-Hunter
Robert Kavanaugh
Mike MacDonald – Antigonish Fuel Fund
Terry MacIntyre - RK
Meghan MacGillivray & Sarah MacDonald - Hospital Foundation
Sisters of St. Martha (Laurie and Owen go to them)
Kathy Chisholm – NS Health
Reema Fuller - Festival Antigonish
Sarah O'Toole - Community Navigator
Colleen Cameron and Rachel MacFarlane- Antigonish Affordable Housing
Eric Smith and Dr. John Chiasson - The Keppoch
Jeff Teasdale – CACL
Dan Ross – Ross Screenprint

List 4:

Angus MacIsaac – Former MLA
Moe Smith – Former MLA
Randy Delorey – Former MLA
Lloyd Hines – Former MLA
Herbie Delorey – Former Warden
Carl Chisholm – Former Mayor
Kay Chisholm – Former Mayor
Michelle Thompson
Greg Morrow
Sean Fraser
Mike Kelloway
(Meet with Michelle, Greg, Sean and Mike one on one first and then invite them to the group session).

List 3:

Volunteer Fire Departments

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March 2, 2022



**Working Engagement &
Communication Plan for
Potential Consolidation**



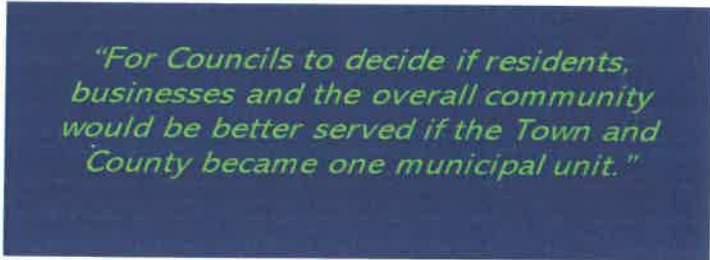
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Section 1: Introduction

The Town of Antigonish and the County of Antigonish have decided to explore potential merging into one municipal unit. Before Councils make a final decision regarding consolidation, they need to talk to residents, community members, businesses, staff, and other stakeholders to understand the issues, concerns, and opportunities.

This engagement and communications plan (C&E Plan) explains how this engagement will occur to help Councils answer the following question:



"For Councils to decide if residents, businesses and the overall community would be better served if the Town and County became one municipal unit."

When designing a C&E plan, it is important to clearly state why engagement is being done. The International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) explains it best when it states:

- ❖ We believe that those who are affected by a decision have a right to be involved in the decision-making process
- ❖ We believe that the public's contribution will influence the decision.
- ❖ Sustainable decisions recognize and communicate the needs and interests of all parties, including decision makers.
- ❖ We will seek out and facilitate the involvement of those potentially affected by or interested in the decision
- ❖ We will provide the information to allow stakeholders to participate in a meaningful way.
- ❖ We will communicate how their input affected the decision.

Engagement and Communication are separate but interrelated activities, and this plan will deal with both. Communication is about providing information and engagement is focusing on discussions and getting information from stakeholders.

Our process will follow the following steps:

March

- Launch Webpage and Public Howspace
- Mail out and newspaper inserts;
- Prepare for Open House Session; radio and print ads
- Finalize and share Fact Sheets

April

- Hold 13-15 Community Information Session
- Mayor/Warden meetings with Paqtnkek
- Organizations meeting
- Youth meetings and other engagements as required
- Howspace activity for both the public and staff

May

- Hold remainder of engagement sessions
- Coalate data
- Fill in any blanks left by previous engagement
- Close out survey
- What We Heard Report and receive comment on that

Section 2: Engagement Plan

2.1 Objectives of Engagement Plan:

- ❖ To understand the variety of perspectives within the broader community that Council will consider when deciding to proceed to the next step in the consolidation process.
- ❖ To educate the public as to why, at this point, consolidation is considered as an option for the future of both municipal units.
- ❖ To let stakeholders, know how to participate and to allow for participation both virtual and with more traditional methods.
- ❖ To ensure that equity seeking groups are involved in the engagement.
- ❖ To understand potential impacts of consolidation on residents, businesses, and the overall community.

2.2 Stakeholder Mapping

Stakeholder mapping is the process of identifying people and organizations that you need to invite into the process. Everyone is welcome, but by being intentional in who has the most at stake in the ultimate outcome, we can make sure that these stakeholders have every opportunity to participate and provide value to the process.

Stakeholder	Engagement tool
Residents, property owners, renters and voters	Information sessions
Residents, property owners, renters and voters	Howspace
Everyone	Sentiment Survey
Staff	Staff information session and Howspace
Volunteer Fire Departments	CAO's to meet with Departments
Community/Business Leaders Session	Key leaders session
Organization Session – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Transit organizations •Chamber •Business Associations •Recreational Groups • •University •Eastern District Planning Commission •Housing Groups •Co-op movement folks 	Online information session with follow up interactive questions. And phone interviews for groups who don't have internet.
EDI Sessions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Mi'kmaq •others as identified by the County and Town 	Face to face,
Youth- partnering with youth organization. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Student Union •other groups as identified 	Howspace or attendance at key leaders sessions.

2.3 Tactics and Schedule

The main tools that will be used to engage with the public are:

HowSpace - This online engagement platform will be constantly updated and refreshed, with the aim of engaging in conversation and pulling useful measures out for Council's consideration. During March and April Howspace will have weekly updates of new information revolving around the fact sheets and FAQ questions.

The fact sheets will cover the following topics:

- Fact Sheet #1 - Representation, Council Size and District Boundaries.
- Fact Sheet #2 - Property Taxation and Potential Consolidation.
- Fact Sheet #3 - The Municipal Consolidation Process
- Fact Sheet #4 - Community Identity and Possible Consolidation.
- Fact Sheet #5 - Water, Electricity and Alternate Energy Leadership
- Fact Sheet #6 - Guiding Principles for Potential Consolidation
- Fact Sheet #7 - Volunteer Fire Services
- Fact Sheet #8 - Police Services
- Fact Sheet #9: Respecting the Differences: Taxes, Area Rates and Community Grants

In addition, there will be two staff fact sheets directed toward staff only and will not be for public consumption.

Community Information Sessions – These will follow an open house format where there will be poster boards based on a series of fact sheets. People can drop in to review the information and discuss with the Brighter Team issues related to consolidation. Examples of the fact sheets are attached to the report. The Mayor and Warden, and any councillor who is able to attend, will be at the sessions to welcome participants and be accessible to the attendees.

Workshops - We will hold a session for organizations who wish to engage on this topic. The session will be held virtually and use the Howspace platform so that the build-in metrics of this tool can be used. We also proposed to hold a community leaders session with key influencers within the community. This session will be held in person.

Pop-Up – Working with staff, two pop up opportunities will occur to reach people who may not be interested or able to participate in the Community Information Sessions or the online tools.

Phone Line - Municipal Staff have set up a phone line where residents and interested parties can call to provide input or ask questions. All calls into this phone line will be logged.

Sentiment Survey – The sentiment survey will be done twice. One before and one after the engagement sessions. Both surveys' will be conducted through connection to an online tool.

The schedule for community information session is:

	Date	Location	Time
Group 1 Sessions-	6-Apr	Fire Chiefs Association (Consultants can be virtual) – Library Community Room	7-9pm
	7-Apr	Community Leaders – Library Community Room	7-9pm
	11-Apr	Library	1pm -3pm
	11-Apr	St. Josephs	7pm-9pm
	12-Apr	Online Engagement Session	3pm -5pm
	12-Apr	Mini Trail	7pm-9pm
	13-Apr	Library	11am-1pm
	13-Apr	Arisaig	7pm-9pm
Group 2 Sessions	25-Apr	Lochaber	7pm-9pm
	26-Apr	Legion Business/Organization	11am-1pm
	26-Apr	Antigonish Legion	7pm-9pm
	27-Apr	John Paul Centre - Community Groups	11am-1pm
	27-Apr	Havre Boucher	7pm-9pm
	28-Apr	John Paul Centre - Former and Current Elected Officials	11am-1pm
	28-Apr	St. Andrews	6pm-8pm
Group 3 Sessions-	02-May	Library	12pm-3pm
	02-May	Heatherton	7pm-9pm
	03-May	Junior School	4pm-7pm
	04-May	Tracadie	6-8pm
Group 4 Session	09-May	Pomquet	6-8pm

*some sessions will include a child care or child program option. Recreation staff will determine which sessions will have this option.

**Group 1 sessions will include pop up engagement opportunities.

2.4 COVID

COVID has changed everything, and engagement efforts must be nimble enough to respond to changing public health directives. Our engagement activities blend in face opportunities with online sessions, which provide options for those who are not comfortable meeting in person at this time. If public health measure changes again, with the online engagement platform, we will be able to adapt.

To accommodate those who may not comply with any public health requirements and those who are immune-compromised, we will hold an online engagement session on April 12th.

2.5 Metrics

Metrics are simply measurements and fall into two categories. The first is quantitative data which is information that can be quantified, counted, or measured. Qualitative

data is descriptive and cannot be measured our counted. Both are important tools for Councils to consider when trying to answer the key question about consolidation.

Our engagement plan will use the following metrics:

Quantitative	Description	How
Number of engagements	Total number of interactions	Communication tracking sheet and Howspace.
Number of people	Total # of people interacted with.	Attendance counts
Repeat Engagements	This measures how involved people are	Assessing if people are engaging more than once
Online Engagements	Total Number of formal online engagements	Howspace and website;
Participation by district	Breakdown of participation by district	Attendance sign in at community sessions and Howspace
Resident versus non-resident	Resident versus non-resident	Attendance sign in at community session and Howspace
Property owners	Who are property owners? This is so we can tell who is speaking as a company or an organization but not necessarily a voter.	Attendance sign in at community sessions
How space quantitative datasets	How long people participated. Repeat participation, etc.	

Qualitative	Description	
Key Issues Identified that Council should consider	Howspace questions and notes from in person sessions	Open Houses and pop ups
Increased knowledge of reasons why consolidation is being considered	Sentiment analysis at beginning and the end.	Survey and Howspace; comments cards
Comfort with draft principles	Howspace questions	Howspace and engagement sessions

Level of interest in consolidation	Observational data	All engagement activities
Key issues identified by staff	Observational data	Staff workshop
Change in position on consolidation	Sentiment analysis at beginning and at the end.	Howspace survey and final survey

2.6 Issue and Stakeholder Analysis

As part of our work, we have identified key issues that we need to be prepared to address, how it will impact our work and what the level of concern we anticipate. Other issues will arise, but these start to identify some the emerging issues to date.

Issue	Impact	Stakeholder	Level of Concern	Geography	Contact
1. Property Tax Impacts	N=None L=Low M=Moderate H=High U=Unknown	Property Owners	H	Town & County	
		Renters	M	Town & County	
		Potential investors	L	Town & County	
2. Loss of identity	M	Town residents	H	Town Boundary	
		County residents	M	County	
3. Rural and urban infrastructure	H	Town Residents	H	Town	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transit • Housing • Water/Sewer • Internet • Recreation/Community facilities • Sidewalks/Roads 			
	H	Rural residents	L	County	
	M	Economic Development agencies/chambers of commerce	M		
4. Power Utility and RCMP	M	Town Residents	M	Town	
5. Fire Service	M	Rural Communities	L	County	
	?	Volunteer Fire Fighters	M	Town and County	
6. Human Resources	H	Town staff	H	Town and County	

Issue	Impact N=None L=Low M=Moderate H=High U=Unknown	Stakeholder	Level of Concern N- None L=Low M=Moderate H= High U=Unknown	Geography	Contact
	H	County staff	H	Town and County	
	M	Families of staff	H	Town and County	
7. District Issues	M	Voters	M	Town and County	
		Town organizations	L		
8. Mi'kmaq	L/N	Paqtnekek Mi'kmaq Nation	L		Chief and Council

Section 3: Communication Environment

The decision of the Town and County Councils to investigate a potential merger comes at a time when there is a lot of discussion about changing the structure of local government in Atlantic Canada. The Province of Nova Scotia has not forced mergers upon municipalities since 1996, but it continues to provide financial and technical support to municipal councils who want to look at new approaches to improve their structure and sharing services. When the new Conservative government came into office last Fall, one of the items in the Mandate Letter for the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing was a complete review of the Municipal Government Act, looking at municipal size and scope and the concept of shared services and regional authorities.

New Brunswick has recently implemented a major reorganization of local government across the Province and Newfoundland has just announced an extensive “regionalization” of local governments there over the next several years. PEI is following the example of Nova Scotia, supporting local initiatives to improve municipal governance.

In 2018, the Town of Windsor and District of West Hants agreed to consolidate the two municipalities into one. In 2020, the West Hants Regional Municipality was formed. This was the first time since the passage of the Municipal Government Act in 1999 that special legislation was used to consolidate two municipalities. Overall, the consolidation was viewed by the municipalities, its residents, and the Department of Municipal Affairs and Housing (DMAH) as a success on many fronts. The Councils of the Town and County of Antigonish have met with representatives of West Hants to learn from their experience before making their decision to explore a possible merger.

3.1 Communication Goals

The goals for this plan are:

- ❖ Citizens are aware that the County and the Town are investigating the possibility of consolidation.
- ❖ They know how to engage with the project and where to go to get more information.
- ❖ Proactively communicate and mitigate any issues so the process is open and transparent.

3.2 Key Messages

- We are a progressive community and the Town and County have been working together for a long time with great success.
- You've elected us to do what's in your best interest and part of our job is to explore opportunities. In order to make the best possible decision and determine whether both the Town and County would be better served by consolidation, we need your participation.
- We have seen the benefits of working together with examples like hosting the National Special Olympics, construction of the Antigonish Skatepark and

- community Dog Park, Holiday Events, Regional Emergency Management, and Physician Retention just to name a few.
- No decision has been made; however, we are exploring the possibility of consolidation at this stage, and need your input.
 - Your participation, input and perspectives are important to us.
 - We will wait until we have more information, including from participants in the engagement process, before any decision is made.
 - We care about what residents and businesses of the Town and County think and are making every effort to ensure everyone who wants to participate can do so easily.
 - A combination of in-person sessions to the extent possible under Covid-19 public health guidelines and online sessions are designed to engage as many people as possible. A toll-free number has also been created for anyone who is not comfortable with technology or may have unreliable internet service.
 - We are looking to partner with community organizations to engage people who may otherwise not have an opportunity to participate.

3.3 Communication Risks and Mitigations

Risk: Some members of the community **may** be disruptive to the process for any number of reasons.

Risk: Misinformation and disinformation may distract from people participating and getting the facts.

Risk: Covid-19 restrictions and fears may result in citizens not getting the information they need to provide input.

Risk: Some citizens may not be comfortable with technology or may not have reliable internet.

Mitigation for all risks: Key messaging, Engagement Design, Communication Tactics

3.4 Communication Strategy

Communication about the engagement will focus on the importance of repeating key messages as it proceeds and will be multi-faceted so as many people as possible can be reached. This means using multiple channels and approaches (e.g., earned media, paid advertising, etc.) to ensure that messages reach people in their own, individually preferred methods. For example, people absorb information in different ways, so communication will be designed to appeal to those who are both audio, visual and tactile learners.

3.5 Communication Tactics

TACTIC	Audience	PURPOSE	OUTCOME	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMING
Brand development	All	To ensure the engagement process is unique and differentiated from both County and Town brands. When citizens see the brand, it is immediately associated with the engagement.	The engagement is easily recognized, and citizens can quickly identify what the brand represents	PR Hive	Complete
Landing page for Antigonish.ca	All	There is a one stop shop for all things engagement and the page will live on beyond the engagement as a place for citizens to stay informed on the process.	There is an easy to access one stop shop for all engagement and consolidation info	PR Hive Shirlyn Kate	Complete
See Appendix B					
Soft launch for website Antigonish.ca	General public	Explain the project, provide contact information, provide space for schedules, fact sheets, maps and report summaries to be uploaded, as appropriate	Consistent messaging, awareness of project, participation in engagement activities (online / in-person)	PR Hive Shirlyn Kate	Complete
See Appendix C					
Media training / coaching	Mayor, Warden, Deputies	Training in how to effectively work with the media		PR Hive	Complete
Public launch via news release and earned media	General public	To broadly announce the engagement and build awareness of website and participation on Howspace.	Consistent messaging Awareness of project	PR Hive	

TACTIC	Audience	PURPOSE	OUTCOME	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMING
Toll free number	Those nervous about Covid, those with unreliable Internet, and those uncomfortable with technology	To explain the engagement and invite questions that will be answered by staff	Participation in future engagement activities Awareness (of project) Participation (in engagement activities) Support of the process	Shirlyn Kate	Complete
Howspace E-Newsletter	Business Stakeholders	Email stakeholders so they can receive invites to sessions, keep up to date on progress, make submissions on Howspace, etc. The E-Newsletter will be distributed through Howspace.	Awareness of project Participation in engagement activities Support of the process	PR Hive Shirlyn Kate	
Email invite	Community Organizations and other partners of traditionally marginalized groups	To offer opportunities to participate (e.g., self-directed engagement toolkit)	Awareness Participation Support of the process	PR Hive	
Rolling FAQ	Project staff / Councillors / Public	To ensure public has answers to their questions.	Consistent information Support of the process	PR Hive Shirlyn Kate	Ongoing
See Appendix D					
Fact sheets	Councillors / Staff / General Public	To provide more detailed information on specific topics we know are of interest. Repurpose content for e-newsletters, mailout, online and in-person.	Awareness Consistent information Transparency	Brighter Community PR Hive	

TACTIC	Audience	PURPOSE	OUTCOME	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMING
Earned media	General Public	To ensure public is up to date on engagement and how to participate, includes release of final report.	Awareness Consistent information Transparency	PR Hive Shirlyn Kate	
Paid media (Possibly use a well-known resident of the area, e.g., Tareq Hadad)	Newspaper Radio	Encourage participation and excitement around the process.	Awareness Participation Consistent messaging Awareness	PR Hive	
Public service announcements	CBC Radio One; The Hawk, 98.9	Public awareness of upcoming engagement sessions.	Media coverage Awareness Participation	PR Hive	
Newspaper insert	Newspaper Or Direct to home	To communicate about the project, share important information and stories, potentially those from participants on Howspace	Awareness Support of process Participation	PR Hive	
Social media content calendar	General public	To communicate about project, capture engagement session photos (for all sessions) and promote participation	Awareness Transparency Participation Support	PR Hive Shirlyn Kate	

TACTIC	Audience	PURPOSE	OUTCOME	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMING
Public service announcements	CBC Radio One; The Hawk	Make public aware of upcoming engagement sessions.	Public announcement	PR Hive	
Photography / video	General public	Capture participation in engagement sessions	Awareness Support Participation	PR Hive Shirlyn Kate	Public sessions, pop ups
Poster boards for in-person sessions	General public	To provide more detailed information on specific topics we know are of interest	Awareness Support Participation	Brighter Community PR Hive	

3.6 Materials

To support the Engagement and Marketing Plan, the following materials will be prepared:

- **Fact Sheets**
- **Letter to all mailboxes in Antigonish**
- **Advertisements in local paper or in Community Connect newsletter**
- **Frequently asked questions**
- **Radio Slots and Public Service Announcements**
- **Howspace**

Appendix A

Antigonish municipalities looking at consolidation

Port Hawkesbury, NS, Canada / 101.5 The Hawk

[B. Jack Morse](#)

Sep 14, 2021 | 1:22 PM



Antigonish Co.'s two local governments are looking at consolidating into a single municipality.

Both the Municipality of the County of Antigonish and the Town of Antigonish held council meetings Monday.

Councillors for each voted to investigate what it would take to consolidate into one regional municipality, and if there was interest from the community to do so.

Laurie Boucher, Mayor of the Town of Antigonish, said the two governments have a strong relationship already.

“Over the past few years, the Town and County have strengthened that relationship, working together even more closely than before,” she said. “We’re exploring this now as two strong municipalities, not when one of us is in crisis.”

Owen McCarron, Warden of the Municipality of the County of Antigonish, said they already share multiple partnerships.

McCarron said that includes with StFX University, St. Martha's Regional Hospital Foundation, Antigonish Community Transit, Antigonish Affordable Housing, Keppoch Mountain, and the People's Place Library.

"Antigonish Town and County have a proven track record of success when it comes to working together," he said. "We see consolidating as one opportunity to have a greater community impact to better serve the people that live and work in our communities."

The first step is an exploration phase which includes assessing if residents, businesses, and communities would be better served by amalgamation.

Appendix B – Landing Page Text

The Town and County of Antigonish are launching a public engagement process to invite input from residents on a possible consolidation.

Over the past few years, the Town and County have partnered on many projects that have resulted in significant successes for our whole community. The relationships and collaboration between the two municipalities has increased to the point where it is worth exploring the option of consolidation.

This is your one-stop-shop for up-to-date information on the public engagement process. In addition to in-person engagement meetings and pop-ups to the extent possible and following public health guidelines, we will use an online platform called Howspace to involve residents in discussions about consolidation.

[icon can be a clear button of some kind that says, “Participate Now” and link to Howspace]

What is Howspace?

Howspace is an all-in-one digital facilitation platform. Here we will host workshops and events, there will be FAQ, and you can interact directly on topics that are of interest to you and see what others think.

Do I have to sign up to Howspace?

No, but you will be asked to provide your name and email address. The system will then send you a confirmation email and the link you can use to access the site.

Appendix C – Soft Launch Plan

Town and County of Antigonish Draft Antigonish.ca / Howspace Soft Launch Jan 26, 2022

Purpose

To soft launch the community engagement page Antigonish.ca and encourage people to use Howspace and build gradual growth leading up to the public engagement sessions. Ideally, we will build a group of active users who are champions and will be helpful in promoting the site to others in the community.

The timeframe for this soft launch is January 27/28 (e.g., when landing page is live) through February.

TACTIC	RESPONSIBILITY	Timing
Email Councils to share Antigonish.ca and ask them to share with their constituents	K&S	Jan 28/29
Email to County and Town staff letting them know the site is live and to share with others	K&S	Jan 28/29
Include engagement logo, tagline, and link to landing page in County and Town email signatures	RM	Jan 31
Social media posts launching Antigonish.ca	K&S	Jan 31 – Feb 29
Inclusion of Antigonish.ca on main phone lines (e.g., If you're calling about the potential consolidation and public engagement, please visit Antigonish.ca)	K&S	Feb 8
Blogs for Warden and Mayor on public engagement, promoting Antigonish.ca and Howspace	K&S with RM	Feb 14

Appendix D – FAQ

Separate document provided

Appendix E - Fact Sheets

To be circulated separately.

Appendix F: Community Information Meetings Format

The Community information sessions will be an open house, drop in-style. Each session will be two hours in length. Each person will be asked to sign in and complete a comment card upon exist.

The Brighter Community Planning team will install poster boards that community members can review. The BCP and municipal staff (both Town and County) will be available to answer questions and engage in small groups or one on one.

The public will also be able to take the fact sheets with them to review and follow up either through direct contact with the municipality or through Howspace.

The mail out to all the community of Antigonish will alert community members of the time and dates of each session. There will be ads in local papers and on the radio to support, along with information on the sessions in the April Joint Newsletter issued by the County and Town.

The COVID protocols for these meetings will be determined closer to the time of the meetings and will be approved by the Town and the County.

The Warden/Mayor will be in attendance for all sessions, along with a representative from each of the municipalities.

Appendix G – Draft Letter residents

Dear residents of the Town and County of Antigonish

In September 2021, the Councils of the Town of Antigonish and the Municipality of the County of Antigonish unanimously voted to explore the possibility of consolidation. Why? Consolidating *may* be a more efficient use of existing resources to provide a high level of service to residents living in all our communities. Many of the issues facing our communities, such as climate change, economic development, infrastructure planning, accessibility, and housing, require or would benefit significantly from a regional approach.

We are a progressive region and the Town and County have been working together for a long time with great success. We have seen the benefits of working together with examples like hosting the National Special Olympics, Regional Emergency Management, and Physician Retention just to name a few.

You've elected us to do what's in your best interest and part of our job is to explore opportunities like this. In this case, our decision needs to be informed by your input.

We are asking everyone who has an interest in Antigonish's future to take part in the community engagement around a possible consolidation. A series of on-line and in-person (to the extent possible while following public health guidelines) will take place throughout April and into May.

Visit [Antigonish.ca](https://www.antigonish.ca) for session dates, to provide your input and have an impact on our community's future. Click on "Participate Now" and add your email address. You will get an email with a link to our online engagement platform where you can ask questions, share information and follow what others are saying.

Toll-free numbers are available (1-833-563-2786 or 1-833-563-2787) for anyone who would prefer to leave a voicemail and have staff follow up. This is a great option for those who want to remain engaged but are hesitant to come to a public session, are not comfortable with technology or may have unreliable Internet service. An email address has also been set up, please feel free to email your questions to info@antigonish.ca.

You care about our community, and we care about what you think, and want to hear your feedback. Your input will help us decide if residents, businesses, and the overall community will be better served if the Town and County became one municipal unit.

Thank you in advance and we look forward to your participation.

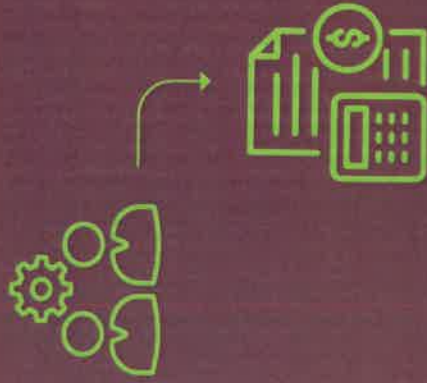
Laurie Boucher
Mayor
Town of Antigonish

Owen McCarron
Warden
Municipality of the County of Antigonish

Property Taxation and Potential Consolidation

ANTIGONISH
Our Community

During consolidations, taxpayers have concerns that property taxes would increase.

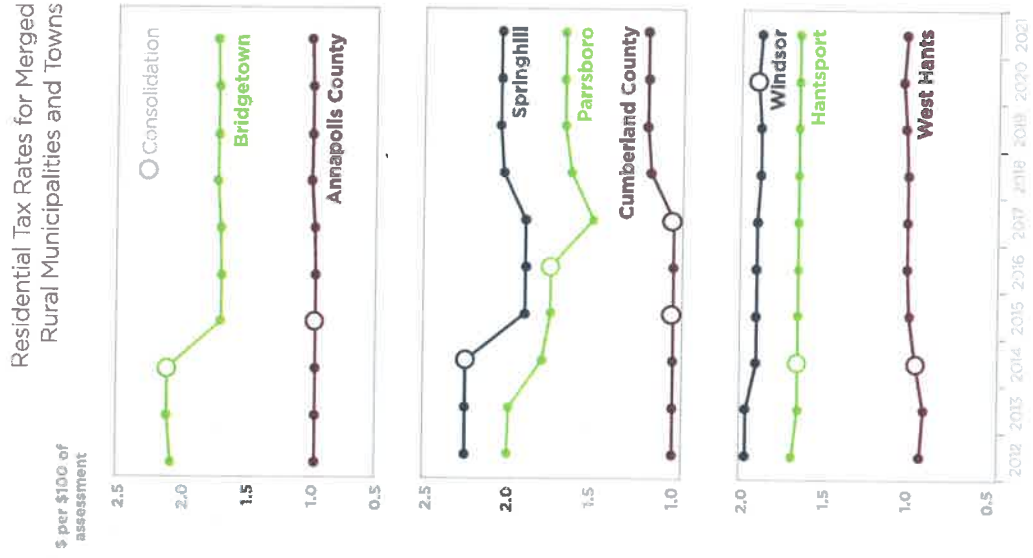


When are tax rates for a merged unit decided?

Should the Town and Municipality decide to consolidate, a joint Transition Committee would prepare a combined operating and capital budget in preparation for the launch of a new municipal unit. Typically, the first year in a merged municipality sees very little change in existing services, fees and tax rates. History shows us that municipal mergers in other parts of Nova Scotia have not created property tax rate increases in the years following a merger.

Experience with other mergers

The following graphs demonstrate the impact other mergers in Nova Scotia on tax rates:



What do these graphs mean? County tax rates did not increase because of these municipal mergers. Town tax rates remained the same or were reduced. Similar conclusions should apply to commercial tax rates before and after a merger.

How will tax bills change in a consolidated municipality?

Typically, a merged municipality will establish a base tax rate for services across the new municipality, and supplement this with “area tax rates” in parts of the municipality where service levels are different. This is identical to the approach used in the County of Antigonish now to support fire protection, hydrants, streetlights.

Forecasting Future Tax Rates with Consolidation:

It is far too early to forecast future property tax rates in a consolidated municipality for the Town and County, but a few facts are known now:

- ✓ Both the Town and County are in good financial shape going into a possible merger.
- ✓ Population and development trends are generally stable – property assessments are not in a state of decline for either municipal unit (1).
- ✓ Municipal infrastructure, capital replacement planning and reserves are in good overall shape in both municipalities.
- ✓ Water rates and electrical utility rates are regulated by the NSUARB, and these would not be impacted by consolidation of the municipal service provider
(See *Fact Sheet on Water, Electricity and Energy Leadership for more information*).

Recommended Approach

Residents and businesses should be taxed fairly, based on services and infrastructure provided to each community. Property tax rates and municipal debt should utilize existing Town and County user pay and area rate models.

Summary: Should the Town and County decide to merge, a joint Transition Committee would prepare the first operating and capital budget in advance of the election of a new Council. The evidence suggests that municipal mergers in Nova Scotia have not resulted in increased taxes for either the County or Town governments involved. Tax bills will likely include a base rate plus area rates, following the current County model. While actual future tax rates can't be predicted, the two units are going into a possible merger without significant risks for tax increases which are often caused by declining revenues or failing infrastructure.



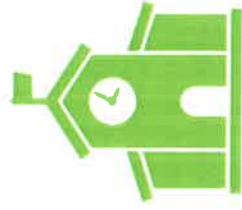
(1) For more detailed statistics about both municipalities, check out the *Municipal Profile and Financial Condition Indicators Reports, 2019-20*, for both the *Town of Antigonish and County of Antigonish*, published on line by Nova Scotia Department of Municipal Affairs and Housing

Representation, Council Size and District Boundaries

ANTIGONISH
Our Community

Introduction

When discussing the potential merger of the town and county, questions arise about the possible changes in representation, the size of a new council and the impact on existing District Boundaries.



When are these things decided?

Representation, Council Size and District Boundaries are important questions, and there is a well-established process in Nova Scotia to determine these and regularly review them through the Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board (NSUARB). *This work would be done by a joint Transition Committee in preparation for the election of a new regional council. This will only happen after a decision to consolidate has been made.*

The Transition Committee would consult with all of the communities involved, develop options and propose the size of Council and the geography of district boundaries and explain their decision to the NSUARB. The NSUARB would also consult with the public as part of its review of the proposed Council size and boundaries.

Balanced Representation

The NSUARB has established a general concept of balanced representation – everyone's electoral vote should carry the same weight, regardless of where they live and uses a guideline that the number of electors in each district should be within 10% of the average for all districts. Exceptions can be made to reflect things like travel distances and communities of interest.



There are two main issues when considering Council size.



Council Size

1. Council Size

How many Councillors are needed to effectively represent citizens and to govern the municipal unit? Currently, the Municipality of Antigonish has 10 Councillors, one of whom is chosen by their peers as Warden. The Town of Antigonish elects 6 Councillors plus the Mayor. **In terms of relative size, the County has a population (2021) of 15,473 and the Town has 4,656.**

In recent years, Nova Scotia municipal councils are smaller. There appears to be public and political interest in having smaller, more efficient councils, and the Province has created a process where municipalities have to review their size and boundaries on a regular basis.



District Boundaries

2. District Boundaries

The review and consultation process for establishing each district must consider several factors listed in the Municipal Government Act (Section 368 (4)):

Number of electors

Relative parity of voting power

(the 10% plus or minus guideline)

Population density

Community of interest

Geographic size

The typical approach for establishing municipal boundaries involves the preparation of maps showing the proposed changes and consulting with the communities involved before making a decision.

Recommended Approach

We believe that electoral districts should foster a balance between rural and urban communities. This would require some blending of urban and suburban areas around the Town with their surrounding communities, and adjustments across more distant districts to reflect these changes. This same concept was used in Queens Regional Municipality, and it has worked well to balance rural and urban interests when making decisions for the whole municipality.

Summary: Should the Town and County decide to consolidate, there are clearly established procedures to ensure fair representation for all voters in a new municipal unit, to determine the number of councillors required for accessible and effective decision-making, and for deciding on the boundaries of new electoral districts.

Community Identity and Potential Consolidation

ANTIGONISH
Our Community

When municipalities in Nova Scotia have merged, people and business wonder if they will lose their community's unique sense of identity.



When are these things decided?

Community identity is not something that is decided by anyone except its residents, businesses and organizations that live in a community. A sense of place is about a lot of things, and the name or type of local government doesn't impact that perception and familiarity. But there are things that a merged municipal government could do to ensure communities across the larger area benefit from the joint organization.

Build on Existing Strengths

Both the Town and County governments have activities and programs in place to support individual organizations and communities. These should be the basis for recognizing and supporting community driven initiatives in the future:

- ✔ Organizations have an opportunity each year to apply for assistance to the Town's Community Grants Policy or the County's Community Partnership Grants Policy.
- ✔ The appointment of citizens to committees such as the Planning Advisory Committee or the Accessibility Committee is an opportunity to reach out and engage community representatives.
- ✔ The County has encouraged the expansion of broadband services, most recently upgraded in the areas of Lochaber and Malignant Cove. This new infrastructure will improve opportunities to communicate with and promote local communities using websites, social media and communications partnerships.
- ✔ Both the Town and County have well established programs to support volunteer fire departments.
- ✔ The Town and County support tourism initiatives that attract people and business to the communities and build local economic activity.
- ✔ Councillors would continue to serve as critical local community advocates through a Council Agendas.
- ✔ County support for community centres.



Drawing on Other Municipal Examples

There are many examples of municipal mergers that support the identity and vibrancy of local communities. As an example, Queens Regional Municipality provided several highlights recently, taken from over twenty-five years' experience as a merged organization:

Be deliberate in spreading infrastructure projects across numerous communities.

Draw citizen appointees for municipal committees from all parts of the region.

Promote local communities with signage and tourism partnerships.

Develop a strong Community Investment Fund and policy.

Establish a single Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use By-Law with one set of rules for development.



Recommended Approach:

A municipal consolidation process will not determine anyone's sense of place or community identity. If someone lives in Havre Boucher, or in Town, they will continue to see themselves as living in their home community. Your community will always be your community. We are following the example from Queens Regional Municipality, which suggests that regional decision making should be seen as benefiting local assets and services, and enhancing overall community.

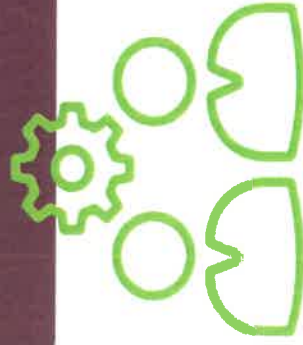
Summary: Protection of Community Identity is an important consideration in a municipal consolidation process. The form of local government has very little to do with determining one's sense of place. Both the Town and County have tools in place to support local communities, their volunteers, meeting spaces and events. It would be important to use the same tools effectively in a consolidated municipal organization.

The Consolidation Process

ANTIGONISH
Our Community

Introduction

In September 2021, both Councils approved the exploration of a possible merger. As a result, they began a process with a few important steps.



When would the potential consolidation of Town and County be decided?

Town and County Councils are researching the possibility of consolidation. As part of that research, both Councils would like to conduct a thorough community engagement process. After obtaining funding from the Department of Municipal Affairs and Housing, the Town and County hired Brighter Community Planning to develop and implement an engagement and communication project to ensure as many people and businesses as possible have the opportunity to provide their input.

The community consultation process will take place in April and May with a final report going to the Municipalities summarizing the findings from the engagement to be made available in late May. **Town and County Councils will make a decision to move ahead or maintain the status quo in Summer 2022.** Before this important decision is made, both Councils are committed to a wide ranging community consultation process.

What is the objective of the consultation process?

The objective is to answer this key question.



For Councils to decide if residents, businesses, and the overall community would be better served if the Town and County became one municipal unit.”

Brighter Community Planning will use a variety of online, print and in person approaches, respecting COVID public health guidelines, to talk, listen, respond to questions and to identify important themes and issues coming from residents in all parts of the Town and County.



How can I take part in the consultation?

There will be lots of opportunities to provide your comments, to meet with Council and Staff, and to get questions answered:

- ✔ Basic information about the consultation process will be available in March on **Antigonish.ca**.
- ✔ A special Antigonish Consolidation Consultation and Engagement website, called Howspace, launched in February. This is a place to share information, ask questions, provide comments and take part in discussions.
- ✔ For those who prefer to receive information on paper, newsletters will be distributed in all communities in April.
- ✔ Community information sessions are being planned for April and May, subject to any COVID health restrictions, to provide a face-to-face opportunity to learn about a possible consolidation, ask questions and have them answered.
- ✔ You can also contact **info@antigonish.ca** or call toll free **1-833-563-2786** or **1-833-563-2787** and staff will respond to you directly.

What happens, if Councils want to move forward with consolidation?



The following is a partial list of what would need to be done if Town and County Councils both vote to move forward with consolidation:

- ✔ Work with the Department of Municipal Affairs and Housing to obtain special Transition Legislation and Funding for the consolidation process.
- ✔ Transition Legislation would provide for:
 - Creation of a joint transition committee (Mayor, Warden, Deputy Mayor and Warden, CAO's) to establish the new Municipality.
 - Hiring a Transition Coordinator to direct the consolidation process with a target date of April 1, 2024.
 - Recruiting a Chief Administrative Officer for the new municipality.
 - Guide the Transition Committee and CAO in establishing a consolidated organization, creating the new administrative structure.
 - Transition Committee development of combined financial, taxation and debt policies and first budget.
 - Transfer of all existing municipal by-laws, policies and contracts to the new municipal unit.
- ✔ Complete an electoral boundary review study and seek approval from the Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board.
- ✔ Organize the first election of Mayor and Council for the combined municipality.
- ✔ Complete the joint transition process by April 1, 2024.

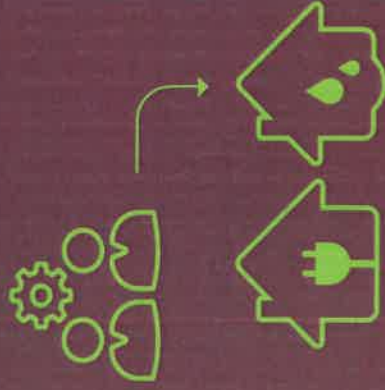
Summary: Town and County

Councils have begun a process to consider whether consolidation would better serve residents, businesses and the broader community. They have created a joint Steering Committee and have retained Brighter Community Planning to lead the consultation and engagement to take place in April and May. Public input will help Councils make a decision on whether it will proceed with consolidation.

Water, Electricity and Energy Leadership

ANTIGONISH
Our Community

Both the County and Town operate utilities. How would these services be impacted by a possible consolidation?



Water in Town and County

In Nova Scotia, water supply and distribution systems are carefully regulated by both the Nova Scotia Department of Environment and the Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board (NSUARB). The Town has a water utility that draws its supply from the James River watershed and is distributed to Town Residents and some County users. There are approximately 1,600 connections to the Town's utility.

The County water utility provides water in the "fringe area" surrounding the Town, and to Lower South River, St. Andrews and St. Josephs. In 2020 the County amalgamated all of its water systems into one utility and harmonized rates for all 1,500 water utility customers. Both the Town and County water utilities regularly review their operations and rates to ensure they are current and

appropriate. Water utility rates are approved by the NSUARB after a periodic rate study and review process.

In Nova Scotia, water supply and distribution systems are carefully regulated by both the Nova Scotia Department of Environment and the Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board.

Although there may be opportunities in the future to combine the two existing water services, initially the utilities, their environmental permits and NSUARB rate orders would remain unchanged. In a consolidated municipality, there would not be any additional demand on one utility or the other to supply water to existing customers.

Electricity in the Town

Town residents and businesses also have their own electrical utility, regulated through the NSUARB. The utility purchases electricity from Nova Scotia Power (NSP), and the approved rate structure is tied closely to changes the NSP rate structure. The administration, maintenance and operation of the utility is integrated with the Town organization, in the same way as the water utility.

While there are opportunities to achieve efficiencies and share knowledge in a larger municipal unit, the Antigonish Electrical Utility and its rate structure would have to be treated as a regulated operation to benefit its existing subscribers.

Renewable Energy Leadership

Both the Town and County have demonstrated real leadership in addressing climate change and alternate energy, and this leadership should be recognized and advanced in any possible municipal consolidation process.

The County has installed a total of 97kWh in solar PV, starting with a roof mounted system (25kWh) in 2016 and a ground mounted (72kWh) solar array in June 2021. Both have long term agreements with Nova Scotia Power. The County recently completed a Low Carbons Community feasibility study to explore new energy initiatives with Paqtnek Mi'kmaw Nation (PMN) and will continue to plan next steps together, building on our Anku'kamkewey Peace and Friendship Accord signed on May 5, 2018. Currently the County and PMN are installing EV chargers in partnership with the Town. In 2021, the County approved a five-year Energy Management Plan that looks at efficiency, renewables and partnership as important components of responding to climate change and providing long term energy options.



The Town is also demonstrating concrete leadership in the development of alternate energy and reducing the community's carbon footprint, through the Alternative Resource Energy Authority (AREA), a partnership between the towns of Antigonish, Berwick and Mahone Bay. The revenues, expenses, assets and liabilities are shared between the AREA's municipal

partners based on the share of the power generated. AREA has future plans for more initiatives, including the installation of automotive EV Chargers and community solar panel gardens.



AREA provides significant financial, economic and environmental benefits, which would be maintained in a potential consolidation.

Summary: The Town and County provide important municipal services through long established and regulated utilities, for water and electricity. These services would be included in a possible consolidation, but they have unique regulatory and ownership characteristics that would have to be recognized in any merger process. In addition, there are significant leadership responses to climate change/alternate energy issues in both municipalities that would require special consideration to grow the opportunities that will exist with a larger organization and protect assets and revenues that have been created by each municipal unit and its citizens.

ANTIGONISH

Our Community

**Consolidation Steering Committee
Municipal Council Chamber – 285 Beech Hill Road
Tuesday, March 8, 2022 @ 8am
Meeting Agenda**

- 1) Review of Map with Household Numbers
- 2) Review of Staff Fact Sheets
- 3) Review of Guiding Principles
- 4) Review of Invitation List for Community Leaders and Organizations Sessions
- 5) Sharing of Working Engagement & Communications Plan
- 6) Council Logistics for June Decision
- 7) Additions:
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.



Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Amalgamation

5 messages

Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>
To: Sean Cameron <scameron@townofantigonish.ca>

Mon, Mar 7, 2022 at 5:39 PM

Sean;

Thought you may be interested in reading the NS Forced Amalgamations Act that I came across when researching, here is the link.

Harris

[Nova Scotia Legislature - Forced Municipal Amalgamations Correction Act \(nslegislature.ca\)](https://nslegislature.ca)

Sean Cameron <scameron@townofantigonish.ca>
To: Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Mon, Mar 7, 2022 at 9:36 PM

Thanks

Some reading for tonight.

Did you see the two of them in a video stating how wonderful Consolation will be?

Get [Outlook for iOS](#)

From: Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, March 7, 2022 5:39:38 PM
To: Sean Cameron <scameron@townofantigonish.ca>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Amalgamation

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

[Quoted text hidden]

Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>
To: Sean Cameron <scameron@townofantigonish.ca>

Tue, Mar 8, 2022 at 6:57 AM

Sean

No, haven't seen video, was it on CJFX?

Sent from my iPhone

On Mar 7, 2022, at 9:36 PM, Sean Cameron <scameron@townofantigonish.ca> wrote:

[Quoted text hidden]

Sean Cameron <scameron@townofantigonish.ca>
To: Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Tue, Mar 8, 2022 at 4:41 PM

Facebook. Town of Antigonish

Get [Outlook for iOS](#)

From: Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 8, 2022 6:57:18 AM
To: Sean Cameron <scameron@townofantigonish.ca>
Subject: Re: [EXTERNAL] Amalgamation

[Quoted text hidden]

Sean Cameron <scameron@townofantigonish.ca>
To: Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Wed, Mar 9, 2022 at 8:52 AM

Harris

It had 1100 views and less than 15 likes. Some negative comments posted.

Get [Outlook for iOS](#)

From: Sean Cameron <scameron@townofantigonish.ca>
Sent: Tuesday, March 8, 2022 4:41:41 PM
To: Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>
Subject: Re: [EXTERNAL] Amalgamation

[Quoted text hidden]



Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Amalgamation

1 message

Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Mon, Mar 7, 2022 at 5:46 PM

To: Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>

Interesting Act that was put in because of adverse conditions as a result of forced amalgamation, here is the link, remember they were forced..

Harris

[Nova Scotia Legislature - Forced Municipal Amalgamations Correction Act \(nslegislature.ca\)](https://www.nslegislature.ca/nova-scotia-legislature/forced-municipal-amalgamations-correction-act)

From: [Shirlyn Donovan](#)
To: [Council](#)
Cc: [Kate Gorman](#)
Subject: Fact Sheets
Date: March 8, 2022 12:03:23 PM
Attachments: [Fact Sheets.pdf](#)
[2022-02-28 Final First Staff Fact Sheet.pdf](#)
[2022-02-28 Final Second Staff Fact Sheet.pdf](#)

Good afternoon,

Please see attached the Fact Sheets on several topic areas. The staff ones are for internal use only. The remaining fact sheets will be displayed on poster board through the community engagement process and versions of these will be distributed to all residents of the Town and County via the County Connect. These are not to be shared publicly yet but will be very soon.

Thanks,
Shirlyn

Shirlyn Donovan

Strategic Initiatives Coordinator
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
285 Beech Hill Road
Antigonish, NS B2G 0B4
902-863-1117



www.antigonishcounty.ns.ca



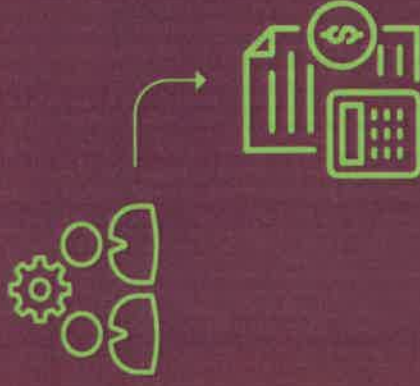
www.twitter.com/antigonishco

Honour Yesterday, Act Today, Inspire Tomorrow

Property Taxation and Potential Consolidation

ANTIGONISH
Our Community

During consolidations, taxpayers have concerns that property taxes would increase.



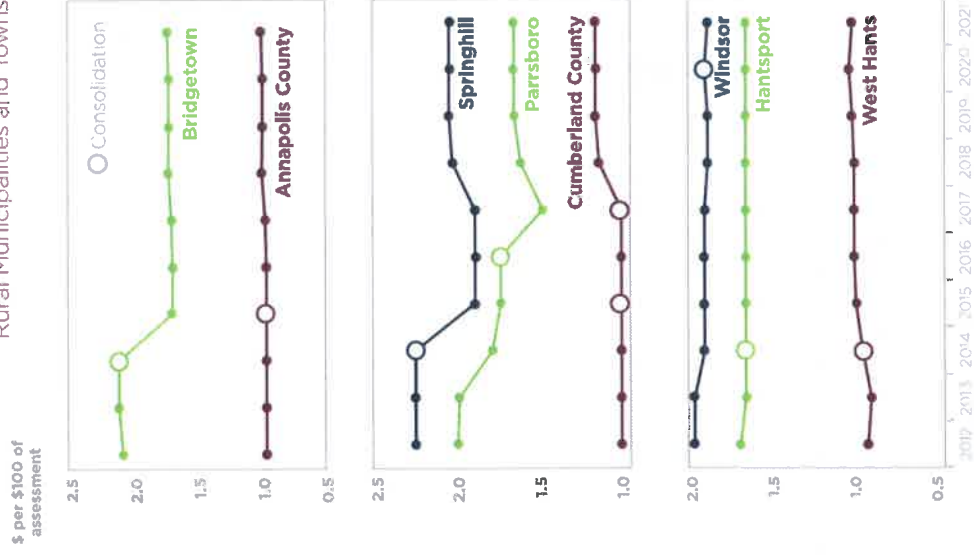
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The following graphs demonstrate the impact other mergers in Nova Scotia on tax rates:

Residential Tax Rates for Merged Rural Municipalities and Towns



What do these graphs mean? County tax rates did not increase because of these municipal mergers. Town tax rates remained the same or were reduced. Similar conclusions should apply to commercial tax rates before and after a merger.

How will tax bills change in a consolidated municipality?

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(See *Fact Sheet on Water, Electricity and Energy Leadership for more information*).

Recommended Approach

Residents and businesses should be taxed fairly, based on services and infrastructure provided to each community. Property tax rates and municipal debt should utilize existing Town and County user pay and area rate models.

Summary: Should the Town and County decide to merge, a Joint Transition Committee would prepare the first operating and capital budget in advance of the election of a new Council. The evidence suggests that municipal mergers in Nova Scotia have not resulted in increased taxes for either the County or Town governments involved. Tax bills will likely include a base rate plus area rates, following the current County model. While actual future tax rates can't be predicted, the two units are going into a possible merger without significant risks for tax increases which are often caused by declining revenues or failing infrastructure.



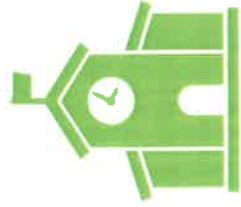
(1) For more detailed statistics about both municipalities, check out the *Municipal Profile and Financial Condition Indicators Reports, 2019-20*, for both the *Town of Antigonish and County of Antigonish*, published on line by Nova Scotia Department of Municipal Affairs and Housing

Representation, Council Size and District Boundaries

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Our Community

Introduction

When discussing the potential merger of the town and county, questions arise about the possible changes in representation, the size of a new council and the impact on existing District Boundaries.



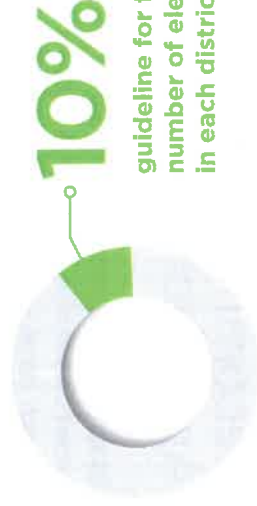
When are these things decided?

Representation, Council Size and District Boundaries are important questions, and there is a well-established process in Nova Scotia to determine these and regularly review them through the Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board (NSUARB). *This work would be done by a joint Transition Committee in preparation for the election of a new regional council. This will only happen after a decision to consolidate has been made.*

The Transition Committee would consult with all of the communities involved, develop options and propose the size of Council and the geography of district boundaries and explain their decision to the NSUARB. The NSUARB would also consult with the public as part of its review of the proposed Council size and boundaries.

Balanced Representation

The NSUARB has established a general concept of balanced representation – everyone's electoral vote should carry the same weight, regardless of where they live and uses a guideline that the number of electors in each district should be within 10% of the average for all districts. Exceptions can be made to reflect things like travel distances and communities of interest.



10%

guideline for the number of electors in each district

There are two main issues when considering Council size.



Council Size

1. Council Size

How many Councillors are needed to effectively represent citizens and to govern the municipal unit? Currently, the Municipality of Antigonish has 10 Councillors, one of whom is chosen by their peers as Warden. The Town of Antigonish elects 6 Councillors plus the Mayor. **In terms of relative size, the County has a population (2021) of 15,473 and the Town has 4,656.**

In recent years, Nova Scotia municipal councils are smaller. There appears to be public and political interest in having smaller, more efficient councils, and the Province has created a process where municipalities have to review their size and boundaries on a regular basis.



District Boundaries

2. District Boundaries

The review and consultation process for establishing each district must consider several factors listed in the Municipal Government Act (Section 368 (4)):

Number of electors

Relative parity of voting power
(the 10% plus or minus guideline)

Population density

Community of interest

Geographic size

The typical approach for establishing municipal boundaries involves the preparation of maps showing the proposed changes and consulting with the communities involved before making a decision.

Recommended Approach

We believe that electoral districts should foster a balance between rural and urban communities. This would require some blending of urban and suburban areas around the Town with their surrounding communities, and adjustments across more distant districts to reflect these changes. This same concept was used in Queens Regional Municipality, and it has worked well to balance rural and urban interests when making decisions for the whole municipality.

Summary: Should the Town and County decide to consolidate, there are clearly established procedures to ensure fair representation for all voters in a new municipal unit, to determine the number of councillors required for accessible and effective decision-making, and for deciding on the boundaries of new electoral districts.

Community Identity and Potential Consolidation



When municipalities in Nova Scotia have merged, people and business wonder if they will lose their community's unique sense of identity.



When are these things decided?

Community identity is not something that is decided by anyone except its residents, businesses and organizations that live in a community. A sense of place is about a lot of things, and the name or type of local government doesn't impact that perception and familiarity. But there are things that a merged municipal government could do to ensure communities across the larger area benefit from the joint organization.

Build on Existing Strengths

Both the Town and County governments have activities and programs in place to support individual organizations and communities. These should be the basis for recognizing and supporting community driven initiatives in the future:

- ✔ Organizations have an opportunity each year to apply for assistance to the Town's Community Grants Policy or the County's Community Partnership Grants Policy.
- ✔ The appointment of citizens to committees such as the Planning Advisory Committee or the Accessibility Committee is an opportunity to reach out and engage community representatives.
- ✔ The County has encouraged the expansion of broadband services, most recently upgraded in the areas of Lochaber and Malignant Cove. This new infrastructure will improve opportunities to communicate with and promote local communities using websites, social media and communications partnerships.
- ✔ Both the Town and County have well established programs to support volunteer fire departments.
- ✔ The Town and County support tourism initiatives that attract people and business to the communities and build local economic activity.
- ✔ Councillors would continue to serve as critical local community advocates through a Council Agendas.
- ✔ County support for community centres.

Drawing on Other Municipal Examples

There are many examples of municipal mergers that support the identity and vibrancy of local communities. As an example, Queens Regional Municipality provided several highlights recently, taken from over twenty-five years' experience as a merged organization:

Be deliberate in spreading infrastructure projects across numerous communities.

Draw citizen appointees for municipal committees from all parts of the region.

Promote local communities with signage and tourism partnerships.

Develop a strong Community Investment Fund and policy.

Establish a single Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use By-Law with one set of rules for development.



Recommended Approach:

A municipal consolidation process will not determine anyone's sense of place or community identity. If someone lives in Havre Boucher, or in Town, they will continue to see themselves as living in their home community. Your community will always be your community. We are following the example from Queens Regional Municipality, which suggests that regional decision making should be seen as benefiting local assets and services, and enhancing overall community.

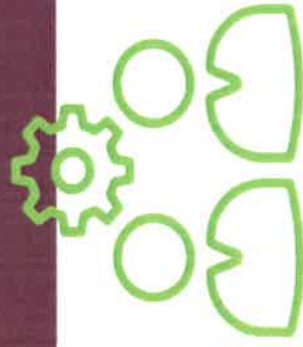
Summary: Protection of Community Identity is an important consideration in a municipal consolidation process. The form of local government has very little to do with determining one's sense of place. Both the Town and County have tools in place to support local communities, their volunteers, meeting spaces and events. It would be important to use the same tools effectively in a consolidated municipal organization.

The Consolidation Process



Introduction

In September 2021, both Councils approved the exploration of a possible merger. As a result, they began a process with a few important steps.



When would the potential consolidation of Town and County be decided?

Town and County Councils are researching the possibility of consolidation. As part of that research, both Councils would like to conduct a thorough community engagement process. After obtaining funding from the Department of Municipal Affairs and Housing, the Town and County hired Brighter Community Planning to develop and implement an engagement and communication project to ensure as many people and businesses as possible have the opportunity to provide their input.

The community consultation process will take place in April and May with a final report going to the Municipalities summarizing the findings from the engagement to be made available in late May. **Town and County Councils will make a decision to move ahead or maintain the status quo in Summer 2022.** Before this important decision is made, both Councils are committed to a wide ranging community consultation process.

What is the objective of the consultation process?

The objective is to answer this key question.



“For Councils to decide if residents, businesses, and the overall community would be better served if the Town and County became one municipal unit.”

Brighter Community Planning will use a variety of online, print and in person approaches, respecting COVID public health guidelines, to talk, listen, respond to questions and to identify important themes and issues coming from residents in all parts of the Town and County.

How can I take part in the consultation?

There will be lots of opportunities to provide your comments, to meet with Council and Staff, and to get questions answered:

- ✓ Basic information about the consultation process will be available in March on **Antigonish.ca**.
- ✓ A special Antigonish Consolidation Consultation and Engagement website, called Howspace, launched in February. This is a place to share information, ask questions, provide comments and take part in discussions.
- ✓ For those who prefer to receive information on paper, newsletters will be distributed in all communities in April.
- ✓ Community information sessions are being planned for April and May, subject to any COVID health restrictions, to provide a face-to-face opportunity to learn about a possible consolidation, ask questions and have them answered.
- ✓ You can also contact **info@antigonish.ca** or call toll free **1-833-563-2786** or **1-833-563-2787** and staff will respond to you directly.

What happens, if Councils want to move forward with consolidation?



The following is a partial list of what would need to be done if Town and County Councils both vote to move forward with consolidation:

- ✓ Work with the Department of Municipal Affairs and Housing to obtain special Transition Legislation and Funding for the consolidation process.
- ✓ Transition Legislation would provide for:
 - Creation of a joint transition committee (Mayor, Warden, Deputy Mayor and Warden, CAO's) to establish the new Municipality.
 - Hiring a Transition Coordinator to direct the consolidation process with a target date of April 1, 2024.
 - Recruiting a Chief Administrative Officer for the new municipality.
 - Guide the Transition Committee and CAO in establishing a consolidated organization, creating the new administrative structure.
 - Transition Committee development of combined financial, taxation and debt policies and first budget.
 - Transfer of all existing municipal by-laws, policies and contracts to the new municipal unit.
- ✓ Complete an electoral boundary review study and seek approval from the Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board.
- ✓ Organize the first election of Mayor and Council for the combined municipality.
- ✓ Complete the joint transition process by April 1, 2024.

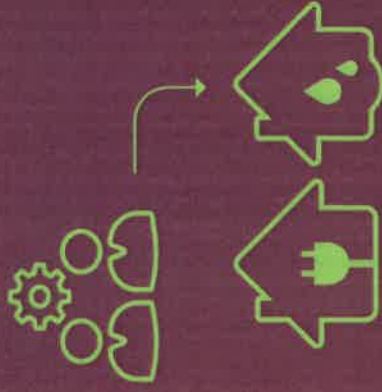
Summary: Town and County

Councils have begun a process to consider whether consolidation would better serve residents, businesses and the broader community. They have created a joint Steering Committee and have retained Brighter Community Planning to lead the consultation and engagement to take place in April and May. Public input will help Councils make a decision on whether it will proceed with consolidation.

Water, Electricity and Energy Leadership

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Both the County and Town operate utilities. How would these services be impacted by a possible consolidation?



Water in Town and County

In Nova Scotia, water supply and distribution systems are carefully regulated by both the Nova Scotia Department of Environment and the Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board (NSUARB). The Town has a water utility that draws its supply from the James River watershed and is distributed to Town Residents and some County users. There are approximately 1,600 connections to the Town's utility.

The County water utility provides water in the "fringe area" surrounding the Town, and to Lower South River, St. Andrews and St. Josephs. In 2020 the County amalgamated all of its water systems into one utility and harmonized rates for all 1,500 water utility customers. Both the Town and County water utilities regularly review their operations and rates to ensure they are current and

appropriate. Water utility rates are approved by the NSUARB after a periodic rate study and review process.

In Nova Scotia, water supply and distribution systems are carefully regulated by both the Nova Scotia Department of Environment and the Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board.

Although there may be opportunities in the future to combine the two existing water services, initially the utilities, their environmental permits and NSUARB rate orders would remain unchanged. In a consolidated municipality, there would not be any additional demand on one utility or the other to supply water to existing customers.

Electricity in the Town

Town residents and businesses also have their own electrical utility, regulated through the NSUARB. The utility purchases electricity from Nova Scotia Power (NSP), and the approved rate structure is tied closely to changes the NSP rate structure. The administration, maintenance and operation of the utility is integrated with the Town organization, in the same way as the water utility.

While there are opportunities to achieve efficiencies and share knowledge in a larger municipal unit, the Antigonish Electrical Utility and its rate structure would have to be treated as a regulated operation to benefit its existing subscribers.

Renewable Energy Leadership

Both the Town and County have demonstrated real leadership in addressing climate change and alternate energy, and this leadership should be recognized and advanced in any possible municipal consolidation process.

The County has installed a total of 97kWh in solar PV, starting with a roof mounted system (25kWh) in 2016 and a ground mounted (72kWh) solar array in June 2021. Both have long term agreements with Nova Scotia Power. The County recently completed a Low Carbons Community feasibility study to explore new energy initiatives with Paqtneq Mi'kmaw Nation (PMN) and will continue to plan next steps together, building on our Anku'kamkewey Peace and Friendship Accord signed on May 5, 2018. Currently the County and PMN are installing EV chargers in partnership with the Town. In 2021, the County approved a five-year Energy Management Plan that looks at efficiency, renewables and partnership as important components of responding to climate change and providing long term energy options.



The Town is also demonstrating concrete leadership in the development of alternate energy and reducing the community's carbon footprint, through the Alternative Resource Energy Authority (AREA), a partnership between the towns of Antigonish, Berwick and Mahone Bay. The revenues, expenses, assets and liabilities are shared between the AREA's municipal

partners based on the share of the power generated. AREA has future plans for more initiatives, including the installation of automotive EV Chargers and community solar panel gardens.



AREA provides significant financial, economic and environmental benefits, which would be maintained in a potential consolidation.

Summary: The Town and County provide important municipal services through long established and regulated utilities, for water and electricity. These services would be included in a possible consolidation, but they have unique regulatory and ownership characteristics that would have to be recognized in any merger process. In addition, there are significant leadership responses to climate change/alternate energy issues in both municipalities that would require special consideration to grow the opportunities that will exist with a larger organization and protect assets and revenues that have been created by each municipal unit and its citizens.

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First Staff Fact Sheet - Consolidation and Staff

Revised February 28, 2022

The question: How will the two organizations be combined in terms of staffing?

The Timing: Should Town and County decide to move forward with consolidation, there will be four key stages for that are important for staff engagement:

- a) The passing of special transition legislation to establish a merged municipality.
- b) Creating a joint Transition Committee, appointment of a Transition Coordinator and commencement of a comprehensive merger work plan.
- c) Retaining third-party HR expertise to help assess the staffing structure of a merged municipality through a Human Resources Analysis and to support existing staff in the transition.
- d) Recruiting a Chief Administrative Officer to manage and staff a merged municipality.

Special Note:

Looking at the Windsor and West Hants consolidation as a benchmark, in terms of the actual recruitment process, the special transition legislation to establish a merged municipality provided the following important requirement:

Preference in employment by the Regional Municipality shall be given to an employee of a municipal government where that employee meets the basic requirements for a position. (Region of Windsor and West Hants Municipality Act, 2018 Section 9 (2))

What is a Human Resource Analysis?

In the example of Windsor West Hants, very soon after the establishment of a Transition Coordinating Committee, the CAO's of the Town and County developed a Request for Proposals (RFP) for a Human Resources Analysis. Gerald Walsh & Associates Inc. was hired to provide a comprehensive analysis of both Town and County human resource elements. Following the analysis, Gerald Walsh & Associates Inc. recommended a merged system, and worked with the Committee and Staff during the transition process.

One of the consultant's first steps was to hold one-on-one meetings with all staff members. This was an opportunity to gain a better understanding of their perspectives and provide staff with a connection point for questions and answers during the transition.

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The Human Resource Analysis included the following:

- Develop an organizational structure that would include a role for current staff.
- Review and update existing job descriptions for all positions within the new structure.
- Identify any positions that would overlap or change significantly and provide recommendations for new positions, training, or options for attrition and severance.
- Attrition and severance options would be shared with staff who indicate interest in these options.
- Complete a salary comparison and market review, recommending new salary bands and scales.
- Complete a benefits comparison and market review, recommending options to merge programs.
- Recommend the placement of Departments and staff in terms of space, shared work, effectiveness.
- Assess implications of alternate forms of municipal service delivery, such as working from home, etc.
- Analyze and identify options for effective service delivery involving unionized and non-union workers, considering all legal and contractual obligations.
- Review and develop combined Human Resources manuals, policies, and procedures.
- Provide an evidence-based structure and methods for employee performance reviews.
- Develop an implementation plan with timelines to achieve consolidation of staff.

In practise, this process provided a mechanism to support staff throughout the merger. The early meetings with every staff member were a key element in the process, and they were followed up with things like organizing several half day workshops on resume writing and interview skills to support individuals going through the process. In many cases staff would provide a resume and sit down for an interview before new positions would be assigned to existing staff. The details of this process can vary depending on arrangements made by the new CAO.

The Transition Co-ordinating Committee and the new council of the merged municipal unit would be responsible for the approval and adoption of new policies, benefits packages, changes to service delivery, etc. The new CAO would work with the Coordinating Committee and council on the adoption of all elements needed for a new organizational structure.

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Summary: Existing staff in the Town and County, and the human resource management systems that exist today are critical considerations in developing a consolidated municipal organization. The Human Resource Analysis would build upon current human resource manuals, policies, and procedures. As important as the technical elements of this work are, so are the opportunities to speak with and work with existing staff along the way. There are several steps and considerations to make before determining a new staffing structure. If both councils decide to move ahead with consolidation, the tentative start date for a new merged municipality would be April 1, 2024.

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Second Staff Fact Sheet

Consolidation and Union Labour Relations

Revised February 28, 2022

The question: How will the two organizations be combined in terms of union and non-union staff?

The Timing: Should the Town and County decide to move forward with consolidation there will be a detailed Human Resources Analysis early in the Transition Co-ordinating Committee work program.

Using Windsor West Hants as an example, this Human Resource Analysis would include this key element:

“Analyze and identify options for effective municipal service delivery involving unionized and non-unionized workers, taking into consideration the current situation of Windsor and West Hants and all legal statutory and contractual obligations.”

It is not possible at this early stage where Councils are just in the process of considering consolidation to suggest what those “options for effective service delivery” might be, or whether there is a need to change anything in terms of existing Public Works staff groups. Those decisions would not be made until after Council decides to move forward or not.

The consolidated organization might want to maintain several separate work teams under public works, in the same way that the Town has maintained separate Electric Utility, Water Treatment, and Public Works teams.

Those answers on the structure of a new organization would be based on the findings from the Human Resources Analysis and will fall under the discretion of the new CAO and new Council of the merged unit.

Are existing union contracts protected in a consolidation process?

The special transition legislation, in the Windsor West Hants example, includes specific provisions to protect unionized staff:

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- 16 (1) *In this Section, "employee" means an employee as defined in Section 2 of the Trade Union Act, excluding those described in subsection 2(2) of that Act.*
- (2) *The Regional Municipality is a transferee for the purpose of Section 31 of the Trade Union Act and, for greater certainty,*
- (a) *the Regional Municipality is bound by successor rights as determined pursuant to the Trade Union Act; and*
- (b) *subject to the Trade Union Act, the Regional Municipality and the employees, who are covered by collective agreements, of a municipal government are bound by the collective agreements as if the Regional Municipality were a party to them.*
- (3) *Where an employee of a municipal government is employed by the Regional Municipality, the period of employment and seniority of that employee with the municipal government at the time of the incorporation of the Regional Municipality is deemed to have been employment and seniority with the Regional Municipality and the continuity of employment and seniority is not broken.*
- (4) *Where an employee of a municipal government is employed by the Regional Municipality in a position which becomes a bargaining unit position, the employee's right to employment in the position is not affected by whether that employee was previously employed pursuant to a collective agreement and the employee is deemed to have seniority credits with the Regional Municipality equal to the employee's service with that municipal government.*
- (5) *No provision of a collective agreement with a municipal government that purports to favour the employees of one municipal government in obtaining employment with the Regional Municipality over those of another municipal government has any force or effect. (Region of Windsor and West Hants Municipality Act, 2018)*

How are union/non-union issues addressed in a consolidation process?

The process of merging existing work teams may or may not require significant changes in existing bargaining units such as the two IBEW Locals in the Town of Antigonish.

Using Public Works staff as the example, there are currently different work groups in both Town and County supported by combined management, supplies, and equipment management systems. From the management" perspective, it would be important to consider the options for different methods of integrating union and non-union teams before deciding how to proceed.

The Nova Scotia Trade Union Act provides an independent review process, should

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management, union or both groups want to change the membership of existing unionized groups in any workplace.

The Nova Scotia Labour Board would consider any change in certification for the two IBEW Locals, based on a history of other mergers of union and non-union workplaces. The Board would review evidence about the impact of a merger on:

- The history of the existing locals;
- the number of union and non-union staff;
- how significant the intermingling of staff might be in a merged organization; and
- whether employees are in favour of collective bargaining and representation by a particular union.

The Labour Board can order a representation vote among an employee group if needed to complete their review of the issue.

Summary: The question of how to combine union and non-union staff in Town and County would not be resolved during the exploration process. If the decision is made by Councils to move forward, then the structure will become clearer when options are presented through the Human Resource Analysis.

Special Transition legislation would protect existing collective bargaining and representation arrangements for Town Public Works, Water Treatment, and Electric Utility employees. Should either management or union representatives want to change existing arrangements, there is a well-established review process through the Nova Scotia Labour Board.

Special Note: The information in this Fact Sheet is intended to be objective and helpful to all staff, but it does not take the place of consultation between the Town of Antigonish and IBEW about potential consolidation.

Beth Schumacher

From: Glenn Horne
Sent: March 8, 2022 1:02 PM
To: Owen McCarron; michellethompsonmla@gmail.com; gregmorrow4gt@gmail.com; Jeff Lawrence; mayor@townofantigonish.ca
Subject: RE: Consolidation Update - Antigonish Town and County
Attachments: 2022 03 02 Draft Final Antigonish Guiding Principles.docx; Final Engagement Plan - Working copy.pdf

Good afternoon, Ministers Thompson & Morrow –

In preparation for our meeting next Monday concerning Consolidation, I have attached some materials for your review. If you have any question on anything you see attached just let me know. You can see all the public facing information on www.antigonish.ca and the associated HowSpace page.

Cheers,
Glenn



Glenn Horne | Chief Administrative Officer
Municipality of the County of Antigonish | 902.863.1117
285 Beech Hill Road, Beech Hill, NS | B2G 0B4
www.antigonishcounty.ns.ca | [@AntigonishCo](https://www.facebook.com/AntigonishCo) | [facebook](https://www.facebook.com/AntigonishCo)

Honour Yesterday, Act Today, Inspire Tomorrow

-----Original Appointment-----

From: Alisha Bowie **On Behalf Of** Glenn Horne
Sent: March 1, 2022 4:21 PM
To: Glenn Horne; Owen McCarron; michellethompsonmla@gmail.com; gregmorrow4gt@gmail.com; Jeff Lawrence; Laurie Boucher
Subject: Consolidation Update - Antigonish Town and County
When: March 14, 2022 10:00 AM-11:00 AM (UTC-04:00) Atlantic Time (Canada).
Where: Council Chambers

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Consolidation Objective and Guiding Principles

Revised 2022 02 02

Objective for the Potential Consolidation of Town and County:

Consolidation is being considered to explore the creation of a stronger local government and a single voice to improve municipal services, community development, economic opportunities, and the quality of life for everyone in Antigonish.

Guiding Principles for Consolidating Antigonish Town and County:

1. **Take a regional approach to municipal services:** Work creatively, deliberately, and visibly to improve municipal services, economic development, tourism, culture, and community infrastructure for all residents and businesses in the Antigonish region.
2. **Build vibrant individual communities:** Promote community identity in rural, urban and First Nations communities, so the whole municipality will be stronger.
3. **Communicate regularly about progress and decisions:** Communications with residents, businesses, councils, and staff should be frequent, transparent, and inclusive.
4. **Continue fair taxation and user pay approaches:** Residents and businesses should only be taxed for services and infrastructure they have access to. Property tax rates and infrastructure debt should utilize area tax rates and utility fee approaches that exist today wherever possible.
5. **Value our existing municipal staff:** The blending of Town and County employees will recognize the value, knowledge and dedication of our current staff and every effort will be made to retain staff and to provide new opportunities.
6. **Ensure Fair Representation for Urban and Rural Residents:** District boundaries should ensure every voter has the same electoral power as every other voter, balance rural and urban interests, and recognize local communities of interest.
7. **Enhance environmental sustainability:** Ownership of the Antigonish electric utility is central to expanding green energy options and reducing our carbon footprint. Build upon the success of initiatives and partnerships with the Alternate Energy Resource Authority and the Municipality's Energy Management Plan.

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March 2, 2022



**Working Engagement &
Communication Plan for
Potential Consolidation**



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Section 1: Introduction

The Town of Antigonish and the County of Antigonish have decided to explore potential merging into one municipal unit. Before Councils make a final decision regarding consolidation, they need to talk to residents, community members, businesses, staff, and other stakeholders to understand the issues, concerns, and opportunities.

This engagement and communications plan (C&E Plan) explains how this engagement will occur to help Councils answer the following question:

"For Councils to decide if residents, businesses and the overall community would be better served if the Town and County became one municipal unit."

When designing a C&E plan, it is important to clearly state why engagement is being done. The International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) explains it best when it states:

- ❖ We believe that those who are affected by a decision have a right to be involved in the decision-making process
- ❖ We believe that the public's contribution will influence the decision.
- ❖ Sustainable decisions recognize and communicate the needs and interests of all parties, including decision makers.
- ❖ We will seek out and facilitate the involvement of those potentially affected by or interested in the decision
- ❖ We will provide the information to allow stakeholders to participate in a meaningful way.
- ❖ We will communicate how their input affected the decision.

Engagement and Communication are separate but interrelated activities, and this plan will deal with both. Communication is about providing information and engagement is focusing on discussions and getting information from stakeholders.

Our process will follow the following steps:

March

- Launch Webpage and Public Howspace
- Mail out and newspaper inserts;
- Prepare for Open House Session; radio and print ads
- Finalize and share Fact Sheets

April

- Hold 13-15 Community Information Session
- Mayor/Warden meetings with Paqtnkek
- Organizations meeting
- Youth meetings and other engagements as required
- Howspace activity for both the public and staff

May

- Hold remainder of engagement sessions
- Coalate data
- Fill in any blanks left by previous engagement
- Close out survey
- What We Heard Report and receive comment on that

Section 2: Engagement Plan

2.1 Objectives of Engagement Plan:

- ❖ To understand the variety of perspectives within the broader community that Council will consider when deciding to proceed to the next step in the consolidation process.
- ❖ To educate the public as to why, at this point, consolidation is considered as an option for the future of both municipal units.
- ❖ To let stakeholders, know how to participate and to allow for participation both virtual and with more traditional methods.
- ❖ To ensure that equity seeking groups are involved in the engagement.
- ❖ To understand potential impacts of consolidation on residents, businesses, and the overall community.

2.2 Stakeholder Mapping

Stakeholder mapping is the process of identifying people and organizations that you need to invite into the process. Everyone is welcome, but by being intentional in who has the most at stake in the ultimate outcome, we can make sure that these stakeholders have every opportunity to participate and provide value to the process.

Stakeholder	Engagement tool
Residents, property owners, renters and voters	Information sessions
Residents, property owners, renters and voters	Howspace
Everyone	Sentiment Survey
Staff	Staff information session and Howspace
Volunteer Fire Departments	CAO's to meet with Departments
Community/Business Leaders Session	Key leaders session
Organization Session – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Transit organizations •Chamber •Business Associations •Recreational Groups • •University •Eastern District Planning Commission •Housing Groups •Co-op movement folks 	Online information session with follow up interactive questions. And phone interviews for groups who don't have internet.
EDI Sessions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Mi'kmaq •others as identified by the County and Town 	Face to face,
Youth- partnering with youth organization. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Student Union •other groups as identified 	Howspace or attendance at key leaders sessions.

2.3 Tactics and Schedule

The main tools that will be used to engage with the public are:

HowSpace - This online engagement platform will be constantly updated and refreshed, with the aim of engaging in conversation and pulling useful measures out for Council's consideration. During March and April Howspace will have weekly updates of new information revolving around the fact sheets and FAQ questions.

The fact sheets will cover the following topics:

- Fact Sheet #1 - Representation, Council Size and District Boundaries.
- Fact Sheet #2 - Property Taxation and Potential Consolidation.
- Fact Sheet #3 - The Municipal Consolidation Process
- Fact Sheet #4 - Community Identity and Possible Consolidation.
- Fact Sheet #5 - Water, Electricity and Alternate Energy Leadership
- Fact Sheet #6 - Guiding Principles for Potential Consolidation
- Fact Sheet #7 - Volunteer Fire Services
- Fact Sheet #8 - Police Services
- Fact Sheet #9: Respecting the Differences: Taxes, Area Rates and Community Grants

In addition, there will be two staff fact sheets directed toward staff only and will not be for public consumption.

Community Information Sessions – These will follow an open house format where there will be poster boards based on a series of fact sheets. People can drop in to review the information and discuss with the Brighter Team issues related to consolidation. Examples of the fact sheets are attached to the report. The Mayor and Warden, and any councillor who is able to attend, will be at the sessions to welcome participants and be accessible to the attendees.

Workshops - We will hold a session for organizations who wish to engage on this topic. The session will be held virtually and use the Howspace platform so that the build-in metrics of this tool can be used. We also proposed to hold a community leaders session with key influencers within the community. This session will be held in person.

Pop-Up – Working with staff, two pop up opportunities will occur to reach people who may not be interested or able to participate in the Community Information Sessions or the online tools.

Phone Line - Municipal Staff have set up a phone line where residents and interested parties can call to provide input or ask questions. All calls into this phone line will be logged.

Sentiment Survey – The sentiment survey will be done twice. One before and one after the engagement sessions. Both surveys' will be conducted through connection to an online tool.

The schedule for community information session is:

	Date	Location	Time
Group 1 Sessions-	6-Apr	Fire Chiefs Association (Consultants can be virtual) – Library Community Room	7-9pm
	7-Apr	Community Leaders – Library Community Room	7-9pm
	11-Apr	Library	1pm -3pm
	11-Apr	St. Josephs	7pm-9pm
	12-Apr	Online Engagement Session	3pm -5pm
	12-Apr	Mini Trail	7pm-9pm
	13-Apr	Library	11am-1pm
	13-Apr	Arisaig	7pm-9pm
Group 2 Sessions	25-Apr	Lochaber	7pm-9pm
	26-Apr	Legion Business/Organization	11am-1pm
	26-Apr	Antigonish Legion	7pm-9pm
	27-Apr	John Paul Centre - Community Groups	11am-1pm
	27-Apr	Havre Boucher	7pm-9pm
	28-Apr	John Paul Centre - Former and Current Elected Officials	11am-1pm
	28-Apr	St. Andrews	6pm-8pm
Group 3 Sessions-	02-May	Library	12pm-3pm
	02-May	Heatherton	7pm-9pm
	03-May	Junior School	4pm-7pm
	04-May	Tracadie	6-8pm
Group 4 Session	09-May	Pomquet	6-8pm

*some sessions will include a child care or child program option. Recreation staff will determine which sessions will have this option.

**Group 1 sessions will include pop up engagement opportunities.

2.4 COVID

COVID has changed everything, and engagement efforts must be nimble enough to respond to changing public health directives. Our engagement activities blend in face opportunities with online sessions, which provide options for those who are not comfortable meeting in person at this time. If public health measure changes again, with the online engagement platform, we will be able to adapt.

To accommodate those who may not comply with any public health requirements and those who are immune-compromised, we will hold an online engagement session on April 12th.

2.5 Metrics

Metrics are simply measurements and fall into two categories. The first is quantitative data which is information that can be quantified, counted, or measured. Qualitative

data is descriptive and cannot be measured or counted. Both are important tools for Councils to consider when trying to answer the key question about consolidation.

Our engagement plan will use the following metrics:

Quantitative	Description	How
Number of engagements	Total number of interactions	Communication tracking sheet and Howspace.
Number of people	Total # of people interacted with.	Attendance counts
Repeat Engagements	This measures how involved people are	Assessing if people are engaging more than once
Online Engagements	Total Number of formal online engagements	Howspace and website;
Participation by district	Breakdown of participation by district	Attendance sign in at community sessions and Howspace
Resident versus non-resident	Resident versus non-resident	Attendance sign in at community session and Howspace
Property owners	Who are property owners? This is so we can tell who is speaking as a company or an organization but not necessarily a voter.	Attendance sign in at community sessions
How space quantitative datasets	How long people participated. Repeat participation, etc.	

Qualitative	Description	
Key Issues Identified that Council should consider	Howspace questions and notes from in person sessions	Open Houses and pop ups
Increased knowledge of reasons why consolidation is being considered	Sentiment analysis at beginning and the end.	Survey and Howspace; comments cards
Comfort with draft principles	Howspace questions	Howspace and engagement sessions

Level of interest in consolidation	Observational data	All engagement activities
Key issues identified by staff	Observational data	Staff workshop
Change in position on consolidation	Sentiment analysis at beginning and at the end.	Howspace survey and final survey

2.6 Issue and Stakeholder Analysis

As part of our work, we have identified key issues that we need to be prepared to address, how it will impact our work and what the level of concern we anticipate. Other issues will arise, but these start to identify some the emerging issues to date.

Issue	Impact	Stakeholder	Level of Concern	Geography	Contact
1. Property Tax Impacts	N=None L=Low M=Moderate H=High U=Unknown	Property Owners	H	Town & County	
		Renters	M	Town & County	
		Potential investors	L	Town & County	
2. Loss of identity	M	Town residents	H	Town Boundary	
		County residents	M	County	
3. Rural and urban infrastructure	H	Town Residents	H	Town	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transit • Housing • Water/Sewer • Internet • Recreation/Community facilities • Sidewalks/Roads 			
		Rural residents	L	County	
		Economic Development agencies/chambers of commerce	M		
4. Power Utility and RCMP	M	Town Residents	M	Town	
5. Fire Service	M	Rural Communities	L	County	
	?	Volunteer Fire Fighters	M	Town and County	
6. Human Resources	H	Town staff	H	Town and County	

Issue	Impact N=None L=Low M=Moderate H=High U=Unknown	Stakeholder	Level of Concern N- None L=Low M=Moderate H= High U=Unknown	Geography	Contact
	H	County staff	H	Town and County	
	M	Families of staff	H	Town and County	
7. District Issues	M	Voters	M	Town and County	
		Town organizations	L		
8. Mi'kmaq	L/N	Paqtnekek Mi'kmaq Nation	L		Chief and Council

Section 3: Communication Environment

The decision of the Town and County Councils to investigate a potential merger comes at a time when there is a lot of discussion about changing the structure of local government in Atlantic Canada. The Province of Nova Scotia has not forced mergers upon municipalities since 1996, but it continues to provide financial and technical support to municipal councils who want to look at new approaches to improve their structure and sharing services. When the new Conservative government came into office last Fall, one of the items in the Mandate Letter for the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing was a complete review of the Municipal Government Act, looking at municipal size and scope and the concept of shared services and regional authorities.

New Brunswick has recently implemented a major reorganization of local government across the Province and Newfoundland has just announced an extensive “regionalization” of local governments there over the next several years. PEI is following the example of Nova Scotia, supporting local initiatives to improve municipal governance.

In 2018, the Town of Windsor and District of West Hants agreed to consolidate the two municipalities into one. In 2020, the West Hants Regional Municipality was formed. This was the first time since the passage of the Municipal Government Act in 1999 that special legislation was used to consolidate two municipalities. Overall, the consolidation was viewed by the municipalities, its residents, and the Department of Municipal Affairs and Housing (DMAH) as a success on many fronts. The Councils of the Town and County of Antigonish have met with representatives of West Hants to learn from their experience before making their decision to explore a possible merger.

3.1 Communication Goals

The goals for this plan are:

- ❖ Citizens are aware that the County and the Town are investigating the possibility of consolidation.
- ❖ They know how to engage with the project and where to go to get more information.
- ❖ Proactively communicate and mitigate any issues so the process is open and transparent.

3.2 Key Messages

- We are a progressive community and the Town and County have been working together for a long time with great success.
- You’ve elected us to do what’s in your best interest and part of our job is to explore opportunities. In order to make the best possible decision and determine whether both the Town and County would be better served by consolidation, we need your participation.
- We have seen the benefits of working together with examples like hosting the National Special Olympics, construction of the Antigonish Skatepark and

community Dog Park, Holiday Events, Regional Emergency Management, and Physician Retention just to name a few.

- No decision has been made; however, we are exploring the possibility of consolidation at this stage, and need your input.
 - Your participation, input and perspectives are important to us.
 - We will wait until we have more information, including from participants in the engagement process, before any decision is made.
- We care about what residents and businesses of the Town and County think and are making every effort to ensure everyone who wants to participate can do so easily.
 - A combination of in-person sessions to the extent possible under Covid-19 public health guidelines and online sessions are designed to engage as many people as possible. A toll-free number has also been created for anyone who is not comfortable with technology or may have unreliable internet service.
 - We are looking to partner with community organizations to engage people who may otherwise not have an opportunity to participate.

3.3 Communication Risks and Mitigations

Risk: Some members of the community **may** be disruptive to the process for any number of reasons.

Risk: Misinformation and disinformation may distract from people participating and getting the facts.

Risk: Covid-19 restrictions and fears may result in citizens not getting the information they need to provide input.

Risk: Some citizens may not be comfortable with technology or may not have reliable internet.

Mitigation for all risks: Key messaging, Engagement Design, Communication Tactics

3.4 Communication Strategy

Communication about the engagement will focus on the importance of repeating key messages as it proceeds and will be multi-faceted so as many people as possible can be reached. This means using multiple channels and approaches (e.g., earned media, paid advertising, etc.) to ensure that messages reach people in their own, individually preferred methods. For example, people absorb information in different ways, so communication will be designed to appeal to those who are both audio, visual and tactile learners.

3.5 Communication Tactics

TACTIC	Audience	PURPOSE	OUTCOME	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMING
Brand development	All	To ensure the engagement process is unique and differentiated from both County and Town brands. When citizens see the brand, it is immediately associated with the engagement.	The engagement is easily recognized, and citizens can quickly identify what the brand represents	PR Hive	Complete
Landing page for Antigonish.ca See Appendix B	All	There is a one stop shop for all things engagement and the page will live on beyond the engagement as a place for citizens to stay informed on the process.	There is an easy to access one stop shop for all engagement and consolidation info	PR Hive Shirlyn Kate	Complete
Soft launch for website Antigonish.ca See Appendix C	General public	Explain the project, provide contact information, provide space for schedules, fact sheets, maps and report summaries to be uploaded, as appropriate	Consistent messaging, awareness of project, participation in engagement activities (online / in-person)	PR Hive Shirlyn Kate	Complete
Media training / coaching	Mayor, Warden, Deputies	Training in how to effectively work with the media		PR Hive	Complete
Public launch via news release and earned media	General public	To broadly announce the engagement and build awareness of website and participation on Howspace.	Consistent messaging Awareness of project	PR Hive	

TACTIC	Audience	PURPOSE	OUTCOME	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMING
Toll free number	Those nervous about Covid, those with unreliable Internet, and those uncomfortable with technology	To explain the engagement and invite questions that will be answered by staff	Participation in future engagement activities Awareness (of project) Participation (in engagement activities) Support of the process	Shirlyn Kate	Complete
Howspace E-Newsletter	Business Stakeholders	Email stakeholders so they can receive invites to sessions, keep up to date on progress, make submissions on Howspace, etc. The E-Newsletter will be distributed through Howspace.	Awareness of project Participation in engagement activities Support of the process	PR Hive Shirlyn Kate	
Email invite	Community Organizations and other partners of traditionally marginalized groups	To offer opportunities to participate (e.g., self-directed engagement toolkit)	Awareness Participation Support of the process	PR Hive	
Rolling FAQ	Project staff / Councillors / Public	To ensure public has answers to their questions.	Consistent information Support of the process	PR Hive Shirlyn Kate	Ongoing
See Appendix D					
Fact sheets	Councillors / Staff / General Public	To provide more detailed information on specific topics we know are of interest. Repurpose content for e-newsletters, mailout, online and in-person.	Awareness Consistent information Transparency	Brighter Community PR Hive	

TACTIC	Audience	PURPOSE	OUTCOME	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMING
Earned media	General Public	To ensure public is up to date on engagement and how to participate, includes release of final report.	Awareness Consistent information Transparency	PR Hive Shirlyn Kate	
Paid media (Possibly use a well-known resident of the area, e.g., Tareq Hadad)	Newspaper Radio	Encourage participation and excitement around the process.	Awareness Participation Consistent messaging Awareness	PR Hive	
Public service announcements	CBC Radio One; The Hawk, 98.9	Public awareness of upcoming engagement sessions.	Media coverage Awareness Participation	PR Hive	
Newspaper insert	Newspaper Or Direct to home	To communicate about the project, share important information and stories, potentially those from participants on Howspace	Awareness Support of process Participation	PR Hive	
Social media content calendar	General public	To communicate about project, capture engagement session photos (for all sessions) and promote participation	Awareness Transparency Participation Support	PR Hive Shirlyn Kate	

TACTIC	Audience	PURPOSE	OUTCOME	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMING
Public service announcements	CBC Radio One; The Hawk	Make public aware of upcoming engagement sessions.	Public announcement	PR Hive	
Photography / video	General public	Capture participation in engagement sessions	Awareness Support Participation	PR Hive Shirlyn Kate	Public sessions, pop ups
Poster boards for in-person sessions	General public	To provide more detailed information on specific topics we know are of interest	Awareness Support Participation	Brighter Community PR Hive	

3.6 Materials

To support the Engagement and Marketing Plan, the following materials will be prepared:

- **Fact Sheets**
- **Letter to all mailboxes in Antigonish**
- **Advertisements in local paper or in Community Connect newsletter**
- **Frequently asked questions**
- **Radio Slots and Public Service Announcements**
- **Howspace**

Appendix A

Antigonish municipalities looking at consolidation

Port Hawkesbury, NS, Canada / 101.5 The Hawk

[B. Jack Morse](#)

Sep 14, 2021 | 1:22 PM



Antigonish Co.'s two local governments are looking at consolidating into a single municipality.

Both the Municipality of the County of Antigonish and the Town of Antigonish held council meetings Monday.

Councillors for each voted to investigate what it would take to consolidate into one regional municipality, and if there was interest from the community to do so.

Laurie Boucher, Mayor of the Town of Antigonish, said the two governments have a strong relationship already.

“Over the past few years, the Town and County have strengthened that relationship, working together even more closely than before,” she said. “We’re exploring this now as two strong municipalities, not when one of us is in crisis.”

Owen McCarron, Warden of the Municipality of the County of Antigonish, said they already share multiple partnerships.

McCarron said that includes with StFX University, St. Martha's Regional Hospital Foundation, Antigonish Community Transit, Antigonish Affordable Housing, Keppoch Mountain, and the People's Place Library.

"Antigonish Town and County have a proven track record of success when it comes to working together," he said. "We see consolidating as one opportunity to have a greater community impact to better serve the people that live and work in our communities."

The first step is an exploration phase which includes assessing if residents, businesses, and communities would be better served by amalgamation.

Appendix B – Landing Page Text

The Town and County of Antigonish are launching a public engagement process to invite input from residents on a possible consolidation.

Over the past few years, the Town and County have partnered on many projects that have resulted in significant successes for our whole community. The relationships and collaboration between the two municipalities has increased to the point where it is worth exploring the option of consolidation.

This is your one-stop-shop for up-to-date information on the public engagement process. In addition to in-person engagement meetings and pop-ups to the extent possible and following public health guidelines, we will use an online platform called Howspace to involve residents in discussions about consolidation.

[icon can be a clear button of some kind that says, “Participate Now” and link to Howspace]

What is Howspace?

Howspace is an all-in-one digital facilitation platform. Here we will host workshops and events, there will be FAQ, and you can interact directly on topics that are of interest to you and see what others think.

Do I have to sign up to Howspace?

No, but you will be asked to provide your name and email address. The system will then send you a confirmation email and the link you can use to access the site.

Appendix C – Soft Launch Plan

Town and County of Antigonish Draft Antigonish.ca / Howspace Soft Launch Jan 26, 2022

Purpose

To soft launch the community engagement page Antigonish.ca and encourage people to use Howspace and build gradual growth leading up to the public engagement sessions. Ideally, we will build a group of active users who are champions and will be helpful in promoting the site to others in the community.

The timeframe for this soft launch is January 27/28 (e.g., when landing page is live) through February.

TACTIC	RESPONSIBILITY	Timing
Email Councils to share Antigonish.ca and ask them to share with their constituents	K&S	Jan 28/29
Email to County and Town staff letting them know the site is live and to share with others	K&S	Jan 28/29
Include engagement logo, tagline, and link to landing page in County and Town email signatures	RM	Jan 31
Social media posts launching Antigonish.ca	K&S	Jan 31 – Feb 29
Inclusion of Antigonish.ca on main phone lines (e.g., If you're calling about the potential consolidation and public engagement, please visit Antigonish.ca)	K&S	Feb 8
Blogs for Warden and Mayor on public engagement, promoting Antigonish.ca and Howspace	K&S with RM	Feb 14

Appendix D – FAQ

Separate document provided

Appendix E - Fact Sheets

To be circulated separately.

Appendix F: Community Information Meetings Format

The Community information sessions will be an open house, drop in-style. Each session will be two hours in length. Each person will be asked to sign in and complete a comment card upon exist.

The Brighter Community Planning team will install poster boards that community members can review. The BCP and municipal staff (both Town and County) will be available to answer questions and engage in small groups or one on one.

The public will also be able to take the fact sheets with them to review and follow up either through direct contact with the municipality or through Howspace.

The mail out to all the community of Antigonish will alert community members of the time and dates of each session. There will be ads in local papers and on the radio to support, along with information on the sessions in the April Joint Newsletter issued by the County and Town.

The COVID protocols for these meetings will be determined closer to the time of the meetings and will be approved by the Town and the County.

The Warden/Mayor will be in attendance for all sessions, along with a representative from each of the municipalities.

Appendix G – Draft Letter residents

Dear residents of the Town and County of Antigonish

In September 2021, the Councils of the Town of Antigonish and the Municipality of the County of Antigonish unanimously voted to explore the possibility of consolidation. Why? Consolidating *may* be a more efficient use of existing resources to provide a high level of service to residents living in all our communities. Many of the issues facing our communities, such as climate change, economic development, infrastructure planning, accessibility, and housing, require or would benefit significantly from a regional approach.

We are a progressive region and the Town and County have been working together for a long time with great success. We have seen the benefits of working together with examples like hosting the National Special Olympics, Regional Emergency Management, and Physician Retention just to name a few.

You've elected us to do what's in your best interest and part of our job is to explore opportunities like this. In this case, our decision needs to be informed by your input.

We are asking everyone who has an interest in Antigonish's future to take part in the community engagement around a possible consolidation. A series of on-line and in-person (to the extent possible while following public health guidelines) will take place throughout April and into May.

Visit [Antigonish.ca](https://www.antigonish.ca) for session dates, to provide your input and have an impact on our community's future. Click on "Participate Now" and add your email address. You will get an email with a link to our online engagement platform where you can ask questions, share information and follow what others are saying.

Toll-free numbers are available (1-833-563-2786 or 1-833-563-2787) for anyone who would prefer to leave a voicemail and have staff follow up. This is a great option for those who want to remain engaged but are hesitant to come to a public session, are not comfortable with technology or may have unreliable Internet service. An email address has also been set up, please feel free to email your questions to info@antigonish.ca.

You care about our community, and we care about what you think, and want to hear your feedback. Your input will help us decide if residents, businesses, and the overall community will be better served if the Town and County became one municipal unit.

Thank you in advance and we look forward to your participation.

Laurie Boucher
Mayor
Town of Antigonish

Owen McCarron
Warden
Municipality of the County of Antigonish

What do these graphs mean? County tax rates did not increase because of these municipal mergers. Town tax rates remained the same or were reduced. Similar conclusions should apply to commercial tax rates before and after a merger.

How will tax bills change in a consolidated municipality?

Typically, a merged municipality will establish a base tax rate for services across the new municipality, and supplement this with “area tax rates” in parts of the municipality where service levels are different. This is identical to the approach used in the County of Antigonish now to support fire protection, hydrants, streetlights.

Forecasting Future Tax Rates with Consolidation:

It is far too early to forecast future property tax rates in a consolidated municipality for the Town and County, but a few facts are known now:

- ✔ Both the Town and County are in good financial shape going into a possible merger.
- ✔ Population and development trends are generally stable – property assessments are not in a state of decline for either municipal unit (1).
- ✔ Municipal infrastructure, capital replacement planning and reserves are in good overall shape in both municipalities.
- ✔ Water rates and electrical utility rates are regulated by the NSUARB, and these would not be impacted by consolidation of the municipal service provider
(See *Fact Sheet on Water, Electricity and Energy Leadership for more information*).

Recommended Approach

Residents and businesses should be taxed fairly, based on services and infrastructure provided to each community. Property tax rates and municipal debt should utilize existing Town and County user pay and area rate models.

Summary: Should the Town and County decide to merge, a joint Transition Committee would prepare the first operating and capital budget in advance of the election of a new Council. The evidence suggests that municipal mergers in Nova Scotia have not resulted in increased taxes for either the County or Town governments involved. Tax bills will likely include a base rate plus area rates, following the current County model. While actual future tax rates can't be predicted, the two units are going into a possible merger without significant risks for tax increases which are often caused by declining revenues or failing infrastructure.



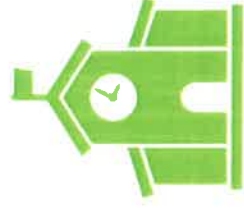
(1) For more detailed statistics about both municipalities, check out the *Municipal Profile and Financial Condition Indicators Reports, 2019-20*, for both the *Town of Antigonish and County of Antigonish*, published on line by Nova Scotia Department of Municipal Affairs and Housing

Representation, Council Size and District Boundaries

ANTIGONISH
Our Community

Introduction

When discussing the potential merger of the town and county, questions arise about the possible changes in representation, the size of a new council and the impact on existing District Boundaries.



When are these things decided?

Representation, Council Size and District Boundaries are important questions, and there is a well-established process in Nova Scotia to determine these and regularly review them through the Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board (NSUARB). *This work would be done by a joint Transition Committee in preparation for the election of a new regional council. This will only happen after a decision to consolidate has been made.*

The Transition Committee would consult with all of the communities involved, develop options and propose the size of Council and the geography of district boundaries and explain their decision to the NSUARB. The NSUARB would also consult with the public as part of its review of the proposed Council size and boundaries.

Balanced Representation

The NSUARB has established a general concept of balanced representation – everyone's electoral vote should carry the same weight, regardless of where they live and uses a guideline that the number of electors in each district should be within 10% of the average for all districts. Exceptions can be made to reflect things like travel distances and communities of interest.



There are two main issues when considering Council size.



Council Size

1. Council Size

How many Councillors are needed to effectively represent citizens and to govern the municipal unit? Currently, the Municipality of Antigonish has 10 Councillors, one of whom is chosen by their peers as Warden. The Town of Antigonish elects 6 Councillors plus the Mayor. **In terms of relative size, the County has a population (2021) of 15,473 and the Town has 4,656.**

In recent years, Nova Scotia municipal councils are smaller. There appears to be public and political interest in having smaller, more efficient councils, and the Province has created a process where municipalities have to review their size and boundaries on a regular basis.



District Boundaries

2. District Boundaries

The review and consultation process for establishing each district must consider several factors listed in the Municipal Government Act (Section 368 (4)):

Number of electors

Relative parity of voting power

(the 10% plus or minus guideline)

Population density

Community of interest

Geographic size

The typical approach for establishing municipal boundaries involves the preparation of maps showing the proposed changes and consulting with the communities involved before making a decision.

Recommended Approach

We believe that electoral districts should foster a balance between rural and urban communities. This would require some blending of urban and suburban areas around the Town with their surrounding communities, and adjustments across more distant districts to reflect these changes. This same concept was used in Queens Regional Municipality, and it has worked well to balance rural and urban interests when making decisions for the whole municipality.

Summary: Should the Town and County decide to consolidate, there are clearly established procedures to ensure fair representation for all voters in a new municipal unit, to determine the number of councillors required for accessible and effective decision-making, and for deciding on the boundaries of new electoral districts.

Community Identity and Potential Consolidation

ANTIGONISH
Our Community

When municipalities in Nova Scotia have merged, people and business wonder if they will lose their community's unique sense of identity.



When are these things decided?

Community identity is not something that is decided by anyone except its residents, businesses and organizations that live in a community. A sense of place is about a lot of things, and the name or type of local government doesn't impact that perception and familiarity. But there are things that a merged municipal government could do to ensure communities across the larger area benefit from the joint organization.

Build on Existing Strengths

Both the Town and County governments have activities and programs in place to support individual organizations and communities. These should be the basis for recognizing and supporting community driven initiatives in the future:

- ✔ Organizations have an opportunity each year to apply for assistance to the Town's Community Grants Policy or the County's Community Partnership Grants Policy.
- ✔ The appointment of citizens to committees such as the Planning Advisory Committee or the Accessibility Committee is an opportunity to reach out and engage community representatives.
- ✔ The County has encouraged the expansion of broadband services, most recently upgraded in the areas of Lochaber and Malignant Cove. This new infrastructure will improve opportunities to communicate with and promote local communities using websites, social media and communications partnerships.
- ✔ Both the Town and County have well established programs to support volunteer fire departments.
- ✔ The Town and County support tourism initiatives that attract people and business to the communities and build local economic activity.
- ✔ Councillors would continue to serve as critical local community advocates through a Council Agendas.
- ✔ County support for community centres.

Drawing on Other Municipal Examples

There are many examples of municipal mergers that support the identity and vibrancy of local communities. As an example, Queens Regional Municipality provided several highlights recently, taken from over twenty-five years' experience as a merged organization:

Be deliberate in spreading infrastructure projects across numerous communities.

Draw citizen appointees for municipal committees from all parts of the region.

Promote local communities with signage and tourism partnerships.

Develop a strong Community Investment Fund and policy.

Establish a single Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use By-Law with one set of rules for development.



Recommended Approach:

A municipal consolidation process will not determine anyone's sense of place or community identity. If someone lives in Havre Boucher, or in Town, they will continue to see themselves as living in their home community. Your community will always be your community. We are following the example from Queens Regional Municipality, which suggests that regional decision making should be seen as benefiting local assets and services, and enhancing overall community.

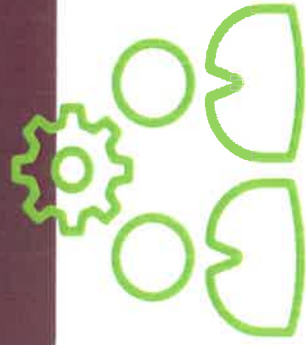
Summary: Protection of Community Identity is an important consideration in a municipal consolidation process. The form of local government has very little to do with determining one's sense of place. Both the Town and County have tools in place to support local communities, their volunteers, meeting spaces and events. It would be important to use the same tools effectively in a consolidated municipal organization.

The Consolidation Process

ANTIGONISH
Our Community

Introduction

In September 2021, both Councils approved the exploration of a possible merger. As a result, they began a process with a few important steps.



When would the potential consolidation of Town and County be decided?

Town and County Councils are researching the possibility of consolidation. As part of that research, both Councils would like to conduct a thorough community engagement process. After obtaining funding from the Department of Municipal Affairs and Housing, the Town and County hired Brighter Community Planning to develop and implement an engagement and communication project to ensure as many people and businesses as possible have the opportunity to provide their input.

The community consultation process will take place in April and May with a final report going to the Municipalities summarizing the findings from the engagement to be made available in late May. **Town and County Councils will make a decision to move ahead or maintain the status quo in Summer 2022.** Before this important decision is made, both Councils are committed to a wide ranging community consultation process.

What is the objective of the consultation process?

The objective is to answer this key question.



For Councils to decide if residents, businesses, and the overall community would be better served if the Town and County became one municipal unit.”

Brighter Community Planning will use a variety of online, print and in person approaches, respecting COVID public health guidelines, to talk, listen, respond to questions and to identify important themes and issues coming from residents in all parts of the Town and County.



How can I take part in the consultation?

There will be lots of opportunities to provide your comments, to meet with Council and Staff, and to get questions answered:

- ✔ Basic information about the consultation process will be available in March on **Antigonish.ca**.
- ✔ A special Antigonish Consolidation Consultation and Engagement website, called Howspace, launched in February. This is a place to share information, ask questions, provide comments and take part in discussions.
- ✔ For those who prefer to receive information on paper, newsletters will be distributed in all communities in April.
- ✔ Community information sessions are being planned for April and May, subject to any COVID health restrictions, to provide a face-to-face opportunity to learn about a possible consolidation, ask questions and have them answered.
- ✔ You can also contact **info@antigonish.ca** or call toll free **1-833-563-2786** or **1-833-563-2787** and staff will respond to you directly.

What happens, if Councils want to move forward with consolidation?



The following is a partial list of what would need to be done if Town and County Councils both vote to move forward with consolidation:

- ✔ Work with the Department of Municipal Affairs and Housing to obtain special Transition Legislation and Funding for the consolidation process.
- ✔ Transition Legislation would provide for:
 - Creation of a joint transition committee (Mayor, Warden, Deputy Mayor and Warden, CAO's) to establish the new Municipality.
 - Hiring a Transition Coordinator to direct the consolidation process with a target date of April 1, 2024.
 - Recruiting a Chief Administrative Officer for the new municipality.
 - Guide the Transition Committee and CAO in establishing a consolidated organization, creating the new administrative structure.
 - Transition Committee development of combined financial, taxation and debt policies and first budget.
 - Transfer of all existing municipal by-laws, policies and contracts to the new municipal unit.
- ✔ Complete an electoral boundary review study and seek approval from the Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board.
- ✔ Organize the first election of Mayor and Council for the combined municipality.
- ✔ Complete the joint transition process by April 1, 2024.

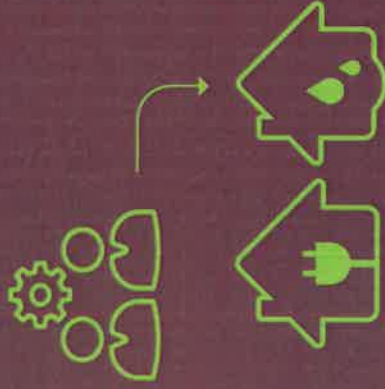
Summary: Town and County

Councils have begun a process to consider whether consolidation would better serve residents, businesses and the broader community. They have created a joint Steering Committee and have retained Brighter Community Planning to lead the consultation and engagement to take place in April and May. Public input will help Councils make a decision on whether it will proceed with consolidation.

Water, Electricity and Energy Leadership

ANTIGONISH
Our Community

Both the County and Town operate utilities. How would these services be impacted by a possible consolidation?



Water in Town and County

In Nova Scotia, water supply and distribution systems are carefully regulated by both the Nova Scotia Department of Environment and the Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board (NSUARB). The Town has a water utility that draws its supply from the James River watershed and is distributed to Town Residents and some County users. There are approximately 1,600 connections to the Town's utility.

The County water utility provides water in the "fringe area" surrounding the Town, and to Lower South River, St. Andrews and St. Josephs. In 2020 the County amalgamated all of its water systems into one utility and harmonized rates for all 1,500 water utility customers. Both the Town and County water utilities regularly review their operations and rates to ensure they are current and

appropriate. Water utility rates are approved by the NSUARB after a periodic rate study and review process.

In Nova Scotia, water supply and distribution systems are carefully regulated by both the Nova Scotia Department of Environment and the Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board.

Although there may be opportunities in the future to combine the two existing water services, initially the utilities, their environmental permits and NSUARB rate orders would remain unchanged. In a consolidated municipality, there would not be any additional demand on one utility or the other to supply water to existing customers.

Electricity in the Town

Town residents and businesses also have their own electrical utility, regulated through the NSUARB. The utility purchases electricity from Nova Scotia Power (NSP), and the approved rate structure is tied closely to changes the NSP rate structure. The administration, maintenance and operation of the utility is integrated with the Town organization, in the same way as the water utility.

While there are opportunities to achieve efficiencies and share knowledge in a larger municipal unit, the Antigonish Electrical Utility and its rate structure would have to be treated as a regulated operation to benefit its existing subscribers.

Renewable Energy Leadership

Both the Town and County have demonstrated real leadership in addressing climate change and alternate energy, and this leadership should be recognized and advanced in any possible municipal consolidation process.

The County has installed a total of 97kWh in solar PV, starting with a roof mounted system (25kWh) in 2016 and a ground mounted (72kWh) solar array in June 2021. Both have long term agreements with Nova Scotia Power. The County recently completed a Low Carbons Community feasibility study to explore new energy initiatives with Paqtnkek Mi'kmaw Nation (PMN) and will continue to plan next steps together, building on our Anku'kamkewey Peace and Friendship Accord signed on May 5, 2018. Currently the County and PMN are installing EV chargers in partnership with the Town. In 2021, the County approved a five-year Energy Management Plan that looks at efficiency, renewables and partnership as important components of responding to climate change and providing long term energy options.



The Town is also demonstrating concrete leadership in the development of alternate energy and reducing the community's carbon footprint, through the Alternative Resource Energy Authority (AREA), a partnership between the towns of Antigonish, Berwick and Mahone Bay. The revenues, expenses, assets and liabilities are shared between the AREA's municipal

partners based on the share of the power generated. AREA has future plans for more initiatives, including the installation of automotive EV Chargers and community solar panel gardens.



AREA provides significant financial, economic and environmental benefits, which would be maintained in a potential consolidation.

Summary: The Town and County provide important municipal services through long established and regulated utilities, for water and electricity. These services would be included in a possible consolidation, but they have unique regulatory and ownership characteristics that would have to be recognized in any merger process. In addition, there are significant leadership responses to climate change/alternate energy issues in both municipalities that would require special consideration to grow the opportunities that will exist with a larger organization and protect assets and revenues that have been created by each municipal unit and its citizens.

Glenn Horne

From: Glenn Horne
Sent: March 8, 2022 1:02 PM
To: Owen McCarron; michellethompsonmla@gmail.com; gregmorrow4gt@gmail.com; Jeff Lawrence; Laurie Boucher
Subject: RE: Consolidation Update - Antigonish Town and County
Attachments: 2022 03 02 Draft Final Antigonish Guiding Principles.docx; Final Engagement Plan - Working copy.pdf

Good afternoon, Ministers Thompson & Morrow –

In preparation for our meeting next Monday concerning Consolidation, I have attached some materials for your review. If you have any question on anything you see attached just let me know. You can see all the public facing information on www.antigonish.ca and the associated HowSpace page.

Cheers,
Glenn



Glenn Horne | Chief Administrative Officer
Municipality of the County of Antigonish | 902.863.1117
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-----Original Appointment-----

From: Alisha Bowie On Behalf Of Glenn Horne
Sent: March 1, 2022 4:21 PM
To: Glenn Horne; Owen McCarron; michellethompsonmla@gmail.com; gregmorrow4gt@gmail.com; Jeff Lawrence; Laurie Boucher
Subject: Consolidation Update - Antigonish Town and County
When: March 14, 2022 10:00 AM-11:00 AM (UTC-04:00) Atlantic Time (Canada).
Where: Council Chambers

Harris McNamara

From: Glenn Horne
Sent: March 10, 2022 10:29 AM
To: Harris McNamara
Subject: Fact Sheets

Good morning, Councillor McNamara –

Just following up our discussion at CoW the other night. I would be happy to sit down with you and review your concerns with the fact sheets at your leisure.

Hope you're enjoying the sunny day!

Glenn



Glenn Horne | Chief Administrative Officer
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Beth Schumacher

From: Mary MacLellan
Sent: March 11, 2022 10:38 AM
To: Alisha Bowie; Owen McCarron; Glenn Horne

I introduced the possible consolidation topic at a meeting in Arisaig last night, They were very upset about the time of the meeting which was changed from 7-9 to 5-7. They felt this would eliminate everyone who works. Could this be changed to the original time, please? I am meeting with another group on Sunday. It would be helpful if I had the later time for the Arisaig meeting to report. Mary

Glenn Horne

From: Glenn Horne
Sent: March 11, 2022 10:45 AM
To: Mary MacLellan; Alisha Bowie; Owen McCarron; Shirlyn Donovan
Subject: Re:

Thanks, Mary. We will look at option.

Cheers,
Glenn

Glenn Horne
CAO
Municipality of the County of Antigonish

From: Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Sent: Friday, March 11, 2022 10:37:40 AM
To: Alisha Bowie <alisha.bowie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Glenn Horne <glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject:

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Glenn Horne

From: Glenn Horne
Sent: March 11, 2022 12:44 PM
To: Owen McCarron; Hughie Stewart; mayor@townofantigonish.ca; Willie Cormier; Jeff Lawrence; Shirlyn Donovan; kgorman@townofantigonish.ca; Alisha Bowie
Subject: Consolidate Steering Committee Meeting CANCELLED

Hi folks -

We don't have sufficient material for a meeting on Tuesday, therefore there is no meeting this week.

Enjoy the break!

Cheers,
Glenn

Glenn Horne
CAO
Municipality of the County of Antigonish



Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Consolidation Questions (CONFIDENTIAL)

1 message

Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Sun, Mar 13, 2022 at 8:52 PM

To: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Glenn Horne <glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>

Everyone;

I have tortured myself with the "consolidation" question ever since we learned about it last September and have still an open mind and truly want to support. We all want to be transparent and I am concerned that there is too much "that will be up to the Transition Committee or the New Consolidated Council". Many items will be decided by the next council but the foundation must be strong with Councillors able to answer questions, look residents in the eye and provide detailed honest answers with possibilities. After the vote, it's too late to ask.

The attachment has comments / questions that have been developed from input by a number of residents in District 9 and other Districts in the county. Glen and Owen have answered some of the questions (appreciated) in the attached document and I believe all councillors would benefit with a meeting with only topic consolidation. If you have more questions, it's an opportunity to ask. We are making decisions for future generations, we need to get it right. I know I haven't had the benefit or experience that others have on council but firmly believe this decision cannot be rushed. Please keep this attachment confidential.

Harris

 Discussion Points for Councillors.docx
32K

Questions / Comments on Consolidation

Confidential Discussions

for

Antigonish County Councillors

COUNCILLORS NEED TO EVALUATE ALL FACTORS WHEN MAKING A DECISION TO CONSOLIDATE OR NOT AS THIS WILL AFFECT GENERATIONS TO COME

1. There are concerns about the cost of services especially the RCMP. Is the policing going to cost another million dollars if we form a new municipality? There is no reference to this possibility in the information to the public. Even if we think the federal and provincial government are going to come through, this is not to date, certain, we need to make residents aware of both possibilities and get the response in writing from governments (Federal & Provincial).
2. A resident expressed a concern about diluting the district voice as she believes there needs to be an understanding of the electoral boundaries before the green light for consolidation. At our meeting with the town council on February 23rd, it was suggested by Willie Cormier (town Councillor) that we develop suggested boundaries as UARB would likely support if the two parties agreed. He suggested it be done before vote. What about the effect of St FX students influence on the makeup of new council, most likely there are a few thousand eligible to vote? Are fringe area candidates at a disadvantage? We could have a wholesale change of councillors certainly influenced by boundaries, this concerns me as experience and history can be gone.
3. The County received \$ 767,000 dollars to January 31, 2022 for Deed Transfer Tax (1% of purchase price) and is a windfall, not something that's going to happen every year as in previous five years we received between 4 – 5 hundred thousand dollars and you should not budget for a windfall. By March 31 it should be approaching \$ 800,000. The property tax assessments in the county are up (Residential 8.77 %, Commercial 10% and Resource 6.83%). This translates into a bit more than one million dollars (Residential \$834,000, Commercial \$129,000 and Resource \$47,000) more in taxes, pending appeals which wouldn't reduce by much. Added to that is our reserve fund, the county has never before been in such good financial shape. I do not know if the town is in as good a shape. Council have not seen their financial position. From a financial perspective it brings up our "due diligence" to explore all the impacts of consolidation.
4. What is the actual financial position of the town of Antigonish ? You wouldn't buy a company without looking at financial position and neither should we consolidate without understanding ALL of the factors. Councillors need a clear understanding of what will become of the significant

reserve funds the county possess (> 5M). We are making a decision that will affect future generations.

5. Council has been told that our infrastructure is in good shape as we have been prudent with ensuring that things are done and life expectancy is monitored well. It speaks to our continued growth and is an endorsement of our staff and Public Works Division. We don't know the state of the infrastructure in the town, believe we need to ask hard questions. Questions on sewage treatment and water reaching their useful life or capacity is information we need to make an informed decision.
6. Queens Regional Municipality charges 25% of the urban road budget to the rural taxpayers. This is a possibility and not something that will be acceptable to county residents.
7. How does the Antigonish Electrical Utility and solar garden effect the county? What is the benefits / liabilities for the county? it has been suggested that benefits are just for town residents. The electrical maintenance upkeeping power lines, substations, transformers is not cheap, we should know what the current condition of the system. From my 35 plus years' experience with the electrical utility in Nova Scotia there is a significant mid-life cost to refurbish the wind turbines and of course after the 25–30-year life, there are the shutdown costs. This is most likely good but shouldn't we know?
8. The rate for commercial in the county is \$1.44 (went down in 2021) while the Town rate is \$2.61 a 45% difference. Will we have two different commercial tax rates? The fringe areas of the county who have the same services as the town will pay a lot more if this is the case or the town will see its rates reduced, I don't think you can have it both ways.
9. The tax rate for residential in the county is \$0.88 cents while the town rate is 1.09, a 19.5 % difference. The county has not had a tax rate increase for 12 years due to the growth we have seen in the county. User pay has been put forward in consolidation material but it is well known that rural residents pay more, example is the Municipality of Queens charges 25% of the urban road budget to the rural taxpayers. Why? What is the advantage to consolidate as far as the county is concerned? If we are going to maintain tax rates differently, does it make sense to consolidate for the sake of consolidation or its in vogue.
10. The Greenwich Fire Department near Kentville was shut down this month by the municipality without warning to the Greenwich Fire Department volunteer members or the chief, just came in and said your closed down. The decision has been reversed by the Municipality on Friday (March10) due to outcry from the fire service and the public. Another item I have just learned is, there was a " fire review" of the fire service with the intention of seeing where "opportunities" can be identified done by West Hants after consolidation, I don't know what opportunities were made, but this does indicate oversight by the municipality taking away independence of local fire departments in our county.

11. Antigonish town has had water shortages, sometimes having residents to restrict use, does this mean a big bill for all county residents for the inevitable if alternate water sources are required for the town. We could supply it and charge the town or partner with the town on the project but we would retain ownership of our resource.
12. Climate change is here to stay, certainly we have had our share of problems in the county with roads mainly but the town is increasingly having issues as a result of flooding as a regular event. This can have huge financial effect on a consolidated municipality.
13. What about the state of sewer in the town, will county residents be on the hook for costly upgrades, what is the condition? I have been told that it's reaching capacity, don't know if this is true but I suspect there are big costs associated with this. Council needs to know what needs to be done and potentially partner with the town?
14. One of the advantages that was suggested is we would have better access "grants" if we become one. It has been put forward that bigger is better and a single voice will carry more weight, not necessarily. Newly released data shows Antigonish Town population to be 4,656 in 2021 and the county is 15,473. This is an insignificant number when compared to HRM or CBRM. The County has recently had success getting approval for solar refit on community centers (not announced yet), we have been successful. This is an example of what the county has done. We partner with the town when it make sense to do so, like the active transit corridor and many other projects, especially the recreation division. Actually, being separate can actually be an advantage.
15. We have been told that it will result in streamlining the organization and result in a reduction of cost. Right up front we need to save one million dollars to pay for the policing service currently. We are facing an added increase of cost for the RCMP member services and I understand the cost is retroactive which will put increased pressure on the county and potential officer coverage in town & county. These costs will most likely go up over the years.
16. Councillors expressed a concern regarding "Special District Grants" and whether they will be continued in a consolidated municipality. These grants have provided the ability for councillors to get quick funding for groups in their area. The surplus balance ranges from \$2,283.25 to 37,455.89 among councillors. The comment that will be decided by the new council should be looked at with caution especially with possible wholesale changes in council.
17. I have been told that town is required to pay 100% of road maintenance, does this have any effect on our arrangement on J – Class roads (50% of the cost is picked up by the province). We certainly been successful over the years. What about future development in the county, could we be responsible for 100 % of new roads? This cost alone is significant and further information needs to be provided.

18. The County is proud of our francophone identity and it is essential we retain our history and especially the French culture in Pomquet and the eastern Districts of the county. The town certainly gets behind the Scottish culture and rightfully so. Will this identity be eroded in the Antigonish Regional Municipality?
19. The "Transition Committee" has a lot of work to get done in the event of a positive vote for consolidation, the county has 70% of the population, yet has two representatives from council. It makes sense to have more representation from the county representing different parts of the county's views.
20. Municipalities that amalgamate are for the most part financially in trouble or infrastructure is old or both. Both the town (we are told) and the County are financially secure and for the foreseeable future, however the county's infrastructure is shiny new compared to the town
21. We need to provide a thorough assessment, a suggestion that has been put forward is let's wait until the next election (2 years away) to fully vet consolidation pros and cons and give residents the best information we can. The current timeline is not carved in stone. One resident suggested to have a list of the pros and cons of consolidation and how it affects the county. If we can't give solid answers, maybe it's time to take a step back. A little extra time can make a difference.
22. Some Residents think there will be a plebiscite, we have to make it clear that this is not the case with consolidation. Some residents believe there is a vote required. I remember the meeting with town & county councils where the provincial government representative said you don't want a plebiscite as residents vote with their "emotions" and I replied that in the recent provincial election I voted for the individual policies and views aligned with mine, I did vote with my emotions. I will consider all the pros and con and make my decision for consolidation, believe all of us want to vote with the best interest of our residents in mind.
23. Councillors have heard many of the items identified in this list will be up to the new council (2024) to decide or more immediately the transition committee which will prepare the first operating and capital budget that will likely include a base rate plus an area rate. More information on the possible outcomes for county residents are needed.

Beth Schumacher

From: Glenn Horne
Sent: March 17, 2022 3:59 PM
To: Owen McCarron; Hughie Stewart; mayor@townofantigonish.ca; Willie Cormier; Jeff Lawrence; Shirlyn Donovan; kgorman@townofantigonish.ca; Alisha Bowie
Subject: Consolidation Steering Committee Meeting - Cancelled

Hi folks –

While we continue to work on the details preparing for the community sessions and finalizing fact sheets, we don't have anything of consequence to report or discuss this week. Therefore, our Steering Committee meeting on Tuesday, March 22 is again cancelled. If you have any questions or would like to discuss anything specific at our meeting on March 29, please let me know.

Thanks!
Glenn



Glenn Horne | Chief Administrative Officer
Municipality of the County of Antigonish | 902.863.1117
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Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: March 21, 2022 3:34 PM
To: Alisha Bowie
Subject: Accepted: Community Engagement Session

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: March 21, 2022 3:34 PM
To: Alisha Bowie
Subject: Accepted: Community Engagement Session

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: March 21, 2022 3:35 PM
To: Alisha Bowie
Subject: Accepted: Community Engagement Session

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From: Harris McNamara
Sent: March 21, 2022 3:35 PM
To: Alisha Bowie
Subject: Accepted: Community Engagement Session

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: March 21, 2022 3:36 PM
To: Alisha Bowie
Subject: Accepted: Community Engagement Session

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: March 21, 2022 3:37 PM
To: Alisha Bowie
Subject: Accepted: Community Engagement Session

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: March 21, 2022 3:37 PM
To: Alisha Bowie
Subject: Accepted: Community Engagement

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: March 21, 2022 4:24 PM
To: Alisha Bowie
Subject: Accepted: Community Engagement Session

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Sent: March 21, 2022 4:24 PM
To: Alisha Bowie
Subject: Accepted: Community Engagement Sessions

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From: Harris McNamara
Sent: March 21, 2022 4:25 PM
To: Alisha Bowie
Subject: Accepted: Community Engagement Session

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: March 21, 2022 4:26 PM
To: Alisha Bowie
Subject: Accepted: Community Engagement Sessions

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: March 21, 2022 4:26 PM
To: Alisha Bowie
Subject: Accepted: Community Engagement Sessions

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: March 21, 2022 4:27 PM
To: Alisha Bowie
Subject: Accepted: Community Engagement Session

Shirlyn Donovan

From: Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 22, 2022 10:32 AM
To: Shirlyn Donovan
Subject: Email addresses of Dan, Hughie and Len

Good Morning;
Just noticed I committed to send you some email addresses.
Len Robertson - [\[redacted\]](#)
Hughie O'Neill - [\[redacted\]](#)
Danny Fougere - [\[redacted\]](#)
Have a great day!
Harris

From: [Glenn Horne](#)
To: [Owen McCarron](#); [Beth Schumacher](#); [Shirdyn Donovan](#)
Subject: Consolidation Discussion with Council
Date: March 23, 2022 8:26:56 AM

Good morning –

Following up the discussion last evening, how does the schedule look to hold a closed door meeting with Council on Monday, April 4? We can use that meeting to hash out lingering questions and do a dry run for the engagement sessions.

Thanks!
Glenn



Glenn Horne | Chief Administrative Officer
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Beth Schumacher

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: March 23, 2022 8:54 AM
To: Glenn Horne
Subject: Re: Consolidation Discussion with Council

Hi Glenn
That's good for me. Thanks
Owen

Sent from my iPhone

On Mar 23, 2022, at 8:26 AM, Glenn Horne <glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca> wrote:

Good morning –

Following up the discussion last evening, how does the schedule look to hold a closed door meeting with Council on Monday, April 4? We can use that meeting to hash out lingering questions and do a dry run for the engagement sessions.

Thanks!
Glenn



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Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>
Sent: March 23, 2022 9:22 AM
To: Glenn Horne
Cc: Owen McCarron; Bill MacFarlane; Shawn Brophy; Remi Deveau; Mary MacLellan; John Dunbar; Harris McNamara; Hughie Stewart; Donnie MacDonald; Gary Mattie
Subject: Confidential Watermark Removal
Attachments: Discussion Points for Councillors.docx

Glenn;

I have removed the "confidential watermark" from the Questions/Comments document sent on May 13th to yourself and council to enable sharing with others to obtain answers. You pointed out last night that you would need to get others involved to get answers. I have attached the document with the watermark removed and copied all Councillors for information.

Questions / Comments on Consolidation

COUNCILLORS NEED TO EVALUATE ALL FACTORS WHEN MAKING A DECISION TO CONSOLIDATE OR NOT AS THIS WILL AFFECT GENERATIONS TO COME

1. There are concerns about the cost of services especially the RCMP. Is the policing going to cost another million dollars per year if we form a new municipality? There is no reference to this possibility in the information to the public. Even if we think the federal and provincial government are going to come through, this is not to date, certain, we need to make residents aware of both possibilities and get the response in writing from governments (Federal & Provincial).
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growth and is an endorsement of our staff and Public Works Division. We don't know the state of the infrastructure in the town, believe we need to ask hard questions. Questions on sewage treatment and water reaching their useful life or capacity is information we need to make an informed decision.

6. Queens Regional Municipality charges 25% of the urban road budget to the rural taxpayers. This is a possibility and not something that will be acceptable to county residents.
7. How does the Antigonish Electrical Utility and solar garden effect the county? What is the benefits / liabilities for the county ? it has been suggested that benefits are just for town residents. The electrical maintenance upkeeping power lines, substations, transformers is not cheap, we should know what the current condition of the system. From my 35 plus years' experience with the electrical utility in Nova Scotia there is a significant mid-life cost to refurbish the wind turbines and of course after the 25–30-year life, there are the shutdown costs. This is most likely good but shouldn't we know?
8. The rate for commercial in the county is \$1.44 (went down in 2021) while the Town rate is \$2.61 a 45% difference. Will we have two different commercial tax rates? The fringe areas of the county who have the same services as the town will pay a lot more if this is the case or the town will see its rates reduced, I don't think you can have it both ways.
9. The tax rate for residential in the county is \$0.88 cents while the town rate is 1.09, a 19.5 % difference. The county has not had a tax rate increase for 12 years due to the growth we have seen in the county. User pay has been put forward in consolidation material but it is well known that rural residents pay more, example is the Municipality of Queens charges 25% of the urban road budget to the rural taxpayers. Why? What is the advantage to consolidate as far as the county is concerned? If we are going to maintain tax rates differently, does it make sense to consolidate for the sake of consolidation or its in vogue.
10. The Greenwich Fire Department near Kentville was shut down this month by the municipality without warning to the Greenwich Fire Department volunteer members or the chief, just came in and said your closed down. The decision has been reversed by the Municipality on Friday (March10) due to outcry from the fire service and the public. Another item I have just learned is, there was a " fire review" of the fire service with the intention of seeing where "opportunities" can be identified done by West Hants after consolidation, I don't know what opportunities were made, but this does indicate oversight by the municipality taking away independence of local fire departments in our county.
11. Antigonish town has had water shortages, sometimes having residents to restrict use, does this mean a big bill for all county residents for the inevitable if alternate water sources are required for the town. We could supply it and charge the town or partner with the town on the project but we would retain ownership of our resource.

12. Climate change is here to stay, certainly we have had our share of problems in the county with roads mainly but the town is increasingly having issues as a result of flooding as a regular event. This can have huge financial effect on a consolidated municipality.
13. What about the state of sewer in the town, will county residents be on the hook for costly upgrades, what is the condition? I have been told that it's reaching capacity, don't know if this is true but I suspect there are big costs associated with this. Council needs to know what needs to be done and potentially partner with the town?
14. One of the advantages that was suggested is we would have better access "grants" if we become one. It has been put forward that bigger is better and a single voice will carry more weight, not necessarily. Newly released data shows Antigonish Town population to be 4,656 in 2021 and the county is 15,473. This is an insignificant number when compared to HRM or CBRM. The County has recently had success getting approval for solar refit on community centers (not announced yet), we have been successful. This is an example of what the county has done. We partner with the town when it make sense to do so, like the active transit corridor and many other projects, especially the recreation division. Actually, being separate can actually be an advantage.
15. We have been told that it will result in streamlining the organization and result in a reduction of cost. Right up front we need to save one million dollars to pay for the policing service currently. We are facing an added increase of cost for the RCMP member services and I understand the cost is retroactive which will put increased pressure on the county and potential officer coverage in town & county. These costs will most likely go up over the years.
16. Councillors expressed a concern regarding "Special District Grants" and whether they will be continued in a consolidated municipality. These grants have provided the ability for councillors to get quick funding for groups in their area. The surplus balance ranges from \$2,283.25 to 37,455.89 among councillors. The comment that will be decided by the new council should be looked at with caution especially with possible wholesale changes in council.
17. I have been told that town is required to pay 100% of road maintenance, does this have any effect on our arrangement on J – Class roads (50% of the cost is picked up by the province). We certainly been successful over the years. What about future development in the county, could we be responsible for 100 % of new roads? This cost alone is significant and further information needs to be provided.
18. The County is proud of our francophone identity and it is essential we retain our history and especially the French culture in Pomquet and the eastern Districts of the county. The town certainly gets behind the Scottish culture and rightfully so. Will this identity be eroded in the Antigonish Regional Municipality?

19. The "Transition Committee" has a lot of work to get done in the event of a positive vote for consolidation, the county has 70% of the population, yet has two representatives from council. It makes sense to have more representation from the county representing different parts of the county's views.
20. Municipalities that amalgamate are for the most part financially in trouble or infrastructure is old or both. Both the town (we are told) and the County are financially secure and for the foreseeable future, however the county's infrastructure is shiny new compared to the town
21. We need to provide a thorough assessment, a suggestion that has been put forward is let's wait until the next election (2 years away) to fully vet consolidation pros and cons and give residents the best information we can. The current timeline is not carved in stone. One resident suggested to have a list of the pros and cons of consolidation and how it affects the county. If we can't give solid answers, maybe it's time to take a step back. A little extra time can make a difference.
22. Some Residents think there will be a plebiscite, we have to make it clear that this is not the case with consolidation. Some residents believe there is a vote required. I remember the meeting with town & county councils where the provincial government representative said you don't want a plebiscite as residents vote with their "emotions" and I replied that in the recent provincial election I voted for the individual policies and views aligned with mine, I did vote with my emotions. I will consider all the pros and con and make my decision for consolidation, believe all of us want to vote with the best interest of our residents in mind.
23. Councillors have heard many of the items identified in this list will be up to the new council (2024) to decide or more immediately the transition committee which will prepare the first operating and capital budget that will likely include a base rate plus an area rate. More information on the possible outcomes for county residents are needed.

Harris McNamara

From: Glenn Horne
Sent: March 23, 2022 10:01 AM
To: Harris McNamara
Cc: Owen McCarron; Bill MacFarlane; Shawn Brophy; Remi Deveau; Mary MacLellan; John Dunbar; Harris McNamara; Hughie Stewart; Donnie MacDonald; Gary Mattie
Subject: RE: Confidential Watermark Removal

Thank you, Harris.



Glenn Horne | Chief Administrative Officer
Municipality of the County of Antigonish | 902.863.1117
285 Beech Hill Road, Beech Hill, NS | B2G 0B4
www.antigonishcounty.ns.ca | [@AntigonishCo](https://www.facebook.com/AntigonishCo) | [facebook](https://www.facebook.com/AntigonishCo)

Honour Yesterday, Act Today, Inspire Tomorrow

From: Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>
Sent: March 23, 2022 9:22 AM
To: Glenn Horne <glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Cc: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Confidential Watermark Removal

Glenn;

I have removed the "confidential watermark" from the Questions/Comments document sent on May 13th to yourself and council to enable sharing with others to obtain answers. You pointed out last night that you would need to get others involved to get answers. I have attached the document with the watermark removed and copied all Councillors for information.



Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Confidential Watermark Removal

1 message

Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>
To: Glenn Home <glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>

Wed, Mar 23, 2022 at 2:05 PM

Glenn

I made a mistake with the previous email, it was March 13th , not May 13th that I originally sent the email to councillors and yourself.

Harris

From: [Beth Schumacher](#)
To: [Council](#)
Cc: [Shiryn Donovan](#)
Subject: Please Respond - Checking on Availability - Monday April 4th
Date: March 23, 2022 4:38:00 PM

Good afternoon Councillors,

I'm touching base to check on everyone's availability on Monday, April 4th, for the purpose of holding a session for Council to talk about consolidation, as requested last evening.

Due to our engagement session schedule through April, we are looking to hold a Committee of the Whole Meeting on Tuesday, April 5th (6:30pm start) and a Council Meeting on Tuesday April 19th (7:30pm). These meetings would replace our regular meetings that would normally take place on Tuesday April 12th. Please hold those dates in your calendars.

Cheers,

Beth

Beth Schumacher
Deputy Municipal Clerk

Municipality of the County of Antigonish
285 Beech Hill Road, Beech Hill B2G 0B4
902-863-1117
www.antigonishcounty.ns.ca

Honour Yesterday, Act Today, Inspire Tomorrow

From: [John Dunbar](#)
To: [Beth Schumacher, Council](#)
Cc: [Shirlyn Donovan](#)
Subject: Re: Please Respond - Checking on Availability - Monday April 4th
Date: March 23, 2022 5:23:12 PM

Hi Beth,

I am available on Monday April 4 after 430pm.

John

From: Beth Schumacher <beth.schumacher@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Sent: March 23, 2022 4:38 PM
To: Council <council@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Cc: Shirlyn Donovan <shirlyn.donovan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Please Respond - Checking on Availability - Monday April 4th

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Honour Yesterday, Act Today, Inspire Tomorrow

Consolidation Information

4 messages

Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Thu, Mar 24, 2022 at 9:14 AM

To: Glenn Horne <glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>

Cc: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>

Glenn

Certainly I have seen an uptick in interest by residents asking for my thoughts and do point them to the information received in the mail this week. I have not shared my Questions / Comments email with **anyone** except the council and yourself. I need to honestly inform residents of my concerns. Can you tell me where in the March 13 email that information is not accurate or breaches confidentiality of the Antigonish County Council, this I take very seriously and it is paramount to me.. I certainly would not make public the March 13th email but need to address all factors with residents and give them the best information possible. That is the reason I so much want to have a discussion on each point prior to the community meetings.

Harris

Glenn Horne <glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>

Thu, Mar 24, 2022 at 10:28 AM

To: Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Cc: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>

Good morning, Councillor McNamara –

I assume by the March 13 email you mean your questions. I am working with staff to prepare responses to these questions for our meeting being scheduled for April 4. I may have something to circulate to you and council by the end of next week, but I will not have anything for you before that time.

In the meantime, I'd strongly urge you to direct all questions or concerns to www.antigonish.ca. There is a lot of existing information on that website and should be the first spot residents look. Even simple things like a definition of consolidation are there. I'd also strongly urge you to encourage them to use HowSpace (available from the website) or to call 1.833.563.2787 or email info@antigonish.ca. As we've discussed, we have retained Brighter Communities to facilitate our consultation process. These sites, emails and phone numbers are the intake for questions and will facilitate responses. If residents in your district don't use them their questions and perspectives will not be recorded and reflected in the final report to Council. It's important to remember that we need to hear these questions and perspectives first hand.

Cheers,

Glenn

**Glenn Horne** | Chief Administrative Officer

Municipality of the County of Antigonish | 902.863.1117

285 Beech Hill Road, Beech Hill, NS | B2G 0B4

www.antigonishcounty.ns.ca | [@AntigonishCo](#) | [facebook](#)

From: Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>
Sent: March 24, 2022 9:15 AM
To: Glenn Horne <glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Cc: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Consolidation Information

Glenn

Certainly I have seen an uptick in interest by residents asking for my thoughts and do point them to the information received in the mail this week. I have not shared my Questions / Comments email with **anyone** except the council and yourself. I need to honestly inform residents of my concerns. Can you tell me where in the March 13 email that information is not accurate or breaches confidentiality of the Antigonish County Council, this I take very seriously and it is paramount to me. I certainly would not make public the March 13th email but need to address all factors with residents and give them the best information possible. That is the reason I so much want to have a discussion on each point prior to the community meetings.

Harris

Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>
To: Glenn Horne <glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>

Thu, Mar 24, 2022 at 1:08 PM

Glenn;
Appreciate the meeting on April 04, it will be a good session to review questions related to consolidation from councillors.
However my question was "Can you tell me where in the March 13 email that information is not accurate or breaches confidentiality of the Antigonish County Council, this I take very seriously and it is paramount to me".

Harris

[Quoted text hidden]

Glenn Horne <glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
To: Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>
Cc: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>

Thu, Mar 24, 2022 at 2:44 PM

Good afternoon, Councillor McNamara –

I understand your request. It still requires me to review your 23 questions in full and identify any such instance. I have made time to prepare responses and can also identify such instances of inaccurate or confidential information next week. I appreciate your understanding.

[Quoted text hidden]

Beth Schumacher

From: Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>
Sent: March 24, 2022 9:15 AM
To: Glenn Horne
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Subject: Consolidation Information

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Harris

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To: Harris McNamara
Cc: Owen McCarron
Subject: RE: Consolidation Information

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Harris

Beth Schumacher

From: Shirlyn Donovan
Sent: March 24, 2022 1:06 PM
To: Owen McCarron
Cc: Glenn Horne
Subject: Community Leaders Contact List
Attachments: Community Leaders Contact List Owen.xlsx

Please see attached the community leaders contact list. Please BCC them when you email with the subject line: Invitation to Consolidation Discussion

I will follow up right after with the draft email and attachments that should be sent. Please send sometime tomorrow.

Thank you,
Shirlyn

Shirlyn Donovan
Strategic Initiatives Coordinator
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
285 Beech Hill Road
Antigonish, NS B2G 0B4
902-863-1117



www.antigonishcounty.ns.ca

www.twitter.com/antigonishco

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Steve Smith - Nova Capital	Owen
Ron MacGillivray - Ron MacGillivray Group of Businesses	Owen
Donald Chisholm - Nova Construction	Owen
Credit Union – Sally vendeWiel	Owen
Agriculture Federation – Alisha Baxter King	Owen
Rhonda MacDougall – 4H	Owen
Joe Jellow – Monastery Petro Can & Hawthorne Convenience	Owen
Len Robertson – Killam and Community	Owen
Hugh O’Neill - HB Community Centre	Owen
Clarence DeYoung	Owen
Malcolm MacKinnon – Heatherton Community Centre	Owen
Angus Bowie	Owen
Brendan Brothers	Owen
Alan MacDonald	Owen
Lloyd Tate	Owen
Chandra & John Gavin	Owen
Ian MacDonald	Owen
Alisha and Miranda Teasdale	Owen
Michelle MacDonald (Trendys)	Owen
Greg Stewart	Owen
Garrett Jurrlink	Owen
Rose Paul	Owen
Dan Fougere	Owen
Ronnie Chisholm – Ron Chisholm Hydroseed	Owen
Bill Fraser – Fraser & Hoyt	Owen
Terry Taylor	Owen
Lowell MacLaughlin	Owen

Beth Schumacher

From: Shirlyn Donovan
Sent: March 24, 2022 1:08 PM
To: Owen McCarron; Glenn Horne
Subject: Invitation to Consolidation Discussion
Attachments: StFX Campus Map.pdf; Business and Community Leaders Session Invite.png; Consolidation Booklet.pdf

Hello,

Please see the invitation below with details on an information session for community and business leaders on the exploration of consolidation. The session will take place at Vesgo Hall, which is a part of the Coady Institute on StFX Campus. I've included a campus map as an attachment to show where the building is located. The best parking options include the Bauer Theatre and St. Ninans Parking Lot.

We hope you can join us for this session. If you can't attend, there are many other community engagement sessions scheduled over the next few weeks. To view the full schedule visit, www.antigonish.ca. If you have any questions, please email info@antigonish.ca.

ANTIGONISH

Our Community

Exploration of Consolidation Information Session

Mayor Laurie Boucher and Warden Owen McCarron invite you to attend an information session on the potential consolidation of Antigonish Town and County.

This is a specific session for community leaders and business owners. Our goal is to provide an opportunity for you to gain insight into the process, ask questions, and share what you think about consolidation for Antigonish.

Community Leaders Information Session

Date: Thursday, April 7, 2022

Time: 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

Location: Vesgo Hall, Room 150, Coady Institute, StFX Campus

Vesgo Hall is #36 on the attached StFX Campus Map. Entrance to Vesgo Hall is beside Xavier Hall facing St. Ninan Street/Carin Park.

For up-to-date information about the Town and County's exploration of consolidation, visit www.antigonish.ca.

ACADEMIC BUILDINGS

1. Xavier Hall (XH) and Alumni House
2. McKenna Centre (north entrance)
3. Schwartz School (SCHW)
5. St. Ninian's Place (SNP)
6. Angus L. Macdonald Library
7. Mount Saint Bernard (MSB)
 - A) Immaculata Hall
 - B) Camden Hall
 - C) Marguerite Hall
 - D) Gilmora Hall
8. Mulroney Hall
9. Nicholson Tower (NT)
10. Annex
12. J. Bruce Brown Hall (JBB)
30. Physical Sciences Centre (PSC)
36. Coady International Institute
37. Markin Global Complex
38. Fine Arts Building

RESIDENCES

7. Mount Saint Bernard (MSB)
14. MacIsaac Hall
16. MacNeil Hall
20. Governors Hall
21. Coady International House
22. Somers Hall
23. Power Hall
26. Bishops Hall
28. MacKinnon Hall
32. Morrison Hall
33. Cameron Hall
39. O'Regan Hall
40. Riley Hall

ADMINISTRATION & OTHER

4. St. Ninian's Cathedral
5. St. Ninian's Place (SNP)
9. Nicholson Tower (NT)
 - Recruitment and Admissions Office
11. Lane Hall
13. Bloomfield Centre
15. MacDonald Hall
24. 42 West Street Building
25. SFX Observatory
27. University Chapel
28. MacKinnon Hall
 - A) Business Office
31. Services Building (5005 Chapel Square)
 - Safety & Security Services
34. Mockler Hall
35. Abernethy House

SPORTS AND RECREATION

17. Alumni Aquatic Centre
18. Amelia Saputo Centre for Healthy Living
19. Charles V. Keating Centre
29. Bauer Theatre

DINING SERVICES

32. Morrison Hall

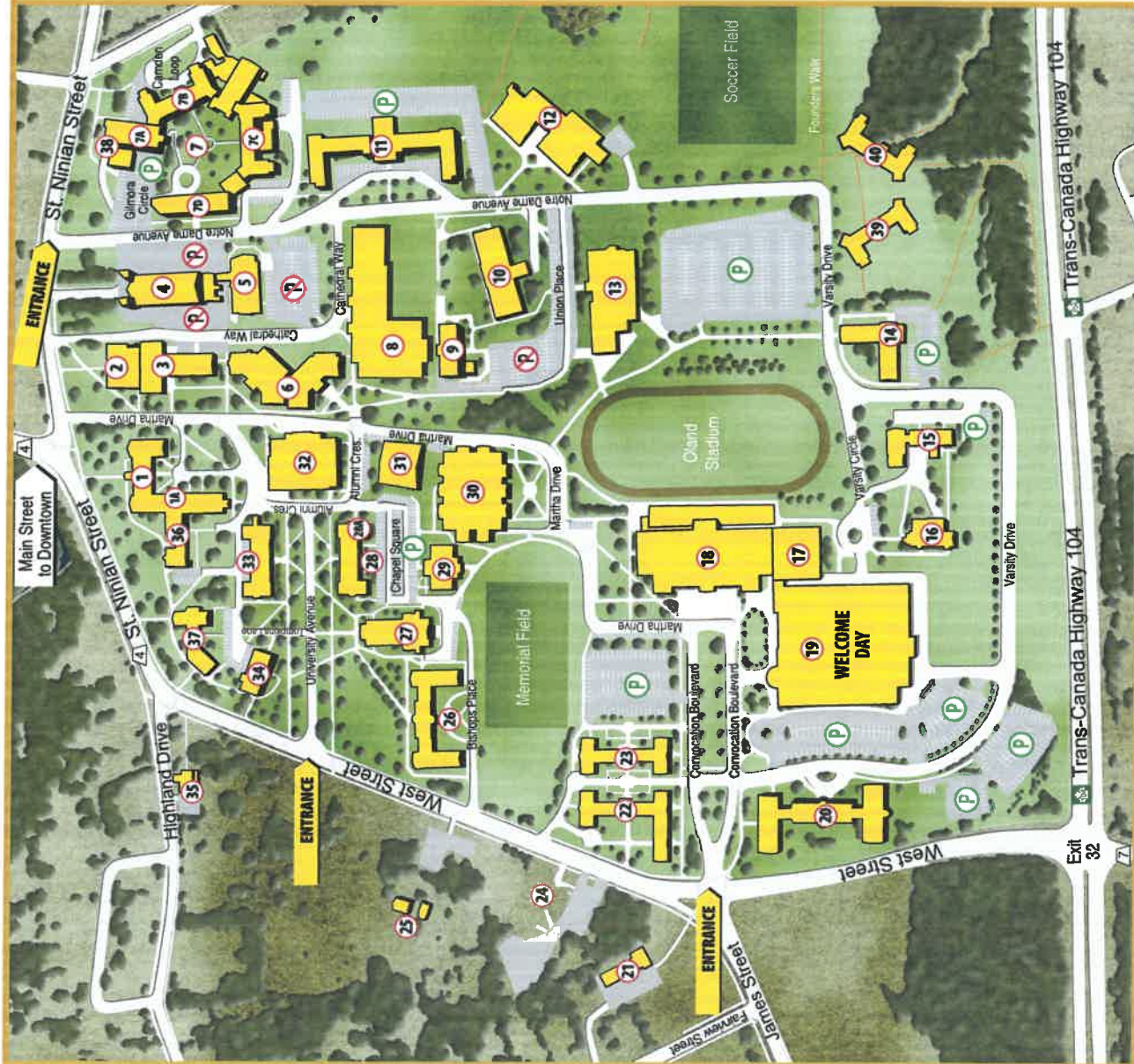
In your timetable the buildings are referenced by acronyms



Denotes parking available



Denotes no parking available



ANTIGONISH

Our Community



Exploring Municipal Consolidation. Your Guide to Community Engagement.

As the Councils for the Town and County of Antigonish explore the possibility of consolidation, we have scheduled an extensive community engagement process. This is your guide to participating.

Exploring Municipal Consolidation.

Your Guide to Community Engagement.

Message from Mayor and Warden



To the Antigonish Community;

In September 2021, both Town and County Councils unanimously voted to explore consolidating the two municipalities into one unit. You might be wondering why now? Or why at all?

We believe that the Town and County have done some progressive work together already. We have seen the benefits from collaborating with examples like hosting the National Special Olympics, Regional Emergency Management, and Physician Retention - just to name a few.

Both the Town and the County are in a good financial position, which is the best time to be looking at the benefits of consolidation, instead of being forced to do so because one needs help.

You've elected us to do what's in your best interest and part of our job is to explore opportunities like this. Your input will inform our decision and help us decide if residents, businesses, and the overall community will be better served if the Town and County become one municipal unit.

This guide is designed to answer some of your questions and let you know how you can take part.

Thank you and we look forward to your involvement.


Laurie Boucher
Mayor
Town of Antigonish


Owen McCarron
Warden
Municipality of the County of Antigonish

ANTIGONISH

Our Community



Exploring Municipal Consolidation.

Your Guide to
Community
Engagement.

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You've elected us to do what's in your best interest and part of our job is to explore opportunities like this. Your input will inform our decision and help us decide if residents, businesses, and the overall community will be better served if the Town and County become one municipal unit.

This guide is designed to answer some of your questions and let you know how you can take part.

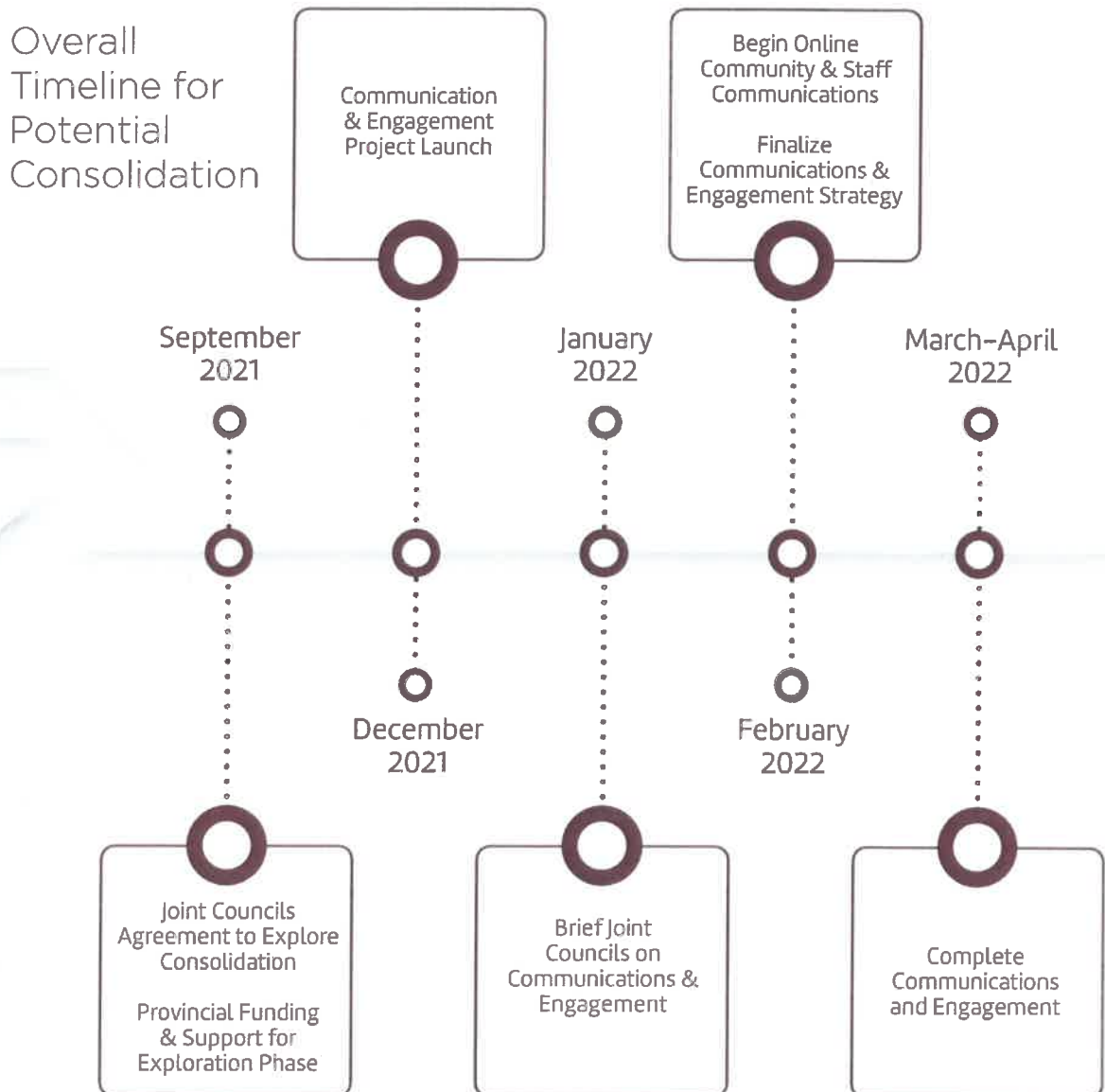
Thank you and we look forward to your involvement.

Laurie Boucher
Mayor
Town of Antigonish

Owen McCarron
Warden
Municipality of the County of Antigonish

Exploring Consolidation Process

Town and County Councils have begun a process to consider whether consolidation would better serve residents, businesses and the broader community. They have created a joint Steering Committee that has retained Brighter Community Planning to lead the consultation and engagement to take place in April and May. Public input will help Councils make a decision on whether it will proceed with consolidation.



As we look at possible consolidation, we have carefully and purposefully created some important principles that will guide us. The Guiding Principles provide insight into what is top of mind for Councillors and will help guide discussions as we head into the community engagement sessions.

Guiding Principles for Consolidating Antigonish Town and County:

- 1. Take a regional approach to municipal services:** Work creatively, deliberately, and visibly to improve municipal services, economic development, tourism, culture, and community infrastructure for all residents and businesses in the Antigonish region.
- 2. Build vibrant individual communities:** Promote community identity in rural, urban and First Nations communities, so the whole municipality will be stronger.
- 3. Communicate regularly about progress and decisions:** Communications with residents, businesses, councils, and staff should be frequent, transparent, and inclusive.
- 4. Continue fair taxation and user pay approaches:** Residents and businesses should only be taxed for services and infrastructure they have access to. Property tax rates and infrastructure debt should utilize area tax rates and utility fee approaches that exist today wherever possible.
- 5. Value our existing municipal staff:** The blending of Town and County employees will recognize the value, knowledge and dedication of our current staff and every effort will be made to retain staff and to provide new opportunities.
- 6. Ensure Fair Representation for Urban and Rural Residents:** District boundaries should ensure every voter has the same electoral power as every other voter, balance rural and urban interests, and recognize local communities of interest.
- 7. Enhance environmental sustainability:** Ownership of the Antigonish electric utility is central to expanding green energy options and reducing our carbon footprint. Build upon the success of initiatives and partnerships with the Alternate Energy Resource Authority and the Municipality's Energy Management Plan.

Exploring Municipal Consolidation.

Your Guide to Community Engagement.



If Decision to Consolidate is Taken

Reporting on Communications and Engagement Issues

May 2022

Joint Councils Decision-Making about Consolidation

June 2022

Provincial Liaison - legislation and transition funding

Summer 2022

Fall 2022

Provincial Special Legislation for Consolidation
Transition Steering Committee, Co-ordinator, Process

Target Date for Potential Consolidation

April 2024

Exploring Municipal Consolidation.

Your Guide to Community Engagement.

The Town and County are using different methods of community engagement to reach as many citizens as possible to understand opportunities and concerns.

Your Questions

We have taken your most common questions and have created a series of fact sheets for you to consider as you think about a possible merger. Additional information on each of the topics below can be found on Antigonish.ca, just click on the “Participate Now” button to access Antigonish’s HowSpace site, where these fact sheets can be found. We will also have copies of them at the in-person drop-in sessions.



How will my input be used?

Your comments will be recorded and put into a report for Councils. This report will be considered as Councils look answer this key question:

Will residents, businesses and the overall community be better served if the Town and County became one municipal unit?

A final report outlining the key themes from a thorough consultation process will be shared with Councils in June. Along with other reports being prepared by staff, Councils will decide in the summer on whether to consolidate.

Exploring Municipal Consolidation.

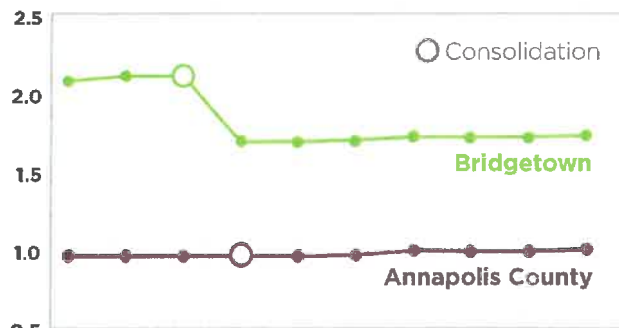
Your Guide to Community Engagement.

Property Taxes

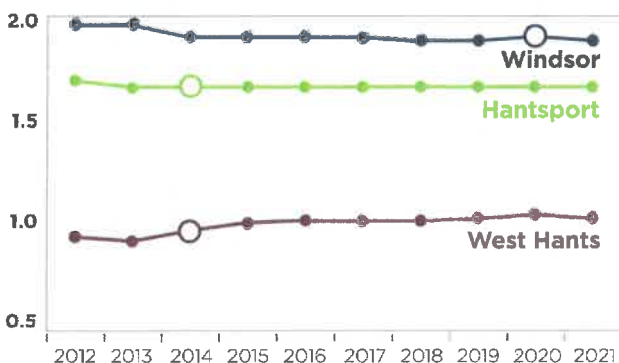
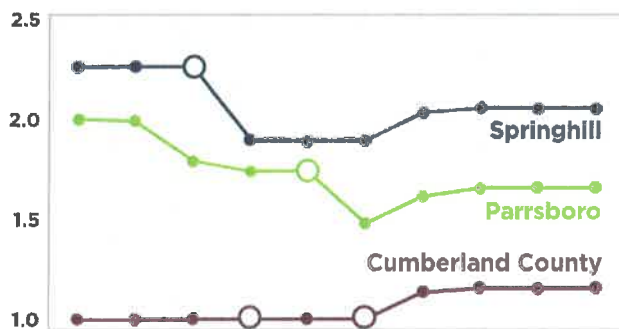
One of the most common concerns expressed when municipal mergers have taken place in other parts of the province is whether consolidation will have an impact on property taxes. History shows us that municipal mergers in other parts of Nova Scotia have not created property tax increases in the years following a merger.

The following graphs show the impact of mergers on tax rates:

\$ per \$100 of assessment



Residential Tax Rates for Merged Rural Municipalities and Towns



While actual future tax rates can't be predicted (future tax rates are set by future Councils) the two units are going into a possible consolidation without significant risks for tax increases which are often caused by declining revenues or failing infrastructure.



Water, Electricity and Energy Leadership

The Town and County provide important municipal services through long established and regulated utilities, for water and electricity. These services would be included in a possible consolidation. They both have unique regulatory and ownership characteristics that would have to be recognized in any merger process. Any future changes to water or electricity rates have to go through a review process and be approved by the Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board (NSUARB).



Both the Town and County have demonstrated real leadership in addressing climate change and alternate energy. This leadership should be recognized and advanced in any possible municipal consolidation process.

Representation, Council Size and District Boundaries



Council Size



District Boundaries

Representation, Council Size and District Boundaries are important questions, and there is a well-established process in Nova Scotia to determine municipal boundaries. The work to determine where new boundaries would be would only happen after a decision to consolidate has been made. If the decision is to consolidate, a Transition Committee would be created, which would consult with all the communities and Councils to decide on the size of Council and the geography of the district boundaries. The recommendation made by the Transition Committee would be submitted to the NSUARB for review. The NSUARB can make adjustments on the recommendation if required and then final approval would be made on the new districts.

Currently, the County undergoes a District Review process every eight years. This is done to ensure balanced representation in the current districts. The Town does not currently go through this process because Councillors are elected at large.



Community Identity

Maintaining community identity is an important consideration when exploring municipal consolidation.

The way your local government is formed will not change your community's identity. The smaller communities you call home will not change and that is what makes Antigonish such a great place to live.

There are many examples of municipal mergers that support the identity and vibrancy of local communities. As an example, Queens Regional Municipality provided several suggestions from more than 25 years as a merged organization.

Support Community Capacity

Both the Town and County have activities and grant programs in place to support individual organizations and smaller community-based initiatives. These grants are an important source of support as well as means for Councils to support citizen involvement in making their communities a stronger place to live, work, and play. A potential consolidation would not create sudden changes in how community organizations receive their grant funding. There are mechanisms in place to fund and provide services to organizations that are vital to the Antigonish community.



Drawing on Other Municipal Examples

There are many examples of municipal mergers that support the identity and vibrancy of local communities. As an example, Queens Regional Municipality provided several highlights recently, taken from over twenty-five years' experience as a merged organization:

Be deliberate in spreading infrastructure projects across numerous communities.

Draw citizen appointees for municipal committees from all parts of the region.

Promote local communities with signage and tourism partnerships.

Develop a strong Community Investment Fund and policy.

Establish a single Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use By-Law with one set of rules for development.



Fire Services

There are nine volunteer Fire Departments located within the Town and County of Antigonish. They play an important role in fire protection and emergency services. They are also important community partners and organizers. The Town of Antigonish Volunteer Fire Department is funded directly by the Town and the County-based volunteer fire departments are funded through an Area Fire Levy. As the discussions continue about the potential for consolidation, there may be questions about what might change around fire service if a municipal merger should take place.



Volunteer Fire Service is important to all communities in both the Town and County. Whether operated directly in the Town or funded by Area Fire Rates in the County, these volunteer organizations understand their community needs and respond accordingly.

They do not operate in isolation and have lots of experience through in their communities and support one another through mutual aid. It is important for municipal funding of volunteer fire service to be continued in the same manner. There is no reason to change this system because of a possible municipal consolidation.



Consultation Schedule

We have designed the consultation to be as open and accessible as possible, with options for in person, online, phone and email. Choose how you'd like to participate:

- ✔ Take part in one of our on-line or in person sessions throughout April and into May. See the public engagement schedule on the following page.

- ✔ Visit Antigonish.ca and click on "**Participate Now.**"

- ✔ Call us toll-free at 1-833-563-2786 or 1-833-563-2787 and leave a voicemail for staff, who will follow up with you. This is a great option for those who want to remain engaged but are hesitant to come to a public session, are not comfortable with technology or may have unreliable Internet service.

- ✔ Email your questions and comments to info@antigonish.ca.



Community Engagement Schedule

A total of 17 community engagement sessions have been arranged so that as many people as possible can attend. To make it even easier for busy parents and caregivers, sessions are child friendly - Town and County recreation staff will be on hand with fun activities for the kids.

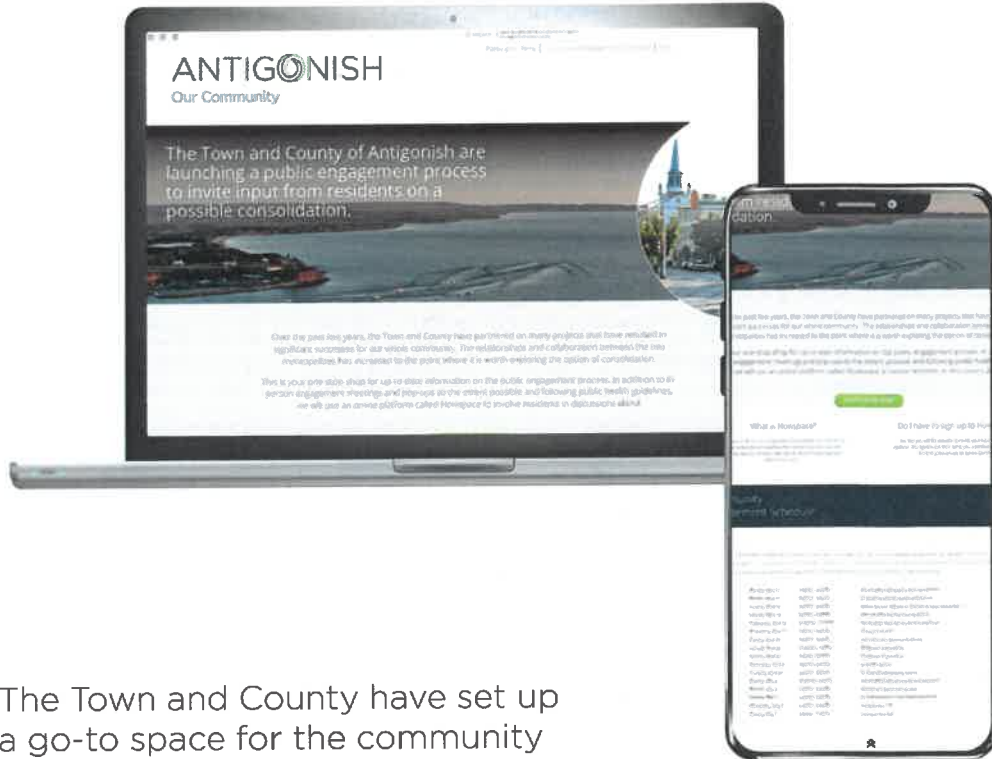
Sessions are organized in an open house format and are “drop in.” Feel free to pop by during the times indicated below.

Monday, April 11	1:00PM - 3:00PM	The Peoples Place Library Community Room
Monday, April 11	7:00PM - 9:00PM	St. Joseph’s Lakeside Community Centre
Tuesday, April 12	3:00PM - 5:00PM	Online Engagement Session
Tuesday, April 12	7:00PM - 9:00PM	Lakevale Mini Trail Community Centre
Wednesday, April 13	11:00AM - 12:30PM	The Peoples Place Library Community Room
Wednesday, April 13	7:00PM - 9:00PM	Arisaig Parish Hall
Monday, April 25	7:00PM - 9:00PM	Havre Boucher Community Centre
Tuesday, April 26	11:00AM - 1:00PM	Antigonish Legion/CACL
Tuesday, April 26	7:00PM - 9:00PM	Antigonish Legion/CACL
Wednesday, April 27	7:00PM - 9:00PM	Lochaber Centre
Thursday, April 28	6:00PM - 8:00PM	St. Andrews Community Centre
Monday, May 2	12:00PM - 3:00PM	The Peoples Place Library Community Room
Monday, May 2	7:00PM - 9:00PM	Heatherton Community Centre
Tuesday, May 3	5:00PM - 8:00PM	St. Andrew Junior School (Appleseed Drive)
Wednesday, May 4	6:00PM - 8:00PM	Tracadie Fire Hall
Monday, May 9	6:00PM - 8:00PM	Pomquet Fire Hall

* A Session is being planned with Paqtnkek Mikmaw Nation that is still TBD.

Exploring Municipal Consolidation.

Your Guide to Community Engagement.



The Town and County have set up a go-to space for the community engagement around a possible consolidation.

Visit **Antigonish.ca** today and click on the "Participate Now" button to take part in the discussion online. See page 14 for all of the ways you can participate.



How can I take part?

We have created a plan that allows residents to be engaged in different ways. A series of public drop-in meetings are scheduled as well as online options, phone and email. See the Consultation Schedule on page 12 for more information.

For ongoing online engagement throughout the consultation phase, we are using Antigonish's HowSpace. This is an all-in-one digital facilitation platform. Here we will host workshops and events, there will be Frequently Asked Questions, and you can interact directly on topics that are of interest to you and see what others are saying.

Visit Antigonish.ca and click on the "Participate Now" button. You will be asked to provide your name and email address. The system will then send you a confirmation email and the link you can use to access the site.

We look forward to your participation! If you have questions, please email info@antigonish.ca.

Beth Schumacher

From: Glenn Horne
Sent: March 24, 2022 2:45 PM
To: Harris McNamara
Cc: Owen McCarron
Subject: RE: Consolidation Information

Good afternoon, Councillor McNamara –

I understand your request. It still requires me to review your 23 questions in full and identify any such instance. I have made time to prepare responses and can also identify such instances of inaccurate or confidential information next week. I appreciate your understanding.

Cheers,
Glenn



Glenn Horne | Chief Administrative Officer
Municipality of the County of Antigonish | 902.863.1117
285 Beech Hill Road, Beech Hill, NS | B2G 0B4
www.antigonishcounty.ns.ca | [@AntigonishCo](#) | [facebook](#)

Honour Yesterday, Act Today, Inspire Tomorrow

From: Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>
Sent: March 24, 2022 1:09 PM
To: Glenn Horne <glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Re: Consolidation Information

Glenn;

Appreciate the meeting on April 04, it will be a good session to review questions related to consolidation from councillors.

However my question was "Can you tell me where in the March 13 email that information is not accurate or breaches confidentiality of the Antigonish County Council, this I take very seriously and it is paramount to me".

Harris

On Thu, Mar 24, 2022 at 10:28 AM Glenn Horne <glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca> wrote:

Good morning, Councillor McNamara –

I assume by the March 13 email you mean your questions. I am working with staff to prepare responses to these questions for our meeting being scheduled for April 4. I may have something to circulate to you and council by the end of next week, but I will not have anything for you before that time.

In the meantime, I'd strongly urge you to direct all questions or concerns to www.antigonish.ca. There is a lot of existing information on that website and should be the first spot residents look. Even simple things like a definition of consolidation are there. I'd also strongly urge you to encourage them to use HowSpace (available from the website) or to call 1.833.563.2787 or email info@antigonish.ca. As we've discussed, we have retained Brighter Communities to facilitate our consultation process. These sites, emails and phone numbers are the intake for questions and will facilitate responses. If residents in your district don't use them their questions and perspectives will not be recorded and reflected in the final report to Council. It's important to remember that we need to hear these questions and perspectives first hand.

Cheers,

Glenn



Glenn Horne | Chief Administrative Officer

Municipality of the County of Antigonish | 902.863.1117

285 Beech Hill Road, Beech Hill, NS | B2G 0B4

www.antigonishcounty.ns.ca | [@AntigonishCo](https://www.facebook.com/AntigonishCo) | [facebook](#)

Honour Yesterday, Act Today, Inspire Tomorrow

From: Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>
Sent: March 24, 2022 9:15 AM
To: Glenn Horne <glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Cc: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Consolidation Information

Glenn

Certainly I have seen an uptick in interest by residents asking for my thoughts and do point them to the information received in the mail this week. I have not shared my Questions / Comments email with **anyone** except the council and yourself. I need to honestly inform residents of my concerns. Can you tell me where in the March 13 email that information is not accurate or breaches confidentiality of the Antigonish County Council, this I take very seriously and it is paramount to me. I certainly would not make public the March 13th email but need to address all factors with residents and give them the best information possible. That is the reason I so much want to have a discussion on each point prior to the community meetings.

Harris McNamara

From: Mary MacLellan
Sent: March 25, 2022 8:41 PM
To: Harris McNamara
Subject: timeline

Harris, I found the time line in my material. It looks like June we make the decision. Mary

From: Harris McNamara
To: Beth Schumacher; Council
Cc: Shirlyn Donovan
Subject: RE: Please Respond - Checking on Availability - Monday April 4th
Date: March 25, 2022 9:53:24 AM

Beth;
Yes, I am available.
Harris

From: Beth Schumacher <beth.schumacher@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Sent: March 23, 2022 4:39 PM
To: Council <council@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Cc: Shirlyn Donovan <shirlyn.donovan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Please Respond - Checking on Availability - Monday April 4th

Good afternoon Councillors,

I'm touching base to check on everyone's availability on Monday, April 4th, for the purpose of holding a session for Council to talk about consolidation, as requested last evening.

Due to our engagement session schedule through April, we are looking to hold a Committee of the Whole Meeting on Tuesday, April 5th (6:30pm start) and a Council Meeting on Tuesday April 19th (7:30pm). These meetings would replace our regular meetings that would normally take place on Tuesday April 12th. Please hold those dates in your calendars.

Cheers,

Beth

Beth Schumacher
Deputy Municipal Clerk

Municipality of the County of Antigonish
285 Beech Hill Road, Beech Hill B2G 0B4
902-863-1117
www.antigonishcounty.ns.ca

Honour Yesterday, Act Today, Inspire Tomorrow

Beth Schumacher

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: March 25, 2022 10:33 AM
Subject: Fwd: Community Leaders Contact List
Attachments: image001.jpg; image002.jpg; Community Leaders Contact List Owen.xlsx

Warden Owen McCarron
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
902-968-1290

Begin forwarded message:

From: Shirlyn Donovan <shirlyn.donovan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Date: March 24, 2022 at 1:05:49 PM ADT
To: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Cc: Glenn Horne <glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Community Leaders Contact List

Please see attached the community leaders contact list. Please BCC them when you email with the subject line:

Invitation to Consolidation Discussion

I will follow up right after with the draft email and attachments that should be sent. Please send sometime tomorrow.

Thank you,

Shirlyn

Shirlyn Donovan

Strategic Initiatives Coordinator

Municipality of the County of Antigonish

285 Beech Hill Road

Antigonish, NS B2G 0B4

902-863-1117

www.antigonishcounty.ns.ca

www.twitter.com/antigonishco

Honour Yesterday, Act Today, Inspire Tomorrow

Steve Smith - Nova Capital	Owen
Ron MacGillivray - Ron MacGillivray Group of Businesses	Owen
Donald Chisholm - Nova Construction	Owen
Credit Union – Sally vendeWiel	Owen
Agriculture Federation – Alisha Baxter King	Owen
Rhonda MacDougall – 4H	Owen
Joe Jellow – Monastery Petro Can & Hawthorne Convenience	Owen
Len Robertson – Killam and Community	Owen
Hugh O’Neill - HB Community Centre	Owen
Clarence DeYoung	Owen
Malcolm MacKinnon – Heatherton Community Centre	Owen
Angus Bowie	Owen
Brendan Brothers	Owen
Alan MacDonald	Owen
Lloyd Tate	Owen
Chandra & John Gavin	Owen
Ian MacDonald	Owen
Alisha and Miranda Teasdale	Owen
Michelle MacDonald (Trendys)	Owen
Greg Stewart	Owen
Garrett Júrlink	Owen
Rose Paul	Owen
Dan Fougere	Owen
Ronnie Chisholm – Ron Chisholm Hydroseed	Owen
Bill Fraser – Fraser & Hoyt	Owen
Terry Taylor	Owen
Lowell MacLaughlin	Owen

From: Owen McCarron
To: Beth Schumacher
Subject: Fwd: Community Leaders Contact List
Date: March 25, 2022 10:36:13 AM
Attachments: [Community Leaders Contact List Owen.xlsx](#)

Warden Owen McCarron
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
902-968-1290

Begin forwarded message:

From: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Date: March 25, 2022 at 10:33:26 AM ADT
Subject: Fwd: Community Leaders Contact List

Warden Owen McCarron
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
902-968-1290

Begin forwarded message:

From: Shirlyn Donovan <shirlyn.donovan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Date: March 24, 2022 at 1:05:49 PM ADT
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Cc: Glenn Horne <glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
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Shirlyn Donovan
Strategic Initiatives Coordinator
Municipality of the County of Antigonish

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Rhonda MacDougall – 4H	Owen
Joe Jellow – Monastery Petro Can & Hawthorne Convenience	Owen
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Michelle MacDonald (Trendys)	Owen
Greg Stewart	Owen
Garrett Júrlink	Owen
Rose Paul	Owen
Dan Fougere	Owen
Ronnie Chisholm – Ron Chisholm Hydroseed	Owen
Bill Fraser – Fraser & Hoyt	Owen
Terry Taylor	Owen
Lowell MacLaughlin	Owen

From: [Beth Schumacher](#)
To: [Owen McCarron](#)
Subject: test
Date: March 25, 2022 10:41:24 AM

Beth Schumacher
Deputy Municipal Clerk

Municipality of the County of Antigonish
285 Beech Hill Road, Beech Hill B2G 0B4
902-863-1117
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Honour Yesterday, Act Today, Inspire Tomorrow

From: Beth Schumacher
To: Owen McCarron
Cc: Shirdyn Donovan
Bcc: ssmith@; rgm; dchisholm; sally; king.aliciadanny; rhonda.macdougall; jellowholdingsltd; lrobertson; HPJOnell; clarenceyoung; malliemac13; agus.bowie; brendanbrothers; alan; lloyd.tate; gbtunacharters; ianmacdonall; alicia; michelle; greg.stewart; giuurlink; r.paul; dan.fouger

Subject: Invitation to Consolidation Discussion
Date: March 25, 2022 10:43:00 AM
Attachments: [Consolidation Booklet.pdf](#)
[Business and Community Leaders Session Invite.png](#)
[StFX Campus Map.pdf](#)

Hello,

Please see the invitation attached with details on an information session for community and business leaders on the exploration of consolidation. The session will take place at Vesgo Hall, which is a part of the Coady Institute on StFX Campus. I've included a campus map as an attachment to show where the building is located. The best parking options include the Bauer Theatre and St. Ninans Parking Lot.

We hope you can join us for this session. If you can't attend, there are many other community engagement sessions scheduled over the next few weeks. To view the full schedule visit, www.antigonish.ca. If you have any questions, please email info@antigonish.ca.

Warden Owen McCarron
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
902-968-1290

ANTIGONISH

Our Community



Exploring Municipal Consolidation.

Your Guide to
Community
Engagement.

As the Councils for the Town and County of Antigonish explore the possibility of consolidation, we have scheduled an extensive community engagement process. This is your guide to participating.

Message from Mayor and Warden



To the Antigonish Community;

In September 2021, both Town and County Councils unanimously voted to explore consolidating the two municipalities into one unit. You might be wondering why now? Or why at all?

We believe that the Town and County have done some progressive work together already. We have seen the benefits from collaborating with examples like hosting the National Special Olympics, Regional Emergency Management, and Physician Retention – just to name a few.

Both the Town and the County are in a good financial position, which is the best time to be looking at the benefits of consolidation, instead of being forced to do so because one needs help.

You've elected us to do what's in your best interest and part of our job is to explore opportunities like this. Your input will inform our decision and help us decide if residents, businesses, and the overall community will be better served if the Town and County become one municipal unit.

This guide is designed to answer some of your questions and let you know how you can take part.

Thank you and we look forward to your involvement.

Laurie Boucher
Mayor
Town of Antigonish

Owen McCarron
Warden
Municipality of the County of Antigonish



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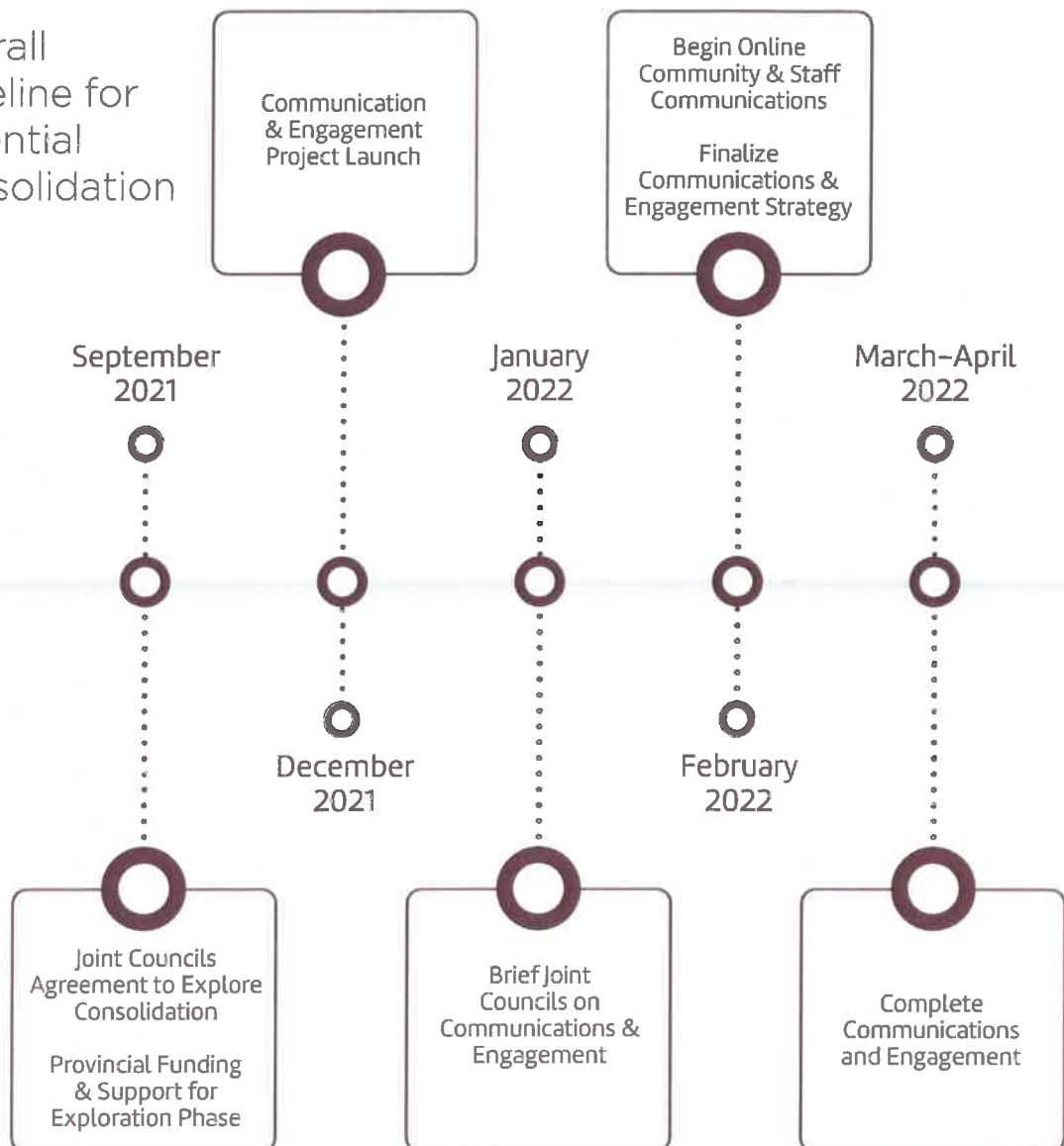
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- 7. Enhance environmental sustainability:** Ownership of the Antigonish electric utility is central to expanding green energy options and reducing our carbon footprint. Build upon the success of initiatives and partnerships with the Alternate Energy Resource Authority and the Municipality's Energy Management Plan.

Exploring Consolidation Process

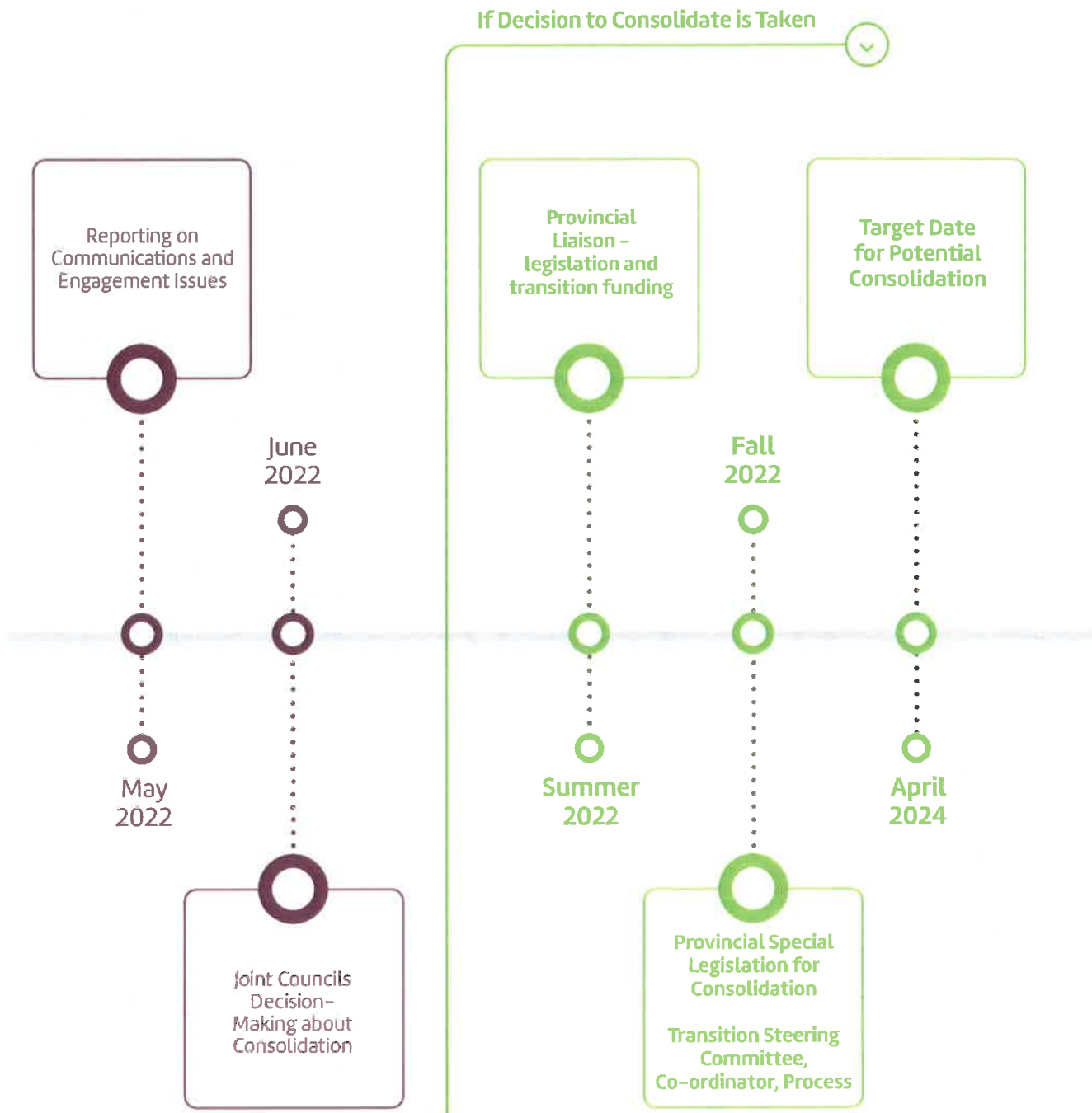
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Overall Timeline for Potential Consolidation



Exploring Municipal Consolidation.

Your Guide to Community Engagement.



Exploring Municipal Consolidation.

Your Guide to Community Engagement.

The Town and County are using different methods of community engagement to reach as many citizens as possible to understand opportunities and concerns.

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Will residents, businesses and the overall community be better served if the Town and County became one municipal unit?

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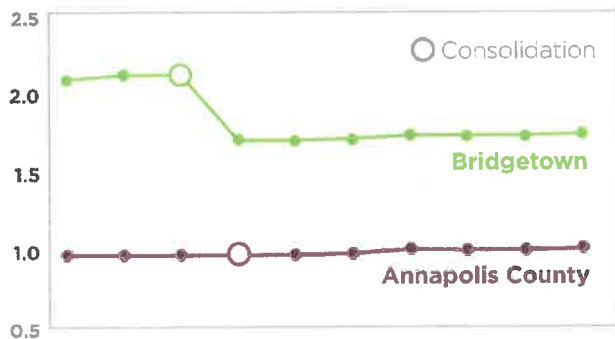


Property Taxes

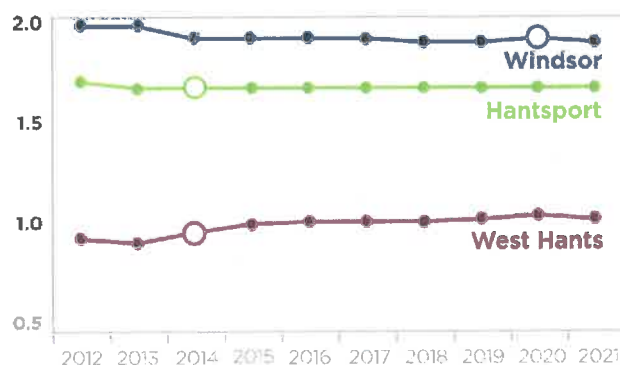
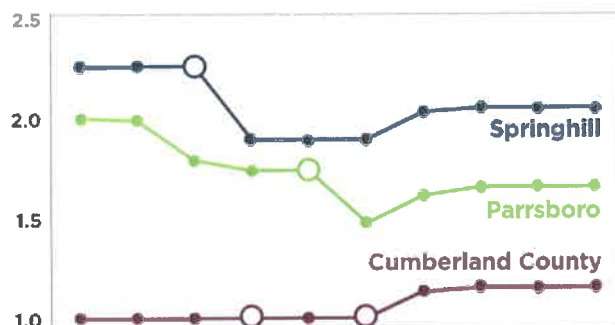
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ANTIGONISH

Our Community

Exploration of Consolidation Information Session

Mayor Laurie Boucher and Warden Owen McCarron invite you to attend an information session on the potential consolidation of Antigonish Town and County.

This is a specific session for community leaders and business owners. Our goal is to provide an opportunity for you to gain insight into the process, ask questions, and share what you think about consolidation for Antigonish.

Community Leaders Information Session

Date: Thursday, April 7, 2022

Time: 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

Location: Vesgo Hall, Room 150, Coady Institute, StFX Campus

Vesgo Hall is #36 on the attached StFX Campus Map. Entrance to Vesgo Hall is beside Xavier Hall facing St. Ninan Street/Carin Park.

For up-to-date information about the Town and County's exploration of consolidation, visit www.antigonish.ca.

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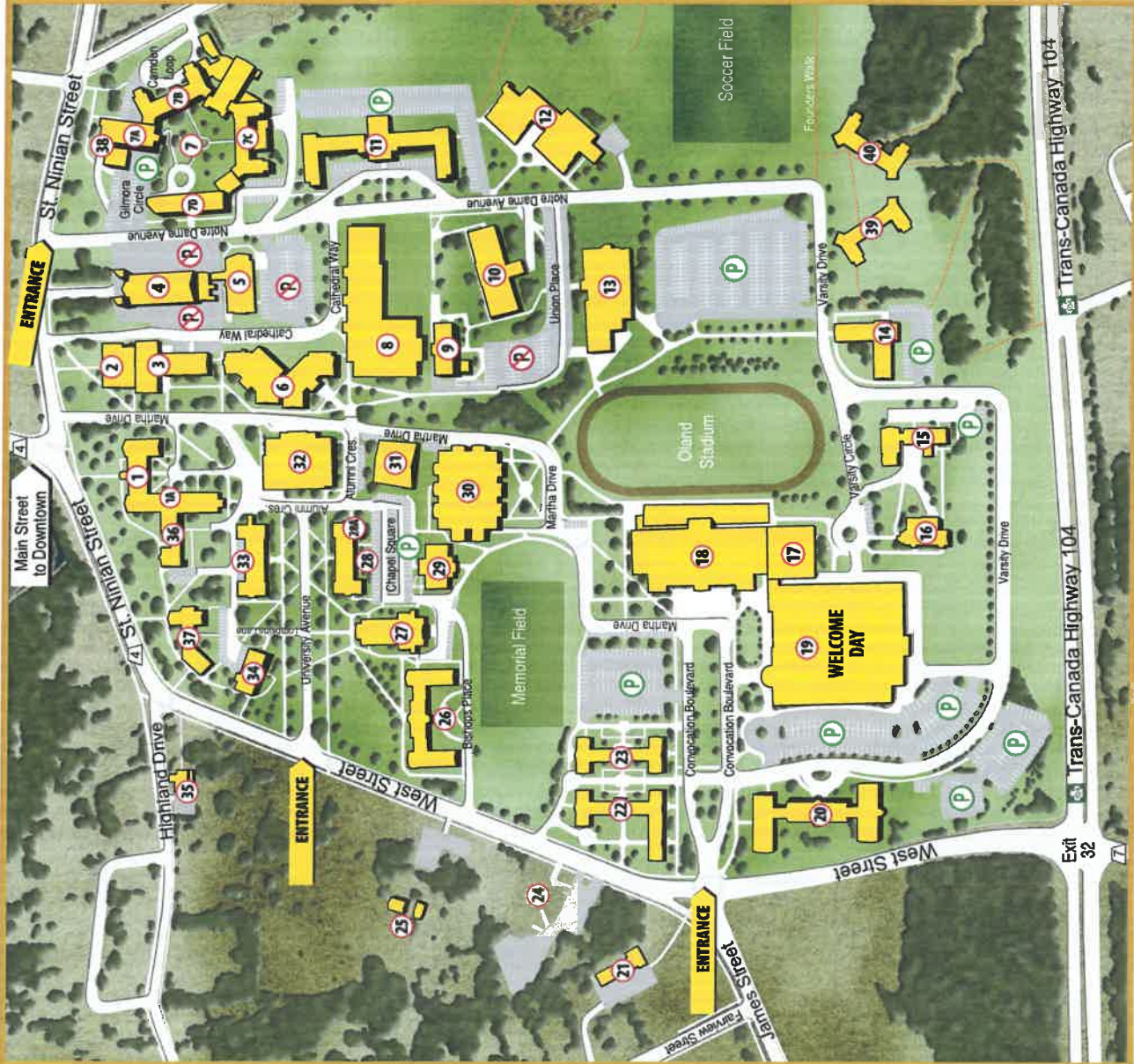
DINING SERVICES

32. Morrison Hall

In your timetable the buildings are referenced by acronyms

 Denotes parking available

 Denotes no parking available



From: [Beth Schumacher](#)
To: [Owen McCarron](#)
Cc: [Shirlyn Donovan](#)
Bcc: ["ron_chisholm"](#); ["sscott"](#); ["rmacleanforestry"](#)
Subject: Invitation to Consolidation Discussion
Date: March 25, 2022 12:04:00 PM
Attachments: [Consolidation Booklet.pdf](#)
[Business and Community Leaders Session Invite.png](#)
[StFX Campus Map.pdf](#)

Hello,

Please see the invitation attached with details on an information session for community and business leaders on the exploration of consolidation. The session will take place at Vesgo Hall, which is a part of the Coady Institute on StFX Campus. I've included a campus map as an attachment to show where the building is located. The best parking options include the Bauer Theatre and St. Ninans Parking Lot.

We hope you can join us for this session. If you can't attend, there are many other community engagement sessions scheduled over the next few weeks. To view the full schedule visit, www.antigonish.ca. If you have any questions, please email info@antigonish.ca.

Warden Owen McCarron
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
902-968-1290

ANTIGONISH

Our Community



Exploring Municipal Consolidation.

Your Guide to
Community
Engagement.

As the Councils for the Town and County of Antigonish explore the possibility of consolidation, we have scheduled an extensive community engagement process. This is your guide to participating.

Message from Mayor and Warden



To the Antigonish Community;

In September 2021, both Town and County Councils unanimously voted to explore consolidating the two municipalities into one unit. You might be wondering why now? Or why at all?

We believe that the Town and County have done some progressive work together already. We have seen the benefits from collaborating with examples like hosting the National Special Olympics, Regional Emergency Management, and Physician Retention – just to name a few.

Both the Town and the County are in a good financial position, which is the best time to be looking at the benefits of consolidation, instead of being forced to do so because one needs help.

You've elected us to do what's in your best interest and part of our job is to explore opportunities like this. Your input will inform our decision and help us decide if residents, businesses, and the overall community will be better served if the Town and County become one municipal unit.

This guide is designed to answer some of your questions and let you know how you can take part.

Thank you and we look forward to your involvement.



Laurie Boucher
Mayor
Town of Antigonish



Owen McCarron
Warden
Municipality of the County of Antigonish

As we look at possible consolidation, we have carefully and purposefully created some important principles that will guide us. The Guiding Principles provide insight into what is top of mind for Councillors and will help guide discussions as we head into the community engagement sessions.

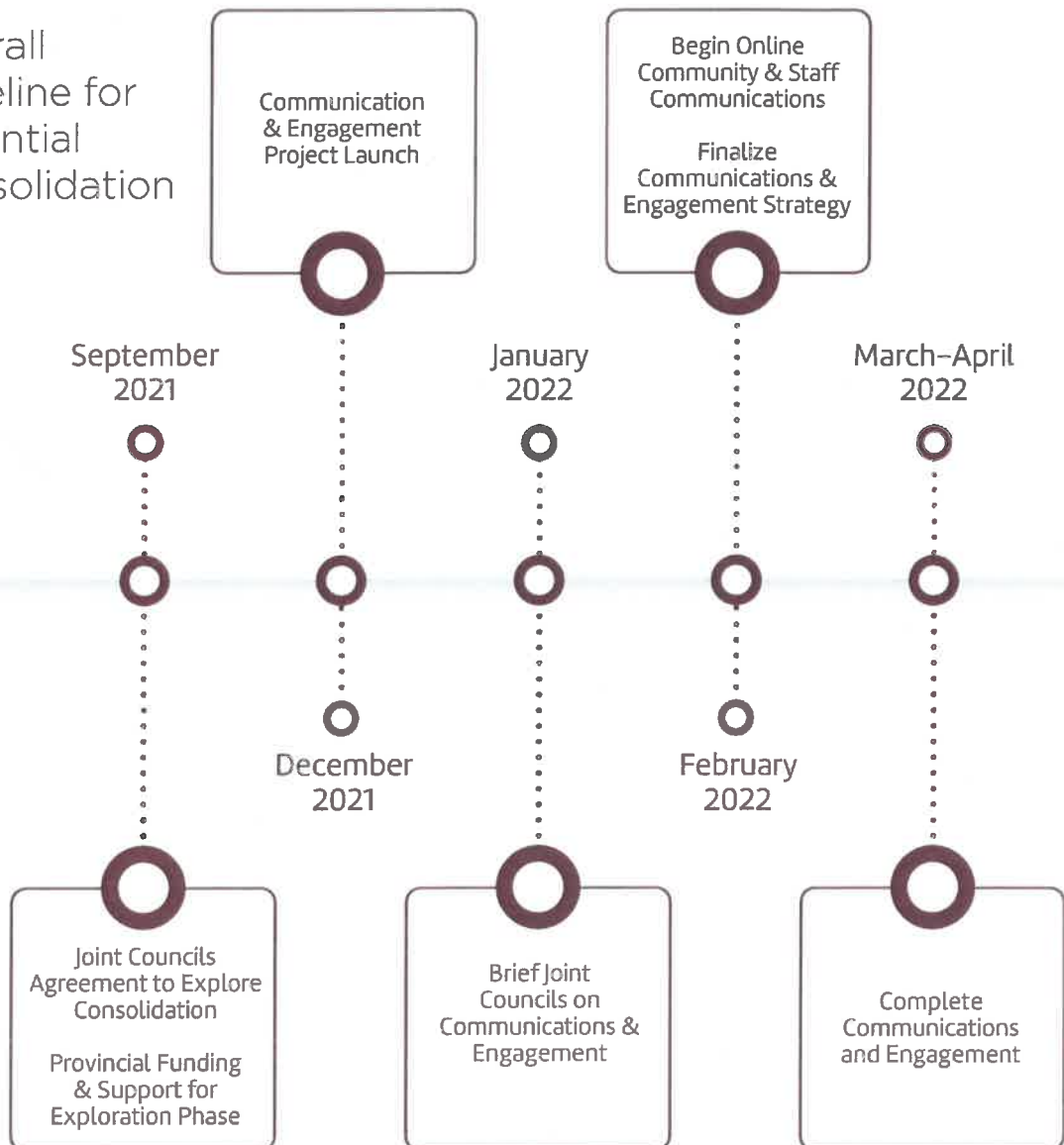
Guiding Principles for Consolidating Antigonish Town and County:

- 1. Take a regional approach to municipal services:** Work creatively, deliberately, and visibly to improve municipal services, economic development, tourism, culture, and community infrastructure for all residents and businesses in the Antigonish region.
- 2. Build vibrant individual communities:** Promote community identity in rural, urban and First Nations communities, so the whole municipality will be stronger.
- 3. Communicate regularly about progress and decisions:** Communications with residents, businesses, councils, and staff should be frequent, transparent, and inclusive.
- 4. Continue fair taxation and user pay approaches:** Residents and businesses should only be taxed for services and infrastructure they have access to. Property tax rates and infrastructure debt should utilize area tax rates and utility fee approaches that exist today wherever possible.
- 5. Value our existing municipal staff:** The blending of Town and County employees will recognize the value, knowledge and dedication of our current staff and every effort will be made to retain staff and to provide new opportunities.
- 6. Ensure Fair Representation for Urban and Rural Residents:** District boundaries should ensure every voter has the same electoral power as every other voter, balance rural and urban interests, and recognize local communities of interest.
- 7. Enhance environmental sustainability:** Ownership of the Antigonish electric utility is central to expanding green energy options and reducing our carbon footprint. Build upon the success of initiatives and partnerships with the Alternate Energy Resource Authority and the Municipality's Energy Management Plan.

Exploring Consolidation Process

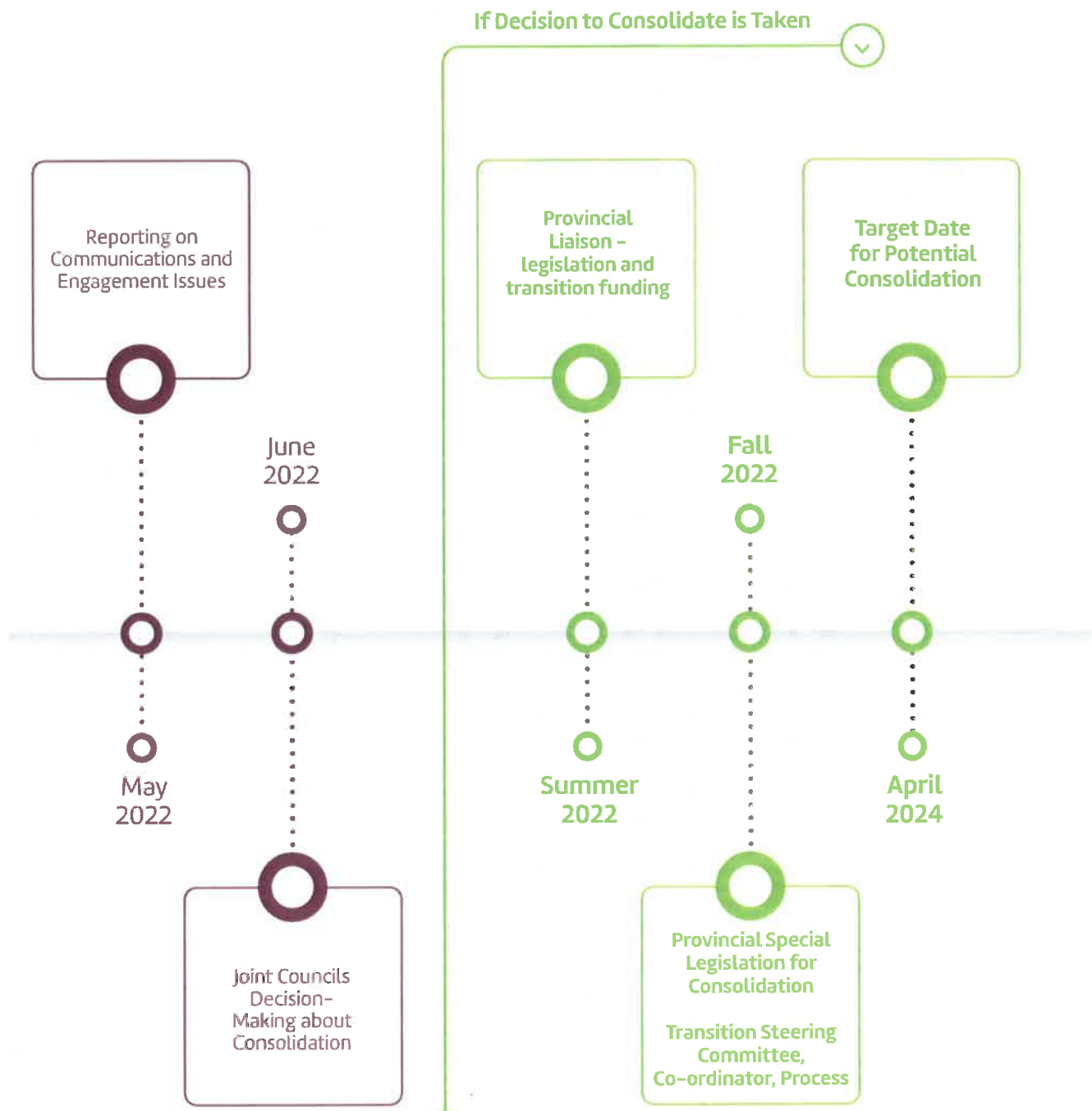
Town and County Councils have begun a process to consider whether consolidation would better serve residents, businesses and the broader community. They have created a joint Steering Committee that has retained Brighter Community Planning to lead the consultation and engagement to take place in April and May. Public input will help Councils make a decision on whether it will proceed with consolidation.

Overall Timeline for Potential Consolidation



Exploring Municipal Consolidation.

Your Guide to **Community** Engagement.



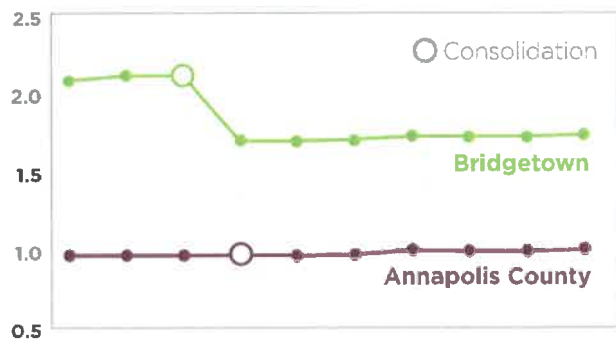


Property Taxes

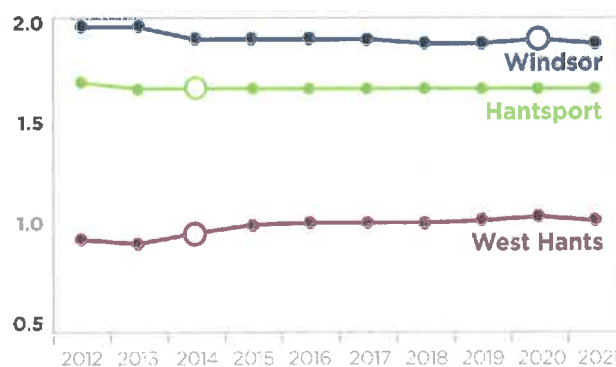
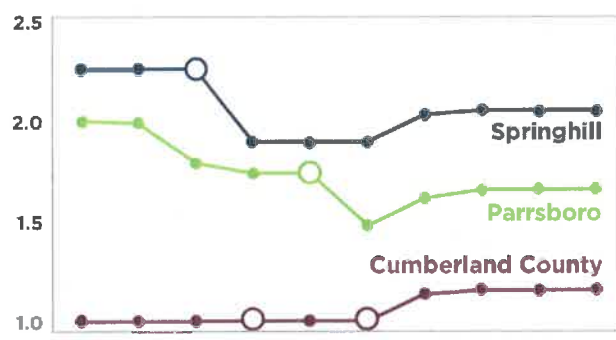
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Council Size



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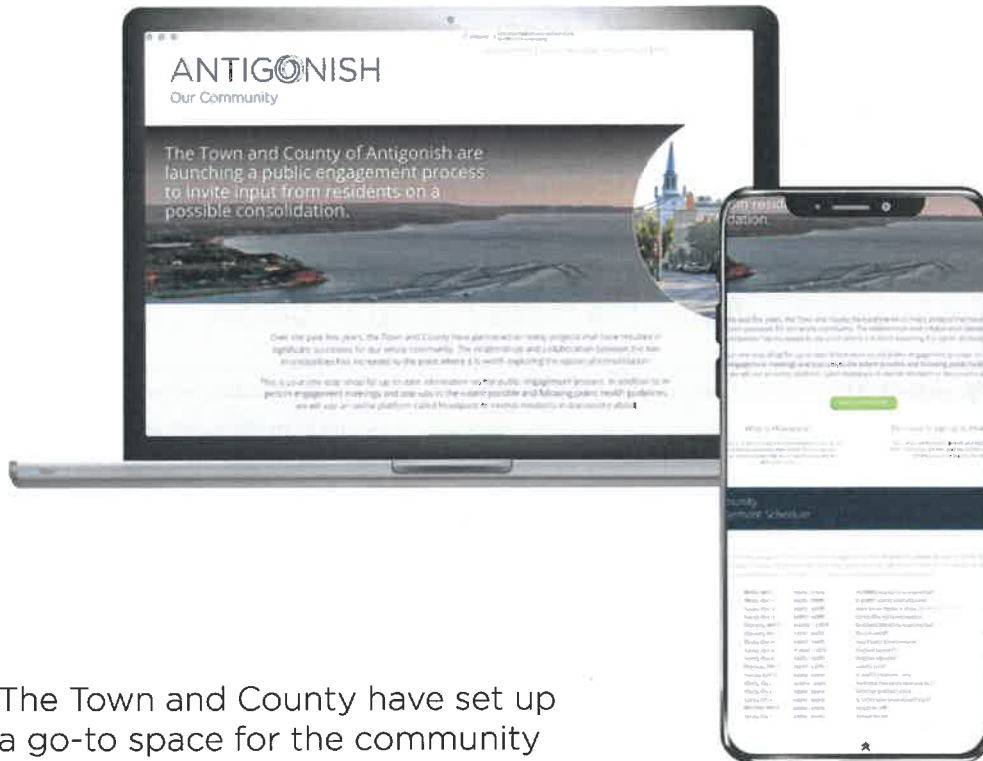
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Exploring Municipal Consolidation.

Your Guide to Community Engagement.



The Town and County have set up a go-to space for the community engagement around a possible consolidation.

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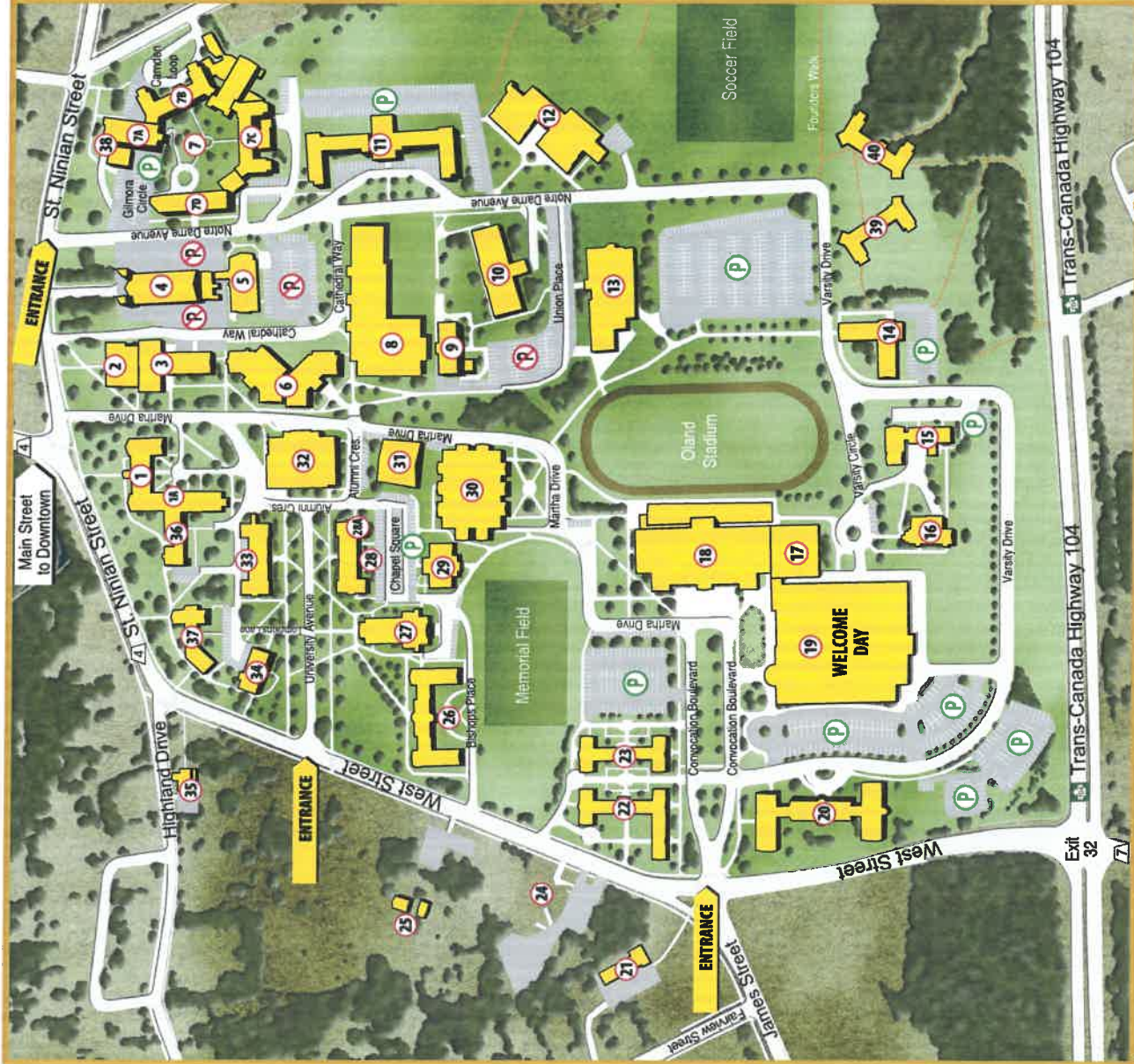
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Denotes no parking available



From: [Beth Schumacher](#)
To: [Shirlyn Donovan](#); [Owen McCarron](#)
Subject: FW: Mail System Error - Subject: Invitation to Consolidation Discussion
Date: March 25, 2022 12:06:00 PM
Attachments: [ATT00001](#)
[Invitation to Consolidation Discussion.msg](#)

We thought this might be from Ron Chisholm's email

-----Original Message-----

From: noreply@bell.net <noreply@bell.net>
Sent: March 25, 2022 12:04 PM
To: Beth Schumacher <beth.schumacher@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Mail System Error - Subject: Invitation to Consolidation Discussion

This is an automatically generated message. French will follow.

The recipient's mailbox is full. Please try again later.

La boîte de réception du destinataire est pleine. Veuillez réessayer plus tard.

This is an automatically generated message. French will follow.

The following attachments have been removed from the bounce message:
Consolidation Booklet.pdf, Business and Community Leaders Session Invite.png, StFX Campus Map.pdf

Ceci est un message généré automatiquement.

Les pièces jointes ci-dessous ont été supprimées du message original.
<AttachmentList>

From: [Gary Mattie](#)
To: [Beth Schumacher](#)
Cc: [Shirlyn Donovan](#)
Subject: Re: Please Respond - Checking on Availability - Monday April 4th
Date: March 25, 2022 3:23:43 PM

I will be attending Beth. Gary

Sent from my iPad

On Mar 23, 2022, at 4:38 PM, Beth Schumacher
<beth.schumacher@antigonishcounty.ns.ca> wrote:

Good afternoon Councillors,

I'm touching base to check on everyone's availability on Monday, April 4th, for the purpose of holding a session for Council to talk about consolidation, as requested last evening.

Due to our engagement session schedule through April, we are looking to hold a Committee of the Whole Meeting on Tuesday, April 5th (6:30pm start) and a Council Meeting on Tuesday April 19th (7:30pm). These meetings would replace our regular meetings that would normally take place on Tuesday April 12th. Please hold those dates in your calendars.

Cheers,

Beth

Beth Schumacher
Deputy Municipal Clerk

Municipality of the County of Antigonish
285 Beech Hill Road, Beech Hill B2G 0B4
902-863-1117
www.antigonishcounty.ns.ca

Honour Yesterday, Act Today, Inspire Tomorrow

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: March 28, 2022 9:33 AM
To: Mary MacLellan
Subject: RE: timeline

Mary;
Thanks for the information, is there a date?
Harris

From: Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Sent: March 25, 2022 8:41 PM
To: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: timeline

Harris, I found the time line in my material. It looks like June we make the decision. Mary

Harris McNamara

From: Glenn Horne
Sent: March 28, 2022 12:36 PM
To: Harris McNamara
Cc: Owen McCarron
Subject: Conflict of Interest

Good afternoon, Councillor McNamara –

As we discussed briefly in September, there is potential for a conflict of interest to arise for you as we get further into discussions and eventually vote on consolidation with the Town of Antigonish. Are you available on Wednesday morning to meet with Warden McCarron and I continue this discussion?

Thanks!
Glenn



Glenn Horne | Chief Administrative Officer
Municipality of the County of Antigonish | 902.863.1117
285 Beech Hill Road, Beech Hill, NS | B2G 0B4
www.antigonishcounty.ns.ca | [@AntigonishCo](https://www.facebook.com/AntigonishCo) | [facebook](https://www.facebook.com/AntigonishCo)

Honour Yesterday, Act Today, Inspire Tomorrow

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: March 29, 2022 10:15 AM
To: Glenn Horne
Subject: RE: Conflict of Interest

Glenn
I can make myself available, what time?
Harris

From: Glenn Horne <glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Sent: March 28, 2022 12:36 PM
To: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Cc: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Conflict of Interest

Good afternoon, Councillor McNamara –

As we discussed briefly in September, there is potential for a conflict of interest to arise for you as we get further into discussions and eventually vote on consolidation with the Town of Antigonish. Are you available on Wednesday morning to meet with Warden McCarron and I continue this discussion?

Thanks!
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Glenn Horne

Subject: Conflict of Interest Discussion
Location: Board Room

Start: Wed 2022-03-30 9:00 AM
End: Wed 2022-03-30 10:00 AM
Show Time As: Tentative

Recurrence: (none)

Meeting Status: Not yet responded

Organizer: Glenn Horne
Required Attendees: Harris McNamara; Owen McCarron
Resources: Board Room

Beth Schumacher

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: March 30, 2022 12:03 PM
To: ron_chisholm@
Subject: FW: Invitation to Consolidation Discussion
Attachments: Consolidation Booklet.pdf; Business and Community Leaders Session Invite.png; StFX Campus Map.pdf

Hello,

Please see the invitation attached with details on an information session for community and business leaders on the exploration of consolidation. The session will take place at Vesgo Hall, which is a part of the Coady Institute on StFX Campus. I've included a campus map as an attachment to show where the building is located. The best parking options include the Bauer Theatre and St. Ninans Parking Lot.

We hope you can join us for this session. If you can't attend, there are many other community engagement sessions scheduled over the next few weeks. To view the full schedule visit, www.antigonish.ca. If you have any questions, please email info@antigonish.ca.

Warden Owen McCarron
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
902-968-1290

ANTIGONISH

Our Community

Exploration of Consolidation Information Session

Mayor Laurie Boucher and Warden Owen McCarron invite you to attend an information session on the potential consolidation of Antigonish Town and County.

This is a specific session for community leaders and business owners. Our goal is to provide an opportunity for you to gain insight into the process, ask questions, and share what you think about consolidation for Antigonish.

Community Leaders Information Session

Date: Thursday, April 7, 2022

Time: 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

Location: Vesgo Hall, Room 150, Coady Institute, SFX Campus

Vesgo Hall is #36 on the attached SFX Campus Map. Entrance to Vesgo Hall is beside Xavier Hall facing St. Ninan Street/Carin Park.

For up-to-date information about the Town and County's exploration of consolidation, visit www.antigonish.ca.

ANTIGONISH

Our Community



Exploring Municipal Consolidation.

Your Guide to
Community
Engagement.

As the Councils for the Town and County of Antigonish explore the possibility of consolidation, we have scheduled an extensive community engagement process. This is your guide to participating.

Message from Mayor and Warden



To the Antigonish Community;

In September 2021, both Town and County Councils unanimously voted to explore consolidating the two municipalities into one unit. You might be wondering why now? Or why at all?

We believe that the Town and County have done some progressive work together already. We have seen the benefits from collaborating with examples like hosting the National Special Olympics, Regional Emergency Management, and Physician Retention – just to name a few.

Both the Town and the County are in a good financial position, which is the best time to be looking at the benefits of consolidation, instead of being forced to do so because one needs help.

You've elected us to do what's in your best interest and part of our job is to explore opportunities like this. Your input will inform our decision and help us decide if residents, businesses, and the overall community will be better served if the Town and County become one municipal unit.

This guide is designed to answer some of your questions and let you know how you can take part.

Thank you and we look forward to your involvement.

Laurie Boucher
Mayor
Town of Antigonish

Owen McCarron
Warden
Municipality of the County of Antigonish

As we look at possible consolidation, we have carefully and purposefully created some important principles that will guide us. The Guiding Principles provide insight into what is top of mind for Councillors and will help guide discussions as we head into the community engagement sessions.

Guiding Principles for Consolidating Antigonish Town and County:

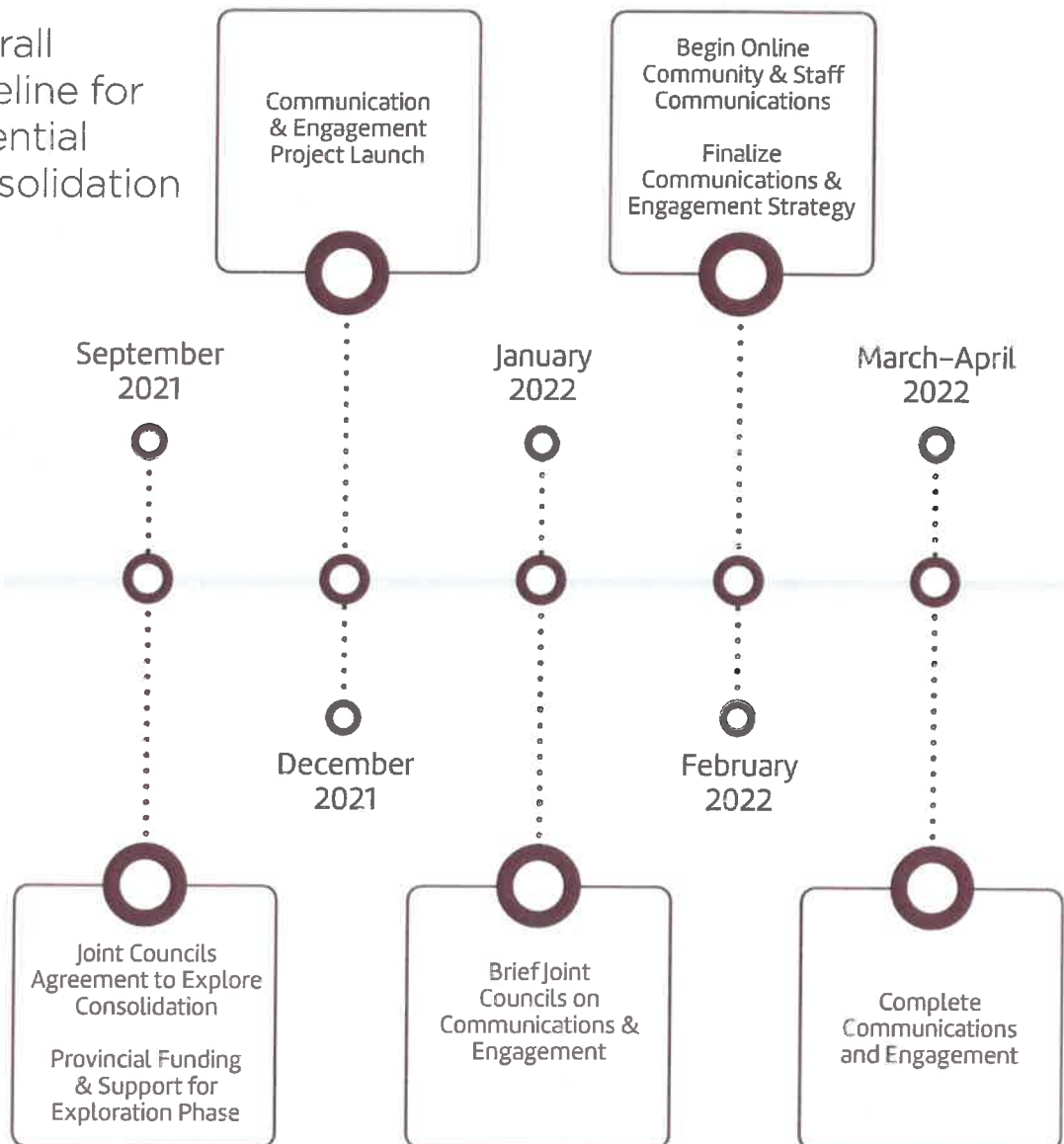
- 1. Take a regional approach to municipal services:** Work creatively, deliberately, and visibly to improve municipal services, economic development, tourism, culture, and community infrastructure for all residents and businesses in the Antigonish region.
- 2. Build vibrant individual communities:** Promote community identity in rural, urban and First Nations communities, so the whole municipality will be stronger.
- 3. Communicate regularly about progress and decisions:** Communications with residents, businesses, councils, and staff should be frequent, transparent, and inclusive.
- 4. Continue fair taxation and user pay approaches:** Residents and businesses should only be taxed for services and infrastructure they have access to. Property tax rates and infrastructure debt should utilize area tax rates and utility fee approaches that exist today wherever possible.
- 5. Value our existing municipal staff:** The blending of Town and County employees will recognize the value, knowledge and dedication of our current staff and every effort will be made to retain staff and to provide new opportunities.
- 6. Ensure Fair Representation for Urban and Rural Residents:** District boundaries should ensure every voter has the same electoral power as every other voter, balance rural and urban interests, and recognize local communities of interest.
- 7. Enhance environmental sustainability:** Ownership of the Antigonish electric utility is central to expanding green energy options and reducing our carbon footprint. Build upon the success of initiatives and partnerships with the Alternate Energy Resource Authority and the Municipality's Energy Management Plan.



Exploring Consolidation Process

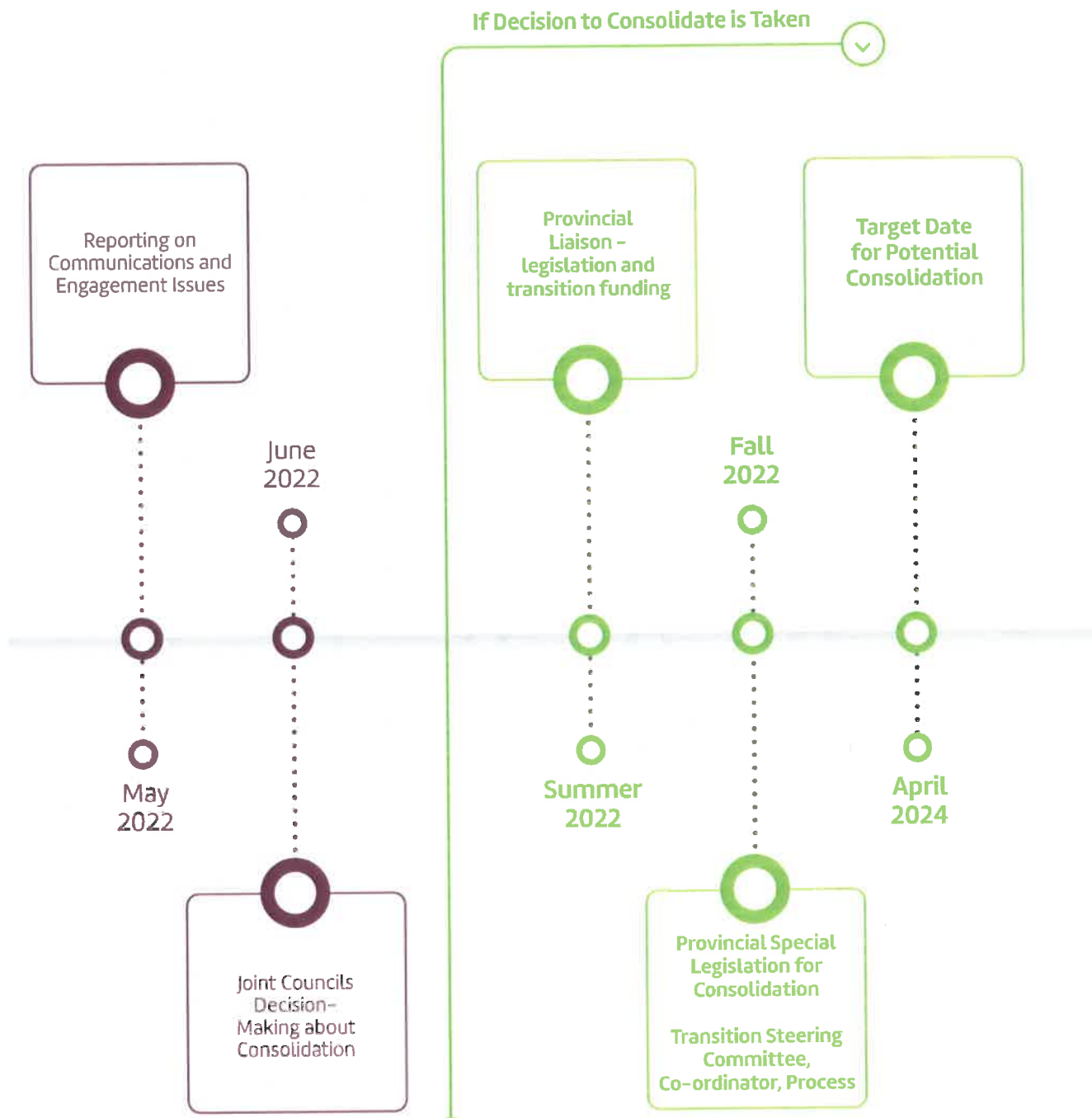
Town and County Councils have begun a process to consider whether consolidation would better serve residents, businesses and the broader community. They have created a joint Steering Committee that has retained Brighter Community Planning to lead the consultation and engagement to take place in April and May. Public input will help Councils make a decision on whether it will proceed with consolidation.

Overall Timeline for Potential Consolidation



Exploring Municipal Consolidation.

Your Guide to Community Engagement.



Exploring Municipal Consolidation.

Your Guide to Community Engagement.

The Town and County are using different methods of community engagement to reach as many citizens as possible to understand opportunities and concerns.

Your Questions

We have taken your most common questions and have created a series of fact sheets for you to consider as you think about a possible merger. Additional information on each of the topics below can be found on Antigonish.ca, just click on the “Participate Now” button to access Antigonish’s HowSpace site, where these fact sheets can be found. We will also have copies of them at the in-person drop-in sessions.



How will my input be used?

Your comments will be recorded and put into a report for Councils. This report will be considered as Councils look answer this key question:

Will residents, businesses and the overall community be better served if the Town and County became one municipal unit?

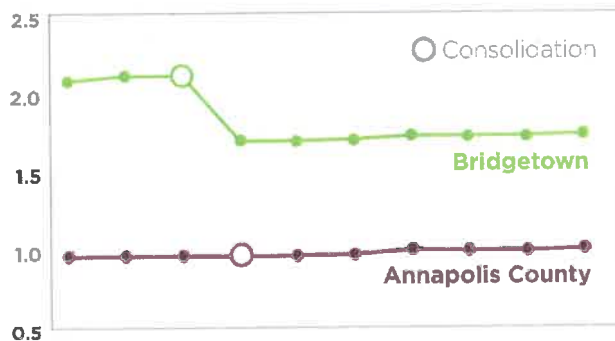
A final report outlining the key themes from a thorough consultation process will be shared with Councils in June. Along with other reports being prepared by staff, Councils will decide in the summer on whether to consolidate.

Property Taxes

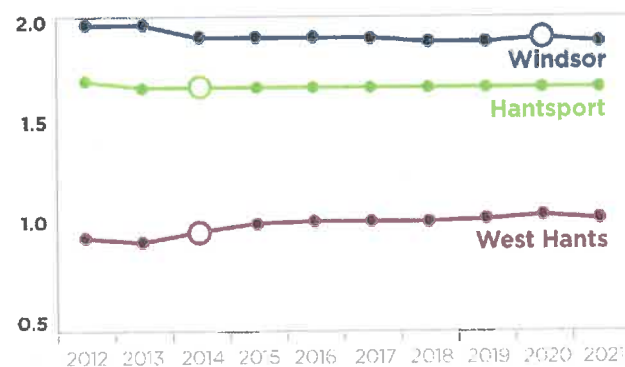
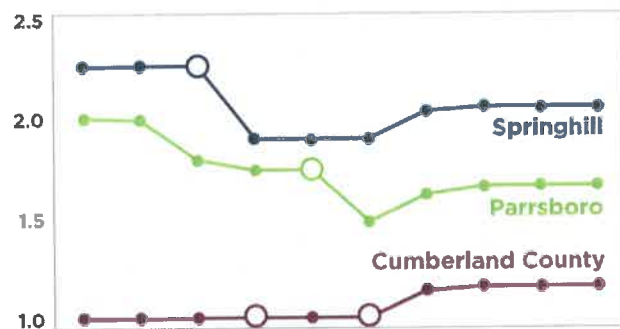
One of the most common concerns expressed when municipal mergers have taken place in other parts of the province is whether consolidation will have an impact on property taxes. History shows us that municipal mergers in other parts of Nova Scotia have not created property tax increases in the years following a merger.

The following graphs show the impact of mergers on tax rates:

\$ per \$100 of assessment



Residential Tax Rates for Merged Rural Municipalities and Towns



While actual future tax rates can't be predicted (future tax rates are set by future Councils) the two units are going into a possible consolidation without significant risks for tax increases which are often caused by declining revenues or failing infrastructure.

Water, Electricity and Energy Leadership

The Town and County provide important municipal services through long established and regulated utilities, for water and electricity. These services would be included in a possible consolidation. They both have unique regulatory and ownership characteristics that would have to be recognized in any merger process. Any future changes to water or electricity rates have to go through a review process and be approved by the Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board (NSUARB).



Both the Town and County have demonstrated real leadership in addressing climate change and alternate energy. This leadership should be recognized and advanced in any possible municipal consolidation process.

Representation, Council Size and District Boundaries



Council Size



District Boundaries

Representation, Council Size and District Boundaries are important questions, and there is a well-established process in Nova Scotia to determine municipal boundaries. The work to determine where new boundaries would be would only happen after a decision to consolidate has been made. If the decision is to consolidate, a Transition Committee would be created, which would consult with all the communities and Councils to decide on the size of Council and the geography of the district boundaries. The recommendation made by the Transition Committee would be submitted to the NSUARB for review. The NSUARB can make adjustments on the recommendation if required and then final approval would be made on the new districts.

Currently, the County undergoes a District Review process every eight years. This is done to ensure balanced representation in the current districts. The Town does not currently go through this process because Councillors are elected at large.



Community Identity

Maintaining community identity is an important consideration when exploring municipal consolidation.

The way your local government is formed will not change your community's identity. The smaller communities you call home will not change and that is what makes Antigonish such a great place to live.

There are many examples of municipal mergers that support the identity and vibrancy of local communities. As an example, Queens Regional Municipality provided several suggestions from more than 25 years as a merged organization.

Support Community Capacity

Both the Town and County have activities and grant programs in place to support individual organizations and smaller community-based initiatives. These grants are an important source of support as well as means for Councils to support citizen involvement in making their communities a stronger place to live, work, and play. A potential consolidation would not create sudden changes in how community organizations receive their grant funding. There are mechanisms in place to fund and provide services to organizations that are vital to the Antigonish community.

Drawing on Other Municipal Examples

There are many examples of municipal mergers that support the identity and vibrancy of local communities. As an example, Queens Regional Municipality provided several highlights recently, taken from over twenty-five years' experience as a merged organization:

Be deliberate in spreading infrastructure projects across numerous communities.

Draw citizen appointees for municipal committees from all parts of the region.

Promote local communities with signage and tourism partnerships.

Develop a strong Community Investment Fund and policy.

Establish a single Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use By-Law with one set of rules for development.



Fire Services

There are nine volunteer Fire Departments located within the Town and County of Antigonish. They play an important role in fire protection and emergency services. They are also important community partners and organizers. The Town of Antigonish Volunteer Fire Department is funded directly by the Town and the County-based volunteer fire departments are funded through an Area Fire Levy. As the discussions continue about the potential for consolidation, there may be questions about what might change around fire service if a municipal merger should take place.



Volunteer Fire Service is important to all communities in both the Town and County. Whether operated directly in the Town or funded by Area Fire Rates in the County, these volunteer organizations understand their community needs and respond accordingly.

They do not operate in isolation and have lots of experience through in their communities and support one another through mutual aid. It is important for municipal funding of volunteer fire service to be continued in the same manner. There is no reason to change this system because of a possible municipal consolidation.



Consultation Schedule

We have designed the consultation to be as open and accessible as possible, with options for in person, online, phone and email. Choose how you'd like to participate:

- ✓ Take part in one of our on-line or in person sessions throughout April and into May. See the public engagement schedule on the following page.

- ✓ Visit **Antigonish.ca** and click on "**Participate Now.**"

- ✓ Call us toll-free at 1-833-563-2786 or 1-833-563-2787 and leave a voicemail for staff, who will follow up with you. This is a great option for those who want to remain engaged but are hesitant to come to a public session, are not comfortable with technology or may have unreliable Internet service.

- ✓ Email your questions and comments to **info@antigonish.ca.**



Community Engagement Schedule

A total of 17 community engagement sessions have been arranged so that as many people as possible can attend. To make it even easier for busy parents and caregivers, sessions are child friendly - Town and County recreation staff will be on hand with fun activities for the kids.

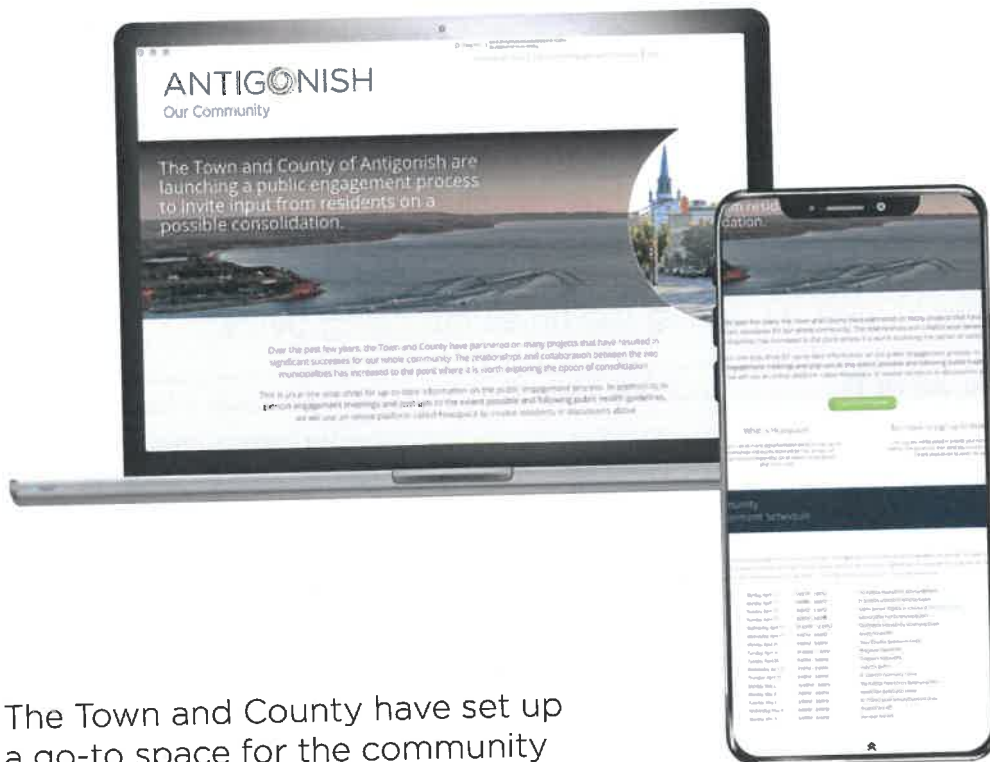
Sessions are organized in an open house format and are “drop in.” Feel free to pop by during the times indicated below.

Monday, April 11	1:00PM - 3:00PM	The Peoples Place Library Community Room
Monday, April 11	7:00PM - 9:00PM	St. Joseph’s Lakeside Community Centre
Tuesday, April 12	3:00PM - 5:00PM	Online Engagement Session
Tuesday, April 12	7:00PM - 9:00PM	Lakevale Mini Trail Community Centre
Wednesday, April 13	11:00AM - 12:30PM	The Peoples Place Library Community Room
Wednesday, April 13	7:00PM - 9:00PM	Arisaig Parish Hall
Monday, April 25	7:00PM - 9:00PM	Havre Boucher Community Centre
Tuesday, April 26	11:00AM - 1:00PM	Antigonish Legion/CACL
Tuesday, April 26	7:00PM - 9:00PM	Antigonish Legion/CACL
Wednesday, April 27	7:00PM - 9:00PM	Lochaber Centre
Thursday, April 28	6:00PM - 8:00PM	St. Andrews Community Centre
Monday, May 2	12:00PM - 3:00PM	The Peoples Place Library Community Room
Monday, May 2	7:00PM - 9:00PM	Heatherton Community Centre
Tuesday, May 3	5:00PM - 8:00PM	St. Andrew Junior School (Appleseed Drive)
Wednesday, May 4	6:00PM - 8:00PM	Tracadie Fire Hall
Monday, May 9	6:00PM - 8:00PM	Pomquet Fire Hall

* A Session is being planned with Paqtnkek Mikmaw Nation that is still TBD.

Exploring Municipal Consolidation.

Your Guide to Community Engagement.



The Town and County have set up a go-to space for the community engagement around a possible consolidation.

Visit **Antigonish.ca** today and click on the “Participate Now” button to take part in the discussion online. See page 14 for all of the ways you can participate.



How can I take part?

We have created a plan that allows residents to be engaged in different ways. A series of public drop-in meetings are scheduled as well as online options, phone and email. See the Consultation Schedule on page 12 for more information.

For ongoing online engagement throughout the consultation phase, we are using Antigonish's HowSpace. This is an all-in-one digital facilitation platform. Here we will host workshops and events, there will be Frequently Asked Questions, and you can interact directly on topics that are of interest to you and see what others are saying.

Visit Antigonish.ca and click on the "Participate Now" button. You will be asked to provide your name and email address. The system will then send you a confirmation email and the link you can use to access the site.

We look forward to your participation! If you have questions, please email [**info@antigonish.ca**](mailto:info@antigonish.ca).

ACADEMIC BUILDINGS

1. Xavier Hall (XH) and Alumni House
- A) Alumni House
2. McKenna Centre (north entrance)
3. Schwartz School (SCHW)
5. St. Ninian's Place (SNP)
6. Angus L. Macdonald Library
7. Mount Saint Bernard (MSB)
 - A) Immaculata Hall
 - B) Camden Hall
 - C) Marguerite Hall
 - D) Gilmora Hall
8. Muirney Hall
9. Nicholson Tower (NT)
10. Annex
12. J. Bruce Brown Hall (JBB)
30. Physical Sciences Centre (PSC)
36. Coady International Institute
37. Markin Global Complex
38. Fine Arts Building

RESIDENCES

7. Mount Saint Bernard (MSB)
14. MacIsaac Hall
16. MacNeil Hall
20. Governors Hall
21. Coady International House
22. Somers Hall
23. Power Hall
26. Bishops Hall
28. MacKinnon Hall
32. Morrison Hall
33. Cameron Hall
39. O'Regan Hall
40. Riley Hall

ADMINISTRATION & OTHER

4. St. Ninian's Cathedral
5. St. Ninian's Place (SNP)
9. Nicholson Tower (NT)
 - Recruitment and Admissions Office
11. Lane Hall
13. Bloomfield Centre
15. MacDonald Hall
24. 42 West Street Building
25. StFX Observatory
27. University Chapel
28. MacKinnon Hall
 - A) Business Office
31. Services Building (5005 Chapel Square)
 - Safety & Security Services
34. Mockler Hall
35. Aberlard House

SPORTS AND RECREATION

17. Alumni Aquatic Centre
18. Amelia Saputo Centre for Healthy Living
19. Charles V. Keating Centre
29. Bauer Theatre

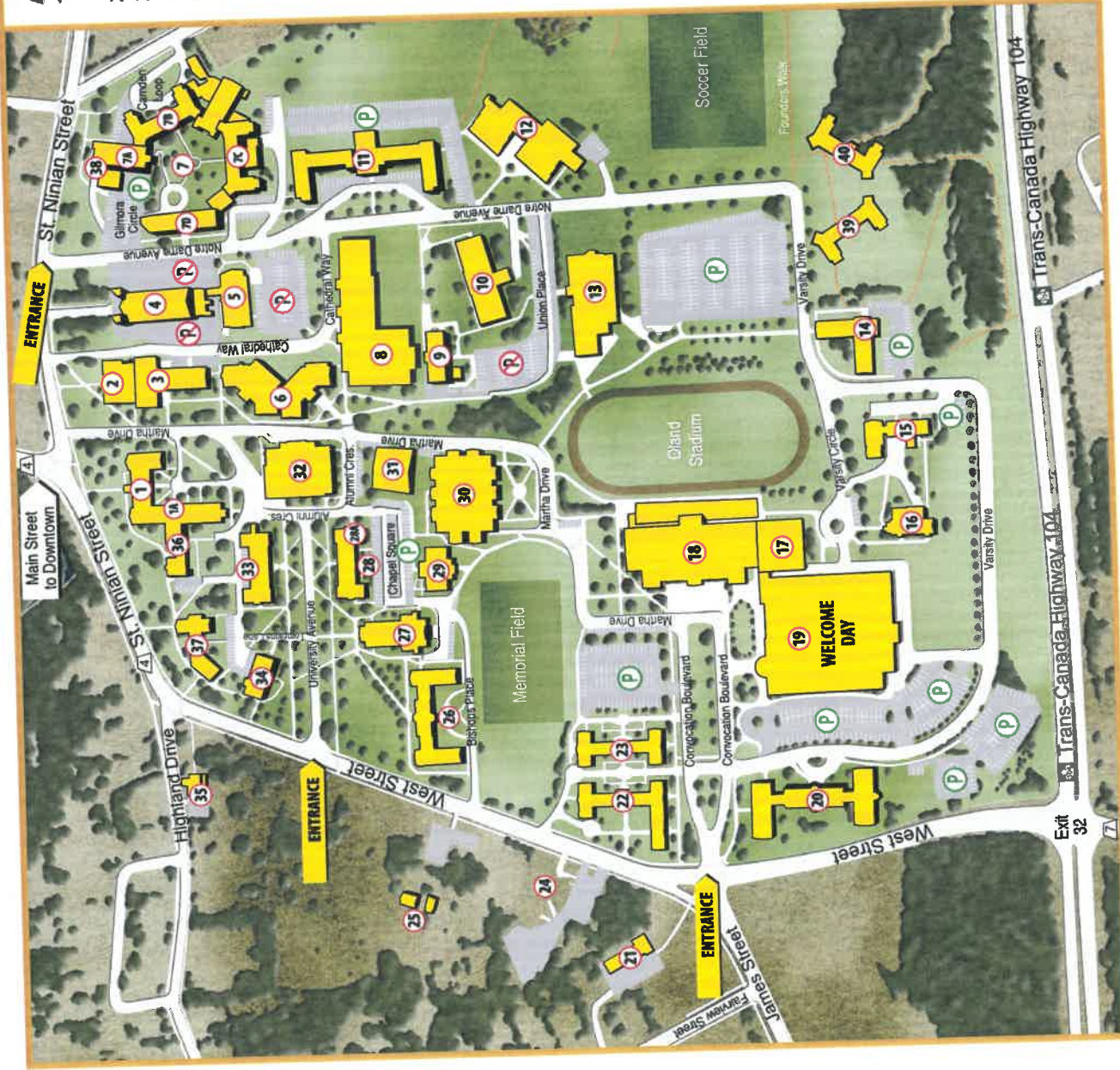
DINING SERVICES

32. Morrison Hall

In your timetable the buildings are referenced by acronyms

Denotes parking available

Denotes no parking available



ST. FRANCIS XAVIER
UNIVERSITY

T: 902 867-2855 • E: stay@stfx.ca • www.stfx.ca

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: March 31, 2022 8:27 AM
To: Glenn Horne
Subject: Accepted: Conflict of Interest Discussion

Beth Schumacher

From: Glenn Horne
Sent: April 1, 2022 11:33 AM
To: Owen McCarron; Hughie Stewart; mayor@townofantigonish.ca; Willie Cormier; Jeff Lawrence; Shirlyn Donovan; kgorman@townofantigonish.ca; Alisha Bowie
Subject: Consolidation Steering Committee Meeting Agenda - April 5
Attachments: Committee Agenda_April 5 2022.pdf; 2021 Consolidated Financial Statements.pdf; F2020_2021 Signed Consolidated Financial Statements.pdf; 2020-21 FCI County of Antigonish.pdf; 2020-21 FCI Town of Antigonish.pdf; 2020-21 FCI County and Town of Antigonish.pdf

Good morning, folks –

Please find attached the agenda and supporting materials for our Steering Committee meeting on Tuesday, April 5 at 8am.

Cheers,
Glenn



Glenn Horne | Chief Administrative Officer
Municipality of the County of Antigonish | 902.863.1117
285 Beech Hill Road, Beech Hill, NS | B2G 0B4
www.antigonishcounty.ns.ca | [@AntigonishCo](https://www.facebook.com/AntigonishCo) | [facebook](https://www.facebook.com/AntigonishCo)

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**Consolidation Steering Committee
Municipal Council Chamber – 285 Beech Hill Road
Tuesday, April 5, 2022 @ 8am
Meeting Agenda**

- 1) Preparation for Community Engagement Sessions
- 2) Discussion of Model General and Area Tax Rates
- 3) Sharing Financial Information
- 4) Sharing Revised Population Distribution Map
- 5) Update on RCMP Contract
- 6) Additions:
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.

Harris McNamara

From: Glenn Horne
Sent: April 1, 2022 3:33 PM
To: Council
Cc: Shirlyn Donovan; Brian Smith; Chrystal Fuller
Subject: Closed-Door Session on Consolidation
Attachments: 2022 - Mar 31 - Municipal Council Questions Related to Consolidation.pdf; Fact Sheets.pdf; Critical Path_Jan 7 2022.pdf; 2021 Consolidated Financial Statements.pdf; F2020_2021 Signed Consolidated Financial Statements.pdf; 2020-21 FCI County of Antigonish.pdf; 2020-21 FCI Town of Antigonish.pdf; 2020-21 FCI County and Town of Antigonish.pdf; 2020 Municipal World Article.pdf; 2019 Municipal World Article.pdf; Key Messages for Councils_April 1 2022.pdf

Good afternoon, councillors –

Please note that a closed-door session will be held on Monday, April 4, for councillors to further discuss consolidation and have lingering questions addressed prior to the public engagement phase of our process. The meeting will be held in the Council Chamber at 5:30pm; dinner will be served at 5pm.

Please find attached materials to support the following order of events:

1. Chrystal will review with Council how the public open-houses will function and share the role(s) we would like councillors to play at those sessions.
2. Key messages that councillors can use ahead of the public open-houses when receiving questions or comments from residents will be reviewed.
3. Review of responses to questions that have been submitted.

Chrystal will be signing off after the walk-through of the open-houses. Brian & Shirlyn will remain to help address any questions that come from Council's discussion.

The following materials are attached and you are encouraged to review them prior to our session. Please note that these materials are NOT for public circulation at this point. Once reviewed by Council information will be post our official channels.

- Questions related to Consolidation.
- Fact Sheets
- Critical Path
- Antigonish County Consolidated Financial Statements, 20/21.
- Town of Antigonish Consolidated Financial Statements, 20/21.
- Financial Condition Indicators (County, Town and Consolidated; 20/21).
- Municipal World Articles re: West Hants Consolidation
- Key Messages you can use if you get calls before or during the community sessions

Enjoy your weekend and see you on Monday.

Thanks!
Glenn



Glenn Horne | Chief Administrative Officer
Municipality of the County of Antigonish | 902.863.1117
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www.antigonishcounty.ns.ca | [@AntigonishCo](https://www.facebook.com/AntigonishCo) | [facebook](#)

Honour Yesterday, Act Today, Inspire Tomorrow

From: [Glenn Horne](#)
To: [Council](#)
Cc: [Shirlyn Donovan](#); [SLT](#)
Subject: Fwd: Invitation: Exploration of Consolidation Info Session for Business and Community Leaders - April 7
Date: April 1, 2022 3:47:49 PM
Attachments: [Business and Community Leaders Session Invite.png](#)
[StFX Campus Map.pdf](#)
[Antigonish - Guide to Community Engagement.pdf](#)

Good afternoon, Councillors -

Please see below an invitation to the community leaders engagement session. If you have any questions please connect with Shirlyn.

Cheers,
Glenn

Glenn Horne
CAO
Municipality of the County of Antigonish

From: Kate Gorman <kgorman@townofantigonish.ca>
Sent: Friday, April 1, 2022, 3:37 p.m.
To: mayor@townofantigonish.ca <mayor@townofantigonish.ca>; Mary Farrell <mf Farrell@townofantigonish.ca>; Donnie MacInnis <dmacinnis@townofantigonish.ca>; Diane Roberts <droberts@townofantigonish.ca>; Andrew Murray <amurray@townofantigonish.ca>; Sean Cameron <scameron@townofantigonish.ca>; Willie Cormier <wcormier@townofantigonish.ca>
Cc: Jeff Lawrence <jlawrence@townofantigonish.ca>; Glenn Horne <glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shirlyn Donovan <shirlyn.donovan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Invitation: Exploration of Consolidation Info Session for Business and Community Leaders - April 7

Hi everyone,

Please see the invitation below with details on an information session for community and business leaders on the exploration of consolidation. This session was designed to be invite only so we could hear first-hand perspectives from a few key voices in the community. The session will be led by Brighter Community Planning and is a great opportunity for Council to hear some different perspectives as we head into the community engagement sessions. It isn't a requirement to attend and is more of a listening opportunity compared to your other sessions with Brighter Community Planning.

The session will take place at Vesgo Hall, which is a part of the Coady Institute on StFX Campus. I've included a campus map as an attachment to show where the building is located. The best parking options include the Bauer Theatre and St. Ninans Parking Lot. I've also included a copy of the Guide to Community Consultation, which will be a part of the April County Connect Newsletter.

ANTIGONISH

Our Community

Exploration of Consolidation Information Session

Mayor Laurie Boucher and Warden Owen McCarron invite you to attend an information session on the potential consolidation of Antigonish Town and County.

This is a specific session for community leaders and business owners. Our goal is to provide an opportunity for you to gain insight into the process, ask questions, and share what you think about consolidation for Antigonish.

Community Leaders Information Session

Date: Thursday, April 7, 2022

Time: 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

Location: Vesgo Hall, Room 150, Coady Institute, StFX Campus

Vesgo Hall is #36 on the attached StFX Campus Map. Entrance to Vesgo Hall is beside Xavier Hall facing St. Ninan Street/Carin Park.

For up-to-date information about the Town and County's exploration of consolidation, visit www.antigonish.ca.

Thank you!

Kate

Kate Gorman

Marketing and Communications Officer

kgorman@townofantigonish.ca

902-318-6758

www.townofantigonish.ca | [Nest Cam](#) | [Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#)

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: April 4, 2022 8:26 AM
To: Shirlyn Donovan
Subject: RE: Invitation: Exploration of Consolidation Info Session for Business and Community Leaders - April 7

Shirlyn
I will be attending, weather permitting
Harris

From: Glenn Horne <glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Sent: April 1, 2022 3:48 PM
To: Council <council@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Cc: Shirlyn Donovan <shirlyn.donovan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; SLT <slt@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Fwd: Invitation: Exploration of Consolidation Info Session for Business and Community Leaders - April 7

Good afternoon, Councillors -

Please see below an invitation to the community leaders engagement session. If you have any questions please connect with Shirlyn.

Cheers,
Glenn

Glenn Horne
CAO
Municipality of the County of Antigonish

From: Kate Gorman <kgorman@townofantigonish.ca>
Sent: Friday, April 1, 2022, 3:37 p.m.
To: mayor@townofantigonish.ca <mayor@townofantigonish.ca>; Mary Farrell <mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca>; Donnie MacInnis <dmacinnis@townofantigonish.ca>; Diane Roberts <droberts@townofantigonish.ca>; Andrew Murray <amurray@townofantigonish.ca>; Sean Cameron <scameron@townofantigonish.ca>; Willie Cormier <wcormier@townofantigonish.ca>
Cc: Jeff Lawrence <jlawrence@townofantigonish.ca>; Glenn Horne <glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shirlyn Donovan <shirlyn.donovan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Invitation: Exploration of Consolidation Info Session for Business and Community Leaders - April 7

Hi everyone,

Please see the invitation below with details on an information session for community and business leaders on the exploration of consolidation. This session was designed to be invite only so we could hear first-hand perspectives from a few key voices in the community. The session will be led by Brighter Community Planning and is a great opportunity for Council to hear some different perspectives as we head into the community engagement sessions. It isn't a requirement to attend and is more of a listening opportunity compared to your other sessions with Brighter Community Planning.

The session will take place at Vesgo Hall, which is a part of the Coady Institute on StFX Campus. I've included a campus map as an attachment to show where the building is located. The best parking options include the Bauer Theatre and St. Ninans Parking Lot. I've also included a copy of the Guide to Community Consultation, which will be a part of the April County Connect Newsletter.

ANTIGONISH

Our Community

Exploration of Consolidation Information Session

Mayor Laurie Boucher and Warden Owen McCarron invite you to attend an information session on the potential consolidation of Antigonish Town and County.

This is a specific session for community leaders and business owners. Our goal is to provide an opportunity for you to gain insight into the process, ask questions, and share what you think about consolidation for Antigonish.

Community Leaders Information Session

Date: Thursday, April 7, 2022

Time: 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

Location: Vesgo Hall, Room 150, Coady Institute, StFX Campus

Vesgo Hall is #36 on the attached StFX Campus Map. Entrance to Vesgo Hall is beside Xavier Hall facing St. Ninan Street/Carin Park.

For up-to-date information about the Town and County's exploration of consolidation, visit www.antigonish.ca.

Thank you!

Kate

Kate Gorman

Marketing and Communications Officer

kgorman@townofantigonish.ca

902-318-6758

www.townofantigonish.ca | [Nest Cam](#) | [Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#)

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: April 4, 2022 8:26 AM
To: Beth Schumacher
Subject: Accepted: Council Workshop - Consolidation Discussion

From: [Beth Schumacher](#)
To: [Council](#), [Shirlyn Donovan](#)
Subject: Council Workshop - Consolidation Discussion
Start: April 4, 2022 5:00:00 PM
End: April 4, 2022 9:00:00 PM
Location: Council Chambers

Dinner will be available at 5pm, with the discussion starting at 5:30pm.

From: [Harris McNamara](#)
To: [Beth Schumacher](#)
Subject: Accepted: Council Workshop - Consolidation Discussion
Start: April 4, 2022 5:00:00 PM
End: April 4, 2022 9:00:00 PM
Location: Council Chambers

From: Owen McCarron
To: Beth Schumacher
Subject: Accepted: Council Workshop - Consolidation Discussion
Start: April 4, 2022 5:00:00 PM
End: April 4, 2022 9:00:00 PM
Location: Council Chambers

From: [John Dunbar](#)
To: [Beth Schumacher](#); [Council](#); [Shirlyn Donovan](#)
Subject: Re: Council Workshop - Consolidation Discussion
Date: April 4, 2022 9:49:16 AM

Hi everyone,

Given the weather forecast for today and the closure of the office, I would like to suggest we cancel tonight's meeting and reschedule.
Perhaps Wednesday night?

John

From: Beth Schumacher <beth.schumacher@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Sent: April 1, 2022 3:37 PM
To: Council <council@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shirlyn Donovan <shirlyn.donovan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Council Workshop - Consolidation Discussion
When: April 4, 2022 5:00 PM-9:00 PM.
Where: Council Chambers

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From: [Glenn Horne](#)
To: [John Dunbar](#); [Beth Schumacher](#); [Council](#); [Shirlyn Donovan](#)
Subject: Re: Council Workshop - Consolidation Discussion
Date: April 4, 2022 10:06:31 AM

Good morning, Councillor Dunbar -

Thank you for the email. Warden McCarron and I will be discussing our options for tonight's meeting later this morning.

Cheers,
Glenn

Glenn Horne
CAO
Municipality of the County of Antigonish

From: John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Sent: Monday, April 4, 2022 9:49:14 AM
To: Beth Schumacher <beth.schumacher@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Council <council@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shirlyn Donovan <shirlyn.donovan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
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To: [John Dunbar](#); [Beth Schumacher](#); [Council](#); [Shirlyn Donovan](#)
Cc: [Chrystal Fuller](#); [Brian Smith](#)
Subject: RE: Council Workshop - Consolidation Discussion
Date: April 4, 2022 12:21:16 PM

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Subject: Council Workshop - Consolidation Discussion

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Where: Council Chambers

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From: [Bill MacFarlane](#)
To: [Glenn Horne](#); [John Dunbar](#); [Beth Schumacher](#); [Council](#); [Shirlyn Donovan](#)
Cc: [Chrystal Fuller](#); [Brian Smith](#)
Subject: RE: Council Workshop - Consolidation Discussion
Date: April 4, 2022 12:32:04 PM

Sounds fine.
Thanks,
Bill

From: Glenn Horne <glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Sent: April 4, 2022 12:21 PM
To: John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Beth Schumacher <beth.schumacher@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Council <council@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shirlyn Donovan <shirlyn.donovan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
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When: April 4, 2022 5:00 PM-9:00 PM.
Where: Council Chambers

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From: Harris McNamara
To: Glenn Horne; John Dunbar; Beth Schumacher; Council; Shirlyn Donovan
Cc: Chrystal Fuller; Brian Smith
Subject: RE: Council Workshop - Consolidation Discussion
Date: April 4, 2022 12:57:42 PM

Glenn / Owen;

I believe this is an important meeting, can we do this Wednesday evening or after our meeting tomorrow evening?

Harris

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Sent: April 4, 2022 12:21 PM
To: John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Beth Schumacher <beth.schumacher@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Council <council@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shirlyn Donovan <shirlyn.donovan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
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Cc: [Chrystal Fuller](#); [Brian Smith](#)
Subject: RE: Council Workshop - Consolidation Discussion
Date: April 4, 2022 2:55:18 PM
Importance: High

Good afternoon, Councillors –

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Thanks!
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Honour Yesterday, Act Today, Inspire Tomorrow

From: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Sent: April 4, 2022 12:58 PM
To: Glenn Horne <glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Beth Schumacher <beth.schumacher@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Council <council@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shirlyn Donovan <shirlyn.donovan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
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To: [Glenn Horne](#); [Harris McNamara](#); [John Dunbar](#); [Beth Schumacher](#); [Council](#); [Shirlyn Donovan](#)
Cc: [Chrystal Fuller](#); [Brian Smith](#)
Subject: RE: Council Workshop - Consolidation Discussion
Date: April 4, 2022 3:04:31 PM

Hi Glenn,
I'm fine with option 1.
Thanks, Donnie

From: Glenn Horne <glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
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To: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Beth Schumacher <beth.schumacher@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Council <council@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shirlyn Donovan <shirlyn.donovan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
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Cc: [Chrystal Fuller](#); [Brian Smith](#)
Subject: Re: Council Workshop - Consolidation Discussion
Date: April 4, 2022 3:18:00 PM

I vote for Option 1.

John

From: Glenn Horne <glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Sent: April 4, 2022 2:55 PM
To: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Beth Schumacher <beth.schumacher@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Council <council@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shirlyn Donovan <shirlyn.donovan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
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Honour Yesterday, Act Today, Inspire Tomorrow

From: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Sent: April 4, 2022 12:58 PM
To: Glenn Horne <glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Beth Schumacher <beth.schumacher@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Council <council@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shirlyn Donovan <shirlyn.donovan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Cc: Chrystal Fuller <chrystal@brighterplanning.ca>; Brian Smith <smithrsx@yahoo.ca>
Subject: RE: Council Workshop - Consolidation Discussion

Glenn / Owen;

I believe this is an important meeting, can we do this Wednesday evening or after our meeting tomorrow evening?

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Beth will be circulating Zoom links this afternoon. Given there will be no dinner, the meeting will start at 5:30.

Cheers,
Glenn



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Subject: Re: Council Workshop - Consolidation Discussion

Good morning, Councillor Dunbar -

Thank you for the email. Warden McCarron and I will be discussing our options for tonight's meeting later this morning.

Cheers,
Glenn

Glenn Horne
CAO
Municipality of the County of Antigonish

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Subject: Re: Council Workshop - Consolidation Discussion

Hi everyone,

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Perhaps Wednesday night?

John

From: Beth Schumacher <beth.schumacher@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Sent: April 1, 2022 3:37 PM
To: Council <council@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shirlyn Donovan <shirlyn.donovan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Council Workshop - Consolidation Discussion
When: April 4, 2022 5:00 PM-9:00 PM.
Where: Council Chambers

Dinner will be available at 5pm, with the discussion starting at 5:30pm.

From: [Mary MacLellan](#)
To: [Donnie MacDonald](#); [Glenn Horne](#); [Harris McNamara](#); [John Dunbar](#); [Beth Schumacher](#); [Council](#); [Shirlyn Donovan](#)
Cc: [Chrystal Fuller](#); [Brian Smith](#)
Subject: RE: Council Workshop - Consolidation Discussion
Date: April 4, 2022 3:31:28 PM

Did I misunderstand that Crystal was attending the meeting tonight. I thought it was just our council and Glen., without the consultants? Could we start at 5:00 tomorrow night and continue if necessary after COW? It is difficult to discuss such an important subject by zoom. It seems the week is all booked up. Is some time on the weekend possible? Personally I had only a few concerns but since the flyer came out I have had numerous calls with questions and concerns of constituents. I've told them that council is meeting on Monday (Which I understand is impossible now) and I would bring their concerns forward and get back to them. The format of the community sessions is a concern of many. Mary

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To: Glenn Horne <glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Beth Schumacher <beth.schumacher@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Council <council@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shirlyn Donovan <shirlyn.donovan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Cc: Chrystal Fuller <chrystal@brighterplanning.ca>; Brian Smith <smithrsx@yahoo.ca>
Subject: RE: Council Workshop - Consolidation Discussion

Hi Glenn,
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Thanks, Donnie

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Subject: RE: Council Workshop - Consolidation Discussion
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All councillors: please let me know your preference ASAP. We will make a call one way or another by 4:30pm today.

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Subject: Re: Council Workshop - Consolidation Discussion

Good morning, Councillor Dunbar -

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Cheers,
Glenn

Glenn Horne
CAO
Municipality of the County of Antigonish

From: John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>

Sent: Monday, April 4, 2022 9:49:14 AM

To: Beth Schumacher <beth.schumacher@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Council <council@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shirlyn Donovan <shirlyn.donovan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>

Subject: Re: Council Workshop - Consolidation Discussion

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To: Council <council@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shirlyn Donovan
<shirlyn.donovan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>

Subject: Council Workshop - Consolidation Discussion

When: April 4, 2022 5:00 PM-9:00 PM.

Where: Council Chambers

Dinner will be available at 5pm, with the discussion starting at 5:30pm.



Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Antigonish County & Antigonish Town - Consolidation - Effects on Fire Departments

2 messages

Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Mon, Apr 4, 2022 at 3:35 PM

To: Carol MacEachern ·

Carol;

Not too bad of a storm today, at least so far. I would like to pass on my comments to Danny about the meeting on Wednesday evening for Fire Chiefs from Antigonish County with the Mayor of Antigonish (Laurie Boucher), Warden of Antigonish County (Owen MacCarron) and Brighter Communities (Consultants) that will say that nothing will change with independence of Fire Departments. This is not the case as they can promise this but in future the new Municipality will have oversight, three examples I would like to bring to your attention;

The Greenwich Fire Department near Kentville was shut down in March of this year by the Kings Municipality without warning to the Greenwich Fire Department volunteer members or the chief, just came in and said your closed down. The decision has been reversed by the Kings Municipality on Friday (March 10) due to outcry from the fire service and the public. The Mayor said it was a mistake and result of fire report done by municipality.

The second situation I have learned is, there was a "fire review" of the fire service with the intention of seeing where "opportunities" can be identified done by West Hants after consolidation, I don't know what opportunities were identified but this does indicate oversight by the municipality taking away independence of local fire departments.

In our area, there is a report in the front page of the newspaper "the Reporter" dated March 23rd, 2022 where there was a conflict between two fire departments but both wanted to continue operating independently and did not want the municipality citing fire departments independence.

The independence may not be in jeopardy now, however a review of the fire service in the new municipality could result in different policies and requirements on fire departments, you never know what you get in elections. This is oversight. There are other issues that I will speak to you and Danny about that effect District 9 much more than the fire departments.

Just for information.

Harris

Carol MacEachern ·
To: Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Mon, Apr 4, 2022 at 10:24 PM

Harris,

The conflict on the Reporter was 2 departments that have a Board of Directors. The one in Isle Madame were unable to make any decisions the board made them. Caused a huge mess.

Omg I knew there were going to be issues! This amalgamation is going to visit Antigonish and we will get the shaft! You know how NSHB is in Halifax now we'll look at our health care down East going down the tube and quickly.

Thanks for your email I printed it off for Danny to see.

Carol

Sent from my iPhone

On Apr 4, 2022, at 3:35 PM, Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com> wrote:

[Quoted text hidden]



Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Amalgamation - Antigonish Town & Antigonish County

2 messages

Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Mon, Apr 4, 2022 at 3:37 PM

To: chris.grover

Chris;

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Just for information.

Harris

Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Mon, Apr 4, 2022 at 4:07 PM

To: Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>

[Quoted text hidden]

From: [Harris McNamara](#)
To: [Mary MacLellan](#); [Donnie MacDonald](#); [Glenn Horne](#); [John Dunbar](#); [Beth Schumacher](#); [Council](#); [Shirlyn Donovan](#)
Cc: [Chrystal Fuller](#); [Brian Smith](#)
Subject: RE: Council Workshop - Consolidation Discussion
Date: April 4, 2022 3:53:13 PM

Folks

I completely agree with Mary and have expressed it to Glenn and Owen, this is a council meeting without consultants and in person.

Harris

From: Mary MacLellan <mmacellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Sent: April 4, 2022 3:31 PM
To: Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Glenn Horne <glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Beth Schumacher <beth.schumacher@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Council <council@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shirlyn Donovan <shirlyn.donovan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
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Cc: [Chrystal Fuller](#); [Brian Smith](#)
Subject: RE: Council Workshop - Consolidation Discussion
Date: April 4, 2022 3:53:52 PM

The meetings don't start until the 11th. Is there a time next week? Mary

From: Glenn Horne <glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
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To: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Beth Schumacher <beth.schumacher@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Council <council@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shirlyn Donovan <shirlyn.donovan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
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Subject: Re: Council Workshop - Consolidation Discussion

Good morning, Councillor Dunbar -

Thank you for the email. Warden McCarron and I will be discussing our options for tonight's meeting later this morning.

Cheers,
Glenn

Glenn Horne
CAO
Municipality of the County of Antigonish

From: John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Sent: Monday, April 4, 2022 9:49:14 AM
To: Beth Schumacher <beth.schumacher@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Council <council@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shirlyn Donovan <shirlyn.donovan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Re: Council Workshop - Consolidation Discussion

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Perhaps Wednesday night?

John

From: Beth Schumacher <beth.schumacher@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Sent: April 1, 2022 3:37 PM
To: Council <council@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shirlyn Donovan <shirlyn.donovan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Council Workshop - Consolidation Discussion
When: April 4, 2022 5:00 PM-9:00 PM.
Where: Council Chambers

Dinner will be available at 5pm, with the discussion starting at 5:30pm.

From: [John Dunbar](#)
To: [Mary MacLellan](#); [Glenn Horne](#); [Harris McNamara](#); [Beth Schumacher](#); [Council](#); [Shirlyn Donovan](#)
Cc: [Chrystal Fuller](#); [Brian Smith](#)
Subject: Re: Council Workshop - Consolidation Discussion
Date: April 4, 2022 4:16:51 PM

Mary, the 11th is next Monday.

I do not understand the objection to the consultants. They are going to be facilitating the community meetings, they are able to attend tonight and if we have questions for them they can be answered tonight. The weather makes attending in person tonight not an option. Time is of the essence here and Zoom is not ideal but we held several Council meetings that way, I feel we should go ahead by Zoom tonight.

John

From: Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Sent: April 4, 2022 3:53 PM
To: Glenn Horne <glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Beth Schumacher <beth.schumacher@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Council <council@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shirlyn Donovan <shirlyn.donovan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Cc: Chrystal Fuller <chrystal@brighterplanning.ca>; Brian Smith <smithrsx@yahoo.ca>
Subject: RE: Council Workshop - Consolidation Discussion

The meetings don't start until the 11th. Is there a time next week? Mary

From: Glenn Horne <glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Sent: April 4, 2022 2:55 PM
To: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Beth Schumacher <beth.schumacher@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Council <council@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shirlyn Donovan <shirlyn.donovan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
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All councillors: please let me know your preference ASAP. We will make a call one way or another by 4:30pm today.

Thanks!
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Honour Yesterday, Act Today, Inspire Tomorrow

From: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
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To: Glenn Horne <glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Beth Schumacher <beth.schumacher@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Council <council@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shirlyn Donovan <shirlyn.donovan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
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Subject: RE: Council Workshop - Consolidation Discussion

Glenn / Owen;
I believe this is an important meeting, can we do this Wednesday evening or after our meeting tomorrow evening?
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From: Glenn Horne <glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Sent: April 4, 2022 12:21 PM
To: John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Beth Schumacher <beth.schumacher@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Council <council@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shirlyn Donovan <shirlyn.donovan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
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Municipality of the County of Antigonish

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Subject: Council Workshop - Consolidation Discussion
When: April 4, 2022 5:00 PM-9:00 PM.
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From: [Gary Mattie](#)
To: [Glenn Horne](#)
Cc: [Harris McNamara](#); [John Dunbar](#); [Beth Schumacher](#); [Council](#); [Shirlyn Donovan](#); [Chrystal Fuller](#); [Brian Smith](#)
Subject: Re: Council Workshop - Consolidation Discussion
Date: April 4, 2022 4:27:08 PM

I guess

Sent from my iPad

On Apr 4, 2022, at 2:55 PM, Glenn Horne
<glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca> wrote:

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Sent: April 4, 2022 10:06 AM

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Municipality of the County of Antigonish

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Subject: Council Workshop - Consolidation Discussion

When: April 4, 2022 5:00 PM-9:00 PM.

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To: [Glenn Horne](#)
Cc: [John Dunbar](#); [Beth Schumacher](#); [Council](#); [Shirlyn Donovan](#); [Chrystal Fuller](#); [Brian Smith](#)
Subject: Re: Council Workshop - Consolidation Discussion
Date: April 4, 2022 4:30:40 PM

I guess I misunderstood when we had our last meeting and we mentioned it counsel and Glenn would have a discussion on consolidation, seems like the platform for tonight is quite different. Or is this gonna happen another day.

Sent from my iPad

On Apr 4, 2022, at 12:21 PM, Glenn Horne
<glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca> wrote:

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To: [Harris McNamara](#); [John Dunbar](#); [Beth Schumacher](#); [Council](#); [Shirlyn Donovan](#)
Cc: [Chrystal Fuller](#); [Brian Smith](#)
Subject: RE: Council Workshop - Consolidation Discussion
Date: April 4, 2022 4:32:44 PM

Hi again –

I have heard from the majority of councillors, the majority of whom have endorsed moving ahead tonight with a Zoom meeting. Thank you for providing your thoughts and see you tonight at 5:30. Beth has provided the Zoom link, which I am putting below once again:

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82236734141?pwd=QStRTWVzWnhKV3plbkZldGlyalBQQT09>

Thanks,
Glenn



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When: April 4, 2022 5:00 PM-9:00 PM.

Where: Council Chambers

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Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Video of John Patrick Pettipas on Consolidation

1 message

Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Mon, Apr 4, 2022 at 5:14 PM

To: Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Glenn Horne <glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>

Everyone;

I know this guy is lacking some interpersonal skills but he has a following. This has been widely circulated and has resulted in a number of calls from residents.

Follow the link below, it's ten minutes long.

<https://youtu.be/fZkii9iH000>

Harris

From: [Glenn Horne](#)
To: [Council](#)
Subject: FW: Closed-Door Session on Consolidation
Date: April 4, 2022 6:23:09 PM
Attachments: [2022 - Mar 31 - Municipal Council Questions Related to Consolidation.pdf](#)
[Fact Sheets.pdf](#)
[Critical Path Jan 7 2022.pdf](#)
[2021 Consolidated Financial Statements.pdf](#)
[2020-2021 Signed Consolidated Financial Statements.pdf](#)
[2020-21 FCI County of Antigonish.pdf](#)
[2020-21 FCI Town of Antigonish.pdf](#)
[2020-21 FCI County and Town of Antigonish.pdf](#)
[2020 Municipal World Article.pdf](#)
[2019 Municipal World Article.pdf](#)
[Key Messages for Councils April 1 2022.pdf](#)



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Honour Yesterday, Act Today, Inspire Tomorrow

From: Glenn Horne
Sent: April 1, 2022 3:33 PM
To: Council <council@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Cc: Shirlyn Donovan <shirlyn.donovan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Brian Smith <smithrsx@yahoo.ca>; Chrystal Fuller <chrystal@brighterplanning.ca>
Subject: Closed-Door Session on Consolidation

Good afternoon, councillors –

Please note that a closed-door session will be held on Monday, April 4, for councillors to further discuss consolidation and have lingering questions addressed prior to the public engagement phase of our process. The meeting will be held in the Council Chamber at 5:30pm; dinner will be served at 5pm.

Please find attached materials to support the following order of events:

1. Chrystal will review with Council how the public open-houses will function and share the role(s) we would like councillors to play at those sessions.
2. Key messages that councillors can use ahead of the public open-houses when receiving questions or comments from residents will be reviewed.
3. Review of responses to questions that have been submitted.

Chrystal will be signing off after the walk-through of the open-houses. Brian & Shirlyn will remain to help address any questions that come from Council's discussion.

The following materials are attached and you are encouraged to review them prior to our session.

Please note that these materials are NOT for public circulation at this point. Once reviewed by Council information will be post our official channels.

- Questions related to Consolidation.
- Fact Sheets
- Critical Path
- Antigonish County Consolidated Financial Statements, 20/21.
- Town of Antigonish Consolidated Financial Statements, 20/21.
- Financial Condition Indicators (County, Town and Consolidated; 20/21).
- Municipal World Articles re: West Hants Consolidation
- Key Messages you can use if you get calls before or during the community sessions

Enjoy your weekend and see you on Monday.

Thanks!

Glenn



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Honour Yesterday, Act Today, Inspire Tomorrow

From: [Allison Duggan](#)
To: [Council](#)
Subject: Copy of County of Antigonish Financial Statements
Date: April 5, 2022 12:50:17 PM
Attachments: [F2020_2021 Signed Consolidated Financial Statements.pdf](#)
[F2020_2021 Antigonish Water Utility Financial Statements.pdf](#)

Hi Folks,

I have had a couple calls from residents requesting a copy of the County's Financial Statements so I figured that it might be beneficial if you had a copy as well. Please see attached a copy of the County's most recent audited consolidated financial statements and a copy of the most recent Antigonish Water Utility Financial Statements.

Thank you!
Allison

Allison Duggan, CPA, CA
Director of Finance
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
902-863-1117

"Honour Yesterday, Act Today, Inspire Tomorrow"

**Municipality of the County of
Antigonish Water Utility
Financial Statements**
March 31, 2021

Independent Auditors' Report

To the Warden and Councillors of
Municipality of the County of Antigonish Water Utility

Opinion

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of Municipality of the County of Antigonish Water Utility which comprise the statement of financial position as at March 31, 2021 and the statements of financial activities and statement of cash flows for the year then ended, and a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information.

In our opinion, these financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of Municipality of the County of Antigonish Water Utility as at March 31, 2021 and the results of its financial performance and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with the Accounting and Reporting Handbook for Water Utilities in Nova Scotia.

Basis for Opinion

Without modifying our opinion, we draw attention to Note 1 to the financial statements which describes the basis of accounting. We conducted our audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements section of our report. We are independent of the Water Utility in accordance with ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in Canada, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Emphasis of Matter

We draw attention to Note 1 in the financial statements, which describes the basis of presentation. The financial statements are prepared in accordance with the Accounting and Reporting Handbook for Water Utilities issued by the Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board. As a result, the financial statements may not be suitable for another purpose. Our opinion is not modified in respect of this matter.

Responsibility of Management and Those Charged with Governance for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with the Accounting and Reporting Handbook for Water Utilities in Nova Scotia and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing financial statements, management is responsible for assessing the Water Utility's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless management either intends to liquidate the Water Utility or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Those charged with governance are responsible for overseeing the Water Utility's financial reporting process.

Auditors' Responsibility for the Audit of the Financial Statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decision of users taken on the basis of these financial statements. As part of an audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards, we exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit.

We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Water Utility's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by management.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of management's use of the going concern basis of accounting and based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Water Utility's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Water Utility to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

Sydney, Nova Scotia
February 15, 2022

MNP LLP

Chartered Professional Accountants

MNP

Municipality of the County of Antigonish Water Utility
Financial Statements

For the year ended March 31, 2021

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Management's Responsibility for the Financial Statements

The accompanying financial statements of the Municipality of the County of Antigonish Water Utility (the "Water Utility") are the responsibility of the Water Utility's management and have been prepared in compliance with legislation, and in accordance with the Accounting and Reporting Handbook for Water Utilities in Nova Scotia. A summary of the significant accounting policies is described in Note 1 to the financial statements. The preparation of financial statements necessarily involves the use of estimates based on management's judgment, particularly when transactions affecting the current accounting period cannot be finalized with certainty until future periods.

The Water Utility's management maintains a system of internal controls designed to provide reasonable assurance that assets are safeguarded, transactions are properly authorized and recorded in compliance with legislative and regulatory requirements, and reliable financial information is available on a timely basis for preparation of the financial statements. These systems are monitored and evaluated by management.

The audit committee meets with management and the external auditors to review the financial statements and discuss any significant financial reporting or internal control matters prior to their approval of the financial statements.

The financial statements have been audited by MNP LLP, independent external auditors appointed by the Water Utility. The accompanying Independent Auditors' Report outlines their responsibilities, the scope of their examination and their opinion on the Water Utility's financial statements.

Glenn Horne
CAO

Municipality of the County of Antigonish Water Utility
Statement of Financial Position – Operating Fund

As at March 31, 2021

	2021	2020
ASSETS		
Accounts receivable	\$ 179,910	\$ 92,801
Due from Municipality of the County of Antigonish, operating fund	677,030	758,248
	\$ 856,940	\$ 851,049
LIABILITIES		
Accrued interest	\$ 12,813	\$ 12,813
Due to Municipality of the County of Antigonish, special reserve fund	6,331	6,331
Due to Municipality of the County of Antigonish Water Utility, capital fund	75,989	51,139
Deferred revenue	25	83,807
	95,158	154,090
SURPLUS		
Surplus	761,782	696,959
	\$ 856,940	\$ 851,049

See accompanying notes to non-consolidated financial statements.

On behalf of the Municipality of the County of Antigonish:

_____ Warden

_____ CAO

Municipality of the County of Antigonish Water Utility
Statement of Operations and Surplus – Operating Fund

For the year ended March 31, 2021

	2021	2020
REVENUES		
Operating revenues		
Water rates	\$ 1,074,479	\$ 996,321
Public fire protection	367,987	322,589
	<u>1,442,466</u>	<u>1,318,910</u>
Non-operating revenue		
Interest	3,933	3,414
	<u>1,446,399</u>	<u>1,322,324</u>
EXPENDITURES		
Operating expenditures		
Source of supply	339,753	307,652
Power and pumping	18,852	18,607
Water treatment	59,923	56,656
Transmission and distribution	377,158	357,932
Administrative	191,302	175,178
Property taxes	37,904	38,165
Depreciation	220,932	182,988
Amortization of deferred contributions	–	(38,160)
	<u>1,245,824</u>	<u>1,099,018</u>
Non-operating expenditures		
Debt charges, principal	84,173	84,173
Debt charges, interest	51,579	49,804
	<u>135,752</u>	<u>133,977</u>
	<u>1,381,576</u>	<u>1,232,995</u>
EXCESS OF REVENUES OVER EXPENDITURES	64,823	89,329
SURPLUS, BEGINNING OF YEAR	696,959	607,630
SURPLUS, END OF YEAR	<u>\$ 761,782</u>	<u>\$ 696,959</u>

See accompanying notes to non-consolidated financial statements.

Municipality of the County of Antigonish Water Utility
Statement of Financial Position – Capital Fund

As at March 31, 2021

	2021	2020
ASSETS		
Restricted cash – depreciation reserve	\$ 1,269,504	\$ 1,201,237
Due from Province of Nova Scotia	80,294	–
Due from Municipality of the County of Antigonish, general operating fund	68,222	9,985
Due from Municipality of the County of Antigonish Water Utility, operating fund	75,989	51,139
Tangible capital assets Utility plant and equipment	11,217,302	8,717,560
	\$ 12,711,311	\$ 9,979,921
LIABILITIES		
Deferred contributions	\$ 3,746,564	\$ 1,602,392
Long-term debt (schedule)	1,471,158	1,582,822
	5,217,722	3,185,214
RESERVES		
Accumulated allowance for depreciation	2,286,020	2,065,088
SURPLUS		
Surplus	5,207,569	4,729,619
	\$ 12,711,311	\$ 9,979,921

See accompanying notes to non-consolidated financial statements.

On behalf of the Municipality of the County of Antigonish:

_____ Warden

_____ CAO

Municipality of the County of Antigonish Water Utility
Statement of Accumulated Allowance for Depreciation

For the year ended March 31, 2021

	2021	2020
BALANCE, BEGINNING OF YEAR	\$ 2,065,088	\$ 1,882,100
Depreciation for the year	220,932	182,988
BALANCE, END OF YEAR	\$ 2,286,020	\$ 2,065,088

Statement of Investment in Capital Assets

For the year ended March 31, 2021

	2021	2020
BALANCE, BEGINNING OF YEAR	\$ 4,729,619	\$ 4,500,924
Term debt retired, water operating fund	84,173	84,173
Term debt retired, general operating fund	27,491	26,731
Interest on depreciation funds	10,715	21,999
Amortization of deferred contributions	75,989	-
Capital out of operations, general fund	279,582	95,792
BALANCE, END OF YEAR	\$ 5,207,569	\$ 4,729,619

Statement of Depreciation Fund Cash

For the year ended March 31, 2021

	2021	2020
FUND, BEGINNING OF YEAR	\$ 1,273,077	\$ 1,128,249
Depreciation	220,932	182,988
Deferred assistance transferred	-	(38,160)
FUND, END OF YEAR	1,494,009	1,273,077
Amount unfunded	(224,505)	(71,840)
CASH, END OF YEAR	\$ 1,269,504	\$ 1,201,237

See accompanying notes to non-consolidated financial statements.

Municipality of the County of Antigonish Water Utility
Statement of Cash Flows – Operating Fund

For the year ended March 31, 2021

	2021	2020
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES		
Excess of revenues over expenditures	\$ 64,823	\$ 89,329
Change in non-cash items		
Increase in accounts receivable	(87,109)	(13,720)
Increase (decrease) in deferred revenue	(83,782)	1,681
Decrease in accrued interest	-	(4,500)
	(106,068)	72,790
CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES		
Decrease (increase) in due from Municipality of County of Antigonish, operating fund	81,218	(86,665)
Increase in due to Municipality of the County of Antigonish Water Utility, capital fund	24,850	13,875
	106,068	(72,790)
NET CHANGE IN CASH	-	-
CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS, BEGINNING OF YEAR	-	-
CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS, END OF YEAR	\$ -	\$ -

See accompanying notes to non-consolidated financial statements.

Municipality of the County of Antigonish Water Utility
Notes to Financial Statements
For the year ended March 31, 2021

1. SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

(a) Basis of presentation

In matters of administrative policy relating to rates, capital expenditures, depreciation rates and accounting matters, the Commission is subject to the jurisdiction of the Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board (NSUARB). Rates charged to and collected from customers are designed to recover costs of providing the regulated services. These statements have been prepared in accordance with the Accounting and Reporting Handbook for Water Utilities (Handbook) issued by the NSUARB. There are differences in the accounting treatment of certain transactions from Canadian generally accepted accounting principles including the accounting of principal and debt payments and gains and losses on the disposal of fixed assets.

Regulatory assets represent costs incurred that have been deferred as approved by the NSUARB and will be recovered through future rates collected from customers.

(b) Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents consist of cash on hand and balances with banks, net of bank indebtedness.

(c) Tangible capital assets

Tangible capital assets are recorded at cost.

Depreciation is provided using the straight-line method over the estimated useful lives of the assets.

The estimated useful lives for the major classifications of utility plant in service are as follows:

Structures and improvements	50 to 100 years
Pumping equipment	5 to 30 years
Purification and treatment equipment	20 to 50 years
SCADA equipment	5 to 25 years
Water, wastewater and stormwater mains	60 to 100 years
Services and laterals	50 to 60 years
Meters	20 to 25 years
Hydrants	50 to 80 years
Tools and work equipment	5 to 30 years
Office equipment and furniture and transportation equipment	3 to 10 years

Municipality of the County of Antigonish Water Utility
Notes to Financial Statements

For the year ended March 31, 2021

1. SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (CONTINUED)

In the year of acquisition, depreciation is calculated at 50% of the above rates unless a project is significant, in which case depreciation is prorated for the number of months the asset was in use.

(d) Revenues and expenditures

All revenues and expenditures are recorded on an accrual basis. Receivables include outstanding revenue billed by the Utility and estimated revenue not yet billed.

(e) Deferred contributions

Deferred contributions represent funding received from external sources. Amortization is provided using the straight-line method which corresponds with the rates of the related tangible capital assets and is recognized to investment in capital assets.

(f) Capital long-term debt

Repayment of long-term debt is recorded on an accrual basis as an expense on the statement of operations. Interest on long-term debt is recorded on an accrual basis. Debt issue costs are deferred and amortized over the term of the debt to which it relates.

(g) Use of estimates

The preparation of financial statements in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities and disclosure of contingent assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements and the reported amounts of revenues and expenses during the reporting periods. Significant items subject to such estimates and assumptions include valuation of accounts receivable and carrying amount of capital assets. Actual results could differ from those estimates.

2. LONG-TERM DEBT

Principal repayments required during the next five years are as follows:

2022	\$ 111,700
2023	591,700
2024	152,500
2025	54,800
2026	54,800

Municipality of the County of Antigonish Water Utility
Notes to Financial Statements
For the year ended March 31, 2021

3. TRANSACTIONS WITH MUNICIPALITY OF THE COUNTY OF ANTIGONISH

- a) In general, and where identifiable, costs incurred by the County on behalf of the Utility are charged to the Utility.
- b) Salary and wage-related costs are allocated in proportion to time spent performing functions on behalf of the Utility.
- c) At March 31, 2021, the County owed \$745,252 to the Utility (2020 - \$768,733) with respect to this inter-fund balance, no interest has been charged to the County.
- d) The Utility provides public fire protection to the County. The charge for this service (included in operating revenues) amounted to \$367,987 (2020 - \$322,589). The charge is governed by the Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board.

4. RATE OF RETURN ON RATE BASE

For the year ended March 31, 2021, the Municipality of the County of Antigonish Water Utility had a rate of return on rate base of 3.8% (2020 – 4.4%).

5. FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

The carrying value of accounts receivable approximate their fair value due to the relatively short terms to maturity.

The carrying value of inter-fund balances and due to/from Municipality of the County of Antigonish approximates its fair value due to special conditions attached thereto.

The fair value of capital debt approximate their carrying value because the contractual rates of interest approximate the current market rates available to the Utility.

Municipality of the County of Antigonish Water Utility
Schedule of Long-Term Debt
For the year ended March 31, 2020

	Date of Issue	Maturity Date	Interest Rate %	Beginning of Year	Issued	Redeemed	End of Year
Municipal Finance Corporation							
Water, extension	2007	2022	4.625 - 4.770	\$ 624,000	\$ -	\$ 48,000	\$ 576,000
Water, building	2008	2023	5.010 - 5.480	124,320	-	8,880	115,440
				748,320	-	56,880	691,440
Municipality of the County of Antigonish Reserve Funds							
Water, various	2008	2034	3.000	834,502	-	54,784	779,718
				\$ 1,582,822	\$ -	\$ 111,664	\$ 1,471,158

**Municipality of The County of
Antigonish
Consolidated Financial Statements**
March 31, 2021

Independent Auditor's Report

To the Warden and Councillors of the Municipality of the County of Antigonish:

Opinion

We have audited the consolidated financial statements of the Municipality of the County of Antigonish and its subsidiaries (the "Municipality"), which comprise the consolidated statement of financial position as at March 31, 2021, and the consolidated statements of operations, accumulated surplus, changes in net financial assets and cash flows for the year then ended, and notes to the consolidated financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies.

In our opinion, the accompanying consolidated financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the consolidated financial position of the Municipality as at March 31, 2021, and the results of its consolidated operations and its consolidated cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian public sector accounting standards.

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Consolidated Financial Statements section of our report. We are independent of the Municipality in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the consolidated financial statements in Canada, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Responsibilities of Management and Those Charged with Governance for the Consolidated Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the consolidated financial statements in accordance with Canadian public sector accounting standards, and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of consolidated financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the consolidated financial statements, management is responsible for assessing the Municipality's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless management either intends to liquidate the Municipality or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Those charged with governance are responsible for overseeing the Municipality's financial reporting process.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Consolidated Financial Statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the consolidated financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these consolidated financial statements.

As part of an audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards, we exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the consolidated financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Municipality's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by management.

- Conclude on the appropriateness of management's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Municipality's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the consolidated financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Municipality to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the consolidated financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the consolidated financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

Sydney, Nova Scotia
February 15, 2022

MNP LLP
Chartered Professional Accountants

MNP

Municipality of the County of Antigonish
Consolidated Financial Statements

For the year ended March 31, 2021

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Management's Responsibility for the Consolidated Financial Statements

The accompanying consolidated financial statements of the Municipality of the County of Antigonish (the "County") are the responsibility of the County's management and have been prepared in compliance with legislation, and in accordance with Canadian public sector accounting standards. A summary of the significant accounting policies are described in Note 1 to the consolidated financial statements. The preparation of financial statements necessarily involves the use of estimates based on management's judgment, particularly when transactions affecting the current accounting period cannot be finalized with certainty until future periods.

The County's management maintains a system of internal controls designed to provide reasonable assurance that assets are safeguarded, transactions are properly authorized and recorded in compliance with legislative and regulatory requirements, and reliable financial information is available on a timely basis for preparation of the consolidated financial statements. These systems are monitored and evaluated by management.

The audit committee meets with management and the external auditors to review the consolidated financial statements and discuss any significant financial reporting or internal control matters prior to their approval of the consolidated financial statements.

The consolidated financial statements have been audited by MNP LLP, independent external auditors appointed by the County. The accompanying Independent Auditors' Report outlines their responsibilities, the scope of their examination and their opinion on the County's consolidated financial statements.



Glenn Horne
CAO



Municipality of the County of Antigonish
Consolidated Statement of Financial Position
As at March 31, 2021

	2021	2020
FINANCIAL ASSETS		
Cash (note 2)	\$ 16,171,976	\$ 16,710,833
Restricted cash	208,283	204,254
Taxes receivable (note 3)	453,832	562,847
Accounts receivable (note 4)	1,154,181	686,063
Short-term investments (note 5)	1,542,966	1,481,557
	19,531,238	19,645,554
FINANCIAL LIABILITIES		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities (note 6)	1,359,948	1,851,476
Deferred revenue	633,055	636,166
Tax sale surplus	208,283	204,254
Long-term debt (note 7)	2,783,650	3,002,258
	4,984,936	5,694,154
NET FINANCIAL ASSETS	14,546,302	13,951,400
NON-FINANCIAL ASSETS		
Tangible capital assets (note 8)	25,763,698	22,661,721
Properties acquired at tax sale	19,866	19,866
Inventory, prepaid expenses and other	66,848	79,803
	25,850,412	22,761,390
ACCUMULATED SURPLUS	\$ 40,396,714	\$ 36,712,790
MUNICIPAL POSITION		
Fund balances		
General operating fund	\$ —	\$ —
Water operating fund	837,771	696,959
General capital fund	14,426,642	13,275,833
Water capital fund	8,878,144	6,332,011
Reserve funds	11,568,463	10,797,923
Gas tax reserve	4,685,694	5,610,064
TOTAL MUNICIPAL POSITION	\$ 40,396,714	\$ 36,712,790

Contingencies (note 10)

See accompanying notes to consolidated financial statements.

On behalf of the Municipality of the County of Antigonish:

 Warden
 CAO

Municipality of the County of Antigonish
Consolidated Statement of Operations

For the year ended March 31, 2021

	2021		2020
	Budget (Unaudited)	Actual	Actual
REVENUES			
Taxes	\$ 9,423,108	\$ 9,608,026	\$ 9,372,731
Grants in lieu of taxes	188,013	184,495	185,178
Sale of services	1,302,059	1,309,875	1,401,950
Revenue from own sources	796,171	973,759	986,654
Conditional transfers from other governments	698,646	1,351,173	1,451,316
Unconditional transfers from other governments	51,981	64,553	45,240
Capital grants	-	922,827	-
Water utility revenue	1,020,190	1,078,412	999,735
	<u>13,480,168</u>	<u>15,493,120</u>	<u>14,442,804</u>
EXPENSES			
General government services	3,009,888	2,977,440	2,747,761
Protective services	2,744,373	2,777,846	2,703,278
Transportation services	558,223	488,054	527,515
Environmental health services	2,909,511	2,959,185	2,930,510
Public health and welfare services	110,300	111,600	112,000
Recreation and cultural services	1,026,816	914,553	1,472,092
Environmental development services	589,288	299,309	287,387
Water utility expenses	1,246,207	1,281,209	1,175,144
	<u>12,194,606</u>	<u>11,809,196</u>	<u>11,955,687</u>
ANNUAL SURPLUS	1,285,562	3,683,924	2,487,117
ACCUMULATED SURPLUS, BEGINNING OF YEAR	36,712,790	36,712,790	34,225,673
ACCUMULATED SURPLUS, END OF YEAR	<u>\$ 37,998,352</u>	<u>\$ 40,396,714</u>	<u>\$ 36,712,790</u>

See accompanying notes to consolidated financial statements.

Municipality of the County of Antigonish
Consolidated Statement of Change in Net Financial Assets
For the year ended March 31, 2021

	2021	2020
ANNUAL SURPLUS	\$ 3,683,924	\$ 2,487,117
Other non-financial assets		
Amortization of tangible capital assets	1,021,772	971,708
Additions to tangible capital assets	(4,123,749)	(1,721,963)
Decrease in inventory, prepaid expenses and other	12,955	9,651
INCREASE IN NET FINANCIAL ASSETS	594,902	1,746,513
NET FINANCIAL ASSETS, BEGINNING OF YEAR	13,951,400	12,204,887
NET FINANCIAL ASSETS, END OF YEAR	\$ 14,546,302	\$ 13,951,400

See accompanying notes to consolidated financial statements.

Municipality of the County of Antigonish
Consolidated Statement of Cash Flows
For the year ended March 31, 2021

	2021	2020
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES		
Annual surplus	\$ 3,683,924	\$ 2,487,117
Add amortization of tangible capital assets	1,021,772	971,708
	<u>4,705,696</u>	<u>3,458,825</u>
Change in non-cash items		
Decrease in taxes receivable	109,015	78,582
Increase in accounts receivable	(468,118)	(290,793)
Increase (decrease) in accounts payable and accrued liabilities	(491,528)	427,325
Increase (decrease) in deferred revenue	(3,111)	91,940
Increase in tax sale surplus	4,029	5,671
Decrease in inventory, prepaid expenses and other	12,955	9,651
	<u>(836,758)</u>	<u>322,376</u>
Net change in cash from operating activities		
CASH FLOWS FROM CAPITAL ACTIVITIES		
Additions to tangible capital assets	(4,123,749)	(1,721,963)
CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES		
Repayment of long-term debt	(218,608)	(218,609)
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES		
Decrease (increase) in short-term investments, net	(61,409)	24
INCREASE (DECREASE) IN CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS	<u>(534,828)</u>	<u>1,840,653</u>
CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS, BEGINNING OF YEAR	16,915,087	15,074,434
CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS, END OF YEAR	<u>\$ 16,380,259</u>	<u>\$ 16,915,087</u>
Cash and cash equivalents consists of		
Cash	\$ 16,171,976	\$ 16,710,833
Restricted cash	208,283	204,254
	<u>\$ 16,380,259</u>	<u>\$ 16,915,087</u>

See accompanying notes to consolidated financial statements.

Municipality of the County of Antigonish

Notes to Consolidated Financial Statements

For the year ended March 31, 2021

1. SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

(a) Basis of presentation

These consolidated financial statements of the Municipality of the County of Antigonish (the "County") have been prepared, in all material respects, in accordance with Canadian public sector accounting standards.

(b) Basis of consolidation

These consolidated financial statements reflect the assets, liabilities, revenue, expenses and changes in fund balances of all funds of the County. The County is comprised of all organizations, committees and local boards accountable for the administration of their financial affairs and resources to the County and that are owned or controlled by the County. Inter-fund and inter-corporate balances and transactions have been eliminated. The entities included are as follows:

- Operating, capital and reserve funds of the Municipality of the County of Antigonish
- Operating and capital funds of the Municipality of the County of Antigonish Water Utility

(c) School boards

The assets, liabilities, taxation and other revenue and expenses with respect to the operations of the school boards are not reflected in these consolidated financial statements as they are provincial government entities.

School boards in Nova Scotia were created by the Province under provisions in the Education Act, and, under provincial statute, every County is required to make a mandatory contribution to its school board. The mandatory contribution is set at the value of the Education Rate, set by the Province each year, multiplied by the previous year's Uniform Assessment. The funding for this contribution to the Strait Regional School Board are recovered by the County by an area rate levied on the assessed value of the taxable property and business occupancy assessments and is shown on the consolidated statement of financial activities as a reduction of taxation revenues.

(d) R.K. MacDonald Nursing Home Corporation

The R.K. MacDonald Nursing Home Corporation is jointly governed by the Municipality of the County of Antigonish and the Town of Antigonish. The County does not consolidate the financial statements of the Nursing Home.

(e) Fund accounting

The resources and operations of the County are comprised of the operating, capital and reserve funds. Transfers between funds are recorded as adjustments to the appropriate fund balance. Supporting schedules to the consolidated financial statements are included to show the financial activities and change in the balance of each fund.

Municipality of the County of Antigonish
Notes to Consolidated Financial Statements
For the year ended March 31, 2021

1. SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (CONTINUED)

(f) Basis of accounting

Revenue and expenses are recorded on the accrual basis of accounting. The accrual basis of accounting recognizes revenue as they are earned and measurable; expenses are recognized as they are incurred and measurable as a result of the receipt of goods or services and the creation of a legal obligation to pay.

(g) Cash and cash equivalents

The County considers cash on hand, deposits held in banks net of outstanding cheques and deposits and temporary lines of credit and overdrafts as cash and cash equivalents.

(h) Short-term investments

Short-term investments are initially recorded at cost and are subsequently measured at fair market value with any changes recorded on the statement of operations.

(i) Tangible capital assets

Tangible capital assets are reported in the statement of financial position at cost net of accumulated amortization. They are amortized on a straight-line basis over their estimated useful lives at the following rates:

Asset	Basis	Rate
Capital fund		
Buildings	Straight-line	40 years
Equipment	Straight-line	5-10 years
Streets	Straight-line	50 years
Sidewalks	Straight-line	20 years
Parking grounds	Straight-line	20 years
Garbage collection and disposal	Straight-line	25 years
Sewer collection and disposal	Straight-line	50 years
Water fund		
Structures and improvements	Straight-line	75 years
Equipment	Straight-line	5-20 years
Mains	Straight-line	75 years
Services and other	Straight-line	50 years
Meters	Straight-line	20 years
Hydrants	Straight-line	50 years

A full year's amortization is taken in the year of acquisition.

Tangible capital assets received as contributions are recorded at their fair value at the date of receipt and are also recorded as revenue.

Municipality of the County of Antigonish
Notes to Consolidated Financial Statements

For the year ended March 31, 2021

1. SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (CONTINUED)

(j) Reserve funds

Certain amounts, as approved by the Council of the County, are set aside in reserve funds for future operating and capital purposes. Transfers to and or from reserves funds are an adjustment to the respective fund when approved.

(k) Government transfers

Government transfers are recognized in the consolidated financial statements in the period in which events giving rise to the transfer occur, providing the transfers are authorized, any eligibility criteria have been met, and reasonable estimates of the amounts can be made.

(l) Deferred revenue

Deferred revenue represents user charges, prepayment of taxes, and other fees that have been collected, for which the related services have yet to be performed. These amounts will be recognized as revenue in the fiscal year the services are performed.

(m) Taxation and related revenue

Property tax billings are prepared by the County based on assessment rolls issued by the Province of Nova Scotia (Province). Tax rates are established annually by Council, incorporating amounts to be raised for local services and the requisition made by the Province in respect of education taxes. Taxation revenues are recorded at the time tax billings are due. Assessments and the related property taxes are subject to appeal. Tax adjustments as a result of appeals are recorded when the results of the appeal process are known. An allowance for unresolved assessment appeals is also provided.

(n) Use of estimates

The preparation of financial statements in conformity with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets, liabilities, the disclosure of contingencies and the reported amounts of revenue and expenses in the consolidated financial statements and accompanying notes. Significant items subject to management's estimates and assumptions include the valuation of receivables and carrying value of tangible capital assets. Due to the inherent uncertainty in making estimates, actual results could differ from those estimates.

Municipality of the County of Antigonish
Notes to Consolidated Financial Statements
For the year ended March 31, 2021

2. CASH

	2021	2020
Operating fund	\$ 654,021	\$ 1,892,210
Capital funds	1,529,968	1,461,701
Reserves funds	13,987,987	13,356,922
	<u>\$ 16,171,976</u>	<u>\$ 16,710,833</u>

3. TAXES RECEIVABLE

	2021	2020
Balance, beginning of year	\$ 562,847	\$ 878,105
Current year's levy of property taxes and rates	12,627,570	12,235,335
	<u>13,190,417</u>	<u>13,113,440</u>
Less		
Current year's collections	12,349,128	12,234,831
Reduced taxes	168,431	121,847
	<u>12,517,559</u>	<u>12,356,678</u>
Gross taxes receivable, end of year	672,858	756,762
Less allowance for uncollectible taxes	(219,026)	(193,915)
Taxes receivable, net	<u>\$ 453,832</u>	<u>\$ 562,847</u>

4. ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE

	2021	2020
Federal government	\$ 334,732	\$ 213,759
Provincial government	9,173	9,173
Water rates	193,898	106,789
Other receivables	630,366	370,330
	<u>1,168,169</u>	<u>700,051</u>
Less allowance for doubtful accounts	13,988	13,988
	<u>\$ 1,154,181</u>	<u>\$ 686,063</u>

Municipality of the County of Antigonish
Notes to Consolidated Financial Statements

For the year ended March 31, 2021

5. SHORT-TERM INVESTMENTS

	2021		2020	
	Cost	Fair Market Value	Cost	Fair Market Value
Portfolio investments	\$ 1,325,735	\$ 1,542,966	\$ 1,326,005	\$ 1,481,557

6. ACCOUNTS PAYABLE AND ACCRUED LIABILITIES

	2021	2020
Trade accounts payable	\$ 1,252,475	\$ 1,705,983
Payable to other governments	107,473	145,493
	\$ 1,359,948	\$ 1,851,476

7. LONG-TERM DEBT

	2021	2020
Municipal Finance Corporation, repayable in annual principal payments of \$44,400, plus interest at 5.26 – 5.48%, maturing in 2023	\$ 577,200	\$ 621,600
Municipal Finance Corporation, repayable in annual principal payments of \$48,000, plus interest at 4.75 – 4.77%, maturing in 2023	576,000	624,000
Municipal Finance Corporation, repayable in annual principal payments of \$32,814, plus interest at 2.81 – 4.579%, maturing in 2026	443,087	475,901
Municipal Finance Corporation, repayable in annual principal payments of \$65,629, plus interest at 2.81 – 4.597%, maturing in 2026	865,050	930,678
Municipal Finance Corporation, repayable in annual principal payments of \$27,766, plus interest at 2.81 – 4.597%, maturing in 2026	322,313	350,079
	\$ 2,783,650	\$ 3,002,258

Municipality of the County of Antigonish
Notes to Consolidated Financial Statements
For the year ended March 31, 2021

7. LONG-TERM DEBT (CONTINUED)

Principal payments required in each of the next five years on debt held as of March 31, 2021 are as follows:

2022	\$ 218,609
2023	698,609
2024	614,609
2025	126,209
2026	126,209

8. TANGIBLE CAPITAL ASSETS

			2021	2020
	Cost	Accumulated Amortization	Net Book Value	Net Book Value
Land	\$ 788,737	\$ -	\$ 788,737	\$ 788,737
Buildings				
General government services	1,848,253	913,372	934,881	945,108
Protective services	269,452	169,043	100,409	26,889
Environmental services	2,079,544	688,603	1,390,941	1,442,930
Recreation and cultural services	1,092,416	277,530	814,886	842,196
Equipment				
General government services	488,739	275,565	213,174	21,086
Public works				
Equipment	385,852	373,853	11,999	14,935
Vehicles	140,345	117,784	22,561	37,359
Environmental health services	2,847,987	2,026,608	821,379	1,005,841
Other				
General government services	112,584	112,584	-	-
Road transport				
Streets	5,097,731	846,598	4,251,133	3,110,240
Sidewalks	1,093,127	859,172	233,955	264,747
Parking grounds	21,715	21,715	-	-
Environmental health services				
Garbage collection and disposal	458,612	458,612	-	-
Sewer collection and disposal	12,875,208	5,707,304	7,167,904	7,425,399
Recreation and cultural services	132,987	52,530	80,457	83,782
Water utility plant and equipment	11,217,302	2,286,020	8,931,282	6,652,472
	\$ 40,950,591	\$ 15,186,893	\$ 25,763,698	\$ 22,661,721

Municipality of the County of Antigonish
Notes to Consolidated Financial Statements

For the year ended March 31, 2021

9. R. K. MACDONALD NURSING HOME CORPORATION

R. K. MacDonald Nursing Home Corporation is jointly governed by the County and Town of Antigonish and is not consolidated. The following table provides condensed supplementary financial information for the Nursing Home:

	2021	2020
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION		
Current assets	\$ 5,358,580	\$ 4,192,167
Capital assets	9,694,774	9,753,541
Total assets	15,053,354	13,945,708
Current liabilities	2,585,170	2,226,546
Long-term liabilities	8,650,329	8,828,346
Total liabilities	11,235,499	11,054,892
NET ASSETS	\$ 3,817,855	\$ 2,890,816

STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS

Revenues	\$ 14,145,876	\$ 13,571,643
Operating expenses	(12,243,520)	(11,816,080)
Financing and capital	(975,317)	(895,477)
EXCESS OF REVENUES OVER EXPENSES	\$ 927,039	\$ 860,086

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

Cash flows from		
Operating activities	\$ 1,667,318	\$ 1,595,212
Financing and investing activities	(564,076)	(559,950)

Municipality of the County of Antigonish
Notes to Consolidated Financial Statements
For the year ended March 31, 2021

10. CONTINGENCIES

The County has guaranteed the following loans

- R. K. MacDonald Nursing Home Corporation for capital purposes. The maximum amount guaranteed is \$4,325,928.
- Antigonish County Volunteer Fire Department for capital purposes for \$100,000 and \$294,400.
- Auld's Cove Volunteer Fire Department for capital purposes for \$145,000 and \$40,000.
- Pomquet Volunteer Fire Department for capital purposes for \$120,000 and \$150,000.

11. FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

(a) Fair value of financial instruments

The fair value of the County's financial instruments that are comprised of cash, taxes receivable, accounts receivable and accounts payable and accrued liabilities approximate their carrying value due to their short-term nature.

Short-term investments are recorded at fair market value.

The fair value of long-term debt is based on rates currently available to the County with similar terms and maturities and approximates its carrying value.

(b) Credit risk

The County is exposed to credit-related losses in the event of non-performance by counterparties to the financial instruments. Credit exposure is minimized by dealing with only credit worthy counterparties.

(c) Interest rate risk

Interest rate risk is the risk that the fair value or future cash flows of a financial instrument will fluctuate because of changes in market interest rates.

The County's debentures are long term with fixed range of rates thereby mitigating its interest rate risk.

Municipality of the County of Antigonish
Notes to Consolidated Financial Statements

For the year ended March 31, 2021

12. TRANSFERS TO PROVINCIAL BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

- (a) The Eastern Mainland Housing Authority

The County shared in the operations of the Authority for the year ended March 31, 2021 in the amount of \$68,529 (2020 - \$56,898).

- (b) Assessment Services

The County is required to pay a share of the cost of operating the provincial assessment system based on the total provincial assessment cost times the average of the County's share of the Uniform Assessment and the County's share of assessment accounts. For the year ended March 31, 2021, the County's share of these costs was \$326,079 (2020 - \$322,104).

- (c) Correctional Services

Municipalities in Nova Scotia are required to make a mandatory contribution to fund the cost of correctional services. The contribution is set by Provincial formula. For the year ended March 31, 2021, the County's contribution for these costs was \$206,034 (2020 - \$205,604).

- (d) Strait-Richmond Regional School Board

The County provided a mandatory contribution in the amount of \$3,706,604 (2020 - \$3,557,460) to the Strait-Richmond Regional School Board.

13. IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON OPERATIONS

In early March 2020 the impact of the global outbreak of COVID-19 (coronavirus) began to have a significant impact on businesses through the restrictions put in place by the Canadian, provincial and municipal governments regarding travel, business operations and isolation/quarantine orders.

At this time, it is unknown the extent of the impact the COVID-19 outbreak may have on the Municipality as this will depend on future developments that are highly uncertain and that cannot be predicted with confidence. These uncertainties arise from the inability to predict the ultimate geographic spread of the disease, and the duration of the outbreak, including the duration of travel restrictions, business closures or disruptions, and quarantine/isolation measures that are currently, or may be put, in place by Canada and other countries to fight the virus. While the extent of effect on the Municipality is unknown, programs and other offerings could continue to be affected in the coming year.

Municipality of the County of Antigonish
Schedule of Remuneration and Expenses of Members of Council and Clerk
For the year ended March 31, 2021

Name	Title	Number of months as an elected official	Remuneration	Expenses
Owen McCarron	Warden	12	\$ 50,086	\$ 3,951
Hugh Stewart	Deputy Warden	12	30,732	3,529
Shawn Brophy	Councillor	5	10,900	465
Vaughn Chisholm	Councillor	7	15,259	2,062
Neil Corbett	Councillor	7	15,259	1,958
Remi Deveau	Councillor	12	26,159	2,963
John Dunbar	Councillor	12	26,159	2,373
Glenn Horne	Clerk/Treasurer	N/A	132,874	1,953
Donald MacDonald	Councillor	12	26,159	2,609
William MacFarlane	Councillor	12	26,159	1,731
Mary MacLellan	Councillor	12	26,159	3,240
Gary Mattie	Councillor	12	26,159	2,640
Harris McNamara	Councillor	5	10,900	1,350

Municipality of the County of Antigonish
Schedule of Segment Disclosure
For the year ended March 31, 2021

Segment reporting is designed to assist users in identifying the resources allocated to support the major activities of the municipality and to better understand the performance of segments. The following schedules provide segment information for the 2021 and 2020 fiscal years. Segment results represent the activities of that segment and are based on the same accounting policies as described in the Significant Accounting Policies as described in Note 1. The County has determined that the following segments represent the major activities of government, with expenses reported by object.

Year ended March 31, 2021	Government Services	General Protective Services	Transportation Services	Environmental Health Services	Health and Welfare Services	Recreation and Cultural Services	Environmental Development Services	Water Utility	Total
REVENUES									
Taxation									
Grants in lieu of taxes	\$ 8,193,095	\$ 1,414,931	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 9,608,026
Sale of services	184,495	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	184,495
Revenue from own sources	1,306,645	-	-	-	-	3,330	-	-	1,309,975
Conditional transfers from other governments	973,759	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	973,759
Unconditional transfers from other governments	1,351,173	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,351,173
Capital grants	64,553	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	64,553
Water utility revenue	80,255	-	-	-	-	-	-	842,572	922,827
	12,153,875	1,414,931	-	-	-	3,330	-	1,078,412	15,493,120
EXPENSES									
Salaries, wages and benefits	1,339,861	4,320	160,109	816,126	-	313,709	-	234,898	2,868,823
Interest on long-term debt	16,747	-	6,775	59,908	-	19,791	-	51,579	154,801
Other operating expenditures	1,509,097	1,677,154	178,175	1,574,411	-	550,418	-	774,000	6,263,265
External transfers and grants	-	1,089,636	-	-	-	-	298,309	-	1,500,545
Amortization	111,735	6,736	142,895	508,739	111,600	-	-	-	1,021,772
	2,977,440	2,777,846	488,054	2,959,185	111,600	30,635	298,309	1,281,209	11,809,196
EXCESS (DEFICIENCY) OF REVENUES OVER EXPENSES	\$ 9,176,435	\$ (1,362,915)	\$ (488,054)	\$ (2,959,185)	\$ (111,600)	\$ (811,223)	\$ (298,309)	\$ 639,775	\$ 3,683,924

**Municipality of the County of Antigonish
Schedule of Segment Disclosure**
For the year ended March 31, 2021

	Year ended March 31, 2020									
	Government Services	General Protective Services	Transportation Services	Environmental Health Services	Public Health and Welfare Services	Recreation and Cultural Services	Environmental Development Services	Water Utility	Total	
REVENUES										
Taxation	\$ 7,988,810	\$ 1,383,921	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 9,372,731	
Grants in lieu of taxes	185,178	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	185,178	
Sale of services	1,303,984	-	-	-	-	97,966	-	-	1,401,950	
Revenue from own sources	986,654	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	986,654	
Conditional transfers from other governments	1,451,316	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,451,316	
Unconditional transfers from other governments	45,240	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	45,240	
Water utility revenue	11,961,182	1,383,921	-	-	-	97,966	-	-	14,442,804	
EXPENSES										
Salaries, wages and benefits	1,290,877	6,745	151,782	805,633	-	376,533	233,725	2,865,295		
Interest on long-term debt	17,848	-	7,234	63,886	-	21,093	49,804	159,865		
Other operating expenditures	1,394,972	1,647,509	195,205	1,520,953	-	1,043,831	708,627	6,511,087		
External transfers and grants	-	1,048,385	-	-	112,000	-	-	-	1,447,722	
Amortization	44,064	689	173,294	540,038	-	30,635	182,988	971,708		
	2,747,761	2,703,278	527,515	2,930,510	112,000	1,472,092	1,175,144	11,955,687		
EXCESS (DEFICIENCY) OF REVENUES OVER EXPENSES	\$ 9,213,421	\$ (3,319,357)	\$ (527,515)	\$ (2,930,510)	\$ (112,000)	\$ (1,374,126)	\$ (175,409)	\$ 2,487,117		

Beth Schumacher

From: Shirlyn Donovan
Sent: April 6, 2022 10:41 AM
Cc: Owen McCarron
Subject: RSVP: Invitation to Exploration of Consolidation Information Session
Attachments: StFX Campus Map (002).pdf; Consolidation Booklet.pdf
Importance: High

Good morning,

This is a friendly reminder that you are invited to attend an information session tomorrow evening, Thursday, April 7 at Vesgo Hall, which is a part of the Coady Institute on StFX Campus regarding the Exploration of Consolidation of the Town and County of Antigonish. I've included a campus map as an attachment to show where the building is located. The best parking options include the Bauer Theatre and St. Ninians Parking Lot.

We hope you can join us for this session. If you can't attend, there are many other community engagement sessions scheduled over the next few weeks. To view the full schedule visit, www.antigonish.ca. If you have any questions, please email info@antigonish.ca.

If you are able to attend tomorrow evening, can you please RSVP to me by the end of day today so we know how many to expect.

Thank you and hope to see you tomorrow night.

Shirlyn

ANTIGONISH

Our Community

Exploration of Consolidation Information Session

Mayor Laurie Boucher and Warden Owen McCarron invite you to attend an information session on the potential consolidation of Antigonish Town and County.

This is a specific session for community leaders and business owners. Our goal is to provide an opportunity for you to gain insight into the process, ask questions, and share what you think about consolidation for Antigonish.

Community Leaders Information Session

Date: Thursday, April 7, 2022

Time: 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

Location: Vesgo Hall, Room 150, Coady Institute, StFX Campus

Vesgo Hall is #36 on the attached StFX Campus Map. Entrance to Vesgo Hall is beside Xavier Hall facing St. Ninan Street/Carin Park.

For up-to-date information about the Town and County's exploration of consolidation, visit www.antigonish.ca.

Shirlyn Donovan

Strategic Initiatives Coordinator

Municipality of the County of Antigonish

285 Beech Hill Road

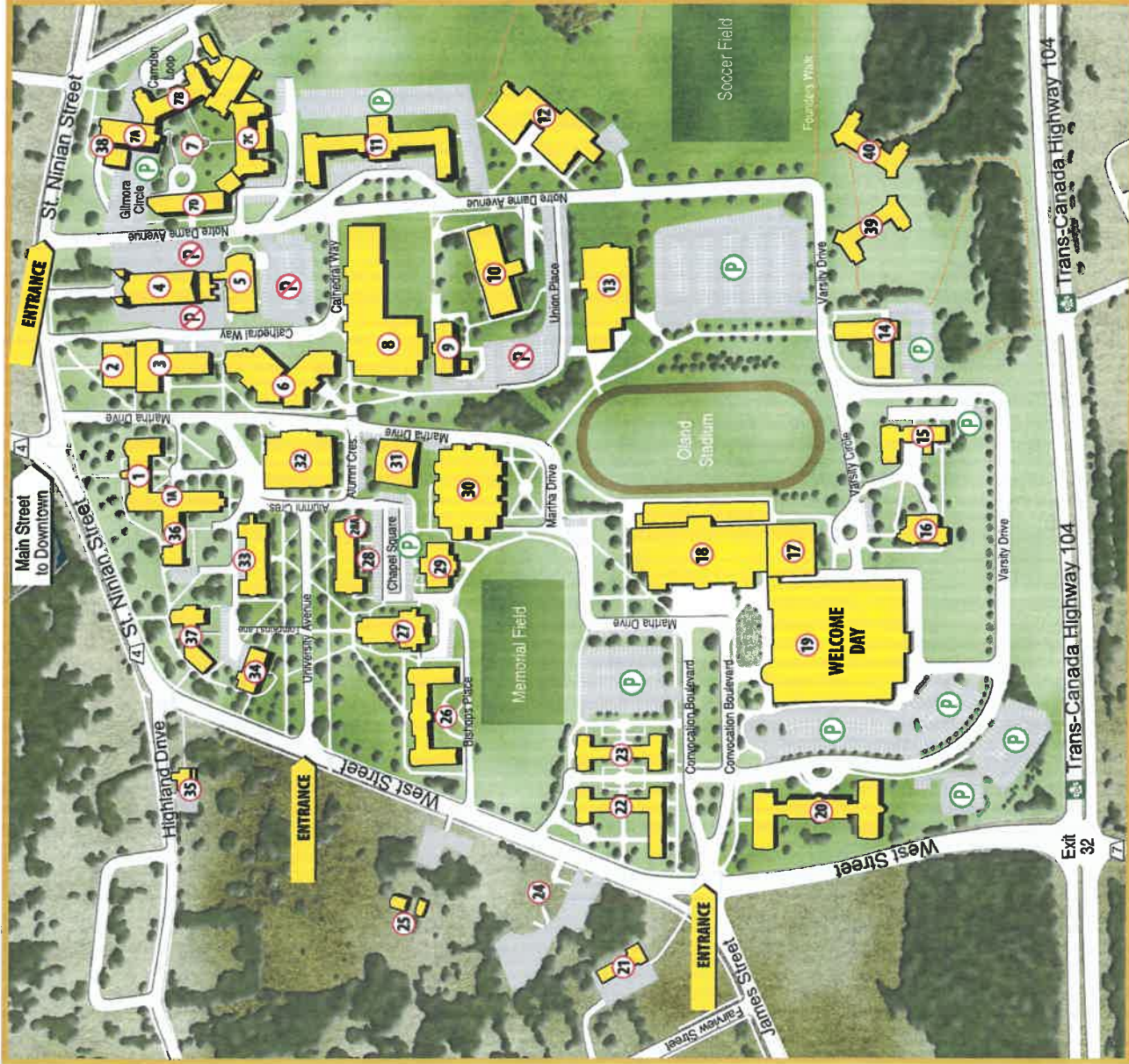
Antigonish, NS B2G 0B4

902-863-1117



www.antigonishcounty.ns.ca
www.twitter.com/antigonishco

Honour Yesterday, Act Today, Inspire Tomorrow



ACADEMIC BUILDINGS

1. Xavier Hall (XH) and Alumni House
A) Alumni House
2. McKenna Centre (north entrance)
3. Schwartz School (SCHW)
5. St. Ninian's Place (SNP)
6. Angus L. Macdonald Library
7. Mount Saint Bernard (MSB)
A) Immaculata Hall
B) Camden Hall
C) Marguerite Hall
D) Gilmora Hall
8. Muirney Hall
9. Nicholson Tower (NT)
10. Annex
12. J. Bruce Brown Hall (JBB)
30. Physical Sciences Centre (PSC)
36. Coady International Institute
37. Markin Global Complex
38. Fine Arts Building

RESIDENCES

7. Mount Saint Bernard (MSB)
14. MacIsaac Hall
16. Mactell Hall
20. Governors Hall
21. Coady International House
22. Somers Hall
23. Power Hall
26. Bishops Hall
28. MacKinnon Hall
32. Morrison Hall
33. Cameron Hall
39. O'Regan Hall
40. Riley Hall

ADMINISTRATION & OTHER

4. St. Ninian's Cathedral
5. St. Ninian's Place (SNP)
9. Nicholson Tower (NT)
Recruitment and Admissions Office
11. Lane Hall
13. Bloomfield Centre
15. MacDonald Hall
24. 42 West Street Building
25. SFX Observatory
27. University Chapel
28. MacKinnon Hall
A) Business Office
31. Services Building (5005 Chapel Square)
Safety & Security Services
34. Mockler Hall
35. Aberlard House

SPORTS AND RECREATION

17. Alumni Aquatic Centre
18. Amelia Saputo Centre for Healthy Living
19. Charles V. Keating Centre
29. Bauer Theatre

DINING SERVICES

32. Morrison Hall

In your timetable the buildings are referenced by acronyms

Denotes parking available

Denotes no parking available



ST. FRANCIS XAVIER
UNIVERSITY

T: 902 867-2855 • E: stay@stfx.ca • www.stfx.ca

ANTIGONISH

Our Community



Exploring Municipal Consolidation.

Your Guide to
Community
Engagement.

As the Councils for the Town and County of Antigonish explore the possibility of consolidation, we have scheduled an extensive community engagement process. This is your guide to participating.

Message from Mayor and Warden



To the Antigonish Community;

In September 2021, both Town and County Councils unanimously voted to explore consolidating the two municipalities into one unit. You might be wondering why now? Or why at all?

We believe that the Town and County have done some progressive work together already. We have seen the benefits from collaborating with examples like hosting the National Special Olympics, Regional Emergency Management, and Physician Retention – just to name a few.

Both the Town and the County are in a good financial position, which is the best time to be looking at the benefits of consolidation, instead of being forced to do so because one needs help.

You've elected us to do what's in your best interest and part of our job is to explore opportunities like this. Your input will inform our decision and help us decide if residents, businesses, and the overall community will be better served if the Town and County become one municipal unit.

This guide is designed to answer some of your questions and let you know how you can take part.

Thank you and we look forward to your involvement.

Laurie Boucher
Mayor
Town of Antigonish

Owen McCarron
Warden
Municipality of the County of Antigonish



As we look at possible consolidation, we have carefully and purposefully created some important principles that will guide us. The Guiding Principles provide insight into what is top of mind for Councillors and will help guide discussions as we head into the community engagement sessions.

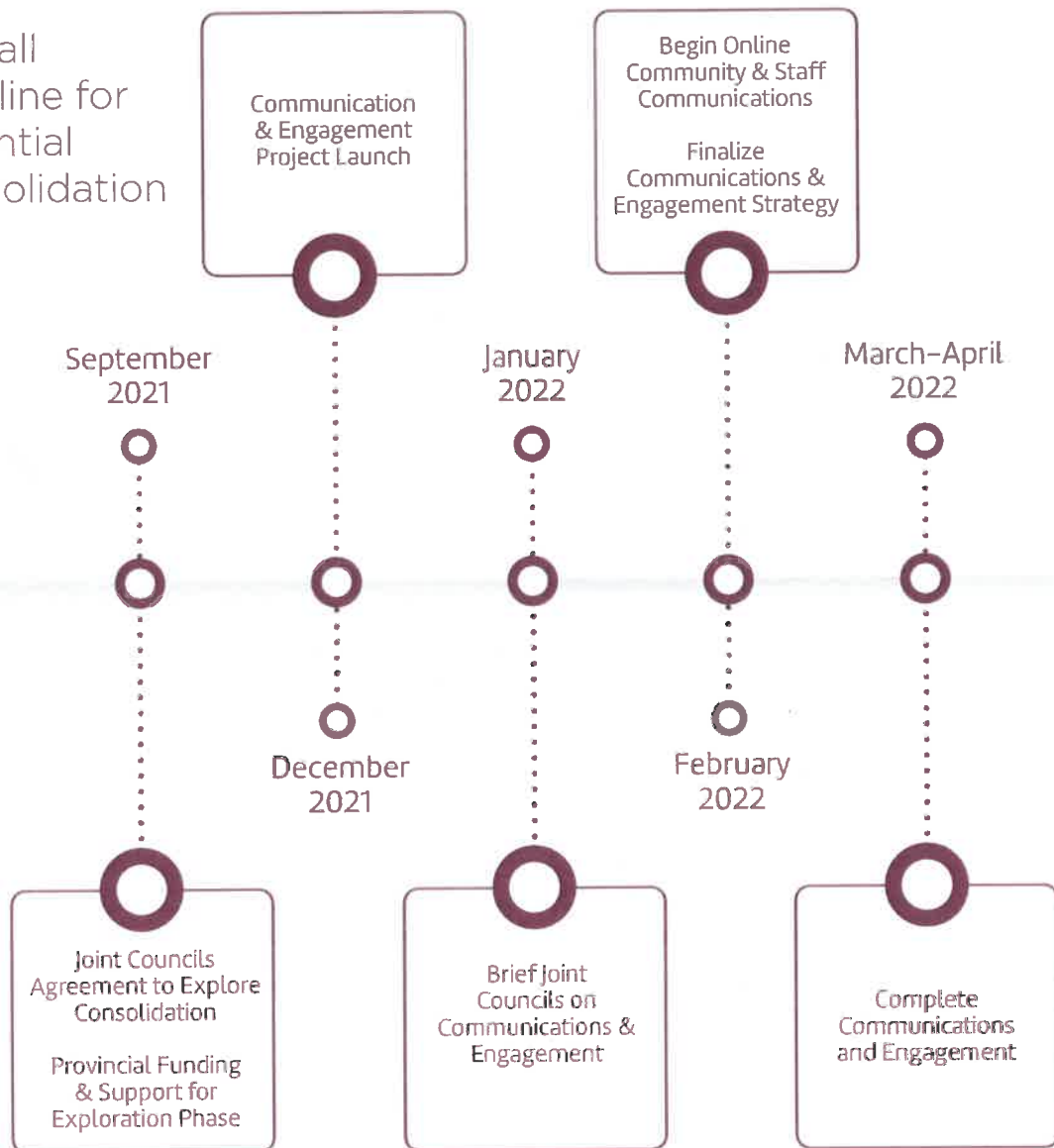
Guiding Principles for Consolidating Antigonish Town and County:

- 1. Take a regional approach to municipal services:** Work creatively, deliberately, and visibly to improve municipal services, economic development, tourism, culture, and community infrastructure for all residents and businesses in the Antigonish region.
- 2. Build vibrant individual communities:** Promote community identity in rural, urban and First Nations communities, so the whole municipality will be stronger.
- 3. Communicate regularly about progress and decisions:** Communications with residents, businesses, councils, and staff should be frequent, transparent, and inclusive.
- 4. Continue fair taxation and user pay approaches:** Residents and businesses should only be taxed for services and infrastructure they have access to. Property tax rates and infrastructure debt should utilize area tax rates and utility fee approaches that exist today wherever possible.
- 5. Value our existing municipal staff:** The blending of Town and County employees will recognize the value, knowledge and dedication of our current staff and every effort will be made to retain staff and to provide new opportunities.
- 6. Ensure Fair Representation for Urban and Rural Residents:** District boundaries should ensure every voter has the same electoral power as every other voter, balance rural and urban interests, and recognize local communities of interest.
- 7. Enhance environmental sustainability:** Ownership of the Antigonish electric utility is central to expanding green energy options and reducing our carbon footprint. Build upon the success of initiatives and partnerships with the Alternate Energy Resource Authority and the Municipality's Energy Management Plan.

Exploring Consolidation Process

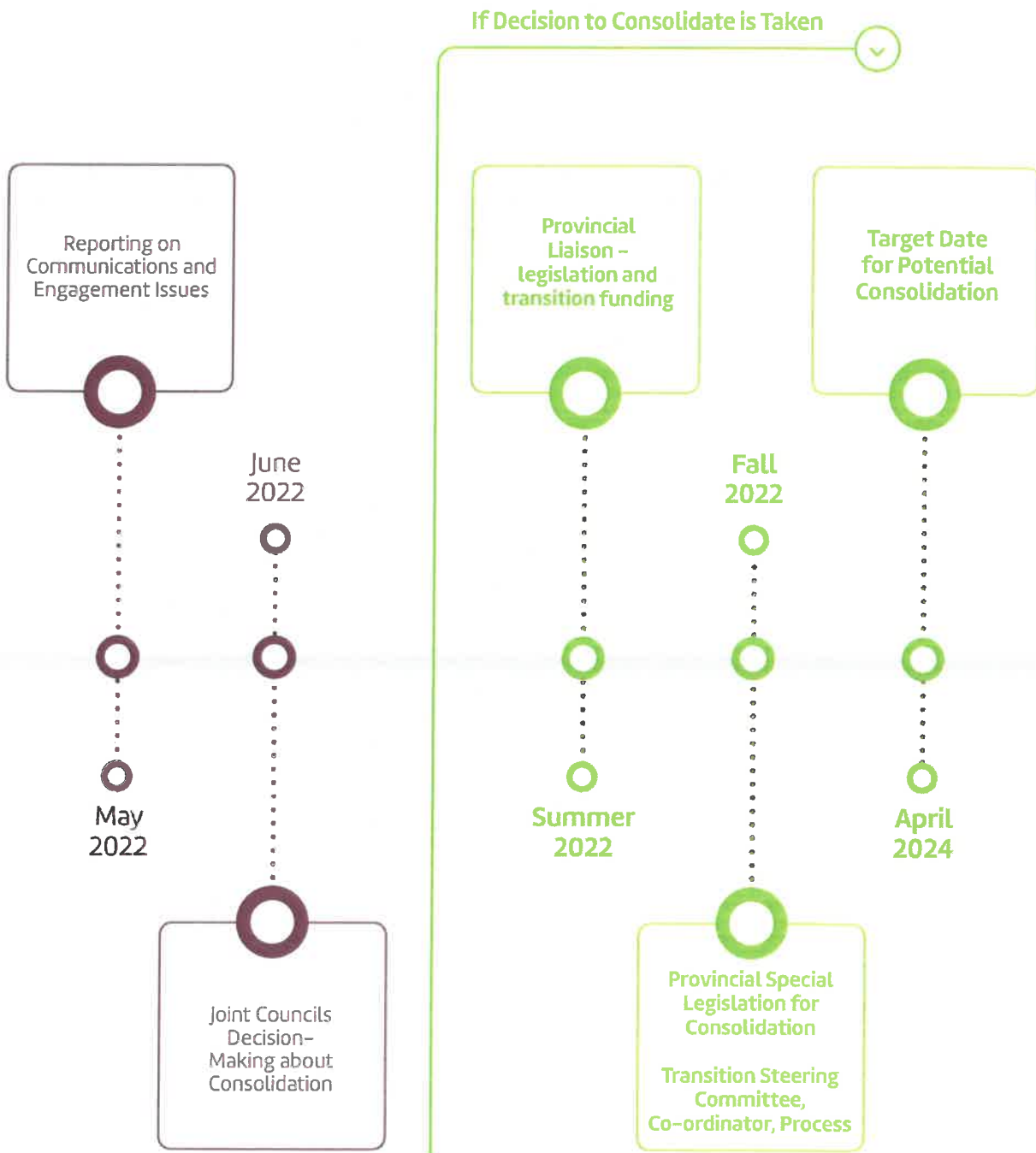
Town and County Councils have begun a process to consider whether consolidation would better serve residents, businesses and the broader community. They have created a joint Steering Committee that has retained Brighter Community Planning to lead the consultation and engagement to take place in April and May. Public input will help Councils make a decision on whether it will proceed with consolidation.

Overall Timeline for Potential Consolidation



Exploring Municipal Consolidation.

Your Guide to Community Engagement.



Exploring Municipal Consolidation.

Your Guide to Community Engagement

The Town and County are using different methods of community engagement to reach as many citizens as possible to understand opportunities and concerns.

Your Questions

We have taken your most common questions and have created a series of fact sheets for you to consider as you think about a possible merger. Additional information on each of the topics below can be found on Antigonish.ca, just click on the “Participate Now” button to access Antigonish’s HowSpace site, where these fact sheets can be found. We will also have copies of them at the in-person drop-in sessions.



How will my input be used?

Your comments will be recorded and put into a report for Councils. This report will be considered as Councils look answer this key question:

Will residents, businesses and the overall community be better served if the Town and County became one municipal unit?

A final report outlining the key themes from a thorough consultation process will be shared with Councils in June. Along with other reports being prepared by staff, Councils will decide in the summer on whether to consolidate.

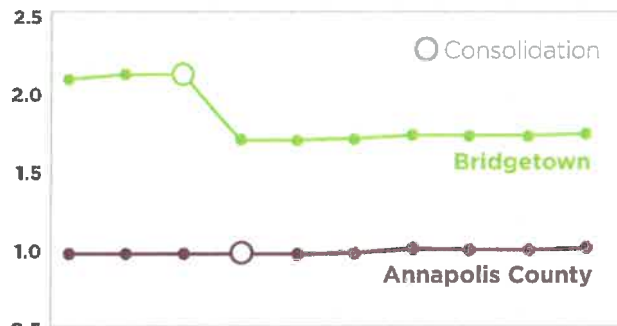


Property Taxes

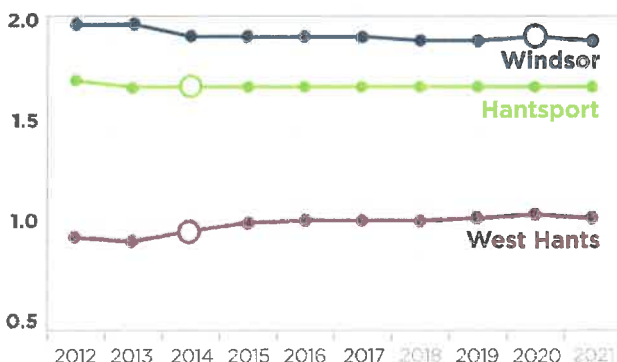
One of the most common concerns expressed when municipal mergers have taken place in other parts of the province is whether consolidation will have an impact on property taxes. History shows us that municipal mergers in other parts of Nova Scotia have not created property tax increases in the years following a merger.

The following graphs show the impact of mergers on tax rates:

\$ per \$100 of assessment



Residential Tax Rates for Merged Rural Municipalities and Towns



While actual future tax rates can't be predicted (future tax rates are set by future Councils) the two units are going into a possible consolidation without significant risks for tax increases which are often caused by declining revenues or failing infrastructure.



Water, Electricity and Energy Leadership

The Town and County provide important municipal services through long established and regulated utilities, for water and electricity. These services would be included in a possible consolidation. They both have unique regulatory and ownership characteristics that would have to be recognized in any merger process. Any future changes to water or electricity rates have go through a review process and be approved by the Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board (NSUARB).



Both the Town and County have demonstrated real leadership in addressing climate change and alternate energy. This leadership should be recognized and advanced in any possible municipal consolidation process.

Representation, Council Size and District Boundaries



Council Size



District Boundaries

Representation, Council Size and District Boundaries are important questions, and there is a well-established process in Nova Scotia to determine municipal boundaries. The work to determine where new boundaries would be would only happen after a decision to consolidate has been made. If the decision is to consolidate, a Transition Committee would be created, which would consult with all the communities and Councils to decide on the size of Council and the geography of the district boundaries. The recommendation made by the Transition Committee would be submitted to the NSUARB for review. The NSUARB can make adjustments on the recommendation if required and then final approval would be made on the new districts.

Currently, the County undergoes a District Review process every eight years. This is done to ensure balanced representation in the current districts. The Town does not currently go through this process because Councillors are elected at large.



Community Identity

Maintaining community identity is an important consideration when exploring municipal consolidation.

The way your local government is formed will not change your community's identity. The smaller communities you call home will not change and that is what makes Antigonish such a great place to live.

There are many examples of municipal mergers that support the identity and vibrancy of local communities. As an example, Queens Regional Municipality provided several suggestions from more than 25 years as a merged organization.

Support Community Capacity

Both the Town and County have activities and grant programs in place to support individual organizations and smaller community-based initiatives. These grants are an important source of support as well as means for Councils to support citizen involvement in making their communities a stronger place to live, work, and play. A potential consolidation would not create sudden changes in how community organizations receive their grant funding. There are mechanisms in place to fund and provide services to organizations that are vital to the Antigonish community.



Drawing on Other Municipal Examples

There are many examples of municipal mergers that support the identity and vibrancy of local communities. As an example, Queens Regional Municipality provided several highlights recently, taken from over twenty-five years' experience as a merged organization:

Be deliberate in spreading infrastructure projects across numerous communities.

Draw citizen appointees for municipal committees from all parts of the region.

Promote local communities with signage and tourism partnerships.

Develop a strong Community Investment Fund and policy.

Establish a single Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use By-Law with one set of rules for development.





Fire Services

There are nine volunteer Fire Departments located within the Town and County of Antigonish. They play an important role in fire protection and emergency services. They are also important community partners and organizers. The Town of Antigonish Volunteer Fire Department is funded directly by the Town and the County-based volunteer fire departments are funded through an Area Fire Levy. As the discussions continue about the potential for consolidation, there may be questions about what might change around fire service if a municipal merger should take place.



Volunteer Fire Service is important to all communities in both the Town and County. Whether operated directly in the Town or funded by Area Fire Rates in the County, these volunteer organizations understand their community needs and respond accordingly.

They do not operate in isolation and have lots of experience through in their communities and support one another through mutual aid. It is important for municipal funding of volunteer fire service to be continued in the same manner. There is no reason to change this system because of a possible municipal consolidation.



Consultation Schedule

We have designed the consultation to be as open and accessible as possible, with options for in person, online, phone and email. Choose how you'd like to participate:

- ✔ Take part in one of our on-line or in person sessions throughout April and into May. See the public engagement schedule on the following page.
.....
- ✔ Visit Antigonish.ca and click on "**Participate Now.**"
.....
- ✔ Call us toll-free at 1-833-563-2786 or 1-833-563-2787 and leave a voicemail for staff, who will follow up with you. This is a great option for those who want to remain engaged but are hesitant to come to a public session, are not comfortable with technology or may have unreliable Internet service.
.....
- ✔ Email your questions and comments to info@antigonish.ca.



Community Engagement Schedule

A total of 17 community engagement sessions have been arranged so that as many people as possible can attend. To make it even easier for busy parents and caregivers, sessions are child friendly - Town and County recreation staff will be on hand with fun activities for the kids.

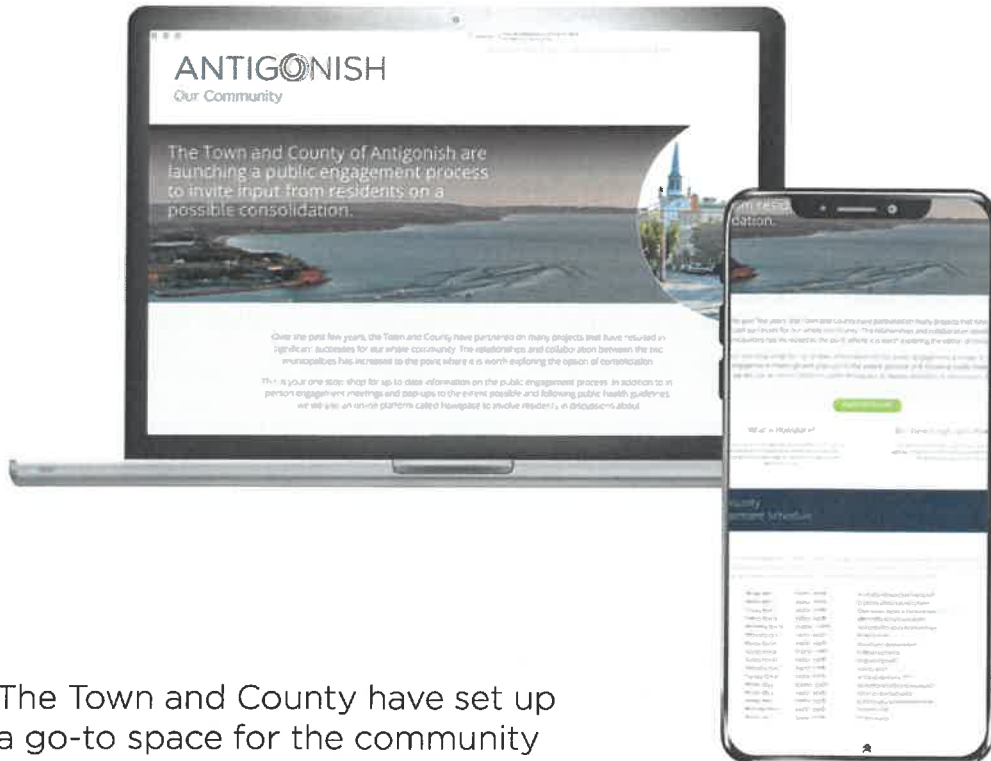
Sessions are organized in an open house format and are “drop in.” Feel free to pop by during the times indicated below.

Monday, April 11	1:00PM - 3:00PM	The Peoples Place Library Community Room
Monday, April 11	7:00PM - 9:00PM	St. Joseph’s Lakeside Community Centre
Tuesday, April 12	3:00PM - 5:00PM	Online Engagement Session
Tuesday, April 12	7:00PM - 9:00PM	Lakevale Mini Trail Community Centre
Wednesday, April 13	11:00AM - 12:30PM	The Peoples Place Library Community Room
Wednesday, April 13	7:00PM - 9:00PM	Arisaig Parish Hall
Monday, April 25	7:00PM - 9:00PM	Havre Boucher Community Centre
Tuesday, April 26	11:00AM - 1:00PM	Antigonish Legion/CACL
Tuesday, April 26	7:00PM - 9:00PM	Antigonish Legion/CACL
Wednesday, April 27	7:00PM - 9:00PM	Lochaber Centre
Thursday, April 28	6:00PM - 8:00PM	St. Andrews Community Centre
Monday, May 2	12:00PM - 3:00PM	The Peoples Place Library Community Room
Monday, May 2	7:00PM - 9:00PM	Heatherton Community Centre
Tuesday, May 3	5:00PM - 8:00PM	St. Andrew Junior School (Appleseed Drive)
Wednesday, May 4	6:00PM - 8:00PM	Tracadie Fire Hall
Monday, May 9	6:00PM - 8:00PM	Pomquet Fire Hall

* A Session is being planned with Paqtnkek Mikmaw Nation that is still TBD.

Exploring Municipal Consolidation.

Your Guide to Community Engagement.



The Town and County have set up a go-to space for the community engagement around a possible consolidation.

Visit **Antigonish.ca** today and click on the "Participate Now" button to take part in the discussion online. See page 14 for all of the ways you can participate.



How can I take part?

We have created a plan that allows residents to be engaged in different ways. A series of public drop-in meetings are scheduled as well as online options, phone and email. See the Consultation Schedule on page 12 for more information.

For ongoing online engagement throughout the consultation phase, we are using Antigonish's HowSpace. This is an all-in-one digital facilitation platform. Here we will host workshops and events, there will be Frequently Asked Questions, and you can interact directly on topics that are of interest to you and see what others are saying.

Visit Antigonish.ca and click on the "Participate Now" button. You will be asked to provide your name and email address. The system will then send you a confirmation email and the link you can use to access the site.

We look forward to your participation! If you have questions, please email info@antigonish.ca.

From: [Shirlyn Donovan](#)
To: [Council](#)
Subject: Community Engagement Supporting Documents
Date: April 6, 2022 12:05:51 PM
Attachments: [Poster Boards Final.pdf](#)
[Antigonish Map.pdf](#)
[2020-21 FCI County of Antigonish \(002\).pdf](#)
[2020-21 FCI Town of Antigonish.pdf](#)
[2020-21 FCI County and Town of Antigonish.pdf](#)
[Key Messages for Councils.pdf](#)
[Engagement Logistics.pdf](#)
[Fact Sheets Combined.pdf](#)

Good morning,

I have attached 8 documents to this email which will provide you with more information heading into the Community Engagement Sessions:

1. Poster Boards – These will be printed on large board and will be displayed during the sessions.
2. Antigonish Map – An Antigonish Map with the yellow dots showing the density of the population in a certain area.
3. FCI County of Antigonish – The Financial Condition Indicators from 2020-21 for the County of Antigonish.
4. FCI Town of Antigonish – The Financial Condition Indicators from 2020-21 for the Town of Antigonish.
5. FCI Town and County Combined – The Financial Condition Indicators from 2020-21 combining the Town and County indicators.
6. Key Messages for Councillors
7. Engagement Logistics on the set up and roles for engagement sessions (working document)
8. Fact Sheets

If you have any questions, please let me know.

Thank you,
Shirlyn

Shirlyn Donovan

Strategic Initiatives Coordinator
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
285 Beech Hill Road
Antigonish, NS B2G 0B4
902-863-1117



www.antigonishcounty.ns.ca
www.twitter.com/antigonishco

Honour Yesterday, Act Today, Inspire Tomorrow

Representation

Council Size and District Boundaries



ANTIGONISH
Our Community

When discussing the potential merger of the Town and County, questions arise about possible changes in representation, the size of a new Council and the impact on existing District Boundaries.



How will changes to Council and boundaries be decided?

- ✓ There is a well-established process that will involve the UARB to determine any new district boundaries.
- ✓ If a decision is made to consolidate, a separate public process would take place to review options for the number of districts and Council size.
- ✓ Current Councils will not be able to determine any new district boundaries or size of a new Council before a decision about consolidation is made.
- ✓ Recommendations would be presented to the UARB, which ultimately has the final decision.

Balanced Representation

- ✓ Everyone's electoral vote will carry the same weight.
- ✓ The number of electors in each district should be within 10% of the average for all districts.



What happens, if Councils want to move forward with consolidation?



1 Council Size



2 District Boundaries

1. Council Size

The County has 10 Councillors. The Town elects 6 Councillors at large plus the Mayor. Public and political interest in having smaller, more efficient councils.

The Province has created a process through the Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board (UARB) where municipalities review boundaries on a regular basis. The County currently undergoes this process every eight years. The Town does not because Councillors are elected at large.

2. District Boundaries

Review and consultation must consider several factors listed in the *Municipal Government Act* (Section 368 (4)):

Number of electors

Relative parity of voting power (*the 10% plus or minus guideline*)

Population density

Community of interest

Geographic size

Summary: Should the Town and County decide to consolidate, there are clearly established procedures to ensure balanced representation for all voters in a new municipal unit, to determine the number of councillors required for accessible and effective decision-making, and for deciding on the boundaries of new electoral districts.

Guiding Principle

6. Ensure fair representation for urban and rural residents

Property Taxation and Potential Consolidation

2

ANTIGONISH
Our Community

During consolidations, taxpayers have concerns that property taxes would increase.



How will tax bills change in a consolidated municipal unit?

In all likelihood, a base tax rate for services across the new municipality, supplement this with "area tax rates," identical to the approach used in the County now.

Forecasting Future Tax Rates with Consolidation:

While future tax rates can't be predicted, the Town and County are going into a possible consolidation without significant risk for a tax increase. This is what we know:

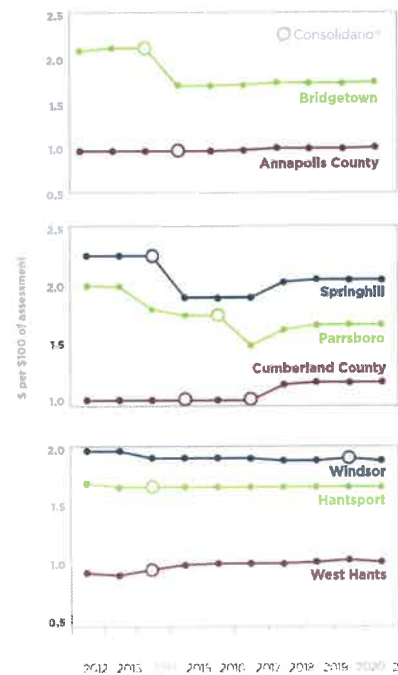
- ✔ Both the Town and County are in good financial shape.
- ✔ Population and development trends are generally stable – property assessments are not in a state of decline for either municipal unit.
- ✔ Municipal infrastructure, capital replacement planning and reserves are in good overall shape in both municipalities.
- ✔ Water rates and electrical utility rates are regulated by the Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board (UARB).

Guiding Principle

4. Continue fair taxation and user pay approaches

History with other mergers

Residential Tax Rates for Merged Rural Municipalities and Towns



Summary: Should the Town and County decide to merge, a joint Transition Committee would prepare the first operating and capital budget in advance of the election of a new Council. The evidence suggests that municipal mergers in Nova Scotia have not resulted in increased taxes for either the County or Town governments involved. Tax bills will likely include a base rate plus area rates, following the current County model. While actual future tax rates can't be predicted, the two units are going into a possible merger without significant risks for tax increases which are often caused by declining revenues or failing infrastructure.

The Consolidation Process

3

ANTIGONISH
Our Community

In September 2021, both Councils unanimously approved the exploration of a possible merger. As a result, they began a process with a few important steps.



Town and County Councils will make a decision to move ahead or maintain the status quo in Summer 2022.

The objective is for Councils to answer the following question:



Will residents, businesses and the overall community be better served if the Town and County became one municipal unit."

What are the next steps if Councils want to move forward with consolidation?

Below is a partial list of what would need to be done.

- ✓ Obtain special Transition Legislation and funding for the consolidation process from the Department of Municipal Affairs and Housing to:
 - Create a Joint Transition Committee;
 - Hire a Transition Coordinator;
 - Recruit a Chief Administrative Officer;
 - Establish a consolidated organization;
 - Develop combined financial, taxation and debt policies and first budget; and
 - Transfer of all existing municipal by-laws, policies and contracts.
- ✓ Conduct an electoral boundary review study and seek approval from the Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board (UARB).
- ✓ Organize the first election.
- ✓ The goal would be to complete the joint transition process by April 1, 2024.

Summary: Town and County Councils have begun a process to consider whether consolidation would better serve residents, businesses and the broader community. They have created a joint Steering Committee and have retained Brighter Community Planning to lead the consultation and engagement to take place in April and May. Public input will help Councils make a decision on whether it will proceed with consolidation.

Guiding Principles

1. Take a regional approach to municipal services
3. Communicate regularly about progress and decisions
5. Value our existing municipal staff
7. Enhance environmental sustainability



Community Identity and Potential Consolidation

4

ANTIGONISH
Our Community

When municipalities in Nova Scotia have merged, people and business wonder if they will lose their community's unique sense of identity.



Build on Existing Strengths

Both the Town and County have activities and programs in place to support individual organizations and communities. These would be the basis for recognizing and supporting community driven initiatives in the future:

- ✓ Town's Community Grants Policy or the County's Community Partnership Grants Policy.
- ✓ Appointment of citizens to committees.
- ✓ Expansion of broadband services.
- ✓ Programs to support volunteer fire departments.
- ✓ Support tourism initiatives that attract people and business.
- ✓ Councillors who continue to serve as critical local community advocates.
- ✓ Support for community centres.
- ✓ Support for the history, culture and talent of the community.



Summary: Protection of Community Identity is an important consideration in a municipal consolidation process. The form of local government has very little to do with determining one's sense of place. Both the Town and County have tools in place to support local communities, their volunteers, meeting spaces and events. It would be important to use the same tools effectively in a consolidated municipal organization.

Drawing on Other Municipal Examples

Be deliberate in spreading infrastructure projects across numerous communities.

Draw citizen appointees for municipal committees from all parts of the region.

Promote local communities with signage and tourism partnerships.

Develop a strong Community Investment Fund and policy.

Establish a single Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use By-Law with one set of rules for development.

Guiding Principles

2. Build vibrant individual communities.
6. Ensure fair representation for urban and rural residents



Water, Electricity and Alternate Energy Leadership and Potential Consolidation



ANTIGONISH
Our Community

Both the County and Town operate utilities. How would these services be impacted by a possible consolidation?



Water in Town and County

In Nova Scotia, water supply and distribution are regulated by both the Nova Scotia Department of Environment and the UARB.

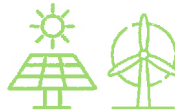
There are approximately **1,600** connections to the Town's water utility. The County has approximately **1,640** water accounts.

The County water utility provides water in the fringe area surrounding the Town and to Lower South River, St. Andrews and St. Josephs.

Initially the utilities, their environmental permits and UARB rate orders would remain unchanged.

In Nova Scotia, water supply and distribution systems are carefully regulated by both the Nova Scotia Department of Environment and the UARB.

Electricity in the Town



Town and fringe residents and businesses receive power from the Town's electrical utility, regulated through the Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board (UARB).

There is no intention to change the service area for residents who receive their power from the Town's electrical utility.

Renewable Energy Leadership

- ✓ Leadership should be recognized and advanced in any possible municipal consolidation process.
- ✓ The County has installed a total of 97kWh in solar PV.
- ✓ The County recently completed a Low Carbon Community feasibility study to explore new energy initiatives with Paqtnkek Mi'kmaw Nation.
- ✓ County approved a five-year Energy Management Plan.
- ✓ The Town is also demonstrating concrete leadership in the development of alternate energy and reducing the community's carbon footprint, through the Alternative Resource Energy Authority (AREA).
- ✓ AREA has future plans for more initiatives, including the installation of automotive EV Chargers and a community solar garden.
- ✓ AREA provides significant financial, economic and environmental benefits, which would be maintained in a potential consolidation.

Summary: The Town and County provide important municipal services through long established and regulated utilities, for water and electricity. These services would be included in a possible consolidation, but they have unique regulatory and ownership characteristics that would have to be recognized in any merger process. In addition, there are significant leadership responses to climate change/alternate energy issues in both municipalities that would require special consideration to grow the opportunities that will exist with a larger organization and protect assets and revenues that have been created by each municipal unit and its citizens.

Guiding Principles

1. Take a regional approach to municipal services
4. Continue fair taxation and user pay approaches
7. Enhance environmental sustainability

Guiding Principles for Potential Consolidation



ANTIGONISH
Our Community

Experience with other municipal mergers has shown that it is important to be clear at the outset about the reason to consider a merger and to set Guiding Principles in place for key decisions. Councils for both municipal units sat together early in the exploration process and developed these Guiding Principles to reflect what is important to our community.



These Guiding Principles provide insight into what is top of mind for Councillors

- 1. Take a regional approach to municipal services:** Work creatively, deliberately, and visibly to improve municipal services, economic development, tourism, culture, and community infrastructure for all residents and businesses in the Antigonish region.
- 2. Build vibrant individual communities:** Promote community identity in rural, urban and First Nations communities, so the whole municipality will be stronger.
- 3. Communicate regularly about progress and decisions:** Communications with residents, businesses, councils, and staff should be frequent, transparent, and inclusive.
- 4. Continue fair taxation and user pay approaches:** Residents and businesses should only be taxed for services and infrastructure they have access to. Property tax rates and infrastructure debt should utilize area tax rates and utility fee approaches that exist today wherever possible.
- 5. Value our existing municipal staff:** The blending of Town and County employees will recognize the value, knowledge and dedication of our current staff and every effort will be made to retain staff and to provide new opportunities.
- 6. Ensure fair representation for urban and rural residents:** District boundaries should ensure every voter has the same electoral power as every other voter, balance rural and urban interests, and recognize local communities of interest.
- 7. Enhance environmental sustainability:** Ownership of the Antigonish electric utility is central to expanding green energy options and reducing our carbon footprint. Build upon the success of initiatives and partnerships with the Alternate Energy Resource Authority and the Municipality's Energy Management Plan.

Objective for the Potential Consolidation of Town and County

Consolidation is being considered to explore the creation of a stronger local government and a unified voice to improve municipal services, community development, economic opportunities, and the quality of life for everyone in Antigonish.

Antigonish Volunteer Fire Departments and Possible Consolidation



ANTIGONISH
Our Community

There are 9 volunteer Fire Departments located within the Town and County of Antigonish. They play an important role in fire protection and emergency services. They are also important community partners and organizers.



The Town of Antigonish Volunteer Fire Department is funded directly by the Town and the County-based volunteer fire departments are funded through an Area Fire Levy. As the discussions continue about the potential for consolidation, there may be questions about what might change around fire service if a municipal merger should take place.

These critical emergency and community organizations are organized in response to the needs of their communities.



Summary: Volunteer Fire Service is important to all communities in both the Town and County. Whether operated directly in the Town or funded by Area Fire Rates in the County, these volunteer organizations understand their community needs and respond accordingly. They do not operate in isolation and have lots of experience through in their communities and support one another through mutual aid. It is important for municipal funding of volunteer fire service to be continued in the same manner. There is no reason to change this system because of a possible municipal consolidation.



Department

- ✔ Antigonish County Volunteer Fire Department
- ✔ North Shore Volunteer Fire Department
- ✔ District 2 – Town Fire Department
- ✔ Four Valley's Fire Department
- ✔ Pomquet Emergency & Rescue Services
- ✔ Tracadie Volunteer Fire Department
- ✔ St. Andrews & District Volunteer Fire Department
- ✔ Auld's Cove Volunteer Fire Department
- ✔ Havre Boucher & District Volunteer Fire Department

1. Take a regional approach to municipal services
2. Build vibrant individual communities
4. Continue fair taxation and user pay approaches

Consolidation or Amalgamation, What's the Difference?



ANTIGONISH
Our Community

The Town and County are looking into “Consolidation” of their two organizations. The following outlines the differences between Consolidation and Amalgamation.



So you’ve been hearing a lot about “Consolidation” but what is it and how does it differ from “Amalgamation”?

Consolidation is a newer approach to municipal mergers that is more collaborative for the municipal partners. Amalgamation happens when a municipality dissolves or is forced to merge with another partner. The key difference is that Consolidation is voluntary and municipal partners have much more control over the process.

	Consolidation	Amalgamation
Examples	Windsor West Hants	Halifax Regional Municipality Cape Breton Regional Municipality
Overview	Municipal Leadership “Bottom Up” Process	Provincial Leadership “Top Down” Process
Legislation	Special Legislation for each merger Joint Councils make the merger decision, Councils request special legislation	Municipal Government Act, Part XVII UARB Reviews Municipal proposals, Cabinet issues merger order
Structure	Joint Transition Committee Joint Committee recommends Coordinator Joint Committee develops organization Staffed with municipal staff, consultants Joint Committee hires first CAO Boundaries reviewed by UARB Joint Committee organizes first election	Independent Coordinator Cabinet Chooses Coordinator Coordinator develops organization Staffed by experts, consultants Coordinator hires first CAO Boundaries reviewed by NSUARB Coordinator organizes first election



The **Key Question**

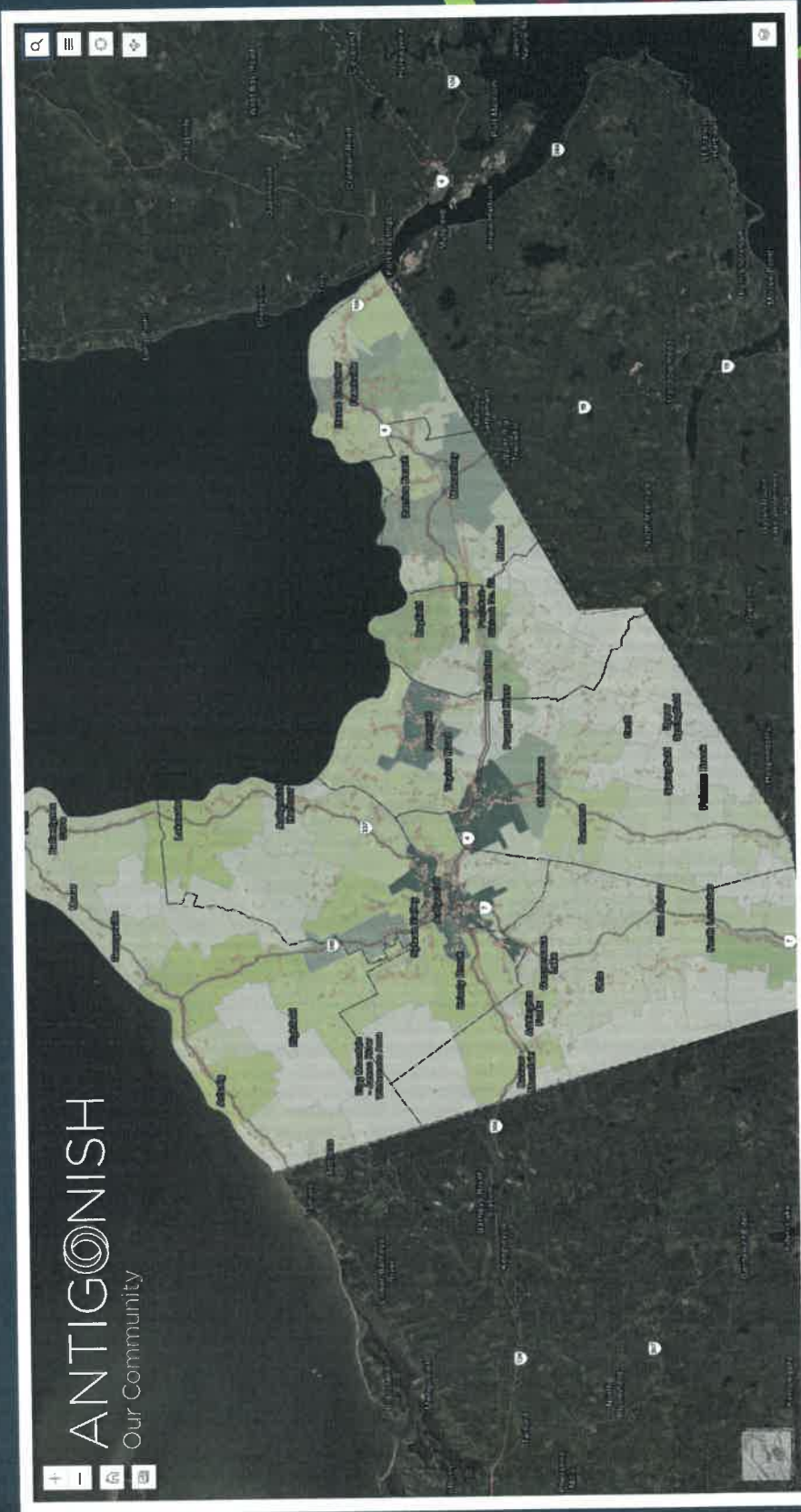
For Councils to decide if residents, businesses, and the overall community would be better served if the Town and County became one municipal unit.

Why Now?

To create a stronger local government and a single voice to improve the economic opportunities, resiliency, and quality of life for everyone in Antigonish Town and County.

Map of Antigonish

Yellow circles represent population density



ANTIGONISH
Our Community



DRAFT MUNICIPALITY OF THE COUNTY OF ANTIGONISH

Financial Condition Indicators Highlights

Overall Assessment

Green (Low risk)

The overall Financial Conditions Index assessment for the County of Antigonish is green (low risk.) This means that, although the Municipality has a few challenges, it is considered low risk for fiscal instability.

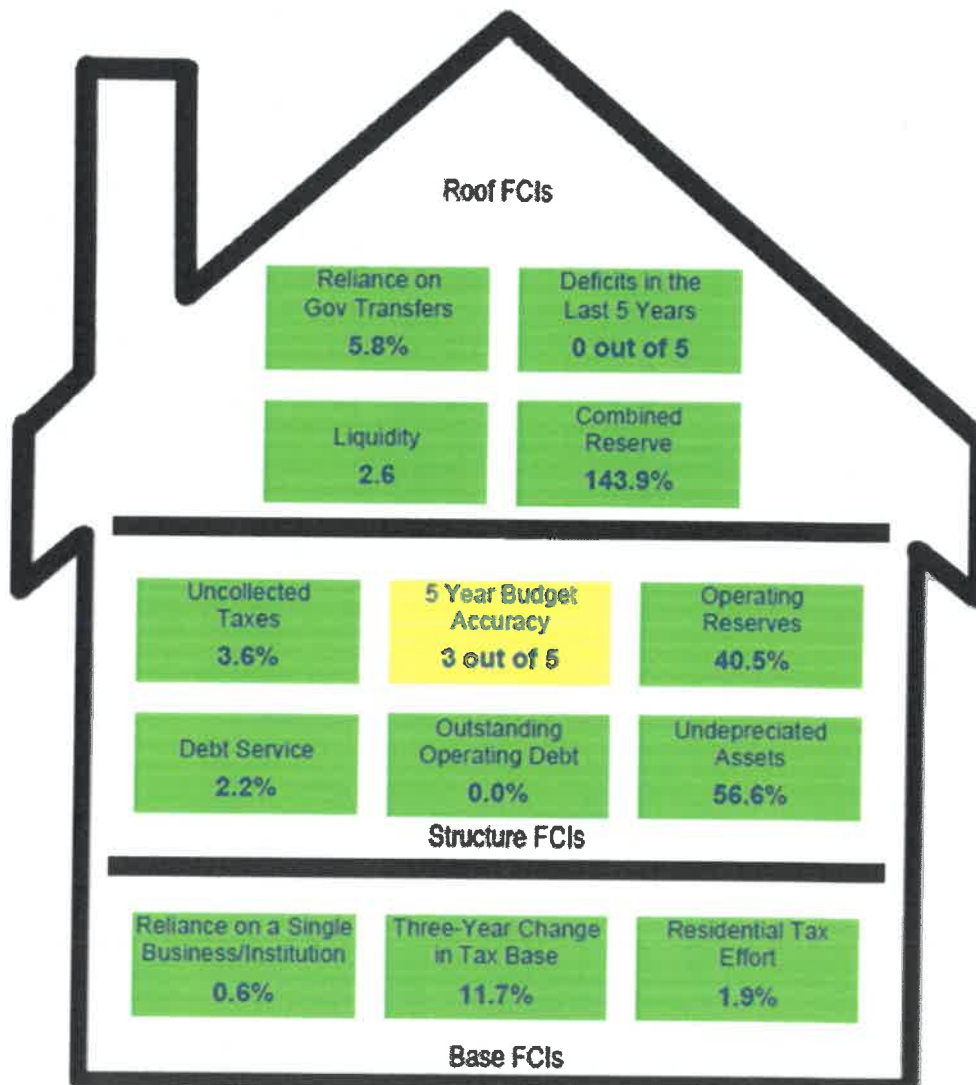
As shown in the House model below, Antigonish's FCIs are comprised of:

Low Risk (green): 12 indicators

Moderate risk (yellow): 1 indicator



























High risk (red): 0 Indicators

Details on the individual FCI assessments and the Municipality's specific challenges are provided below.



CONFIDENTIAL DRAFT MUNICIPALITY OF THE COUNTY OF ANTIGONISH

Two-Year Comparison of Financial Condition Indicators

BASE	2021	2020	+/-
3-year Change in Tax Base	 11.7%	 9.3%	2.4%
Reliance on a Single Business or Institution	 0.6%	 0.7%	-0.1%
Residential Tax Effort	 1.9%	 1.9%	0.0%
STRUCTURE			
Uncollected Taxes	 3.6%	 4.6%	-1.0%
5 Year Budget Accuracy	 3/5	 3/5	0
Operating Reserves	 40.5%	 32.5%	8.0%
Debt Service	 2.2%	 2.3%	-0.1%
Outstanding Operating Debt	 0.0%	 0.0%	0.0%
Undepreciated Assets	 56.6%	 56.5%	0.1%
ROOF			
Deficits in the Last 5 Years	 0/5	 0/5	0
Liquidity	 2.6	 1.9	0.7
Reliance on Government Transfers	 5.8%	 1.3%	4.5%
Combined Reserve	 143.9%	 136.8%	7.1%

* For 3-year Change in Tax Base, CPI % change for 2021 is 6.7% and for 2020 is 3.2%

DRAFT TOWN OF ANTIGONISH

Financial Condition Indicators Highlights

Overall Assessment

Green (Low risk)

The overall Financial Conditions Index assessment for the Town of Antigonish is green (low risk.) This means that, although the Municipality has a few challenges, it is considered low risk for fiscal instability.

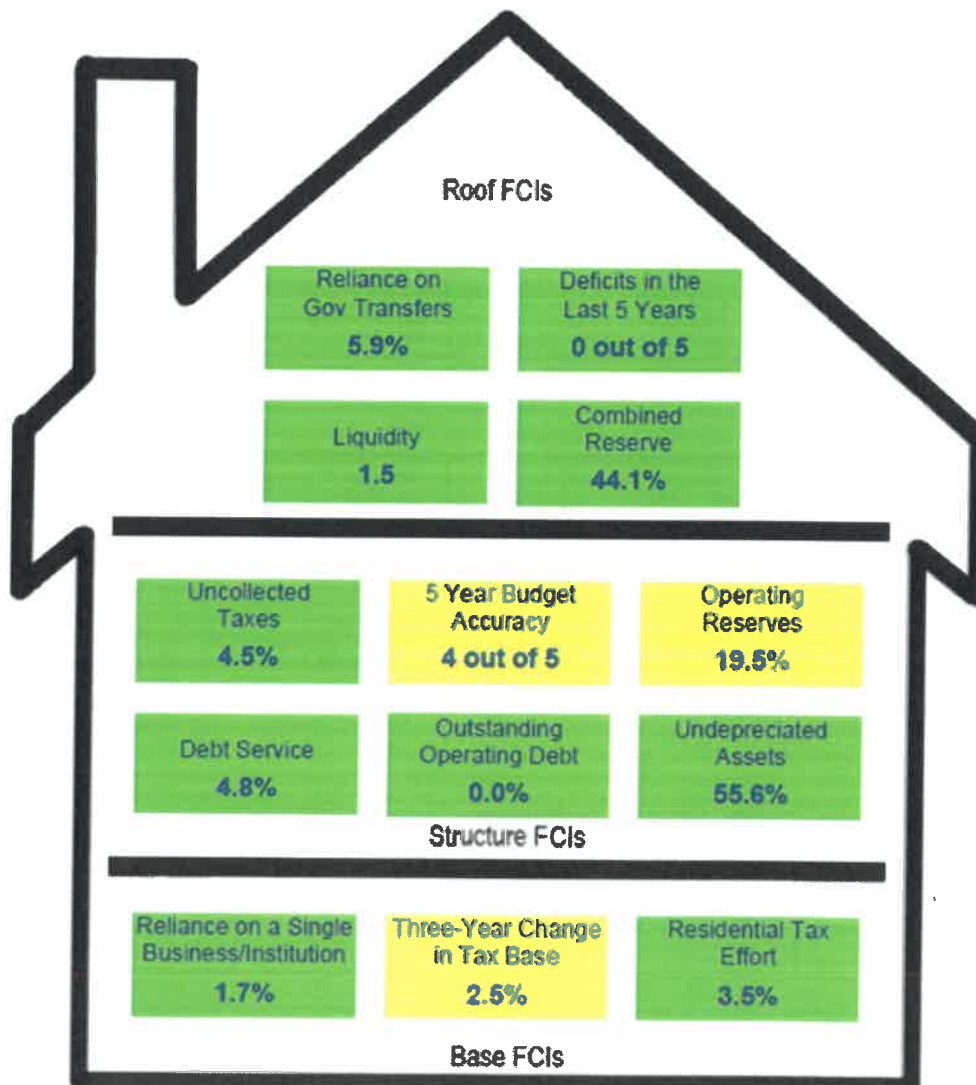
As shown in the House model below, Antigonish's FCIs are comprised of:

Low Risk (green): 10 indicators

Moderate risk (yellow): 3 indicators

High risk (red): 0 Indicators

Details on the individual FCI assessments and the Municipality's specific challenges are provided below.



CONFIDENTIAL DRAFT TOWN OF ANTIGONISH

Two-Year Comparison of Financial Condition Indicators

BASE	2021	2020	+/-
3-year Change in Tax Base	● 2.5%	● 0.6%	1.9%
Reliance on a Single Business or Institution	● 1.7%	● 1.7%	0.0%
Residential Tax Effort	● 3.5%	● 3.5%	0.0%
STRUCTURE			
Uncollected Taxes	● 4.5%	● 4.9%	-0.4%
5 Year Budget Accuracy	● 4/5	● 5/5	-1
Operating Reserves	● 19.5%	● 14.0%	5.5%
Debt Service	● 4.8%	● 5.9%	-1.1%
Outstanding Operating Debt	● 0.0%	● 0.0%	0.0%
Undepreciated Assets	● 55.6%	● 56.8%	-1.2%
ROOF			
Deficits in the Last 5 Years	● 0/5	● 1/5	-1
Liquidity	● 1.5	● 1.4	0.1
Reliance on Government Transfers	● 5.9%	● 2.2%	3.7%
Combined Reserve	● 44.1%	● 29.8%	14.3%

* For 3-year Change in Tax Base, CPI % change for 2021 is 6.7% and for 2020 is 3.2%

DRAFT COMBINED COUNTY AND TOWN OF ANTIGONISH

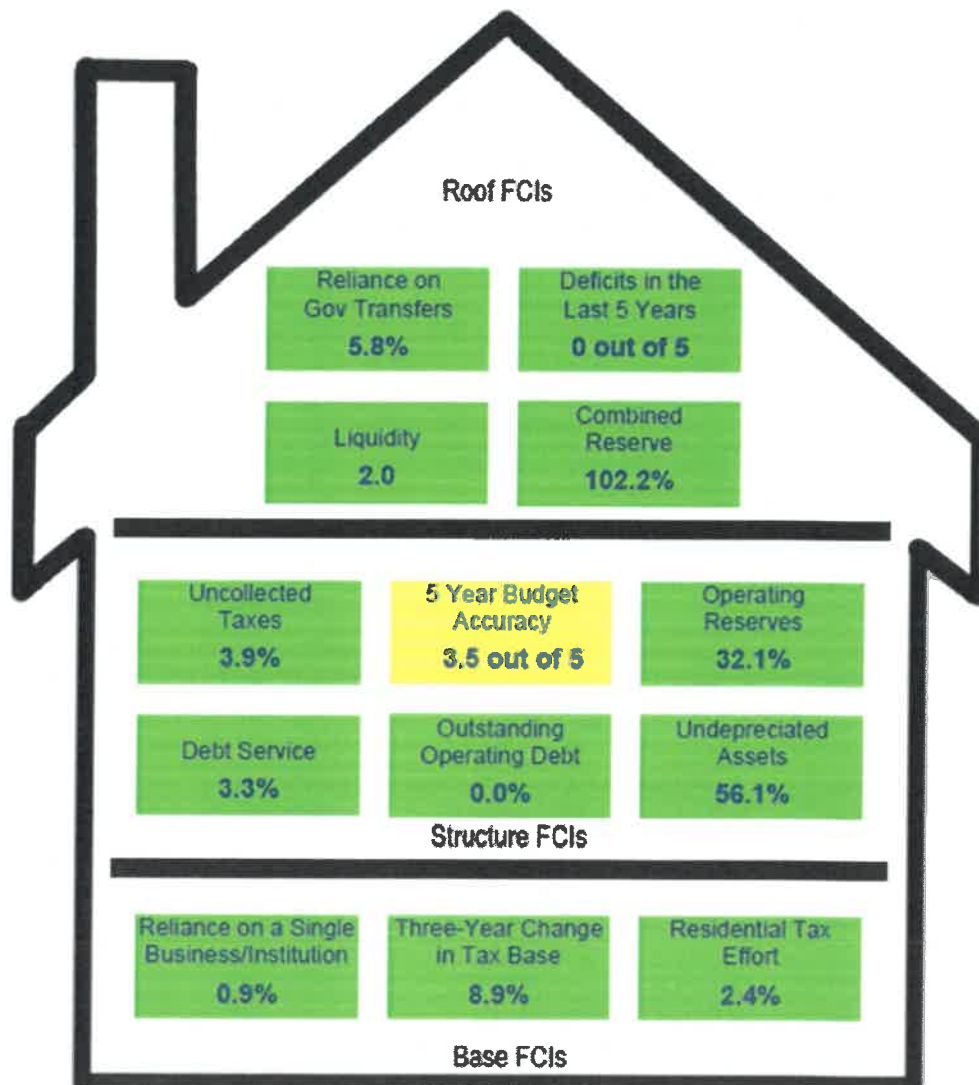
Financial Condition Indicators Highlights

Overall Assessment Green (Low risk)
 The overall Financial Conditions Index assessment for the Combined County and Town of Antigonish is green (low risk.) This means that, although the Municipality has a few challenges, it is considered low risk for fiscal instability.

As shown in the House model below, Antigonish's FCIs are comprised of:

- Low Risk (green): 12 indicators
- Moderate risk (yellow): 1 indicator
- High risk (red): 0 Indicators

Details on the individual FCI assessments and the Municipality's specific challenges are provided below.



Council's Role at Engagement Sessions

Council members attending sessions will play an important role. As the most recognizable person in the room, councillors can help make attendees feel comfortable by greeting them, providing some information about the set-up, introducing them to the consultants, encouraging them to ask questions and fill out the comment cards.

Councillors do not have to be the subject matter experts, but if attendees ask questions, feel free to introduce them to the consultants who will also collect feedback, and if that's not possible, point them to the word wall in the meantime.

If councillors notice a situation that may need to be de-escalated and they are comfortable jumping in to provide assistance, they are encouraged to do so.

Key Messages for Councillors

- We are exploring consolidation to determine if residents, businesses and the overall community would be better served if the Town and County became one municipal unit
- We are looking into consolidation now to because both municipalities are in good financial shape. Together we may have a stronger local government and a single voice to improve the economic opportunities, resiliency, and quality of life for everyone in Antigonish County.
- We are in the exploration stage of consolidation and our job at this point is to listen.
- No decision has been made. I encourage you to look at the material posted on www.antigonish.ca, attend a session, call the 1-800 number or email your questions and thoughts.
- Your input will help us decide whether residents, businesses, and the overall community would be better served if the Town and County became one municipal unit.
- We will wait until we have more information, including from participants in the engagement process, before any decision is made.
- At this stage we have some answers but not all of them. We are providing the best information we have. But we are counting on participation to help guide an eventual decision.
- We are exploring consolidation, which is different from amalgamation. The key difference is our two municipalities have chosen to explore consolidation together and we will make the decision, with public input. Our Councils and the community have control of the consolidation process. Amalgamation is a process imposed by the province and government issues an order to merge or a decision is made by the NS

Utility and Review Board. In this scenario, Councils and the community have very little say.

Additional Talking Points about the Engagement Process

- To make the best possible decision and determine whether both the Town and County would be better served by consolidation, we need your participation.
- We have seen the benefits of working together with examples like hosting the National Special Olympics, construction of the Antigonish Skatepark and community Dog Park, Holiday Events, Regional Emergency Management, and Physician Retention just to name a few.
- We care about what residents and businesses of the Town and County think and are making every effort to ensure everyone who wants to participate can do so easily.
 - A combination of in-person sessions and online sessions are designed to engage as many people as possible. A toll-free number has also been created for anyone who is not comfortable with technology or may have unreliable internet service.
 - We are looking to partner with community organizations to engage people who may otherwise not have an opportunity to participate.

To: Kate Gorman, Shirlyn Donovan
From: Chrystal Fuller
Date: 2022-04-04
Re: Engagement Logistics
cc: Brian Smith and Robyn McIssac

Open Houses

The Open House format will be as follows:

Welcome Table:

- Staffed by municipal staff, who will explain how the open house works and orient people. Try and get an idea of what the issues are and if there is a burning question, direct them to one of the consultants
- It would be good for the Councillor to greet people at the door and help facilitate discussions with the consultants
- Sign in Sheet. Please have everyone sign in and provide contact information. If people refuse to sign in then just keep track of how many people refuse to sign in.
- Hand sanitizer, box of masks
- Encourage people with children to use the recreation staff who will be there.
- Please encourage use of Comment cards
- Encourage them to have a cup of tea/snack and stay awhile.
- When people exit, they should be thanked for attending.

Poster Boards

- BCP will be at the poster boards to discuss things with people
- BCP will track themes from each conversation or major questions that arise.

Conversation Tables

- Tables should be set up near the refreshments to allow people to sit down, write on the comment cards, talk with their Councillor or just take a rest.
- Municipality to provide plastic table cloths to cover tables and place pens on each table for writing. Comment cards should be on the tables, along with a few copies of the fact sheet.
- One table will have a computer so people can sign up for Howspace or leave a comment.

Word wall - A large piece of paper will be on the wall where people can write comments regarding the question that Council is trying to answer. (Municipality to provide paper)

Role of Councillors

- Facilitators of the conversations with consultants.
- Please try not to debate. We are all here to listen to and understand what the concerns and issues are regarding consolidation, not to convince them of something. Consultants can review the poster board information and deal with the tough questions.
- Encourage people to fill a comment card out, lead people who want to have detailed conversations to the consultants so we can capture their comments. If you end up having a conversation with someone who won't talk to the consultants, please take some notes on the conversation and provide them to the consulting team.
- Be prepared to answer questions from your constituents such as:
 - Why is consolidations being considered?
 - What an open house format and not a town hall style meeting?
 - What are the next steps?
 - Are you holding a plebiscite?
- Review the FAQ and the key messaging documents in advance, which will help you during the engagement sessions and ensure consistent messaging.
- Warden/Mayor to deal with all media who attend, keep BCP advised of media contacts.

Role of Staff People

- Be friendly and welcoming
- Encourage people to use Howspace and fill out comment cards
- Explain and support the process that the Municipalities are going through
- Encourage people to use the word wall.
- Keep the room tidy and the food flowing
- Make sure everyone signs in or if people refuse to sign in, keep track of the total attendees.
- Keep notes on any conversations you have, particularly related to themes.
-

Role of Consultants

- Stand at the poster boards and have conversations with attendees to understand issues relating to consultation, from each individual's perspective
- Document conversations to feed into metrics
- Manage heated conversations as best as possible
- Listen, learn and summarize and explain the process
- Support individual Councillors during any conversations where assistance or additional details may be required.

Required materials:

- Table cloths
- 2 boxes of Pens (to start)

- Poster boards
- Tea/Coffee and snacks
- 8-10 clip boards
- Roll of paper for world wall
- Package of markers
- Comment cards
- Name tags for staff and consultant team
- Copies of Community Connects or Fact Sheets
- Hand sanitizer at table and throughout the room. Masks may also be a good idea if people show up without one and wish to wear one.
- 12-14 easels.

General Timing

- Consultant team to arrive 1 hour before the session to set up the rooms and prepare materials
- Councillors are encouraged to come at that time so if there are questions or specific issues that they wish to discuss, we have time.
- Doors open about 15 minutes before the scheduled session. People always show up early so we need to be ready to greet people 15 minutes before the session formally begins.
- Consultants will stay as long as people want to talk, within reason.
- At the end of each session, it would be good to have a short debrief with the local Councillor, Mayor/Warden and staff to make sure all comments were captured and to make any minor adjustments in advance of the next session.
- All comments cards and materials should be provided to Chrystal at the end of each session.

Consolidation or Amalgamation?

What is the difference?

8

ANTIGONISH
Our Community

The Town and County are looking into “Consolidation” of their two organizations. The following outlines the differences between Consolidation and Amalgamation.



So you've been hearing a lot about “Consolidation” but what is it and how does it differ from “Amalgamation”?

Consolidation is a newer approach to municipal mergers that is more collaborative for the municipal partners. Amalgamation generally happens when a municipality is forced to merge with another partner. The key difference is that Consolidation is voluntary and municipal partners have much more control over the process.

With Consolidation, the Province would create special legislation to empower a “Joint Transition Committee” that represents both municipal units. The Joint Transition Committee has the authority to determine what the new Regional Municipality would look like.

	Consolidation	Amalgamation
Examples	Windsor West Hants	Halifax Regional Municipality Cape Breton Regional Municipality
Overview	Municipal Leadership “Bottom Up” Process	Provincial Leadership “Top Down” Process
Legislation	Special Legislation for each merger Joint Councils make the merger decision, Councils request special legislation	Municipal Government Act, Part XVII UARB Reviews Municipal proposals, Cabinet issues merger order
Structure	Joint Transition Committee Joint Committee recommends Coordinator Joint Committee develops organization Staffed with municipal staff, consultants Joint Committee hires first CAO Boundaries reviewed by UARB Joint Committee organizes first election	Independent Coordinator Cabinet Chooses Coordinator Coordinator develops organization Staffed by experts, consultants Coordinator hires first CAO Boundaries reviewed by NSUARB Coordinator organizes first election

Representation, Council Size and District Boundaries

1

ANTIGONISH
Our Community

Introduction

When discussing the potential merger of the Town and County, questions arise about the possible changes in representation, the size of a new council and the impact on existing District Boundaries.

Guiding Principle

6. Ensure fair representation for urban and rural residents



When are these things decided?

Representation, Council Size and District Boundaries are important questions, and there is a well-established process in Nova Scotia to determine these and regularly review them through the Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board (UARB). *This work would be done by a Joint Transition Committee in preparation for the election of a new regional council. This will only happen after a decision to consolidate has been made.*

The Transition Committee would consult with all of the communities involved, develop options and propose the size of Council and the geography of district boundaries and explain their decision to the UARB. The UARB would also consult with the public as part of its review of the proposed Council size and boundaries.

Balanced Representation

The UARB has established a general concept of balanced representation - everyone's electoral vote will carry the same weight, regardless of where they live and uses a guideline that the number of electors in each district should be within 10% of the average for all districts. Exceptions can be made to reflect things like travel distances and communities of interest.



There are two main issues when considering Council size.



Council Size

1. Council Size

How many Councillors are needed to effectively represent citizens and to govern the municipal unit? Currently, the Municipality of the County of Antigonish has 10 Councillors, one of whom is chosen by their peers as Warden. The Town of Antigonish elects 6 Councillors at large plus the Mayor.

In terms of relative size, the County has a population (2021) of 15,473 and the Town has 4,656.

In recent years, Nova Scotia municipal councils are smaller. The Province has created a process through the UARB where municipalities have to review their size and boundaries on a regular basis. The County currently undergoes this process every eight years. The Town does not because councillors are elected at large.



District Boundaries

2. District Boundaries

The review and consultation process for establishing each district must consider several factors listed in the Municipal Government Act (Section 368 (4)):

Number of electors

Relative parity of voting power
(the 10% plus or minus guideline)

Population density

Community of interest

Geographic size

The typical approach for establishing municipal boundaries involves the preparation of maps showing the proposed changes and consulting with the communities involved before making a decision.

Current Councils will not be able to determine any new district boundaries or size of a new Council before the decision about consolidation is made.

Recommended Approach

We believe that electoral districts should foster a balance between rural and urban communities. This would require some blending of urban and suburban areas around the Town with their surrounding communities, and adjustments across more distant districts to reflect these changes. This same concept was used in Queens Regional Municipality, and it has worked well to balance rural and urban interests when making decisions for the whole municipality.

Summary: Should the Town and County decide to consolidate, there are clearly established procedures to ensure balanced representation for all voters in a new municipal unit to determine the number of councillors required for accessible and effective decision-making, and for deciding on the boundaries of new electoral districts.

What do these graphs mean? County tax rates did not increase because of these municipal mergers. Town tax rates remained the same or were reduced. Similar conclusions should apply to commercial tax rates before and after a merger.

How will tax bills change in a consolidated municipality?

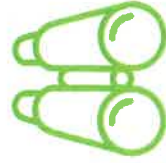
Typically, a merged municipality will establish a base tax rate for services across the new municipality, and supplement this with “area tax rates” in parts of the municipality where service levels are different. This is identical to the approach used in the County of Antigonish now to support fire protection, hydrants, streetlights and water.

Forecasting Future Tax Rates with Consolidation

It is far too early to forecast future property tax rates in a consolidated municipality for the Town and County, but a few facts are known now:

- ✔ Both the Town and County are in good financial shape going into a possible merger.
- ✔ Population and development trends are generally stable – property assessments are not in a state of decline for either municipal unit.*
- ✔ Municipal infrastructure, capital replacement planning and reserves are in good overall shape in both municipalities.
- ✔ Water rates and electrical utility rates are regulated by the UARB, and these would not be impacted by consolidation of the municipal service provider

(See *Fact Sheet 5 on Water, Electricity and Energy Leadership for more information*).



(*) For more detailed statistics about both municipalities, check out the *Municipal Profile and Financial Condition Indicators Reports, 2019-20*, for both the *Town of Antigonish and County of Antigonish*, published online by Nova Scotia Department of Municipal Affairs and Housing

Recommended Approach

Residents and businesses should be taxed fairly, based on services and infrastructure provided to each community. Property tax rates and municipal debt should utilize existing Town and County user pay and area rate models.

Summary: Should the Town and County decide to merge, a Joint Transition Committee would prepare the first operating and capital budget in advance of the election of a new Council. The evidence suggests that municipal mergers in Nova Scotia have not resulted in increased taxes for either the County or Town governments involved. Tax bills will likely include a base rate plus area rates, following the current County model. While actual future tax rates can't be predicted, the two units are going into a possible merger without significant risks for tax increases which are often caused by declining revenues or failing infrastructure.

The Consolidation Process

3

ANTIGONISH
Our Community

Introduction

In September 2021, both Councils approved the exploration of a possible merger. As a result, they began a process with a few important steps.



Guiding Principle(s)

1. Take a regional approach to municipal services
3. Communicate regularly about progress and decisions
5. Value our existing municipal staff
7. Enhance environmental sustainability

When would the potential consolidation of Town and County be decided?

Town and County Councils are researching the possibility of consolidation. As part of that research, both Councils would like to conduct a thorough community engagement process. After obtaining funding from the Department of Municipal Affairs and Housing, the Town and County hired Brighter Community Planning to develop and implement an engagement and communication project to ensure as many people and businesses as possible have the opportunity to provide their input.

The community consultation process will take place in April and May with a final report going to the Municipalities summarizing the findings from the engagement to be made available in late May. **Town and County Councils will make a decision to move ahead or maintain the status quo in Summer 2022.** Before this important decision is made, both Councils are committed to a wide ranging community consultation process.

What is the objective of the consultation process?



For Councils to decide if residents, businesses and the overall community would be better served if the Town and County became one municipal unit.”

Brighter Community Planning will use a variety of online, print and in person approaches, respecting public health guidelines, to talk, listen, respond to questions and to identify important themes and issues coming from residents in all parts of the Town and County.

How can I take part in the consultation?

There will be lots of opportunities to provide your comments, to meet with Council and Staff, and to get questions answered:

- ✔ Basic information about the consultation process became available in March on **Antigonish.ca**.
- ✔ A special Antigonish Consolidation Consultation and Engagement website, called Howspace, launched in February. This is a place to share information, ask questions, provide comments and take part in discussions.
- ✔ For those who prefer to receive information on paper, the April issue of County Connect was distributed in all communities and included a special insert on the consultation process and possible consolidation.
- ✔ Community information sessions are being planned for April and May, subject to any health restrictions, to provide a face-to-face opportunity to learn about a possible consolidation, ask questions and have them answered.
- ✔ You can also contact **info@antigonish.ca** or call toll free **1-833-563-2786** or **1-833-563-2787** and staff will respond to you directly.

What happens, if Councils want to move forward with consolidation?



The following is a partial list of what would need to be done if both Town and County Councils vote to move forward with consolidation:

- ✔ Work with the Department of Municipal Affairs and Housing to obtain special Transition Legislation and funding for the consolidation process.
- ✔ Transition Legislation would provide for:
 - Creating a Joint Transition Committee (Mayor, Warden, Deputy Mayor and Warden, CAO's) to establish the new Municipality.
 - Hiring a Transition Coordinator to direct the consolidation process with a target date of April 1, 2024.
 - Guiding the Transition Committee and CAO's in establishing a consolidated organization, creating the new administrative structure.
 - Recruiting a CAO for the new municipality.
 - Developing combined financial, taxation and debt policies and first budget.
 - Transferring all existing municipal by-laws, policies and contracts to the new municipal unit.

Summary: Town and County

Councils have begun a process to consider whether consolidation would better serve residents, businesses and the broader community. They have created a joint Steering Committee and have retained Brighter Community Planning to lead the consultation and engagement to take place in April and May. Public input will help Councils make a decision on whether it will proceed with consolidation.

Community Identity and Potential Consolidation

4

ANTIGONISH
Our Community

When municipalities in Nova Scotia have merged, people and business wonder if they will lose their community's unique sense of identity.



When are these things decided?

Community identity is not something that is decided by anyone except its residents, businesses and organizations that live in a community. A sense of place is about a lot of things, and the name or type of local government doesn't impact that perception and familiarity.

But there are things that a merged municipal government could do to ensure communities across the larger area benefit from the joint organization.

Build on Existing Strengths

Both the Town and County have activities and programs in place to support individual organizations and communities. These would be the basis for recognizing and supporting community driven initiatives in the future.

Guiding Principles

2. Build vibrant individual communities.
6. Ensure fair representation for urban and rural residents

- ✔ Organizations have an opportunity each year to apply for assistance to the Town's Community Grants Policy or the County's Community Partnership Grants Policy.
- ✔ The appointment of citizens to committees such as the Planning Advisory Committee or the Accessibility Committee is an opportunity to reach out and engage community representatives.
- ✔ The County has encouraged the expansion of broadband services, most recently upgraded in the areas of Lochaber and Malignant Cove. This new infrastructure will improve opportunities to communicate with and promote local communities using websites, social media and communications partnerships.
- ✔ Both the Town and County have well established programs to support volunteer fire departments.
- ✔ The Town and County support tourism initiatives that attract people and business to the communities and build local economic activity.
- ✔ Councillors would continue to serve as critical local community advocates through a Council Agendas.
- ✔ There would be continued support for the history, culture and talent of the community.

Drawing on Other Municipal Examples

There are many examples of municipal mergers that support the identity and vibrancy of local communities. As an example, Queens Regional Municipality provided several highlights recently, taken from over twenty-five years' experience as a merged organization.

Be deliberate in spreading infrastructure projects across numerous communities.

Draw citizen appointees for municipal committees from all parts of the region.

Promote local communities with signage and tourism partnerships.

Develop a strong Community Investment Fund and policy.

Establish a single Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use By-Law with one set of rules for development.



Recommended Approach

A municipal consolidation process will not determine anyone's sense of place or community identity. If someone lives in Havre Boucher, or the Town, they will continue to see themselves as living in their home community. Your community will always be your community. We would follow the example from Queens Regional Municipality, which suggests that regional decision making should be seen as benefiting local assets and services, and enhancing overall community.

Summary: Protection of Community Identity is an important consideration in a municipal consolidation process. The form of local government has very little to do with determining one's sense of place. Both the Town and County have tools in place to support local communities, their volunteers, meeting spaces and events. It would be important to use the same tools effectively in a consolidated municipal organization.

Water, Electricity and Energy Leadership

5

ANTIGONISH

Our Community

Both the County and Town operate utilities. How would these services be impacted by a possible consolidation?



Guiding Principle(s)

1. Take a regional approach to municipal services
4. Continue fair taxation and user pay approaches
7. Enhance environmental sustainability

Water in Town and County

In Nova Scotia, water supply and distribution systems are carefully regulated by both the Nova Scotia Department of Environment and the Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board (UARB). The Town has a water utility that draws its supply from the James River watershed and is distributed to Town Residents and some County users. There are approximately 1,600 connections to the Town's water utility.

The County water utility provides water in the fringe area surrounding the Town, and to Lower South River, St. Andrews and St. Josephs. In 2020 the County amalgamated all of its water systems into one utility and harmonized rates for all 1,640 water utility customers.

Both the Town and County water utilities regularly review their operations and rates

to ensure they are current and appropriate. Water utility rates are approved by the UARB after a periodic rate study and review process.

In Nova Scotia, water supply and distribution systems are carefully regulated by both the Nova Scotia Department of Environment and the Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board.

Although there may be opportunities in the future to combine the two existing water services, initially the utilities, their environmental permits and UARB rate orders would remain unchanged. In a consolidated municipality, there would not be any additional demand on one utility or the other to supply water to existing customers.

Electricity in the Town

Town residents and businesses also have their own electrical utility, regulated through the UARB. The utility purchases electricity from Nova Scotia Power (NSP), and the approved rate structure is tied closely to changes the NSP rate structure. The administration, maintenance and operation of the utility is integrated with the Town organization, in the same way as the water utility.

While there are opportunities to achieve efficiencies and share knowledge in a larger municipal unit, the Antigonish Electrical Utility and its rate structure would have to be treated as a regulated operation to benefit its existing subscribers.

Renewable Energy Leadership

Both the Town and County have demonstrated real leadership in addressing climate change and alternate energy, and this leadership should be recognized and advanced in any possible municipal consolidation process.

The County has installed a total of 97kWh in solar PV, starting with a roof mounted system (25kWh) in 2016 and a ground mounted (72kWh) solar array in June 2021. Both have long term agreements with NSP. The County recently completed a Low Carbon Community feasibility study to explore new energy initiatives with Paqtnekek Mi'kmaw Nation (PMN) and will continue to plan next steps together, building on our Anku'kamkewey Peace and Friendship Accord signed on May 5, 2018. Currently the County and PMN are installing EV chargers in partnership with the Town. In 2021, the County approved a five-year Energy Management Plan that looks at efficiency, renewables and partnership as important components of responding to climate change and providing long term energy options.



The Town is also demonstrating concrete leadership in the development of alternate energy and reducing the community's carbon footprint, through the Alternative Resource Energy Authority (AREA), a partnership between the towns of Antigonish, Berwick and Mahone Bay. The revenues, expenses, assets and liabilities are shared between the AREA's municipal

partners based on the share of the power generated. AREA has future plans for more initiatives, including the installation of automotive EV Chargers and a community solar gardens.



AREA provides significant financial, economic and environmental benefits, which would be maintained in a potential consolidation.

Summary: The Town and County provide important municipal services through long established and regulated utilities, for water and electricity. These services would be included in a possible consolidation, but they have unique regulatory and ownership characteristics that would have to be recognized in any merger process. In addition, there are significant leadership responses to climate change/alternate energy issues in both municipalities that would require special consideration to grow the opportunities that will exist with a larger organization and protect assets and revenues that have been created by each municipal unit and its citizens.

Guiding Principles for Potential Consolidation

ANTIGONISH

Our Community

Experience with other municipal mergers has shown that it is important to be clear at the outset about the reason to consider a merger and to set in place some Guiding Principles for key decisions. Councils for both municipal units sat together early in the exploration process and developed these Guiding Principles to reflect what is important to our community. They also provide insight into what is top of mind for Councillors.

Objective for the Potential Consolidation of Town and County

Consolidation is being considered to explore the creation of a stronger local government and a unified voice to improve municipal services, community development, economic opportunities, and the quality of life for everyone in Antigonish.

Guiding Principles

- 1. Take a regional approach to municipal services:** Work creatively, deliberately, and visibly to improve municipal services, economic development, tourism, culture, and community infrastructure for all residents and businesses in the Antigonish region.
- 2. Build vibrant individual communities:** Promote community identity in rural, urban and First Nations communities, so the whole municipality will be stronger.
- 3. Communicate regularly about progress and decisions:** Communications with residents, businesses, councils, and staff should be frequent, transparent, and inclusive.
- 4. Continue fair taxation and user pay approaches:** Residents and businesses should only be taxed for services and infrastructure they have access to. Property tax rates and infrastructure debt should utilize area tax rates and utility fee approaches that exist today wherever possible.



- 5. Value our existing municipal staff:** The blending of Town and County employees will recognize the value, knowledge and dedication of our current staff and every effort will be made to retain staff and to provide new opportunities.
- 6. Ensure fair representation for urban and rural residents:** District boundaries should ensure every voter has the same electoral power as every other voter, balance rural and urban interests, and recognize local communities of interest.
- 7. Enhance environmental sustainability:** Ownership of the Antigonish electric utility is central to expanding green energy options and reducing our carbon footprint. Build upon the success of initiatives and partnerships with the Alternate Energy Resource Authority and the Municipality's Energy Management Plan.

Summary: The Town and County are exploring a possible merger to one new municipal unit. They have developed a clear objective for this process, and some Guiding Principles to provide a transparent framework for consolidation.

For more information, contact: info@antigonish.ca

Antigonish Volunteer Fire Departments and Possible Consolidation

7

ANTIGONISH

Our Community

There are 9 volunteer Fire Departments located within the Town and County. They play an important role in fire protection and emergency services. They are also important community partners and organizers.



The Town of Antigonish Volunteer Fire Department is funded directly by the Town and the County-based volunteer fire departments are funded through an Area Fire Levy. As the discussions continue about the potential for consolidation, there may be questions about what might change around fire service if a municipal merger should take place.

A history of strong municipal support for volunteers

The Municipal Government Act provides local governments with the ability to provide fire service directly or to support external volunteer organizations that do so. The Town has funded a volunteer fire department for many years, and these costs are included in the annual operating and capital budget.

Guiding Principle(s)

1. Take a regional approach to municipal services
2. Build vibrant individual communities
4. Continue fair taxation and user pay approaches

In 2021-22 the Town operating budget for fire protection was about \$300,000. The Town supports the volunteer Chief and the Department, but the Chief is not an employee of the Town. Operating within annual budgets, the volunteers determine what the organization of fire services looks like on a year-to-year basis.



These critical emergency and community organizations are organized in response to the needs of their communities.

For the volunteer departments serving the County, there is also a history of long-term financial support to each volunteer organization through the mechanism of Area Fire Levies. The County paid approximately \$1,094,000 to County Fire Departments.

Departments

Antigonish County Volunteer Fire Department
North Shore Volunteer Fire Department
District 2 – Town Fire Department
Four Valley's Fire Department
Pomquet Emergency & Rescue Services
Tracadie Volunteer Fire Department
St. Andrews & District Volunteer Fire Department
Auld's Cove Volunteer Fire Department
Havre Boucher & District Volunteer Fire Dept.

Area rates are also provided for external departments in St. Mary's and Merigomish.

These critical emergency and community organizations are organized in response to the needs of their communities. The County collects and remits the Area Fire Levy to assist these groups, but it does not impose standards and procedures. The volunteer fire departments further support one another through the Strait Area Mutual Aid Association.

Will the relationship between municipal governments and volunteer fire services change?

Changes to funding and the operation of volunteer fire departments is not a part of any discussions on consolidation. The Town and County will only discuss changes to volunteer fire services during this process if a request is made by the fire departments.



Summary: Volunteer Fire

Service is important to all communities in both the Town and County. Whether operated directly in the Town or funded by Area Fire Rates in the County, these volunteer organizations understand their community needs and respond accordingly. They do not operate in isolation and have lots of experience through in their communities and support one another through mutual aid. It is important for municipal funding of volunteer fire service to be continued in the same manner. There is no reason to change this system because of a possible municipal consolidation.

Beth Schumacher

From: Glenn Horne
Sent: April 6, 2022 1:11 PM
To: Warren McBeath; jdbain@edpc.ca; David Muise; Sarah O'Toole; Bud MacInnis; Eric Stackhouse
Cc: Shirlyn Donovan; kgorman@townofantigonish.ca; Jeff Lawrence; Alisha Bowie
Subject: Meeting on County & Town Consolidation
Attachments: Poster Boards Final.pdf; Final Guiding Principles.pdf

Good afternoon, folks –

As you are each aware, the County and Town are exploring the merits of consolidating into one municipality. We are in the midst of our community engagement process with in-person engagement to begin next week.

As inter-municipal partners, Jeff and I wanted to take some time to meet with you, answer questions and hear your thoughts on this proposal. We are available to meet next Thursday, April 14 at 10:30 in the County Council Chamber. Please let me know if you are available and interested in attending. If this time doesn't work for you we can make other arrangements.

I have also attached some materials that will be used during our public engagement so you can see what has been done so far. If you have any questions at any time please feel free to reach out to either of us.

Thanks and I look forward to speaking with you further next Thursday.

Cheers,
Glenn



Glenn Horne | Chief Administrative Officer
Municipality of the County of Antigonish | 902.863.1117
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Honour Yesterday, Act Today, Inspire Tomorrow

Representation

Council Size and District Boundaries



ANTIGONISH

Our Community

When discussing the potential merger of the Town and County, questions arise about possible changes in representation, the size of a new Council and the impact on existing District Boundaries.



How will changes to Council and boundaries be decided?

- ✓ There is a well-established process that will involve the UARB to determine any new district boundaries.
- ✓ If a decision is made to consolidate, a separate public process would take place to review options for the number of districts and Council size.
- ✓ Current Councils will not be able to determine any new district boundaries or size of a new Council before a decision about consolidation is made.
- ✓ Recommendations would be presented to the UARB, which ultimately has the final decision.

Balanced Representation

- ✓ Everyone's electoral vote will carry the same weight.
- ✓ The number of electors in each district should be within 10% of the average for all districts.



What happens, if Councils want to move forward with consolidation?



1 Council Size

1. Council Size

The County has 10 Councillors. The Town elects 6 Councillors at large plus the Mayor. Public and political interest in having smaller, more efficient councils.

The Province has created a process through the Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board (UARB) where municipalities review boundaries on a regular basis. The County currently undergoes this process every eight years. The Town does not because Councillors are elected at large.

2. District Boundaries

Review and consultation must consider several factors listed in the *Municipal Government Act* (Section 368 (4)):

Number of electors

Relative parity of voting power (the 10% plus or minus guideline)

Population density

Community of interest

Geographic size



2 District Boundaries

Summary:

Should the Town and County decide to consolidate, there are clearly established procedures to ensure balanced representation for all voters in a new municipal unit, to determine the number of councillors required for accessible and effective decision-making, and for deciding on the boundaries of new electoral districts.

Guiding Principle

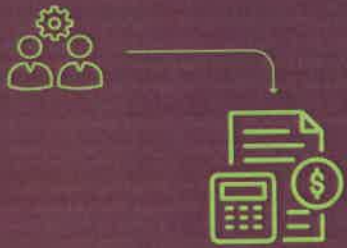
6. Ensure fair representation for urban and rural residents

Property Taxation and Potential Consolidation

2

ANTIGONISH
Our Community

During consolidations, taxpayers have concerns that property taxes would increase.



How will tax bills change in a consolidated municipal unit?

In all likelihood, a base tax rate for services across the new municipality, supplement this with "area tax rates," identical to the approach used in the County now.

Forecasting Future Tax Rates with Consolidation:

While future tax rates can't be predicted, the Town and County are going into a possible consolidation without significant risk for a tax increase. This is what we know:

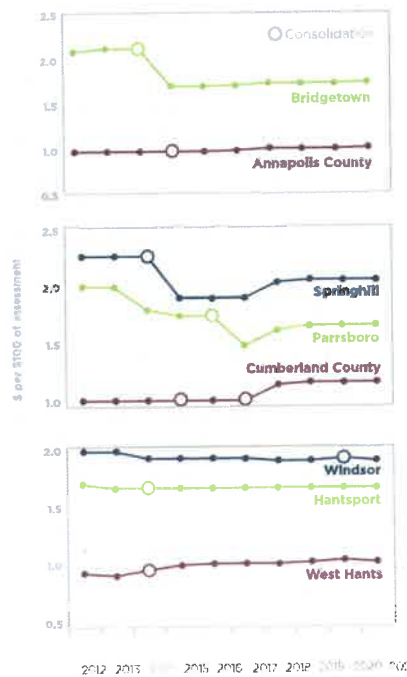
- ✔ Both the Town and County are in good financial shape.
- ✔ Population and development trends are generally stable - property assessments are not in a state of decline for either municipal unit.
- ✔ Municipal infrastructure, capital replacement planning and reserves are in good overall shape in both municipalities.
- ✔ Water rates and electrical utility rates are regulated by the Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board (UARB).

Guiding Principle

4. Continue fair taxation and user pay approaches

History with other mergers

Residential Tax Rates for Merged Rural Municipalities and Towns



Summary: Should the Town and County decide to merge, a joint Transition Committee would prepare the first operating and capital budget in advance of the election of a new Council. The evidence suggests that municipal mergers in Nova Scotia have not resulted in increased taxes for either the County or Town governments involved. Tax bills will likely include a base rate plus area rates, following the current County model. While actual future tax rates can't be predicted, the two units are going into a possible merger without significant risks for tax increases which are often caused by declining revenues or failing infrastructure.

The Consolidation Process

3

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Our Community

In September 2021, both Councils unanimously approved the exploration of a possible merger. As a result, they began a process with a few important steps.



Town and County Councils will make a decision to move ahead or maintain the status quo in Summer 2022.

The objective is for Councils to answer the following question:



“Will residents, businesses and the overall community be better served if the Town and County became one municipal unit.”

What are the next steps if Councils want to move forward with consolidation?

Below is a partial list of what would need to be done.

- ✓ Obtain special Transition Legislation and funding for the consolidation process from the Department of Municipal Affairs and Housing to:
 - Create a Joint Transition Committee;
 - Hire a Transition Coordinator;
 - Recruit a Chief Administrative Officer;
 - Establish a consolidated organization;
 - Develop combined financial, taxation and debt policies and first budget; and
 - Transfer of all existing municipal by-laws, policies and contracts.
- ✓ Conduct an electoral boundary review study and seek approval from the Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board (UARB).
- ✓ Organize the first election.
- ✓ The goal would be to complete the joint transition process by April 1, 2024.

Summary: Town and County Councils have begun a process to consider whether consolidation would better serve residents, businesses and the broader community. They have created a joint Steering Committee and have retained Brighter Community Planning to lead the consultation and engagement to take place in April and May. Public input will help Councils make a decision on whether it will proceed with consolidation.

Guiding Principles

1. Take a regional approach to municipal services
3. Communicate regularly about progress and decisions
5. Value our existing municipal staff
7. Enhance environmental sustainability

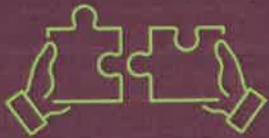


Community Identity and Potential Consolidation

4

ANTIGONISH
Our Community

When municipalities in Nova Scotia have merged, people and business wonder if they will lose their community's unique sense of identity.



Build on Existing Strengths

Both the Town and County have activities and programs in place to support individual organizations and communities. These would be the basis for recognizing and supporting community driven initiatives in the future:

- ✓ Town's Community Grants Policy or the County's Community Partnership Grants Policy.
- ✓ Appointment of citizens to committees.
- ✓ Expansion of broadband services.
- ✓ Programs to support volunteer fire departments.
- ✓ Support tourism initiatives that attract people and business.
- ✓ Councillors who continue to serve as critical local community advocates.
- ✓ Support for community centres.
- ✓ Support for the history, culture and talent of the community.



Summary: Protection of Community Identity is an important consideration in a municipal consolidation process. The form of local government has very little to do with determining one's sense of place. Both the Town and County have tools in place to support local communities, their volunteers, meeting spaces and events. It would be important to use the same tools effectively in a consolidated municipal organization.

Drawing on Other Municipal Examples

Be deliberate in spreading infrastructure projects across numerous communities.

Draw citizen appointees for municipal committees from all parts of the region.

Promote local communities with signage and tourism partnerships.

Develop a strong Community Investment Fund and policy.

Establish a single Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use By-Law with one set of rules for development.

Guiding Principles

2. Build vibrant individual communities.
6. Ensure fair representation for urban and rural residents



Water, Electricity and Alternate Energy Leadership and Potential Consolidation



ANTIGONISH Our Community

Both the County and Town operate utilities. How would these services be impacted by a possible consolidation?



Water in Town and County

In Nova Scotia, water supply and distribution are regulated by both the Nova Scotia Department of Environment and the UARB.

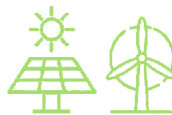
There are approximately **1,600** connections to the Town's water utility. The County has approximately **1,640** water accounts.

The County water utility provides water in the fringe area surrounding the Town and to Lower South River, St. Andrews and St. Josephs.

Initially the utilities, their environmental permits and UARB rate orders would remain unchanged.

In Nova Scotia, water supply and distribution systems are carefully regulated by both the Nova Scotia Department of Environment and the UARB.

Electricity in the Town



Town and fringe residents and businesses receive power from the Town's electrical utility, regulated through the Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board (UARB).

There is no intention to change the service area for residents who receive their power from the Town's electrical utility.

Renewable Energy Leadership

- ✔ Leadership should be recognized and advanced in any possible municipal consolidation process.
- ✔ The County has installed a total of 97kWh in solar PV.
- ✔ The County recently completed a Low Carbon Community feasibility study to explore new energy initiatives with Paqtnkek Mi'kmaw Nation.
- ✔ County approved a five-year Energy Management Plan.
- ✔ The Town is also demonstrating concrete leadership in the development of alternate energy and reducing the community's carbon footprint, through the Alternative Resource Energy Authority (AREA).
- ✔ AREA has future plans for more initiatives, including the installation of automotive EV Chargers and a community solar garden.
- ✔ AREA provides significant financial, economic and environmental benefits, which would be maintained in a potential consolidation.

Summary: The Town and County provide important municipal services through long established and regulated utilities, for water and electricity. These services would be included in a possible consolidation, but they have unique regulatory and ownership characteristics that would have to be recognized in any merger process. In addition, there are significant leadership responses to climate change/alternate energy issues in both municipalities that would require special consideration to grow the opportunities that will exist with a larger organization and protect assets and revenues that have been created by each municipal unit and its citizens.

Guiding Principles

1. Take a regional approach to municipal services
4. Continue fair taxation and user pay approaches
7. Enhance environmental sustainability

Guiding Principles for Potential Consolidation



ANTIGONISH
Our Community

Experience with other municipal mergers has shown that it is important to be clear at the outset about the reason to consider a merger and to set Guiding Principles in place for key decisions. Councils for both municipal units sat together early in the exploration process and developed these Guiding Principles to reflect what is important to our community.



These Guiding Principles provide insight into what is top of mind for Councillors

- 1. Take a regional approach to municipal services:** Work creatively, deliberately, and visibly to improve municipal services, economic development, tourism, culture, and community infrastructure for all residents and businesses in the Antigonish region.
- 2. Build vibrant individual communities:** Promote community identity in rural, urban and First Nations communities, so the whole municipality will be stronger.
- 3. Communicate regularly about progress and decisions:** Communications with residents, businesses, councils, and staff should be frequent, transparent, and inclusive.
- 4. Continue fair taxation and user pay approaches:** Residents and businesses should only be taxed for services and infrastructure they have access to. Property tax rates and infrastructure debt should utilize area tax rates and utility fee approaches that exist today wherever possible.
- 5. Value our existing municipal staff:** The blending of Town and County employees will recognize the value, knowledge and dedication of our current staff and every effort will be made to retain staff and to provide new opportunities.
- 6. Ensure fair representation for urban and rural residents:** District boundaries should ensure every voter has the same electoral power as every other voter, balance rural and urban interests, and recognize local communities of interest.
- 7. Enhance environmental sustainability:** Ownership of the Antigonish electric utility is central to expanding green energy options and reducing our carbon footprint. Build upon the success of initiatives and partnerships with the Alternate Energy Resource Authority and the Municipality's Energy Management Plan.

Objective for the Potential Consolidation of Town and County

Consolidation is being considered to explore the creation of a stronger local government and a unified voice to improve municipal services, community development, economic opportunities, and the quality of life for everyone in Antigonish.

Antigonish Volunteer Fire Departments and Possible Consolidation



ANTIGONISH
Our Community

There are 9 volunteer Fire Departments located within the Town and County of Antigonish. They play an important role in fire protection and emergency services. They are also important community partners and organizers.



The Town of Antigonish Volunteer Fire Department is funded directly by the Town and the County-based volunteer fire departments are funded through an Area Fire Levy. As the discussions continue about the potential for consolidation, there may be questions about what might change around fire service if a municipal merger should take place.

These critical emergency and community organizations are organized in response to the needs of their communities.



Department

- ✓ Antigonish County Volunteer Fire Department
- ✓ North Shore Volunteer Fire Department
- ✓ District 2 – Town Fire Department
- ✓ Four Valley's Fire Department
- ✓ Pomquet Emergency & Rescue Services
- ✓ Tracadie Volunteer Fire Department
- ✓ St. Andrews & District Volunteer Fire Department
- ✓ Auld's Cove Volunteer Fire Department
- ✓ Havre Boucher & District Volunteer Fire Department

Summary: Volunteer Fire Service is important to all communities in both the Town and County. Whether operated directly in the Town or funded by Area Fire Rates in the County, these volunteer organizations understand their community needs and respond accordingly. They do not operate in isolation and have lots of experience through in their communities and support one another through mutual aid. It is important for municipal funding of volunteer fire service to be continued in the same manner. There is no reason to change this system because of a possible municipal consolidation.



1. Take a regional approach to municipal services
2. Build vibrant individual communities
4. Continue fair taxation and user pay approaches

Consolidation or Amalgamation, What's the Difference?



ANTIGONISH
Our Community

The Town and County are looking into "Consolidation" of their two organizations. The following outlines the differences between Consolidation and Amalgamation.



So you've been hearing a lot about "Consolidation" but what is it and how does it differ from "Amalgamation"?

Consolidation is a newer approach to municipal mergers that is more collaborative for the municipal partners. Amalgamation happens when a municipality dissolves or is forced to merge with another partner. The key difference is that Consolidation is voluntary and municipal partners have much more control over the process.

	Consolidation	Amalgamation
Examples	Windsor West Hants	Halifax Regional Municipality Cape Breton Regional Municipality
Overview	Municipal Leadership "Bottom Up" Process	Provincial Leadership "Top Down" Process
Legislation	Special Legislation for each merger Joint Councils make the merger decision, Councils request special legislation	Municipal Government Act, Part XVII UARB Reviews Municipal proposals, Cabinet issues merger order
Structure	Joint Transition Committee Joint Committee recommends Coordinator Joint Committee develops organization Staffed with municipal staff, consultants Joint Committee hires first CAO Boundaries reviewed by UARB Joint Committee organizes first election	Independent Coordinator Cabinet Chooses Coordinator Coordinator develops organization Staffed by experts, consultants Coordinator hires first CAO Boundaries reviewed by NSUARB Coordinator organizes first election



The **Key Question**

For Councils to decide if residents, businesses, and the overall community would be better served if the Town and County became one municipal unit.

Why Now?

To create a stronger local government and a single voice to improve the economic opportunities, resiliency, and quality of life for everyone in Antigonish Town and County.

ANTIGONISH

Our Community

Consolidation Objective and Guiding Principles

Revised 2022 02 02

Objective for the Potential Consolidation of Town and County:

Consolidation is being considered to explore the creation of a stronger local government and a single voice to improve municipal services, community development, economic opportunities, and the quality of life for everyone in Antigonish.

Guiding Principles for Consolidating Antigonish Town and County:

1. **Take a regional approach to municipal services:** Work creatively, deliberately, and visibly to improve municipal services, economic development, tourism, culture, and community infrastructure for all residents and businesses in the Antigonish region.
2. **Build vibrant individual communities:** Promote community identity in rural, urban and First Nations communities, so the whole municipality will be stronger.
3. **Communicate regularly about progress and decisions:** Communications with residents, businesses, councils, and staff should be frequent, transparent, and inclusive.
4. **Continue fair taxation and user pay approaches:** Residents and businesses should only be taxed for services and infrastructure they have access to. Property tax rates and infrastructure debt should utilize area tax rates and utility fee approaches that exist today wherever possible.
5. **Value our existing municipal staff:** The blending of Town and County employees will recognize the value, knowledge and dedication of our current staff and every effort will be made to retain staff and to provide new opportunities.
6. **Ensure Fair Representation for Urban and Rural Residents:** District boundaries should ensure every voter has the same electoral power as every other voter, balance rural and urban interests, and recognize local communities of interest.
7. **Enhance environmental sustainability:** Ownership of the Antigonish electric utility is central to expanding green energy options and reducing our carbon footprint. Build upon the success of initiatives and partnerships with the Alternate Energy Resource Authority and the Municipality's Energy Management Plan.

From: [Shirlyn Donovan](#)
To: [Council](#)
Cc: [Kate Gorman](#)
Subject: Information Session Thursday April 7 Location
Date: April 6, 2022 4:16:16 PM
Attachments: [StFX Campus Map \(002\).pdf](#)

Good afternoon,

Tomorrow evenings session will take place in Vegso Hall (room 150) which in Coady East. Attached is a campus map, it is #36 on the map.

There are accessible parking spots on the street (In between Morrison Hall & Coady International Institute) – which would be close to the door with a ramp. If those happen to be full, there are also some down to the left of the building.

Other parking is available in Chapel square in front of the Bauer Theatre.

If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out. I will likely hang around outside to direct people in front of the Coady because many are not familiar with this meeting space.

Thank you and see you tomorrow.

Shirlyn

Shirlyn Donovan

Strategic Initiatives Coordinator
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
285 Beech Hill Road
Antigonish, NS B2G 0B4
902-863-1117



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www.twitter.com/antigonishco

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ACADEMIC BUILDINGS

1. Xavier Hall (XH) and Alumni House
 - A) Alumni House
2. McKenna Centre (north entrance)
3. Schwartz School (SCHW)
5. St. Ninian's Place (SNP)
6. Angus L. Macdonald Library
7. Mount Saint Bernard (MSB)
 - A) Immaculata Hall
 - B) Camden Hall
 - C) Marguerite Hall
 - D) Gilmora Hall
8. Mulroney Hall
9. Nicholson Tower (NT)
10. Annex
12. J. Bruce Brown Hall (JBB)
30. Physical Sciences Centre (PSC)
36. Coady International Institute
37. Markin Global Complex
38. Fine Arts Building

RESIDENCES

7. Mount Saint Bernard (MSB)
14. MacIsaac Hall
16. MacNeil Hall
20. Governors Hall
21. Coady International House
22. Somers Hall
23. Power Hall
26. Bishops Hall
28. Mackinnon Hall
32. Morrison Hall
33. Cameron Hall
39. O'Regan Hall
40. Riley Hall

ADMINISTRATION & OTHER

4. St. Ninian's Cathedral
5. St. Ninian's Place (SNP)
9. Nicholson Tower (NT)
 - Recruitment and Admissions Office
11. Lane Hall
13. Bloomfield Centre
15. Macdonald Hall
24. 42 West Street Building
25. StFX Observatory
27. University Chapel
28. Mackinnon Hall
 - A) Business Office
31. Services Building (5005 Chapel Square)
 - Safety & Security Services
34. Mockler Hall
35. Abernethy House

SPORTS AND RECREATION

17. Alumni Aquatic Centre
18. Amelia Saputo Centre for Healthy Living
19. Charles V. Keating Centre
29. Bauer Theatre

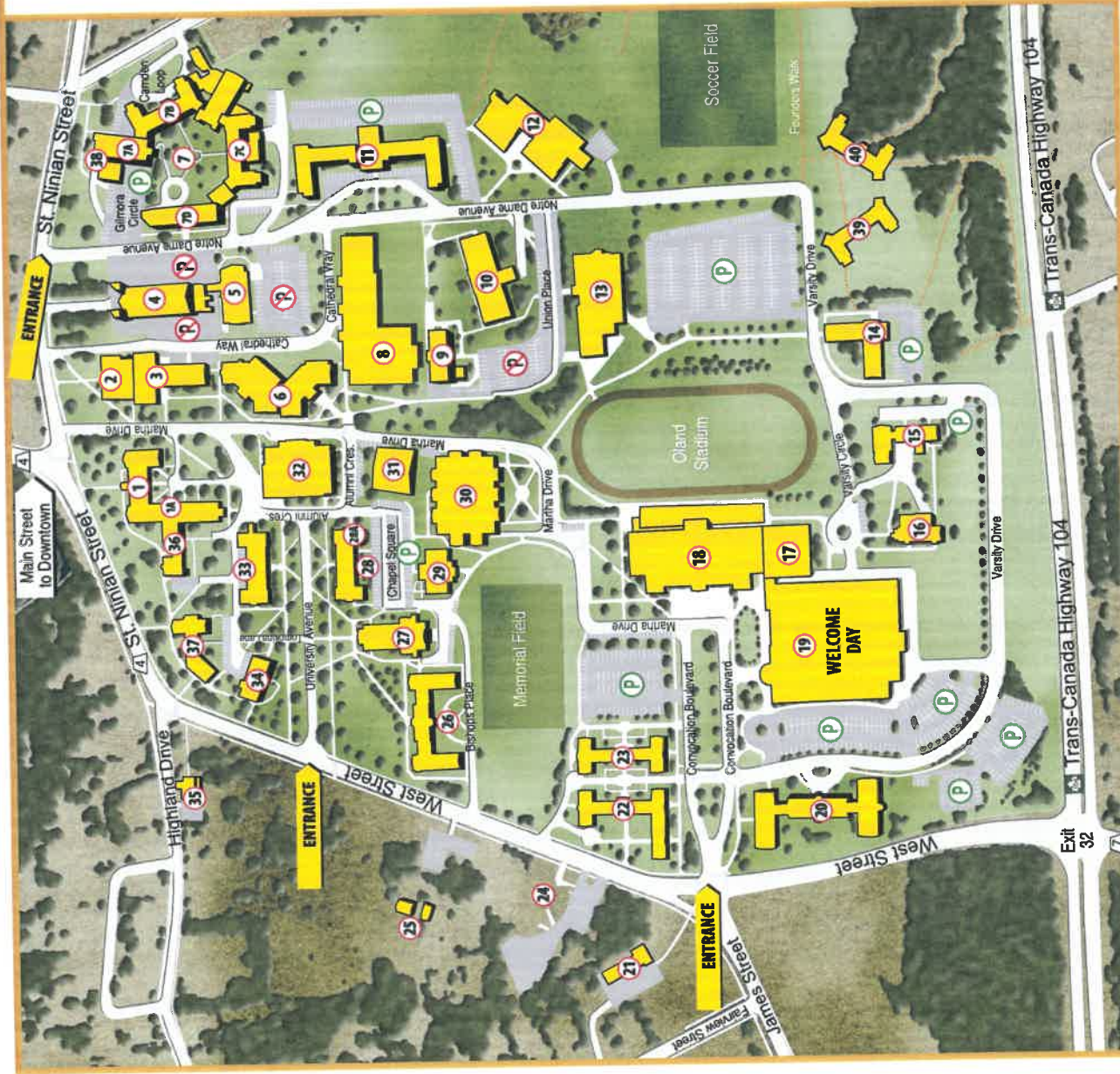
DINING SERVICES

32. Morrison Hall

In your timetable the buildings are referenced by acronyms

 Denotes parking available

 Denotes no parking available



ST. FRANCIS XAVIER
UNIVERSITY

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Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Harris - Consolidation / Amalgamation

5 messages

Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Wed, Apr 6, 2022 at 7:07 PM

To: Hugh O'Neill <

Hughie;

I plan on getting information out on my website this week. Could you have a look at content and make suggestions? I am not good with words.

Thanks

Harris

 **Folks.docx**
22K

Hugh O'Neill <

Wed, Apr 6, 2022 at 7:40 PM

To: Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

yup.

Question what percentage of eligible voters voted in district 9 when you won

[Quoted text hidden]

Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Wed, Apr 6, 2022 at 8:00 PM

To: Hugh O'Neill

Hugh

approximately 72%

Have Gwen check grammar (lol)

Harris

[Quoted text hidden]

Hugh O'Neill <

Thu, Apr 7, 2022 at 11:23 AM

To: Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

gwen is working on your document 😊

was it an elected provincial member or a bureaucrat who advised you not to hold a plebiscite?

[Quoted text hidden]

Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Thu, Apr 7, 2022 at 1:42 PM

To: Hugh O'Neill

Hugh

Yes, I believe he was an assistant to the Deputy Minister of Municipal Affairs. He said people vote with their emotions which got my back up. It was heard by both the town and county councils.

Harris

[Quoted text hidden]

Consolidation Amalgamation

I have taken the position is that we don't have sufficient information on the "pros & cons" of consolidation to support such a merger into one municipal unit. We have no Cost Benefit Analysis for all the components (i.e., infrastructure in town and county , Antigonish Town Electrical Utility, Surpluses, debt, etc.). that demonstrates benefits to Antigonish Town and Antigonish County or the liabilities to each. I am not worried what they do in other municipalities, we need information! From this we need to build a 5-year business plan. We are doing things backward it's approved amalgamation and then we will identify the Cost Benefit Analysis.

Let's look at the definition of amalgamation / consolidation, they are essentially the same thing, one sounds less ominous.

Some Residents think there will be a plebiscite, I want to make clear this is **not** the case. What is going to happen is Antigonish County Councillors will vote in June and a simple majority (6 out of 10 County Councillors) will signal county residents approval or not. Then it will happen pending a simple majority from Antigonish Town Council.

I believe a thorough assessment is required. , A suggestion that has been put forward is let's wait until the next election (2 years away) to fully vet consolidation pros and cons and give residents the best information we can. The current timeline is not carved in stone. One resident suggested to have a list of the pros and cons of consolidation and how it effects the county. Some residents believe there is a vote required. I remember the meeting with town & county councils where

the provincial government representative said you don't want a plebiscite as residents vote with their "emotions" and I replied that in the recent provincial election I voted for the individual policies and views aligned with mine, I did vote with my emotions. I will consider all the pros and con and make my decision for consolidation. Feedback to date is that we don't have enough info believe all of us want to vote with the best interest of our residents of District 9 in mind.

It is critical that county residents' voices be heard, please provide your thoughts. I want to encourage participation in the session on April 25th, 2022 at the Havre Boucher Community Center from 7pm to 9pm.

The format will be information boards/ materials with one-on-one questions that can be asked. There is not a question-and-answer session for the group nor can residents make presentations. It our future and the future of our children and grandchildren. There are other ways of making your opinions, call 1-833-563-2786 or 1-833-563-2787 and leave a voicemail or email your questions and comments to info@antigonish.ca. **COUNCILLORS NEED TO BE CONTACTED TO EXPRESS YOUR THOUGHTS, THIS WILL INFLUENCE THE VOTE, YOU HAVE THE POWER!**

Comments and Questions that I have put together which were sent to all Antigonish County Councillors;

1. There are concerns about the cost of services especially the RCMP. We are told that policing if consolidation occurs, we will be on the hook for a yearly increase of over a million dollars for policing services as we are a new municipality. The division of

costs between a municipality and the federal government went from a 70 /30 split to 90 / 10 split. There is no reference to this possibility in the information to the public. Even if we think the federal and provincial government are going to come through, this is not to date, certain., we need to make residents aware of both possibilities and get the response in writing from governments (Federal & Provincial) in my opinion.

In addition, the RCMP have a new collective agreement with their members and these costs are retroactive which will result in significant costs to every municipality. This cost is not related to consolidation.

2. Antigonish County received \$ 767,000 dollars to January 31, 2022 for Deed Transfer Tax (1% of purchase price) and is a windfall, not something that's going to happen every year as in previous five years we received between 4 – 5 hundred thousand dollars and you should not budget for a windfall. Our year ends March 31 it should be approaching \$ 800,000. The property tax assessments in the county are up (Residential 8.77 %, Commercial 10% and Resource 6.83%). This translates into a bit more than one million dollars (Residential \$834,000, Commercial \$129,000 and Resource \$47,000) more in taxes, pending appeals which wouldn't reduce by much. Added to that is our reserve fund, the county has never before been in such good financial shape. I received the financials for the Antigonish Town this week and reviewing. From a financial

perspective it brings up our “due diligence” to explore all the impacts of consolidation.

3. The rate for commercial in the county is \$1.44 (went down in 2021) while the Town rate is \$2.61 a 45% difference. Will we have two different commercial tax rates? The fringe areas of the county who have the same services as the town will pay a lot more if this is the case or the town will see its rates reduced, I don't think you can have it both ways.
4. The tax rate for residential in the county is \$0.88 cents while the town rate is 1.09, a 19.5 % difference. The county has not had a tax rate increase for 12 years due to the growth we have seen in the county. User pay has been put forward in amalgamation /consolidation material but it is well known that rural residents pay more, example is the Municipality of Queens charges 25% of the urban road budget to the rural taxpayers.
5. I was a member of the Havre Boucher Fire Department for over 20 years and I know we in rural fire departments value our independence, this could be eroded by future municipal councils. A couple of examples of points that we should consider.

The Greenwich Fire Department near Kentville was shut down in March of this year by the Kings Municipality without warning to the Greenwich Fire Department volunteer members or the chief, just came in and said your closed down. The decision has been reversed by the Kings Municipality on Friday (March10) due to outcry from the fire service and the public. The Mayor said it was a mistake and result of fire report done by municipality.

Another item I have learned is, there was a “ fire review ” of the fire service with the intention of seeing where “opportunities” can be identified done by West Hants after consolidation, I don’t know what opportunities were made, but this does indicate oversight by the municipality taking away independence of local fire departments.

In our area, there is a report in the front page of the newspaper “the Reporter” dated March 23rd, 2022 where there was a conflict between two fire departments but both wanted to continue operating independently.

6. A resident expressed a concern about diluting the district voice as she believes there needs to be an understanding of the electoral boundaries before the green light for consolidation. At our meeting with the town council on February 23rd, it was suggested by Willie Cormier (Town Councillor) that we develop suggested boundaries as UARB would likely support if the two parties agreed. He suggested it be done before vote. I certainly agree with him.
- A resident expressed a concern about diluting the district voice as she believes there needs to be an understanding of the electoral boundaries before the green light for consolidation. At our meeting with the town council on February 23rd, it was suggested by Willie Cormier (Town Councillor) that we develop suggested boundaries as UARB would likely support if the two parties agreed. He suggested it be done before vote. I certainly agree with him.

Harris McNamara

From: Glenn Horne
Sent: April 7, 2022 8:22 AM
To: Harris McNamara
Cc: Owen McCarron
Subject: RE: Conflict of Interest

Good morning, Councillor McNamara –

Just checking in to see if you have any additional questions or if you've been able to connect with a lawyer for a second opinion?

Cheers,
Glenn



Glenn Horne | Chief Administrative Officer
Municipality of the County of Antigonish | 902.863.1117
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From: Glenn Horne
Sent: March 30, 2022 12:29 PM
To: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Cc: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Marc Dunning <>
Subject: RE: Conflict of Interest

Good afternoon, Councillor McNamara –

Thank you again for meeting with Warden McCarron and I this morning. At the meeting we shared with you a legal opinion advising that you would be in conflict of interest on the eventual motion before Municipal Council related to consolidation. That motion will be: *The Municipality request the provincial government consolidate the Municipality of the County of Antigonish and the Town of Antigonish into one municipal unit through special legislation.* I am obligated to advise you of this situation if I am aware of it; it is up to you to declare a conflict.

The basis of this opinion that you will be in conflict with the motion above is the deemed pecuniary interest of your daughter who is the Director of Corporate Services for the Town of Antigonish. While both councils have endorsed a approach to consolidation that would see every effort made to retain staff and to provide new opportunities, it is most likely that the most change will come at the top administrative levels of the organization (ie: there will be one CAO, Director of Corporate Services, Director of Public Works, etc...). Staff currently in those positions will have to go through some kind of selection process. While every effort will be made to retain there is no guarantee for a specific position.

We further advised you to speak directly with the Municipality's solicitor on this matter, Marc Dunning (cced). You suggested, and we agreed, that you would get independent counsel on this question and the Municipality would pay these legal fees. I further encouraged you to retain a lawyer with experience in municipal government and familiarity with the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act. If you change your mind and would like to speak with Mr. Dunning you now have his contact information.

Please let me know when you have had an opportunity to review this with a lawyer. Municipal Council will need to be made aware of the potential for this conflict. However, we will wait to share this information until after you've had an opportunity to speak with a lawyer.

If you have further questions please let me know.

Cheers,
Glenn



Glenn Horne | Chief Administrative Officer
Municipality of the County of Antigonish | 902.863.1117
285 Beech Hill Road, Beech Hill, NS | B2G 0B4
www.antigonishcounty.ns.ca | [@AntigonishCo](https://www.facebook.com/AntigonishCo) | [facebook](https://www.facebook.com/AntigonishCo)

Honour Yesterday, Act Today, Inspire Tomorrow

From: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Sent: March 29, 2022 10:15 AM
To: Glenn Horne <glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: RE: Conflict of Interest

Glenn
I can make myself available, what time?
Harris

From: Glenn Horne <glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Sent: March 28, 2022 12:36 PM
To: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Cc: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Conflict of Interest

Good afternoon, Councillor McNamara –

As we discussed briefly in September, there is potential for a conflict of interest to arise for you as we get further into discussions and eventually vote on consolidation with the Town of Antigonish. Are you available on Wednesday morning to meet with Warden McCarron and I continue this discussion?

Thanks!
Glenn



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Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Gwen and My Edits

3 messages

Hugh O'Neill

Thu, Apr 7, 2022 at 2:06 PM

To: Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

 **Folks (2).docx**
24K

Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Fri, Apr 8, 2022 at 8:41 AM

To: Hugh O'Neill <

Hugh

Thank you for coming to the Community Leader's meeting last evening and also Gwen 7 yourself reviewing the information that I am considering putting on my site. I am waiting for a lawyer's opinion before I publish this and the Conflict of Interest issue. Please keep the letter from Glenn & Owen confidential for now. I have a meeting next week with the lawyer.

Have a great weekend!

Harris

On Thu, Apr 7, 2022 at 2:06 PM Hugh O'Neill <hpjoneill@gmail.com> wrote:

Hugh O'Neill

Fri, Apr 8, 2022 at 8:56 AM

To: Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Mum is the word 😊. Yes wait until you have your Meeting with your lawyer. Also ask if the CAO should be sending this email and if he shouldn't, is his action, given his potential to gain from this, an actual conflict of interest. I found him fairly aggressive last night.

[Quoted text hidden]

Consolidation Amalgamation

I have taken the position is that we don't have sufficient information on the "pros & cons" of consolidation to support such a merger into one municipal unit. We have no Cost Benefit Analysis for all the components (i.e., infrastructure in town and county , Antigonish Town Electrical Utility, Surpluses, debt, etc.). that demonstrates benefits to Antigonish Town and Antigonish County or the liabilities to each. I am not worried what they do in other municipalities, we need information! From this we need to build a 5-year business plan. We are doing things backward it's approved amalgamation and then we will identify the Cost Benefit Analysis.

Let's look at the definition of amalgamation / consolidation, they are essentially the same thing, one sounds less ominous.

Some Residents think there will be a plebiscite, I want to make clear this is **not** the case. What is going to happen is Antigonish County Councillors will vote in June and a simple majority (6 out of 10 County Councillors) will signal county residents approval or not. Then it will happen pending a simple majority from Antigonish Town Council.

I believe a thorough assessment is required. , A suggestion that has been put forward is let's wait until the next election (2 years away) to fully vet consolidation pros and cons and give residents the best information we can. The current timeline is not carved in stone. One resident suggested to have a list of the pros and cons of consolidation and how it effects the county. Some residents believe there is a vote required. I remember the meeting with town & county councils where

the provincial government representative said you don't want a plebiscite as residents vote with their "emotions" and I replied that in the recent provincial election I voted for the individual policies and views aligned with mine, I did vote with my emotions. I will consider all the pros and con and make my decision for consolidation. Feedback to date is that we don't have enough info believe all of us want to vote with the best interest of our residents of District 9 in mind.

It is critical that county residents' voices be heard, please provide your thoughts. I want to encourage participation in the session on April 25th, 2022 at the Havre Boucher Community Center from 7pm to 9pm.

The format will be information boards/ materials with one-on-one questions that can be asked. There is not a question-and-answer session for the group nor can residents make presentations. It our future and the future of our children and grandchildren. There are other ways of making your opinions, call 1-833-563-2786 or 1-833-563-2787 and leave a voicemail or email your questions and comments to info@antigonish.ca. **COUNCILLORS NEED TO BE CONTACTED TO EXPRESS YOUR THOUGHTS, THIS WILL INFLUENCE THE VOTE, YOU HAVE THE POWER!**

Comments and Questions that I have put together which were sent to all Antigonish County Councillors;

1. There are concerns about the cost of services especially the RCMP. We are told that policing if consolidation occurs, we will be on the hook for a yearly increase of over a million dollars for policing services as we are a new municipality. The division of

costs between a municipality and the federal government went from a 70 /30 split to 90 / 10 split. There is no reference to this possibility in the information to the public. Even if we think the federal and provincial government are going to come through, this is not to date, certain., we need to make residents aware of both possibilities and get the response in writing from governments (Federal & Provincial) in my opinion.

In addition, the RCMP have a new collective agreement with their members and these costs are retroactive which will result in significant costs to every municipality. This cost is not related to consolidation.

2. Antigonish County received \$ 767,000 dollars to January 31, 2022 for Deed Transfer Tax (1% of purchase price) and is a windfall, not something that's going to happen every year as in previous five years we received between 4 – 5 hundred thousand dollars and you should not budget for a windfall. Our year ends March 31 it should be approaching \$ 800,000. The property tax assessments in the county are up (Residential 8.77 %, Commercial 10% and Resource 6.83%). This translates into a bit more than one million dollars (Residential \$834,000, Commercial \$129,000 and Resource \$47,000) more in taxes, pending appeals which wouldn't reduce by much. Added to that is our reserve fund, the county has never before been in such good financial shape. I received the financials for the Antigonish Town this week and reviewing. From a financial

perspective it brings up our “due diligence” to explore all the impacts of consolidation.

3. The rate for commercial in the county is \$1.44 (went down in 2021) while the Town rate is \$2.61 a 45% difference. Will we have two different commercial tax rates? The fringe areas of the county who have the same services as the town will pay a lot more if this is the case or the town will see its rates reduced, I don't think you can have it both ways.
4. The tax rate for residential in the county is \$0.88 cents while the town rate is 1.09, a 19.5 % difference. The county has not had a tax rate increase for 12 years due to the growth we have seen in the county. User pay has been put forward in amalgamation /consolidation material but it is well known that rural residents pay more, example is the Municipality of Queens charges 25% of the urban road budget to the rural taxpayers.
5. I was a member of the Havre Boucher Fire Department for over 20 years and I know we in rural fire departments value our independence, this could be eroded by future municipal councils. A couple of examples of points that we should consider.

The Greenwich Fire Department near Kentville was shut down in March of this year by the Kings Municipality without warning to the Greenwich Fire Department volunteer members or the chief, just came in and said your closed down. The decision has been reversed by the Kings Municipality on Friday (March10) due to outcry from the fire service and the public. The Mayor said it was a mistake and result of fire report done by municipality.

Another item I have learned is, there was a “ fire review ” of the fire service with the intention of seeing where “opportunities” can be identified done by West Hants after consolidation, I don’t know what opportunities were made, but this does indicate oversight by the municipality taking away independence of local fire departments.

In our area, there is a report in the front page of the newspaper “the Reporter” dated March 23rd, 2022 where there was a conflict between two fire departments but both wanted to continue operating independently.

6. A resident expressed a concern about diluting the district voice as she believes there needs to be an understanding of the electoral boundaries before the green light for consolidation. At our meeting with the town council on February 23rd , it was suggested by Willie Cormier (Town Councillor) that we develop suggested boundaries as UARB would likely support if the two parties agreed. He suggested it be done before vote. I certainly agree with him.
- A resident expressed a concern about diluting the district voice as she believes there needs to be an understanding of the electoral boundaries before the green light for consolidation. At our meeting with the town council on February 23rd , it was suggested by Willie Cormier (Town Councillor) that we develop suggested boundaries as UARB would likely support if the two parties agreed. He suggested it be done before vote. I certainly agree with him.

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: April 8, 2022 8:59 AM
To: harris.mcnamara@gmail.com
Subject: FW: Conflict of Interest

From: Glenn Horne <glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Sent: March 28, 2022 12:36 PM
To: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Cc: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Conflict of Interest

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Thanks!
Glenn



Glenn Horne | Chief Administrative Officer
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Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Fwd: Letter on Democracy Abandoned By Antigonish

2 messages

Anne-Marie Long <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Fri, Apr 8, 2022 at 9:26 AM

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Anne-Marie Long**
Date: Thu, 7 Apr 2022 at 23:18
Subject: Fwd: Letter on Democracy Abandoned By Antigonish
To: <gmatie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Anne-Marie Long**
Date: Thu, 7 Apr 2022 at 22:59
Subject: Letter on Democracy Abandoned By Antigonish
To: <letters@herald.ca>, <edits@herald.ca>

Hi Gary

This is the letter that I sent to the Chronicle Herald. Please start a list of requests for a plebiscite for the county. It doesn't matter if the town holds one in order for us to hold a vote in the county.

I spoke with Bruce Kiley at the NSUARB again today. He said that unless there was a matter before the Board, they would not ask for a plebiscite. He said that we have to lobby our own municipality for one.

Anne Marie Long

 **Town County Consolidation.docx**
20K

Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>
To: Hugh O'Neill

Mon, Apr 11, 2022 at 10:03 AM

see Ann Marie letter

Harris

[Quoted text hidden]

 **Town County Consolidation.docx**
20K

Harris McNamara

From: Shirlyn Donovan
Sent: April 8, 2022 3:49 PM
To: Council; SLT
Subject: Meeting Minutes - Volunteer Fire Service Information Session
Attachments: Volunteer Fire Service Information Session - Meeting Minutes - April 6 2022.pdf

Good afternoon,

Please find attached the minutes from the meeting held on Wednesday, April 6, 2022, with the Volunteer Fire Departments.

Thanks!

Shirlyn

Shirlyn Donovan
Strategic Initiatives Coordinator
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
285 Beech Hill Road
Antigonish, NS B2G 0B4
902-863-1117

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 www.twitter.com/antigonishco

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Volunteer Fire Service Information Session

County Council Chambers

April 6, 2022

Attendance

Mayor Laurie Boucher, Warden Owen McCarron, Deputy Mayor Willie Cormier, Steve Scannell, Glenn Horne, Shirlyn Donovan, Kate Orman, Robert MacPherson, Bill Chisholm, John DeWolf, Brendan MacInnis, Kristin MacEachern, Murray MacEachern, George Durabi, Pierre Venedam, Chris Grover, Pierre Venedam, Johnny Duykers, Doug Benoit, Greg MacDougall, Brian Smith

Welcome

Warden McCarron and Mayor Boucher provided welcome remarks and an introduced Brian Smith from Brighter Community Planning & Consulting.

Presentation

Brian Smith joined the session virtually and provided a presentation on how Town and County Councils arrived at this point, the process to date, upcoming community engagement, and timelines for decision making. Topics covered in the presentation included:

- How Council Arrived Here: History of success, joint infrastructure investments, partnerships with community groups, etc.
- Exploration – September 2021 Councils voted to unanimously explore consolidation.
- Voice of the Community – Councils recognize the importance of talking to the community to determine if consolidation should be pursued.
- Review of the Guiding Principles
- Engagement and Communications Plan
- Process – Timelines and schedule for Brighter Community Planning's involvement in this process.

Question & Answer

**Questions were answered by Warden McCarron, Mayor Boucher, Glenn Horne, and Brian Smith. The fact sheets, community consultation guide, and financial indicators documents were provided as handouts.*

Question – (Looking at the Property Tax graphic) The Town rates in these examples seemed to have dropped where the County rates stayed the same or went up, that doesn't seem beneficial?

Answer – The examples provided are mostly looking at Town's that have dissolved. The purpose of these graphs was to show that there was no sudden dramatic increase due to consolidation. In the example that includes Cumberland County you will note a significant increase a few years after the dissolution of Springhill and Parrsboro. This increase was unrelated to consolidation, it was because of Cumberland's

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need to establish sufficient capital and operating reserves. The difference for the Town and County is that we are both in strong financial positions, we aren't looking at one another for a helping hand.

Question – Fire protection needs are very different from the Town and rural communities. Are there plans to change that structure or to make it uniform?

Answer – No. There is a process already in place and we see no need to change that. If the County Departments decide they want rates to go up, there is a process in place to make that happen. The Town and County look to the Fire Departments to tell us what is working and what isn't, we trust your leadership in the communities you serve.

Question – If we merged into one municipality and a new CAO was hired one of the first things they could do is change fire service, so is bigger better?

Answer – The reality is that consolidation or not, when a new CAO or new Council is elected there are the potential for changes in relationships. However, we are looking to put the correct procedures in place to protect the autonomy of the fire service.

Question – What about planning and development, is one set of rules better?

Answer – Both the Town and County are members of Eastern District Planning Commission. EDPC has provided us with that consistency, which helps developers and makes the process easier when they know what to expect for building in the Town and County.

Question – Would the Town have to change the name of their Fire Department if the Town and County come together?

Answer – Any changes to the name would come from the department itself. If the department came forward with proposed name change that was supported by the community of course Council would consider it. Operationally and structurally, nothing would change within the department even if there was a name change.

Question – A large portion of County fire budgets and time go into insurance and procurement. Are there opportunities for support in these areas under a new municipality?

Answer – Yes. If those are conversations, you want to have we are always open to working together. If there are things we can help coordinate and streamline, we are open and willing to provide support in the areas where it makes sense and is needed.

Question – If consolidation happens, would the new regional government be able to move trucks or resources from one department to another?

Answer – No. There will never be any intention to do that. The equipment available in each department is there because of a clearly identified need. Our role is to support you as fire fighters. You know your communities and that is clear when you are called into action and have the resources needed when a major fire event happens.

Question - Would there be changes to the fire districts and the areas served by each department and would there be redundancies that would have to be reviewed?

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Answer – No. If municipal boundaries change the fire districts and the areas served remain the same.

We have seen this already with a district in St. Andrews. A few years ago, the municipal district changed, but the fire area remained the same. Despite the departments being close, each has their own volunteer base. CAOs and staff tend to respect the chiefs and the way they operate.

Question – Are members of the public going to have a plebiscite?

Answer – We are not planning to have a plebiscite. The community engagement sessions are designed to create an environment to have factual discussions, like this. We are taking this approach to go out to the community and the feedback received will build the final report Council receives. That report will inform Councils final decision whether to consolidate or not.

Question – You’ve talked about being able to do more if you are one unit. Have you had projects declined now as two separate units?

Answer – Yes. There are numerous applications to the provincial and federal government that have been denied. Both of us would submit separate applications to the same pot of money, government officials will look at them and say we can’t give to both, so they don’t give to either and move onto the next community. Higher levels of government are looking for that coordination and cooperation for their investments.

Question – Has the business case been made for consolidation? What about RCMP costs and staff efficiencies?

Answer – Town and County staff have been reviewing budgets and what a possible merger could look like financially. Financial indicator documents have been prepared and are available for public review. The discussions around RCMP and any changes to costs are currently ongoing with Public Safety Canada. That will be a key piece of information for Council to make their final decision and once there is information to share Council and the community will be made aware.

Closing Remarks

Final remarks from Warden McCarron and Mayor Boucher.

Adjournment

From: [Shirlyn Donovan](#)
To: [Council](#)
Subject: Exploration of Consolidation Information
Date: April 8, 2022 4:36:27 PM
Attachments: [Engagement Schedule.pdf](#)

Good afternoon,

Community engagement sessions are set to begin Monday. The online session is set for Tuesday, April 12 from 3-5pm, if you plan to attend, you must pre-register by clicking this link: <https://bit.ly/3i3Pczc>. Please see the full schedule attached.

Our consultants have also offered to have one on one session conversations prior to each session with Councillors from the area hosting that evening. They will arrive at each session 45-60 minutes prior to the session so please feel free to arrive early and meet with them.

Any questions, please let me know.

Thanks,
Shirlyn

Shirlyn Donovan

Strategic Initiatives Coordinator
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
285 Beech Hill Road
Antigonish, NS B2G 0B4
902-863-1117



www.antigonishcounty.ns.ca

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Our Community



Exploring Consolidation - take part and have an impact on our community's future.

Will residents, businesses and the overall community be better served if the Town and County became one? You tell us!

- Drop in to one of the sessions below.
- Visit Antigonish.ca and click on "Participate Now."
- Call us toll-free at 1-833-563-2786 or 1-833-563-2787 and leave a voicemail for staff, who will follow up with you.
- Email your questions and comments to info@antigonish.ca.

Monday, April 11	1:00PM - 3:00PM	The Peoples Place Library Community Room
Monday, April 11	7:00PM - 9:00PM	St. Joseph's Lakeside Community Centre
Tuesday, April 12	3:00PM - 5:00PM	Online Session. Register in advance at https://bit.ly/3i3Pczc
Tuesday, April 12	7:00PM - 9:00PM	Lakevale Mini Trail Community Centre
Wednesday, April 13	11:00AM - 12:30PM	The Peoples Place Library Community Room
Wednesday, April 13	7:00PM - 9:00PM	Arisaig Parish Hall
Monday, April 25	7:00PM - 9:00PM	Havre Boucher Community Centre
Tuesday, April 26	11:00AM - 1:00PM	Antigonish Legion/CACL
Tuesday, April 26	7:00PM - 9:00PM	Antigonish Legion/CACL
Wednesday, April 27	7:00PM - 9:00PM	Lochaber Centre
Thursday, April 28	6:00PM - 8:00PM	St. Andrews Community Centre
Monday, May 2	12:00PM - 3:00PM	The Peoples Place Library Community Room
Monday, May 2	7:00PM - 9:00PM	Heatherton Community Centre
Tuesday, May 3	5:00PM - 8:00PM	St. Andrew Junior School (Appleseed Drive)
Wednesday, May 4	6:00PM - 8:00PM	Tracadie Fire Hall
Monday, May 9	6:00PM - 8:00PM	Pomquet Fire Hall

* A Session is being planned with Paqtnekek Mikmaw Nation that is still TBD

From: [Shirlyn Donovan](#)
To: [Council: SLT](#)
Subject: Meeting Minutes - Volunteer Fire Service Information Session
Date: April 8, 2022 3:49:21 PM
Attachments: [Volunteer Fire Service Information Session - Meeting Minutes - April 6 2022.pdf](#)

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Beth Schumacher

From: Kate Gorman <kgorman@townofantigonish.ca>
Sent: April 8, 2022 6:01 PM
To: Owen McCarron; mayor@townofantigonish.ca
Cc: Shirlyn Donovan
Subject: Speaking Notes - Introductions
Attachments: Community Engagement Sessions - General Intro.docx; Online Engagement Session - Introduction.docx

Hi Owen and Laurie,

Please find attached your opening remarks for the online session. I shortened it up a bit compared to the last two sessions.

I also included a general introduction that Laurie requested for the in-person sessions. This can be shared, or you guys can trade off who gets to do it for each session. You don't have to use it but Laurie thought it might be good to have if 20 mins into the in-person sessions we want to pause and take a little ownership of the process.

Have a great weekend,

Kate

Kate Gorman
Marketing and Communications Officer
kgorman@townofantigonish.ca
902-318-6758
www.townofantigonish.ca | [Nest Cam](#) | [Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#)

Good evening, everyone.

I appreciate you all for taking the time to be here.

I'd also like to acknowledge we are gathered here today in Mi'kma'ki, the traditional unceded territory of the Mi'kmaw people.

Today, we are joined by Brighter Community Planning and Consulting. We hired Brighter Community Planning to help support us through this Community Engagement process. The Brighter Community Planning team are well versed in the municipal landscape in Nova Scotia. They have experience with past mergers, service reviews, planning, economic development and community engagement. We trust their expertise to help facilitate this process. They are here to listen, gather feedback, and report on what was heard.

Community Engagement is vital component of this exploration process. We are grateful to be able to go out into the community and hear from you. You are here because you feel strongly about Antigonish's future.

We are not here to take sides and no decisions have been made. We are here to listen, share our values as a collective of Council, and get into some great discussions.

I want to draw your attention to our Guiding Principles. These were developed by both councils and will let you know where our values and what is top of mind for us as a Council as we go through this process.

Thank you for coming and let's get back to the conversations.

Owen:

Good afternoon everyone.

Mayor Boucher and I appreciate you all for taking the time to join us virtually.

I'd also like to acknowledge we are gathered here today in Mi'kma'ki, the traditional unceded territory of the Mi'kmaw people.

Today, we will have a presentation from Brighter Community Planning and Consulting. They are going to provide some background on the exploration process, how we've gotten to where we are today, and what is upcoming. Then we are going to open the floor for discussion and questions. This is your session, so anything that comes to mind please don't hesitate to ask.

Laurie:

Back in September, both Councils unanimously voted to explore consolidation.

For the last number of years, the relationship between the Town and County has been incredibly positive. We are working well together both at the Council and staff levels.

The relationship we have built continues to grow based on our shared foundation of trust, consistency, and hard work. These values have resulted in a lot of positive investment for our community including infrastructure, capacity building, increased support for community groups, and events attraction.

Together, we have been putting in the work to learn what consolidation could mean for the future of Antigonish.

The big question we are trying to ask is if our citizens, businesses, and community groups would be better served if we did consolidate into one municipal unit.

Owen:

To help support this work, we have hired Brighter Community Planning & Consulting to lead the Community Engagement portion of the exploration phase.

The Brighter Community Planning team are well versed in the municipal landscape in Nova Scotia. They have experience with past mergers, service reviews, planning, economic development, and community engagement. We trust their expertise to help facilitate this process. They are here to listen, gather feedback, and report on what was heard. I'd like to welcome Brian Smith and Chrystal Fuller and pass the controls over to them for the presentation.

Shirlyn Donovan

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: Sunday, April 10, 2022 6:20 PM
To: Glenn Horne; Shirlyn Donovan
Subject: Fwd: Consolidation

FYI

Warden Owen McCarron
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
902-968-1290

Begin forwarded message:

From: Bill Fraser <wcdfraser@i >
Date: April 10, 2022 at 4:31:36 PM ADT
To: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, mayor@townofantigonish.ca
Subject: Consolidation

Dear Owen and Laurie:

Let me first apologize for having to leave Thursday evening's session early.

But I want to commend you both and your respective councils for initiating this consolidation process. For my part, I can only envision benefits for residents and businesses in both Town and County.

And what better time than when both governments enjoy healthy balance sheets and a working relationship the likes of which we have never seen before.

I also see it as a preemptive move before higher levels of government decide to dictate how local governments will be structured and administered.

I am fully supportive of this process and the anticipated outcome.

I might add that while there is reference to "economic development" in the Guiding Principle #1, it would be my hope that a consolidated local government would see regional growth as a primary objective.

Again, my congratulations to you both.

Bill

you have my full support

So

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: April 11, 2022 9:27 AM
To: ginger1
Subject: FW: Exploration of Consolidation Information
Attachments: Engagement Schedule.pdf

Ann-Marie;

Thought you may be interested in the link, I not sure why we have to register but I am trying to get participation of the rural residents.

Harris

From: Shirlyn Donovan <shirlyn.donovan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Sent: April 8, 2022 4:36 PM
To: Council <council@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Exploration of Consolidation Information

Good afternoon,

Community engagement sessions are set to begin Monday. The online session is set for Tuesday, April 12 from 3-5pm, if you plan to attend, you must pre-register by clicking this link: <https://bit.ly/3i3Pczc>. Please see the full schedule attached.

Our consultants have also offered to have one on one session conversations prior to each session with Councillors from the area hosting that evening. They will arrive at each session 45-60 minutes prior to the session so please feel free to arrive early and meet with them.

Any questions, please let me know.

Thanks,
Shirlyn

Shirlyn Donovan
Strategic Initiatives Coordinator
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
285 Beech Hill Road
Antigonish, NS B2G 0B4
902-863-1117



www.antigonishcounty.ns.ca
[www.twitter.com/antigonishco](https://twitter.com/antigonishco)

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ANTIGONISH

Our Community



Exploring Consolidation - take part and have an impact on our community's future.

Will residents, businesses and the overall community be better served if the Town and County became one? You tell us!

- Drop in to one of the sessions below.
- Visit Antigonish.ca and click on "Participate Now."
- Call us toll-free at 1-833-563-2786 or 1-833-563-2787 and leave a voicemail for staff, who will follow up with you.
- Email your questions and comments to info@antigonish.ca.

Monday, April 11	1:00PM - 3:00PM	The Peoples Place Library Community Room
Monday, April 11	7:00PM - 9:00PM	St. Joseph's Lakeside Community Centre
Tuesday, April 12	3:00PM - 5:00PM	Online Session. Register in advance at https://bit.ly/3i3Pczc
Tuesday, April 12	7:00PM - 9:00PM	Lakevale Mini Trail Community Centre
Wednesday, April 13	11:00AM - 12:30PM	The Peoples Place Library Community Room
Wednesday, April 13	7:00PM - 9:00PM	Arisaig Parish Hall
Monday, April 25	7:00PM - 9:00PM	Havre Boucher Community Centre
Tuesday, April 26	11:00AM - 1:00PM	Antigonish Legion/CACL
Tuesday, April 26	7:00PM - 9:00PM	Antigonish Legion/CACL
Wednesday, April 27	7:00PM - 9:00PM	Lochaber Centre
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Monday, May 2	7:00PM - 9:00PM	Heatherton Community Centre
Tuesday, May 3	5:00PM - 8:00PM	St. Andrew Junior School (Appleseed Drive)
Wednesday, May 4	6:00PM - 8:00PM	Tracadie Fire Hall
Monday, May 9	6:00PM - 8:00PM	Pomquet Fire Hall

* A Session is being planned with Paqtnekek Mikmaw Nation that is still TBD

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: April 13, 2022 9:06 AM
To: harris.mcnamara@gmail.com
Subject: FW: Conflict of Interest

From: Glenn Horne <glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Sent: March 30, 2022 12:29 PM
To: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Cc: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Marc Dunning
Subject: RE: Conflict of Interest

Good afternoon, Councillor McNamara –

Thank you again for meeting with Warden McCarron and I this morning. At the meeting we shared with you a legal opinion advising that you would be in conflict of interest on the eventual motion before Municipal Council related to consolidation. That motion will be: *The Municipality request the provincial government consolidate the Municipality of the County of Antigonish and the Town of Antigonish into one municipal unit through special legislation.* I am obligated to advise you of this situation if I am aware of it; it is up to you to declare a conflict.

The basis of this opinion that you will be in conflict with the motion above is the deemed pecuniary interest of your daughter who is the Director of Corporate Services for the Town of Antigonish. While both councils have endorsed a approach to consolidation that would see every effort made to retain staff and to provide new opportunities, it is most likely that the most change will come at the top administrative levels of the organization (ie: there will be one CAO, Director of Corporate Services, Director of Public Works, etc...). Staff currently in those positions will have to go through some kind of selection process. While every effort will be made to retain there is no guarantee for a specific position.

We further advised you to speak directly with the Municipality's solicitor on this matter, Marc Dunning (cced). You suggested, and we agreed, that you would get independent counsel on this question and the Municipality would pay these legal fees. I further encouraged you to retain a lawyer with experience in municipal government and familiarity with the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act. If you change your mind and would like to speak with Mr. Dunning you now have his contact information.

Please let me know when you have had an opportunity to review this with a lawyer. Municipal Council will need to be made aware of the potential for this conflict. However, we will wait to share this information until after you've had an opportunity to speak with a lawyer.

If you have further questions please let me know.

Cheers,
Glenn



Glenn Horne | Chief Administrative Officer
Municipality of the County of Antigonish | 902.863.1117
285 Beech Hill Road, Beech Hill, NS | B2G 0B4
www.antigonishcounty.ns.ca | [@AntigonishCo](https://www.facebook.com/AntigonishCo) | [facebook](#)

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From: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Sent: March 29, 2022 10:15 AM
To: Glenn Horne <glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: RE: Conflict of Interest

Glenn
I can make myself available, what time?
Harris

From: Glenn Horne <glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Sent: March 28, 2022 12:36 PM
To: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Cc: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Conflict of Interest

Good afternoon, Councillor McNamara –

As we discussed briefly in September, there is potential for a conflict of interest to arise for you as we get further into discussions and eventually vote on consolidation with the Town of Antigonish. Are you available on Wednesday morning to meet with Warden McCarron and I continue this discussion?

Thanks!
Glenn



Glenn Horne | Chief Administrative Officer
Municipality of the County of Antigonish | 902.863.1117
285 Beech Hill Road, Beech Hill, NS | B2G 0B4
www.antigonishcounty.ns.ca | [@AntigonishCo](https://www.facebook.com/AntigonishCo) | [facebook](#)

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Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Outside Sign

2 messages

Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Wed, Apr 13, 2022 at 4:36 PM

To: Dee Melong

Dee;
Attached is what I am sending to Mary for the church bulletin.

I was thinking for the sign

District 9 Residents
Information on Consolidation Session
April 18th - 6:30 - 8:30 pm



St. Paul's Church Bulletin.docx
13K

Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Thu, Apr 14, 2022 at 6:54 AM

To: Dee Melong

Dee

I am worried John Patrick Pettipas will show up and derail a normal discussion. He calls people down on his u-tube videos, nasty, attacking and calling names which I won't repeat. I will not have the meeting sabotaged. Could we put RESIDENTS of DISTRICT 9 ONLY ???

Sent from my iPhone

On Apr 13, 2022, at 5:40 PM, Dee Melong

wrote:

Ok. Will put it on the sign Friday morning..
Dee

Sent from my iPad

On Apr 13, 2022, at 4:36 PM, Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com> wrote:

[Quoted text hidden]

<St. Paul's Church Bulletin.docx>

Mary, How about this? If it is too long I will shorten.

Thanks

Harris

There will be a District 9 Community Meeting on the proposed **“CONSOLIDATION”** of Antigonish Town Municipality & Antigonish County Municipality into one Municipality. The meeting will be at the Havre Boucher Community Centre on April 18th from 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm. It's our future and the future of our children and grandchildren, please attend.



Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

St Paul's Parish Bulletin this week

1 message

Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Wed, Apr 13, 2022 at 4:48 PM

To: marywilliams@st-pauls-parish.com

Mary, How about this? If it is too long I can shorten.

Thanks

Harris

There will be a District 9 Community Meeting on the proposed "**CONSOLIDATION**" of Antigonish Town Municipality & Antigonish County Municipality into one Municipality. The meeting will be at the Havre Boucher Community Centre on April 18th from 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm. Its our future and the future of our children and grandchildren, please attend

Beth Schumacher

From: Shirlyn Donovan
Sent: April 14, 2022 3:55 PM
Cc: Owen McCarron; mayor@townofantigonish.ca; Kate Gorman
Subject: Invitation to Exploration of Consolidation Information Session
Attachments: Community Leaders and Non Profits Session Invite (1) (002).png; Consolidation Booklet.pdf

Good afternoon,

On behalf of Mayor Laurie Boucher and Warden Owen McCarron, I would like to invite you to attend an information session on the potential consolidation of Antigonish Town and County.

This is a specific session for community leaders and non-profit organizations. Our goal is to provide an opportunity for you to gain insight into the process, ask questions, and share what you think about consolidation for Antigonish.

The session will take place on Wednesday, April 27, 2022 from 10:30am-12:00pm at the John Paul Centre, 308 Main Street.

For up-to-date information about the Town and County's exploration of consolidation, please visit: www.antigonish.ca

Please RSVP to myself if you are able to attend.

Thank you,
Shirlyn

Shirlyn Donovan
Strategic Initiatives Coordinator
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
285 Beech Hill Road
Antigonish, NS B2G 0B4
902-863-1117



www.antigonishcounty.ns.ca
www.twitter.com/antigonishco

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Our Community

Exploration of Consolidation Information Session

Mayor Laurie Boucher and Warden Owen McCarron invite you to attend an information session on the potential consolidation of Antigonish Town and County.

This is a specific session for community leaders and non-profit organizations. Our goal is to provide an opportunity for you to gain insight into the process, ask questions, and share what you think about consolidation for Antigonish.

Community Leaders & Non Profits Information Session

Date: Wednesday, April 27, 2022

Time: 10:30 a.m. to 12 p.m.

Location: John Paul Centre, 308 Main Street

For up-to-date information about the Town and County's exploration of consolidation, visit www.antigonish.ca.

ANTIGONISH

Our Community



Exploring Municipal Consolidation.

Your Guide to
Community
Engagement.

As the Councils for the Town and County of Antigonish explore the possibility of consolidation, we have scheduled an extensive community engagement process. This is your guide to participating.

Message from Mayor and Warden



To the Antigonish Community;

In September 2021, both Town and County Councils unanimously voted to explore consolidating the two municipalities into one unit. You might be wondering why now? Or why at all?

We believe that the Town and County have done some progressive work together already. We have seen the benefits from collaborating with examples like hosting the National Special Olympics, Regional Emergency Management, and Physician Retention – just to name a few.

Both the Town and the County are in a good financial position, which is the best time to be looking at the benefits of consolidation, instead of being forced to do so because one needs help.

You've elected us to do what's in your best interest and part of our job is to explore opportunities like this. Your input will inform our decision and help us decide if residents, businesses, and the overall community will be better served if the Town and County become one municipal unit.

This guide is designed to answer some of your questions and let you know how you can take part.

Thank you and we look forward to your involvement.

Laurie Boucher
Mayor
Town of Antigonish

Owen McCarron
Warden
Municipality of the County of Antigonish



As we look at possible consolidation, we have carefully and purposefully created some important principles that will guide us. The Guiding Principles provide insight into what is top of mind for Councillors and will help guide discussions as we head into the community engagement sessions.

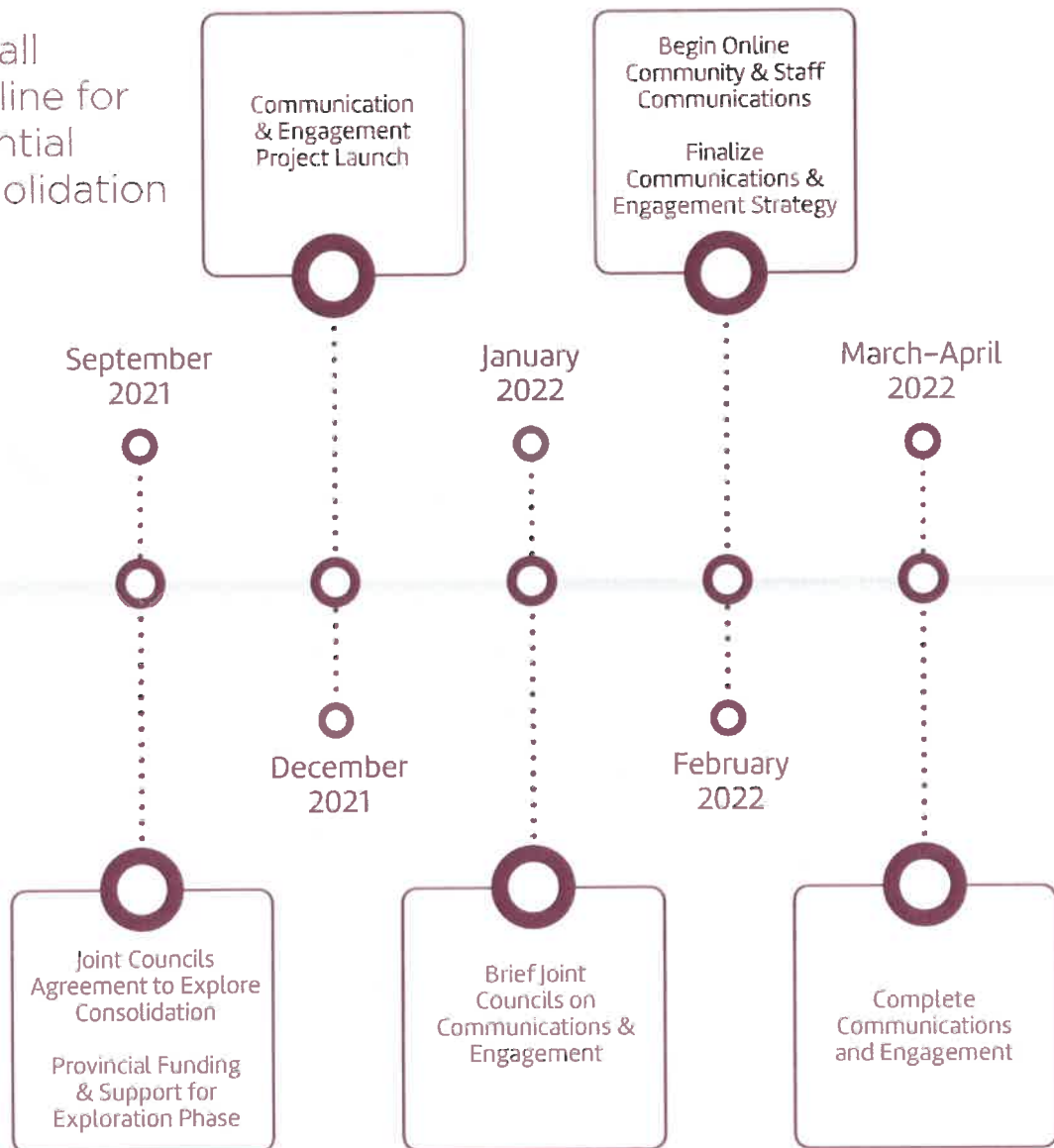
Guiding Principles for Consolidating Antigonish Town and County:

- 1. Take a regional approach to municipal services:** Work creatively, deliberately, and visibly to improve municipal services, economic development, tourism, culture, and community infrastructure for all residents and businesses in the Antigonish region.
- 2. Build vibrant individual communities:** Promote community identity in rural, urban and First Nations communities, so the whole municipality will be stronger.
- 3. Communicate regularly about progress and decisions:** Communications with residents, businesses, councils, and staff should be frequent, transparent, and inclusive.
- 4. Continue fair taxation and user pay approaches:** Residents and businesses should only be taxed for services and infrastructure they have access to. Property tax rates and infrastructure debt should utilize area tax rates and utility fee approaches that exist today wherever possible.
- 5. Value our existing municipal staff:** The blending of Town and County employees will recognize the value, knowledge and dedication of our current staff and every effort will be made to retain staff and to provide new opportunities.
- 6. Ensure Fair Representation for Urban and Rural Residents:** District boundaries should ensure every voter has the same electoral power as every other voter, balance rural and urban interests, and recognize local communities of interest.
- 7. Enhance environmental sustainability:** Ownership of the Antigonish electric utility is central to expanding green energy options and reducing our carbon footprint. Build upon the success of initiatives and partnerships with the Alternate Energy Resource Authority and the Municipality's Energy Management Plan.

Exploring Consolidation Process

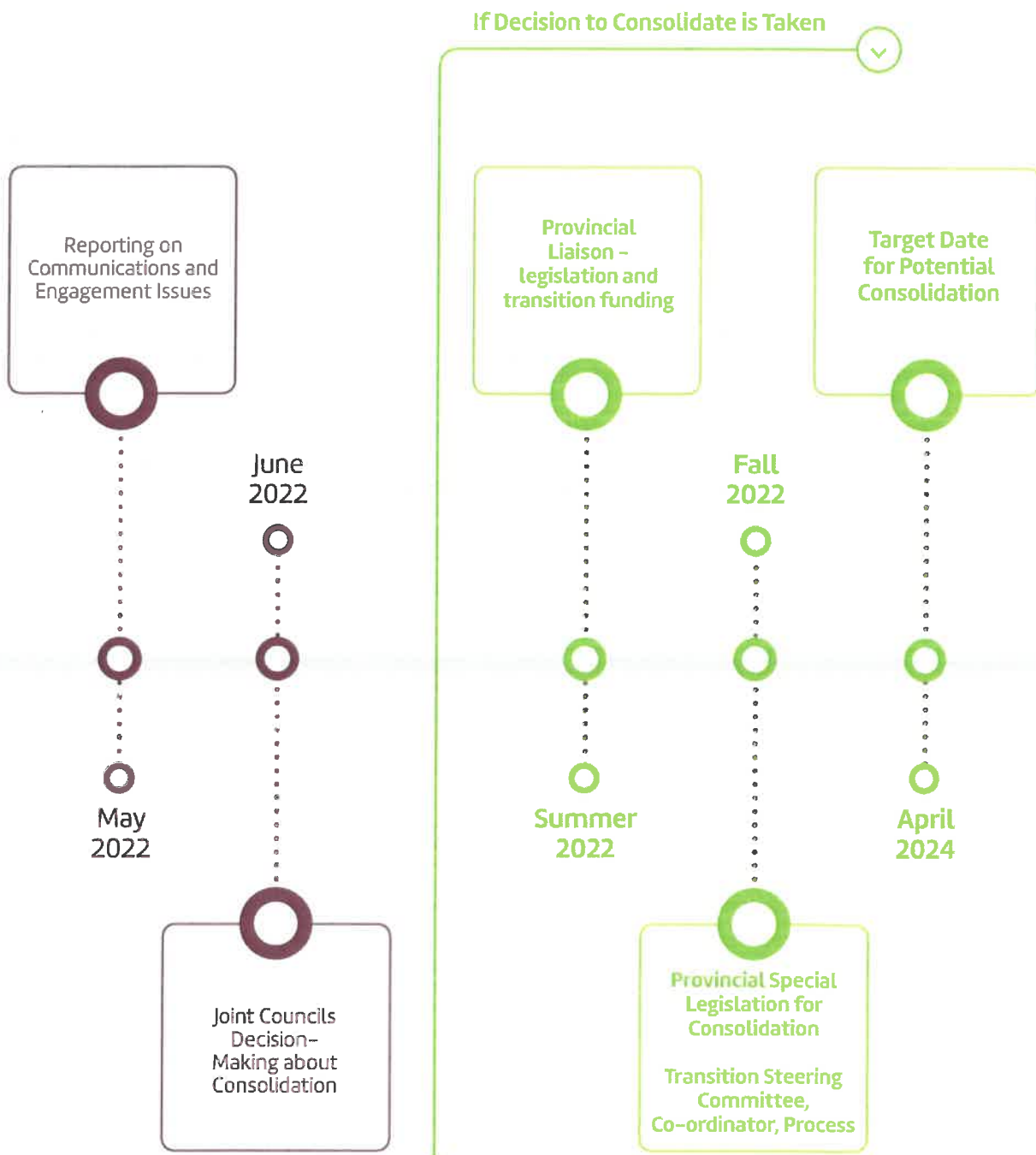
Town and County Councils have begun a process to consider whether consolidation would better serve residents, businesses and the broader community. They have created a joint Steering Committee that has retained Brighter Community Planning to lead the consultation and engagement to take place in April and May. Public input will help Councils make a decision on whether it will proceed with consolidation.

Overall Timeline for Potential Consolidation



Exploring Municipal Consolidation.

Your Guide to Community Engagement.



Exploring Municipal Consolidation.

Your Guide to Community Engagement

The Town and County are using different methods of community engagement to reach as many citizens as possible to understand opportunities and concerns.

Your Questions

We have taken your most common questions and have created a series of fact sheets for you to consider as you think about a possible merger. Additional information on each of the topics below can be found on Antigonish.ca, just click on the “Participate Now” button to access Antigonish’s HowSpace site, where these fact sheets can be found. We will also have copies of them at the in-person drop-in sessions.



How will my input be used?

Your comments will be recorded and put into a report for Councils. This report will be considered as Councils look answer this key question:

Will residents, businesses and the overall community be better served if the Town and County became one municipal unit?

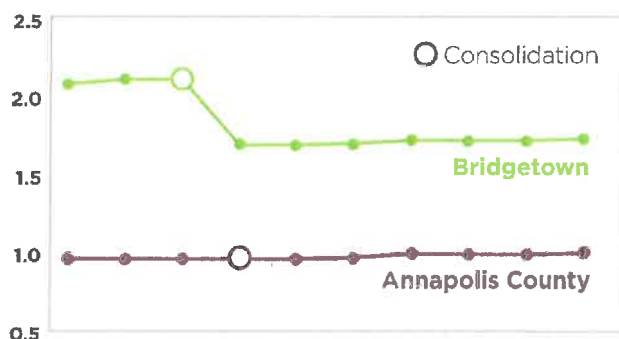
A final report outlining the key themes from a thorough consultation process will be shared with Councils in June. Along with other reports being prepared by staff, Councils will decide in the summer on whether to consolidate.

Property Taxes

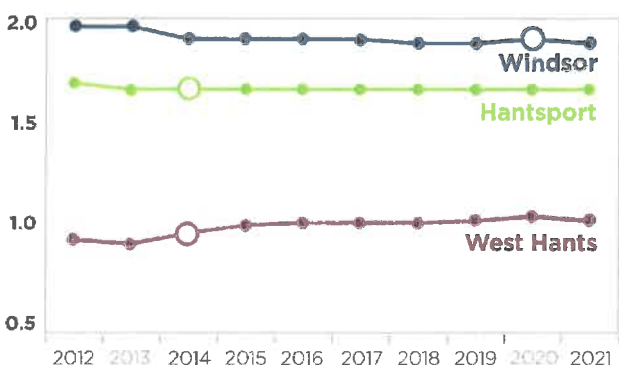
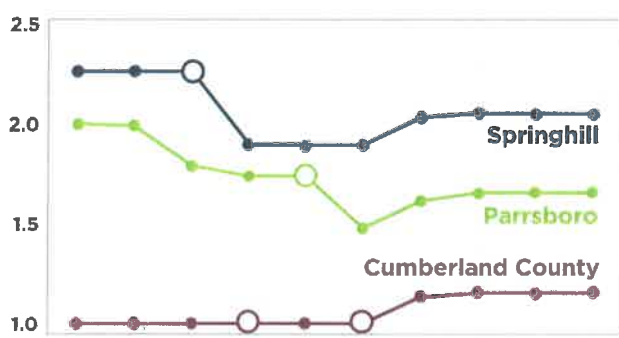
One of the most common concerns expressed when municipal mergers have taken place in other parts of the province is whether consolidation will have an impact on property taxes. History shows us that municipal mergers in other parts of Nova Scotia have not created property tax increases in the years following a merger.

The following graphs show the impact of mergers on tax rates:

\$ per \$100 of assessment



Residential Tax Rates for Merged Rural Municipalities and Towns



While actual future tax rates can't be predicted (future tax rates are set by future Councils) the two units are going into a possible consolidation without significant risks for tax increases which are often caused by declining revenues or failing infrastructure.



Water, Electricity and Energy Leadership

The Town and County provide important municipal services through long established and regulated utilities, for water and electricity. These services would be included in a possible consolidation. They both have unique regulatory and ownership characteristics that would have to be recognized in any merger process. Any future changes to water or electricity rates have to go through a review process and be approved by the Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board (NSUARB).



Both the Town and County have demonstrated real leadership in addressing climate change and alternate energy. This leadership should be recognized and advanced in any possible municipal consolidation process.



Representation, Council Size and District Boundaries



Council Size



District Boundaries

Representation, Council Size and District Boundaries are important questions, and there is a well-established process in Nova Scotia to determine municipal boundaries. The work to determine where new boundaries would be would only happen after a decision to consolidate has been made. If the decision is to consolidate, a Transition Committee would be created, which would consult with all the communities and Councils to decide on the size of Council and the geography of the district boundaries. The recommendation made by the Transition Committee would be submitted to the NSUARB for review. The NSUARB can make adjustments on the recommendation if required and then final approval would be made on the new districts.

Currently, the County undergoes a District Review process every eight years. This is done to ensure balanced representation in the current districts. The Town does not currently go through this process because Councillors are elected at large.



Community Identity

Maintaining community identity is an important consideration when exploring municipal consolidation.

The way your local government is formed will not change your community's identity. The smaller communities you call home will not change and that is what makes Antigonish such a great place to live.

There are many examples of municipal mergers that support the identity and vibrancy of local communities. As an example, Queens Regional Municipality provided several suggestions from more than 25 years as a merged organization.

Support Community Capacity

Both the Town and County have activities and grant programs in place to support individual organizations and smaller community-based initiatives. These grants are an important source of support as well as means for Councils to support citizen involvement in making their communities a stronger place to live, work, and play. A potential consolidation would not create sudden changes in how community organizations receive their grant funding. There are mechanisms in place to fund and provide services to organizations that are vital to the Antigonish community.



Drawing on Other Municipal Examples

There are many examples of municipal mergers that support the identity and vibrancy of local communities. As an example, Queens Regional Municipality provided several highlights recently, taken from over twenty-five years' experience as a merged organization:

Be deliberate in spreading infrastructure projects across numerous communities.

Draw citizen appointees for municipal committees from all parts of the region.

Promote local communities with signage and tourism partnerships.

Develop a strong Community Investment Fund and policy.

Establish a single Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use By-Law with one set of rules for development.





Fire Services

There are nine volunteer Fire Departments located within the Town and County of Antigonish. They play an important role in fire protection and emergency services. They are also important community partners and organizers. The Town of Antigonish Volunteer Fire Department is funded directly by the Town and the County-based volunteer fire departments are funded through an Area Fire Levy. As the discussions continue about the potential for consolidation, there may be questions about what might change around fire service if a municipal merger should take place.



Volunteer Fire Service is important to all communities in both the Town and County. Whether operated directly in the Town or funded by Area Fire Rates in the County, these volunteer organizations understand their community needs and respond accordingly.

They do not operate in isolation and have lots of experience through in their communities and support one another through mutual aid. It is important for municipal funding of volunteer fire service to be continued in the same manner. There is no reason to change this system because of a possible municipal consolidation.



Consultation Schedule

We have designed the consultation to be as open and accessible as possible, with options for in person, online, phone and email. Choose how you'd like to participate:

- ✔ Take part in one of our on-line or in person sessions throughout April and into May. See the public engagement schedule on the following page.
.....
- ✔ Visit Antigonish.ca and click on "**Participate Now.**"
.....
- ✔ Call us toll-free at 1-833-563-2786 or 1-833-563-2787 and leave a voicemail for staff, who will follow up with you. This is a great option for those who want to remain engaged but are hesitant to come to a public session, are not comfortable with technology or may have unreliable Internet service.
.....
- ✔ Email your questions and comments to info@antigonish.ca.



Community Engagement Schedule

A total of 17 community engagement sessions have been arranged so that as many people as possible can attend. To make it even easier for busy parents and caregivers, sessions are child friendly - Town and County recreation staff will be on hand with fun activities for the kids.

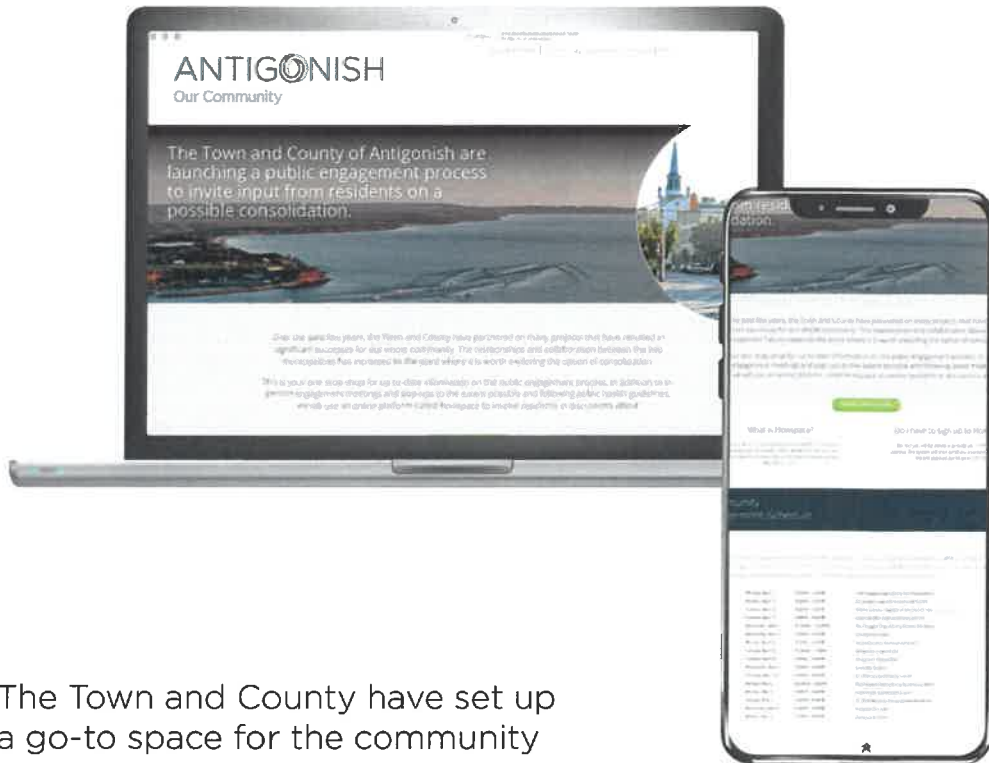
Sessions are organized in an open house format and are “drop in.” Feel free to pop by during the times indicated below.

Monday, April 11	1:00PM - 3:00PM	The Peoples Place Library Community Room
Monday, April 11	7:00PM - 9:00PM	St. Joseph's Lakeside Community Centre
Tuesday, April 12	3:00PM - 5:00PM	Online Engagement Session
Tuesday, April 12	7:00PM - 9:00PM	Lakevale Mini Trail Community Centre
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Monday, May 9	6:00PM - 8:00PM	Pomquet Fire Hall

* A Session is being planned with Paqtnkek Mikmaw Nation that is still TBD.

Exploring Municipal Consolidation.

Your Guide to Community Engagement.



The Town and County have set up a go-to space for the community engagement around a possible consolidation.

Visit **Antigonish.ca** today and click on the “Participate Now” button to take part in the discussion online. See page 14 for all of the ways you can participate.



How can I take part?

We have created a plan that allows residents to be engaged in different ways. A series of public drop-in meetings are scheduled as well as online options, phone and email. See the Consultation Schedule on page 12 for more information.

For ongoing online engagement throughout the consultation phase, we are using Antigonish's HowSpace. This is an all-in-one digital facilitation platform. Here we will host workshops and events, there will be Frequently Asked Questions, and you can interact directly on topics that are of interest to you and see what others are saying.

Visit Antigonish.ca and click on the "Participate Now" button. You will be asked to provide your name and email address. The system will then send you a confirmation email and the link you can use to access the site.

We look forward to your participation! If you have questions, please email info@antigonish.ca.

Beth Schumacher

From: Bob Hale
Sent: April 14, 2022 4:02 PM
To: Shirlyn Donovan
Cc: Owen McCarron; mayor@townofantigonish.ca; Kate Gorman
Subject: Re: Invitation to Exploration of Consolidation Information Session
Attachments: image001.jpg; image002.jpg; Community Leaders and Non Profits Session Invite (1) (002).png; Consolidation Booklet.pdf

Thank you for the invite Shirlyn. I would like to attend and look forward to hearing more about the plan(and grilling the Warden and Mayor!!!)

Have a great weekend!

Bob

Bob Hale
Director, Ancillary Services
StFX University

On Apr 14, 2022, at 3:54 PM, Shirlyn Donovan <shirlyn.donovan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca> wrote:

Good afternoon,

On behalf of Mayor Laurie Boucher and Warden Owen McCarron, I would like to invite you to attend an information session on the potential consolidation of Antigonish Town and County.

This is a specific session for community leaders and non-profit organizations. Our goal is to provide an opportunity for you to gain insight into the process, ask questions, and share what you think about consolidation for Antigonish.

The session will take place on Wednesday, April 27, 2022 from 10:30am-12:00pm at the John Paul Centre, 308 Main Street.

For up-to-date information about the Town and County's exploration of consolidation, please visit: www.antigonish.ca

Please RSVP to myself if you are able to attend.

Thank you,
Shirlyn

Shirlyn Donovan
Strategic Initiatives Coordinator
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
285 Beech Hill Road
Antigonish, NS B2G 0B4

902-863-1117

www.antigonishcounty.ns.ca

www.twitter.com/antigonishco

Honour Yesterday, Act Today, Inspire Tomorrow

Antigonish County

ANTIGONISH

Our Community

Exploration of Consolidation Information Session

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Community Leaders & Non Profits Information Session

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Time: 10:30 a.m. to 12 p.m.

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Exploring Municipal Consolidation.

Your Guide to
Community
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Message from Mayor and Warden



To the Antigonish Community;

In September 2021, both Town and County Councils unanimously voted to explore consolidating the two municipalities into one unit. You might be wondering why now? Or why at all?

We believe that the Town and County have done some progressive work together already. We have seen the benefits from collaborating with examples like hosting the National Special Olympics, Regional Emergency Management, and Physician Retention – just to name a few.

Both the Town and the County are in a good financial position, which is the best time to be looking at the benefits of consolidation, instead of being forced to do so because one needs help.

You've elected us to do what's in your best interest and part of our job is to explore opportunities like this. Your input will inform our decision and help us decide if residents, businesses, and the overall community will be better served if the Town and County become one municipal unit.

This guide is designed to answer some of your questions and let you know how you can take part.

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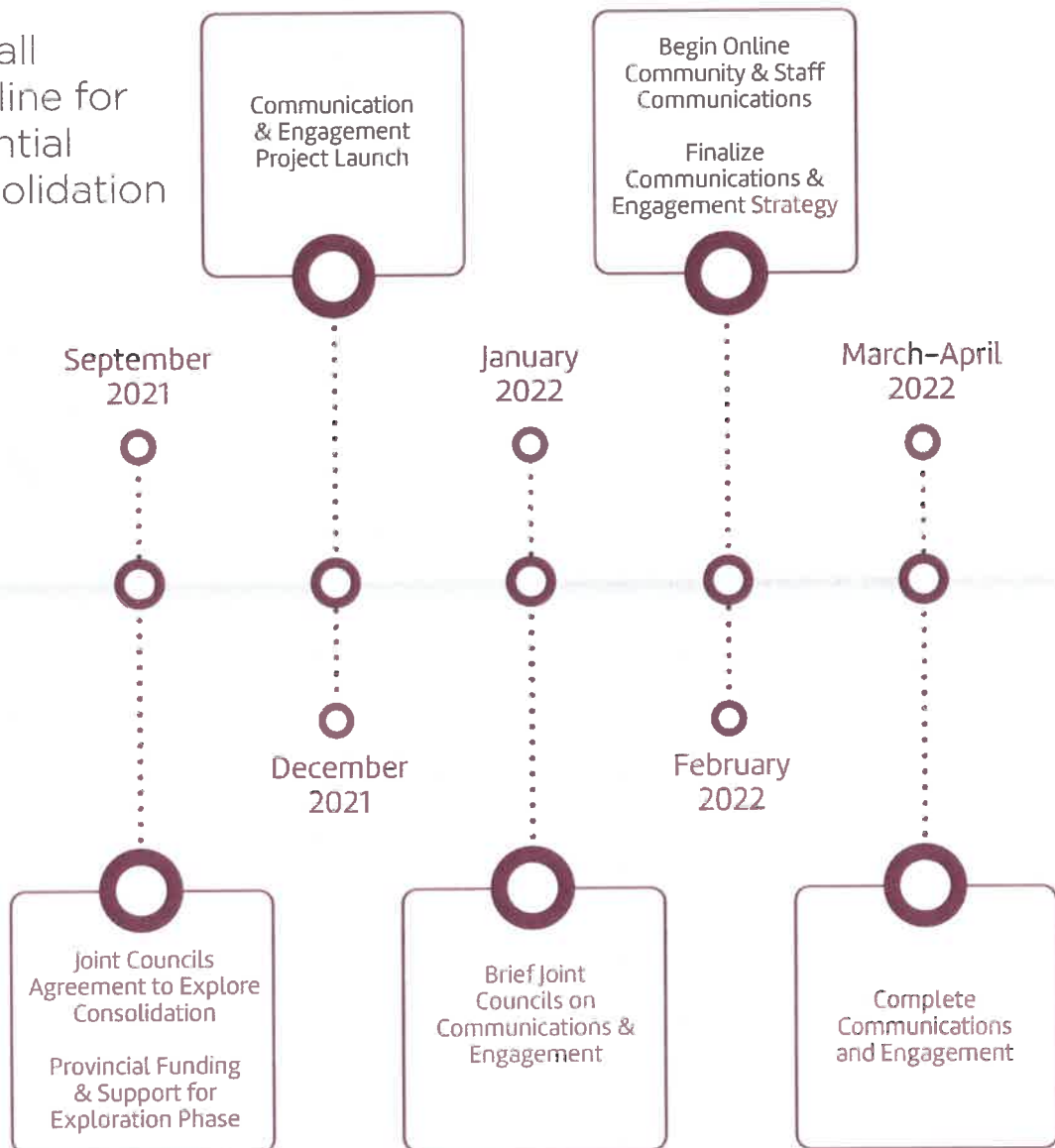
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Exploring Consolidation Process

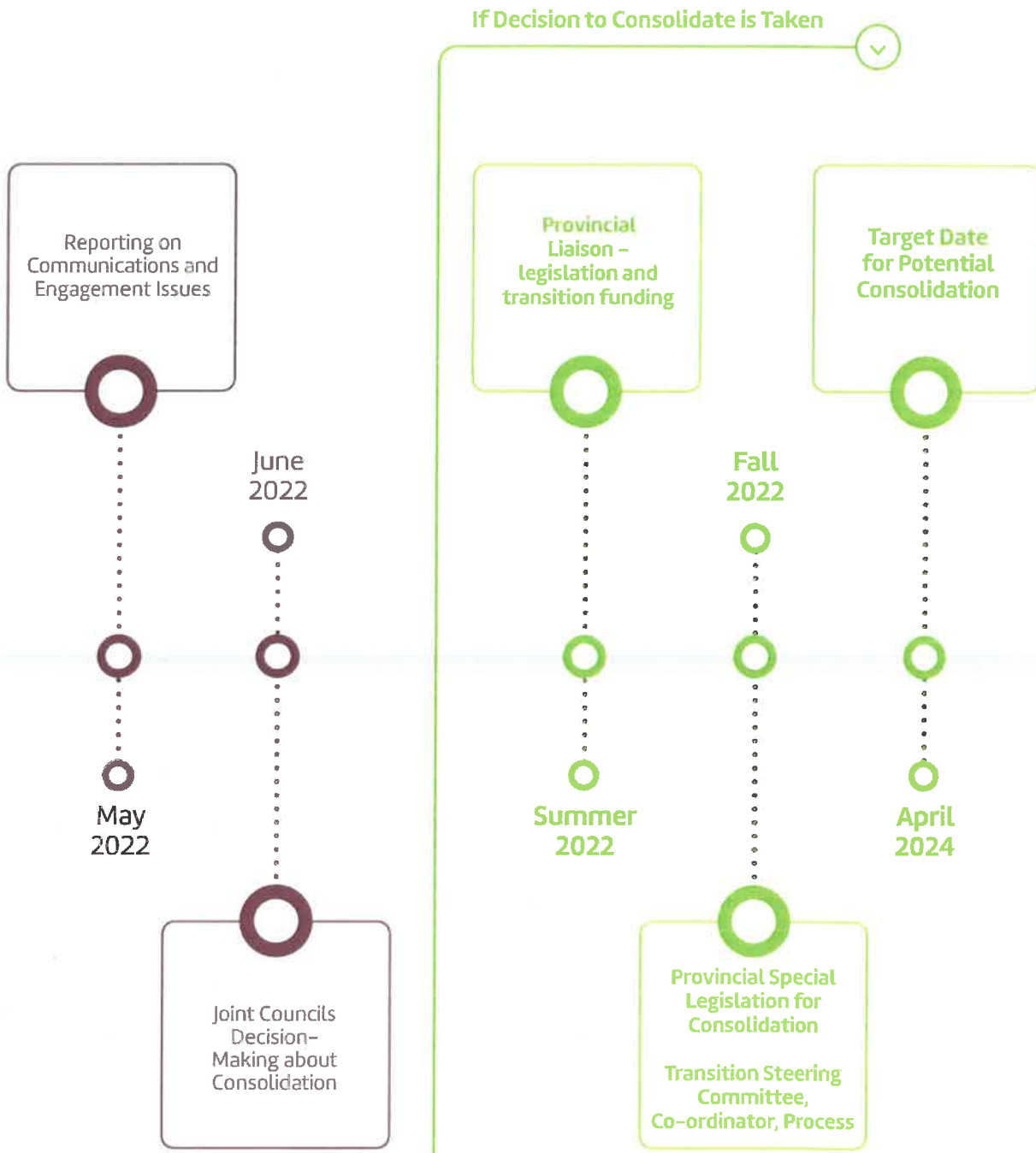
Town and County Councils have begun a process to consider whether consolidation would better serve residents, businesses and the broader community. They have created a joint Steering Committee that has retained Brighter Community Planning to lead the consultation and engagement to take place in April and May. Public input will help Councils make a decision on whether it will proceed with consolidation.

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The Town and County are using different methods of community engagement to reach as many citizens as possible to understand opportunities and concerns.

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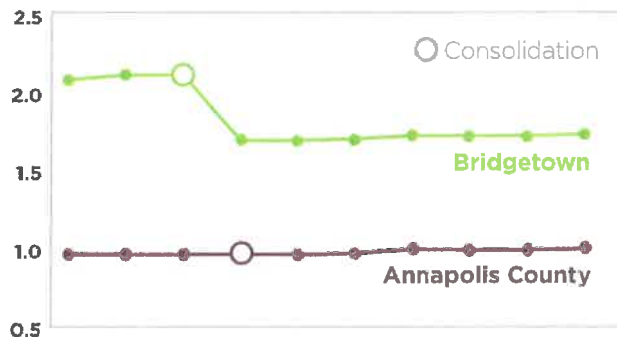


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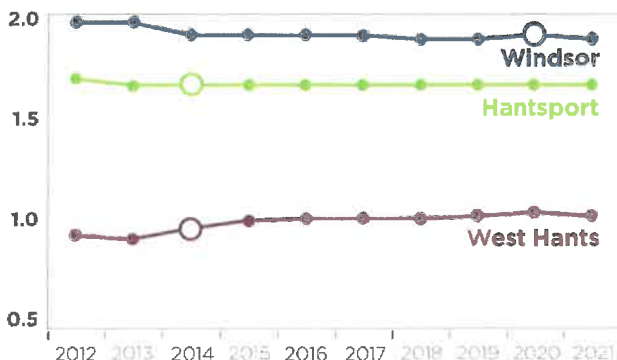
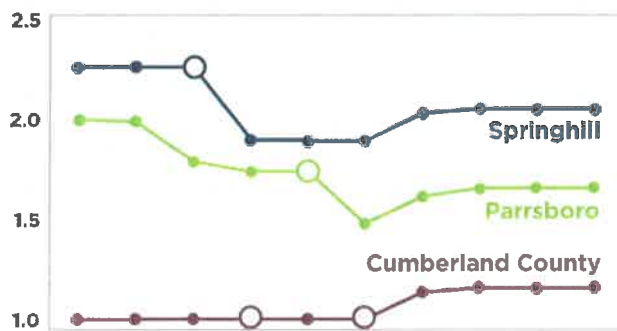
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Representation, Council Size and District Boundaries



Council Size



District Boundaries

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Both the Town and County have activities and grant programs in place to support individual organizations and smaller community-based initiatives. These grants are an important source of support as well as means for Councils to support citizen involvement in making their communities a stronger place to live, work, and play. A potential consolidation would not create sudden changes in how community organizations receive their grant funding. There are mechanisms in place to fund and provide services to organizations that are vital to the Antigonish community.



Drawing on Other Municipal Examples

There are many examples of municipal mergers that support the identity and vibrancy of local communities. As an example, Queens Regional Municipality provided several highlights recently, taken from over twenty-five years' experience as a merged organization:

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Volunteer Fire Service is important to all communities in both the Town and County. Whether operated directly in the Town or funded by Area Fire Rates in the County, these volunteer organizations understand their community needs and respond accordingly.

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Consultation Schedule

We have designed the consultation to be as open and accessible as possible, with options for in person, online, phone and email. Choose how you'd like to participate:

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- ✔ Visit Antigonish.ca and click on "**Participate Now.**"

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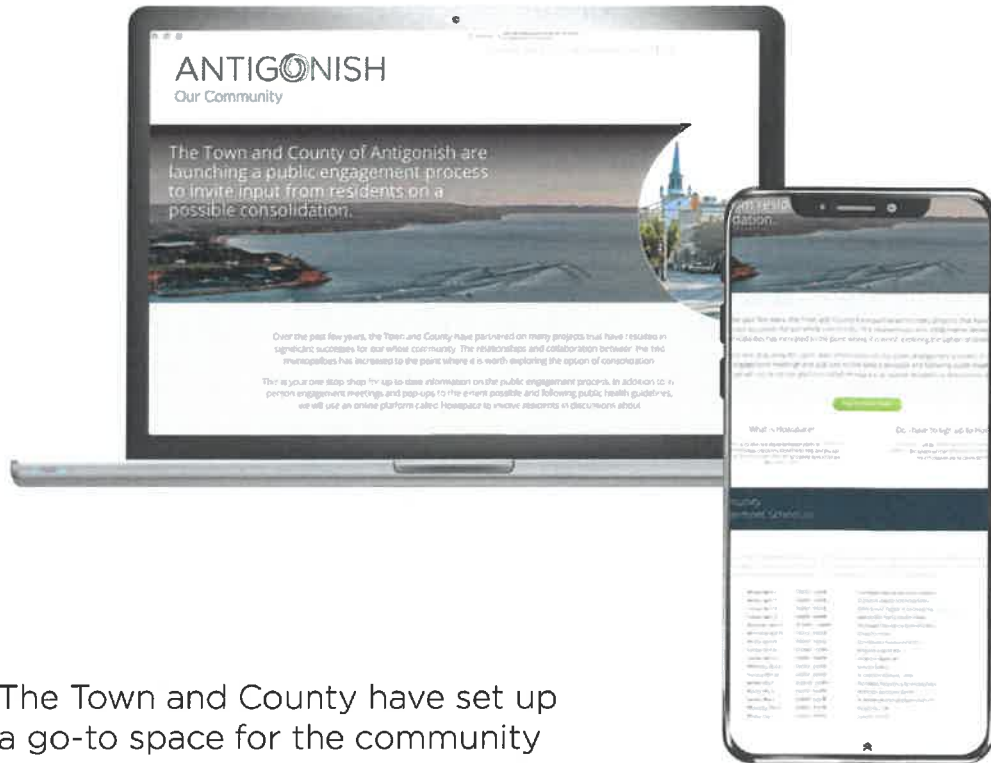
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Your Guide to Community Engagement.



The Town and County have set up a go-to space for the community engagement around a possible consolidation.

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Sent: April 14, 2022 4:21 PM
Cc: Owen McCarron; mayor@townofantigonish.ca; Kate Gorman
Subject: Invitation Exploration of Consolidation Information Session
Attachments: Elected Officials Exploration of Consolidation Information Session (1).png; Consolidation Booklet.pdf

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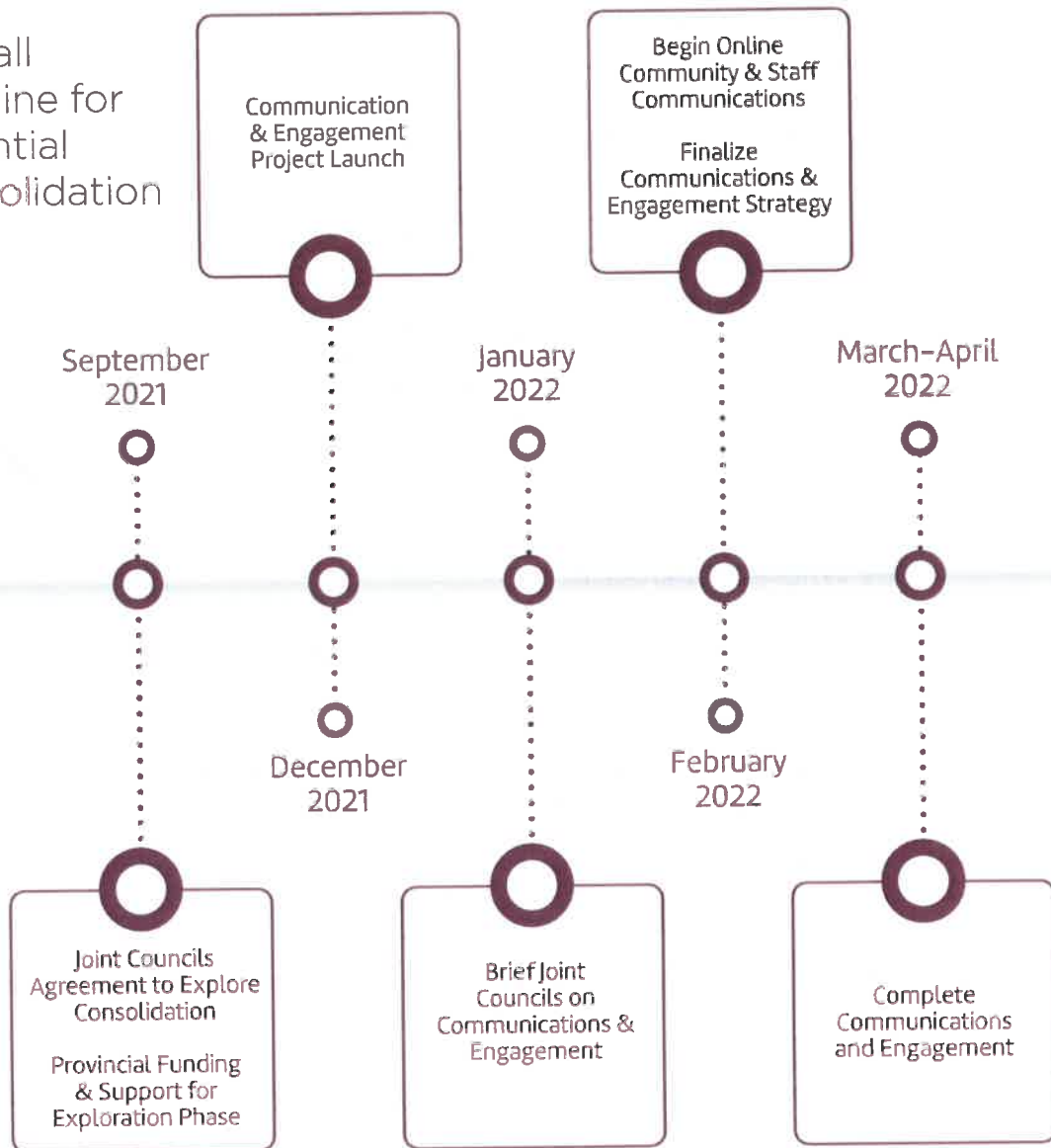
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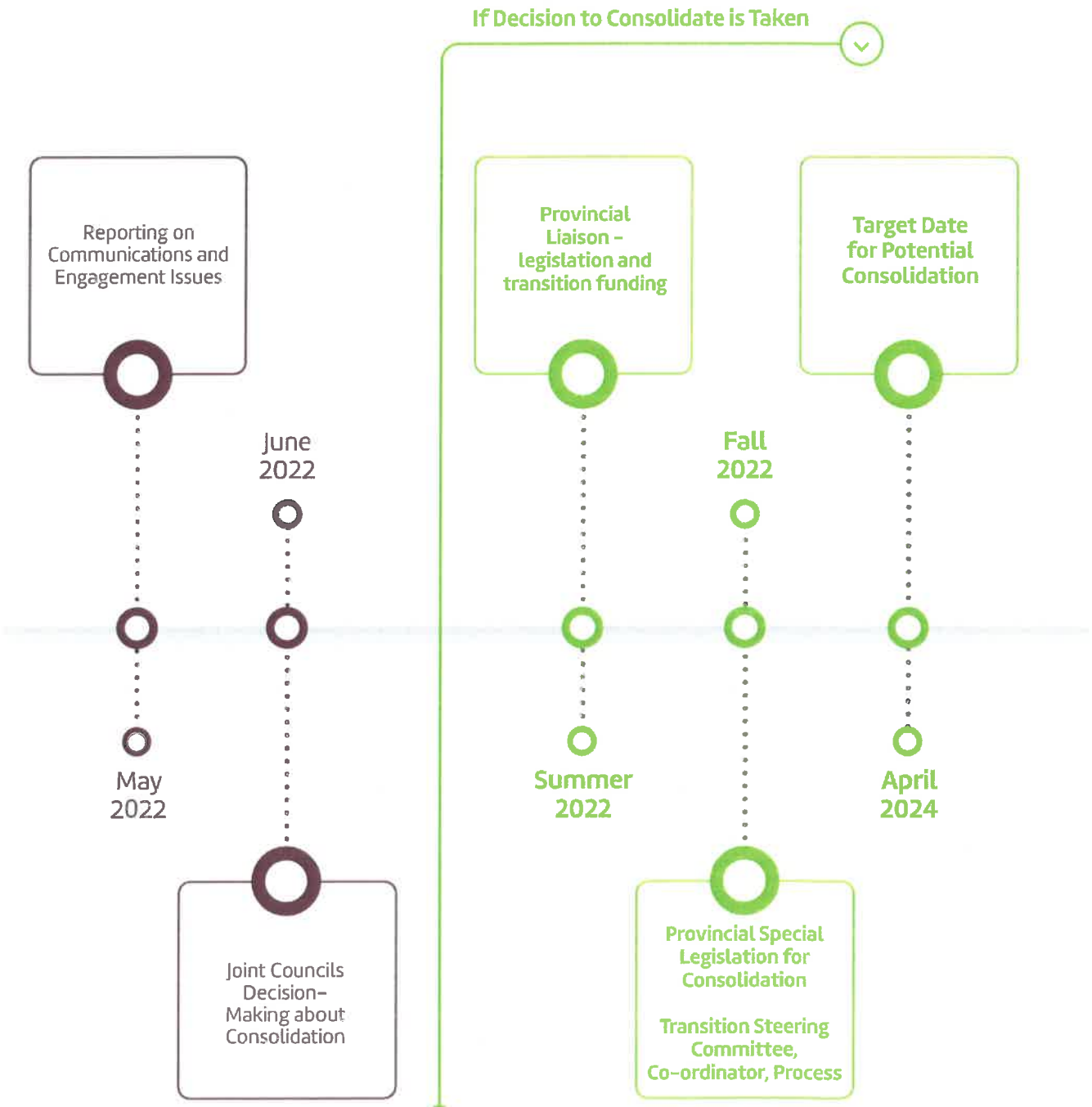
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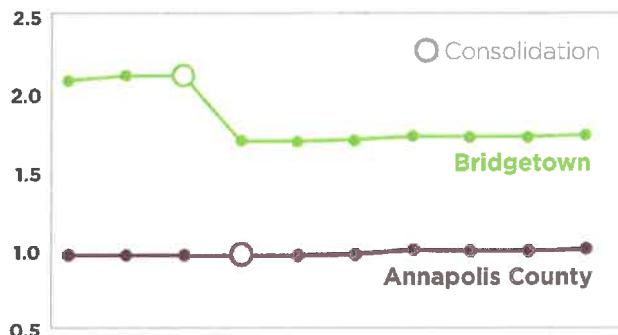


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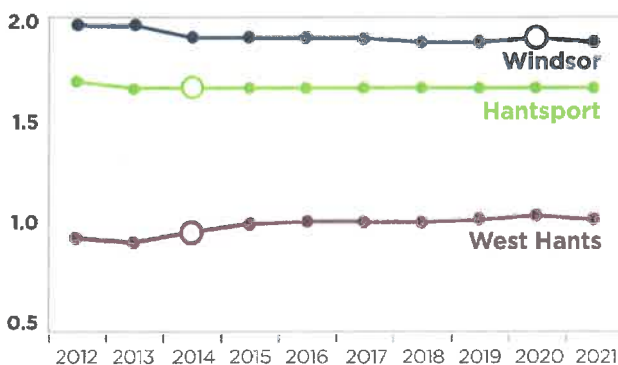
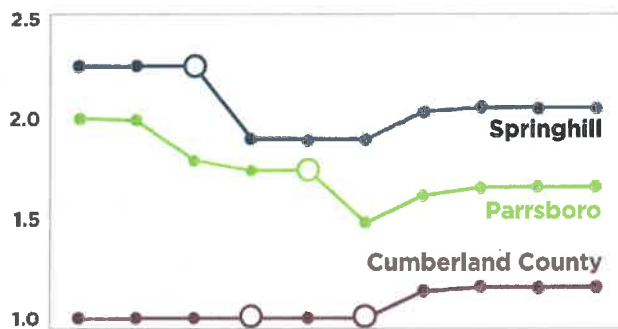
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To: Owen McCarron
Subject: Invitations for Current and Former Elected Officials
Attachments: Elected Officials Exploration of Consolidation Information Session (1).png

Hi Owen,

I do not have emails for the following:

Moe Smith
Randy Delorey
Lloyd Hines
Herbie Delorey

Are you perhaps able to make some calls this weekend and perhaps invite them that way?

Jeff is going to reach out to Carl Chisholm and Kay Chisholm next week because I didn't have emails for either of them.

Thanks and Happy Easter!
Shirlyn

Shirlyn Donovan
Strategic Initiatives Coordinator
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
285 Beech Hill Road
Antigonish, NS B2G 0B4
902-863-1117



www.antigonishcounty.ns.ca



www.twitter.com/antigonishco

Honour Yesterday, Act Today, Inspire Tomorrow

ANTIGONISH

Our Community

Exploration of Consolidation Information Session

Mayor Laurie Boucher and Warden Owen McCarron invite you to attend an information session on the potential of consolidation of Antigonish Town and County.

This is a specific session for current and former elected officials. Our goal is to provide and opportunity for you to gain insight into the process, ask questions and share what you think about consolidation for Antigonish.

Current & Former Elected Officials Information Session

Date: Thursday, April 28, 2022

Time: 10:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Location: John Paul Centre, 308 Main Street

For up-to-date information about the Town and County's exploration of consolidation, please visit www.antigonish.ca.

Beth Schumacher

From: Randy Crouse <
Sent: April 14, 2022 7:08 PM
To: Shirlyn Donovan
Cc: Owen McCarron; mayor@townofantigonish.ca; Kate Gorman
Subject: Re: Invitation to Exploration of Consolidation Information Session

Hi Shirlyn,

Thank you very much for the invite. Unfortunately, I am working that day and will be unable to attend.

All the best,
Randy

Challenger Baseball Canada National Coordinator
Nova Scotia Challenger Baseball Coordinator
Antigonish Challenger Baseball Coordinator

challenger@baseball.ca

1 Keating Court
Antigonish, Nova Scotia
B2G 0A3

www.antigonishchallenger.com
www.nschallengerbaseball.com
www.challengerbaseballcanada.ca
www.jayscare.com/challengerbaseball

From: Shirlyn Donovan <shirlyn.donovan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Sent: April 14, 2022 3:54 PM
Cc: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; mayor@townofantigonish.ca <mayor@townofantigonish.ca>; Kate Gorman <kgorman@townofantigonish.ca>
Subject: Invitation to Exploration of Consolidation Information Session

Good afternoon,

On behalf of Mayor Laurie Boucher and Warden Owen McCarron, I would like to invite you to attend an information session on the potential consolidation of Antigonish Town and County.

This is a specific session for community leaders and non-profit organizations. Our goal is to provide an opportunity for you to gain insight into the process, ask questions, and share what you think about consolidation for Antigonish.

The session will take place on Wednesday, April 27, 2022 from 10:30am-12:00pm at the John Paul Centre, 308 Main Street.

For up-to-date information about the Town and County's exploration of consolidation, please visit: www.antigonish.ca

Please RSVP to myself if you are able to attend.

Thank you,
Shirlyn

Shirlyn Donovan

Strategic Initiatives Coordinator
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
285 Beech Hill Road
Antigonish, NS B2G 0B4
902-863-1117



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Harris McNamara

From: Mark Fougere <
Sent: April 16, 2022 8:24 PM
To: Neil Corbett; fitz ; Len Robertson; Jamie Corture; Deborah Brow; Angela Meagher; jocelyn Bryson; bhanlon ; cyril.campbell ; lee Daponte; nj_macpherson ; rodneylevangie ; Judy; kimmacpherson ; chris.grover ; chiasson.connie ; d.fougere ; antedenmar ; alicia.vink ; cbrazeau ; carpenter.charles ; garywood ; baewynd ; colleenbreen ; carol & Danny Mac Eachern; gailanderson ; denise.fougere@antigonishcountyns.ca; geraldchiasson ; melong_dbuck ; Gillis MacAskill; scotchandwater18; Wayne MacMillan; bennettdavel Patricia DeCoste; Karen Fougere; Brian & Jane Bennett; Russell Boucher; Mark Fougere; jmacdonald ; Hgjewers ; carpenterob Jamie/Raylene Chisholm; Daryl / Tammy Breen; Kelsey Decoste; Dan Fougere; Angus; David; cyril.campbell ; cathycouture; regfougere jabrow ; Josie Melong; Marion Donnelly; Bonnie Decoste; connolly ; Isampson Pam Bennett; theresafougere Andrea Stewart; yvonne fiander; Joseph B. Melong; Kim Brow; Wenda De Young; mdgyoung ; melissa_decoste Cathy; Estrella Melong; Mady Hanlon; Gary Melong
Cc: Harris McNamara
Subject: Amalgamation Meeting this coming Monday Evening April 18, 2022
Attachments: Pictou County Amalgamation.docx

Hello all,

This coming **Monday, April 18th @ 6:30 pm** our **district 9 counsellor Harris McNamara** is holding a meeting at the **Havre Boucher Community Center @ 6:30 PM, for residents of District 9 only!**

In the fall of 2021, both Town and County Councils voted to explore the potential for the two municipal units to become one. The next part of the exploration phase involves hearing from you, the residents of Antigonish. **There appears to be no plebiscite to see what we want to do! We need answers!**

On April 25th there will be an engagement session at the Community Center and without a plebiscite this will be forced down our throat. Please see the article on Pictou County amalgamation attempt!

I urge our community to come and make your voices be heard in a respectful manner. In light of recent spikes in Covid 19 and no mandate for Mask, please consider masking to protect you and your family/friends, but ultimately the choice is yours. I apologize if you receive this twice. Please spread the meeting words and hope you can attend! Please call me if you have questions or concerns!

Mark Fougere

Cell

Nova Scotia

Nova Scotia takes back \$27M offer after Pictou amalgamation scuttled

Pictou County residents voted 'no' to amalgamation in a plebiscite this weekend

Paul Withers · CBC News · Posted: May 30, 2016 6:01 PM AT | Last Updated: May 30, 2016



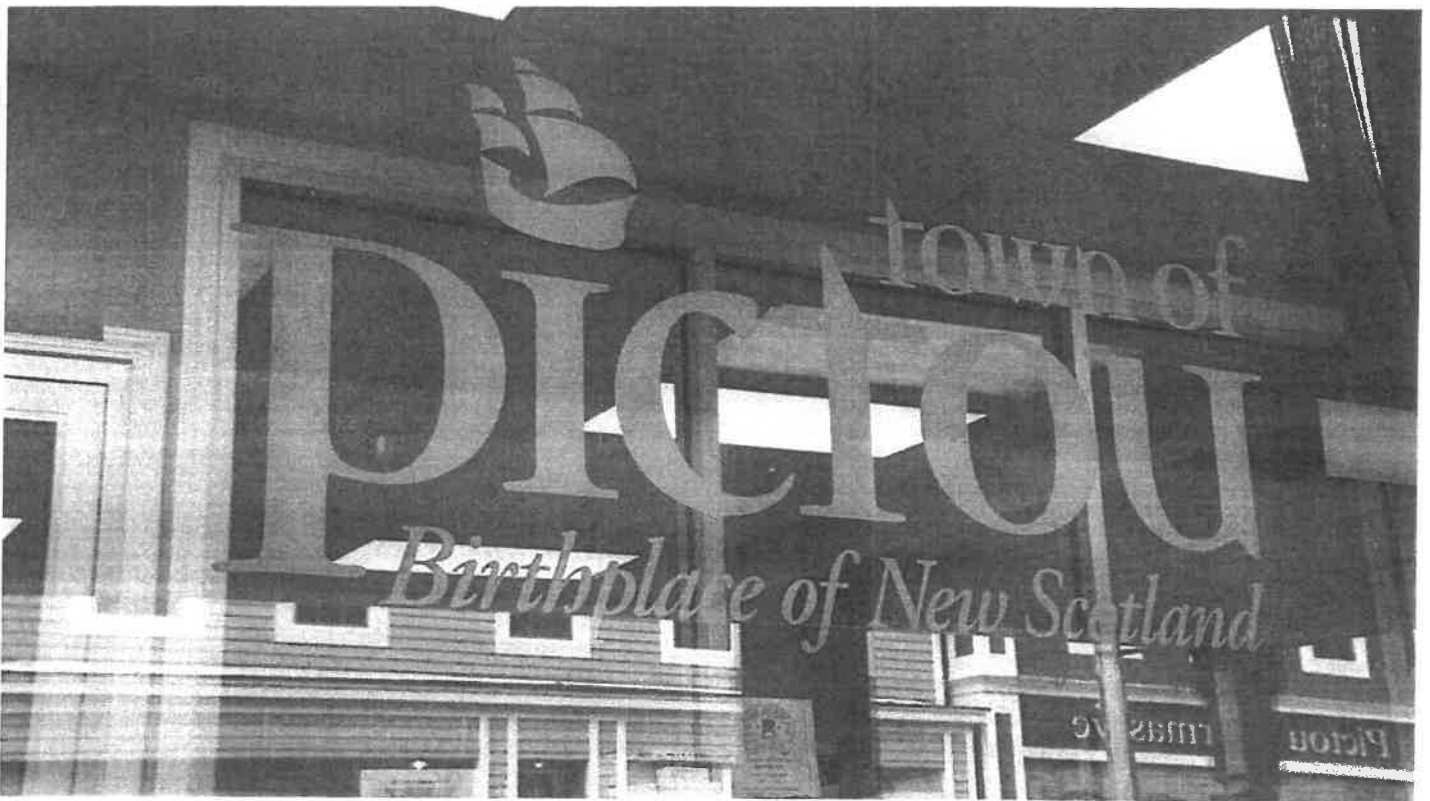
16,707 ballots were cast and 66 per cent voted against the merger. (CBC)

Nova Scotia Premier Stephen McNeil says his government's offer of \$27 million to help amalgamate municipalities in Pictou County is off the table after voters rejected the move in a non-binding plebiscite this weekend.

"Obviously it's not there. They chose not to do the amalgamation," McNeil said.

The province, which has been encouraging amalgamations, promised millions of dollars in infrastructure and transition funding if the towns of Stellarton, New Glasgow and Pictou, and the Municipality of the County of Pictou amalgamated.

Clear rejection



Saturday's plebiscite was the first time in the province residents were able to weigh in through a plebiscite on a local amalgamation. (CBC)

The four municipal councils had submitted an application to the Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board.

But unlike other recent dissolutions and amalgamations, the issue was put to voters and clearly rejected.

Although the results are not binding, the mayor of the Town of Pictou says amalgamation is over, for now.

'It's dead'



Town of Pictou Mayor Joe Hawes said he was disappointed with the plebiscite results. (CBC)

"It's dead. For all practical purposes, it's dead," said Mayor Joe Hawes.

New Glasgow was the only municipality supporting amalgamation. It was narrowly rejected in the Town of Pictou and strongly rejected in Stellarton and the county of Pictou.

"I was disappointed because our entire council was behind it. We thought we could get our basic infrastructure needs done and put us on a solid footing going into a new unit," Hawes.

Letting the people decide





Brian White is chair of the Amalgamation No Thank You Group. (CBC)

Brian White, financial adviser for the towns of Westville and Trenton, led the "no" side. He says after this weekend, no amalgamation in Nova Scotia should go forward without a plebiscite.

"A binding plebiscite is necessary," said White.

"I think whenever there is a significant change to the municipal structure, that it should be left to the people to decide if that's the course they want to go," he said.

More amalgamations on the horizon

There are three other municipal amalgamations before the Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board. None involves a plebiscite.

Two towns — Mulgrave and Parrsboro — have applied to dissolve. A citizens' group has petitioned the regulator to force the amalgamation of the Town of Windsor and West Hants.

The Town of Windsor supports amalgamation; West Hants opposes. As for Pictou, the four municipalities have until June 20 to tell regulators their intentions.'

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Beth Schumacher

From: Glenn Horne
Sent: April 18, 2022 8:13 AM
To: Shawn Brophy
Cc: Owen McCarron
Subject: Re: Conflict of Interest

Good morning, Councillor Brophy -

I hope you had a good Easter weekend. I meant to call you on Thursday and it slipped my mind. During our CoW meeting on Tuesday, I plan to share with the rest of Council the opinion we've received re: your conflict of interest with our decision on consolidation. As we've discussed, the rest of Council should know as our conversations progress. This does not affect your ability to get a second opinion and you'll also be given an opportunity to share your thoughts with Council.

If you'd like to discuss please give me a call (902.870.9315).

Cheers,
Glenn

Glenn Horne
CAO
Municipality of the County of Antigonish

From: Glenn Horne <glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Sent: Tuesday, March 22, 2022 7:32:23 AM
To: Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Re: Conflict of Interest

Thanks, Shawn. Enjoy your day!

Glenn Horne
CAO
Municipality of the County of Antigonish

From: Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Sent: Tuesday, March 22, 2022 7:15:32 AM
To: Glenn Horne <glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: RE: Conflict of Interest

I was in contact with Mark and we had a good discussion about the possible conflict. I will be getting a second opinion and then we can discuss it further, Thank you.

From: Glenn Horne <glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Sent: March 21, 2022 8:56 AM
To: Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>

Cc: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>

Subject: Conflict of Interest

Good morning, Councillor Brophy –

I hope you had a good weekend. Just checking in to see if you have any additional questions on the conflict of interest we discussed after the last Council meeting. If you'd like to discuss anything further I am available at 5pm tomorrow, prior to our Asset Management Meeting.

Cheers,
Glenn



Glenn Horne | Chief Administrative Officer
Municipality of the County of Antigonish | 902.863.1117
285 Beech Hill Road, Beech Hill, NS | B2G 0B4
www.antigonishcounty.ns.ca | [@AntigonishCo](https://www.facebook.com/AntigonishCo) | [facebook](#)

Honour Yesterday, Act Today, Inspire Tomorrow



Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Councillors - Town vs County

1 message

Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Mon, Apr 18, 2022 at 2:28 PM

To: Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>

Gary;
Please send me the section on the 2 councillors from town district?
Thanks
Harris

Beth Schumacher

From: sylvia breen ·
Sent: April 18, 2022 8:34 PM
To: John Dunbar; Shawn Brophy; Remi Deveau; Owen McCarron; Mary MacLellan; Donnie MacDonald; Hughie Stewart; Bill MacFarlane; Gary Mattie
Subject: Fw: Consolidation

What's in this for but higher taxes. Each district should have a vote not up to the councilors. We are from district 9 and should have a say

Gerald and Sylvia Breen

Beth Schumacher

From: Margaret MacIntosh <
Sent: April 19, 2022 12:02 PM
To: Owen McCarron
Subject: Consolidation Vote

Hi Owen,

I was shocked and disappointed to learn that Harris will not be able to represent our community in the upcoming consolidation vote. As you are well aware Harris is beloved by our community, he won by a significant margin and we trust him to represent our interests.

I am just seeking confirmation that Mr. Brophy of district 4 is also unable to participate due to his conflict of interest being employed by the town.

If that's the case and 2 out of the 10 districts can not be represented I really have strong concerns with the way this is going forward. It doesn't seem right that 20% of the county loses their voice entirely on this matter. How can we ethically fo about this with 2 counselors missing from the vote?

My larger concerns regarding lack of information and transparency with this entire process I will wait to address at our community meeting next week. I'm looking forward to seeing you there.

Thank you for your time.

Margaret MacIntosh

Beth Schumacher

From: Mary Farrell <mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca>
Sent: April 19, 2022 3:23 PM
To: Owen McCarron; Glenn Horne
Subject: Fwd: [EXTERNAL] Consolidation

Mary Farrell
Councillor
Town of Antigonish
274 Main Street
Antigonish Nova Scotia
B2G 2T2
902-863-2741
902-870-0286

Begin forwarded message:

From: Cynthia Henderson <...>
Date: April 19, 2022 at 11:04:15 AM ADT
To: "Laurie M. Boucher" <loucher@townofantigonish.ca>, Willie Cormier <wcormier@townofantigonish.ca>, Mary Farrell <mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca>, Diane Roberts <droberts@townofantigonish.ca>, Donnie MacInnis <dmacinnis@townofantigonish.ca>, Andrew Murray <amurray@townofantigonish.ca>, Sean Cameron <scameron@townofantigonish.ca>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Consolidation

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Good morning all,

As background, I was brought up with the philosophy that "What appears to happens is just as important as what happens".

In September 2021 both councils (Town and County) approved exploring a "merger". This was less than one year after the 2020 municipal elections. This would indicate that the movement toward a merger was a strong possibility prior to the municipal election, but was not brought up to the public during the election by the people re-offering for council eliminating public engagement and input. Now, the possible merger is out in the open and public engagement is taking place with the decision on merging/consolidating being made by the councils but with no direct input by the citizens. Having talked to a number of Town and County Councillors, they generally indicate they have made their decision on how they will vote. (So much for listening to the public at the engagement sessions.)

The Town and County have been working jointly on a number of projects in the last few years and that is a positive move, but the way this possible consolidation is taking place gives the impression that there is little openness about the procedure. The engagement sessions, particularly those in Town, are largely

during working hours, limiting participation. The timeline is quick, the decision will be made less than a year after the initial vote to explore the possible merger.

This gives the impression that the decision has been made and the publicity, information sessions and information being distributed is to "sell" the consolidation and make it appear that the public has a say.

I am not against the consolidation per se, but the process **appears** to be to justify the decision that has been made rather than to gather input to make the decision.

Regards,

Cynthia Henderson

Harris McNamara

From: Camilla Benoit
Sent: April 19, 2022 4:01 PM
To: Harris McNamara
Subject: Fwd: Re Consolidation Community Engagement

See below

Camilla

Sent from my iPad/Camilla

Camilla Benoit

Begin forwarded message:

From: Camilla Benoit <
Date: April 19, 2022 at 3:57:59 PM ADT
To: harris.mcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca
Subject: Re Consolidation Community Engagement

Good afternoon Harris

First I wanted to extend my appreciation and thanks for bring forth your concerns to the community of District 9, last pm. In addition allowing the residents to express their support and concerns. You certainly put forth a defined course of expectations regarding the proposed Consolidation.

Regrettably I will be away for the scheduled meeting for Havre Boucher, / Pomquet however I have sent an email to all county councillors expressing my concerns regarding several unanswered questions and the constraints on the process.

I am not on board with this consolidation at this time due to lack of proper information and cost projections not made available.

I trust this will work out in a more positive outcome.

PS I also mentioned in my email that there was a possibility that District 9 could possibly be without a vote based on the information you stated last pm.

Respectfully

Camilla Benoit Sampson

Camilla

Sent from my iPad/Camilla

Camilla Benoit

Facebook Post

4 messages

Margaret MacIntosh ·

To: "harris.mcnamara@gmail.com" <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Tue, Apr 19, 2022 at 9:23 PM

Hey Harris,

I actually did two Facebook posts on this today I can't promise any traction but at least it's out there. I've attached screen shots and below you can find the text version of the posts. If there's anything you can think of I can do to help make sure district 9 has a voice in this issue please let me know.

Thanks,
Margaret

From my personal Facebook page :

So I hate doing this kind of stuff but here it goes: local politics time!

We should all be aware of the efforts for consolidation of the town and county of Antigonish. I don't want to know what you think about it, and I'll keep my opinion to myself what I want to talk about today is HOW they're going about this. See they aren't having a plebiscite on this, it's going to be voted on by the counsilors. There are 10 counsilors for the approximately 15,000 County residents and 7 counsilors for the approximately 5,000 town residents. The reasoning behind this approach is that they don't believe we as voters in a democracy are capable of making an informed decision (I'll withhold my comments on the fact that they aren't providing any useful information on this matter).

That should be enough to start raising red flags, in fact it's enough to infuriate me. Nobody ever accused democracy of being the most intelligent form of government, but it's the one that allows us the freedoms we enjoy. It is important that all taxpayers have adequate representation especially on something this important.

Yes we have a representative democracy, and we elect the counsilors that we believe will best represent our interests and I'm ok with that. But what you may not know is that in district 9, and district 4 of the county we won't be represented in this vote at all. See, it's been determined that working for the town, or having a relative that works for the town creates a conflict of interest and Mr Brophy and Mr MacNamara have been informed they have a conflict of interest and won't be able to vote. So that's 2/10 of the county counsilors that won't be able to vote. If we assume proportional representation that's approximately 3,000 county residents without a voice on this which is more than half the population of the town of Antigonish. This is NOT OK!

Apparently they are discussing this at a town council meeting tonight, if you're able to you should attend. You should also call your counsilor and make your voice on this heard!! I don't care if you're for or against consolidation I care that we all get a voice and that this is a democratic process. At this point, the only way I see to make sure this is an ethical process is to bring it to the people with a plebiscite that way we know it's a free and fair election and I'll be happy to live with the results whatever they may be.

<https://antigonishcounty.ns.ca/council/>
<https://www.townofantigonish.ca/council.html>

From the AGCM Facebook group:

Just want everyone to know there is a very important town council meeting tonight that affects the entire town and county of Antigonish.

I won't get into my personal opinions on consolidation, I want to keep this about everyone having a voice in our municipal government.

We learned last night that Mr. MacNamara of District 9 will not be allowed to vote on the consolidation because his daughter works for the town of Antigonish. Our community is understandably very upset (we love and support Harris and trust him to act in our best interest). Shawn Brophy of District 4 told me today that as an employee of the town he also has a "potential conflict of interest" and may not be able to vote. This would mean that 20% of the county will not be represented in any way on this very important vote. (Just for clarity sake that would be the same number of people as if 60% of the town wasn't represented - its a big deal).

They will be discussing this and how to move forward in a fair and ethical manner at tonight's meeting. I personally can not attend but I did contact Harris and Owen with my concerns. (I personally see a plebiscite as the only fair way forward, with 2 council members unable to vote, its the only way I can see to ensure everyone is fairly represented)

So if you care about representation in municipal government (as you should because if we don't have a voice in our municipality then we don't have a hope on a provincial or federal level) please contact your council person and / or attend tonight's meeting and make yourself heard ESPECIALLY if you live in district 4 or district 9 of the county!!

3 attachments



SmartSelect_20220419-212009_Facebook.jpg
549K



SmartSelect_20220419-212158_Facebook.jpg
786K

SmartSelect_20220419-212051_Facebook.jpg
605K

This is the first time I have ever written an article and I am not a professional writer. I am just a person who has a passion for writing and I hope you will enjoy reading it. I am not a professional writer and I am not a professional writer. I am just a person who has a passion for writing and I hope you will enjoy reading it. I am not a professional writer and I am not a professional writer. I am just a person who has a passion for writing and I hope you will enjoy reading it.

Remember to stay safe and healthy. I hope you will enjoy reading it. I am not a professional writer and I am not a professional writer. I am just a person who has a passion for writing and I hope you will enjoy reading it. I am not a professional writer and I am not a professional writer. I am just a person who has a passion for writing and I hope you will enjoy reading it.

Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>
To: Brenda Greencom < >

Wed, Apr 20, 2022 at 7:45 AM

Brenda
This lady writes a good article and she don't mind calling it !
Harris

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Margaret MacIntosh
Date: April 19, 2022 at 9:23:20 PM ADT
To: harris.mcnamara@gmail.com
Subject: Facebook Post

[Quoted text hidden]



Margaret MacIntosh



4h · 🌐

So I hate doing this kind of stuff but here it goes: local politics time!

We should all be aware of the efforts for consolidation of the town and county of Antigonish. I don't want to know what you think about it, and I'll keep my opinion to myself what I want to talk about today is HOW they're going about this. See they aren't having a plebiscite on this, it's going to be voted on by the councilors. There are 10 councilors for the approximately 15,000 County residents and 7 councilors for the approximately 5,000 town residents. The reasoning behind this approach is that they don't believe we as voters in a democracy are capable of making an informed decision (I'll withhold my comments on the fact that they aren't providing any useful information on this matter).

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Margaret MacIntosh



8h · 🌐

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Have a look at Margaret's posts to a number of Facebook site, she is really articulate and gets the message across. By the way what does the "J" stand for in your email (lol).
Harris

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>
Date: April 20, 2022 at 7:45:44 AM ADT
To: Brenda Greencom <
Subject: Fwd: Facebook post

Brenda
[Quoted text hidden]

Norma MacPherson <
To: Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Wed, Apr 20, 2022 at 8:41 AM

Josephine

Sent from my iPhone

On Apr 20, 2022, at 8:28 AM, Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com> wrote:

Norma
[Quoted text hidden]
[Quoted text hidden]

[Quoted text hidden]
[Quoted text hidden]

[Quoted text hidden]
<[SmartSelect_20220419-212009_Facebook.jpg](#)>
<[SmartSelect_20220419-212158_Facebook.jpg](#)>
<[SmartSelect_20220419-212051_Facebook.jpg](#)>



Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Church Bulletin - New Request for this Sunday

3 messages

Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Wed, Apr 20, 2022 at 10:49 AM

To: Mary Williams

Mary;

Sorry to be a pain but could you put in the Church Bulletin for the weekend the following;

"There will be an opportunity to ask questions on the potential Amalgamation of Antigonish Town & Antigonish County on MONDAY, APRIL 25TH from 7 pm - 9 pm in the Havre Boucher Community Centre. Residents are encouraged to attend as it will affect our children and grandchildren".

marywilliams

Wed, Apr 20, 2022 at 6:57 PM

To: Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Not a problem whatsoever

[Quoted text hidden]

Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Wed, Apr 20, 2022 at 6:58 PM

To: "marywilliams"

Great, thanks!

[Quoted text hidden]

Hughie Stewart

From: Camilla Benoit <c
Sent: April 20, 2022 11:41 AM
To: Hughie Stewart
Subject: Consolidation Community Engagement

Good morning

The purpose of this email is to address concerns of the proposed Municipal amalgamation/consolidation. After reading through the County Connect identifying "Exploring Municipal Amalgamation/ Consolidation -guide to community engagement", it certainly was a well constructed format which has provided me with food for thought and more questions that are not being answered. It appears that the consultants hired are driving a hard sales pitch to move forward with this consolidation/ amalgamation, yet have no answers to questions put forth. What is provided are positive outcomes from other districts yet no information on the district(s) that are regretting such a process ie residents of Darthmouth, Porters Lake etc in HRM.

Given the short time line placed for a decision, for the county and town councillors to vote on this proposal, it seems that it would have been most beneficial / opportunities to have hosted town hall meetings with residents and allow the process to go to a public vote.

In addition the residents have little to no opportunity to direct questions except for one on one to the consultants.

The presentations does not provide definitive response to questions such as:

- Where is the financial or cost projections for entering into a consolidation and sustainability over the next five years
- What kind of an impact will this pose on both, county commercial and residential tax rates (show us estimate or projections of calculated new rates)?
- How will fire responses and services look like? Will some VFD be eliminated and or consolidated?
- What will our police services look like ? Will it still be RCMP or a Regional Police force?
- How will this change the electricity (town only at present) , water /sewer rates (show us projected numbers of rates impacted by the changes) ?
- What will the impact be for the representation ratio of councillors to residents, and new boundaries?
- What will the impact be on small business owners through out the county?
- What will the impact on small farming businesses and or hobby farms ?

These are only a few questions from a long list, that as a resident and tax payer deserve responses to.

Secondly it was brought to my attention that a 'conflict of interest' was vetted towards District 4 & 9 councillors which potentially if founded could prevent residents from those areas being properly represented.

Regrettably I am informing you and fellow county councillors who are elected representatives of the residents of the county of Antigonish, that I strongly disagree with the amalgamation/ consolidation process at this time. This should have gone to town hall meetings and then brought forward in a democratic process.

Respectively
Camilla Benoit

Camilla

Sent from my iPad/Camilla

Camilla Benoit

_____ (h)

Camilla

Sent from my iPad/Camilla

Camilla Benoit

_____ (h)

Camilla

Sent from my iPad/Camilla

Camilla Benoit

_____ (h)

Camilla

Sent from my iPad/Camilla

Camilla Benoit

_____ (h)

Camilla

Sent from my iPad/Camilla

Camilla Benoit

_____ (h)

Shirlyn Donovan

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: Wednesday, April 20, 2022 12:39 PM
To: Glenn Horne; Shirlyn Donovan
Subject: Fwd: Consolidation Community Engagement

FYI

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Camilla Benoit < >
Date: April 20, 2022 at 11:23:53 AM ADT
To: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Consolidation Community Engagement

Good morning

The purpose of this email is to address concerns of the proposed Municipal amalgamation/consolidation.

After reading through the County Connect identifying "Exploring Municipal Amalgamation/ Consolidation -guide to community engagement", it certainly was a well constructed format which has provided me with food for thought and more questions that are not being answered. It appears that the consultants hired are driving a hard sales pitch to move forward with this consolidation/ amalgamation, yet have no answers to questions put forth. What is provided are positive outcomes from other districts yet no information on the district(s) that are regretting such a process ie residents of Dartmouth, Porters Lake etc in HRM.

Given the short time line placed for a decision, for the county and town councillors to vote on this proposal, it seems that it would have been most beneficial / opportunities to have hosted town hall meetings with residents and allow the process to go to a public vote.

In addition the residents have little to no opportunity to direct questions except for one on one to the consultants.

The presentations does not provide definitive response to questions such as:

- Where is the financial or cost projections for entering into a consolidation and sustainability over the next five years
- What kind of an impact will this pose on both, county commercial and residential tax rates (show us estimate or projections of calculated new rates)?
- How will fire responses and services look like? Will some VFD be eliminated and or consolidated?
- What will our police services look like ? Will it still be RCMP or a Regional Police force?
- How will this change the electricity (town only at present) , water /sewer rates (show us projected numbers of rates impacted by the changes) ?
- What will the impact be for the representation ratio of councillors to residents, and new boundaries?
- What will the impact be on small business owners through out the county?
- What will the impact on small farming businesses and or hobby farms ?

These are only a few questions from a long list, that as a resident and tax payer deserve responses to.

Secondly it was brought to my attention that a 'conflict of interest' was vetted towards District 4 & 9

councillors which potentially if founded could prevent residents from those areas being properly represented.

Regrettably I am informing you and fellow county councillors who are elected representatives of the residents of the county of Antigonish, that I strongly disagree with the amalgamation/ consolidation process at this time. This should have gone to town hall meetings and then brought forward in a democratic process.

Respectively
Camilla Benoit

Camilla

Sent from my iPad/Camilla

Camilla Benoit

- (h)

Camilla

Sent from my iPad/Camilla

Camilla Benoit

- (h)

Harris McNamara

From: sandra webb ·
Sent: April 20, 2022 2:08 PM
To: Harris McNamara
Subject: Fwd: Municipal letter
Attachments: Municipal letter.docx

This is my letter that I sent to all the councillors! Annmarie Fougere Long had a great Blurb put in the paper included with our weekly flyers!

Sent from my iPad

Subject: Municipal letter

Aug 20th

Hi

I am writing in regard to the Proposed Consolidation of the Town and County of Antigonish. I feel that we do not have enough information as to what if any advantages the county will benefit from, and I don't think we should have to rely on the county councilors to vote for us.

We trust our councilor to represent us, but we have nine others that we have to put our trust in, and we should not have to worry about any politics which always seem to come up. We see what the hospital consolidation results are and once there is a merger, there is no going back.

We need time to absorb these facts and figures, and I as well as many others feel that we should have more time to review the pros and cons. I am sending this email to all the ten councilors, and I am also wondering what will become of our representation on council if there were a merger, would we have the ten that we have now, I think not!

The county is in good shape in my opinion so why would we want to change that! We all know that the county does not have the perks the town has in regard to sewer, water, skate parks, walking trails etc. I doubt if we ever would.

Best Regards,

Sandra Webb
District 9 Resident

Harris McNamara

From: Linda Wood <lwood@antigonish.ca>
Sent: April 20, 2022 3:06 PM
To: Harris McNamara; Owen McCarron; Gary Mattie; John Dunbar; Shawn Brophy; Remi Deveau; Mary MacLellan; Donnie MacDonald; Hughie Stewart; Bill MacFarlane
Subject: Re: Proposed Consolidation/ Amalgamation of Antigonish Town & County

Dear Warden & Councillors,

With regards to the proposed consolidation/ amalgamation, as taxpayers of District 9, we feel all our appointed counsellors for the town and county should be SLOWING DOWN this process, until residents can be more informed.

One on one discussions in the community does not allow for correct information to be shared, info gets distorted, he said...she said!

We need public Question & Answer meetings...in each district , with those in attendance who can answer our questions.

We also feel it's only right that we all have a voice in the resulting process, so please urge and allow for a plebiscite.

Thank you for considering our request

Linda & Larry Wood
Auld's Cove District 9

*Copied and emailed to the warden and each councillor



Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Amalgamation

1 message

Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>
To: "harris.mcnamara@gmail.com" <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Wed, Apr 20, 2022 at 6:56 PM

Sent from my iPhone



IMG_0982.JPG
773K

Alicia 2
1 message

Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>
To: "harris.mcnamara@gmail.com" <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Wed, Apr 20, 2022 at 6:59 PM

Sent from my iPhone



IMG_0982.JPG
773K



Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Alicia 2a

1 message

Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>
To: "harris.mcnamara@gmail.com" <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Wed, Apr 20, 2022 at 7:10 PM

Sent from my iPhone



IMG_0982.JPG
773K

Amalgamation Notes

3 messages

Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Wed, Apr 20, 2022 at 7:19 PM

To: Anne Marie McKeough <

Ann;

I attached the phone and email addresses of councillors of Antigonish County Council and two articles for information.
Harris

4 attachments



Alicia 1.JPG
764K



Alicia 2.JPG
773K

Contact Numbers.docx
14K

Information.pdf
2021K

Anne Marie McKeough <

Wed, Apr 20, 2022 at 7:54 PM

To: Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Thanks for the information Harris. After I read the attachments, I'll prepare a letter to the Chronicle Herald. I think it's safest to phrase concerns as questions, rather than accusations. I'd like to run it by you first if that's ok. Is Saltwire separate from the CH? It looks that way online.

I spoke to Bunny about this. Like Maureen and Ron, she's on board to speak out.

Also, I'm going to try to speak with Ann Marie Long, who 'penned a pointed piece' in the Casket.

Finally, I spoke at some length with Angus Mattie today. (He's done quite a bit of work for us over our years in HB and we've got to know him a bit.) He's been following this and, as you might guess, knows the 'players.' I asked him to speak out, based on his ethics and position in the community. He's going to talk with his brother, Gary, who he indicated is on the side of openness and caution in terms of the amalgamation. As is Leona Brow!

Thank you for your principled work Harris.

Anne

Get [Outlook for iOS](#)

From: Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Sent: Wednesday, April 20, 2022 4:19:50 PM

To: Anne Marie McKeough <

Subject: Amalgamation Notes

[EXTERNAL]

[Quoted text hidden]

Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Wed, Apr 20, 2022 at 8:20 PM

To: Anne Marie McKeough <

Ann

Thank you, I am off to Halifax in the morning as I have a few meetings. I will be back on Friday but will review anything as I will have my computer.

Harris

[Quoted text hidden]

Hughie Stewart

From: Tammy Breen <1 |>
Sent: April 20, 2022 7:41 PM
To: Hughie Stewart
Subject: Consolidation

Hello Mr. Stewart,

I am writing to you asking for your support in giving our area , district nine a voice in the decision concerning consolidation. It has come to our attention that our councillor may be unable to represent us and vote on this issue. As such I would request that a plebiscite occur so that district nine can have their voices heard. I am sure you would agree , a decision without the voice of any district would be a undemocratic.

I also would like time for a more proper analysis of consolidation that includes cost benefit analysis. There are very few numbers in the information given and as such makes it very difficult to make an informed decision. Further, we are being asked to take alot on faith that the future joint transition council will figure out details. What would be the numbers of representation from town and from county on this transition council?

I think taking our time to collect some more information would ensure that both town and county could get behind this plan.

Please vote no to this process so we can have a voice.
Thank you for your time.
Tammy Breen

Sent from my iPhone

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Shirlyn Donovan](#)
To: Council
Subject: Postponement and Rescheduling of Upcoming Sessions
Date: April 21, 2022 2:54:26 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
Importance: High

Good afternoon Council,

We have some unfortunate news that some members of both Town and County Council have tested positive for COVID-19. Under the guidance of our consulting team, we have decided to postpone all the Community Engagement Sessions scheduled from Monday, April 25 to Thursday, April 28.

This is being done to allow those who have tested positive the opportunity to complete their isolation and take the time needed to rest and re-cooperate. We wanted to be sure you all were given advance notice on this schedule change. Notices are being prepped to get the word out to the public as quickly as possible.

We have a drafted a tentative new schedule and have added a new online session for Thursday, April 28. The sessions highlighted in yellow are the ones that have been rescheduled/added. We are working on confirming the availability at each location before the list can be finalized. If anyone has any issues with the revised schedule, please notify me by 12 noon tomorrow.

Thursday, April 28	6:00PM - 8:00PM	WEBINAR
Sunday, May 1	6:00PM - 8:00PM	CACL Legion
Monday, May 2	12:00PM - 3:00PM	The Peoples Place Library Community Room
Monday, May 2	7:00PM - 9:00PM	Heatherton Community Centre
Tuesday, May 3	11:00AM - 1:00PM	CACL Legion
Tuesday, May 3	5:00PM - 8:00PM	St. Andrew Junior School (Appleseed Drive)
Wednesday, May 4	10:30AM - 12:00PM	John Paul Centre (Community Groups/Leaders)
Wednesday, May 4	6:00PM - 8:00PM	Tracadie Fire Hall
Thursday, May 5	6:00PM - 8:00PM	St. Andrews Community Centre
Monday, May 9	10:30AM - 12:00PM	John Paul Centre (Current and Former Elected Officials)
Monday, May 9	6:00PM - 8:00PM	Pomquet Fire Hall
Tuesday, May 10	7:00PM - 9:00PM	Havre Boucher
Wednesday, May 11	7:00PM - 9:00PM	Lochaber Centre

Once the schedule is updated, we will make the edits on www.antigonish.ca and calendar invites will be sent to each of you.

If anyone has any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to give me a call at 902-872-1250.

Thanks,

Shirlyn

Shirlyn Donovan

Strategic Initiatives Coordinator
 Municipality of the County of Antigonish
 285 Beech Hill Road
 Antigonish, NS B2G 0B4
 902-863-1117

 www.antigonishcounty.ns.ca
 www.twitter.com/antigonishco

Honour Yesterday, Act Today, Inspire Tomorrow



Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Amalgamation

1 message

Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Fri, Apr 22, 2022 at 12:34 PM

To: deyoungcarolann@

Carol;

Great to talk to you this morning, your interest is appreciated as I don't believe it is in the best interest of the county. I have included the names, email addresses and phone number of the Warden and Councillors. We need a plebiscite !!!! . The meeting in Havre Boucher is Monday April 25th from 7-9 pm. We need a good showing> If you want to go to Tracadie its Wednesday May 04 from 7-9 pm, you can attend both.

Have a great day!

Harris



Contact Numbers.docx

14K



Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Meeting - Tracadie Amalgamation

1 message

Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Fri, Apr 22, 2022 at 3:32 PM

To: Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>

Gary;

Attached are notes that I picked and chose information from, I am missing some points but you got this. I had copies for all so that they could call persons making decisions.

Harris

2 attachments

 **Contact Numbers.docx**
14K

 **notes.docx**
18K

I have taken the position is that we don't have sufficient information on the "pros & cons" of consolidation to support such a merger into one municipal unit. We have no Cost Benefit Analysis for all the components (i.e., infrastructure in town and county , Antigonish Town Electrical Utility, Surpluses, debt, etc.) that demonstrates benefits to Antigonish Town and Antigonish County or the liabilities to each. I am not worried what they do in other municipalities, we need information! From this we need to build a 5-year business plan. We are doing things backward it's approved amalgamation and then we will identify the Cost Benefit Analysis.

Some Residents think there will be a plebiscite, I want to make clear this is **not** the case. What is going to happen is Antigonish County Councillors will vote in June and a simple majority (6 out of 10 County Councillors) will signal county residents approval or not. Then it will happen pending a simple majority from Antigonish Town Council.

I believe a thorough assessment is required. , A suggestion that has been put forward is let's wait until the next election (2 years away) to fully vet consolidation pros and cons and give residents the best information we can. The current timeline is not carved in stone. One resident suggested to have a list of the pros and cons of consolidation and how it effects the county. Some residents believe there is a vote required. I remember the meeting with town & county councils where the provincial government representative said you don't want a plebiscite as residents vote with their "emotions" and I replied that in the recent provincial election I voted for the individual policies and views aligned with mine, I did vote with my emotions. I will consider all the pros and con and make my decision for consolidation. Feedback to date is that we don't have enough info believe all of us want to vote with the best interest of our residents in mind.

It is critical that county residents' voices be heard, please provide your thoughts. I want to encourage participation in the session on April 25th, 2022 at the Havre Boucher Community Center from 7pm to 9pm.

The format will be information boards/ materials with one-on-one questions that can be asked. There is not a question-and-answer session for the group nor can residents make presentations. It our future and the future of our children and grandchildren. There are other ways of making your opinions, call 1-833-563-2786 or 1-833-563-2787 and leave a voicemail or email your questions and comments to info@antigonish.ca. **COUNCILLORS NEED TO BE CONTACTED TO EXPRESS YOUR THOUGHTS, THIS WILL INFLUENCE THE VOTE, YOU HAVE THE POWER!**

Examples

1. The tax rate for commercial in the county is \$1.44 (went down in 2021) while the Town rate is \$2.61 a 45% difference. Will we have two different commercial tax rates? The fringe areas of the county who have the same services as the town will pay a lot more if this is the case or the town will see its rates reduced, I don't think you can have it both ways.
2. The tax rate for residential in the county is \$0.88 cents while the town rate is 1.09, a 19.5 % difference. The county has not had a tax rate increase for 12 years due to the growth we have seen in the county. User pay has been put forward in amalgamation /consolidation material but it is well known that rural residents pay more, example is the Municipality of Queens charges 25% of the urban road budget to the rural taxpayers.

3. There are concerns about the cost of services especially the RCMP. We are told that policing if consolidation occurs, we will be on the hook for a yearly increase of over a million dollars for policing services as we are a new municipality. There is no reference to this possibility in the information to the public. Even if we think the federal and provincial government are going to come through, this is not to date, certain., we need to make residents aware of both possibilities and get the response in writing from governments (Federal & Provincial) in my opinion. In addition, the RCMP have a new collective agreement with their members and these this 11% increase is retroactive to 2017 which will result in significant costs to every municipality. This cost is not related to consolidation.
4. Antigonish County received \$ 767,000 dollars to January 31, 2022 for Deed Transfer Tax (1% of purchase price) and is a windfall, not something that's going to happen every year as in previous five years we received between 4 – 5 hundred thousand dollars and you should not budget for a windfall. Our year ends March 31 it should be approaching \$ 800,000. The property tax assessments in the county are up (Residential 8.77 %, Commercial 10% and Resource 6.83%). This translates into a bit more than one million dollars (Residential \$834,000, Commercial \$129,000 and Resource \$47,000) more in taxes, pending appeals which wouldn't reduce by much. Added to that is our reserve fund, the county has never before been in such good financial shape. I received the financials for the Antigonish Town this week and reviewing.
5. A resident expressed a concern about diluting the district voice as she believes there needs to be an understanding of the electoral

boundaries before the green light for consolidation. At our meeting with the town council on February 23rd, it was suggested by Willie Cormier (Town Councillor) that we develop suggested boundaries as UARB would likely support if the two parties agreed. He suggested it be done before vote. I certainly agree with him.

6. Councillors have heard many of the items identified in this list will be up to the new council (2024) to decide or more immediately the transition committee which will prepare the first operating and capital budget that will likely include a base rate plus an area rate. More information on the possible outcomes for county residents are needed.

7. I was a member of the Havre Boucher Fire Department for over 20 years and I know we in rural fire departments value our independence, this could be eroded by future municipal councils. A couple of examples of points that we should consider.

The Greenwich Fire Department near Kentville was shut down in March of this year by the Kings Municipality without warning to the Greenwich Fire Department volunteer members or the chief, just came in and said your closed down. The decision has been reversed by the Kings Municipality on Friday (March10) due to outcry from the fire service and the public. The Mayor said it was a mistake and result of fire report done by municipality. What about a change of councillors next election? The municipality will have oversight.

Contact Numbers & Email Addresses

NAME	EMAIL
Owen McCarron (Warden) PHONE 902-968-1290	omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca
Gary Mattie (Councillor) PHONE 902-968-1175	gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca
John Dunbar (Councillor) PHONE 902-338-2200	jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca
Shawn Brophy (Councillor) PHONE 902-863-8485	sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca
Remi Deveau (Councillor) PHONE 902-870-2866	rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca
Mary MacLellan(Councillor) PHONE 902-863-1101	mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca
Don MacDonald (Councillor) PHONE 902-863-5449	dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca
Hughie Stewart (D. Warden) PHONE 902-872-0420	hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca
Bill MacFarlane (Councillor) PHONE 902-870-7737	bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca
Harris McNamara(Councillor) PHONE 902-318-8333	hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca

From: [Shirlyn Donovan](#)
To: [Council](#); [MCA Staff](#)
Subject: Exploration of Consolidation Sessions Postponed
Date: April 22, 2022 4:31:08 PM
Attachments: [Sessions Rescheduled \(Facebook Post\).png](#)

Please see the message below that we just shared on social media, please share with your networks to get the word out to the community:

The Municipality of the County of Antigonish and the Town of Antigonish are in the process of holding public consultation sessions as they explore the possibility of consolidation.

As of late this week, several Council members of both the County and Town have tested positive for COVID-19. Out of an abundance of caution, and to allow those affected to complete their isolation periods and recover, all sessions currently planned for the week of April 25 will be rescheduled to May.

Sessions to be rescheduled include:

- Havre Boucher on Monday, April 25
- Two sessions at the Antigonish Legion on Tuesday, April 26
- Lochaber on Wednesday, April 27
- St. Andrews on Thursday, April 28

Dates for new sessions will be posted on www.antigonish.ca.

An evening online session has been added on Wednesday, April 27 at 7:30 p.m. Registration must be done in advance. To register, go to:

https://us02web.zoom.us/j/61234567890?pwd=WN_4JbE4Zc3ST2iFj3oKyrdA

Both County and Town Councils thank everyone for their understanding.

If anyone has questions, please let me know.

Thanks,
Shirlyn

Shirlyn Donovan

Strategic Initiatives Coordinator
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
285 Beech Hill Road
Antigonish, NS B2G 0B4
902-863-1117



www.antigonishcounty.ns.ca

www.twitter.com/antigonishco

Honour Yesterday, Act Today, Inspire Tomorrow

ANTIGONISH

Our Community

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Dates for new sessions will be posted on www.antigonish.ca next week.

Both the Town and County Councils thank everyone for their understanding.

Hughie Stewart

From: Leslie Fancey < >
Sent: April 22, 2022 4:33 PM
To: Hughie Stewart
Subject: consolidation

Hello Mr. Stewart,

I wish to express my opposition to the proposed consolidation of Antigonish town and county. While I believe it is important for the two to work together as they have in the past, I believe the residents of our county are better served with our own municipal council.

I also believe that a plebiscite should be held so that everyone can participate meaningfully.

Thank you for your attention.

Sincerely,
Leslie Fancey
resident of District 8

Harris McNamara

From: Leslie Fancey
Sent: April 22, 2022 4:41 PM
To: Harris McNamara
Subject: consolidation

Hello Mr. McNamara,

I wish to express my opposition to the proposed consolidation of Antigonish town and county. While I believe it is important for the two to work together as they have in the past, I believe the residents of our county are better served with our own municipal council.

I also believe that a plebiscite should be held so that everyone can participate meaningfully.

Thank you for your attention.

Sincerely,
Leslie Fancey
resident of District 8

Harris McNamara

From: Mark Fougere
Sent: April 22, 2022 4:43 PM
To: Harris McNamara
Subject: Petition and news story
Attachments: Petition for Plebisite Antigonish Town - County.docx

Harris, Thanks for meeting and the generous donation to Cape Jack Beach Project.
Here is e-copy of petition & news coverage on amalgamation
[Antigonish Deputy Mayor William Cormier says Efforts are Being Made to Answer Questions about a Possible Consolidation | 989 XFM](#)

Mark

Harris McNamara

From: Chrystal Fuller - Brighter Community Planning (via Antigonish)
<howspace@in.howspace.com>
Sent: April 22, 2022 4:45 PM
To: Harris McNamara
Subject: Important Information Regarding Community Engagement Sessions

Hi Harris,

The community engagement sessions to explore consolidation are well underway. Thank you for your suggestions and questions so far - we are replying and adapting in response to your feedback. Please continue to use this interactive site to post your comments and thoughts.

As of late this week, several Council members of both the Town and County have tested positive for COVID-19. Out of an abundance of caution, and to allow those affected to complete their isolation periods and recover, all sessions currently planned for the week of April 25 will be rescheduled to May.

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- St. Andrews on Thursday, April 28

The new dates for rescheduled sessions will be posted on [Antigonish.ca](https://www.antigonish.ca) early next week and we will send an email to everyone on our mailing list.

We know people want to share their opinions, so we are providing an additional online session on Wednesday, April 27 at 7.30 PM. Please register in advance for this session [here](#). This session will be recorded and posted on Howspace (which can be accessed through Antigonish.ca) so those who are not able to attend can watch it at their convenience.

We also heard that some participants would like to see a presentation. Follow the link below to view a brief presentation on the engagement process and an overview of some areas of interest.

Log in to Antigonish workspace as Harris McNamara

**Best regards,
Chrystal Fuller - Brighter Community Planning**

Please note that this email contains your personal
<https://antigonish.in.howspace.com/1/z9948353/hmcnamara> access link. Don't forward this
email to anyone.

Powered by [Howspace](#)



Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Petition - Antigonish County Plebiscite

1 message

Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Sat, Apr 23, 2022 at 9:12 AM

To: Carol MacEachern

Cc: Peggy Power

Carol;

1. Attached is the names, telephone numbers and email addresses of councillors that resident can call or email. I gave them out at the Monday Meeting.

2. Attached is the petition opposing the amalgamation of Antigonish Town and County. Feel free to start canvassing for signatures.

Give me a call if you have any questions or want to talk

Harris

2 attachments



Petition for Plebisite Antigonish Town - County.docx

14K



Contact Numbers.docx

14K

Contact Numbers & Email Addresses

NAME	EMAIL
Owen McCarron (Warden) PHONE 902-968-1290	omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca
Gary Mattie (Councillor) PHONE 902-968-1175	gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca
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Mary MacLellan(Councillor) PHONE 902-863-1101	mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca
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Hughie Stewart (D. Warden) PHONE 902-872-0420	hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca
Bill MacFarlane (Councillor) PHONE 902-870-7737	bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca
Harris McNamara(Councillor) PHONE 902-318-8333	hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca

Hughie Stewart

From: Tony VanDenHeuvel < >
Sent: April 23, 2022 10:30 AM
To: Mary MacLellan; Donnie MacDonald; Hughie Stewart; Shawn Brophy; Remi Deveau; Owen McCarron; John Dunbar; Gary Mattie; Harris McNamara; Bill MacFarlane; mayor@townofantigonish.ca; wgormier@townofantigonish.ca; dmacinnis@townofantigonish.ca; Sean Cameron; amurray@townofantigonish.ca; Mary Farrell; droberts@townofantigonish.ca
Subject: Consolodation

Good Morning

Recently I have been hearing more and more about the consolidation being planned by the town and county. In talking to residents of both the town and county I have gotten the same feelings that;

- A. The wool is being pulled over our eyes
- B. Someone is trying to pull a fast one on us
- C. Who asked for this
- D. If this was such a important thing why wasn't it campaigned on during the last municipal elections
- E. Why do we not get a vote as we did in previous years for a decision of this magnitude

Now, admittedly I have been ignorant to a lot of what has been going on and didn't start paying attention until a few days ago so I don't have enough information to make an informed decision on if this is going to be a good thing or not.

I do know that a decision of this magnitude should not be left up to the group of councilors who have not campaigned on this topic.

Correct me if I am wrong

I have heard that not all councilors are going to be able to participate in the vote due to conflict of interest.

If that is true, who is going to vote for their constituents?

Have their constituents been informed of this?

How can a decision of this magnitude go forward if not all constituents are going to be represented?

Furthermore, what does this mean going forward?

Will the Town and county be dissolved and formed into one municipality?

What is going to happen to the towns electric utility?

Will municipal services like the garbage collection be privatized or put out to tender?

Will we town residents be paying more for policing if the current funding model gets changed?

Will my tax rates go up?

Will our town roads and snow removal be improved?

Will the county be given more roads to take care of from the province?

Will there be cost savings in terms of duplications of jobs?

We currently have two CAOs, will there only be one now?

If this is truly about working together to have shared services why can't we continue with the arrangement we have in place now?

I am going to try and get to some of the information sessions in the coming weeks, maybe that will give me more answers to my questions.

Again, I still can't figure out where this came from, why it wasn't campaigned on during the latest municipal elections and why there is not a plebiscite on the issue.

Thank you

A concerned resident

Tony VanDenHeuvel

Beth Schumacher

From: Jeff Lawrence <jlawrence@townofantigonish.ca>
Sent: April 23, 2022 5:51 PM
To: Glenn Horne
Cc: Owen McCarron; mayor@townofantigonish.ca; Hughie Stewart; Willie Cormier; Shirlyn Donovan; Kate Gorman; Alisha Bowie; Chrystal Fuller; Brian Smith; Robyn McIsaac
Subject: Re: [EXTERNAL] Consolidation Steering Committee Meeting
Attachments: Committee Agenda_April 26 2022.pdf

I look forward to it.

On Apr 23, 2022, at 4:40 PM, Glenn Horne <glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca> wrote:

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Good afternoon, folks –

For those of you who will be joining our weekly Consolidation Steering Committee meeting via Zoom, please find the link below. Otherwise, we will see you on Tuesday morning at the County Council Chamber. Your meeting agenda is attached.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86369168670?pwd=ajFkR21iKzVjRG12Lyt5cGIVa0QvQT09>

Meeting ID: 863 6916 8670

Passcode: 016904

I hope you're having a good weekend!

Glenn

[Antigonish-County-Logo-Rev]

Glenn Horne | Chief Administrative Officer

Municipality of the County of Antigonish | 902.863.1117

285 Beech Hill Road, Beech Hill, NS | B2G 0B4

www.antigonishcounty.ns.ca <<http://www.antigonishcounty.ns.ca/>> | @AntigonishCo

<<https://twitter.com/AntigonishCo>> |

facebook<<https://www.facebook.com/AntigonishCountyRecreation/>>

Honour Yesterday, Act Today, Inspire Tomorrow



**Consolidation Steering Committee
Municipal Council Chamber – 285 Beech Hill Road
Tuesday, April 26, 2022 @ 8am
Meeting Agenda**

- 1) Community Engagement Sessions Check-In with Brighter Communities
- 2) Update on RCMP Contract
- 3) Additions:
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.



Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Consolidation Letter

2 messages

Anne Marie McKeough

Sun, Apr 24, 2022 at 7:08 PM

To: Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Hi Harris:

I'm attaching a draft of the letter I'm preparing for the Halifax Chronical Herald. It's only a first draft and I'd be very grateful for your input in terms of content, voice, tone, and/or wordsmithing. Bunny is going to look at this letter after you do.

I thought I'd also contact Portia Clark and Pam Berman to see if they're interested in this issue. I have a call into Anne Marie Long to see how we might work together on any radio coverage. I got her number from Gary Mattie and called her on Saturday, but haven't heard back from her yet

Bye for now,

Anne



Halifax Chronical Hearld Consolidation Letter.docx

17K

Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Mon, Apr 25, 2022 at 10:17 AM

To: Anne Marie McKeough

Ann;

Thank you for your support, it is so much appreciated! I have had a few calls from out of province / country that have property in the county wondering what is going on. There is a site on facebook (Meta) titled "Antigonish Town and County Residents in favour of a plebiscite" and in 2 days they have over 500 members, have a look. . With regard to your potential article for the Herald and other publications, I believe it tells the story in a concise way and is respectful to all.

I do want to clarify Point 3 as I have not been threatened. I was contacted by the Warden (Owen McCarron) and CEO (Glenn Horne) requesting a meeting on March 29, 2022 by phone. We agreed to meet at the municipal office the next day (March 30, 2022) where I was informed that in the County Solicitor's (Marc Dunning) opinion I was in a "potential conflict of interest as my daughter was on the Senior Management Team for Antigonish Town. I was given the Conflict of Interest law and among items highlight in yellow was penalty for being in conflict of interest if I do not declare a conflict and excuse myself from the vote. The maximum penalty is 25K , default would result of up to a year in jail and I could not run for council for 10 years. It was followed up the same day with this in writing, not from the lawyer but from the county CAO (Glenn Horne). I inquired how residents from District 9 will be represented and was informed that residents could call other councillors, this is not acceptable! I have retained a lawyer and he thinks they do not have a case. The problem is it's just an opinion, my lawyer says you can get different opinions from different lawyers and he suggests go to court and let judge decide. I am now evaluating if it's worth a long drawn judicial fight and the costs associated with legal representation. You mention District 4 Councillor Shawn Brophy received a letter and it in the same situation as myself. I can say confidently that "vote now and plan later" strategy has been a theme for me, haven't heard this from Shawn, he is very quiet but wants to vote. Of note there may be other potential conflicts, I was told of another situation two weeks ago which may arise. This means if Shawn and I declare a conflict that 20% of the county will not be represented, if a third arises then 30% of the county will not be represented.

Sorry for being long winded but I want you to know the whole story.

Can you text me Maureen's number? I had it but never put in my phone.

Have a great day and please do not hesitate to call if you have any questions at all.

Harris

[Quoted text hidden]

Democratic Process Threatened in Antigonish Town and County Consolidation Procedures

Nova Scotians are facing many urgent social issues, including a lack of affordable housing, access to health care, and climate change. In the face of such major issues, consolidation between two municipalities (Antigonish town and county) may appear to be a simple matter and of minor concern. This is especially the case when the municipalities are rated as having moderate and low financial risk, respectively. But when we take a closer look at how the consolidation process is actually playing out, a very different and problematic picture emerges – one where basic democratic principles are challenged. Three such challenges are described herein.

1. Municipal councillors, who are tasked with voting on consolidation, have not been adequately informed by colleagues who are championing consolidation as to its pros and cons. No cost/benefit analysis has been conducted at this point and detailed short and long-term business plans have not been provided. The proponents of consolidation have lauded ‘cooperation’ and ‘building a future together,’ with little or no hard data to back up their ‘blue skies’ prophecies.

2. Planned ‘Community Engagement Sessions’ are utilizing a format that disallows a meaningful exchange of ideas among community members. The poster-board format that is being proposed is woefully inadequate to address changes in the governance structure of communities. It is incumbent on elected officials to present clear, detailed information on both the pros and cons of consolidation. They must also allow time for community members to express their points-of-view in an open discussion. This is how community consensus is built and how community divisiveness is avoided.

3. Disenfranchisement of two county councillors has been threatened. The two councillors have received letters informing them that they are in conflict-of-interest, must not vote on consolidation, and will be subject to a substantial fine or jail time if they do vote and are subsequently found to be in conflict. The cited causes of conflict involve (a) being employed by the town and (b) having an adult family member, who lives in a separate household, employed by the town in a professional capacity. It is of note that both councillors have voiced concern about the 'vote now and plan later' strategy that has shaped municipal council discussions. The two municipal districts affected by the conflict-of-interest claim represent 20% of the county voters, which translates into approximately 3,000 individuals whose views will not be represented.

In light of the many shortcomings in the current consolidation process, communities are exploring ways to ensure that they have adequate information to take a position on the utility of consolidation and that this position will be represented in some final vote. This has led community members to propose that what they see as a flawed and overly rush process be slowed down and that a plebiscite be held in place of councillors' vote. Some members of both the town and county municipal councils have preemptively opposed a plebiscite because 'they are divisive' and because 'people vote with their emotions.' But community members at large see a plebiscite as the only way for each person to have an equal say in this important decision.

Harris McNamara

From: Jane <[redacted]>
Sent: April 24, 2022 8:08 PM
To: Harris McNamara
Subject: Antigonish town & county

Hi Harris

I realize you are not my councillor and I'm not a big Facebook fan to ask questions, so my course of action is go to the source.

Is it accurate that you will not be able to vote on the consolidation of town and county? How many people do you represent in your district?

I do plan to attend the meeting but it's always good to have the facts.

Hope you and your family are doing well.

Jane

Sent from my iPad

Harris McNamara

From: Carmen Breen <
Sent: April 24, 2022 9:34 PM
To: Harris McNamara
Subject: We the tax payers NEED a plebiscite

Sent from my iPad

Hughie Stewart

From: Chad Anderson <
Sent: April 24, 2022 9:34 PM
To: Hughie Stewart
Subject: Plebiscite

Good evening Hughie , It's Chad Anderson and I am from District 9 , Havre Boucher. I am a very concerned of the Consolidation of the town with the county of Antigonish. I'm concerned about the bad effects that it will have on Me , My family, My friends and My community . Wondering why we are not getting any information on this topic, good or bad and why we can't get a vote ????? It's my community, my home, my family's home and land . I want a say in what happens I want to vote !!!!!!!

Can you please give me any information on this consolidation, Can you tell me why I would want this?? What's in it for me and my family????

Other tax payers I have talked to in the county also have many concerns about this consolidation. With the recent price increases of everything, I can't afford for my taxes to go up and county services to diminish , to pay for Antigonish town improvements and debt.

Thank you for your time and hope to hear from you soon, Chad

Sent from my iPhone

Hughie Stewart

From: Carmen Breen < >
Sent: April 24, 2022 9:38 PM
To: Hughie Stewart
Subject: We the tax payers NEED a plebiscite

Sent from my iPad

Harris McNamara

From: Chad Anderson
Sent: April 24, 2022 9:47 PM
To: Harris McNamara
Subject: Plebiscite

Hey Harris, I'm just sitting here writing emails to every councillor including the two dumb ass's the mayor and warden. I just wanted to thank you all you have been doing for me my family and my community. Km still pissed at the dirty stunts they are pulling with you and your daughter but that how dirty politics works and that will never change. Hope all is well with you and your family and hopefully we can get some answers and a vote . Thanks again Chad

Sent from my iPhone

Harris McNamara

From: Anne-Marie Long
Sent: April 24, 2022 10:40 PM
To: Owen McCarron; mmaclan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca; Donnie MacDonald; Hughie Stewart; Shawn Brophy; Remi Deveau; John Dunbar; Gary Mattie; Harris McNamara; Bill MacFarlane; mayor@townofantigonish.ca; wcornier@townofantigonish.ca; dmacinnis@townofantigonish.ca; scameron@townofantigonish.ca; amurray@townofantigonish.ca; mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca; droberts@townofantigonish.ca
Subject: Proposed Consolidation of Antigonish Town & County

Dear Warden, Mayor and Councillors:

This is my formal request that both town and county Councils reconsider the process taking place for the proposed consolidation of both municipalities; and ,after providing timely and relevant information to all the taxpayers, that you hold a plebiscite vote under S.53 of the Municipal Government Act of NS on this issue.

I must convey my absolute disappointment in the process chosen to date. I have had the utmost respect for both our current Warden and Mayor and most of the councillors who have served over the past years. I've been truly content and pleased with the degree of cooperation between the town and county Councils under Owen and Laurie. Actually, I believe that during my time since I returned to NS in 1994, Owen, you have been the best Warden the county has had. I also dare to say that until these past few weeks, both our Warden and the Mayor enjoyed good public reputations that were respectively well earned.

I've been retired since early 2009 and prior to that I was an executive manager and a professional accountant for many years. And before that, I was president of a union with 4000 members. I have a good understanding of people and behaviours. I also understand government operations and the desire and need for change. I have worked with consultants who gave advice; however, they did not drive the change and we, the executives, made the decisions.

By now you must know that the dissatisfaction and disappointment in the process towards consolidation, being expressed by many, is due to the methodology being used and failure to propose a plebiscite. Since yesterday, after information was distributed at the Farmer's Market, over 400 people have joined a Facebook page looking for a plebiscite.

It seems that the consultants, with the support of Municipal Affairs and their financial contribution, have given one way to get this done and you've totally accepted that advice. The website and open forum meetings should have been used to provide information on the determined advantages and disadvantages of a merger. That should have happened prior to a plebiscite vote to enable people to become informed and to observe what is in it for them. Yes, you've scheduled meetings across both municipalities; however, they are totally controlled in this kiosk style manner. Anyone in a leadership role should know that many people will not go to a microphone and ask questions; yet, by attending an open forum meeting where there is perhaps an informed speaker and a Q&A session, people can hear the questions and answers that provide much information to the uninformed.

Make no mistake in presuming I was against a merger. I fully supported the exploration of a merger of the town and county. What has me hitting the Internet , websites and writing letters and posts is the apparent sudden rush to have this decided before, or early in, the summer; also, because I consider this process to be an abuse of power and an absolute failure to trust, that if you have given out sufficient information to enable people to make the decision, the ones who do vote will know that they have your respect.

While I believe that there has been a major error in judgement in the way this process has been handled, I believe that there is time for "redemption". With the delay in sessions due to unfortunate illnesses, it is possible to restructure the remaining meetings to be "open forum" style, with yourselves and the consultants answering questions. And you should offer a plebiscite. Quite frankly an apology for the process to date would also go a long way to getting people onside to listen.

My biggest concern is actually what happens if you continue with this process and get only a council approved vote to continue with the consolidation. The fact is that, after a consolidation decision, we will need a strong, experienced person as mayor and we will need some solid, experienced councillors to help the mayor. If you continue destroying the trust, that you've earned by your past work, we may end up with someone as mayor who is unskilled yet untainted, simply due to taxpayer frustration with the council members who voted for consolidation. *(Dare I say, remember how Donald Trump got elected.)* Solid leaders should also know that many people react emotionally and when faced with a stumbling block, such as feeling robbed of a vote in this decision, they are unable to separate the past good from the one current issue. That's reality and when it happens we all lose.

Respectfully,
Anne Marie Long
Tracadie

Hughie Stewart

From: Jack Bouckeno < >
Sent: April 24, 2022 11:26 PM
To: Hughie Stewart
Subject: public vote request

Good afternoon,

I would like for you and your fellow council members of the Municipality of the County of Antigonish to place the decision of consolidation between the Antigonish Town Municipality and Antigonish County Municipality before the members of the community to vote. I believe this is a significant change to the community. I do not believe that this decision should be made by this or any council, and to do so without the support of the community would be shortsighted, at best. In my opinion, such a vote, without community support, would be a travesty of the democratic decision making process.

Margie Layes

Sent from my T-Mobile 4G LTE Device

Sent from my T-Mobile 4G LTE Device

Harris McNamara

From: Jack Bouckeno
Sent: April 24, 2022 11:28 PM
To: Harris McNamara
Subject: public vote request

Good afternoon,

I would like for you and your fellow council members of the Municipality of the County of Antigonish to place the decision of consolidation between the Antigonish Town Municipality and Antigonish County Municipality before the members of the community to vote. I believe this is a significant change to the community. I do not believe that this decision should be made by this or any council, and to do so without the support of the community would be shortsighted, at best. In my opinion, such a vote, without community support, would be a travesty of the democratic decision making process.

Margie Laves

Sent from my T-Mobile 4G LTE Device

Sent from my T-Mobile 4G LTE Device

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: April 25, 2022 12:09 AM
To: Jane
Subject: RE: Antigonish town & county

Jane

How are you doing? See pictures of Hudson from time to time and the little girl (name escapes me). Yes, I will not be able to vote on the amalgamation motion. The Warden and CAO called me to a meeting on March 30 where I was told by them that they had contacted a lawyer for the county and he said I had a potential conflict of interest as my daughter works for the town and I should declare a conflict. They also highlighted the penalty for conflict of interest, 25 000 fine or a year in jail and can't run for 10 years I think. I have been pretty vocal in my opposition to amalgamation. There is another councillor that has a conflict also and there could be others, it's a mess. I represent at least 10% of the population of the county if you divide it up, with 2 councillors not able to vote that's 20% of county residents, there could be more. The only way to be fair is have a plebiscite, six councillors should not decide for future generations, this decision effects our grandchildren, its that important. If you really want to know facts, give me a call, its always nice to talk to you!

Harris
902-318-8333
902-234-2492

-----Original Message-----

From: Jane
Sent: April 24, 2022 8:08 PM
To: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Antigonish town & county

Hi Harris

I realize you are not my councillor and I'm not a big Facebook fan to ask questions, so my course of action is go to the source.

Is it accurate that you will not be able to vote on the consolidation of town and county? How many people do you represent in your district?

I do plan to attend the meeting but it's always good to have the facts.

Hope you and your family are doing well.

Jane

Sent from my iPad

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: April 25, 2022 12:14 AM
To: Chad Anderson
Subject: RE: Plebiscite

Chad;

Thank you, I am not a follower, this had to be brought out into the open, that's why we had the meeting on April 18th. let the people decide! It effects future generations, our children and grandchildren.

Harris

-----Original Message-----

From: Chad Anderson
Sent: April 24, 2022 9:47 PM
To: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Plebiscite

Hey Harris, I'm just sitting here writing emails to every councillor including the two dumb ass's the mayor and warden. I just wanted to thank you all you have been doing for me my family and my community. Km still pissed at the dirty stunts they are pulling with you and your daughter but that how dirty politics works and that will never change. Hope all is well with you and your family and hopefully we can get some answers and a vote . Thanks again Chad

Sent from my iPhone

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: April 25, 2022 12:16 AM
To: Mark Fougere
Subject: RE: Petition and news story

Thank you!

From: Mark Fougere
Sent: April 22, 2022 4:43 PM
To: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Petition and news story

Harris, Thanks for meeting and the generous donation to Cape Jack Beach Project.
Here is e-copy of petition & news coverage on amalgamation
[Antigonish Deputy Mayor William Cormier says Efforts are Being Made to Answer Questions about a Possible Consolidation | 989 XFM](#)

Mark

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: April 25, 2022 12:21 AM
To: Leslie Fancey
Subject: RE: consolidation

Leslie;

I totally agree, that's why I had my own community meeting on April 18th to inform residents. Gary is having a community meeting on Wednesday April 27 in the parish hall. Everyone should have a vote on such an important matter that will affect future generations, a plebiscite is required.

Harris

902-318-8333

From: Leslie Fancey
Sent: April 22, 2022 4:41 PM
To: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: consolidation

Hello Mr. McNamara,

I wish to express my opposition to the proposed consolidation of Antigonish town and county. While I believe it is important for the two to work together as they have in the past, I believe the residents of our county are better served with our own municipal council.

I also believe that a plebiscite should be held so that everyone can participate meaningfully.

Thank you for your attention.

Sincerely,
Leslie Fancey
resident of District 8

Hughie Stewart

From: natasha breen <... >
Sent: April 25, 2022 6:56 AM
To: Owen McCarron; Gary Mattie; John Dunbar; Shawn Brophy; Remi Deveau; Mary MacLellan; Donnie MacDonald; Hughie Stewart; Bill MacFarlane; harris.mcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca
Subject: Re: Consolidation of Antigonish Town and County

I am a community member of District 9. I feel each community member from each district should be allowed to vote. As a community member of Antigonish County, I feel we are being left out and I am probably not the only one.

- What are the pros and cons identified by the reviews of other mergers?

- What is going to happen when our taxes increase? Community members that are on a fixed income or low income will not be able to afford an increase, therefore they will not be able to pay than Antigonish is going to end up with the property and it will go for a tax sale all because of increase in taxes and then the community member becomes homeless. Who will be held responsible for when people lose their homes because their taxes increased?

- What extra fees are we going to incur, for example water and sewage? Most county people are not on a water and sewage system.

- What happens to fire services if a merger takes place in terms of costs and coverage? Will our fire stations lose funding given that despite the current funding through our property tax assessments?

- What happens with our protective services? The town spends more than the county on these services despite the county is larger than the town.

As a community member of District 9 Antigonish County, we should have a right to more input on the consolidation process, we should have a right to vote.

Natasha Breen

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Hughie Stewart

From: Merton Taylor < >
Sent: April 25, 2022 7:44 AM
To: Owen McCarron; Gary Mattie; John Dunbar; sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca; Remi Deveau; mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca; Donnie MacDonald; Hughie Stewart; Bill MacFarlane; Harris McNamara
Subject: Consolidation of Antigonish Town and County

I am a community member of District 8. I feel each community member from each district should be allowed to vote instead of just having the council voting.

- What are the pros and cons identified by the reviews of other mergers?
- What is going to happen when our taxes increase? Community members that are on a fixed income or low income will not be able to afford an increase, therefore they will not be able to pay than Antigonish is going to end up with the property and it will go for a tax sale all because of increase in taxes and then the community member becomes homeless.
- What extra fees are we going to incur, for example water and sewage? Most county people are not on a water and sewage system.
- What happens to fire services if a merger takes place in terms of costs and coverage? Will our fire stations lose funding given that despite the current funding through our property tax assessments?
- What happens with our protective services? The town spends more than the county on these services despite the county is larger than the town.

As a community member of District 8 Antigonish County, we should have a right to more input on the consolidation process, we should have a right to vote.

Merton Taylor

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Hughie Stewart

From: denise anderson < >
Sent: April 25, 2022 8:47 AM
To: Hughie Stewart
Subject: Amalgamation

Sent from my iPad. We in the county have a right to be heard before decisions can be made

Harris McNamara

From: Jane
Sent: April 25, 2022 9:37 AM
To: Harris McNamara
Subject: Re: Antigonish town & county

Harris,

Thanks so much for your speedy reply. It is very concerning that so many people will not be represented by their councillors. Seems highly unfair!

Covid seems to be rampant in our town/county and people are afraid to go out right now. I will be attending the meeting and I will be in contact with my councillor.

It's always easier to reach out to someone you know. Thanks again.

Jane

Sent from my iPad

> On Apr 25, 2022, at 12:08 AM, Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca> wrote:

>

> Jane

> How are you doing? See pictures of Hudson from time to time and the little girl (name escapes me). Yes, I will not be able to vote on the amalgamation motion. The Warden and CAO called me to a meeting on March 30 where I was told by them that they had contacted a lawyer for the county and he said I had a potential conflict of Interest as my daughter works for the town and I should declare a conflict. They also highlighted the penalty for conflict of interest, 25 000 fine or a year in jail and can't run for 10 years I think. I have been pretty vocal in my opposition to amalgamation. There is another councillor that has a conflict also and there could be others, it's a mess. I represent at least 10% of the population of the county if you divide it up, with 2 councillors not able to vote that's 20% of county residents, there could be more. The only way to be fair is have a plebiscite, six councillors should not decide for future generations, this decision effects our grandchildren, its that important. If you really want to know facts, give me a call, its always nice to talk to you!

>

> Harris

> 902-318-8333

> 902-234-2492

>

> -----Original Message-----

> From: Jane

> Sent: April 24, 2022 8:08 PM

> To: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>

> Subject: Antigonish town & county

>

> Hi Harris

>

> I realize you are not my councillor and I'm not a big Facebook fan to ask questions, so my course of action is go to the source.

- >
- > Is it accurate that you will not be able to vote on the consolidation of town and county? How many people do you represent in your district?
- >
- > I do plan to attend the meeting but it's always good to have the facts.
- >
- > Hope you and your family are doing well.
- >
- > Jane
- >
- > Sent from my iPad

Beth Schumacher

From: Town of Antigonish Mayor <mayor@townofantigonish.ca>
Sent: April 25, 2022 10:21 AM
To: Kaitlin Knox; Owen McCarron
Subject: Re: [EXTERNAL] Merger

Hello Kaitlin and thank you for email. I understand your concerns about how consolidation may or may not affect your business. I've answered your questions below but first let me explain how we got to where we are now.

In September both councils voted to explore the possibility of consolidating to one unit.

- We started with having joint council meet with Municipal Affairs to see when a consolidated municipality would stand in the province. All council member had an opportunity to ask questions
- We then met with Queens/Liverpool, a municipality that had consolidated 25 years ago. We believe their experience would give all council insight into the result of consolidation in their community. We asked questions about their successes, has consolidation changed their community for the better, as well as what would they do differently.
- We then met with the newly formed municipality of Windsor/West Hants. Although they are just two years past consolidation we believed talking with them with a more recent event would be helpful to all council members as well.
- The next steps we're developing our guiding principles as well as the forum of the consultations going forward. We reached **unanimous consensus, not one councillor objected to the format**, on both the guiding principles and the consultation process.

We, as joint council have done our research and now we are meeting with the public to share our findings and listen to the concerns of the citizens.

1. First of all, what is in it for the county?

The reasoning behind exploring consolidation is not what's good for the county and what's good for the town. Over the past number of years we worked hard as two separate units to remember to think of what's good for the community. This is the mindset that helped both councils

- Bring a skatepark to the community that has been attempted for the past 25 years
- Complete The Sandlot (challenger baseball field)
- Dog park
- The growth of Keppoch as a four season recreation destination
- Bring the National Special Olympic Games to Antigonish
- Host multiple regional and provincial Special Olympic Games
- And more...

All of these accomplishments create a better quality of life for all residents. We know we have a stronger voice with both the provincial and the federal government if we come to the table as one. We sometimes compete for the same monies from other levels of government resulting being turned down because they couldn't give to both the town and county. The provincial and federal governments want to invest in an area that they know will be successful and we are exploring to see if we can be that area.

Both councils and staff work well together right now but this is not guaranteed for the future. Even though we are on the same page in many instances, time and resources are being used by both municipalities.

Exploring consolidation is to see if becoming one unit would better serve the residents and businesses as well as growing the community so that families like yours and mine can thrive.

1. Why aren't residents being told the details on how this merger will affect our government spending?

The two councils have been telling the details in a variety of formats.

- we are hosting 18 Consultation Sessions throughout the town and county at various times to make it accessible for all. Residents can attend any one of the sessions because the information is not unique to the area.
- The website antigonish.ca talks about what we've found during our exploration of consolidation. On the website there is places for comments as well as a survey.
- Understanding that not everyone feels comfortable on a computer or coming to the sessions in person, we've also set up a phone line dedicated to the process. Anyone can leave their concerns and comments and it will all be recorded.

1. Why aren't residents getting a vote?

Both councils unanimously agreed to the consultation and communication process at a joint council meeting, this included a council vote.

- Plebiscites are not the only way to engage the community. In fact, plebiscites are notorious for low turnouts so it is not always a true indication of the community's concerns.
- Plebiscites can be very expensive. The last plebiscite cost the town and county close to 1 million dollars.
- Plebiscites can be devious. We don't have to look further than our neighbours to the west of Antigonish, Pictou County, as well as the last time Antigonish held a plebiscite. I know I was given wrong information on a number of issues that determined my vote. We have already corrected a multitude of misinformation, for example the idea of taxes rising due to consolidation, county residents paying for town sidewalks, and to top it off...the rumour

of the county putting in a new sewer treatment plant in Williams Point. We know that false information travels three to four times faster on social media than correct information.

- Engaging people, encouraging citizens to discuss issues and bring up their concerns is an effective way to gather information from the public.
1. Will this merger cause an increase in the commercial and residential tax rates for those of us living in the county?

There is no evidence that consolidating to one municipal unit will substantially affect taxes in both the town and county. Although we can not predict the future, and this is true even if council decides to remain separate, we can forecast the future based on data from the past. Using data from other municipalities that have consolidated, there is no evidence that taxes would increase. If you think about it, both town and county are in good financial standing. We have the revenues to cover our budgets now.

1. Currently the county has a cap on these tax rates that is lower than the cap in town.

The Capped Assessment Program (CAP) is legislated by the province for all municipalities, therefore, nothing will change.

1. How can you assure those of us with livestock in the county that our right to farm will not be changed with the ever-increasing urban sprawl happening in the province?

By urban sprawl, I assume, you are talking about growth. There is much research that indicates that sprawl is not the result of government policies or bad urban planning, but rather the ability of people to move further from town or city centres to live. We see growth in the fringe area of the county limits now. For example, Annie's Bluff, Mt Cameron, and Townsend (over by SAJS). We even see growth out the #7 and along The highway towards Lower Southriver, all of these areas receive the same municipal services as town and these areas are considered urban. I could not find any research that would support the two municipalities being one unit will expedite this growth.

Urban sprawl in bigger cities occur when services move out to the more rural areas. For example if Arisag or Harvre Boucher was to suddenly see an increase in population and we would see a Superstore or Walmart come to those areas. This would create another urban area. We still have people travelling to New Glasgow, Moncton and Halifax to shop.

The growth we are experiencing now is a natural growth due to both municipalities having very good financial indicators, therefore we are able to offer more services which makes the community more attractive for businesses, families and tourists.

1. We are seeing more and more bylaws being implemented in municipalities around the province that are prohibiting individuals from even owning laying hens and dictating how many livestock they can have per acre.

I will address questions 7, 8, and 9 together.

IF both councils vote to consolidate it is not that the town would be taking over the county or the county taking over the town, it would be one unit that would meet the needs of all residents. The county already does this by meeting the needs of the more rural areas, such as Arisag, Cape George and Tracadie and others, as well as meeting the needs of the more urban areas like Mt Cameron, Annie's Bluff etc.

Urban planning and rural planning are different and are required to meet the needs of the areas. IF we consolidate, we can't assume the county would allow someone to take down three or four houses and erect a farm on Main St. The same is true for the county, it would not make sense to enforce urban bylaws in rural areas, it just wouldn't work.

Our community is doing well because we have such a diverse workforce. It would be shortsighted to not see the importance of farming to the local economy, whether you reside in town or county. If consolidation goes ahead the motivation would be to improve our community and make it stronger for many generations to come. Farming has been in Antigonish for generations and is well rooted in our DNA it is part of who we are.

1. If the town and county merge, what is stopping the town from dictating similar requirements to the farmers?
1. What is stopping the town from telling the farmers when they can and cannot spread manure (convocation weekend for example)?
1. What is stopping the town from refusing to issue building permits for livestock barns, feedlots, etc. if they deem those structures too close to housing developments?
1. The NS Right to Farm legislation is only good until enough people vote to remove it, or municipal zoning bylaws override it.

The NS Right to Farm is legislated by the province. Provincial legislation overrides municipal bylaws.

I hope this helps answer some of your questions Kaitlin. If you need more answers please do not hesitate to share your concerns. You can contact Lise Roy at lroy@townofantigonish.ca to set up a meeting. I look forward to speaking to you in person at a consultation session new you.

Best,
Laurie

Mayor Laurie Boucher
Town of Antigonish
274 Main St, Antigonish, N.S
B2G 2C4
mayor@townofantigonish.ca | 902•870•7795

From: Kaitlin Knox
Sent: Saturday, April 23, 2022 6:43:55 PM
To: omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Town of Antigonish Mayor <mayor@townofantigonish.ca>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Merger

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hi Owen and Laurie,

As a resident of the county and agriculture business owner, I have a couple questions about the proposed town and county merger.

First of all, what is in it for the county? Why aren't residents being told the details on how this merger will affect our government spending? Why aren't residents getting a vote?

Second, will this merger cause an increase in the commercial and residential tax rates for those of us living in the county? Currently the county has a cap on these tax rates that is lower than the cap in town.

Third, how can you assure those of us with livestock in the county that our right to farm will not be changed with the ever-increasing urban sprawl happening in the province? We are seeing more and more bylaws being implemented in municipalities around the province that are prohibiting individuals from even owning laying hens and dictating how many livestock they can have per acre. If the town and county merge, what is stopping the town from dictating similar requirements to the farmers? What is stopping the town from telling the farmers when they can and cannot spread manure (convocation weekend for example)? What is stopping the town from refusing to issue building permits for livestock barns, feedlots, etc. if they deem those structures too close to housing developments? The NS Right to Farm legislation is only good until enough people vote to remove it, or municipal zoning bylaws override it.

Thank you for your time.

Best Regards,

Kaitlin Knox, MSc.

Winterwind Kigers

Carrondale Cattle Company Inc.
Nova Scotia, Canada

 | www.WinterwindKigers.com



Carrondale Cattle Company Inc

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: April 25, 2022 10:21 AM
To: harris.mcnamara@gmail.com
Subject: FW: Proposed Consolidation of Antigonish Town & County

From: Anne-Marie Long
Sent: April 24, 2022 10:40 PM
To: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; mmacllan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca; Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; mayor@townofantigonish.ca; wgormier@townofantigonish.ca; dmacinnis@townofantigonish.ca; scameron@townofantigonish.ca; amurray@townofantigonish.ca; mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca; droberts@townofantigonish.ca
Subject: Proposed Consolidation of Antigonish Town & County

Dear Warden, Mayor and Councillors:

This is my formal request that both town and county Councils reconsider the process taking place for the proposed consolidation of both municipalities; and ,after providing timely and relevant information to all the taxpayers, that you hold a plebiscite vote under S.53 of the Municipal Government Act of NS on this issue.

I must convey my absolute disappointment in the process chosen to date. I have had the utmost respect for both our current Warden and Mayor and most of the councillors who have served over the past years. I've been truly content and pleased with the degree of cooperation between the town and county Councils under Owen and Laurie. Actually, I believe that during my time since I returned to NS in 1994, Owen, you have been the best Warden the county has had. I also dare to say that until these past few weeks, both our Warden and the Mayor enjoyed good public reputations that were respectively well earned.

I've been retired since early 2009 and prior to that I was an executive manager and a professional accountant for many years. And before that, I was president of a union with 4000 members. I have a good understanding of people and behaviours. I also understand government operations and the desire and need for change. I have worked with consultants who gave advice; however, they did not drive the change and we, the executives, made the decisions.

By now you must know that the dissatisfaction and disappointment in the process towards consolidation, being expressed by many, is due to the methodology being used and failure to propose a plebiscite. Since yesterday, after information was distributed at the Farmer's Market, over 400 people have joined a Facebook page looking for a plebiscite.

It seems that the consultants, with the support of Municipal Affairs and their financial contribution, have given one way to get this done and you've totally accepted that advice. The website and open forum meetings should have been used to provide information on the determined advantages and disadvantages of a merger. That should have happened prior to a plebiscite vote to enable people to become informed and to observe what is in it for them. Yes, you've scheduled meetings across both municipalities; however, they are totally controlled in this kiosk style manner. Anyone in a leadership role should know that many people will not go to a microphone and ask questions; yet, by attending an open

forum meeting where there is perhaps an informed speaker and a Q&A session, people can hear the questions and answers that provide much information to the uninformed.

Make no mistake in presuming I was against a merger. I fully supported the exploration of a merger of the town and county. What has me hitting the Internet , websites and writing letters and posts is the apparent sudden rush to have this decided before, or early in, the summer; also, because I consider this process to be an abuse of power and an absolute failure to trust, that if you have given out sufficient information to enable people to make the decision, the ones who do vote will know that they have your respect.

While I believe that there has been a major error in judgement in the way this process has been handled, I believe that there is time for "redemption". With the delay in sessions due to unfortunate illnesses, it is possible to restructure the remaining meetings to be "open forum" style, with yourselves and the consultants answering questions. And you should offer a plebiscite. Quite frankly an apology for the process to date would also go a long way to getting people onside to listen.

My biggest concern is actually what happens if you continue with this process and get only a council approved vote to continue with the consolidation. The fact is that, after a consolidation decision, we will need a strong, experienced person as mayor and we will need some solid, experienced councillors to help the mayor. If you continue destroying the trust, that you've earned by your past work, we may end up with someone as mayor who is unskilled yet untainted, simply due to taxpayer frustration with the council members who voted for consolidation. *(Dare I say, remember how Donald Trump got elected.)* Solid leaders should also know that many people react emotionally and when faced with a stumbling block, such as feeling robbed of a vote in this decision, they are unable to separate the past good from the one current issue. That's reality and when it happens we all lose.

Respectfully,
Anne Marie Long
Tracadie

Beth Schumacher

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: April 25, 2022 11:45 AM
To: Leslie Fancey
Subject: Re: consolidation

Good morning Ms.Fancey,
Thank you for reaching out. I do appreciate your comments and I for sure do put a lot weight in comments from residents from across Antigonish County.

Regards

Warden Owen McCarron
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
902-968-1290

> On Apr 22, 2022, at 4:38 PM, Leslie Fancey wrote:
>
>
> Hello Mr. McCarron,
>
> I wish to express my opposition to the proposed consolidation of Antigonish town and county. While I believe it is important for the two to work together as they have in the past, I believe the residents of our county are better served with our own municipal council.
>
> I also believe that a plebiscite should be held so that everyone can participate meaningfully.
>
> Thank you for your attention.
>
> Sincerely,
> Leslie Fancey
> resident of District 8

Beth Schumacher

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: April 25, 2022 11:49 AM
To: john mullaney
Subject: Re: Consolidation

Good morning Mr.Mullaney,

Thanks for your email, I am listening to the concerns and ideas being expressed from all parts of our County. As we said from the beginning this is to explore the possibilities and is in my mind not a forgone conclusion. I do look forward to our engagement session in your community.

Regards

Warden Owen McCarron
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
902-968-1290

> On Apr 22, 2022, at 10:13 AM, john mullaney wrote:
>
> Mr McCarron (Warden of Antigonish County: I am very concerned that democracy with regards to Consolidation is being bypassed. If you care for the the people, let all the people affected have a vote to Consolidate or not to Consolidate. Give the people all the info, there is no rush, is there? Please let us vote.
> John Mullaney
> Old Post Road
> Frankville N.S.
> Thank you for your time on this matter.
>
> Sent from my iPad

Beth Schumacher

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: April 25, 2022 11:53 AM
To: Tammy Breen
Subject: Re: Consolidation

Good morning Ms. Breen,

Thank you for your email, you raise a number of good points, I do look forward to our community engagement session in your community so we can further discuss this. Again thanks for reaching out.

Warden Owen McCarron
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
902-968-1290

> On Apr 20, 2022, at 7:41 PM, Tammy Breen wrote:
>
> Hello Mr. McCarrin,
>
> I am writing to you asking for your support in giving our area , district nine a voice in the decision concerning consolidation. It has come to our attention that our councillor may be unable to represent us and vote on this issue. As such I would request that a plebiscite occur so that district nine can have their voices heard. I am sure you would agree , a decision without the voice of any district would be a undemocratic.
>
> I also would like time for a more proper analysis of consolidation that includes cost benefit analysis.
> There are very few numbers in the information given and as such makes it very difficult to make an informed decision. Further, we are being asked to take alot on faith that the future joint transition council will figure out details. What would be the numbers of representation from town and from county on this transition council?
>
> I think taking our time to collect some more information would ensure that both town and county could get behind this plan.
>
> Please vote no to this process so we can have a voice.
> Thank you for your time.
> Tammy Breen
>
>
>
> Sent from my iPhone
>
> Sent from my iPhone

Beth Schumacher

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: April 25, 2022 11:58 AM
To: Margaret MacIntosh
Subject: Re: Consolidation Vote

Good morning Ms. MacIntosh,
Thank you for reaching out, you are correct about about the potential of conflict with district #4 Councillor, I am listening to emails and conversations around consolidation talks and I do look forward to meeting you at the engagement session in your community. Thanks

Warden Owen McCarron
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
902-968-1290

> On Apr 19, 2022, at 12:02 PM, Margaret MacIntosh wrote:
>
>
> Hi Owen,
>
> I was shocked and disappointed to learn that Harris will not be able to represent our community in the upcoming consolidation vote. As you are well aware Harris is beloved by our community, he won by a significant margin and we trust him to represent our interests.
>
> I am just seeking confirmation that Mr. Brophy of district 4 is also unable to participate due to his conflict of interest being employed by the town.
>
> If that's the case and 2 out of the 10 districts can not be represented I really have strong concerns with the way this is going forward. It doesn't seem right that 20% of the county loses their voice entirely on this matter. How can we ethically fo about this with 2 counselors missing from the vote?
>
> My larger concerns regarding lack of information and transparency with this entire process I will wait to address at our community meeting next week. I'm looking forward to seeing you there.
>
> Thank you for your time.
>
> Margaret MacIntosh

Beth Schumacher

From: omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca
Sent: April 25, 2022 12:00 PM
To: Camilla Benoit
Subject: Re: Consolidation Community Engagement

Good Ms. Benoit,
Thank you for reaching out, I look forward to our community engagement see

Warden Owen McCarron
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
902-968-1290

On Apr 20, 2022, at 11:23 AM, Camilla Benoit wrote:

Good morning

The purpose of this email is to address concerns of the proposed Municipal amalgamation/consolidation.

After reading through the County Connect identifying "Exploring Municipal Amalgamation/ Consolidation -guide to community engagement", it certainly was a well constructed format which has provided me with food for thought and more questions that are not being answered. It appears that the consultants hired are driving a hard sales pitch to move forward with this consolidation/ amalgamation, yet have no answers to questions put forth. What is provided are positive outcomes from other districts yet no information on the district(s) that are regretting such a process ie residents of Dartmouth, Porters Lake etc in HRM.

Given the short time line placed for a decision, for the county and town councillors to vote on this proposal, it seems that it would have been most beneficial / opportunities to have hosted town hall meetings with residents and allow the process to go to a public vote.

In addition the residents have little to no opportunity to direct questions except for one on one to the consultants.

The presentations does not provide definitive response to questions such as:

- Where is the financial or cost projections for entering into a consolidation and sustainability over the next five years
- What kind of an impact will this pose on both, county commercial and residential tax rates (show us estimate or projections of calculated new rates)?
- How will fire responses and services look like? Will some VFD be eliminated and or consolidated?
- What will our police services look like ? Will it still be RCMP or a Regional Police force?
- How will this change the electricity (town only at present) , water /sewer rates (show us projected numbers of rates impacted by the changes) ?
- What will the impact be for the representation ratio of councillors to residents, and new boundaries?
- What will the impact be on small business owners through out the county?
- What will the impact on small farming businesses and or hobby farms ?

These are only a few questions from a long list, that as a resident and tax payer deserve responses to.

Secondly it was brought to my attention that a 'conflict of interest' was vetted towards District 4 & 9

councillors which potentially if founded could prevent residents from those areas being properly represented.

Regrettably I am informing you and fellow county councillors who are elected representatives of the residents of the county of Antigonish, that I strongly disagree with the amalgamation/ consolidation process at this time. This should have gone to town hall meetings and then brought forward in a democratic process.

Respectively
Camilla Benoit

Camilla

Sent from my iPad/Camilla

Camilla Benoit

Camilla

Sent from my iPad/Camilla

Camilla Benoit

Beth Schumacher

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: April 25, 2022 12:37 PM
To: Tammy Breen
Subject: Re: Virus?

Just sending a test email. Can you let me know if it comes through ok. Thanks Owen

Sent from my iPhone

> On Apr 25, 2022, at 12:29 PM, Tammy Breen

>

> Hi Mr McCarron,

>

> I could not read your response as it appeared as pictographs? I suspect u may have a virus.

>

> Sent from my iPhone

>

>> On Apr 25, 2022, at 11:53 AM, Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca> wrote:

>>

>> Good morning Ms. Breen,

>> Thank you for your email, you raise a number of good points, I do look forward to our community engagement session in your community so we can further discuss this. Again thanks for reaching out.

>>

>> Warden Owen McCarron

>> Municipality of the County of Antigonish

>> 902-968-1290

>>

>>>> On Apr 20, 2022, at 7:41 PM, Tammy Breen wrote:

>>>>

>>>> Hello Mr. McCarrin,

>>>>

>>>> I am writing to you asking for your support in giving our area , district nine a voice in the decision concerning consolidation. It has come to our attention that our councillor may be unable to represent us and vote on this issue. As such I would request that a plebiscite occur so that district nine can have their voices heard. I am sure you would agree , a decision without the voice of any district would be a undemocratic.

>>>>

>>>> I also would like time for a more proper analysis of consolidation that includes cost benefit analysis.

>>>> There are very few numbers in the information given and as such makes it very difficult to make an informed decision. Further, we are being asked to take alot on faith that the future joint transition council will figure out details. What would be the numbers of representation from town and from county on this transition council?

>>>>

>>>> I think taking our time to collect some more information would ensure that both town and county could get behind this plan.

>>>>

>>>> Please vote no to this process so we can have a voice.

>>>> Thank you for your time.

>>>> Tammy Breen

>>>>

>>>

>>>

>>> Sent from my iPhone

>>>

>>> Sent from my iPhone

>

Harris McNamara

From: Terry Penny
Sent: April 25, 2022 12:53 PM
To: Mary MacLellan; Donnie MacDonald; Hughie Stewart; Shawn Brophy; Remi Deveau; Owen McCarron; John Dunbar; Gary Mattie; Harris McNamara; Bill MacFarlane
Subject: Proposed consolidation of Antigonish Town and County

Councillors and Warden of Antigonish County

I view the presentation of the proposed consolidation of Antigonish Town and County as an insult to the people of Antigonish County. The community sessions presented only one perspective with many unanswered questions. In your attempt to deny community discussion, you are fuelling a frenzy of fear and intimidation resulting in the very community divisiveness you stated you wanted to avoid if open discussions were allowed.

As elected representatives of the people of Antigonish County, none of you were elected on a platform of consolidation/amalgamation. Without a mandate from the community, an issue of this magnitude demands the voice of the people. This voice can only be achieved through a plebiscite.

To deny a vote "because social media presents people with misinformation" is further insult to your community.

Please allow this issue to be voted on by the people it affects.

Sincerely

Terry Penny,
Lakevale, NS

Beth Schumacher

From: Tammy Breen <
Sent: April 25, 2022 1:29 PM
To: Owen McCarron
Subject: Re: Virus?

I can read your response now. Thank you.

Sent from my iPhone

> On Apr 25, 2022, at 12:36 PM, Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca> wrote:

>

> Just sending a test email. Can you let me know if it comes through

> ok. Thanks Owen

>

> Sent from my iPhone

>

>> On Apr 25, 2022, at 12:29 PM, Tammy Breen < > te:

>>

>> Hi Mr McCarron,

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>> Sent from my iPhone

>>

>>>> On Apr 25, 2022, at 11:53 AM, Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca> wrote:

>>>>

>>>> Good morning Ms. Breen,

>>>> Thank you for your email, you raise a number of good points, I do look forward to our community engagement session in your community so we can further discuss this. Again thanks for reaching out.

>>>>

>>>> Warden Owen McCarron

>>>> Municipality of the County of Antigonish

>>>> 902-968-1290

>>>>

>>>>> On Apr 20, 2022, at 7:41 PM, Tammy Breen <

>>>>>

>>>>> Hello Mr. McCarrin,

>>>>>

>>>>> I am writing to you asking for your support in giving our area , district nine a voice in the decision concerning consolidation. It has come to our attention that our councillor may be unable to represent us and vote on this issue. As such I would request that a plebiscite occur so that district nine can have their voices heard. I am sure you would agree , a decision without the voice of any district would be a undemocratic.

>>>>>

>>>>> I also would like time for a more proper analysis of consolidation that includes cost benefit analysis.

>>>>> There are very few numbers in the information given and as such makes it very difficult to make an informed decision. Further, we are being asked to take alot on faith that the future joint transition council will figure out details. What would be the numbers of representation from town and from county on this transition council?

>>>>>

>>>> I think taking our time to collect some more information would ensure that both town and county could get behind this plan.

>>>>

>>>> Please vote no to this process so we can have a voice.

>>>> Thank you for your time.

>>>> Tammy Breen

>>>>

>>>>

>>>>

>>>> Sent from my iPhone

>>>>

>>>> Sent from my iPhone

>>

Hughie Stewart

From: sylvia breen <[redacted]>
Sent: April 25, 2022 1:49 PM
To: Owen McCarron; John Dunbar; Shawn Brophy; Donnie MacDonald; Remi Deveau;
Hughie Stewart
Subject: Consolidation

What does this mean for us ,nothing but higher taxes. As tax payers we should have a vote not left to the mayor and councilors to decide for us. We are residents of district 9 Gerald and Sylvia Breen

From: [Shirlyn Donovan](#)
To: [Council](#)
Cc: [Kate Gorman](#)
Subject: Updated Community Engagement Schedule
Date: April 25, 2022 2:00:02 PM
Attachments: [Engagement Schedule Updated April 25.pdf](#)

Good afternoon,

Please see attached the updated community engagement schedule.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Thanks,
Shirlyn

Shirlyn Donovan

Strategic Initiatives Coordinator
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
285 Beech Hill Road
Antigonish, NS B2G 0B4
902-863-1117



www.antigonishcounty.ns.ca
www.twitter.com/antigonishco

Honour Yesterday, Act Today, Inspire Tomorrow

Updated Community Engagement Schedule

DATE	TIME	LOCATION
Wednesday, April 27	7:30 PM	WEBINAR Register: https://us02web.zoom.us/j/.../WN_4JbE4Zc3ST2IFj3okYrnda
Sunday, May 1	6:00PM - 8:00PM	CACL/Legion
Monday, May 2	12:00PM - 3:00PM	The Peoples Place Library Community Room
Monday, May 2	7:00PM - 9:00PM	Heatherton Community Centre
Tuesday, May 3	11:00AM - 1:00PM	CACL/Legion
Tuesday, May 3	5:00PM - 8:00PM	St. Andrew Junior School (Appleseed Drive)
Wednesday, May 4	6:00PM - 8:00PM	Tracadie Fire Hall
Thursday, May 5	6:00PM - 8:00PM	St. Andrews Community Centre
Monday, May 9	6:00PM - 8:00PM	Pomquet Fire Hall
Wednesday, May 11	7:00PM - 9:00PM	Havre Boucher
Thursday, May 12	7:00PM - 9:00PM	Lochaber

Harris McNamara

From: Valerie Chugg
Sent: April 25, 2022 3:08 PM
To: Harris McNamara

Hello Harris. I am from District 1. I attended a session at Mini Trail Community Centre in Lakevale. I've emailed Mary MacLellan requesting a meeting with her constituents. I have heard that because of a conflict you do not get to vote when the time comes and wonder how this could possibly happen when you are elected to represent your constituents? How could the employment of a relative have any bearing on what you hear from these meetings and allow you to form an opinion? This process is not overly transparent. Seems like a 'done deal'. The timing of this process, the length of time before next municipal elections and from what I hear a few councillors who will not be offering in next election appears that a few councillors and perhaps mayor and warden are running this process. I understand what consolidation means. I do not think that citizens are getting a fair voice in this! Sincerely, Valerie Chugg.

Sent from my iPhone

Harris McNamara

From: Tony VanDenHeuvel
Sent: April 25, 2022 3:50 PM
To: Harris McNamara
Subject: Conflict of interest

Hi Harris

Recently I've been hearing bits and pieces about the consolidation with the town and county and one thing I'm hearing is two county councillors will be unable to vote due to a conflict of interest.

You being one of them, Shawn Brophy being the other.

If this is the case and you are being singled out because of a family connection to the town and Shawn being singled out due to employment, wouldn't Owen be in conflict of interest where he benefits from selling his firewood to the municipality and town for the fuel fund?

I checked with one other councillor and he seemed to think this would be the case.

It may be nothing, but it may be something to keep a eye on as this gets closer to the end.

Thank you
Tony VanDenHeuvel

Sent from my iPhone



Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

OPPS! attachment Antigonish Town and County Consolidation

2 messages

Anne Marie McKeough

Mon, Apr 25, 2022 at 9:50 PM

To: Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>, Bunny and Briar

⌵

From: Anne Marie McKeough <...>

Date: Monday, April 25, 2022 at 6:47 PM

To: Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>, Bunny and Brian

Subject: Antigonish Town and County Consolidation

Harris: If you have time, would you review the third point for accuracy.

Bunny and Brian: I'd be happy to have any and all thoughts and suggestions for improvement.

Annie the Activist



Halifax Chronical Hearld Consolidation Letter.docx

18K

Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Tue, Apr 26, 2022 at 9:19 AM

To: Anne Marie McKeough <

Ann;

I have reviewed your letter and find it to be good however a couple of points;

1. I don't have accurate numbers of residents in the two areas, I believe numbers are conservative but trying to confirm.
2. Councillor on the last sentence requires a "s" added

Ann Marie and I met for a couple of hours yesterday to discuss where we are at. She has penned a letter to councillors and warden that is very good and supports your letter. Her letter will become public after the next council meeting, however it was to councillors and warden and i can't send it to you now. Perhaps Ann Marie will send it if you ask.

Harris

[Quoted text hidden]

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: April 26, 2022 8:31 AM
To: harris.mcnamara@gmail.com
Subject: FW: Proposed Consolidation of Antigonish Town & County

From: Anne-Marie Long
Sent: April 24, 2022 10:40 PM
To: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; mmacllan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca; Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; mayor@townofantigonish.ca; wcmormier@townofantigonish.ca; dmacinnis@townofantigonish.ca; scameron@townofantigonish.ca; amurray@townofantigonish.ca; mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca; droberts@townofantigonish.ca
Subject: Proposed Consolidation of Antigonish Town & County

Dear Warden, Mayor and Councillors:

This is my formal request that both town and county Councils reconsider the process taking place for the proposed consolidation of both municipalities; and ,after providing timely and relevant information to all the taxpayers, that you hold a plebiscite vote under S.53 of the Municipal Government Act of NS on this issue.

I must convey my absolute disappointment in the process chosen to date. I have had the utmost respect for both our current Warden and Mayor and most of the councillors who have served over the past years. I've been truly content and pleased with the degree of cooperation between the town and county Councils under Owen and Laurie. Actually, I believe that during my time since I returned to NS in 1994, Owen, you have been the best Warden the county has had. I also dare to say that until these past few weeks, both our Warden and the Mayor enjoyed good public reputations that were respectively well earned.

I've been retired since early 2009 and prior to that I was an executive manager and a professional accountant for many years. And before that, I was president of a union with 4000 members. I have a good understanding of people and behaviours. I also understand government operations and the desire and need for change. I have worked with consultants who gave advice; however, they did not drive the change and we, the executives, made the decisions.

By now you must know that the dissatisfaction and disappointment in the process towards consolidation, being expressed by many, is due to the methodology being used and failure to propose a plebiscite. Since yesterday, after information was distributed at the Farmer's Market, over 400 people have joined a Facebook page looking for a plebiscite.

It seems that the consultants, with the support of Municipal Affairs and their financial contribution, have given one way to get this done and you've totally accepted that advice. The website and open forum meetings should have been used to provide information on the determined advantages and disadvantages of a merger. That should have happened prior to a plebiscite vote to enable people to become informed and to observe what is in it for them. Yes, you've scheduled meetings across both municipalities; however, they are totally controlled in this kiosk style manner. Anyone in a leadership role should know that many people will not go to a microphone and ask questions; yet, by attending an open

forum meeting where there is perhaps an informed speaker and a Q&A session, people can hear the questions and answers that provide much information to the uninformed.

Make no mistake in presuming I was against a merger. I fully supported the exploration of a merger of the town and county. What has me hitting the Internet , websites and writing letters and posts is the apparent sudden rush to have this decided before, or early in, the summer; also, because I consider this process to be an abuse of power and an absolute failure to trust, that if you have given out sufficient information to enable people to make the decision, the ones who do vote will know that they have your respect.

While I believe that there has been a major error in judgement in the way this process has been handled, I believe that there is time for "redemption". With the delay in sessions due to unfortunate illnesses, it is possible to restructure the remaining meetings to be "open forum" style, with yourselves and the consultants answering questions. And you should offer a plebiscite. Quite frankly an apology for the process to date would also go a long way to getting people onside to listen.

My biggest concern is actually what happens if you continue with this process and get only a council approved vote to continue with the consolidation. The fact is that, after a consolidation decision, we will need a strong, experienced person as mayor and we will need some solid, experienced councillors to help the mayor. If you continue destroying the trust, that you've earned by your past work, we may end up with someone as mayor who is unskilled yet untainted, simply due to taxpayer frustration with the council members who voted for consolidation. *(Dare I say, remember how Donald Trump got elected.)* Solid leaders should also know that many people react emotionally and when faced with a stumbling block, such as feeling robbed of a vote in this decision, they are unable to separate the past good from the one current issue. That's reality and when it happens we all lose.

Respectfully,
Anne Marie Long
Tracadie

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: April 26, 2022 9:51 AM
To: Terry Penny
Subject: RE: Proposed consolidation of Antigonish Town and County

Terry;

Thank you for your support. I had a community meeting In Havre Boucher Community Centre on April 18th to inform residents of my opposition to amalgamation. In Tracadie they are having a similar meeting tomorrow night and I have encouraged all residents of the county to contact their councillor and warden. This is not a done deal!

Harris
902-318-8333

-----Original Message-----

From: Terry Penny
Sent: April 25, 2022 12:53 PM
To: Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Proposed consolidation of Antigonish Town and County

Councillors and Warden of Antigonish County

I view the presentation of the proposed consolidation of Antigonish Town and County as an insult to the people of Antigonish County. The community sessions presented only one perspective with many unanswered questions. In your attempt to deny community discussion, you are fuelling a frenzy of fear and intimidation resulting in the very community divisiveness you stated you wanted to avoid if open discussions were allowed.

As elected representatives of the people of Antigonish County, none of you were elected on a platform of consolidation/amalgamation. Without a mandate from the community, an issue of this magnitude demands the voice of the people. This voice can only be achieved through a plebiscite.

To deny a vote "because social media presents people with misinformation" is further insult to your community.

Please allow this issue to be voted on by the people it affects.

Sincerely

Terry Penny,
Lakevale, NS

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: April 26, 2022 9:52 AM
To: Jane
Subject: RE: Antigonish town & county

Jane;
I have been attending all the county sessions, see you there.
Harris

-----Original Message-----

From: Jane
Sent: April 25, 2022 9:37 AM
To: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Re: Antigonish town & county

Harris,

Thanks so much for your speedy reply. It is very concerning that so many people will not be represented by their councillors. Seems highly unfair!

Covid seems to be rampant in our town/county and people are afraid to go out right now. I will be attending the meeting and I will be in contact with my councillor.

It's always easier to reach out to someone you know. Thanks again.

Jane

Sent from my iPad

> On Apr 25, 2022, at 12:08 AM, Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca> wrote:

>

> Jane

> How are you doing? See pictures of Hudson from time to time and the little girl (name escapes me). Yes, I will not be able to vote on the amalgamation motion. The Warden and CAO called me to a meeting on March 30 where I was told by them that they had contacted a lawyer for the county and he said I had a potential conflict of Interest as my daughter works for the town and I should declare a conflict. They also highlighted the penalty for conflict of interest, 25 000 fine or a year in jail and can't run for 10 years I think. I have been pretty vocal in my opposition to amalgamation. There is another councillor that has a conflict also and there could be others, it's a mess. I represent at least 10% of the population of the county if you divide it up, with 2 councillors not able to vote that's 20% of county residents, there could be more. The only way to be fair is have a plebiscite, six councillors should not decide for future generations, this decision effects our grandchildren, its that important. If you really want to know facts, give me a call, its always nice to talk to you!

>

> Harris

> 902-318-8333

> 902-234-2492

>

> -----Original Message-----

> From: Jane

> Sent: April 24, 2022 8:08 PM

> To: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>

> Subject: Antigonish town & county

>

> Hi Harris

>

> I realize you are not my councillor and I'm not a big Facebook fan to ask questions, so my course of action is go to the source.

>

> Is it accurate that you will not be able to vote on the consolidation of town and county? How many people do you represent in your district?

>

> I do plan to attend the meeting but it's always good to have the facts.

>

> Hope you and your family are doing well.

>

> Jane

>

> Sent from my iPad

Harris McNamara

From: Terry Penny >
Sent: April 26, 2022 10:17 AM
To: Harris McNamara
Subject: Re: Proposed consolidation of Antigonish Town and County

Thank you for your efforts to try and see this issue managed in a respectful and democratic manner. As this issue was never included in any mandates by those running for election, regardless of one's position on this issue it needs to be voted on by the people not the 17 elected to represent us. And if my understanding is correct that number has now be reduced to 15 as you and Mr Brophy have been excluded from the right to represent your area. Just how far are our elected representatives, those elected by a vote, going to allow the democratic right to vote slide before we end this travesty? Terry Penny

Sent from my iPhone

> On Apr 26, 2022, at 9:51 AM, Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca> wrote:

>

> Terry;

> Thank you for your support. I had a community meeting In Havre Boucher Community Centre on April 18th to inform residents of my opposition to amalgamation. In Tracadie they are having a similar meeting tomorrow night and I have encouraged all residents of the county to contact their councillor and warden. This is not a done deal!

> Harris

> 902-318-8333

>

> -----Original Message-----

> From: Terry Penny

> Sent: April 25, 2022 12:53 PM

> To: Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>

> Subject: Proposed consolidation of Antigonish Town and County

>

> Councillors and Warden of Antigonish County

>

> I view the presentation of the proposed consolidation of Antigonish Town and County as an insult to the people of Antigonish County. The community sessions presented only one perspective with many unanswered questions. In your attempt to deny community discussion, you are fuelling a frenzy of fear and intimidation resulting in the very community divisiveness you stated you wanted to avoid if open discussions were allowed.

>

>

> As elected representatives of the people of Antigonish County, none of you were elected on a platform of consolidation/amalgamation. Without a mandate from the community, an issue of this magnitude demands the voice of the people. This voice can only be achieved through a plebiscite.

>

> To deny a vote "because social media presents people with misinformation" is further insult to your community.

>

> Please allow this issue to be voted on by the people it affects.

>

> Sincerely

>

> Terry Penny,

> Lakevale, NS

Harris McNamara

From: Anne Marie McKeough
Sent: April 26, 2022 12:08 PM
To: mmaclean@antigonishcounty.ns.ca ; Donnie MacDonald; Hughie Stewart; Shawn Brophy; Remi Deveau; Owen McCarron; John Dunbar; Gary Mattie; Harris McNamara; Bill MacFarlane
Subject: Antigonish Town and County Consolidation

Re Antigonish Town and County Consolidation Process

Dear Antigonish Town and County Councillors:

Public service can sometimes feel like a thankless task. That's why I want to thank you for your important work and to acknowledge the time and energy you have undoubtedly devoted to it. Despite my respect for the willingness of all elected municipal officials to serve your communities, I must take issue with the procedures employed by those championing consolidation. Some of my more major concerns are briefly discussed herein.

First, hard data either pro or con consolidation, as it impacts Antigonish town and county, is woefully lacking. Have councillors been provided with a cost/benefits analysis? Have short- and long-term financial plans been articulated? Have the current and projected financial expenditures and income been laid out to all councillors? Without this in-depth information, it is impossible for an informed decision to be reached by councillors.

Second, the view put forward pertaining to the efficacy of consolidation appears to be one sided. Emphasis has been placed on constructs such as 'cooperation' and 'building a future together,' yet the potential challenges of consolidation for the town and county have not been explored in any depth. This leaves community members with the impression that consolidation is a fait accompli, and results in distrust of the process and those who are the driving force behind it. This perception is further exacerbated by comments to the effect that community members vote with their emotions (as opposed to rational cognitive processes). Further, the preemptive position that plebiscites are "divisive" leads one to wonder what within this consolidation might cause people to strongly oppose their neighbours in hitherto cooperative communities.

Third, potentially disenfranchising 20% or more of the county citizenry is, to be blunt, a call to action that cannot go unanswered. In my view, this is clearly a step too far and does not serve our community well.

Like many others who have voiced opinions on social media and in person, I see the current 'vote now and plan later' strategy as highly problematic. The only solution for ameliorating the tense situation before us is to pause, ensure that hard data is provided to all taxpayers, step away from having the councillors vote, and respond favourably to the many calls for a plebiscite. This is the course of action that will allow trust in municipal politics to return.

Anne McKeough
Havre Boucher

Harris McNamara

From: Anne-Marie Long
Sent: April 26, 2022 1:11 PM
To: Owen McCarron; Mary MacLellan; Donnie MacDonald; Hughie Stewart; Shawn Brophy; Remi Deveau; John Dunbar; Gary Mattie; Harris McNamara; Bill MacFarlane; mayor@townofantigonish.ca; wcmier@townofantigonish.ca; dmacinnis@townofantigonish.ca; Sean Cameron; Andrew Murray; mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca; droberts@townofantigonish.ca
Cc: decosteshirley
Subject: Meeting Wednesday 27 April /22 from 7:00 to 9: 00, Tracadie

Good day everyone.

I have been asked by the coordinator of our meeting for District 8, Shirley DeCoste, to invite all Councillors from the town and county to our meeting at our parish hall in Tracadie, adjacent to St Peters church, tomorrow evening. This is a Q&A session on what is known about the proposed consolidation.

I understand that our Warden was previously invited and is unable to attend due to illness.

The consultants were apparently invited by our councillor and have declined.

I will be chairing the meeting and I do hope that those who are able to come will do so, if only to witness the questions being asked, and to observe that people want answers. Hopefully, all will observe that open forum meetings are not the disasters that some portray them to be.

Masks, sanitizers, and spacing will be accommodated.

I apologize for the late invitation!

Anne Marie Long



Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Contacts with County

2 messages

Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Tue, Apr 26, 2022 at 2:39 PM

To: anguswhat

Angus;
Attached is the contact list for councillors and warden.
Harris

 **Contact Numbers.docx**
14K

angus stewart

Tue, Apr 26, 2022 at 6:02 PM

To: Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Thanks Harris, much appreciated...Keep up the good work.

From: Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Sent: April 26, 2022 2:39 PM

To: anguswhat

Subject: Contacts with County

[Quoted text hidden]

Harris McNamara

From: Glenn Horne
Sent: April 26, 2022 3:02 PM
To: ginger
Cc: Owen McCarron; Mary MacLellan; Donnie MacDonald; Hughie Stewart; Shawn Brophy; Remi Deveau; John Dunbar; Gary Mattie; Harris McNamara; Bill MacFarlane; mayor@townofantigonish.ca; Willie Cormier; Sean Cameron; Andrew Murray; Mary Farrell (mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca); Diane Roberts; decosteshirley
Subject: FW: Meeting Wednesday 27 April /22 from 7:00 to 9: 00, Tracadie

Good afternoon, Mrs. Long –

As you are likely aware, some members of both Town and County Council have tested positive for COVID-19. As a result, all the Community Engagement Sessions scheduled from Monday, April 25 to Thursday, April 28 are being rescheduled to later dates.

With these sessions being rescheduled, it provided us an opportunity to respond to comments received during the first week of in-community engagement, seeking another online session. We have scheduled another one for this same night, Wednesday, April 27 at 7:30pm. All councillors have also been invited to that session.

If you or anyone planning to attend the session in Tracadie would like to participate in the online session please register here: https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_4JbE4Zc3ST2iFj3oKyrndA. Participants will have an opportunity to ask questions during the online forum.

Thanks!
Glenn



Glenn Horne | Chief Administrative Officer
Municipality of the County of Antigonish | 902.863.1117
285 Beech Hill Road, Beech Hill, NS | B2G 0B4
www.antigonishcounty.ns.ca | [@AntigonishCo](https://www.facebook.com/AntigonishCo) | [facebook](https://www.facebook.com/AntigonishCo)

Honour Yesterday, Act Today, Inspire Tomorrow

From: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Sent: April 26, 2022 1:47 PM
To: Glenn Horne <glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Fwd: Meeting Wednesday 27 April /22 from 7:00 to 9: 00, Tracadie

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Anne-Marie Long
Date: April 26, 2022 at 1:11:39 PM ADT
To: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Mary MacLellan

<mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, mayor@townofantigonish.ca, wcormier@townofantigonish.ca, dmacinnis@townofantigonish.ca, Sean Cameron <scameron@townofantigonish.ca>, Andrew Murray <amurray@townofantigonish.ca>, mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca, droberts@townofantigonish.ca

Cc:

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Masks, sanitizers, and spacing will be accommodated.

I apologize for the late invitation!

Anne Marie Long

Harris McNamara

From: Anne-Marie Long
Sent: April 26, 2022 3:07 PM
To: Glenn Horne
Cc: Owen McCarron; Mary MacLellan; Donnie MacDonald; Hughie Stewart; Shawn Brophy; Remi Deveau; John Dunbar; Gary Mattie; Harris McNamara; Bill MacFarlane; mayor@townofantigonish.ca; Willie Cormier; Sean Cameron; Andrew Murray; Mary Farrell (mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca); Diane Roberts; decosteshirle
Subject: Re: FW: Meeting Wednesday 27 April /22 from 7:00 to 9: 00, Tracadie
Attachments: image001.jpg

I appreciate the notification, Glenn.

Anne-Marie

On Tue., Apr. 26, 2022, 3:02 p.m. Glenn Horne, <glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca> wrote:

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Glenn



Glenn Horne | Chief Administrative Officer

Municipality of the County of Antigonish | 902.863.1117

285 Beech Hill Road, Beech Hill, NS | B2G 0B4

www.antigonishcounty.ns.ca | [@AntigonishCo](#) | [facebook](#)

Honour Yesterday, Act Today, Inspire Tomorrow

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Date: April 26, 2022 at 1:11:39 PM ADT
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I apologize for the late invitation!

Anne Marie Long

Harris McNamara

Subject: Exploration of Consolidation Webinar
Location: Zoom Webinar

Start: Wed 2022-04-27 7:30 PM
End: Wed 2022-04-27 9:00 PM
Show Time As: Tentative

Recurrence: (none)

Meeting Status: Not yet responded

Organizer: Shirlyn Donovan
Required Attendees: Council

Good afternoon,

Please see the zoom link to register if you wish to attend the webinar tomorrow evening regarding the Exploration of Consolidation.

You are invited to a Zoom webinar.
When: Apr 27, 2022 07:30 PM Halifax
Topic: Exploration of Consolidation

Register in advance for this webinar:

https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_4JbE4Zc3ST2iFi3oKyrndA

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar.

If you have any questions, please let me know.

Thanks,
Shirlyn

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: April 26, 2022 3:14 PM
To: ginger
Subject: FW: Updated Community Engagement Schedule
Attachments: Engagement Schedule Updated April 25.pdf

From: Shirlyn Donovan <shirlyn.donovan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Sent: April 25, 2022 2:00 PM
To: Council <council@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Cc: Kate Gorman <kgorman@townofantigonish.ca>
Subject: Updated Community Engagement Schedule

Good afternoon,

Please see attached the updated community engagement schedule.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Thanks,
Shirlyn

Shirlyn Donovan
Strategic Initiatives Coordinator
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
285 Beech Hill Road
Antigonish, NS B2G 0B4
902-863-1117

 www.antigonishcounty.ns.ca
 www.twitter.com/antigonishco

Honour Yesterday, Act Today, Inspire Tomorrow

Updated Community Engagement Schedule

DATE	TIME	LOCATION
Wednesday, April 27	7:30 PM	WEBINAR
		Register: https://us02web.zoom.us/j/4JbE4Zc3ST2iFj3oKyrndA
Sunday, May 1	6:00PM - 8:00PM	CACL/Legion
Monday, May 2	12:00PM - 3:00PM	The Peoples Place Library Community Room
Monday, May 2	7:00PM - 9:00PM	Heatherton Community Centre
Tuesday, May 3	11:00AM - 1:00PM	CACL/Legion
Tuesday, May 3	5:00PM - 8:00PM	St. Andrew Junior School (Appleseed Drive)
Wednesday, May 4	6:00PM - 8:00PM	Tracadie Fire Hall
Thursday, May 5	6:00PM - 8:00PM	St. Andrews Community Centre
Monday, May 9	6:00PM - 8:00PM	Pomquet Fire Hall
Wednesday, May 11	7:00PM - 9:00PM	Havre Boucher
Thursday, May 12	7:00PM - 9:00PM	Lochaber

Harris McNamara

From: Anne-Marie Long
Sent: April 26, 2022 3:49 PM
To: Harris McNamara
Subject: Fwd: FW: Meeting Wednesday 27 April /22 from 7:00 to 9: 00, Tracadie
Attachments: image001.jpg

Interesting comment below from Glenn about anyone else attending the meeting in Tracadie.

I talked with Gary briefly. He told me about the Logo we used but he had already told me that.

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Glenn Horne <glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Date: Tue., Apr. 26, 2022, 3:02 p.m.
Subject: FW: Meeting Wednesday 27 April /22 from 7:00 to 9: 00, Tracadie
To: [ginger](#)¹
Cc: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, mayor@townofantigonish.ca <mayor@townofantigonish.ca>, Willie Cormier <wcormier@townofantigonish.ca>, Sean Cameron <scameron@townofantigonish.ca>, Andrew Murray <amurray@townofantigonish.ca>, Mary Farrell <mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca> <mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca>, Diane Roberts <droberts@townofantigonish.ca>, decosteshirley

Good afternoon, Mrs. Long –

As you are likely aware, some members of both Town and County Council have tested positive for COVID-19. As a result, all the Community Engagement Sessions scheduled from Monday, April 25 to Thursday, April 28 are being rescheduled to later dates.

With these sessions being rescheduled, it provided us an opportunity to respond to comments received during the first week of in-community engagement, seeking another online session. We have scheduled another one for this same night, Wednesday, April 27 at 7:30pm. All councillors have also been invited to that session.

If you or anyone planning to attend the session in Tracadie would like to participate in the online session please register here: https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_4JbE4Zc3ST2iFj3oKyrndA. Participants will have an opportunity to ask questions during the online forum.

Thanks!

Glenn



Glenn Horne | Chief Administrative Officer

Municipality of the County of Antigonish | 902.863.1117

285 Beech Hill Road, Beech Hill, NS | B2G 0B4

www.antigonishcounty.ns.ca | [@AntigonishCo](#) | [facebook](#)

Honour Yesterday, Act Today, Inspire Tomorrow

From: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Sent: April 26, 2022 1:47 PM
To: Glenn Horne <glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Fwd: Meeting Wednesday 27 April /22 from 7:00 to 9: 00, Tracadie

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Anne-Marie Long
Date: April 26, 2022 at 1:11:39 PM ADT
To: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, mayor@townofantigonish.ca, wormier@townofantigonish.ca, dmacinnis@townofantigonish.ca, Sean Cameron <scameron@townofantigonish.ca>, Andrew Murray <amurray@townofantigonish.ca>, mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca, droberts@townofantigonish.ca
Cc: decosteshirley
Subject: Meeting Wednesday 27 April /22 from 7:00 to 9: 00, Tracadie

Good day everyone.

I have been asked by the coordinator of our meeting for District 8, Shirley DeCoste, to invite all Councillors from the town and county to our meeting at our parish hall in Tracadie, adjacent to St Peters church, tomorrow evening.

This is a Q&A session on what is known about the proposed consolidation.

I understand that our Warden was previously invited and is unable to attend due to illness.

The consultants were apparently invited by our councillor and have declined.

I will be chairing the meeting and I do hope that those who are able to come will do so, if only to witness the questions being asked, and to observe that people want answers. Hopefully, all will observe that open forum meetings are not the disasters that some portray them to be.

Masks, sanitizers, and spacing will be accommodated.

I apologize for the late invitation!

Anne Marie Long

Harris McNamara

From: Town of Antigonish Mayor <mayor@townofantigonish.ca>
Sent: April 26, 2022 4:07 PM
To: Anne-Marie Long; Owen McCarron; mmacllan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca; Donnie MacDonald; Hughie Stewart; Shawn Brophy; Remi Deveau; John Dunbar; Gary Mattie; Harris McNamara; Bill MacFarlane; Willie Cormier; Donnie MacInnis; Sean Cameron; Andrew Murray; Mary Farrell; Diane Roberts
Subject: Re: [EXTERNAL] Proposed Consolidation of Antigonish Town & County

Dear Anne Marie,

Thank you for your email. I had the pleasure of sitting on The Antigonish Town and County Crime Prevention committee with you and I am well aware of your experience and knowledge of government operations. I have always respected your work and commitment to your community of Tracadie as well as the greater community of Antigonish.

I am proud that our Council does not shy away from hard conversations that lead to important decisions for the betterment of our community. Although I understand the importance of maintaining positive public relations, we are elected to sit around the table, listen to our residents, and sometimes make unpopular decisions. As for the decision around consolidation, there hasn't been one yet. I have seen and heard some Councillors state their position on the matter and to be honest I am disappointed that they are not seeing this process through. We committed to the engagement process and listening to residents before we as a collective make the final decision.

The consultants have been hired to help facilitate the communication and consultation plan of the exploration of consolidation. The consultants are neutral and are simply helping to support the community engagement process and gather the information to present to council. They are not driving the change. Council makes the final decision.

Both councils have given unanimous endorsement on the consultation and communication process at a joint council meeting, this included a council vote on the issue. We started by having workshops with the consultants and determining the how to go forward, as well as the guiding principles. Every Councillor had an opportunity to speak and share differing opinions on the process. Not one Councillor chose to exercise that option during these sessions. There was even follow-up communication sent via email and no additional feedback was given.

Yes, we are hearing some complaints about the format. I agree the format is different than what we've done in the past, but different don't mean it is bad. We've also heard from others that they liked the one-on-one conversations because they felt more comfortable. Some people are being told that their taxes will go up, or that the county residents will be paying for the old infrastructure in the town. This is simply not true. Or that the Councillors didn't agree with the process or that they didn't have a say in the guiding principles. This again is not true. You may be extremely disappointed with the way this is being handled, I too am extremely disappointed with some of the comments from Councillors that are simply not true and feeding the misinformation that is currently circulating in the community.

I, along with Owen and some Councillors have gotten very positive feedback from the community, but these conversations aren't being shared online. I was told by a few that they were reading comments and posts being shared on Facebook and were afraid to speak out because they didn't want their friends or relatives upset with them. How unfortunate is that someone feels afraid to speak up? That isn't what our community is about. I've been following the Facebook page and there is a lot of misinformation and disparaging comments that go uncorrected.

In your email you stated "It seems that the consultants, with the support of Municipal Affairs and their financial contribution, have given one way to get this done and you've totally accepted that advice".

Again, this is wrong. Some members of Council have been pushing this narrative when they themselves were in the room when it was a unanimous consensus to proceed and now, they're saying they didn't happen. Also, during the meeting with Municipal Affairs, the representatives never said one way or another what they wanted, they simply answered questions presented by both councils.

I don't agree with you that a plebiscite is the only way to gather information and make an education decision. If this were the case nothing would ever get done. Look at our budgets as an example. Town and County each pass multi-million-dollar annual budgets and not one person comes to our Council Chambers when the open budget discussions are taking place. Residents trust those that were elected to the best well-informed decision, so why would that be any different on this issue?

Plebiscites are not the only way to engage the community. In fact, plebiscites are notorious for low turnouts so it is not always a true indication of the community's concerns. Plebiscites can be divisive. We don't have to look further than our neighbours to the west of Antigonish, Pictou County, as well as the last time Antigonish held a plebiscite. We have already corrected a multitude of misinformation, for example the idea of taxes rising due to consolidation, county residents paying for town sidewalks, and to top it off...the rumour of the county putting in a new sewer treatment plant in Williams Point. We know that false information travels three to four times faster on social media than correct information.

Engaging people, encouraging citizens to discuss issues and bring up their concerns is an effective way to gather information from the public. There is a multitude of ways to engage the community, because councils have not chosen town hall meetings and a plebiscite doesn't mean it will not be effective. I do realize that not everyone has the ability to get up to a mic and ask questions, this is the reason we asked for several ways for the community to have input.

We are hosting 18 Consultation Sessions throughout the town and county at various times to make it accessible for all. Residents can attend any one of the sessions because the information is not unique to the area. The website antigonish.ca talks about what we've found during our exploration of consolidation. On the website there is places for comments as well as a survey.

Understanding that not everyone feels comfortable on a computer or coming to the sessions in person, we've also set up a phone line dedicated to the process. Anyone can leave their concerns and comments and it will all be recorded.

Public consultation is very important to the process, and it is not the only step in the exploration process. We started with having joint council meet with Municipal Affairs to see when a consolidated municipality would stand in the province. All council members had an opportunity to ask questions. We then met with Queens/Liverpool, a municipality that had consolidated 25 years ago. We believe their experience would give all council insight into the result of consolidation in their community. We asked questions about their successes, has consolidation changed their community for the better, as well as what would they do differently.

We then met with the newly formed municipality of Windsor/West Hants. Although they are just two years past consolidation, we believed talking with them with a more recent event would be helpful to all council members as well. The next steps we're developing our guiding principles as well as the forum of the consultations going forward. We reached unanimous consensus, not one councillor objected to the format, on both the guiding principles and the consultation process. We, as joint council have done research and now we are meeting with the public to share our findings and listen to the concerns of the citizens.

This has been in the public since September, I have answered questions and given dates regularly, as has Owen, on the radio and in the printed media. That is 7 months ago. During that time we have had several council meetings where the

process was discussed and voted on.

You have stated "I also dare to say that until these past few weeks, both our Warden and the Mayor enjoyed good public reputations that were respectively well earned". This leads me to believe people started paying attention in the last few weeks hence the appearance of the process being rushed. This is a nine month exploration and we are at the seventh month.

You have referenced S.53 of the Municipal Government Act of NS on this issue, this is if the municipalities were amalgamating not consolidating. There is a difference, knowing your experience, I am sure you have reviewed the website and know the difference. An amalgamation is completely controlled by the province, such a CBRM and HRM.

Please feel free to contact me and we can discuss this further you can contact Lise Roy at lroy@townofantigonish.ca to schedule a meeting at your convenience. I look forward to seeing you at a session soon.

Best,
Laurie

Mayor Laurie Boucher
Town of Antigonish
274 Main St, Antigonish, N.S
B2G 2C4
mayor@townofantigonish.ca | 902•870•7795

From: Anne-Marie Long
Sent: Sunday, April 24, 2022 10:39:50 PM
To: omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; mmacclan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <mmacclan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Town of Antigonish Mayor <mayor@townofantigonish.ca>; Willie Cormier <wcormier@townofantigonish.ca>; Donnie MacInnis <dmacinnis@townofantigonish.ca>; Sean Cameron <scameron@townofantigonish.ca>; Andrew Murray <amurray@townofantigonish.ca>; Mary Farrell <mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca>; Diane Roberts <droberts@townofantigonish.ca>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Proposed Consolidation of Antigonish Town & County

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Warden, Mayor and Councillors:

This is my formal request that both town and county Councils reconsider the process taking place for the proposed consolidation of both municipalities; and ,after providing timely and relevant information to all the taxpayers, that you hold a plebiscite vote under S.53 of the Municipal Government Act of NS on this issue.

I must convey my absolute disappointment in the process chosen to date. I have had the utmost respect for both our current Warden and Mayor and most of the councillors who have served over the past years. I've been truly

content and pleased with the degree of cooperation between the town and county Councils under Owen and Laurie. Actually, I believe that during my time since I returned to NS in 1994, Owen, you have been the best Warden the county has had. I also dare to say that until these past few weeks, both our Warden and the Mayor enjoyed good public reputations that were respectively well earned.

I've been retired since early 2009 and prior to that I was an executive manager and a professional accountant for many years. And before that, I was president of a union with 4000 members. I have a good understanding of people and behaviours. I also understand government operations and the desire and need for change. I have worked with consultants who gave advice; however, they did not drive the change and we, the executives, made the decisions.

By now you must know that the dissatisfaction and disappointment in the process towards consolidation, being expressed by many, is due to the methodology being used and failure to propose a plebiscite. Since yesterday, after information was distributed at the Farmer's Market, over 400 people have joined a Facebook page looking for a plebiscite.

It seems that the consultants, with the support of Municipal Affairs and their financial contribution, have given one way to get this done and you've totally accepted that advice. The website and open forum meetings should have been used to provide information on the determined advantages and disadvantages of a merger. That should have happened prior to a plebiscite vote to enable people to become informed and to observe what is in it for them. Yes, you've scheduled meetings across both municipalities; however, they are totally controlled in this kiosk style manner. Anyone in a leadership role should know that many people will not go to a microphone and ask questions; yet, by attending an open forum meeting where there is perhaps an informed speaker and a Q&A session, people can hear the questions and answers that provide much information to the uninformed.

Make no mistake in presuming I was against a merger. I fully supported the exploration of a merger of the town and county. What has me hitting the Internet, websites and writing letters and posts is the apparent sudden rush to have this decided before, or early in, the summer; also, because I consider this process to be an abuse of power and an absolute failure to trust, that if you have given out sufficient information to enable people to make the decision, the ones who do vote will know that they have your respect.

While I believe that there has been a major error in judgement in the way this process has been handled, I believe that there is time for "redemption". With the delay in sessions due to unfortunate illnesses, it is possible to restructure the remaining meetings to be "open forum" style, with yourselves and the consultants answering questions. And you should offer a plebiscite. Quite frankly an apology for the process to date would also go a long way to getting people onside to listen.

My biggest concern is actually what happens if you continue with this process and get only a council approved vote to continue with the consolidation. The fact is that, after a consolidation decision, we will need a strong, experienced person as mayor and we will need some solid, experienced councillors to help the mayor. If you continue destroying the trust, that you've earned by your past work, we may end up with someone as mayor who is unskilled yet untainted, simply due to taxpayer frustration with the council members who voted for consolidation. (*Dare I say, remember how Donald Trump got elected.*) Solid leaders should also know that many people react emotionally and when faced with a stumbling block, such as feeling robbed of a vote in this decision, they are unable to separate the past good from the one current issue. That's reality and when it happens we all lose.

Respectfully,
Anne Marie Long
Tracadie

From: [Glenn Horne](#)
To: [Council](#)
Cc: [Shirlyn Donovan](#); [Chrystal Fuller](#); [Jeff Lawrence](#); [Kate Gorman](#)
Subject: Consolidation Emails
Date: April 27, 2022 7:50:42 AM

Good morning, councillors –

As you receive emails concerning consolidation please forward them to info@antigonish.ca so those questions or concerns can be captured or cc that email address when you respond. We can then make sure this correspondence finds its way to our engagement report.

Thanks!

Glenn



Glenn Horne | Chief Administrative Officer
Municipality of the County of Antigonish | 902.863.1117
285 Beech Hill Road, Beech Hill, NS | B2G 0B4
www.antigonishcounty.ns.ca | [@AntigonishCo](#) | [facebook](#)

Honour Yesterday, Act Today, Inspire Tomorrow

Shirlyn Donovan

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: Wednesday, April 27, 2022 8:25 AM
To: info
Subject: Fwd: Amalgamation

Warden Owen McCarron
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
902-968-1290

Begin forwarded message:

From: Theresa <[REDACTED]>
Date: April 26, 2022 at 9:09:16 PM ADT
To: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Amalgamation

Hi Owen

I just wanted to drop a line and say I am not in favour of the amalgamation. I don't really see the positive for us as a county.

I think there must be a plebiscite.

Just my two cents.

Cheers!

Theresa MacEachern

Sent from my iPhone

Shirlyn Donovan

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: Wednesday, April 27, 2022 8:25 AM
To: info
Subject: Fwd: Amalgamation

Warden Owen McCarron
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
902-968-1290

Begin forwarded message:

From: debbie fougere < >
Date: April 26, 2022 at 2:29:03 PM ADT
To: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Amalgamation

As a voting citizen of district 8 we want a plebiscite !

Shirlyn Donovan

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: Wednesday, April 27, 2022 8:28 AM
To: info
Subject: Fwd: Antigonish Town and County Consolidation

Warden Owen McCarron
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
902-968-1290

Begin forwarded message:

From: Anne Marie McKeough <
Date: April 26, 2022 at 12:07:36 PM ADT
To: "mmaclean@antigonishcounty.ns.ca ," <mmaclean@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Antigonish Town and County Consolidation

Re Antigonish Town and County Consolidation Process

Dear Antigonish Town and County Councillors:

Public service can sometimes feel like a thankless task. That's why I want to thank you for your important work and to acknowledge the time and energy you have undoubtedly devoted to it. Despite my respect for the willingness of all elected municipal officials to serve your communities, I must take issue with the procedures employed by those championing consolidation. Some of my more major concerns are briefly discussed herein.

First, hard data either pro or con consolidation, as it impacts Antigonish town and county, is woefully lacking. Have councillors been provided with a cost/benefits analysis? Have short- and long-term financial plans been articulated? Have the current and projected financial expenditures and income been laid out to all councillors? Without this in-depth information, it is impossible for an informed decision to be reached by councillors.

Second, the view put forward pertaining to the efficacy of consolidation appears to be one sided. Emphasis has been placed on constructs such as 'cooperation' and 'building a future together,' yet the potential challenges of consolidation for the town and county have not been explored in any depth. This leaves community members with the impression that consolidation

is a fait accompli, and results in distrust of the process and those who are the driving force behind it. This perception is further exacerbated by comments to the effect that community members vote with their emotions (as opposed to rational cognitive processes). Further, the preemptive position that plebiscites are “divisive” leads one to wonder what within this consolidation might cause people to strongly oppose their neighbours in hitherto cooperative communities.

Third, potentially disenfranchising 20% or more of the county citizenry is, to be blunt, a call to action that cannot go unanswered. In my view, this is clearly a step too far and does not serve our community well.

Like many others who have voiced opinions on social media and in person, I see the current ‘vote now and plan later’ strategy as highly problematic. The only solution for ameliorating the tense situation before us is to pause, ensure that hard data is provided to all taxpayers, step away from having the councillors vote, and respond favourably to the many calls for a plebiscite. This is the course of action that will allow trust in municipal politics to return.

Anne McKeough
Havre Boucher

Shirlyn Donovan

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: Wednesday, April 27, 2022 8:29 AM
To: info
Subject: Fwd: Consolidation

Warden Owen McCarron
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
902-968-1290

Begin forwarded message:

From: john mullaney < >
Date: April 22, 2022 at 10:13:10 AM ADT
To: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Consolidation

Mr McCarron (Warden of Antigonish County: I am very concerned that democracy with regards to Consolidation is being bypassed. If you care for the the people, let all the people affected have a vote to Consolidate or not to Consolidate. Give the people all the info, there is no rush, is there? Please let us vote.

John Mullaney
Old Post Road
Frankville N.S.
Thank you for your time on this matter.

Sent from my iPad

Shirlyn Donovan

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: Wednesday, April 27, 2022 8:29 AM
To: info
Subject: Fwd: Consolidation

Warden Owen McCarron
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
902-968-1290

Begin forwarded message:

From: Tammy Breen <tbreen@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Date: April 20, 2022 at 7:41:48 PM ADT
To: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Consolidation

Hello Mr. McCarrin,

I am writing to you asking for your support in giving our area , district nine a voice in the decision concerning consolidation. It has come to our attention that our councillor may be unable to represent us and vote on this issue. As such I would request that a plebiscite occur so that district nine can have their voices heard. I am sure you would agree , a decision without the voice of any district would be a undemocratic.

I also would like time for a more proper analysis of consolidation that includes cost benefit analysis. There are very few numbers in the information given and as such makes it very difficult to make an informed decision. Further, we are being asked to take alot on faith that the future joint transition council will figure out details. What would be the numbers of representation from town and from county on this transition council?

I think taking our time to collect some more information would ensure that both town and county could get behind this plan.

Please vote no to this process so we can have a voice.
Thank you for your time.
Tammy Breen

Sent from my iPhone

Sent from my iPhone

Shirlyn Donovan

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: Wednesday, April 27, 2022 8:29 AM
To: info
Subject: Fwd: Consolidation

Warden Owen McCarron
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
902-968-1290

Begin forwarded message:

From: sylvia breen <>
Date: April 18, 2022 at 8:33:42 PM ADT
To: John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Fw: Consolidation

What's in this for but higher taxes. Each district should have a vote not up to the councilors. We are from district 9 and should have a say

Gerald and Sylvia Breen

Shirlyn Donovan

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: Wednesday, April 27, 2022 8:30 AM
To: info
Subject: Fwd: [EXTERNAL] Consolidation

Warden Owen McCarron
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
902-968-1290

Begin forwarded message:

From: Bill Fraser <...>
Date: April 11, 2022 at 2:51:29 PM ADT
To: mayor@townofantigonish.ca, Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Re: [EXTERNAL] Consolidation

Sure

From: Town of Antigonish Mayor <mayor@townofantigonish.ca>
Sent: Sunday, April 10, 2022 11:26 PM
To: Bill Fraser <...>; omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca
<omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Re: [EXTERNAL] Consolidation

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Thank you Bill, for taking time to come and for your encouragement. We are collecting all the comments to give to council in the final report. Would you mind if we included your email?

Best,
Laurie.

Mayor Laurie Boucher
Town of Antigonish
274 Main St, Antigonish, N.S
B2G 2C4
mayor@townofantigonish.ca | 902•870•7795

From: Bill Fraser <...>
Sent: Sunday, April 10, 2022 4:31:32 PM
To: omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Town of Antigonish

Mayor <mayor@townofantigonish.ca>

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Consolidation

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Owen and Laurie:

Let me first apologize for having to leave Thursday evening's session early.

But I want to commend you both and your respective councils for initiating this consolidation process. For my part, I can only envision benefits for residents and businesses in both Town and County.

And what better time than when both governments enjoy healthy balance sheets and a working relationship the likes of which we have never seen before.

I also see it as a preemptive move before higher levels of government decide to dictate how local governments will be structured and administered.

I am fully supportive of this process and the anticipated outcome.

I might add that while there is reference to "economic development" in the Guiding Principle #1, it would be my hope that a consolidated local government would see regional growth as a primary objective.

Again, my congratulations to you both.

Bill

you have my full support

So

Shirlyn Donovan

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: Wednesday, April 27, 2022 8:32 AM
To: info
Subject: Fwd: Proposed consolidation of Antigonish Town and County

Warden Owen McCarron
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
902-968-1290

Begin forwarded message:

From: Terry Penny < >
Date: April 25, 2022 at 12:52:39 PM ADT
To: Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Proposed consolidation of Antigonish Town and County

Councillors and Warden of Antigonish County

I view the presentation of the proposed consolidation of Antigonish Town and County as an insult to the people of Antigonish County. The community sessions presented only one perspective with many unanswered questions. In your attempt to deny community discussion, you are fuelling a frenzy of fear and intimidation resulting in the very community divisiveness you stated you wanted to avoid if open discussions were allowed.

As elected representatives of the people of Antigonish County, none of you were elected on a platform of consolidation/amalgamation. Without a mandate from the community, an issue of this magnitude demands the voice of the people. This voice can only be achieved through a plebiscite.

To deny a vote "because social media presents people with misinformation" is further insult to your community.

Please allow this issue to be voted on by the people it affects.

Sincerely

Terry Penny,
Lakevale, NS

Beth Schumacher

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: April 27, 2022 8:32 AM
To: info
Subject: Fwd: consolidation

Warden Owen McCarron
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
902-968-1290

Begin forwarded message:

From: Leslie Fancey <
Date: April 22, 2022 at 4:38:05 PM ADT
To: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: consolidation

Hello Mr. McCarron,

I wish to express my opposition to the proposed consolidation of Antigonish town and county. While I believe it is important for the two to work together as they have in the past, I believe the residents of our county are better served with our own municipal council.

I also believe that a plebiscite should be held so that everyone can participate meaningfully.

Thank you for your attention.

Sincerely,
Leslie Fancey
resident of District 8

Shirlyn Donovan

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: Wednesday, April 27, 2022 8:32 AM
To: info
Subject: Fwd: Consolidation Vote

Warden Owen McCarron
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
902-968-1290

Begin forwarded message:

From: Margaret MacIntosh < >
Date: April 19, 2022 at 12:02:05 PM ADT
To: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Consolidation Vote

Hi Owen,

I was shocked and disappointed to learn that Harris will not be able to represent our community in the upcoming consolidation vote. As you are well aware Harris is beloved by our community, he won by a significant margin and we trust him to represent our interests.

I am just seeking confirmation that Mr. Brophy of district 4 is also unable to participate due to his conflict of interest being employed by the town.

If that's the case and 2 out of the 10 districts can not be represented I really have strong concerns with the way this is going forward. It doesn't seem right that 20% of the county loses their voice entirely on this matter. How can we ethically fo about this with 2 counselors missing from the vote?

My larger concerns regarding lack of information and transparency with this entire process I will wait to address at our community meeting next week. I'm looking forward to seeing you there.

Thank you for your time.

Margaret MacIntosh

Shirlyn Donovan

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: Wednesday, April 27, 2022 8:33 AM
To: info
Subject: Fwd: Amalgamation

Warden Owen McCarron
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
902-968-1290

Begin forwarded message:

From: denise anderson <
Date: April 25, 2022 at 8:27:52 AM ADT
To: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Amalgamation

Very sorry but I don't agree with this. We definitely NEED a vote before we can make a decision. Denise Anderson
Sent from

Beth Schumacher

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: April 27, 2022 8:33 AM
To: info
Subject: Fwd: Consolidation of Antigonish Town and County

Warden Owen McCarron
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
902-968-1290

Begin forwarded message:

From: Merton Taylor
Date: April 25, 2022 at 7:44:32 AM ADT
To: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca, Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca, Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Consolidation of Antigonish Town and County

I am a community member of District 8. I feel each community member from each district should be allowed to vote instead of just having the council voting.

- What are the pros and cons identified by the reviews of other mergers?
- What is going to happen when our taxes increase? Community members that are on a fixed income or low income will not be able to afford an increase, therefore they will not be able to pay their taxes and then the community member becomes homeless.
- What extra fees are we going to incur, for example water and sewage? Most county people are not on a water and sewage system.
- What happens to fire services if a merger takes place in terms of costs and coverage? Will our fire stations lose funding given that despite the current funding through our property tax assessments?
- What happens with our protective services? The town spends more than the county on these services despite the county is larger than the town.

As a community member of District 8 Antigonish County, we should have a right to more input on the consolidation process, we should have a right to vote.

Merton Taylor

Get [Outlook for Android](#)

Get [Outlook for Android](#)

Beth Schumacher

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: April 27, 2022 8:33 AM
To: info
Subject: Fwd: Consolidation of Antigonish Town and County

Warden Owen McCarron
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
902-968-1290

Begin forwarded message:

From: natasha breen <
Date: April 25, 2022 at 6:55:40 AM ADT
To: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, harris.mcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca
Subject: Re: Consolidation of Antigonish Town and County

I am a community member of District 9. I feel each community member from each district should be allowed to vote. As a community member of Antigonish County, I feel we are being left out and I am probably not the only one.

- What are the pros and cons identified by the reviews of other mergers?

- What is going to happen when our taxes increase? Community members that are on a fixed income or low income will not be able to afford an increase, therefore they will not be able to pay their Antigonish property tax and it will go for a tax sale all because of increase in taxes and then the community member becomes homeless. Who will be held responsible for when people lose their homes because their taxes increased?

- What extra fees are we going to incur, for example water and sewage? Most county people are not on a water and sewage system.

- What happens to fire services if a merger takes place in terms of costs and coverage? Will our fire stations lose funding given that despite the current funding through our property tax assessments?

- What happens with our protective services? The town spends more than the county on these services despite the county is larger than the town.

As a community member of District 9 Antigonish County, we should have a right to more input on the consolidation process, we should have a right to vote.

Natasha Breen

Get [Outlook for Android](#)

Beth Schumacher

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: April 27, 2022 8:34 AM
To: info
Subject: Fwd: Plebiscite

Warden Owen McCarron
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
902-968-1290

Begin forwarded message:

From: Chad Anderson
Date: April 24, 2022 at 9:38:46 PM ADT
To: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Plebiscite

Good evening , My name is Chad Anderson and I am from District 9 , Havre Boucher. I am a very concerned of the Consolidation of the town with the county of Antigonish. I'm concerned about the bad effects that it will have on Me , My family, My friends and My community . Wondering why we are not getting any information on this topic, good or bad and why we can't get a vote ?????? It's my community, my home, my family's home and land . I want a say in what happens I want to vote !!!!!!! Can you please give me any information on this consolidation, Can you tell me why I would want this?? What's in it for me and my family????

Other tax payers I have talked to in the county also have many concerns about this consolidation. With the recent price increases of everything, I can't afford for my taxes to go up and county services to diminish , to pay for Antigonish town improvements and debt.
Thank you for your time and hope to hear from you soon, Chad

Sent from my iPhone

Beth Schumacher

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: April 27, 2022 8:34 AM
To: info
Subject: Fwd: Amalgamation/Consolidation

Warden Owen McCarron
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
902-968-1290

Begin forwarded message:

From: Carol MacEachern <..... m>
Date: April 23, 2022 at 10:35:29 PM ADT
To: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Amalgamation/Consolidation

Good evening Owen,

I am writing to let you know I am upset. I would like to know who made the decision there would be no plebiscite? I cannot for the life of me understand how a few people feel they can make a decision without informing the people they represent! It is mind blowing! 18,000 + people uninformed that a huge decision like this is being made without their input! Covid had been blamed for a lot of things but something this big should have been put on hold until the taxpayers who voted you all in are updated.

I would like a few questions answered please?

1. You stated: consolidation may also be more efficient use of existing resources (water and sewer). I live in District 9. We have our own septic and drilled well. How does your statement pertain to me?

2. You are asking: what does everybody think?

I think this is outrageous! I have not heard a thing pertaining to district 9. Everything is focused on the town. What will amalgamation do for us?

3. You say it's not necessarily about today but you want to look back in 20 or 30 years and say "hopefully that this is a good decision ". Sounds to me like there is doubt here!

4. What affect will this have on volunteer fire departments?

5. There are rumours going around concerning two councillors who may not have a vote. If this is the case who will be representing the people in their district?

I got the email concerning the cancellation of the meetings in our district. I look forward to hearing from you on these questions and seeing you on the 11 in Havre Boucher.

Sincerely,
Carol



Shirlyn Donovan

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: Wednesday, April 27, 2022 8:34 AM
To: info
Subject: Fwd: We the tax payers NEED a plebiscite

Warden Owen McCarron
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
902-968-1290

Begin forwarded message:

From: Carmen Breen < >
Date: April 24, 2022 at 9:36:06 PM ADT
To: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: We the tax payers NEED a plebiscite

Sent from my iPad

Beth Schumacher

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: April 27, 2022 8:35 AM
To: info
Subject: Fwd: Consolodation

Warden Owen McCarron
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
902-968-1290

Begin forwarded message:

From: Tony VanDenHeuvel < >
Date: April 23, 2022 at 10:29:50 AM ADT
To: Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, mayor@townofantigonish.ca, wgormier@townofantigonish.ca, dmacinnis@townofantigonish.ca, Sean Cameron <scameron@townofantigonish.ca>, amurray@townofantigonish.ca, Mary Farrell <mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca>, droberts@townofantigonish.ca
Subject: Consolodation

Good Morning

Recently I have been hearing more and more about the consolidation being planned by the town and county.

In talking to residents of both the town and county I have gotten the same feelings that;

- A. The wool is being pulled over our eyes
- B. Someone is trying to pull a fast one on us
- C. Who asked for this
- D. If this was such a important thing why wasn't it campaigned on during the last municipal elections
- E. Why do we not get a vote as we did in previous years for a decision of this magnitude

Now, admittedly I have been ignorant to a lot of what has been going on and didn't start paying attention until a few days ago so I don't have enough information to make an informed decision on if this is going to be a good thing or not.

I do know that a decision of this magnitude should not be left up to the group of councilors who have not campaigned on this topic.

Correct me if I am wrong

I have heard that not all councilors are going to be able to participate in the vote due to conflict of interest.

If that is true, who is going to vote for their constituents?

Have their constituents been informed of this?

How can a decision of this magnitude go forward if not all constituents are going to be represented?

Furthermore, what does this mean going forward?

Will the Town and county be dissolved and formed into one municipality?

What is going to happen to the towns electric utility?

Will municipal services like the garbage collection be privatized or put out to tender?

Will we town residents be paying more for policing if the current funding model gets changed?

Will my tax rates go up?

Will our town roads and snow removal be improved?

Will the county be given more roads to take care of from the province?

Will there be cost savings in terms of duplications of jobs?

We currently have two CAOs, will there only be one now?

If this is truly about working together to have shared services why can't we continue with the arrangement we have in place now?

I am going to try and get to some of the information sessions in the coming weeks, maybe that will give me more answers to my questions.

Again, I still can't figure out where this came from, why it wasn't campaigned on during the latest municipal elections and why there is not a plebiscite on the issue.

Thank you

A concerned resident

Tony VanDenHeuvel

Beth Schumacher

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: April 27, 2022 8:37 AM
To: info
Subject: Fwd: Proposed Consolidation/ Amalgamation of Antigonish Town & County

Warden Owen McCarron
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
902-968-1290

Begin forwarded message:

From: Linda Wood
Date: April 20, 2022 at 3:08:27 PM ADT
To: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Re: Proposed Consolidation/ Amalgamation of Antigonish Town & County

Dear Warden & Councillors,

With regards to the proposed consolidation/ amalgamation, as taxpayers of District 9, we feel all our appointed counsellors for the town and county should be SLOWING DOWN this process, until residents can be more informed.

One on one discussions in the community does not allow for correct information to be shared, info gets distorted, he said...she said!

We need public Question & Answer meetings...in each district , with those in attendance who can answer our questions.

We also feel it's only right that we all have a voice in the resulting process, so please urge and allow for a plebiscite.

Thank you for considering our request
Linda & Larry Wood
Auld's Cove District 9

*Copied and emailed to the warden and each councillor

Beth Schumacher

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: April 27, 2022 8:37 AM
To: info
Subject: Fwd: Municipal letter
Attachments: Municipal letter.docx

Warden Owen McCarron
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
902-968-1290

Begin forwarded message:

From: sandra webb <[redacted]>
Date: April 20, 2022 at 1:05:41 PM ADT
To: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Fwd: Municipal letter

Sent from my iPad

Subject: Municipal letter

Hi

I am writing in regard to the Proposed Consolidation of the Town and County of Antigonish. I feel that we do not have enough information as to what if any advantages the county will benefit from, and I don't think we should have to rely on the county councilors to vote for us.

We trust our councilor to represent us, but we have nine others that we have to put our trust in, and we should not have to worry about any politics which always seem to come up. We see what the hospital consolidation results are and once there is a merger, there is no going back.

We need time to absorb these facts and figures, and I as well as many others feel that we should have more time to review the pros and cons. I am sending this email to all the ten councilors, and I am also wondering what will become of our representation on council if there were a merger, would we have the ten that we have now, I think not!

The county is in good shape in my opinion so why would we want to change that! We all know that the county does not have the perks the town has in regard to sewer, water, skate parks, walking trails etc. I doubt if we ever would.

Best Regards,

Sandra Webb
District 9 Resident

Beth Schumacher

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: April 27, 2022 8:37 AM
To: info
Subject: Fwd: Consolidation Community Engagement

Warden Owen McCarron
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
902-968-1290

Begin forwarded message:

From: Camilla Benoit
Date: April 20, 2022 at 11:23:53 AM ADT
To: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Consolidation Community Engagement

Good morning

The purpose of this email is to address concerns of the proposed Municipal amalgamation/consolidation.

After reading through the County Connect identifying "Exploring Municipal Amalgamation/ Consolidation -guide to community engagement", it certainly was a well constructed format which has provided me with food for thought and more questions that are not being answered. It appears that the consultants hired are driving a hard sales pitch to move forward with this consolidation/ amalgamation, yet have no answers to questions put forth. What is provided are positive outcomes from other districts yet no information on the district(s) that are regretting such a process ie residents of Dartmouth, Porters Lake etc in HRM.

Given the short time line placed for a decision, for the county and town councillors to vote on this proposal, it seems that it would have been most beneficial / opportunities to have hosted town hall meetings with residents and allow the process to go to a public vote.

In addition the residents have little to no opportunity to direct questions except for one on one to the consultants.

The presentations does not provide definitive response to questions such as:

- Where is the financial or cost projections for entering into a consolidation and sustainability over the next five years
- What kind of an impact will this pose on both, county commercial and residential tax rates (show us estimate or projections of calculated new rates)?
- How will fire responses and services look like? Will some VFD be eliminated and or consolidated?
- What will our police services look like ? Will it still be RCMP or a Regional Police force?
- How will this change the electricity (town only at present) , water /sewer rates (show us projected numbers of rates impacted by the changes) ?
- What will the impact be for the representation ratio of councillors to residents, and new boundaries?
- What will the impact be on small business owners through out the county?
- What will the impact on small farming businesses and or hobby farms ?

These are only a few questions from a long list, that as a resident and tax payer deserve responses to.

Secondly it was brought to my attention that a 'conflict of interest' was vetted towards District 4 & 9 councillors which potentially if founded could prevent residents from those areas being properly represented.

Regrettably I am informing you and fellow county councillors who are elected representatives of the residents of the county of Antigonish, that I strongly disagree with the amalgamation/ consolidation process at this time. This should have gone to town hall meetings and then brought forward in a democratic process.

Respectively
Camilla Benoit

Camilla

Sent from my iPad/Camilla

Camilla Benoit

Camilla

Sent from my iPad/Camilla

Camilla Benoit

Shirlyn Donovan

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: Wednesday, April 27, 2022 8:42 AM
To: info
Subject: Fwd: Merger

Warden Owen McCarron
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
902-968-1290

Begin forwarded message:

From: Kaitlin Knox < >
Date: April 23, 2022 at 1:43:59 PM ADT
To: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, mayor@townofantigonish.ca
Subject: Merger

Hi Owen and Laurie,

As a resident of the county and agriculture business owner, I have a couple questions about the proposed town and county merger.

First of all, what is in it for the county? Why aren't residents being told the details on how this merger will affect our government spending? Why aren't residents getting a vote?

Second, will this merger cause an increase in the commercial and residential tax rates for those of us living in the county? Currently the county has a cap on these tax rates that is lower than the cap in town.

Third, how can you assure those of us with livestock in the county that our right to farm will not be changed with the ever-increasing urban sprawl happening in the province? We are seeing more and more bylaws being implemented in municipalities around the province that are prohibiting individuals from even owning laying hens and dictating how many livestock they can have per acre. If the town and county merge, what is stopping the town from dictating similar requirements to the farmers? What is stopping the town from telling the farmers when they can and cannot spread manure (convocation weekend for example)? What is stopping the town from refusing to issue building permits for livestock barns, feedlots, etc. if they deem those structures too close to housing developments? The NS Right to Farm legislation is only good until enough people vote to remove it, or municipal zoning bylaws override it.

Thank you for your time.

Best Regards,

Kaitlin Knox, MSc.

Winterwind Kigers

Carrondale Cattle Company Inc.

Nova Scotia, Canada



| www.WinterwindKigers.com



Carrondale Cattle Company Inc.

Shirlyn Donovan

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: Wednesday, April 27, 2022 8:42 AM
To: info
Subject: Fwd: Amalgamation

Warden Owen McCarron
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
902-968-1290

Begin forwarded message:

From: Margie Benoit < >
Date: April 26, 2022 at 6:25:00 PM ADT
To: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Amalgamation

Owen. , in our opinion, we think the citizens of both the town and county should vote as to whether we amalgamate. There are too many unanswered questions.
Sent from my iPad

Beth Schumacher

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: April 27, 2022 8:43 AM
To: info
Subject: Fwd: Consolidation

Warden Owen McCarron
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
902-968-1290

Begin forwarded message:

From: sylvia breen <
Date: April 25, 2022 at 1:48:54 PM ADT
To: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, John Dunbar
<jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Donnie
MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>,
Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Consolidation

What does this mean for us ,nothing but higher taxes. As tax payers we should have a
vote not left to the mayor and councilors to decide for us. We are residents of district
9 Gerald and Sylvia Breen

Beth Schumacher

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: April 27, 2022 9:44 AM
To: Alisha Bowie
Subject: Accepted: Consolidation - Lochaber

Beth Schumacher

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: April 27, 2022 9:44 AM
To: Alisha Bowie
Subject: Accepted: Consolidation - Havre Boucher

Beth Schumacher

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: April 27, 2022 9:43 AM
To: Alisha Bowie
Subject: Accepted: Consolidation - CACL/Legion

Beth Schumacher

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: April 27, 2022 9:43 AM
To: Alisha Bowie
Subject: Accepted: Consolidation - CACL/Legion

Beth Schumacher

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: April 27, 2022 9:44 AM
To: Alisha Bowie
Subject: Accepted: Consolidation - St. Andrews Community

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: April 27, 2022 10:04 AM
To: Alisha Bowie
Subject: Accepted: Consolidation - CACL/Legion

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: April 27, 2022 10:04 AM
To: Alisha Bowie
Subject: Accepted: Consolidation - CACL/Legion

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: April 27, 2022 10:04 AM
To: Alisha Bowie
Subject: Accepted: Consolidation - St. Andrews Community

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: April 27, 2022 10:04 AM
To: Alisha Bowie
Subject: Accepted: Consolidation - Havre Boucher

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: April 27, 2022 10:04 AM
To: Alisha Bowie
Subject: Accepted: Consolidation - Lochaber

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: April 27, 2022 10:09 AM
To: Jack Bouckeno
Subject: RE: public vote request

Jack;

Thank you for your support, I certainly agree , we need a plebiscite as this is too fundamental decision about our children and grandchildren future to have it made by 6 councillors.

Harris

From: Jack Bouckeno
Sent: April 24, 2022 11:28 PM
To: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: public vote request

Good afternoon,

I would like for you and your fellow council members of the Municipality of the County of Antigonish to place the decision of consolidation between the Antigonish Town Municipality and Antigonish County Municipality before the members of the community to vote. I believe this is a significant change to the community. I do not believe that this decision should be made by this or any council, and to do so without the support of the community would be shortsighted, at best. In my opinion, such a vote, without community support, would be a travesty of the democratic decision making process.

Margie Layes

Sent from my T-Mobile 4G LTE Device

Sent from my T-Mobile 4G LTE Device

Beth Schumacher

From: Glenn Horne
Sent: April 27, 2022 10:15 AM
To: mayor@townofantigonish.ca
Cc: Owen McCarron, Jeff Lawrence
Subject: Questions re: Consolidation
Attachments: 2022 - Mar 31 - Municipal Council Questions Related to Consolidation.pdf

Good morning, Laurie –

In speaking with Owen I understand that you'll be speaking with Anne-Marie Long later today. I have attached responses to all the questions Councillor McNamara has asked, which we reviewed in detail with all of council in a closed-door session in early April. As you'll see, most of the questions had already been addressed but we did it all again as he requested. He has not asked any questions of council since then. The attached document is market confidential and I'd ask that it not be shared. However, if the material in it is useful please feel free to use it.

Cheers,
Glenn



Glenn Horne | Chief Administrative Officer
Municipality of the County of Antigonish | 902.863.1117
285 Beech Hill Road, Beech Hill, NS | B2G 0B4
www.antigonishcounty.ns.ca | [@AntigonishCo](https://www.facebook.com/AntigonishCo) | [facebook](https://www.facebook.com/AntigonishCo)

Honour Yesterday, Act Today, Inspire Tomorrow

Closed-Door Discussion re: Consolidation

(This document is confidential and not for public circulation)

Background

In September 2021, the Councils of the County and Town of Antigonish unanimously agreed to explore the opportunity of consolidating the two municipal units into one.

Since that time the following activities have taken place:

- Five Joint Council sessions have been held:
 - September 27 with the Department of Municipal Affairs.
 - October 25 with the Region of Queens
 - November 1 with the Region of West Hants
 - January 20 with Brighter Communities Planning & Consulting to introduce the consulting team obtain feedback on community engagement activities.
 - February 23 with Brighter Communities to create and endorse the Guiding Principles and endorse the Community Engagement Plan.
- Established a Consolidation Steering Committee, which has been meeting weekly since the fall (with some cancellations).
- Secured \$150,000 in funding from the Department of Municipal Affairs to support the work of exploring consolidation.
- Consultants have been retained to manage community engagement. With their assistance we have:
 - Launched www.antigonish.ca and the associated HowSpace.
 - Developed 18 frequently asked questions based on questions provided by councillors and the public.
 - Developed and additional 8 fact sheets based on input from councillors, staff and the public.
 - Prepared an extensive community engagement process which begins in early April.
- Held numerous staff sessions, both formal and informal, to facilitate staff input, share information and address questions.
- Held numerous council discussions / debriefs related to consolidation.
- Circulated community engagement letter / schedule to every resident in the municipalities.
- Continued dialogue with the Department of Municipal Affairs, MLAs and MPs related to consolidation.
- Worked with the Department of Municipal Affairs to develop finance condition indicators for both the County and Town as well as a model for a consolidated municipality.
- Finance staff completing a review of financial information and a model tax rate to share with Councils soon.

This is an ongoing process. Our critical path is attached again for your reference. We are at the approximate middle of this process, preparing for community engagement in early April. A decision on consolidation is scheduled for late-June, after the community engagement and the submission of an engagement report.

Purpose of Community Engagement

The purpose of our community engagement is to provide information to help Councils answer this question:

“For Councils to decide if residents, businesses and the overall community would be better served if the Town and County became one municipal unit”.

Significant time and effort has been taken to identify important questions and responses in advance of community engagement sessions. The purpose of these sessions is to continue to share information and listen to the questions and thoughts brought forward by residents. This will allow councillors to hear what is important to residents and weigh that information in making a decision.

Responses to Submitted Questions:

1. What is the status of the County and Town’s RCMP contracts if the municipalities consolidate?

- Once consolidated, the Regional Municipality of West Hants was presented with a change in its RCMP contract.
- Specifically, the division of costs between the municipality and federal government went from 70/30 to 90/10. This resulted in an approximately \$1M annual increase in the cost of policing services.
- This issue was among the first shared with us when discussing consolidation with DMA.
- Since September, we have been in discussions with DMA which, on behalf of the County and Town, has been working with the NS Department of Justice and Public Safety Canada (PSC) to see the cost of policing services remain the same if consolidation takes place.
- Specific details of these discussions remain confidential.
- We have made all parties aware of our timelines and are awaiting a response from PSC. This is key information required for Councils to make a decision.
- Unrelated to consolidation, RCMP costs will increase beginning in 2022/23 and each year thereafter due to the recent signing of the first collective agreement between the federal government and RCMP members. These costs are increasing regardless of consolidation.

2. How will electoral districts (number and boundaries) be determined.

- This question has been addressed and is available in the FAQ section of www.antigonish.ca. There is also a fact sheet with the best information we can provide at this time.
- With respect to making a “suggestion” to the NSUARB on the number of electoral districts and their boundaries, I do not share the opinion that the UARB would “likely support” the suggestion.
- The process to establish and review electoral districts is set out in legislation and guidance provided by the NSUARB and available here:

<https://nsuarb.novascotia.ca/mandates/municipal-boundaries/municipal-boundaries-user-guide>. Done appropriately, it should be carried out as an independent process and with its own public engagement.

- A requirement and a timeline to establish electoral districts and boundaries is included in the special legislation.
- Anyone who meets the definition of an elector in the Municipal Elections Act is legally eligible to vote in a municipal election.

3. How can the financial health of the Town and County be assessed?

- Please find attached the Audited Financial Statements of both the County and the Town for the most recent fiscal year ending March 31, 2021.
- Additionally, the Department of Municipal Affairs has provided Financial Condition Indicators for both units and has created indicators for a consolidated municipal unit based on the same fiscal year ending March 31, 2021. In reviewing indicators, it is important to remember that Towns are compared to other Towns and Rurals other Rurals.
- As you can see from these documents, both municipal units are in strong financial shape.

4. What is the state of municipal infrastructure and the potential increased costs due to consolidation?

- Shared sewer infrastructure is subject to an inter-municipal agreement between the County and Town that details the division of costs for operations and capital.
- Both the Town and County Water Utilities are regulated by the NSUARB through the Public Utilities Act. As such, operating and capital costs are allocated to its rate payers (users).
- Both the Town and County pay for municipal roads 100% from the general rate. This includes the municipality's contribution to J-Class Road maintenance and the maintenance of any new public road built in the County.
- Both the Town and County manage the maintenance, renewal and replacement of their infrastructure on an ongoing basis.
- The most significant effect of consolidation is that a consolidated municipal unit would own all municipal infrastructure and make decisions in the best interest of all users, regardless of their place of residence, rather than one unit as the owner and the other as the client, making decisions in isolation.

5. What are liabilities associated with the Town Electric Utility if we consolidate?

- A Fact Sheet has been provided on this topic.
- Like the water utilities, the Electric Utility is regulated by the NSUARB through the Public Utilities Act. Any current or future costs associated with the Electric Utility are the responsibility of its rate payers.

6. Will there be a significant change to residential tax rates because of consolidation?

- A FAQ and Fact Sheet has been provided on this topic.

- In addition to these responses, County and Town staff are developing model base and area rates for Council's review.
- The specific inputs that go into establishing a specific tax rate will be the choice of the new municipal council.

7. Will a consolidated municipality have two different commercial tax rates?

- There is nothing inherent in the consolidation process that would trigger a significant change in commercial tax rates.
- If the Council's choose to consolidate, the new municipality will have the choice to establish two commercial tax rates in a similar manner to establishing residential rates, or establish on uniform rate.
- This will be a choice of the new municipal council.

8. Will consolidation make changes to how Volunteer Fire Departments in Antigonish are funded, managed or operated?

- No. Councils have stated clearly that VFDs are among the backbones of our communities and operate very well as they are.

9. Will County residents incur a significant cost for water shortages being experienced by the Town due to consolidation?

- Please see question #4.
- All users of the water utility, in the Town and the County, contribute to capital costs through the water rates they pay.
- The scenario described whereby we create a contractual arrangement for the supply or use of water describes our current arrangement. This scenario has resulted in increased expenses on studies and consultants, options not being fully explored because planning is done in isolation, and frequent conflict resulting in time wasted and viability of projects being questioned.
- A consolidated municipality makes all decisions based on what is in the best interest of all the rate payers, not the County rate payers and the Town rate payers in isolation of one another.

10. What is the state of the Town Sewer Treatment Plant (STP) and will the County incur additional costs due to consolidation?

- Town staff continue to assess and monitor the status of the STP. Updates are provided to the County annually.
- Municipal Council has received multiple updates on shared sewer operations over the past 8-10 years. However, Council has not received an update recently in light of other more urgent matters.
- Shared sewer infrastructure is subject to an inter-municipal agreement between the County and Town that details the division of costs for operations and capital. Those costs are then shared among all sewer users through the sewer rate.
- If consolidated the County would no longer be a user of sewer services, but an owner of the facility and make decisions based on what is in the best

interest of all the rate payers, not the County rate payers and the Town rate payers in isolation of one another.

11. Will consolidation provide Antigonish with better access to provincial and federal grants?

- While we have worked hard for recent success with provincial and federal grants, this has not always been the case.
- All of the municipal, provincial and federal officials we have spoken with have shared that consolidation / amalgamation has made a difference when it came to provincial and federal investments in the local community.
- The other advantage created by consolidation is greater capacity to identify funding opportunities, network and develop relationships, advocate and follow through with successful projects.

12. What will happen to Special District Grants and Community Partnership Grants if we consolidate?

- A Fact Sheet has been drafted related to this question.
- This will be a choice of the new municipal council.
- While respecting this is a choice of a new municipal council:
 - i. both the County and Town provide annual grants to community organizations that amount to approximately 3% of tax revenue, and;
 - ii. Municipal Council has made it clear that Special District Grants are important to our communities and communicated such to Town officials.
- Based on this, it is reasonable to expect these programs will continue in some fashion.

13. Will consolidation effect the J-Class Road capital cost-sharing program?

- No. We have no reason to believe consolidation will affect J-Class Roads.

14. Will cultural identity be eroded by consolidation?

- A Fact Sheet has been drafted related to this question.
- There is no evidence to suggest municipal governance structure has any influence on cultural identity.

15. Can the County have more representation than the Town on a Transition Committee?

- No. The transition committee represents a consolidated municipality. At that stage it no longer reflects the former municipalities, but the whole new municipality.
- Windsor / West Hants has shown the value of municipal partners entering into a merger process as equals.

Beth Schumacher

From: Shirlyn Donovan
Sent: April 27, 2022 10:16 AM
To: Glenn Horne
Cc: Owen McCarron
Subject: RE: 1-800 numbers

I have received 1 call from the voicemail that comes into my email inbox, the person did not leave a call back number just a message that we should not move forward with consolidation. Kate's number was listed first, she has received 19 calls, she has gotten back to all but John Patrick Petitpas and one other.

I have gotten about 6 calls to my office line, likely calling through reception and being forwarded to me.

Thanks,
Shirlyn

Shirlyn Donovan
Strategic Initiatives Coordinator
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
285 Beech Hill Road
Antigonish, NS B2G 0B4
902-863-1117

 www.antigonishcounty.ns.ca
 www.twitter.com/antigonishco

Honour Yesterday, Act Today, Inspire Tomorrow

From: Glenn Horne <glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Sent: Wednesday, April 27, 2022 7:52 AM
To: Shirlyn Donovan <shirlyn.donovan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Cc: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: 1-800 numbers

Good morning, Shirlyn –

Can you share with Owen and I how many calls the 1-800 numbers has received and the process for call-backs?

Thanks!
Glenn



Glenn Horne | Chief Administrative Officer
Municipality of the County of Antigonish | 902.863.1117
285 Beech Hill Road, Beech Hill, NS | B2G 0B4
www.antigonishcounty.ns.ca | [@AntigonishCo](https://www.instagram.com/AntigonishCo) | [facebook](https://www.facebook.com/AntigonishCo)

Honour Yesterday, Act Today, Inspire Tomorrow

Antigonish County

Harris McNamara

From: Jeannette Benoit <
Sent: April 27, 2022 1:49 PM
To: Owen McCarron; Mary MacLellan; Donnie MacDonald; Hughie Stewart; Shawn Brophy; Remi Deveau; John Dunbar; Gary Mattie; Harris McNamara; Bill MacFarlane; mayor@townofantigonish.ca; wcmier@townofantigonish.ca; dmacinnis@townofantigonish.ca; scameron@townofantigonish.ca; amurray@townofantigonish.ca; mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca; droberts@townofantigonish.ca
Subject: Consolidation

To you the warden, mayor and councillors of Antigonish town and county.

I am sending you this in regards to your consolidation idea.

I am totally against it!!!!

We need to vote on this. Not be told what the few of you want to do.

First of all, you are doing this in the middle of a pandemic which is the worst time possible (maybe not for you guys) but for the seniors that are too afraid to be in public during this time. And can't go to your sessions There are still way too many cases of Covid in the area. You are well aware of this since several of you are isolating. Please show us, the people of the town and county, some respect by letting us vote on this very sensitive issue.

Jeannette Benoit

Clyde Bowman

District 8.

Sent from my iPhone

Beth Schumacher

From: karen megronigle
Sent: April 27, 2022 1:50 PM
To: Mary MacLellan; Donnie MacDonald; Hughie Stewart; Shawn Brophy; Owen McCarron; John Dunbar; Gary Mattie; Harris McNamara; Bill MacFarlane; mayor@townofantigonish.ca; wormier@townofantigonish.ca; dmacinnis@townofantigonish.ca; scameron@townofantigonish.ca; amurray@townofantigonish.ca; mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca; droberts@townofantigonish.ca; Remi Deveau
Subject: Councillor Letter
Attachments: Councillor Letter.pdf

Sent from my iPad

Megronigle, S&K
Highway 337
Cape George, NS B2G2L2

26 April 2022

Dear Town and Municipal Councillors,

I hope this email finds you well. I attended one of the fact finding meetings regarding the consolidation of town and county and after considering the information provided I must say how disappointed I am with the entire process and the way it has been presented. As a taxpayer in the County, I see no benefit to consolidation. We will lose representation as councillors will be combined and districts will be changed. As a permanent resident and not a citizen of Canada, I could not even vote for the councillor in my district yet they will be voting for me on this issue. As a taxpayer I find it insulting that we cannot cast our own ballot. The format for the meetings was totally ridiculous; we expected you, our representatives, to address the issue and answer our questions as a whole, not one on one. If that format was chosen by the research company you hired, it was a waste of our money. The handouts and the guide in the County Connect (which was received the day before the meetings started) were very slanted toward consolidation. Each councillor or representative I spoke to at the meeting used all of the same talking points like it was rehearsed. Comparing what happened at a plebiscite years ago has no bearing on today. Wording like " no sudden changes" to the current grant programs (As per County Connect) has me very concerned. I write grant applications for several nonprofit organizations and we all know if this consolidation goes forward, our grant money will be consolidated too, but the applicants will increase. One huge part of this research hasn't even been completed: the cost of policing a combined town/ county. How can you make an informed decision missing this critical piece of information which will impact the budget? The topic of sidewalks and roads is another part of this picture. How do you think county residents will feel when town streets or sidewalks are improved and the Marsh Road where our fire department is located is not even paved? I have also heard but not confirmed that two councillors will not be able to vote on this issue. If true, who represents their constituents??? Reading all the information that was made available brings up another question....if so many things will not be impacted by a consolidation, why do it? Who initiated this process? The Town? County? NS government?

I sincerely hope my friends and neighbours contact you as well. I have not spoken to one person in favour of this consolidation. Taxpayers deserve a vote on this issue.

With kind regards,

Karen Megronigle
Stephen Megronigle

Shirlyn Donovan

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: Wednesday, April 27, 2022 2:50 PM
To: info
Subject: Fwd: Councillor Letter
Attachments: Councillor Letter.pdf

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: karen megronigle < >
Date: April 27, 2022 at 1:50:05 PM ADT
To: Mary MacLellan <mmacellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, mayor@townofantigonish.ca, wgormier@townofantigonish.ca, dmacinnis@townofantigonish.ca, scameron@townofantigonish.ca, amurray@townofantigonish.ca, mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca, droberts@townofantigonish.ca, Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Councillor Letter

Sent from my iPad

Megronigle, S&K
Highway 337
Cape George, NS B2G2L2

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With kind regards,

Karen Megronigle
Stephen Megronigle

Shirlyn Donovan

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: Wednesday, April 27, 2022 2:51 PM
To: info
Subject: Fwd: Consolidation

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Jeannette Benoit < >
Date: April 27, 2022 at 1:48:56 PM ADT
To: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, mayor@townofantigonish.ca, wgormier@townofantigonish.ca, dmacinnis@townofantigonish.ca, scameron@townofantigonish.ca, amurray@townofantigonish.ca, mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca, droberts@townofantigonish.ca
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I am totally against it!!!!

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Jeannette Benoit

Clyde Bowman

District 8.

Sent from my iPhone

Hughie Stewart

From: Bunny and Brian Roberts < >
Sent: April 27, 2022 2:52 PM
To: Mary MacLellan; Donnie MacDonald; dfmacdonald@antigonish.ns.ca; Hughie Stewart; hdstewart@antigonish.ns.ca; Shawn Brophy; sbrophy@antigonish.ns.ca; Remi Deveau; rdeveau@antigonish.ns.ca; Owen McCarron; omccarron@antigonish.ns.ca; John Dunbar; jdunbar@antigonish.ns.ca; Gary Mattie; gmattie@antigonish.ns.ca; Harris McNamara; Bill MacFarlane; bmacfarlane@antigonish.ns.ca; mayor@townofantigonish.ca; mayor@townofantigoinish.ca; wcornier@townofantigonish.ca; dmacinnis@townofantigonish.ca; scameron@townofantigonish.ca; amurray@townofantigonish.ca; mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca; droberts@townofantigonish.ca
Subject: Antigonish Town and County Consolidation Process

As an Antigonish municipality taxpayer I would like to ask Warden Owen McCarron if he could outline for me the steps being taken to discuss and to determine the very significant issue of amalgamation of the Town of Antigonish and the municipality of Antigonish county.

The importance of open, public debate in such a crucial decision cannot be ignored. In-camera meetings, small group discussions, and exclusion of individuals based on "conflict of interest" assertions give rise to suspicions of bias and secrecy. This must be avoided at all costs.

A plebiscite surely would resolve the growing problems. Why not consult and listen to those you represent?

A concerned taxpayer.
Bernardine McKeough Roberts

Cape Jack Road
Linwood

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: April 27, 2022 3:07 PM
To: Bunny and Brian Roberts
Subject: RE: Antigonish Town and County Consolidation Process

Bunny & Brian;

Thank you so much for writing the Warden & Councillors, we need to keep the pressure on. They are not bending yet (County CAO & Warden) but they will, if nothing else I am persistent(lol).

I will keep you guys informed.

Harris

From: Bunny and Brian Roberts
Sent: April 27, 2022 2:52 PM
To: Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; dfmacdonald@antigonish.ns.ca; Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; hdstewart@antigonish.ns.ca; Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; sbrophy@antigonish.ns.ca; Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; rdeveau@antigonish.ns.ca; Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; omccarron@antigonish.ns.ca; John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; jdunbar@antigonish.ns.ca; Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; gmattie@antigonish.ns.ca; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; bmacfarlane@antigonish.ns.ca; mayor@townofantigonish.ca; mayor@townofantigoish.ca; wgormier@townofantigonish.ca; dmacinnis@townofantigonish.ca; scameron@townofantigonish.ca; amurray@townofantigonish.ca; mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca; droberts@townofantigonish.ca
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A plebiscite surely would resolve the growing problems. Why not consult and listen to those you represent?

A concerned taxpayer.

Bernardine McKeough Roberts

- r Cape Jack Road
Linwood

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: April 27, 2022 3:18 PM
To: karen megronigle
Subject: RE: Councillor Letter

Karen & Stephen;

Thank you, some excellent points!! I have been very vocal in my opposition to consolidation from the start. We are getting momentum, please encourage your friend to call your councillor or email like you did. I had a community meeting in Havre Boucher (April 18th) with 118 residents attending, ALL want a plebiscite. We did this because the consultants hired were just cheerleaders for amalgamation. Tracadie has one tonight. We have 600 members of a face book site wanting a plebiscite and don't forget to sign the petition.

Harris
902-318-8333

From: karen megronigle
Sent: April 27, 2022 1:50 PM
To: Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; mayor@townofantigonish.ca; wgormier@townofantigonish.ca; dmacinnis@townofantigonish.ca; scameron@townofantigonish.ca; amurray@townofantigonish.ca; mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca; droberts@townofantigonish.ca; Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Councillor Letter

Sent from my iPad

Beth Schumacher

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: April 27, 2022 4:03 PM
To: info
Subject: Fwd: Antigonish Town and County Consolidation Process

Warden Owen McCarron
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
902-968-1290

Begin forwarded message:

From: Bunny and Brian Roberts
Date: April 27, 2022 at 2:51:57 PM ADT
To: Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, dfmacdonald@antigonish.ns.ca, Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, hdstewart@antigonish.ns.ca, Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, sbrophy@antigonish.ns.ca, Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, rdeveau@antigonish.ns.ca, Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, omccarron@antigonish.ns.ca, John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, jdunbar@antigonish.ns.ca, Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, gmattie@antigonish.ns.ca, Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, bmacfarlane@antigonish.ns.ca, mayor@townofantigonish.ca, mayor@townofantigoinish.ca, wcornier@townofantigonish.ca, dmacinnis@townofantigonish.ca, scameron@townofantigonish.ca, amurray@townofantigonish.ca, mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca, droberts@townofantigonish.ca
Subject: Antigonish Town and County Consolidation Process

As an Antigonish municipality taxpayer I would like to ask Warden Owen McCarron if he could outline for me the steps being taken to discuss and to determine the very significant issue of amalgamation of the Town of Antigonish and the municipality of Antigonish county.

The importance of open, public debate in such a crucial decision cannot be ignored. In-camera meetings, small group discussions, and exclusion of individuals based on "conflict of interest" assertions give rise to suspicions of bias and secrecy. This must be avoided at all costs.

A plebiscite surely would resolve the growing problems. Why not consult and listen to those you represent?

A concerned taxpayer.
Bernardine McKeough Roberts

Cape Jack Road
Linwood

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: April 27, 2022 4:23 PM
To: Terry Penny
Subject: RE: Proposed consolidation of Antigonish Town and County

Terry;

You are correct, Shawn Brophy (District 4) and myself (District 9) have been informed that we are in "Potential Conflict of Interest" from the CEO and Warden and I have received an opinion from a law firm that I am not. It was also pointed out and highlighted different sections of the conflict of interest legislation including potential penalty which is up to 25,000 dollar fine, default to one year in jail if I don't declare a conflict by the CAO & warden. I have a daughter that works for the town not the county and that is what their basis for the conflict. It was told to me that my district would not have a vote (even more reason for a plebiscite) and residents could contact other councillors. I have been very vocal from the beginning of this process, the county is growing, the town is not. Financially we are in great shape and growing everyday. We in District 9 had a community meeting with 118 residents attending on April 18th, every one wanted a plebiscite, actually there is one in Tracadie tonight. I am available to talk anytime.

Harris
902-318-8333

-----Original Message-----

From: Terry Penny
Sent: April 26, 2022 10:17 AM
To: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Re: Proposed consolidation of Antigonish Town and County

Thank you for your efforts to try and see this issue managed in a respectful and democratic manner. As this issue was never included in any mandates by those running for election, regardless of one's position on this issue it needs to be voted on by the people not the 17 elected to represent us. And if my understanding is correct that number has now be reduced to 15 as you and Mr Brophy have been excluded from the right to represent your area. Just how far are our elected representatives, those elected by a vote, going to allow the democratic right to vote slide before we end this travesty? Terry Penny

Sent from my iPhone

> On Apr 26, 2022, at 9:51 AM, Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca> wrote:

>

> Terry;

> Thank you for your support. I had a community meeting In Havre Boucher Community Centre on April 18th to inform residents of my opposition to amalgamation. In Tracadie they are having a similar meeting tomorrow night and I have encouraged all residents of the county to contact their councillor and warden. This is not a done deal!

> Harris

> 902-318-8333

>

> -----Original Message-----

> **From:** Terry Penny

> **Sent:** April 25, 2022 12:53 PM

> **To:** Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Donnie MacDonald

> <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shawn Brophy

> <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Owen McCarron

<omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>

> Subject: Proposed consolidation of Antigonish Town and County

>

> Councillors and Warden of Antigonish County

>

> I view the presentation of the proposed consolidation of Antigonish Town and County as an insult to the people of Antigonish County. The community sessions presented only one perspective with many unanswered questions. In your attempt to deny community discussion, you are fuelling a frenzy of fear and intimidation resulting in the very community divisiveness you stated you wanted to avoid if open discussions were allowed.

>

>

> As elected representatives of the people of Antigonish County, none of you were elected on a platform of consolidation/amalgamation. Without a mandate from the community, an issue of this magnitude demands the voice of the people. This voice can only be achieved through a plebiscite.

>

> To deny a vote "because social media presents people with misinformation" is further insult to your community.

>

> Please allow this issue to be voted on by the people it affects.

>

> Sincerely

>

> Terry Penny,

> Lakevale, NS

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: April 27, 2022 4:43 PM
To: Valerie Chugg
Subject: RE:

Valerie;

I agree with you! I have been the most vocal councillor wanting to get answer to questions, I have not been provided answers or answers were lacking. I had a meeting with the community on April 18th to get input, 118 residents attended and not one supported amalgamation, hope you are successful in holding one, District 8 (Tracadie) is having one tonight. What needs to happen is, one, pros and cons of amalgamation, two, a cost benefit analysis be done on every component (infrastructure, surpluses, personnel, fixed assets, Antigonish Electrical Utility, County landfill, etc) of the amalgamation, three, a 5 year business plan that residents can see, a complete picture. A plebiscite is required after this is done, 6 people in the county should not decide this fundamental issue which will effect future generations. If you want to discuss, please call or email anytime.

Harris
902-318-8333

-----Original Message-----

From: Valerie Chugg
Sent: April 25, 2022 3:08 PM
To: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject:

Hello Harris. I am from District 1. I attended a session at Mini Trail Community Centre in Lakevale. I've emailed Mary MacLellan requesting a meeting with her constituents. I have heard that because of a conflict you do not get to vote when the time comes and wonder how this could possibly happen when you are elected to represent your constituents? How could the employment of a relative have any bearing on what you hear from these meetings and allow you to form an opinion? This process is not overly transparent. Seems like a 'done deal'. The timing of this process, the length of time before next municipal elections and from what I hear a few councillors who will not be offering in next election appears that a few councillors and perhaps mayor and warden are running this process. I understand what consolidation means. I do not think that citizens are getting a fair voice in this! Sincerely, Valerie Chugg.

Sent from my iPhone

Beth Schumacher

From: Kate Gorman <kgorman@townofantigonish.ca>
Sent: April 27, 2022 4:52 PM
To: Owen McCarron; mayor@townofantigonish.ca
Cc: Shirlyn Donovan
Subject: Introduction for Tonight! - Online Engagement Session
Attachments: Online Engagement Session - Introduction.docx

I forgot you both will need introduction notes for tonight!

Please see attached. I just updated the ones from the previous online session and kept it super short and simple so we can get right into the presentation.

Thanks!

Kate

Kate Gorman
Marketing and Communications Officer
kgorman@townofantigonish.ca
902-318-6758
www.townofantigonish.ca | [Nest Cam](#) | [Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#)

Owen:

Good evening everyone.

Mayor Boucher and I appreciate you all for taking the time to join us virtually.

Tonight, we will have a presentation from Brighter Community Planning and Consulting. They are going to provide some background on the exploration process, how we've gotten to where we are today, and what is upcoming. Then we are going to open the floor for discussion and questions. This is your session, so anything that comes to mind please don't hesitate to ask.

The Brighter Community Planning team are well versed in the municipal landscape in Nova Scotia. They have experience with past mergers, service reviews, planning, economic development, and community engagement. We trust their expertise to help facilitate this process. They are here to listen, gather feedback, and report on what was heard.

Laurie:

Back in September, both Councils voted unanimously to explore consolidation.

For the last number of years, the relationship between the Town and County has been incredibly positive. We are working well together at the Council and staff level.

The relationship we have built continues to grow based on our shared foundation of trust, consistency, and hard work. These values have resulted in a lot of positive investment for our community including infrastructure, capacity building, increased support for community groups, and events attraction.

Together, we have been putting in the work to learn what consolidation could mean for the future of Antigonish.

The big question we are trying to answer is, would our citizens, businesses, and community groups would be better served if we did consolidate into one municipal unit?

Thank you and we look forward to the discussion.

Beth Schumacher

From: Town of Antigonish Mayor <mayor@townofantigonish.ca>
Sent: April 27, 2022 6:46 PM
To: Owen McCarron
Subject: Fwd: [EXTERNAL] Proposed Consolidation of Antigonish Town & County

Fyi

Mayor Laurie Boucher
Town of Antigonish
274 Main St, Antigonish, N.S
B2G 2C4
mayor@townofantigonish.ca | 902•870•7795

From: Anne-Marie Long <
Sent: Wednesday, April 27, 2022 6:44:42 PM
To: Town of Antigonish Mayor <mayor@townofantigonish.ca>
Subject: Re: [EXTERNAL] Proposed Consolidation of Antigonish Town & County

I am so sorry. I'm at the hall now. I suggested to Gary that he invite Owen out of respect, and he said that he had. Then a day or so later, he was to invite the consultants.
After discussion with our meeting coordinator, I sent the invite out to all of you.
This is embarrassing for our District.

On Wed., Apr. 27, 2022, 5:48 p.m. Town of Antigonish Mayor, <mayor@townofantigonish.ca> wrote:
Hi Anne Marie,
I spoke to Owen today and he said he was not invited. Heard about it but wasn't invited.

Chat soon,
Laurie

Mayor Laurie Boucher
Town of Antigonish
274 Main St, Antigonish, N.S
B2G 2C4
mayor@townofantigonish.ca | 902•870•7795

From: Anne-Marie Long <
Sent: Wednesday, April 27, 2022 5:34:44 PM
To: Town of Antigonish Mayor <mayor@townofantigonish.ca>
Subject: Re: [EXTERNAL] Proposed Consolidation of Antigonish Town & County

Hi Laurie
We've been scheduled for over a week. Owen was invited along with the consultants.
Perhaps more independent info could be put on the website.

Must run. A.M.

On Wed., Apr. 27, 2022, 5:09 p.m. Town of Antigonish Mayor, <mayor@townofantigonish.ca> wrote:
Hi Anne Marie, happy to be able to spend time with family, it's so important.

I'm disappointed we didn't get to chat before tonight, I believe I can give you some factual information you could bring to the meeting.

It is also unfortunate you will not be able to join the meeting, you would have the opportunity to ask your questions.

Best,
Laurie

Mayor Laurie Boucher
Town of Antigonish
274 Main St, Antigonish, N.S
B2G 2C4
mayor@townofantigonish.ca | 902•870•7795

From: Anne-Marie Long <____>
Sent: Wednesday, April 27, 2022 3:21:50 PM
To: Town of Antigonish Mayor <mayor@townofantigonish.ca>
Subject: Re: [EXTERNAL] Proposed Consolidation of Antigonish Town & County

Just sent a note on Messenger, Laurie.
And this gal is not into facetimeing. My son loves it!
A.M.

On Wed., Apr. 27, 2022, 10:56 a.m. Town of Antigonish Mayor, <mayor@townofantigonish.ca> wrote:
Hi again Anne Marie, are we on for 1:30? I can have Kate Gorman send you a link.

Thank you,
Laurie

Mayor Laurie Boucher
Town of Antigonish
274 Main St, Antigonish, N.S
B2G 2C4
mayor@townofantigonish.ca | 902•870•7795

From: Town of Antigonish Mayor <mayor@townofantigonish.ca>
Sent: Tuesday, April 26, 2022 10:01:17 PM
To: Anne-Marie Long <____>
Subject: Re: [EXTERNAL] Proposed Consolidation of Antigonish Town & County

Great, can you give me a time so I have it in my agenda? Would 1:30 work for you?

Would it be possible to FaceTime? Or video message through Facebook?

Best,
Laurie

Mayor Laurie Boucher
Town of Antigonish
274 Main St, Antigonish, N.S
B2G 2C4
mayor@townofantigonish.ca | 902•870•7795

From: Anne-Marie Long
Sent: Tuesday, April 26, 2022 5:48:34 PM
To: Town of Antigonish Mayor <mayor@townofantigonish.ca>
Subject: Re: [EXTERNAL] Proposed Consolidation of Antigonish Town & County

I will make time to call you tomorrow, Laurie. What's the best number to reach you?

On Tue., Apr. 26, 2022, 5:41 p.m. Town of Antigonish Mayor, <mayor@townofantigonish.ca> wrote:
Hi Anne-Marie, I thought you were making time for a meeting with me, I offered to meet if you wanted to.

I am always up for a call, although, tonight I have a meeting. Would you have time tomorrow?

Laurie

Mayor Laurie Boucher
Town of Antigonish
274 Main St, Antigonish, N.S
B2G 2C4
mayor@townofantigonish.ca | 902•870•7795

From: Anne-Marie Long
Sent: Tuesday, April 26, 2022 5:36:56 PM
To: Town of Antigonish Mayor <mayor@townofantigonish.ca>
Subject: Re: [EXTERNAL] Proposed Consolidation of Antigonish Town & County

Hi Laurie
I think that I may not have been clear in my message. The meeting to which I'm referring is in Tracadie at our parish hall tomorrow evening. Were you expecting me to call you tomorrow or this evening? A.M.

On Tue, 26 Apr 2022 at 17:12, Town of Antigonish Mayor <mayor@townofantigonish.ca> wrote:
Sure Anne Marie, what time is good for you?

Mayor Laurie Boucher
Town of Antigonish
274 Main St, Antigonish, N.S
B2G 2C4

From: Anne-Marie Long <mayor@townofantigonish.ca>
Sent: Tuesday, April 26, 2022 5:08:59 PM
To: Town of Antigonish Mayor <mayor@townofantigonish.ca>
Subject: Re: [EXTERNAL] Proposed Consolidation of Antigonish Town & County

Thank you for your lengthy response, Laurie. I will make time before our meeting tomorrow evening to digest the contents and share what I may tomorrow evening at our community meeting.

Best regards,
Anne-Marie

On Tue., Apr. 26, 2022, 4:07 p.m. Town of Antigonish Mayor, <mayor@townofantigonish.ca> wrote:
Dear Anne Marie,

Thank you for your email. I had the pleasure of sitting on The Antigonish Town and County Crime Prevention committee with you and I am well aware of your experience and knowledge of government operations. I have always respected your work and commitment to your community of Tracadie as well as the greater community of Antigonish.

I am proud that our Council does not shy away from hard conversations that lead to important decisions for the betterment of our community. Although I understand the importance of maintaining positive public relations, we are elected to sit around the table, listen to our residents, and sometimes make unpopular decisions. As for the decision around consolidation, there hasn't been one yet. I have seen and heard some Councillors state their position on the matter and to be honest I am disappointed that they are not seeing this process through. We committed to the engagement process and listening to residents before we as a collective make the final decision.

The consultants have been hired to help facilitate the communication and consultation plan of the exploration of consolidation. The consultants are neutral and are simply helping to support the community engagement process and gather the information to present to council. They are not driving the change. Council makes the final decision.

Both councils have given unanimous endorsement on the consultation and communication process at a joint council meeting, this included a council vote on the issue. We started by having workshops with the consultants and determining the how to go forward, as well as the guiding principles. Every Councillor had an opportunity to speak and share differing opinions on the process. Not one Councillor chose to exercise that option during these sessions. There was even follow-up communication sent via email and no additional feedback was given.

Yes, we are hearing some complaints about the format. I agree the format is different than what we've done in the past, but different don't mean it is bad. We've also heard from others that they liked the one-on-one conversations because they felt more comfortable. Some people are being told that their taxes will go up, or that the county residents will be paying for the old infrastructure in the town. This is simply not true. Or that the Councillors didn't agree with the process or that they didn't have a say in the guiding principles. This again is not true. You may be extremely disappointed with the way this is being handled, I too am extremely disappointed with some of the comments from Councillors that are simply not true and feeding the misinformation that is currently circulating in the community.

I, along with Owen and some Councillors have gotten very positive feedback from the community, but these conversations aren't being shared online. I was told by a few that they were reading comments and posts being

shared on Facebook and were afraid to speak out because they didn't want their friends or relatives upset with them. How unfortunate is that someone feels afraid to speak up? That isn't what our community is about. I've been following the Facebook page and there is a lot of misinformation and disparaging comments that go uncorrected.

In your email you stated "It seems that the consultants, with the support of Municipal Affairs and their financial contribution, have given one way to get this done and you've totally accepted that advice".

Again, this is wrong. Some members of Council have been pushing this narrative when they themselves were in the room when it was a unanimous consensus to proceed and now, they're saying they didn't happen. Also, during the meeting with Municipal Affairs, the representatives never said one way or another what they wanted, they simply answered questions presented by both councils.

I don't agree with you that a plebiscite is the only way to gather information and make an education decision. If this were the case nothing would ever get done. Look at our budgets as an example. Town and County each pass multi-million-dollar annual budgets and not one person comes to our Council Chambers when the open budget discussions are taking place. Residents trust those that were elected to the best well-informed decision, so why would that be any different on this issue?

Plebiscites are not the only way to engage the community. In fact, plebiscites are notorious for low turnouts so it is not always a true indication of the community's concerns. Plebiscites can be divisive. We don't have to look further than our neighbours to the west of Antigonish, Pictou County, as well as the last time Antigonish held a plebiscite. We have already corrected a multitude of misinformation, for example the idea of taxes rising due to consolidation, county residents paying for town sidewalks, and to top it off...the rumour of the county putting in a new sewer treatment plant in Williams Point. We know that false information travels three to four times faster on social media than correct information.

Engaging people, encouraging citizens to discuss issues and bring up their concerns is an effective way to gather information from the public. There is a multitude of ways to engage the community, because councils have not chosen town hall meetings and a plebiscite doesn't mean it will not be effective. I do realize that not everyone has the ability to get up to a mic and ask questions, this is the reason we asked for several ways for the community to have input.

We are hosting 18 Consultation Sessions throughout the town and county at various times to make it accessible for all. Residents can attend any one of the sessions because the information is not unique to the area. The website antigonish.ca talks about what we've found during our exploration of consolidation. On the website there is places for comments as well as a survey.

Understanding that not everyone feels comfortable on a computer or coming to the sessions in person, we've also set up a phone line dedicated to the process. Anyone can leave their concerns and comments and it will all be recorded.

Public consultation is very important to the process, and it is not the only step in the exploration process. We started with having joint council meet with Municipal Affairs to see when a consolidated municipality would stand in the province. All council members had an opportunity to ask questions. We then met with Queens/Liverpool, a municipality that had consolidated 25 years ago. We believe their experience would give all council insight into the result of consolidation in their community. We asked questions about their successes, has consolidation changed their community for the better, as well as what would they do differently.

We then met with the newly formed municipality of Windsor/West Hants. Although they are just two years past consolidation, we believed talking with them with a more recent event would be helpful to all council members as well. The next steps we're developing our guiding principles as well as the forum of the consultations going forward. We reached unanimous consensus, not one councillor objected to the format, on both the guiding principles and the consultation process. We, as joint council have done research and now we are meeting with the public to share our findings and listen to the concerns of the citizens.

This has been in the public since September, I have answered questions and given dates regularly, as has Owen, on the radio and in the printed media. That is 7 months ago. During that time we have had several council meetings where the process was discussed and voted on.

You have stated "I also dare to say that until these past few weeks, both our Warden and the Mayor enjoyed good public reputations that were respectively well earned". This leads me to believe people started paying attention in the last few weeks hence the appearance of the process being rushed. This is a nine month exploration and we are at the seventh month.

You have referenced S.53 of the Municipal Government Act of NS on this issue, this is if the municipalities were amalgamating not consolidating. There is a difference, knowing your experience, I am sure you have reviewed the website and know the difference. An amalgamation is completely controlled by the province, such a CBRM and HRM.

Please feel free to contact me and we can discuss this further you can contact Lise Roy at lroy@townofantigonish.ca to schedule a meeting at your convenience. I look forward to seeing you at a session soon.

Best,
Laurie

Mayor Laurie Boucher
Town of Antigonish
274 Main St, Antigonish, N.S
B2G 2C4
mayor@townofantigonish.ca | 902•870•7795

From: Anne-Marie Long

Sent: Sunday, April 24, 2022 10:39:50 PM

To: omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>;
mmacllan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <mmacllan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca
<dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca
<hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>;
rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca
<jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>;
hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>;
bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Town of Antigonish Mayor
<mayor@townofantigonish.ca>; Willie Cormier <wcormier@townofantigonish.ca>; Donnie MacInnis
<dmacinnis@townofantigonish.ca>; Sean Cameron <scameron@townofantigonish.ca>; Andrew Murray
<amurray@townofantigonish.ca>; Mary Farrell <mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca>; Diane Roberts

<[droberts@townofantigonish.ca](mailto:drobot@townofantigonish.ca)>

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Proposed Consolidation of Antigonish Town & County

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Warden, Mayor and Councillors:

This is my formal request that both town and county Councils reconsider the process taking place for the proposed consolidation of both municipalities; and ,after providing timely and relevant information to all the taxpayers, that you hold a plebiscite vote under S.53 of the Municipal Government Act of NS on this issue.

I must convey my absolute disappointment in the process chosen to date. I have had the utmost respect for both our current Warden and Mayor and most of the councillors who have served over the past years. I've been truly content and pleased with the degree of cooperation between the town and county Councils under Owen and Laurie. Actually, I believe that during my time since I returned to NS in 1994, Owen, you have been the best Warden the county has had. I also dare to say that until these past few weeks, both our Warden and the Mayor enjoyed good public reputations that were respectively well earned.

I've been retired since early 2009 and prior to that I was an executive manager and a professional accountant for many years. And before that, I was president of a union with 4000 members. I have a good understanding of people and behaviours. I also understand government operations and the desire and need for change. I have worked with consultants who gave advice; however, they did not drive the change and we, the executives, made the decisions.

By now you must know that the dissatisfaction and disappointment in the process towards consolidation, being expressed by many, is due to the methodology being used and failure to propose a plebiscite. Since yesterday, after information was distributed at the Farmer's Market, over 400 people have joined a Facebook page looking for a plebiscite.

It seems that the consultants, with the support of Municipal Affairs and their financial contribution, have given one way to get this done and you've totally accepted that advice. The website and open forum meetings should have been used to provide information on the determined advantages and disadvantages of a merger. That should have happened prior to a plebiscite vote to enable people to become informed and to observe what is in it for them. Yes, you've scheduled meetings across both municipalities; however, they are totally controlled in this kiosk style manner. Anyone in a leadership role should know that many people will not go to a microphone and ask questions; yet, by attending an open forum meeting where there is perhaps an informed speaker and a Q&A session, people can hear the questions and answers that provide much information to the uninformed.

Make no mistake in presuming I was against a merger. I fully supported the exploration of a merger of the town and county. What has me hitting the Internet , websites and writing letters and posts is the apparent sudden rush to have this decided before, or early in, the summer; also, because I consider this process to be an abuse of power and an absolute failure to trust, that if you have given out sufficient information to enable people to make the decision, the ones who do vote will know that they have your respect.

While I believe that there has been a major error in judgement in the way this process has been handled, I believe that there is time for "redemption". With the delay in sessions due to unfortunate illnesses, it is possible to restructure the remaining meetings to be "open forum" style, with yourselves and the consultants answering questions. And you should offer a plebiscite. Quite frankly an apology for the process to date would also go a long way to getting people onside to listen.

My biggest concern is actually what happens if you continue with this process and get only a council approved vote to continue with the consolidation. The fact is that, after a consolidation decision, we will need a strong, experienced person as mayor and we will need some solid, experienced councillors to help the mayor. If you continue destroying the trust, that you've earned by your past work, we may end up with someone as mayor who is unskilled yet untainted, simply due to taxpayer frustration with the council members who voted for consolidation. *(Dare I say, remember how Donald Trump got elected.)* Solid leaders should also know that many people react emotionally and when faced with a stumbling block, such as feeling robbed of a vote in this decision, they are unable to separate the past good from the one current issue. That's reality and when it happens we all lose.

Respectfully,
Anne Marie Long
Tracadie

Beth Schumacher

From: Zoom <no-reply@zoom.us>
Sent: April 27, 2022 7:20 PM
To: Owen McCarron
Subject: Panelist for Exploration of Consolidation

Hi Owen,

You are invited to a Zoom webinar.

Date Time: Apr 27, 2022 07:30 PM Halifax

Topic: Exploration of Consolidation

Join from a PC, Mac, iPad, iPhone or Android device:

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Or Telephone:

Dial(for higher quality, dial a number based on your current location):

US: +1 646 558 8656 or +1 669 900 9128 or +1 253 215 8782 or +1 301 715 8592 or +1 312 626 6799 or +1 346 248 7799

Webinar ID: 823 5943 1576

Participant ID: 463716

Passcode: 907889

International numbers available: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/kd5a6uGsrF>

Beth Schumacher

From: Glenn Horne <glenn.horne@gmail.com>
Sent: April 27, 2022 7:27 PM
To: Owen McCarron
Subject: Fwd: Exploration of Consolidation Confirmation

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Zoom <no-reply@zoom.us>
Date: Tue., Apr. 26, 2022, 2:58 p.m.
Subject: Exploration of Consolidation Confirmation
To: <glenn.horne@gmail.com>



Consolidation. You can find information about this webinar below.

Apr 27, 2022 07:30 PM Halifax

823 5943 1576

907889

@antigonishcounty.ns.ca.

d, or Android

o your browser:

<https://www.zoom.us/j/907889?pwd=Z3bzhPMUxiRFJiZUtyVWdOVVV0TnIBAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA&pwd=YXBkTmhqRU4xVUxvcDhXblVubTVF>

share this link publicly.

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US: +16465588656,,82359431576#,,, *907889# or +16699009128,,82359431576#,,, *907889#

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US: +1 646 558 8656 or +1 669 900 9128 or +1 253 215 8782 or +1 301 715 8592 or +1 312 626 6799 or +1 346 248 7799

823 5943 1576

907889



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Beth Schumacher

From: Shirlyn Donovan
Sent: April 27, 2022 7:31 PM
To: Owen McCarron
Subject: FW: Exploration of Consolidation Confirmation

Shirlyn Donovan
Strategic Initiatives Coordinator
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
285 Beech Hill Road
Antigonish, NS B2G 0B4
902-863-1117



www.antigonishcounty.ns.ca

www.twitter.com/antigonishco

Honour Yesterday, Act Today, Inspire Tomorrow

From: Zoom <no-reply@zoom.us>
Sent: Wednesday, April 27, 2022 4:20 PM
To: Shirlyn Donovan <shirlyn.donovan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Exploration of Consolidation Confirmation



ration of Consolidation. You can find information about this webinar below.

Apr 27, 2022 07:30 PM Halifax

823 5943 1576

907889

shorne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca

any time.

iPad, or Android

Copy this into your browser:

<https://api.zoom.us/j/907889?pwd=YXBkTmhqRU4xVUxvcDhXblVubTVPZz09&uu=paSVRrMkVVRGp5TGt3RTJnAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA&tk=7rjhigFt-S9ThcFnb8t8Y39JwweXsuy26lObfHL-576>

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US: +1 646 558 8656 or +1 669 900 9128 or +1 253 215 8782 or +1 301 715 8592 or +1 312 626 6799 or +1 346 248 7799

823 5943 1576

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Beth Schumacher

From: Kate Gorman <kgorman@townofantigonish.ca>
Sent: April 27, 2022 7:35 PM
To: Owen McCarron
Subject: Fw: [EXTERNAL] Exploration of Consolidation Confirmation

Click to join webinar below.

Kate Gorman
Marketing and Communications Officer
kgorman@townofantigonish.ca
902-318-6758
www.townofantigonish.ca | [Nest Cam](#) | [Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#)

From: Zoom <no-reply@zoom.us>
Sent: Wednesday, April 27, 2022 10:29 AM
To: Kate Gorman <kgorman@townofantigonish.ca>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Exploration of Consolidation Confirmation

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.



out this webinar below.

PM Halifax

EWQAKkasRE.DQMAAAATLQExmBZU0E5LS00dVFpLUEySZA0bXBUR2ZBAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA&pi

2359431576#,...*907889# or +16699009128,,82359431576#,...*907889#

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or +1 669 900 9128 or +1 253 215 8782 or +1 301 715 8592 or +1 312 626 6799 or +1 346 248 7799



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Hughie Stewart

From: Shane Decoste <
Sent: April 27, 2022 9:32 PM
To: Hughie Stewart
Subject: Consolidation

Hi my name is Shane DeCoste i live at old Mulgrave road Antigonish county, I attended the exploration of consolidation meeting tonight at the hall in Tracadie . I would like to say that I am totally disgusted with the lack of answers to the very basic questions because of what the 2 councillors called a total lack of transparency, I have lived in this community for 47 years and I believe that a decision to be of this importance should be made by all people who make a contribution to this beautiful community,answers to these basic questions asked tonight will be welcomed with open ears , so I am demanding a plebiscite so we can decide our future as a community the same way we built it together, thanks for your time regards Shane DeCoste Sent from my iPhone

Beth Schumacher

From: Shane Decoste
Sent: April 27, 2022 9:33 PM
To: Owen McCarron
Subject: Consolidation

Hi my name is Shane DeCoste i live at old Mulgrave road Antigonish county, I attended the exploration of consolidation meeting tonight at the hall in Tracadie . I would like to say that I am totally disgusted with the lack of answers to the very basic questions because of what the 2 councillors called a total lack of transparency, I have lived in this community for 47 years and I believe that a decision to be of this importance should be made by all people who make a contribution to this beautiful community,answers to these basic questions asked tonight will be welcomed with open ears , so I am demanding a plebiscite so we can decide our future as a community the same way we built it together, thanks for your time regards Shane DeCoste

Sent from my iPhone

Harris McNamara

From: Shane Decoste
Sent: April 27, 2022 9:34 PM
To: Harris McNamara
Subject: Consolidation

Hi my name is Shane DeCoste i live at 1000 old Mulgrave road Antigonish county, I attended the exploration of consolidation meeting tonight at the hall in Tracadie . I would like to say that I am totally disgusted with the lack of answers to the very basic questions because of what the 2 councillors called a total lack of transparency, I have lived in this community for 47 years and I believe that a decision to be of this importance should be made by all people who make a contribution to this beautiful community, answers to these basic questions asked tonight will be welcomed with open ears , so I am demanding a plebiscite so we can decide our future as a community the same way we built it together, thanks for your time regards Shane DeCoste

Sent from my iPhone

Hughie Stewart

From: Tricie Decoste <
Sent: April 27, 2022 9:40 PM
To: Hughie Stewart
Subject: Consolidation

Hi my name is Patricia DeCoste i live at old Mulgrave road Antigonish county, I attended the exploration of consolidation meeting tonight at the hall in Tracadie with my husband . I would like to say that I am totally disgusted with the lack of answers to the very basic questions because of what the 2 councillors called a total lack of transparency, I have lived in this community for 48 years and I believe that a decision to be of this importance should be made by all people who make a contribution to this beautiful community,answers to these basic questions asked tonight will be welcomed with open ears , so I am demanding a plebiscite so we can decide our future as a community the same way we built it together, thanks for your time regards Patricia DeCoste

Sent from my iPhone

Shirlyn Donovan

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: Wednesday, April 27, 2022 9:41 PM
To: info
Subject: Fwd: Consolidation

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Shane Decoste < >
Date: April 27, 2022 at 9:33:06 PM ADT
To: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Consolidation

Hi my name is Shane DeCoste i live at old Mulgrave road Antigonish county, I attended the exploration of consolidation meeting tonight at the hall in Tracadie . I would like to say that I am totally disgusted with the lack of answers to the very basic questions because of what the 2 councillors called a total lack of transparency, I have lived in this community for 47 years and I believe that a decision to be of this importance should be made by all people who make a contribution to this beautiful community,answers to these basic questions asked tonight will be welcomed with open ears , so I am demanding a plebiscite so we can decide our future as a community the same way we built it together, thanks for your time regards Shane DeCoste

Sent from my iPhone

Harris McNamara

From: Tricie Decoste <
Sent: April 27, 2022 9:42 PM
To: Harris McNamara
Subject: Consolidation

Hi my name is Patricia DeCoste i live at 1111 old Mulgrave road Antigonish county, I attended the exploration of consolidation meeting tonight at the hall in Tracadie with my husband . I would like to say that I am totally disgusted with the lack of answers to the very basic questions because of what the 2 councillors called a total lack of transparency, I have lived in this community for 48 years and I believe that a decision to be of this importance should be made by all people who make a contribution to this beautiful community,answers to these basic questions asked tonight will be welcomed with open ears , so I am demanding a plebiscite so we can decide our future as a community the same way we built it together, thanks for your time regards Patricia DeCoste

Sent from my iPhone

Beth Schumacher

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: April 27, 2022 9:48 PM
To: info
Subject: Fwd: Consolidation

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Tricie Decoste <
Date: April 27, 2022 at 9:41:27 PM ADT
To: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Consolidation

Hi my name is Patricia DeCoste i live at Old Mulgrave road Antigonish county, I attended the exploration of consolidation meeting tonight at the hall in Tracadie with my husband . I would like to say that I am totally disgusted with the lack of answers to the very basic questions because of what the 2 councillors called a total lack of transparency, I have lived in this community for 48 years and I believe that a decision to be of this importance should be made by all people who make a contribution to this beautiful community,answers to these basic questions asked tonight will be welcomed with open ears , so I am demanding a plebiscite so we can decide our future as a community the same way we built it together, thanks for your time regards Patricia DeCoste

Sent from my iPhone

Beth Schumacher

From: Tony VanDenHeuvel
Sent: April 27, 2022 9:53 PM
To: Owen McCarron
Subject: Consolidation

Hey Owen

Just finished up the webinar with you, I had to laugh, in 96 or 97 I was in the living room watching the baseball playoffs when you sat at our kitchen table talking to mom and dad.

Tonight a couple years later I looked in at my kids in the living room watching tv as I was listening to you speak at my kitchen table.

I hope they age as well as we have.

Tony

Sent from my iPhone

Beth Schumacher

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: April 27, 2022 10:28 PM
To: Tony VanDenHeuvel
Subject: Re: Consolidation

Yep that is so true. I was thinking how much your father would have enjoyed the Bulldogs big win. He never missed many games.

Sent from my iPhone

> On Apr 27, 2022, at 10:14 PM, Tony VanDenHeuvel <tonyvdheuvel@antigonishcounty.ns.ca> wrote:
>
> She's doing well, now that the weather is nicer and days are longer she isn't finding the days as long. As the song goes "it gets easier but it never gets easy"
>
>
> Sent from my iPhone
>
>> On Apr 27, 2022, at 10:07 PM, Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca> wrote:
>>
>> Wow. They do grow up quickly. Our two are 29 and soon to be 32. Seems like yesterday I was taking Matthew to motor cross races and I was doing the wrenching. How's your Mom doing these days?
>>
>> Sent from my iPhone
>>
>>> On Apr 27, 2022, at 10:01 PM, Tony VanDenHeuvel <tonyvdheuvel@antigonishcounty.ns.ca> wrote:
>>>
>>> Two, 10 and 7. Will be 11 and 8 soon.
>>> It goes by fast
>>>
>>> Sent from my iPhone
>>>
>>>> On Apr 27, 2022, at 9:56 PM, Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca> wrote:
>>>>
>>>> Hi Tony
>>>> It's amazing where the time goes. How many children do you guys have?
>>>>
>>>> Sent from my iPhone
>>>>
>>>>> On Apr 27, 2022, at 9:52 PM, Tony VanDenHeuvel <tonyvdheuvel@antigonishcounty.ns.ca> wrote:
>>>>>
>>>>> Hey Owen
>>>>>
>>>>> Just finished up the webinar with you, I had to laugh, in 96 or 97 I was in the living room watching the baseball playoffs when you sat at our kitchen table talking to mom and dad.
>>>>> Tonight a couple years later I looked in at my kids in the living room watching tv as I was listening to you speak at my kitchen table.
>>>>> I hope they age as well as we have.

>>>>
>>>> Tony
>>>>
>>>>
>>>> Sent from my iPhone

12/12/12

Beth Schumacher

From: Lisa, Reggie and Michael <
Sent: April 27, 2022 10:57 PM
To: Owen McCarron
Subject: Consolidation Plebiscite

Greetings Warden McCarron,

I am contacting you to voice my concern over the proposed consolidation of the town and county of Antigonish. I do not feel I and many people I speak with are well educated on the pros and cons of this proposal and as a result, I am concerned we are moving too quickly in this venture. I have been taking in as much information as I can and many questions are not able to be answered by our county councillors. **I am also requesting that the people of the county be allowed to have their voice heard through a vote in a plebiscite.** I do not think it is logical or realistic to expect a councillor to make a decision for **ALL** the people in their district. Each person needs to be able to make their voice heard.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter,

Reggie DeCoste

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows

Hughie Stewart

From: Annemarie Meagher <
Sent: April 27, 2022 10:59 PM
To: Hughie Stewart
Subject: Public vote

Hughie
We need public vote on amalgamation

Anne Marie Meagher

Sent from my iPad

Beth Schumacher

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: April 27, 2022 11:01 PM
To: info
Subject: Fwd: Consolidation Plebiscite

Warden Owen McCarron
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
902-968-1290

Begin forwarded message:

From: "Lisa, Reggie and Michael"
Date: April 27, 2022 at 10:56:52 PM ADT
To: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Consolidation Plebiscite

Greetings Warden McCarron,

I am contacting you to voice my concern over the proposed consolidation of the town and county of Antigonish. I do not feel I and many people I speak with are well educated on the pros and cons of this proposal and as a result, I am concerned we are moving too quickly in this venture. I have been taking in as much information as I can and many questions are not able to be answered by our county councillors. **I am also requesting that the people of the county be allowed to have their voice heard through a vote in a plebiscite.** I do not think it is logical or realistic to expect a councillor to make a decision for **ALL** the people in their district. Each person needs to be able to make their voice heard.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter,

Reggie DeCoste

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows

Beth Schumacher

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: April 27, 2022 11:03 PM
To: Laurie Boucher
Subject: Fwd: Consolidation Plebiscite

FYI

Warden Owen McCarron
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
902-968-1290

Begin forwarded message:

From: "Lisa, Reggie and Michael"
Date: April 27, 2022 at 10:56:52 PM ADT
To: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Consolidation Plebiscite

Greetings Warden McCarron,

I am contacting you to voice my concern over the proposed consolidation of the town and county of Antigonish. I do not feel I and many people I speak with are well educated on the pros and cons of this proposal and as a result, I am concerned we are moving too quickly in this venture. I have been taking in as much information as I can and many questions are not able to be answered by our county councillors. **I am also requesting that the people of the county be allowed to have their voice heard through a vote in a plebiscite.** I do not think it is logical or realistic to expect a councillor to make a decision for **ALL** the people in their district. Each person needs to be able to make their voice heard.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter,

Reggie DeCoste

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows

Harris McNamara

From: Ambrose Landry ·
Sent: April 27, 2022 11:13 PM
To: Harris McNamara

We want a Plebiscite

Get [Outlook for Android](#)

Hughie Stewart

From: Ambrose Landry <
Sent: April 27, 2022 11:17 PM
To: [Hughie Stewart](#)

We want a Plebiscite

Get [Outlook for Android](#)

Hughie Stewart

From: John Mattie <\ >
Sent: April 27, 2022 11:22 PM
To: Hughie Stewart
Subject: Public vote

We need public vote on amalgamation

John Mattie

Sent from my iPhone

Harris McNamara

From: Bernadette Landry
Sent: April 27, 2022 11:37 PM
To: Harris McNamara
Subject: Plebiscite

We want a plebiscite!!

Get [Outlook for Android](#)

Harris McNamara

From: Evan DeCoste ·
Sent: April 28, 2022 7:23 AM
To: Harris McNamara
Subject: We want a Vote

I don't think it's fair for it to come down 9-10 town or county councillors to decide what's good for town and county. This all needs to slow down an answers to questions need to me given. I think we all deserve a vote. Its now about what affects all of us. something this big should be handled by plebiscite
We will be losing 20% of our county councillors vote due to "conflicts of interest"
We want a Plebiscite

Thanks Evan DeCoste

Hughie Stewart

From: Colleen Breen < >
Sent: April 28, 2022 8:00 AM
To: Hughie Stewart
Subject: Plebiscite

Good morning Mr Stewart

I'm am writing in regards to the discussion on the amalgamation between the town and county of Antigonish
I am a resident of district 9 and am requesting more information and a chance to vote on this matter.

Thank you,
Colleen Breen

Harris McNamara

From: Anita Mattie <
Sent: April 28, 2022 8:11 AM
To: amurry@townofantigonish.ca; Bill MacFarlane; Donnie MacDonald;
dmacinnis@townofantigonish.ca; droberts@townofantigonish.ca; Gary Mattie; Hughie
Stewart; Harris McNamara; John Dunbar; mayor@townofantigonish.ca;
mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca; Mary MacLellan; Owen McCarron; Remi Deveau; Shawn
Brophy; scameron@townofantigonish.ca; wgormier@townofantigonish.ca
Subject: Consolidation

Town and county council

I am a resident of Antigonish county.

I along with the rest of the residents of this county deserve meaningful consultation in this momentous decision.

I insist that the question of consolidation be put to a plebiscite of all residents

Anita Mattie

Shirlyn Donovan

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: Thursday, April 28, 2022 8:25 AM
To: info
Subject: Fwd: Plebiscite

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Colleen Breen <
Date: April 28, 2022 at 8:10:34 AM ADT
To: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Plebiscite

Good morning Mr. McCarran

I am writing in regards to the discussion taken place on the amalgamation between the town and county of Antigonish

I am a resident of district 9. I am requesting more information and a chance to vote on this matter

Thank you, Colleen Breen

Beth Schumacher

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: April 28, 2022 8:26 AM
To: info
Subject: Fwd: Consolidation

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Anita Mattie
Date: April 28, 2022 at 8:11:41 AM ADT
To: amurry@townofantigonish.ca, Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, dmacinnis@townofantigonish.ca, droberts@townofantigonish.ca, Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, mayor@townofantigonish.ca, mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca, Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, scameron@townofantigonisg.ca, wgormier@townofantigonish.ca
Subject: Consolidation

Town and county council

I am a resident of Antigonish county.

I along with the rest of the residents of this county deserve meaningful consultation in this momentous decision.

I insist that the question of consolidation be put to a plebiscite of all residents

Anita Mattie

Harris McNamara

From: Colleen Breen
Sent: April 28, 2022 8:26 AM
To: Harris McNamara
Subject: Plebiscite

Good morning Mr. McNamara

I am writing in regards to the discussion regarding the amalgamation between the town and county of Antigonish
As you know I am a resident of district 9. I am requesting more information and a chance to vote on this matter

Thank you,
Colleen Breen

Shirlyn Donovan

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: Thursday, April 28, 2022 8:27 AM
To: info
Subject: Fwd: We want a vote

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Evan DeCoste <
Date: April 28, 2022 at 7:10:33 AM ADT
To: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: We want a vote

I don't think it's fair for it to come down 9-10 town or county councillors to decide what's good for town and county. This all needs to slow down an answers to questions need to me given. I think we all deserve a vote. Its now about what affects all of us. something this big should be handled by plebiscite
We will be losing 20% of our county councillors vote due to "conflicts of interest"
We want a Plebiscite

Thanks Evan DeCoste

Shirlyn Donovan

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: Thursday, April 28, 2022 8:28 AM
To: info
Subject: Fwd:

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Ambrose Landry
Date: April 27, 2022 at 11:17:11 PM ADT
To: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>

We want a Plebiscite

Get [Outlook for Android](#)

Beth Schumacher

From: Kevin Delorey <
Sent: April 28, 2022 8:32 AM
To: Owen McCarron
Subject: Consolidation

Hi Mr. McCarron:

Last night, I attended the consolidation session in Tracadie and I came away with more questions than answers. I believe that once the consultants produce the findings of the report outlining the pros and cons of consolidation then a plebiscite should be held.

Regards,

*Kevin Delorey, Ed.D(c)
Education Consultant
Monastery, Nova Scotia*

Beth Schumacher

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: April 28, 2022 8:37 AM
To: info
Subject: Fwd: Consolidation

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Kevin Delorey
Date: April 28, 2022 at 8:31:55 AM ADT
To: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Consolidation

Hi Mr. McCarron:

Last night, I attended the consolidation session in Tracadie and I came away with more questions than answers. I believe that once the consultants produce the findings of the report outlining the pros and cons of consolidation then a plebiscite should be held.

Regards,

*Kevin Delorey, Ed.D(c)
Education Consultant
Monastery, Nova Scotia*

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: April 28, 2022 9:04 AM
To: Bernadette Landry
Subject: RE: Plebiscite

Bernadette;
Please ensure you email or call other councillors, I want the same thing as you.
Harris

From: Bernadette Landry
Sent: April 27, 2022 11:37 PM
To: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Plebiscite

We want a plebiscite!!

Get [Outlook for Android](#)

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: April 28, 2022 9:08 AM
To: info@antigonish.ca
Subject: FW: Consolidation

-----Original Message-----

From: Jeannette Benoit
Sent: April 27, 2022 1:49 PM
To: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; mayor@townofantigonish.ca; wgormier@townofantigonish.ca; dmacinnis@townofantigonish.ca; scameron@townofantigonish.ca; amurray@townofantigonish.ca; mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca; droberts@townofantigonish.ca
Subject: Consolidation

To you the warden, mayor and councillors of Antigonish town and county.

I am sending you this in regards to your consolidation idea.

I am totally against it!!!!

We need to vote on this. Not be told what the few of you want to do.

First of all, you are doing this in the middle of a pandemic which is the worst time possible (maybe not for you guys) but for the seniors that are too afraid to be in public during this time. And can't go to your sessions There are still way too many cases of Covid in the area. You are well aware of this since several of you are isolating. Please show us, the people of the town and county, some respect by letting us vote on this very sensitive issue.

Jeannette Benoit

Clyde Bowman

District 8.

Sent from my iPhone

Shirlyn Donovan

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: Thursday, April 28, 2022 9:08 AM
To: info
Subject: FW: Consolidation

-----Original Message-----

From: Jeannette Benoit <jeannettebenoit@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Sent: April 27, 2022 1:49 PM
To: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; mayor@townofantigonish.ca; wormier@townofantigonish.ca; dmacinnis@townofantigonish.ca; scameron@townofantigonish.ca; amurray@townofantigonish.ca; mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca; droberts@townofantigonish.ca
Subject: Consolidation

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I am totally against it!!!!

We need to vote on this. Not be told what the few of you want to do.

First of all, you are doing this in the middle of a pandemic which is the worst time possible (maybe not for you guys) but for the seniors that are too afraid to be in public during this time. And can't go to your sessions There are still way too many cases of Covid in the area. You are well aware of this since several of you are isolating. Please show us, the people of the town and county, some respect by letting us vote on this very sensitive issue.

Jeannette Benoit

Clyde Bowman

District 8.

Sent from my iPhone



Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Emailed all 10

2 messages

Colleen Breen <[redacted]>
To: Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Thu, Apr 28, 2022 at 9:08 AM

Thanks Harris
I didn't want to put in that email that you didn't have to reply
I sat down with the County Connect book and emailed all 10 of you this morning.
I was disappointed to hear you will not be reoffering to run in the next election but I still totally understandable on so many levels

Enjoy your day!

Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>
To: Colleen Breen <[redacted]>

Thu, Apr 28, 2022 at 9:51 AM

Colleen
I may run as they can't get away with stunts like this,
Harris
[Quoted text hidden]

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: April 28, 2022 9:09 AM
To: info@antigonish.ca
Subject: FW: Councillor Letter
Attachments: Councillor Letter.pdf

From: karen megronigle
Sent: April 27, 2022 1:50 PM
To: Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; mayor@townofantigonish.ca; wgormier@townofantigonish.ca; dmacinnis@townofantigonish.ca; scameron@townofantigonish.ca; amurray@townofantigonish.ca; mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca; droberts@townofantigonish.ca; Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Councillor Letter

Sent from my iPad

Megronigle, S&K
Highway 337
Cape George, NS B2G2L2

26 April 2022

Dear Town and Municipal Councillors,

I hope this email finds you well. I attended one of the fact finding meetings regarding the consolidation of town and county and after considering the information provided I must say how disappointed I am with the entire process and the way it has been presented. As a taxpayer in the County, I see no benefit to consolidation. We will lose representation as councillors will be combined and districts will be changed. As a permanent resident and not a citizen of Canada, I could not even vote for the councillor in my district yet they will be voting for me on this issue. As a taxpayer I find it insulting that we cannot cast our own ballot. The format for the meetings was totally ridiculous; we expected you, our representatives, to address the issue and answer our questions as a whole, not one on one. If that format was chosen by the research company you hired, it was a waste of our money. The handouts and the guide in the County Connect (which was received the day before the meetings started) were very slanted toward consolidation. Each councillor or representative I spoke to at the meeting used all of the same talking points like it was rehearsed. Comparing what happened at a plebiscite years ago has no bearing on today. Wording like “ no sudden changes” to the current grant programs (As per County Connect) has me very concerned. I write grant applications for several nonprofit organizations and we all know if this consolidation goes forward, our grant money will be consolidated too, but the applicants will increase. One huge part of this research hasn't even been completed: the cost of policing a combined town/ county. How can you make an informed decision missing this critical piece of information which will impact the budget? The topic of sidewalks and roads is another part of this picture. How do you think county residents will feel when town streets or sidewalks are improved and the Marsh Road where our fire department is located is not even paved? I have also heard but not confirmed that two councillors will not be able to vote on this issue. If true, who represents their constituents??? Reading all the information that was made available brings up another question....if so many things will not be impacted by a consolidation, why do it? Who initiated this process? The Town? County? NS government?

I sincerely hope my friends and neighbours contact you as well. I have not spoken to one person in favour of this consolidation. Taxpayers deserve a vote on this issue.

With kind regards,

Karen Megronigle
Stephen Megronigle

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: April 28, 2022 9:09 AM
To: info@antigonish.ca
Subject: FW: Antigonish Town and County Consolidation Process

From: Bunny and Brian Roberts ·
Sent: April 27, 2022 2:52 PM
To: Mary MacLellan <mmacellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; dfmacdonald@antigonish.ns.ca; Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; hdstewart@antigonish.ns.ca; Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; sbrophy@antigonish.ns.ca; Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; rdeveau@antigonish.ns.ca; Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; omccarron@antigonish.ns.ca; John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; jdunbar@antigonish.ns.ca; Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; gmattie@antigonish.ns.ca; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; bmacfarlane@antigonish.ns.ca; mayor@townofantigonish.ca; mayor@townofantigonish.ca; wgormier@townofantigonish.ca; dmacinnis@townofantigonish.ca; scameron@townofantigonish.ca; amurray@townofantigonish.ca; mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca; droberts@townofantigonish.ca
Subject: Antigonish Town and County Consolidation Process

As an Antigonish municipality taxpayer I would like to ask Warden Owen McCarron if he could outline for me the steps being taken to discuss and to determine the very significant issue of amalgamation of the Town of Antigonish and the municipality of Antigonish county.

The importance of open, public debate in such a crucial decision cannot be ignored. In-camera meetings, small group discussions, and exclusion of individuals based on "conflict of interest" assertions give rise to suspicions of bias and secrecy. This must be avoided at all costs.

A plebiscite surely would resolve the growing problems. Why not consult and listen to those you represent?

A concerned taxpayer.
Bernardine McKeough Roberts

Cape Jack Road
Linwood

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: April 28, 2022 9:09 AM
To: 'info@antigonish.ca'
Subject: FW: Consolidation

-----Original Message-----

From: Shane Decoste
Sent: April 27, 2022 9:34 PM
To: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Consolidation

Hi my name is Shane DeCoste i live at ; old Mulgrave road Antigonish county, I attended the exploration of consolidation meeting tonight at the hall in Tracadie . I would like to say that I am totally disgusted with the lack of answers to the very basic questions because of what the 2 councillors called a total lack of transparency, I have lived in this community for 47 years and I believe that a decision to be of this importance should be made by all people who make a contribution to this beautiful community, answers to these basic questions asked tonight will be welcomed with open ears , so I am demanding a plebiscite so we can decide our future as a community the same way we built it together, thanks for your time regards Shane DeCoste

Sent from my iPhone

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: April 28, 2022 9:10 AM
To: 'info@antigonish.ca'
Subject: FW: Consolidation

-----Original Message-----

From: Tricie Decoste
Sent: April 27, 2022 9:42 PM
To: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Consolidation

Hi my name is Patricia DeCoste i live at 1000 old Mulgrave road Antigonish county, I attended the exploration of consolidation meeting tonight at the hall in Tracadie with my husband . I would like to say that I am totally disgusted with the lack of answers to the very basic questions because of what the 2 councillors called a total lack of transparency, I have lived in this community for 48 years and I believe that a decision to be of this importance should be made by all people who make a contribution to this beautiful community,answers to these basic questions asked tonight will be welcomed with open ears , so I am demanding a plebiscite so we can decide our future as a community the same way we built it together, thanks for your time regards Patricia DeCoste

Sent from my iPhone

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: April 28, 2022 9:10 AM
To: info@antigonish.ca
Subject: FW:

From: Ambrose Landry
Sent: April 27, 2022 11:13 PM
To: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject:

We want a Plebiscite

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Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: April 28, 2022 9:11 AM
To: info@antigonish.ca
Subject: FW: We want a Vote

From: Evan DeCoste
Sent: April 28, 2022 7:23 AM
To: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: We want a Vote

I don't think it's fair for it to come down 9-10 town or county councillors to decide what's good for town and county. This all needs to slow down an answers to questions need to me given. I think we all deserve a vote. Its now about what affects all of us. something this big should be handled by plebiscite

We will be losing 20% of our county councillors vote due to "conflicts of interest"

We want a Plebiscite

Thanks Evan DeCoste

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: April 28, 2022 9:11 AM
To: info@antigonish.ca
Subject: FW: Consolidation

From: Anita Mattie
Sent: April 28, 2022 8:11 AM
To: amurry@townofantigonish.ca; Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; dmacinnis@townofantigonish.ca; droberts@townofantigonish.ca; Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; mayor@townofantigonish.ca; mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca; Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; scameron@townofantigonish.ca; wgormier@townofantigonish.ca
Subject: Consolidation

Town and county council

I am a resident of Antigonish county.

I along with the rest of the residents of this county deserve meaningful consultation in this momentous decision.

I insist that the question of consolidation be put to a plebiscite of all residents

Anita Mattie

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: April 28, 2022 9:11 AM
To: 'info@antigonish.ca'
Subject: FW: Plebiscite

From: Colleen Breen
Sent: April 28, 2022 8:26 AM
To: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Plebiscite

Good morning Mr. McNamara

I am writing in regards to the discussion regarding the amalgamation between the town and county of Antigonish
As you know I am a resident of district 9. I am requesting more information and a chance to vote on this matter

Thank you,
Colleen Breen

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: April 28, 2022 9:13 AM
To: info@antigonish.ca
Subject: FW:

-----Original Message-----

From: Valerie Chugg
Sent: April 25, 2022 3:08 PM
To: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject:

Hello Harris. I am from District 1. I attended a session at Mini Trail Community Centre in Lakevale. I've emailed Mary MacLellan requesting a meeting with her constituents. I have heard that because of a conflict you do not get to vote when the time comes and wonder how this could possibly happen when you are elected to represent your constituents? How could the employment of a relative have any bearing on what you hear from these meetings and allow you to form an opinion? This process is not overly transparent. Seems like a 'done deal'. The timing of this process, the length of time before next municipal elections and from what I hear a few councillors who will not be offering in next election appears that a few councillors and perhaps mayor and warden are running this process. I understand what consolidation means. I do not think that citizens are getting a fair voice in this! Sincerely, Valerie Chugg.

Sent from my iPhone

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: April 28, 2022 9:13 AM
To: 'info@antigonish.ca'
Subject: FW: Proposed consolidation of Antigonish Town and County

-----Original Message-----

From: Terry Penny
Sent: April 25, 2022 12:53 PM
To: Mary MacLellan <mmacellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Proposed consolidation of Antigonish Town and County

Councillors and Warden of Antigonish County

I view the presentation of the proposed consolidation of Antigonish Town and County as an insult to the people of Antigonish County. The community sessions presented only one perspective with many unanswered questions. In your attempt to deny community discussion, you are fuelling a frenzy of fear and intimidation resulting in the very community divisiveness you stated you wanted to avoid if open discussions were allowed.

As elected representatives of the people of Antigonish County, none of you were elected on a platform of consolidation/amalgamation. Without a mandate from the community, an issue of this magnitude demands the voice of the people. This voice can only be achieved through a plebiscite.

To deny a vote "because social media presents people with misinformation" is further insult to your community.

Please allow this issue to be voted on by the people it affects.

Sincerely

Terry Penny,
Lakevale, NS

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: April 28, 2022 9:14 AM
To: info@antigonish.ca
Subject: FW: Consolidation of Antigonish Town and County

From: Merton Taylor
Sent: April 25, 2022 7:44 AM
To: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca; Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca; Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Consolidation of Antigonish Town and County

I am a community member of District 8. I feel each community member from each district should be allowed to vote instead of just having the council voting.

- What are the pros and cons identified by the reviews of other mergers?
- What is going to happen when our taxes increase? Community members that are on a fixed income or low income will not be able to afford an increase, therefore they will not be able to pay than Antigonish is going to end up with the property and it will go for a tax sale all because of increase in taxes and then the community member becomes homeless.
- What extra fees are we going to incur, for example water and sewage? Most county people are not on a water and sewage system.
- What happens to fire services if a merger takes place in terms of costs and coverage? Will our fire stations lose funding given that despite the current funding through our property tax assessments?
- What happens with our protective services? The town spends more than the county on these services despite the county is larger than the town.

As a community member of District 8 Antigonish County, we should have a right to more input on the consolidation process, we should have a right to vote.

Merton Taylor

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Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: April 28, 2022 9:14 AM
To: info@antigonish.ca
Subject: FW: public vote request

From: Jack Bouckeno
Sent: April 24, 2022 11:28 PM
To: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: public vote request

Good afternoon,

I would like for you and your fellow council members of the Municipality of the County of Antigonish to place the decision of consolidation between the Antigonish Town Municipality and Antigonish County Municipality before the members of the community to vote. I believe this is a significant change to the community. I do not believe that this decision should be made by this or any council, and to do so without the support of the community would be shortsighted, at best. In my opinion, such a vote, without community support, would be a travesty of the democratic decision making process.

Margie Layes

Sent from my T-Mobile 4G LTE Device

Sent from my T-Mobile 4G LTE Device

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: April 28, 2022 9:15 AM
To: info@antigonish.ca
Subject: FW: Antigonish town & county

-----Original Message-----

From: Jane
Sent: April 24, 2022 8:08 PM
To: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Antigonish town & county

Hi Harris

I realize you are not my councillor and I'm not a big Facebook fan to ask questions, so my course of action is go to the source.

Is it accurate that you will not be able to vote on the consolidation of town and county? How many people do you represent in your district?

I do plan to attend the meeting but it's always good to have the facts.

Hope you and your family are doing well.

Jane

Sent from my iPad

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: April 28, 2022 9:16 AM
To: info@antigonish.ca
Subject: FW: Consolodation

From: Tony VanDenHeuvel
Sent: April 23, 2022 10:30 AM
To: Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; mayor@townofantigonish.ca; wgormier@townofantigonish.ca; dmaccinnis@townofantigonish.ca; Sean Cameron <scameron@townofantigonish.ca>; amurray@townofantigonish.ca; Mary Farrell <mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca>; droberts@townofantigonish.ca
Subject: Consolodation

Good Morning

Recently I have been hearing more and more about the consolidation being planned by the town and county. In talking to residents of both the town and county I have gotten the same feelings that;

- A. The wool is being pulled over our eyes
- B. Someone is trying to pull a fast one on us
- C. Who asked for this
- D. If this was such a important thing why wasn't it campaigned on during the last municipal elections
- E. Why do we not get a vote as we did in previous years for a decision of this magnitude

Now, admittedly I have been ignorant to a lot of what has been going on and didn't start paying attention until a few days ago so I don't have enough information to make an informed decision on if this is going to be a good thing or not.

I do know that a decision of this magnitude should not be left up to the group of councilors who have not campaigned on this topic.

Correct me if I am wrong

I have heard that not all councilors are going to be able to participate in the vote due to conflict of interest.

If that is true, who is going to vote for their constituents?

Have their constituents been informed of this?

How can a decision of this magnitude go forward if not all constituents are going to be represented?

Furthermore, what does this mean going forward?

Will the Town and county be dissolved and formed into one municipality?

What is going to happen to the towns electric utility?

Will municipal services like the garbage collection be privatized or put out to tender?

Will we town residents be paying more for policing if the current funding model gets changed?

Will my tax rates go up?

Will our town roads and snow removal be improved?

Will the county be given more roads to take care of from the province?

Will there be cost savings in terms of duplications of jobs?

We currently have two CAOs, will there only be one now?

If this is truly about working together to have shared services why can't we continue with the arrangement we have in place now?

I am going to try and get to some of the information sessions in the coming weeks, maybe that will give me more answers to my questions.

Again, I still can't figure out where this came from, why it wasn't campaigned on during the latest municipal elections and why there is not a plebiscite on the issue.

Thank you

A concerned resident

Tony VanDenHeuvel

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: April 28, 2022 9:16 AM
To: info@antigonish.ca
Subject: FW: consolidation

From: Leslie Fancey
Sent: April 22, 2022 4:41 PM
To: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: consolidation

Hello Mr. McNamara,

I wish to express my opposition to the proposed consolidation of Antigonish town and county. While I believe it is important for the two to work together as they have in the past, I believe the residents of our county are better served with our own municipal council.

I also believe that a plebiscite should be held so that everyone can participate meaningfully.

Thank you for your attention.

Sincerely,
Leslie Fancey
resident of District 8

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: April 28, 2022 9:18 AM
To: info@antigonish.ca
Subject: FW: Proposed Consolidation/ Amalgamation of Antigonish Town & County

From: Linda Wood
Sent: April 20, 2022 3:06 PM
To: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Re: Proposed Consolidation/ Amalgamation of Antigonish Town & County

Dear Warden & Councillors,

**With regards to the proposed consolidation/
amalgamation, as taxpayers of District 9, we feel
all our appointed counsellors for the town
and county should be SLOWING DOWN this
process, until residents can be more informed.**

One on one discussions in the community does not allow for correct information to be shared, info gets distorted, he said...she said!

We need public Question & Answer meetings...in each district , with those in attendance who can answer our questions.

We also feel it's only right that we all have a voice in the resulting process, so please urge and allow for a plebiscite.

Thank you for considering our request

Linda & Larry Wood

Auld's Cove District 9

*Copied and emailed to the warden and each councillor

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: April 28, 2022 9:18 AM
To: info@antigonish.ca
Subject: FW: Municipal letter
Attachments: Municipal letter.docx

From: sandra webb
Sent: April 20, 2022 2:08 PM
To: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Fwd: Municipal letter

This is my letter that I sent to all the councillors! Annmarie Fougere Long had a great Blurb put in the paper included with our weekly flyers!

Sent from my iPad

Subject: Municipal letter

Hi

I am writing in regard to the Proposed Consolidation of the Town and County of Antigonish. I feel that we do not have enough information as to what if any advantages the county will benefit from, and I don't think we should have to rely on the county councilors to vote for us.

We trust our councilor to represent us, but we have nine others that we have to put our trust in, and we should not have to worry about any politics which always seem to come up. We see what the hospital consolidation results are and once there is a merger, there is no going back.

We need time to absorb these facts and figures, and I as well as many others feel that we should have more time to review the pros and cons. I am sending this email to all the ten councilors, and I am also wondering what will become of our representation on council if there were a merger, would we have the ten that we have now, I think not!

The county is in good shape in my opinion so why would we want to change that! We all know that the county does not have the perks the town has in regard to sewer, water, skate parks, walking trails etc. I doubt if we ever would.

Best Regards,

Sandra Webb
District 9 Resident

Harris McNamara

From: Valerie Chugg --
Sent: April 28, 2022 9:48 AM
To: Harris McNamara
Subject: Re:

Harris thanks for responding to my email. It appears to me that the mayor and warden think consolidation is a fair accompli. Someone has to take the lead on requesting a plebiscite. It needs to be well organized and it needs to happen quickly. Any ideas? Valerie

Sent from my iPhone

> On Apr 27, 2022, at 4:42 PM, Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca> wrote:

>

> Valerie;

> I agree with you! I have been the most vocal councillor wanting to get answer to questions, I have not been provided answers or answers were lacking. I had a meeting with the community on April 18th to get input, 118 residents attended and not one supported amalgamation, hope you are successful in holding one, District 8 (Tracadie) is having one tonight. What needs to happen is, one, pros and cons of amalgamation, two, a cost benefit analysis be done on every component (infrastructure, surpluses, personnel, fixed assets, Antigonish Electrical Utility, County landfill, etc) of the amalgamation, three, a 5 year business plan that residents can see, a complete picture. A plebiscite is required after this is done, 6 people in the county should not decide this fundamental issue which will effect future generations. If you want to discuss, please call or email anytime.

> Harris

> 902-318-8333

>

>

> -----Original Message-----

> From: Valerie Chugg --

> Sent: April 25, 2022 3:08 PM

> To: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>

> Subject:

>

> Hello Harris. I am from District 1. I attended a session at Mini Trail Community Centre in Lakevale. I've emailed Mary MacLellan requesting a meeting with her constituents. I have heard that because of a conflict you do not get to vote when the time comes and wonder how this could possibly happen when you are elected to represent your constituents? How could the employment of a relative have any bearing on what you hear from these meetings and allow you to form an opinion? This process is not overly transparent. Seems like a 'done deal'. The timing of this process, the length of time before next municipal elections and from what I hear a few councillors who will not be offering in next election appears that a few councillors and perhaps mayor and warden are running this process. I understand what consolidation means. I do not think that citizens are getting a fair voice in this! Sincerely, Valerie Chugg.

>

> Sent from my iPhone

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: April 28, 2022 9:55 AM
To: Alisha Bowie
Subject: Accepted: Consolidation - St. Andrews Community

From: [Alisha Bowie](#)
To: [Council S.T.](#); [Shirlyn Donovan](#)
Subject: St. Andrews Community Consultation
Date: April 28, 2022 9:55:10 AM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

Good Morning,

Sorry for the confusion, when I sent out the new dates yesterday I accidentally put St. Andrews on May 2nd. St. Andrews is on May 5th. I have adjusted and resent the invite.

Thank you
Alisha

Alisha Bowie, Administrative Assistant
285 Beech Hill Rd
Beech Hill, NS B2G 0B4
Phone: (902) 863-1117
Fax: (902) 863-5751

MUNICIPALITY OF THE COUNTY OF
ANTIGONISH

Beth Schumacher

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: April 28, 2022 10:46 AM
To: Alisha Bowie
Subject: Accepted: Consolidation - St. Andrews Community

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: April 28, 2022 10:50 AM
To: harris.mcnamara@gmail.com
Subject: RE:

Valerie;

I have been doing all I can to get more solid information instead of vague answers (e.g. its up to transition committee, up to new council, etc.). It got me a conflict of interest letter (lol). We had over 130 residents last night in Tracadie and 118 at a community meeting in Havre Boucher on April 18th, all residents want a plebiscite and to slowdown the process until we get answers. You could organize a community meeting in your district? Found great support in District 8&9.

Probably the best thing is to encourage residents to email all councillors (names, addresses and phone number in attachment)

-----Original Message-----

From: Valerie Chugg
Sent: April 28, 2022 9:48 AM
To: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Re:

Harris thanks for responding to my email. It appears to me that the mayor and warden think consolidation is a fair accompli. Someone has to take the lead on requesting a plebiscite. It needs to be well organized and it needs to happen quickly. Any ideas? Valerie

Sent from my iPhone

> On Apr 27, 2022, at 4:42 PM, Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca> wrote:

>

> Valerie;

> I agree with you! I have been the most vocal councillor wanting to get answer to questions, I have not been provided answers or answers were lacking. I had a meeting with the community on April 18th to get input, 118 residents attended and not one supported amalgamation, hope you are successful in holding one, District 8 (Tracadie) is having one tonight. What needs to happen is, one, pros and cons of amalgamation, two, a cost benefit analysis be done on every component (infrastructure, surpluses, personnel, fixed assets, Antigonish Electrical Utility, County landfill, etc) of the amalgamation, three, a 5 year business plan that residents can see, a complete picture. A plebiscite is required after this is done, 6 people in the county should not decide this fundamental issue which will effect future generations. If you want to discuss, please call or email anytime.

> Harris

> 902-318-8333

>

>

> -----Original Message-----

> **From:** Valerie Chugg

> **Sent:** April 25, 2022 3:08 PM

> **To:** Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>

> **Subject:**

>

> Hello Harris. I am from District 1. I attended a session at Mini Trail Community Centre in Lakevale. I've emailed Mary MacLellan requesting a meeting with her constituents. I have heard that because of a conflict you do not get to vote when the time comes and wonder how this could possibly happen when you are elected to represent your constituents? How could the employment of a relative have any bearing on what you hear from these meetings and allow you to form an opinion? This process is not overly transparent. Seems like a 'done deal'. The timing of this process, the length of time before next municipal elections and from what I hear a few councillors who will not be offering in next election appears that a few councillors and perhaps mayor and warden are running this process. I understand what consolidation means. I do not think that citizens are getting a fair voice in this! Sincerely, Valerie Chugg.

>

> Sent from my iPhone



Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Harris - Potential Actions

2 messages

Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Thu, Apr 28, 2022 at 11:06 AM

To: valeriechugg

Valerie;

I have been doing all I can to get more solid information instead of vague answers (e.g. its up to transition committee, up to new council, etc.). It got me a conflict of interest letter (lol). We had over 130 residents last night in Tracadie and 118 at a community meeting in Havre Boucher on April 18th, all residents want a plebiscite and to slow down the process until we get answers..

1. You could organize a community meeting in your district? Found great support in District 8&9. at these meetings.
2. Probably the best thing is to encourage residents to email all councillors (names, addresses and phone number in attachment) . I gave out sheets with this information at meetings.
3. Some residents of the county are writing media outlets with their concerns with lack meaningful information.
4. There could be a could challenge by making application to the NS Supreme Court.
5. Show up in numbers at council meetings to protest. I you want to make a presentation you have to call and get on agenda.
7. Encourage residents to join website for plebiscite.
6. Contact your provincial representative, Michelle Tompkins or in my case Greg Morrow...

Harris
902-318-8333

2 attachments

 **Contact Numbers.docx**
14K

 **Contact Numbers.docx**
14K

Valerie Chugg
To: Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Thu, Apr 28, 2022 at 1:05 PM

I'm

Speaking to members of my community. I think the way you are being treated in just wrong. You were elected by your constituents who now have no say and you have no say. Is that democracy?

Sent from my iPhone

> On Apr 28, 2022, at 11:07 AM, Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com> wrote:

>
>

[Quoted text hidden]

> <Contact Numbers.docx>
> <Contact Numbers.docx>

Harris McNamara

From: Bernadette Landry
Sent: April 28, 2022 1:07 PM
To: Harris McNamara
Subject: Re: Plebiscite

Done

Get [Outlook for Android](#)

From: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Sent: Thursday, April 28, 2022 9:03:32 AM
To: Bernadette Landry
Subject: RE: Plebiscite

Bernadette;
Please ensure you email or call other councillors, I want the same thing as you.
Harris

From: Bernadette Landry
Sent: April 27, 2022 11:37 PM
To: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Plebiscite

We want a plebiscite!!

Get [Outlook for Android](#)

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: April 28, 2022 1:21 PM
To: Bernadette Landry
Subject: RE: Plebiscite

Bernadette
Thanks very much, we will make a difference, I am optimistic.
Have a great day!
Harris

From: Bernadette Landry
Sent: April 28, 2022 1:07 PM
To: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Re: Plebiscite

Done

Get [Outlook for Android](#)

From: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Sent: Thursday, April 28, 2022 9:03:32 AM
To: Bernadette Landry <bernadette.landry@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: RE: Plebiscite

Bernadette;
Please ensure you email or call other councillors, I want the same thing as you.
Harris

From: Bernadette Landry <bernadette.landry@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Sent: April 27, 2022 11:37 PM
To: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Plebiscite

We want a plebiscite!!

Get [Outlook for Android](#)



Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Notification Numbers

1 message

Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Thu, Apr 28, 2022 at 1:45 PM

To: gdboudreau

Thank very very much
Harris



Contact Numbers.docx

14K

Harris McNamara

From: Barbara Jean Brosha
Sent: April 28, 2022 1:49 PM
To: Owen McCarron
Cc: Shawn Brophy; John Dunbar; Harris McNamara
Subject: Plebiscite

Hi Owen

We are writing you today to request that we have a vote of the plans to consolidate the town and county.

Sent from my iPad

Harris McNamara

From: Kim Fougere -9-
Sent: April 28, 2022 2:22 PM
To: Harris McNamara
Subject: Plebiscite

Hi harris

Thank you for your support 😊

I am from district 9 Frankville

I am Emailing all of the representatives to ask for a plebiscite to discuss the consolidation / amalgamation of Antigonish town and county. Everyone should be informed and allowed a vote on what they wish to choose.

I do not believe amalgamation is in the best interest of residents

There are many questions and not enough information provided

Is the school in the county going to be closed?

What about our taxes, will they increase? What are the benefits to my family and I to want this?

What by laws will change for the county? Do you have a list of everything that will affect us? How will funding change for our volunteer fire departments, recreation department, schools, roads, etc?

Please call me 902 or email back thank you

Kim fougere

Sent from my iPhone

Hughie Stewart

From: Kim Fougere < >
Sent: April 28, 2022 2:24 PM
To: Hughie Stewart
Subject: Plebiscite

Hi Hugie

I am from district 9 Frankville

I Emailed my representative Harris McNamara and all of the representatives to ask for a plebiscite to discuss the consolidation / amalgamation of Antigonish town and county. Everyone should be informed and allowed a vote on what they wish to choose.

I do not believe amalgamation is in the best interest of residents

There are many questions and not enough information provided

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What about our taxes, will they increase? What are the benefits to my family and I to want this?

What by laws will change for the county? Do you have a list of everything that will affect us? How will funding change for our volunteer fire departments, recreation department, schools, roads, etc?

Please call me or email back thank you

Kim fougere

Sent from my iPhone

Beth Schumacher

From: Kim Fougere <[redacted]>
Sent: April 28, 2022 2:26 PM
To: Owen McCarron
Subject: Plebiscite

Hi Owen

I am from district 9 Frankville

I Emailed my representative Harris McNamara and all of the representatives to ask for a plebiscite to discuss the consolidation / amalgamation of Antigonish town and county. Everyone should be informed and allowed a vote on what they wish to choose.

I do not believe amalgamation is in the best interest of residents

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What about our taxes, will they increase? What are the benefits to my family and I to want this?

What by laws will change for the county? Do you have a list of everything that will affect us? How will funding change for our volunteer fire departments, recreation department, schools, roads, etc?

Please call me 902 [redacted] or email back thank you

Kim fougere

Hughie Stewart

From: Susan Morell < >
Sent: April 28, 2022 2:36 PM
To: Hughie Stewart
Subject: Plebiscite Plea

Dear Mr. Stewart

After attending a community meeting about the proposed municipal consolidation, we are asking that community members in each district have a vote in this process !

Thank you,
Susan and John Morell
Old Antigonish Rd, Afton
NS B0H 1A0

Hughie Stewart

From: Elsie Pettipas <[REDACTED]>
Sent: April 28, 2022 2:37 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: Gary Mattie; John Dunbar; Shawn Brophy; Remi Deveau; mmaclelan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca; Donnie MacDonald; Hughie Stewart; Bill MacFarlane; harris.mcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca
Subject: Amalgamation

My husband Willam pettipas and I are saying NO to the amalgamation Yours truly Elsie Pettipas

Sent from my iPad

Harris McNamara

From: Susan Morell
Sent: April 28, 2022 2:39 PM
To: Harris McNamara
Subject: Plebiscite plea

Dear Mr. McNamara

After attending a community meeting about the proposed municipal consolidation, we are asking that community members in each district have a vote in this process !

Thank you,
Susan and John Morell
Old Antigonish Rd, Afton
NS B0H 1A0

Beth Schumacher

From: Susan Morell <
Sent: April 28, 2022 2:42 PM
To: Owen McCarron
Subject: Plebiscite Plea

Dear Mr. McCarron

After attending a community meeting about the proposed municipal consolidation, we are asking that community members in each district have a vote in this process !

Thank you,
Susan and John Morell
Old Antigonish Rd, Afton
NS B0H 1A0

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: April 28, 2022 4:13 PM
To: info@antigonish.ca
Subject: FW: Plebiscite plea

From: Susan Morell <
Sent: April 28, 2022 2:39 PM
To: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Plebiscite plea

Dear Mr. McNamara

After attending a community meeting about the proposed municipal consolidation, we are asking that community members in each district have a vote in this process !

Thank you,
Susan and John Morell
1 Old Antigonish Rd, Afton
NS B0H 1A0

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: April 28, 2022 4:15 PM
To: Susan Morell
Subject: RE: Plebiscite plea

Susan /John;

Thank you, its great that you and John are contacting councillors, we will be successful!

Harris

From: Susan Morell
Sent: April 28, 2022 2:39 PM
To: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Plebiscite plea

Dear Mr. McNamara

After attending a community meeting about the proposed municipal consolidation, we are asking that community members in each district have a vote in this process !

Thank you,
Susan and John Morell
1 Old Antigonish Rd, Afton
NS BOH 1A0

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: April 28, 2022 4:16 PM
To: info@antigonish.ca
Subject: FW: Plebiscite

-----Original Message-----

From: Kim Fougere <
Sent: April 28, 2022 2:22 PM
To: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Plebiscite

Hi harris

Thank you for your support 😊

I am from district 9 Frankville

I am Emailing all of the representatives to ask for a plebiscite to discuss the consolidation / amalgamation of Antigonish town and county. Everyone should be informed and allowed a vote on what they wish to choose.

I do not believe amalgamation is in the best interest of residents

There are many questions and not enough information provided

Is the school in the county going to be closed?

What about our taxes, will they increase? What are the benefits to my family and I to want this?

What by laws will change for the county? Do you have a list of everything that will affect us? How will funding change for our volunteer fire departments, recreation department, schools, roads, etc?

Please call me 902 - - - - - or email back thank you

Kim fougere

Sent from my iPhone

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: April 28, 2022 4:18 PM
To: Kim Fougere
Subject: RE: Plebiscite

Kim;

As always we can count on you, we are putting pressure on the Warden and Councillors. Had over 200 at Tracadie last night, everyone supported us. It was great.

Harris

-----Original Message-----

From: Kim Fougere
Sent: April 28, 2022 2:22 PM
To: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Plebiscite

Hi harris

Thank you for your support 😊

I am from district 9 Frankville

I am Emailing all of the representatives to ask for a plebiscite to discuss the consolidation / amalgamation of Antigonish town and county. Everyone should be informed and allowed a vote on what they wish to choose.

I do not believe amalgamation is in the best interest of residents

There are many questions and not enough information provided

Is the school in the county going to be closed?

What about our taxes, will they increase? What are the benefits to my family and I to want this?

What by laws will change for the county? Do you have a list of everything that will affect us? How will funding change for our volunteer fire departments, recreation department, schools, roads, etc?

Please call me 902 / or email back thank you

Kim fougere

Sent from my iPhone

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: April 28, 2022 4:25 PM
To: Barbara Jean Brosha
Subject: RE: Plebiscite

Babara;

Thanks so much for taking the time to contact the councillors, you are making a difference. We have to convince councillors to vote against amalgamation. We had over 200 in the session in Tracadie last night and 118 in Havre Boucher on April 18th for a community meeting . Your voice is important!

If you are related to Sylvester Brosha, say hello to him for me, I worked with him at NSPI for many years.

Have a great evening!

Harris

-----Original Message-----

From: Barbara Jean Brosha
Sent: April 28, 2022 1:49 PM
To: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Cc: Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Plebiscite

Hi Owen

We are writing you today to request that we have a vote of the plans to consolidate the town and county.

Sent from my iPad

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: April 28, 2022 4:26 PM
To: info@antigonish.ca
Subject: FW: Plebiscite

-----Original Message-----

From: Barbara Jean Brophy
Sent: April 28, 2022 1:49 PM
To: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Cc: Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Plebiscite

Hi Owen

We are writing you today to request that we have a vote of the plans to consolidate the town and county.

Sent from my iPad

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: April 28, 2022 4:30 PM
To: Anne-Marie Long
Subject: RE: Checking your receipt of this email

Ann Marie;

I had 19 emails today that were sent to most councillors, especially from Heatherton, we are making progress.
Harris

From: Anne-Marie Long
Sent: April 28, 2022 4:08 PM
To: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Checking your receipt of this email

Hughie Stewart

From: Joe MacDonald ·
Sent: April 28, 2022 4:39 PM
To: mayor@townofantigonish.ca; Mary MacLellan; wcornier@townofantigonish.ca; Donnie MacDonald; dmacinnis@townofantigonish.ca; Hughie Stewart; scameron@townofantigonish.ca; Shawn Brophy; amurray@townofantigonish.ca; Remi Deveau; mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca; droberts@townofantigonish.ca; Owen McCarron; John Dunbar; Gary Mattie; Harris McNamara
Cc: Mary Jane McDonald
Subject: Exploration of Consolidation

Good afternoon.

MJ and I are writing in support of Consolidation and as such we wish to encourage your continued leadership in supporting this direction for the people of Antigonish.

Many of you know me and MJ either through my work at StFX and MJ at the Casket and likely more through our extensive volunteer work within our community. From my many and varied roles at StFX where for over 40 years I worked closely with Mayors and Wardens and Councilor's and staff on many StFX related projects to the Terry Fox Run, the Antigonish Roadrunners Club, the Antigonish Area Partnership, the Chamber of Commerce, XFM, St. Martha's Regional Hospital Foundation and the Antigonish Highland Games and other organizations. For 5 years, as Dean of Students, I sat on the Antigonish Police and Licensing Commission board.

Why do I share these many engagements? Well, quite simply, I chose many years ago to make Antigonish home because of the people who live here and the career and volunteer opportunities offered by this community. Antigonish is a special place that has so much to offer its citizens and its citizens have so much to offer to this community. I have lived in Lanark, on Old South River Road, on West Street and in St. Joseph's. Within each of these communities 'I lived there' and, at the same time, in Antigonish, and I/we continue to live in Antigonish! In my travels, when asked I say I am from "Antigonish". Town and County boundaries, wherever they exist, have no defining features to me and MJ.

For us, Consolidation is timely as it provides a current and futuristic context. We have read the "Fact Sheets" and understand clearly the directions proposed. I have also seen some of the rhetoric on social media sites that quite frankly it is not factual.

Thank you for your time and please stay the course.

Cheers, Joe

JOE MACDONALD
CEREMONIAL OFFICER

St. Francis Xavier University
Antigonish, Nova Scotia · Canada
ceremonialoffice@stfx.ca
www.stfx.ca



ST. FRANCIS XAVIER
UNIVERSITY

More2gether
Two doses means fewer restrictions

I acknowledge that StFX is located in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq People.

Harris McNamara

From: Barbara Jean Brosha
Sent: April 28, 2022 4:45 PM
To: Harris McNamara
Subject: Re: Plebiscite

Thanks for your quick reply, Sylvester says Hi also . Thanks for all your doing for the county.
Thanks
Bunny.

Sent from my iPad

> On Apr 28, 2022, at 4:25 PM, Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca> wrote:
>
> Babara;
> Thanks so much for taking the time to contact the councillors, you are making a difference. We have to convince
councillors to vote against amalgamation. We had over 200 in the session in Tracadie last night and 118 in Havre
Boucher on April 18th for a community meeting . Your voice is important!
> If you are related to Sylvester Brosha, say hello to him for me, I worked with him at NSPI for many years.
> Have a great evening!
> Harris
>
> -----Original Message-----
> From: Barbara Jean Brosha
> Sent: April 28, 2022 1:49 PM
> To: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
> Cc: Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Harris
McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
> Subject: Plebiscite
>
> Hi Owen
> We are writing you today to request that we have a vote of the plans to consolidate the town and county.
>
> Sent from my iPad

Beth Schumacher

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: April 28, 2022 5:36 PM
To: Joe MacDonald
Subject: Re: Exploration of Consolidation

Thank you Joe & MJ
Owen

Sent from my iPhone

On Apr 28, 2022, at 4:39 PM, Joe MacDonald wrote:

Good afternoon.

MJ and I are writing in support of Consolidation and as such we wish to encourage your continued leadership in supporting this direction for the people of Antigonish.

Many of you know me and MJ either through my work at StFX and MJ at the Casket and likely more through our extensive volunteer work within our community. From my many and varied roles at StFX where for over 40 years I worked closely with Mayors and Wardens and Councilor's and staff on many StFX related projects to the Terry Fox Run, the Antigonish Roadrunners Club, the Antigonish Area Partnership, the Chamber of Commerce, XFM, St. Martha's Regional Hospital Foundation and the Antigonish Highland Games and other organizations. For 5 years, as Dean of Students, I sat on the Antigonish Police and Licensing Commission board.

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For us, Consolidation is timely as it provides a current and futuristic context. We have read the "Fact Sheets" and understand clearly the directions proposed. I have also seen some of the rhetoric on social media sites that quite frankly it is not factual.

Thank you for your time and please stay the course.

Cheers, Joe

JOE MACDONALD
CEREMONIAL OFFICER
St. Francis Xavier University
Antigonish, Nova Scotia · Canada

ceremonialoffice@stfx.ca
www.stfx.ca



**ST. FRANCIS XAVIER
UNIVERSITY**

More²gether
Two doses means fewer restrictions

I acknowledge that StFX is located in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq People.

Harris McNamara

From: Terry Penny
Sent: April 28, 2022 5:45 PM
To: Harris McNamara
Subject: Re: Proposed consolidation of Antigonish Town and County

Good evening

Do you know and are you able to share the position of each councillor (including the warden) on consolidation and if they support (and will vote for) the requested plebiscite ?

Additionally I gave an interview today to Aaron Beswick, Saltwire on the need for a plebiscite. We need more public pressure on this issue. It should be published by the weekend

Thanks. Terry
Sent from my iPhone

> On Apr 27, 2022, at 4:22 PM, Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca> wrote:

>

> Terry;

> You are correct, Shawn Brophy (District 4) and myself (District 9) have been informed that we are in "Potential Conflict of Interest" from the CEO and Warden and I have received an opinion from a law firm that I am not. It was also pointed out and highlighted different sections of the conflict of interest legislation including potential penalty which is up to 25,000 dollar fine, default to one year in jail if I don't declare a conflict by the CAO & warden. I have a daughter that works for the town not the county and that is what their basis for the conflict. It was told to me that my district would not have a vote (even more reason for a plebiscite) and residents could contact other councillors. I have been very vocal from the beginning of this process, the county is growing, the town is not. Financially we are in great shape and growing everyday. We in District 9 had a community meeting with 118 residents attending on April 18th, every one wanted a plebiscite, actually there is one in Tracadie tonight. I am available to talk anytime.

> Harris

> 902-318-8333

>

> -----Original Message-----

> From: Terry Penny

> Sent: April 26, 2022 10:17 AM

> To: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>

> Subject: Re: Proposed consolidation of Antigonish Town and County

>

> Thank you for your efforts to try and see this issue managed in a respectful and democratic manner. As this issue was never included in any mandates by those running for election, regardless of one's position on this issue it needs to be voted on by the people not the 17 elected to represent us. And if my understanding is correct that number has now be reduced to 15 as you and Mr Brophy have been excluded from the right to represent your area. Just how far are our elected representatives, those elected by a vote, going to allow the democratic right to vote slide before we end this travesty? Terry Penny

>

> Sent from my iPhone

>

>> On Apr 26, 2022, at 9:51 AM, Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca> wrote:

>>

>> Terry;

>> Thank you for your support. I had a community meeting In Havre Boucher Community Centre on April 18th to inform residents of my opposition to amalgamation. In Tracadie they are having a similar meeting tomorrow night and I have encouraged all residents of the county to contact their councillor and warden. This is not a done deal!

>> Harris

>> 902-318-8333

>>

>> -----Original Message-----

>> From: Terry Penny <

>> Sent: April 25, 2022 12:53 PM

>> To: Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Donnie MacDonald

>> <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shawn Brophy

>> <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Owen McCarron

>> <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Gary Mattie

>> <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Bill MacFarlane

>> <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>

>> Subject: Proposed consolidation of Antigonish Town and County

>>

>> Councillors and Warden of Antigonish County

>>

>> I view the presentation of the proposed consolidation of Antigonish Town and County as an insult to the people of Antigonish County. The community sessions presented only one perspective with many unanswered questions. In your attempt to deny community discussion, you are fuelling a frenzy of fear and intimidation resulting in the very community divisiveness you stated you wanted to avoid if open discussions were allowed.

>>

>>

>> As elected representatives of the people of Antigonish County, none of you were elected on a platform of consolidation/amalgamation. Without a mandate from the community, an issue of this magnitude demands the voice of the people. This voice can only be achieved through a plebiscite.

>>

>> To deny a vote "because social media presents people with misinformation" is further insult to your community.

>>

>> Please allow this issue to be voted on by the people it affects.

>>

>> Sincerely

>>

>> Terry Penny,

>> Lakevale, NS

Beth Schumacher

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: April 28, 2022 6:53 PM
To: Glenn Horne
Subject: Fwd: Exploration of Consolidation

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Joe MacDonald
Date: April 28, 2022 at 4:39:31 PM ADT
To: mayor@townofantigonish.ca, Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, wcmormier@townofantigonish.ca, Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, dmacinnis@townofantigonish.ca, Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, scameron@townofantigonish.ca, Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, amurray@townofantigonish.ca, Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca, droberts@townofantigonish.ca, Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Cc: Mary Jane McDonald
Subject: Exploration of Consolidation

Good afternoon.

MJ and I are writing in support of Consolidation and as such we wish to encourage your continued leadership in supporting this direction for the people of Antigonish.

Many of you know me and MJ either through my work at StFX and MJ at the Casket and likely more through our extensive volunteer work within our community. From my many and varied roles at StFX where for over 40 years I worked closely with Mayors and Wardens and Councilor's and staff on many StFX related projects to the Terry Fox Run, the Antigonish Roadrunners Club, the Antigonish Area Partnership, the Chamber of Commerce, XFM, St. Martha's Regional Hospital Foundation and the Antigonish Highland Games and other organizations. For 5 years, as Dean of Students, I sat on the Antigonish Police and Licensing Commission board.

Why do I share these many engagements? Well, quite simply, I chose many years ago to make Antigonish home because of the people who live here and the career and volunteer opportunities offered by this community. Antigonish is a special place that has so much to offer its citizens and its citizens have so much to offer to this community. I have lived in Lanark, on Old South River Road, on West Street and in St. Joseph's. Within each of these communities 'I lived there' and, at the same time, in Antigonish, and I/we continue to live in Antigonish! In my travels, when asked I say I am from "Antigonish". Town and County boundaries, wherever they exist, have no defining features to me and MJ.

For us, Consolidation is timely as it provides a current and futuristic context. We have read the “Fact Sheets” and understand clearly the directions proposed. I have also seen some of the rhetoric on social media sites that quite frankly it is not factual.

Thank you for your time and please stay the course.

Cheers, Joe

JOE MACDONALD
CEREMONIAL OFFICER

St. Francis Xavier University
Antigonish, Nova Scotia · Canada
ceremonialoffice@stfx.ca
www.stfx.ca



ST. FRANCIS XAVIER
UNIVERSITY



I acknowledge that StFX is located in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq People.



Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Councillor & Warden Contact Numbers

1 message

Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Thu, Apr 28, 2022 at 7:17 PM

To: hildaannmyette ^"

Hilda / Billy;

Thank you for your call, it is so important that residents do just what you guys are doing. I have attached names, phone numbers and email addresses for all. Do not hesitate to call if I can help with anything.

Have a great evening!

Harris

318-8333



Contact Numbers.docx

14K



Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Councillors and Warden's Contact information

2 messages

Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Thu, Apr 28, 2022 at 7:33 PM

To: russellpettipas <russellpettipas@gmail.com>

Russell / Mary;
thank you guys for supporting the effort to not amalgamate with the town.
I have the contact information attached.
have a great evening!
Harris

 **Contact Numbers.docx**
14K

Russell Pettipas

Thu, Apr 28, 2022 at 8:40 PM

To: Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Got it, thanks!
[Quoted text hidden]



Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Councillors and Warden's Contact information

2 messages

Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Thu, Apr 28, 2022 at 7:33 PM

To: russellpettipas

Russell / Mary;
thank you guys for supporting the effort to not amalgamate with the town.
I have the contact information attached.
have a great evening!
Harris

 **Contact Numbers.docx**
14K

Russell Pettipas

Thu, Apr 28, 2022 at 8:40 PM

To: Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Got it, thanks!
[Quoted text hidden]

Hughie Stewart

From: pauline spin < >
Sent: April 28, 2022 8:12 PM
To: Hughie Stewart
Subject: Consolidation

Greetings,

I am writing concerning the proposed consolidation. I want you to know that my voice needs to be heard with regards to this matter. As a concerned constituent, I feel that I should have a vote; therefore, I am demanding a plebiscite.

Sincerely yours,

Pauline Spin

Reading Recovery Teacher/ Math Interventionist "Be the reason somebody smiles today!"

Beth Schumacher

From: pauline spin <
Sent: April 28, 2022 8:17 PM
To: Owen McCarron
Subject: Consolidation

Greetings,

I am writing concerning the proposed consolidation. I want you to know that my voice needs to be heard with regards to this matter. As a concerned constituent, I feel that I should have a vote; therefore, I am demanding a plebiscite.

Sincerely yours,

Pauline Spin

Reading Recovery Teacher/ Math Interventionist

“Be the reason somebody smiles today!”

Harris McNamara

From: pauline spin
Sent: April 28, 2022 8:22 PM
To: Harris McNamara
Subject: Consolidation

Greetings,

I am writing concerning the proposed consolidation. I want you to know that my voice needs to be heard with regards to this matter. As a concerned constituent, I feel that I should have a vote; therefore, I am demanding a plebiscite.

Sincerely yours,
Pauline Spin
Reading Recovery Teacher/ Math Interventionist

“Be the reason somebody smiles today!”


Hughie Stewart

From: Concerned Citizen via Change.org <change@t.change.org>
Sent: April 28, 2022 8:52 PM
To: Hughie Stewart
Subject: New petition to you: Petition For A Plebiscite Over The Consolidation Of Antigonish Town and County



Hughie Stewart: you've been listed as a decision maker

Concerned Citizen started a petition on Change.org and listed you as a decision maker. Learn more about Concerned Citizen's petition and how you can respond:



Concerned Citizen is petitioning Hughie Stewart (Council)

Petition For A Plebiscite Over The Consolidation Of Antigonish Town and County

The residents of the County of Antigonish do not agree with the joint councils in deciding about Consolidation of Town and County into one regional government. We want a plebiscite as per section 53 of the Nova Scotia Municipal Government...

[View the petition](#)

WHAT YOU CAN DO

- 1. View the petition:** Learn about the petition and its supporters.
You will receive updates as new supporters sign the petition so you can see who is signing and why.
- 2. Respond to the petition:** Post a response to let the petition supporters know you're listening, say whether you agree with their call to action, or ask them for more information.
- 3. Continue the dialogue:** Read the comments posted by petition supporters and continue the dialogue so that others can see you're an engaged leader who is willing to participate in open discussion.

CHANGE.ORG FOR DECISION MAKERS

On Change.org, decision makers like you connect directly with people around the world to resolve issues. Learn more.

This notification was sent to hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca, the address listed as a decision maker.

This is a one-time notification to the email address listed above. You will not receive any further notifications regarding this petition from us.

[Privacy policy](#)

We'd love to hear from you! [Contact us](#) through our help centre.

Change.org · 548 Market St #29993, San Francisco, CA 94104-5401, USA

Harris McNamara

From: Concerned Citizen via Change.org <change@t.change.org>
Sent: April 28, 2022 8:52 PM
To: Harris McNamara
Subject: New petition to you: Petition For A Plebiscite Over The Consolidation Of Antigonish Town and County



Harris McNamara: you've been listed as a decision maker

Concerned Citizen started a petition on Change.org and listed you as a decision maker. Learn more about Concerned Citizen's petition and how you can respond:



Concerned Citizen is petitioning Harris McNamara (Counc)

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CHANGE.ORG FOR DECISION MAKERS

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This notification was sent to hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca, the address listed as a decision maker.

This is a one-time notification to the email address listed above. You will not receive any further notifications regarding this petition from us.

[Privacy policy](#)

We'd love to hear from you! [Contact us](#) through our help centre.

Change.org · 548 Market St #29993, San Francisco, CA 94104-5401, USA

Shirlyn Donovan

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: Thursday, April 28, 2022 9:46 PM
To: info
Subject: Fwd: Consolidation

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: pauline spin <pauline.spin@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Date: April 28, 2022 at 8:17:17 PM ADT
To: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Consolidation

Greetings,

I am writing concerning the proposed consolidation. I want you to know that my voice needs to be heard with regards to this matter. As a concerned constituent, I feel that I should have a vote; therefore, I am demanding a plebiscite.

Sincerely yours,
Pauline Spin
Reading Recovery Teacher/ Math Interventionist

“Be the reason somebody smiles today!”

Hughie Stewart

From: Marina Anstey ·
Sent: April 28, 2022 9:55 PM
To: Laurie M. Boucher; Owen McCarron
Cc: wcmormier@townofantigonish.ca; Diane Roberts; MARY FARRELL; Donnie MacInnis; Andrew Murray; SEAN CAMERON; Mary MacLellan; Donnie MacDonald; John Dunbar; Remi Deveau; Hughie Stewart; Shawn Brophy; Gary Mattie; Harris McNamara; Bill MacFarlane
Subject: Consolidation

To the Mayor, Warden and all Town and County Councillors,

I am writing this to all of you to let you know I am in favor of having a vote on consolidation. This decision should not be up to the the Mayor, Warden and some councillors for thousands of residents in Antigonish Town and County. What makes you all think that you can speak for the residents of Antigonish Town and County?

There will be many effects to both Town and County as a result of a consolidation. Your reasons for not holding a plebiscite on this issue are weak. So let's be frank. Your reasons for not wanting to hold a vote is because you know how the residents feel. I haven't spoken to one person who thinks this is a good idea.

And to not allow some councillors to vote or have a say in this, is really unfair. Saying it is a conflict of interest is not honest. We all know there is very little land left in town, and that most of the land that can be developed is in county. Of course, we also know that the Mayor and Warden are developers. And the consultant says we are not going there because it is too complicated. How is it too complicated? What are you hiding? We should all be informed as to what this is going to do to both Town and County in the future. You were all elected to speak for the residents, not make decisions as important as this one for us. That should be up to the residents themselves.

As a resident of town, I am very much in favor of a vote on this issue. I am sending this to all the town and county councilors, though I know some of them have had no say in this. I truly hope that you all look at this again and allow a vote.

Sincerely,

Marina Anstey

Archie Street

Hughie Stewart

From: Brandy Bowman <
Sent: April 28, 2022 10:02 PM
To: Mary MacLellan; Donnie MacDonald; Hughie Stewart; Shawn Brophy; Remi Deveau; Owen McCarron; John Dunbar; Gary Mattie; Harris McNamara; Bill MacFarlane; mayor@townofantigonish.ca; wcornier@townofantigonish.ca; dmacinnis@townofantigonish.ca; scameron@townofantigonish.ca; amurray@townofantigonish.ca; mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca; droberts@townofantigonish.ca
Subject: County & Town consolidation

Dear Representative of the **Residents** of Antigonish County and Town:

Our names are Brandy Bowman and Shane Pettipas, residents of District 9. We are writing to formally request information and a plebiscite vote concerning the amalgamation or consolidation of Antigonish County and Town.

We would like there to be transparency of information in relation to the possible consolidation/amalgamation of Antigonish County and Town. As tax paying residents and voters, it is not unreasonable to expect access to information that we have all paid for. One can only assume you all have access to this information, since, as you have stated, "You've [been] elected (...) to do what's in [our] best interest", and we fully expect all representatives to not only have a vote, but to place that vote with full knowledge and understanding of the consequences to the constituents that make up her or his district.

Referencing a Letter to the Editor written by Anne Marie Long, and published in the Wednesday, April 20, 2022 edition of "The Casket", the minimum list of information the residents would like to see become public knowledge is as follows:

- 1.
- 2.
3. The pros and cons take away from the reviews of other mergers
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
7. The current state of each municipality's infrastructure
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.
11. The fiscal breakdown of town only (or county only) systems or investments
- 12.
- 13.
- 14.
15. The future of county fire service and costs (ie: insurance) related to losing fire
16. stations to county residents (realistically assuming that town is not likely to lose ANY services)
- 17.
- 18.
- 19.
20. Breakdown of financial responsibility for protective services
- 21.

Lastly, after speaking to a number of county residents, we haven't yet heard from anyone who feels an amalgamation or consolidation is in our best interest, while the town council seems keen on this solution. With that in mind, we would like to request a plebiscite vote, as it would be the logical solution, once the aforementioned information has been freely distributed to all residents.

Respectfully,

Brandy Bowman & Shane Pettipas
Havre Boucher

Beth Schumacher

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: April 28, 2022 10:21 PM
To: info
Subject: Fwd: Consolidation

Warden Owen McCarron
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
902-968-1290

Begin forwarded message:

From: Marina Anstey
Date: April 28, 2022 at 9:55:28 PM ADT
To: "Laurie M. Boucher" <loucher@townofantigonish.ca>, Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Cc: wgormier@townofantigonish.ca, Diane Roberts <droboterts@townofantigonish.ca>, MARY FARRELL <mf Farrell@townofantigonish.ca>, Donnie MacInnis <dmacinnis@townofantigonish.ca>, Andrew Murray <amurray@townofantigonish.ca>, SEAN CAMERON <scameron@townofantigonish.ca>, Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Consolidation

To the Mayor, Warden and all Town and County Councillors,

I am writing this to all of you to let you know I am in favor of having a vote on consolidation. This decision should not be up to the Mayor, Warden and some councillors for thousands of residents in Antigonish Town and County. What makes you all think that you can speak for the residents of Antigonish Town and County?

There will be many effects to both Town and County as a result of a consolidation. Your reasons for not holding a plebiscite on this issue are weak. So let's be frank. Your reasons for not wanting to hold a vote is because you know how the residents feel. I haven't spoken to one person who thinks this is a good idea.

And to not allow some councillors to vote or have a say in this, is really unfair. Saying it is a conflict of interest is not honest. We all know there is very little land left in town, and that most of the land that can be developed is in county. Of course, we also know that the Mayor and Warden are developers. And the consultant says we are not going there because it is too complicated. How is it too complicated? What are you hiding? We should all be informed as to what this is going to do to both Town and County in the future. You were all elected to speak for the residents, not make decisions as important as this one for us. That should be up to the residents themselves.

As a resident of town, I am very much in favor of a vote on this issue. I am sending this to all the town and county councilors, though I know some of them have had no say in this. I truly hope that you all look at this again and allow a vote.

Sincerely,

Marina Anstey

Archie Street

Shirlyn Donovan

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: Thursday, April 28, 2022 10:29 PM
To: info
Subject: Fwd: Plebiscite Plea

Warden Owen McCarron
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
902-968-1290

Begin forwarded message:

From: Susan Morell <susan.morell@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Date: April 28, 2022 at 2:42:30 PM ADT
To: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Plebiscite Plea

Dear Mr. McCarron

After attending a community meeting about the proposed municipal consolidation, we are asking that community members in each district have a vote in this process !

Thank you,
Susan and John Morell
Old Antigonish Rd, Afton
NS B0H 1A0

Shirlyn Donovan

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: Thursday, April 28, 2022 10:31 PM
To: info
Subject: Fwd: Plebiscite

Warden Owen McCarron
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
902-968-1290

Begin forwarded message:

From: Barbara Jean Brosha <
Date: April 28, 2022 at 1:49:04 PM ADT
To: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Cc: Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, John Dunbar
<jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Plebiscite

Hi Owen

We are writing you today to request that we have a vote of the plans to consolidate the town and county.

Sent from my iPad

Harris McNamara

From: Town of Antigonish Mayor <mayor@townofantigonish.ca>
Sent: April 28, 2022 10:50 PM
To: Joe MacDonald; Mary MacLellan; Willie Cormier; Donnie MacDonald; Donnie MacInnis; Hughie Stewart; Sean Cameron; Shawn Brophy; Andrew Murray; Remi Deveau; Mary Farrell; Diane Roberts; Owen McCarron; John Dunbar; Gary Mattie; Harris McNamara
Cc: Mary Jane McDonald
Subject: Re: [EXTERNAL] Exploration of Consolidation

Thank you for taking the time to write to us Joe and MJ and, as well, thank you for your kind words.

Best,
Laurie

Mayor Laurie Boucher
Town of Antigonish
274 Main St, Antigonish, N.S
B2G 2C4
mayor@townofantigonish.ca | 902•870•7795

From: Joe MacDonald
Sent: Thursday, April 28, 2022 4:39:27 PM
To: Town of Antigonish Mayor <mayor@townofantigonish.ca>; mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Willie Cormier <wcormier@townofantigonish.ca>; Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Donnie MacInnis <dmacinnis@townofantigonish.ca>; hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Sean Cameron <scameron@townofantigonish.ca>; sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Andrew Murray <amurray@townofantigonish.ca>; rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Mary Farrell <mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca>; Diane Roberts <droboters@townofantigonish.ca>; omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Cc: Mary Jane McDonald n>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Exploration of Consolidation

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Good afternoon.

MJ and I are writing in support of Consolidation and as such we wish to encourage your continued leadership in supporting this direction for the people of Antigonish.

Many of you know me and MJ either through my work at StFX and MJ at the Casket and likely more through our extensive volunteer work within our community. From my many and varied roles at StFX where for over 40 years I worked closely with Mayors and Wardens and Councilor's and staff on many StFX related projects to the Terry Fox Run, the Antigonish Roadrunners Club, the Antigonish Area Partnership, the Chamber of Commerce, XFM, St. Martha's

Regional Hospital Foundation and the Antigonish Highland Games and other organizations. For 5 years, as Dean of Students, I sat on the Antigonish Police and Licensing Commission board.

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For us, Consolidation is timely as it provides a current and futuristic context. We have read the "Fact Sheets" and understand clearly the directions proposed. I have also seen some of the rhetoric on social media sites that quite frankly it is not factual.

Thank you for your time and please stay the course.

Cheers, Joe

JOE MACDONALD
CEREMONIAL OFFICER

St. Francis Xavier University
Antigonish, Nova Scotia · Canada

ceremonialoffice@stfx.ca

www.stfx.ca



ST. FRANCIS XAVIER
UNIVERSITY

More²gether
Two doses means fewer restrictions

I acknowledge that StFX is located in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq People.

Harris McNamara

From: Kim Fougere <kfougere@antigonishcountyns.ca>
Sent: April 29, 2022 1:08 AM
To: Harris McNamara
Subject: Re: Plebiscite

I heard and that's great Harris! I have to get the date and time for the meeting and plug in phone so I can go. You are so on with stuff you amaze me always keep up the great work. See you Sunday

Sent from my iPhone

> On Apr 28, 2022, at 4:17 PM, Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca> wrote:
>
> Kim;
> As always we can count on you, we are putting pressure on the Warden and Councillors. Had over 200 at Tracadie last night, everyone supported us. It was great.
> Harris
>
> -----Original Message-----
> From: Kim Fougere <kfougere@antigonishcountyns.ca>
> Sent: April 28, 2022 2:22 PM
> To: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
> Subject: Plebiscite
>
> Hi harris
>
> Thank you for your support 😊
>
> I am from district 9 Frankville
> I am Emailing all of the representatives to ask for a plebiscite to discuss the consolidation / amalgamation of Antigonish town and county. Everyone should be informed and allowed a vote on what they wish to choose.
>
> I do not believe amalgamation is in the best interest of residents
>
> There are many questions and not enough information provided
>
> Is the school in the county going to be closed?
> What about our taxes, will they increase? What are the benefits to my family and I to want this?
> What by laws will change for the county? Do you have a list of everything that will affect us? How will funding change for our volunteer fire departments, recreation department, schools, roads, etc?
>
> Please call me 902 431-1111 or email back thank you
>
> Kim fougere
> Sent from my iPhone

Hughie Stewart

From: Maureen Donnelly <
Sent: April 29, 2022 9:38 AM
To: Owen McCarron; Gary Mattie; John Dunbar; Shawn Brophy; Remi Deveau; Mary MacLellan; Donnie MacDonald; Hughie Stewart; Bill MacFarlane; harris.macnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca
Subject: Amalgamation

I Maureen Donnelly of Tracadie has attended the meeting on the 27th of April there is clearly not enough information at this time to agree with the amalgamation Yours truly Maureen Donnelly

Sent from Maureen's iPhone

Hughie Stewart

From: craig langley <craig.langley@antigonish.ca>
Sent: April 29, 2022 9:50 AM
To: Owen McCarron
Cc: Gary Mattie; John Dunbar; Shawn Brophy; Remi Deveau; mmaclellan@antigonish.ns.ca; Donnie MacDonald; Hughie Stewart; Bill MacFarlane; harris.mcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca
Subject: Town and County of Antigonish possible consolidation

Good Morning,

I would like to start off by thanking you all for your continued service to the residents of Antigonish County, and all you do for each of your districts. Over the last number of weeks, I have been reading and reviewing all the information provided on the antigonish.ca website, attending community meetings, and talking to community members from Antigonish county and surrounding counties on the possible consolidation of town and county. Based on all the information provided I feel there is insufficient detailed information available to council members and residents to make an informed decision on possible consolidation. The process of consolidation has moved way to fast from exploring the idea to council voting on it, a decision of this magnitude should not be left to the councillors to vote on alone, especially when all councillors may not be able to vote due to conflicts of interest. There are too many unanswered questions that we will not know for sure until consolidation is finalized which will be too late, ex. tax structure, policing services, condition of town infrastructure, potential tax hikes, district boundaries, number of councillors, equal representation of districts, size of municipal staff etc. etc. etc.

This possible consolidation should be postponed immediately, reviewed thoroughly, and after that if the councils of both Town and County feel that consolidation is the best path forward, then have a plebiscite and let the residents of the county and town vote.

Regards,

Craig Langley
East Tracadie Road
Antigonish County

Harris McNamara

From: Laurie M. Boucher <loucher@townofantigonish.ca>
Sent: April 29, 2022 9:59 AM
To: Marina Anstey; Owen McCarron
Cc: Willie Cormier; Diane Roberts; Mary Farrell; Donnie MacInnis; Andrew Murray; Sean Cameron; Mary MacLellan; Donnie MacDonald; John Dunbar; Remi Deveau; Hughie Stewart; Shawn Brophy; Gary Mattie; Harris McNamara; Bill MacFarlane; Lise Roy; Kate Gorman
Subject: Re: [EXTERNAL] Consolidation

Good morning Marina,
Thank you for your email. I'll start by saying all of council had equal say in this...Every council member voted to explore consolidation, every councillor agreed to the guiding principles and every councillor agreed to the process and Communication Plan.

I understand, from your email, that you want a plebiscite on this issue but you haven't shared your concerns about consolidation.

I would be happy to meet with you at any time or you can attend a session and we can talk there. In any case, my door is always open for a discussion. I've copied Lise Roy on this, if you would like to meet, Lise would be able to make an appointment at your convenience.

Best,
Laurie

Mayor Laurie Boucher
Town of Antigonish
274 Main St, Antigonish, N.S
B2G 2C4
mayor@townofantigonish.ca | 902•870•7795

From: Marina Anstey
Sent: Thursday, April 28, 2022 9:55:24 PM
To: Laurie M. Boucher <loucher@townofantigonish.ca>; Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Cc: Willie Cormier <wcormier@townofantigonish.ca>; Diane Roberts <droboterts@townofantigonish.ca>; Mary Farrell <mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca>; Donnie MacInnis <dmacinnis@townofantigonish.ca>; Andrew Murray <amurray@townofantigonish.ca>; Sean Cameron <scameron@townofantigonish.ca>; Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Donnie Macdonald <dmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Sean Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Bill McFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Consolidation

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

To the Mayor, Warden and all Town and County Councillors,

I am writing this to all of you to let you know I am in favor of having a vote on consolidation. This decision should not be up to the Mayor, Warden and some councillors for thousands of residents in Antigonish Town and County. What makes you all think that you can speak for the residents of Antigonish Town and County?

There will be many effects to both Town and County as a result of a consolidation. Your reasons for not holding a plebiscite on this issue are weak. So let's be frank. Your reasons for not wanting to hold a vote is because you know how the residents feel. I haven't spoken to one person who thinks this is a good idea.

And to not allow some councillors to vote or have a say in this, is really unfair. Saying it is a conflict of interest is not honest. We all know there is very little land left in town, and that most of the land that can be developed is in county. Of course, we also know that the Mayor and Warden are developers. And the consultant says we are not going there because it is too complicated. How is it too complicated? What are you hiding? We should all be informed as to what this is going to do to both Town and County in the future. You were all elected to speak for the residents, not make decisions as important as this one for us. That should be up to the residents themselves.

As a resident of town, I am very much in favor of a vote on this issue. I am sending this to all the town and county councilors, though I know some of them have had no say in this. I truly hope that you all look at this again and allow a vote.

Sincerely,

Marina Anstey

Archie Street

Hughie Stewart

From: Angela Langley <angela@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Sent: April 29, 2022 10:11 AM
To: Owen McCarron
Cc: Gary Mattie; John Dunbar; Shawn Brophy; Remi Deveau; Mary MacLellan; Donnie MacDonald; Hughie Stewart; Bill MacFarlane; harris.mcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca
Subject: Town and County Consolidation

Good Morning,

I am sending this email to ask Antigonish County council to please have a plebiscite and let the residents of the Town and County decide the outcome of a potential consolidation.

Angela Langley
East Tracadie Road
Antigonish County

Beth Schumacher

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: April 28, 2022 10:20 PM
To: info
Subject: Fwd: County & Town consolidation

Warden Owen McCarron
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
902-968-1290

Begin forwarded message:

From: Brandy Bowman ·
Date: April 28, 2022 at 10:02:23 PM ADT
To: Mary MacLellan <mmacellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, mayor@townofantigonish.ca, wcmormier@townofantigonish.ca, dmacinnis@townofantigonish.ca, scameron@townofantigonish.ca, amurray@townofantigonish.ca, mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca, droberts@townofantigonish.ca
Subject: County & Town consolidation

Hughie Stewart

From: Jonathan Spin <
Sent: April 29, 2022 10:23 AM
To: Hughie Stewart
Subject: Consolidation

Greetings,

I am writing concerning the proposed consolidation. I want you to know that my voice needs to be heard with regards to this matter. As a concerned constituent, I feel that I should have a vote; therefore, I am demanding a plebiscite.

Sincerely yours,

Jonathan Spin

Get [Outlook for Android](#)

Harris McNamara

From: Jonathan Spin
Sent: April 29, 2022 10:27 AM
To: Harris McNamara
Subject: Consolidation

Greetings,

I am writing concerning the proposed consolidation. I want you to know that my voice needs to be heard with regards to this matter. As a concerned constituent, I feel that I should have a vote; therefore, I am demanding a plebiscite.

Sincerely yours,

Jonathan Spin

Get [Outlook for Android](#)

Harris McNamara

From: craig langley <craiglangley@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Sent: April 29, 2022 10:27 AM
To: Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Fw: Town and County of Antigonish possible consolidation

From: craig langley
Sent: April 29, 2022 9:50 AM
To: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Cc: Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; harris.mcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <harris.mcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Town and County of Antigonish possible consolidation

Good Morning,

I would like to start off by thanking you all for your continued service to the residents of Antigonish County, and all you do for each of your districts. Over the last number of weeks, I have been reading and reviewing all the information provided on the antigonish.ca website, attending community meetings, and talking to community members from Antigonish county and surrounding counties on the possible consolidation of town and county. Based on all the information provided I feel there is insufficient detailed information available to council members and residents to make an informed decision on possible consolidation. The process of consolidation has moved way to fast from exploring the idea to council voting on it, a decision of this magnitude should not be left to the councillors to vote on alone, especially when all councillors may not be able to vote due to conflicts of interest. There are too many unanswered questions that we will not know for sure until consolidation is finalized which will be too late, ex. tax structure, policing services, condition of town infrastructure, potential tax hikes, district boundaries, number of councillors, equal representation of districts, size of municipal staff etc. etc. etc.

This possible consolidation should be postponed immediately, reviewed thoroughly, and after that if the councils of both Town and County feel that consolidation is the best path forward, then have a plebiscite and let the residents of the county and town vote.

Regards,

Craig Langley
7 East Tracadie Road
Antigonish County

Beth Schumacher

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: April 28, 2022 10:29 PM
To: info
Subject: Fwd: Plebiscite Plea

Warden Owen McCarron
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
902-968-1290

Begin forwarded message:

From: Susan Morell
Date: April 28, 2022 at 2:42:30 PM ADT
To: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Plebiscite Plea

Dear Mr. McCarron

After attending a community meeting about the proposed municipal consolidation, we are asking that community members in each district have a vote in this process !

Thank you,
Susan and John Morell
Old Antigonish Rd, Afton
NS B0H 1A0

Beth Schumacher

From: Glenn Horne
Sent: April 29, 2022 11:10 AM
To: Owen McCarron; mayor@townofantigonish.ca; Willie Cormier; Hughie Stewart; Jeff Lawrence; Shirlyn Donovan; Kate Gorman; Alisha Bowie
Subject: NO Consolidation Steering Committee Meeting on May 3

We will just connect before one of our engagement sessions instead if needed.

Have a great weekend!
Glenn



Glenn Horne | Chief Administrative Officer
Municipality of the County of Antigonish | 902.863.1117
285 Beech Hill Road, Beech Hill, NS | B2G 0B4
www.antigonishcounty.ns.ca | [@AntigonishCo](https://www.instagram.com/AntigonishCo) | [facebook](https://www.facebook.com/AntigonishCo)

Honour Yesterday, Act Today, Inspire Tomorrow

Beth Schumacher

From: Kate Gorman <kgorman@townofantigonish.ca>
Sent: April 29, 2022 12:12 PM
To: Owen McCarron
Cc: Shirlyn Donovan
Subject: CBC Interview Request - Wednesday In Person

Hi Owen,

Jon Tattrie from CBC is going to be in Antigonish on Wednesday and would like to do an interview on consolidation.

I think it would be best if the interview is done together, it helps keep the messaging consistent and you can help share the responsibility of answering the questions.

Would Wednesday, May 4 at 1 p.m. work for your schedule? I can reserve Town Hall Council Chambers or even just use Laurie's office, or we can go to the Municipal Office if that is easier.

I've also asked him for clarification if it will be a video interview or just a sit-down conversation. Once I confirm that piece I will let you know.

Thanks!

Kate

Kate Gorman
Marketing and Communications Officer
kgorman@townofantigonish.ca
902-318-6758
www.townofantigonish.ca | [Nest Cam](#) | [Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#)

Beth Schumacher

From: Jonathan Spin
Sent: April 29, 2022 12:22 PM
To: Owen McCarron
Subject: Consolidation

Greetings,

I am writing concerning the proposed consolidation. I want you to know that my voice needs to be heard with regards to this matter. As a concerned constituent, I feel that I should have a vote; therefore, I am demanding a plebiscite.

Sincerely yours,

Jonathan Spin

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Beth Schumacher

From: Kate Gorman <kgorman@townofantigonish.ca>
Sent: April 29, 2022 12:15 PM
To: Owen McCarron
Cc: Shirlyn Donovan
Subject: Re: CBC Interview Request - Wednesday In Person

It would be a TV interview. Prerecorded, not live.

They would then use the interview to develop the story for radio and online.

Kate Gorman
Marketing and Communications Officer
kgorman@townofantigonish.ca
902-318-6758
www.townofantigonish.ca | [Nest Cam](#) | [Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#)

From: Kate Gorman
Sent: Friday, April 29, 2022 12:11 PM
To: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Cc: Shirlyn Donovan <shirlyn.donovan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: CBC Interview Request - Wednesday In Person

Hi Owen,

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Kate

Kate Gorman
Marketing and Communications Officer
kgorman@townofantigonish.ca
902-318-6758
www.townofantigonish.ca | [Nest Cam](#) | [Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#)

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: April 29, 2022 12:51 PM
To: craig langley
Subject: RE: Town and County of Antigonish possible consolidation

Craig;

Very good email, it covers all the pertinent concerns of residents. I appreciate your efforts and of course asking questions at our meeting in Tracadie. Don't forget the meeting on May 04, 2022 with the consultants, mayor, warden and councillors that show up, it is important to getting this amalgamation stopped. It is my opinion an exercise in sunshine with flowery answers and vague answers.

Thanks

Harris

From: craig langley
Sent: April 29, 2022 10:27 AM
To: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Fw: Town and County of Antigonish possible consolidation

From: craig langley
Sent: April 29, 2022 9:50 AM
To: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Cc: Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; mmaclellan@antigonish.ns.ca <mmaclellan@antigonish.ns.ca>; dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; harris.mcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <harris.mcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Town and County of Antigonish possible consolidation

Good Morning,

I would like to start off by thanking you all for your continued service to the residents of Antigonish County, and all you do for each of your districts. Over the last number of weeks, I have been reading and reviewing all the information provided on the antigonish.ca website, attending community meetings, and talking to community members from Antigonish county and surrounding counties on the possible consolidation of town and county. Based on all the information provided I feel there is insufficient detailed information available to council members and residents to make an informed decision on possible consolidation. The process of consolidation has moved way to fast from exploring the idea to council voting on it, a decision of this magnitude should not be left to the councillors to vote on alone, especially when all councillors may not be able to vote due to conflicts of interest. There are too many unanswered questions that we will not know for sure until consolidation is finalized which will be too late, ex. tax structure, policing services, condition of town infrastructure, potential tax hikes, district boundaries, number of councillors, equal representation of districts, size of municipal staff etc. etc. etc.

This possible consolidation should be postponed immediately, reviewed thoroughly, and after that if the councils of both Town and County feel that consolidation is the best path forward, then have a plebiscite and let the residents of the county and town vote.

Regards,

Craig Langley
East Tracadie Road
Antigonish County

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: April 29, 2022 12:55 PM
To: 'info@antigonish.ca'
Subject: FW: Consolidation

From: Jonathan Spin
Sent: April 29, 2022 10:27 AM
To: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Consolidation

Greetings,

I am writing concerning the proposed consolidation. I want you to know that my voice needs to be heard with regards to this matter. As a concerned constituent, I feel that I should have a vote; therefore, I am demanding a plebiscite.

Sincerely yours,

Jonathan Spin

Get [Outlook for Android](#)

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: April 29, 2022 12:58 PM
To: 'info@antigonish.ca'
Subject: FW: County & Town consolidation

From: Brandy Bowman
Sent: April 28, 2022 10:02 PM
To: Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; mayor@townofantigonish.ca; wgormier@townofantigonish.ca; dmaccinnis@townofantigonish.ca; scameron@townofantigonish.ca; amurray@townofantigonish.ca; mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca; droberts@townofantigonish.ca
Subject: County & Town consolidation

Dear Representative of the **Residents** of Antigonish County and Town:

Our names are Brandy Bowman and Shane Pettipas, residents of District 9. We are writing to formally request information and a plebiscite vote concerning the amalgamation or consolidation of Antigonish County and Town.

We would like there to be transparency of information in relation to the possible consolidation/amalgamation of Antigonish County and Town. As tax paying residents and voters, it is not unreasonable to expect access to information that we have all paid for. One can only assume you all have access to this information, since, as you have stated, "You've [been] elected (...) to do what's in [our] best interest", and we fully expect all representatives to not only have a vote, but to place that vote with full knowledge and understanding of the consequences to the constituents that make up her or his district.

Referencing a Letter to the Editor written by Anne Marie Long, and published in the Wednesday, April 20, 2022 edition of "The Casket", the minimum list of information the residents would like to see become public knowledge is as follows:

- 1.
- 2.
3. The pros and cons take away from the reviews of other mergers
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
7. The current state of each municipality's infrastructure
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.
11. The fiscal breakdown of town only (or county only) systems or investments
- 12.

- 13.
- 14.
15. The future of county fire service and costs (ie: insurance) related to losing fire
16. stations to county residents (realistically assuming that town is not likely to lose ANY services)
- 17.
- 18.
- 19.
20. Breakdown of financial responsibility for protective services
- 21.

Lastly, after speaking to a number of county residents, we haven't yet heard from anyone who feels an amalgamation or consolidation is in our best interest, while the town council seems keen on this solution. With that in mind, we would like to request a plebiscite vote, as it would be the logical solution, once the aforementioned information has been freely distributed to all residents.

Respectfully,

Brandy Bowman & Shane Pettipas
Havre Boucher

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: April 29, 2022 12:59 PM
To: info@antigonish.ca
Subject: FW: Consolidation

-----Original Message-----

From: Marina Anstey
Sent: April 28, 2022 9:55 PM
To: Laurie M. Boucher <loucher@townofantigonish.ca>; Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Cc: wgormier@townofantigonish.ca; Diane Roberts <droboters@townofantigonish.ca>; MARY FARRELL <mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca>; Donnie MacInnis <dmacinnis@townofantigonish.ca>; Andrew Murray <amurray@townofantigonish.ca>; SEAN CAMERON <scameron@townofantigonish.ca>; Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Consolidation

To the Mayor, Warden and all Town and County Councillors,

I am writing this to all of you to let you know I am in favor of having a vote on consolidation. This decision should not be up to the Mayor, Warden and some councillors for thousands of residents in Antigonish Town and County. What makes you all think that you can speak for the residents of Antigonish Town and County?

There will be many effects to both Town and County as a result of a consolidation. Your reasons for not holding a plebiscite on this issue are weak. So let's be frank. Your reasons for not wanting to hold a vote is because you know how the residents feel. I haven't spoken to one person who thinks this is a good idea.

And to not allow some councillors to vote or have a say in this, is really unfair. Saying it is a conflict of interest is not honest. We all know there is very little land left in town, and that most of the land that can be developed is in county. Of course, we also know that the Mayor and Warden are developers. And the consultant says we are not going there because it is too complicated. How is it too complicated? What are you hiding? We should all be informed as to what this is going to do to both Town and County in the future. You were all elected to speak for the residents, not make decisions as important as this one for us. That should be up to the residents themselves.

As a resident of town, I am very much in favor of a vote on this issue. I am sending this to all the town and county councilors, though I know some of them have had no say in this. I truly hope that you all look at this again and allow a vote.

Sincerely,

Marina Anstey

Archie Street

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: April 29, 2022 1:07 PM
To: Marina Anstey
Subject: RE: Consolidation

Marina;

Thank you for your input, I agree with your assessment as a handful of individuals should not make a decision that will effect our children and grandchildren. I voted to explore consolidation but I need information. Its too quick, what is the rush? A cost benefit analysis needs to be done on every component of amalgamation (infrastructure, surpluses, County landfill, Antigonish Utility, personnel, etc.), this way we know the pros and cons and can make a decision.

I certainly appreciate residents getting involved!!

Harris McNamara
Councillor Antigonish County
902-318-8333

-----Original Message-----

From: Marina Anstey
Sent: April 28, 2022 9:55 PM
To: Laurie M. Boucher <loucher@townofantigonish.ca>; Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Cc: wcornier@townofantigonish.ca; Diane Roberts <droberts@townofantigonish.ca>; MARY FARRELL <mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca>; Donnie MacInnis <dmacinnis@townofantigonish.ca>; Andrew Murray <amurray@townofantigonish.ca>; SEAN CAMERON <scameron@townofantigonish.ca>; Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
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As a resident of town, I am very much in favor of a vote on this issue. I am sending this to all the town and county councilors, though I know some of them have had no say in this. I truly hope that you all look at this again and allow a vote.

Sincerely,

Marina Anstey

Archie Street

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: April 29, 2022 1:08 PM
To: info@antigonish.ca
Subject: FW: Consolidation

-----Original Message-----

From: pauline spin
Sent: April 28, 2022 8:22 PM
To: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Consolidation

Greetings,

I am writing concerning the proposed consolidation. I want you to know that my voice needs to be heard with regards to this matter. As a concerned constituent, I feel that I should have a vote; therefore, I am demanding a plebiscite.

Sincerely yours,
Pauline Spin
Reading Recovery Teacher/ Math Interventionist

"Be the reason somebody smiles today!"

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: April 29, 2022 1:11 PM
To: Terry Penny
Subject: RE: Proposed consolidation of Antigonish Town and County

Terry;
I agree with many of your points, give me a call to discuss.
Harris
902-318-8333

-----Original Message-----

From: Terry Penny
Sent: April 28, 2022 5:45 PM
To: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Re: Proposed consolidation of Antigonish Town and County

Good evening

Do you know and are you able to share the position of each councillor (including the warden) on consolidation and if they support (and will vote for) the requested plebiscite ?

Additionally I gave an interview today to Aaron Beswick, Saltwire on the need for a plebiscite. We need more public pressure on this issue. It should be published by the weekend

Thanks. Terry
Sent from my iPhone

> On Apr 27, 2022, at 4:22 PM, Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca> wrote:

>

> Terry;

> You are correct, Shawn Brophy (District 4) and myself (District 9) have been informed that we are in "Potential Conflict of Interest" from the CEO and Warden and I have received an opinion from a law firm that I am not. It was also pointed out and highlighted different sections of the conflict of interest legislation including potential penalty which is up to 25,000 dollar fine, default to one year in jail if I don't declare a conflict by the CAO & warden. I have a daughter that works for the town not the county and that is what their basis for the conflict. It was told to me that my district would not have a vote (even more reason for a plebiscite) and residents could contact other councillors. I have been very vocal from the beginning of this process, the county is growing, the town is not. Financially we are in great shape and growing everyday. We in District 9 had a community meeting with 118 residents attending on April 18th, every one wanted a plebiscite, actually there is one in Tracadie tonight. I am available to talk anytime.

> Harris

> 902-318-8333

>

> -----Original Message-----

> **From:** Terry Penny

> **Sent:** April 26, 2022 10:17 AM

> **To:** Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>

> **Subject:** Re: Proposed consolidation of Antigonish Town and County

>

> Thank you for your efforts to try and see this issue managed in a respectful and democratic manner. As this issue was never included in any mandates by those running for election, regardless of one's position on this issue it needs to be voted on by the people not the 17 elected to represent us. And if my understanding is correct that number has now been reduced to 15 as you and Mr Brophy have been excluded from the right to represent your area. Just how far are our elected representatives, those elected by a vote, going to allow the democratic right to vote slide before we end this travesty? Terry Penny

>
> Sent from my iPhone

>> On Apr 26, 2022, at 9:51 AM, Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca> wrote:

>>

>> Terry;

>> Thank you for your support. I had a community meeting In Havre Boucher Community Centre on April 18th to inform residents of my opposition to amalgamation. In Tracadie they are having a similar meeting tomorrow night and I have encouraged all residents of the county to contact their councillor and warden. This is not a done deal!

>> Harris

>> 902-318-8333

>>

>> -----Original Message-----

>> From: Terry Penny

>> Sent: April 25, 2022 12:53 PM

>> To: Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Donnie MacDonald

<dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shawn Brophy

<sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Owen McCarron

<omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Gary Mattie

<gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Bill MacFarlane

<bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>

>> Subject: Proposed consolidation of Antigonish Town and County

>>

>> Councillors and Warden of Antigonish County

>>

>> I view the presentation of the proposed consolidation of Antigonish Town and County as an insult to the people of Antigonish County. The community sessions presented only one perspective with many unanswered questions. In your attempt to deny community discussion, you are fuelling a frenzy of fear and intimidation resulting in the very community divisiveness you stated you wanted to avoid if open discussions were allowed.

>>

>>

>> As elected representatives of the people of Antigonish County, none of you were elected on a platform of consolidation/amalgamation. Without a mandate from the community, an issue of this magnitude demands the voice of the people. This voice can only be achieved through a plebiscite.

>>

>> To deny a vote "because social media presents people with misinformation" is further insult to your community.

>>

>> Please allow this issue to be voted on by the people it affects.

>>

>> Sincerely

>>

>> Terry Penny,

>> Lakevale, NS

Shirlyn Donovan

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: Friday, April 29, 2022 1:13 PM
To: info
Subject: Fwd: Consolidation

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Jonathan Spin <
Date: April 29, 2022 at 12:21:33 PM ADT
To: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Consolidation

Greetings,

I am writing concerning the proposed consolidation. I want you to know that my voice needs to be heard with regards to this matter. As a concerned constituent, I feel that I should have a vote; therefore, I am demanding a plebiscite.

Sincerely yours,
Jonathan Spin

Get [Outlook for Android](#)

Beth Schumacher

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: April 29, 2022 1:15 PM
To: Kate Gorman
Cc: Shirlyn Donovan
Subject: Re: CBC Interview Request - Wednesday In Person

Hi Kate. That works. Could you pop a calendar invite. Thanks
Owen

Sent from my iPhone

On Apr 29, 2022, at 12:11 PM, Kate Gorman <kgorman@townofantigonish.ca> wrote:

Hi Owen,

Jon Tattrie from CBC is going to be in Antigonish on Wednesday and would like to do an interview on consolidation.

I think it would be best if the interview is done together, it helps keep the messaging consistent and you can help share the responsibility of answering the questions.

Would Wednesday, May 4 at 1 p.m. work for your schedule? I can reserve Town Hall Council Chambers or even just use Laurie's office, or we can go to the Municipal Office if that is easier.

I've also asked him for clarification if it will be a video interview or just a sit-down conversation. Once I confirm that piece I will let you know.

Thanks!

Kate

Kate Gorman
Marketing and Communications Officer
kgorman@townofantigonish.ca
902-318-6758
www.townofantigonish.ca | [Nest Cam](#) | [Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#)

Beth Schumacher

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: April 29, 2022 1:17 PM
To: info
Subject: Fwd: Town and County Consolidation

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Angela Langley <angela.langley@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Date: April 29, 2022 at 10:11:16 AM ADT
To: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Cc: Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, harris.mcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca
Subject: Town and County Consolidation

Good Morning,

I am sending this email to ask Antigonish County council to please have a plebiscite and let the residents of the Town and County decide the outcome of a potential consolidation.

Angela Langley
East Tracadie Road
Antigonish County

Beth Schumacher

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: April 29, 2022 1:19 PM
To: info
Subject: Fwd: Town and County of Antigonish possible consolidation

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: craig langley < >
Date: April 29, 2022 at 9:50:24 AM ADT
To: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Cc: Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, mmaclellan@antigonish.ns.ca, Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, harris.mcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca
Subject: Town and County of Antigonish possible consolidation

Good Morning,

I would like to start off by thanking you all for your continued service to the residents of Antigonish County, and all you do for each of your districts. Over the last number of weeks, I have been reading and reviewing all the information provided on the antigonish.ca website, attending community meetings, and talking to community members from Antigonish county and surrounding counties on the possible consolidation of town and county. Based on all the information provided I feel there is insufficient detailed information available to council members and residents to make an informed decision on possible consolidation. The process of consolidation has moved way to fast from exploring the idea to council voting on it, a decision of this magnitude should not be left to the councillors to vote on alone, especially when all councillors may not be able to vote due to conflicts of interest. There are too many unanswered questions that we will not know for sure until consolidation is finalized which will be too late, ex. tax structure, policing services, condition of town infrastructure, potential tax hikes, district boundaries, number of councillors, equal representation of districts, size of municipal staff etc. etc. etc.

This possible consolidation should be postponed immediately, reviewed thoroughly, and after that if the councils of both Town and County feel that consolidation is the best path forward, then have a plebiscite and let the residents of the county and town vote.

Regards,

Craig Langley
East Tracadie Road

Antigonish County

Antigonish County

Shirlyn Donovan

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: Friday, April 29, 2022 1:19 PM
To: info
Subject: Fwd: Amalgamation

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Maureen Donnelly <maureen.donnelly@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Date: April 29, 2022 at 9:37:59 AM ADT
To: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, harris.macnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca
Subject: Amalgamation

I Maureen Donnelly of Tracadie has attended the meeting on the 27th of April there is clearly not enough information at this time to agree with the amalgamation

Yours truly
Maureen Donnelly

Sent from Maureen's iPhone



Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Contacts for Councillors & Warden

1 message

Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Fri, Apr 29, 2022 at 2:28 PM

To: fougere

Clayton;
Below are emails, phone numbers and names of Councillors & Warden.
Harris

Contact Numbers & Email Addresses

NAME	EMAIL	PHONE
Owen McCarron (Warden)	omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca	PHONE 902-968-1290
Gary Mattie (Councillor)	gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca	PHONE 902-968-1175
John Dunbar (Councillor)	jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca	PHONE 902-338-2200
Shawn Brophy (Councillor)	sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca	PHONE 902-863-8485
Remi Deveau (Councillor)	rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca	PHONE 902-870-2866
Mary MacLellan(Councillor)	mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca	PHONE 902-863-1101
Don MacDonald (Councillor)	dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca	PHONE 902-863-5449
Hughie Stewart (D. Warden)	hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca	PHONE 902-872-0420
Bill MacFarlane (Councillor)	bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca	PHONE 902-870-7737
Harris McNamara(Councillor)	hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca	PHONE 902-318-8333

Beth Schumacher

From: Kate Gorman <kgorman@townofantigonish.ca>
Sent: April 29, 2022 2:35 PM
To: Owen McCarron
Cc: Shirlyn Donovan
Subject: Re: [EXTERNAL] Re: CBC Interview Request - Wednesday In Person

Yes I will send one along.

Kate Gorman
Marketing and Communications Officer
kgorman@townofantigonish.ca
902-318-6758
www.townofantigonish.ca | [Nest Cam](#) | [Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#)

From: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Sent: Friday, April 29, 2022 1:15 PM
To: Kate Gorman <kgorman@townofantigonish.ca>
Cc: Shirlyn Donovan <shirlyn.donovan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Re: CBC Interview Request - Wednesday In Person

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hi Kate. That works. Could you pop a calendar invite. Thanks
Owen

Sent from my iPhone

On Apr 29, 2022, at 12:11 PM, Kate Gorman <kgorman@townofantigonish.ca> wrote:

Hi Owen,

Jon Tattrie from CBC is going to be in Antigonish on Wednesday and would like to do an interview on consolidation.

I think it would be best if the interview is done together, it helps keep the messaging consistent and you can help share the responsibility of answering the questions.

Would Wednesday, May 4 at 1 p.m. work for your schedule? I can reserve Town Hall Council Chambers or even just use Laurie's office, or we can go to the Municipal Office if that is easier.

I've also asked him for clarification if it will be a video interview or just a sit-down conversation. Once I confirm that piece I will let you know.

Thanks!

Kate

Kate Gorman

Marketing and Communications Officer

kgorman@townofantigonish.ca

902-318-6758

www.townofantigonish.ca | [Nest Cam](#) | [Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#)



Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Councillors & Warden's Contact information

2 messages

Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Fri, Apr 29, 2022 at 3:12 PM

To: Damian.fougere

Damian / Miriam;

Good to speak to you today and thanks for listening. Residents of the county will not be better off amalgamating with the town of Antigonish. It makes no sense. Residents need to email their councillor and say we want a plebiscite, we don't want 6 people deciding for 15,000 . Please honor the resident's right to vote on this issue, it will affect our children and grandchildren. Especially your Councillor Shawn Brophy and the Warden Owen McCarron need emails, all if you have time.

I apologize to Miriam for the for the grammar,I didn't do too well in Carmalita's class (lol)

Harris

902-318-8333

NAME	EMAIL	PHONE
Owen McCarron (Warden)	omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca	PHONE 902-968-1290
Gary Mattie (Councillor)	gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca	PHONE 902-968-1175
John Dunbar (Councillor)	jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca	PHONE 902-338-2200
Shawn Brophy (Councillor)	sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca	PHONE 902-863-8485
Remi Deveau (Councillor)	rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca	PHONE 902-870-2866
Mary MacLellan(Councillor)	mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca	PHONE 902-863-1101
Don MacDonald (Councillor)	dmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca	PHONE 902-863-5449
Hughie Stewart (D. Warden)	hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca	PHONE 902-872-0420
Bill MacFarlane (Councillor)	bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca	PHONE 902-870-7737
Harris McNamara(Councillor)	hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca	PHONE 902-318-8333

r) hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca PHONE 902-318-8333

Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Wed, May 4, 2022 at 3:05 PM

To: damien.fougere

Clayton Fougere

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Date: April 29, 2022 at 3:12:46 PM ADT

To: .m

Subject: Councillors & Warden's Contact information

[Quoted text hidden]

Beth Schumacher

From: Kate Gorman <kgorman@townofantigonish.ca>
Sent: April 29, 2022 3:42 PM
To: Owen McCarron
Cc: Shirlyn Donovan
Subject: Re: [EXTERNAL] Re: CBC Interview Request - Wednesday In Person

I forgot we have scheduled an online engagement session for Wednesday from 12-1:30, if I move the interview to 2:30 would that be ok?

Thanks,

Kate

Kate Gorman
Marketing and Communications Officer
kgorman@townofantigonish.ca
902-318-6758
www.townofantigonish.ca | [Nest Cam](#) | [Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#)

From: Kate Gorman <kgorman@townofantigonish.ca>
Sent: Friday, April 29, 2022 2:35 PM
To: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Cc: Shirlyn Donovan <shirlyn.donovan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Re: [EXTERNAL] Re: CBC Interview Request - Wednesday In Person

Yes I will send one along.

Kate Gorman
Marketing and Communications Officer
kgorman@townofantigonish.ca
902-318-6758
www.townofantigonish.ca | [Nest Cam](#) | [Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#)

From: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Sent: Friday, April 29, 2022 1:15 PM
To: Kate Gorman <kgorman@townofantigonish.ca>
Cc: Shirlyn Donovan <shirlyn.donovan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Re: CBC Interview Request - Wednesday In Person

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Hi Kate. That works. Could you pop a calendar invite. Thanks
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Sent from my iPhone

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Would Wednesday, May 4 at 1 p.m. work for your schedule? I can reserve Town Hall Council Chambers or even just use Laurie's office, or we can go to the Municipal Office if that is easier.

I've also asked him for clarification if it will be a video interview or just a sit-down conversation. Once I confirm that piece I will let you know.

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Marketing and Communications Officer
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902-318-6758
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Beth Schumacher

From: Kate Gorman <kgorman@townofantigonish.ca>
Sent: April 29, 2022 3:44 PM
To: Owen McCarron
Cc: Shirlyn Donovan
Subject: Re: [EXTERNAL] Re: CBC Interview Request - Wednesday In Person

Disregard that! I am getting my dates confused! Thank goodness it is Friday.

Interview is still Wednesday at 1.

Kate Gorman

Marketing and Communications Officer

kgorman@townofantigonish.ca

902-318-6758

www.townofantigonish.ca | [Nest Cam](#) | [Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#)

From: Kate Gorman <kgorman@townofantigonish.ca>
Sent: Friday, April 29, 2022 3:41 PM
To: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Cc: Shirlyn Donovan <shirlyn.donovan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Re: [EXTERNAL] Re: CBC Interview Request - Wednesday In Person

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Kate

Kate Gorman

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kgorman@townofantigonish.ca

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Cc: Shirlyn Donovan <shirlyn.donovan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Re: [EXTERNAL] Re: CBC Interview Request - Wednesday In Person

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kgorman@townofantigonish.ca

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Kate

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Marketing and Communications Officer
kgorman@townofantigonish.ca
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www.townofantigonish.ca | [Nest Cam](#) | [Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#)

Beth Schumacher

From: The Engagement Team Exploring Potential Consolidation
<howspace@in.howspace.com>
Sent: April 29, 2022 4:18 PM
To: Owen McCarron
Subject: Proposed Consolidation Engagement Weekly Update

Hi Owen,

After taking a week to allow for the required isolation of some Council members as they recover from COVID, we will be back out in communities this week to meet with residents. The upcoming meetings dates and locations can be found [here](#).

This past Wednesday night we held a well attended online engagement session where 68 people heard a presentation and asked questions. Many excellent questions were asked, so many in fact that we did not have time to answer them all. A video of this meeting is available to watch at your leisure. Follow the link below to watch the video (It will be up sometime later tonight. Thanks for your patience). We intend to hold a lunch and learn webinar on May 5th to answer the remaining questions and respond to new ones. Please register for this at <https://bit.ly/3MDINZX>.

One of the main questions that arose this week was, "What happens if a Councillor declares a conflict of interest." Here is some information that may help clarify this issue. There is provincial legislation, the [Municipal Conflict of Interest Act](#), that clearly sets out what conditions create a conflict of interest. When the conditions are met by a Councillor, then they are not eligible to vote. This is a common occurrence in municipal government, especially in smaller communities. When a conflict occurs, this does not mean a specific area or district's view is not represented. It then becomes the responsibility for the rest of Council to integrate the comments and concerns of the residents into the final decision.

We continue to encourage residents to contact info@antigonish.ca with your comments and questions, post a comment or question on the online portal or attend one of the community drop in sessions. The drop-in sessions are

organized to provide you with flexibility to come anytime to have those important one on one or small group conversations with Councillors and staff. So far, we have found that the last hour of meetings is less busy then the first hour so keep that in mind when making your plans to attend a session. Childcare is also provided during the meetings. Remember, you don't have to live in the community to attend the meeting there.

We look forward to seeing or hearing from this week.

Log in to Antigonish workspace as Owen McCarron

The Engagement Team

Please note that this email contains your personal <https://antigonish.in.howspace.com/1/y7645371/omccarron> access link. Don't forward this email to anyone.

Powered by [Howspace](#)

Harris McNamara

From: The Engagement Team Exploring Potential Consolidation
<howspace@in.howspace.com>
Sent: April 29, 2022 4:18 PM
To: Harris McNamara
Subject: Proposed Consolidation Engagement Weekly Update

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We look forward to seeing or hearing from this week.

Log in to Antigonish workspace as Harris McNamara

The Engagement Team

Please note that this email contains your personal <https://antigonish.in.howspace.com/1/f7237053/hmcnamara> access link. Don't forward this email to anyone.

Powered by [Howspace](#)

Hughie Stewart

From: Sherman England <
Sent: April 29, 2022 5:05 PM
To: Owen McCarron; mayor@townofantigonish.ca
Cc: Mary MacLellan; Donnie MacDonald; Hughie Stewart; Shawn Brophy; Remi Deveau; John Dunbar; Harris McNamara; Gary Mattie; Bill MacFarlane; wcornier@townofantigonish.ca; dmacinnis@townofantigonish.ca; scameron@townofantigonish.ca; amurray@townofantigonish.ca; mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca; droberts@townofantigonish.ca
Subject: Re: Consolidation

Good evening Owen and Laurie,

I was hoping to get out to the consultation sessions that were previously scheduled for this week but had to be postponed due to the fact some of your councillors came down with COVID. Where I will be away I thought it best to put my comments in an email and copy those involved in the sessions.

To begin, I want to offer my congratulations once again to both you and your fellow councillors for exploring the concept of consolidation in Antigonish. To have two separate municipalities that are so intertwined in all aspects of our community life needs to be questioned. Over the past 34 years I have lived in both the present-day town and county and I often questioned why two (2) local municipal governments were needed to provide essentially the same services - with a dual set of infrastructure - to the approximate 20,000 residents who reside within the 1500 sq/km that make up the present municipal units.

I fully appreciate the concern of some, as changes often come with fear and some interpretation. Staying the same is often comfortable, but what is creating comfort today and where we will be in 10 years are two entirely different situations. To have two distinct municipal governments to provide services to our small area / population is not likely going to serve anyone well as we look ahead.

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I wish both you and your fellow councils the greatest success as you explore consolidation and all it has to offer. As avoiding change and staying comfortable in the short term does not ensure continued growth and success in the long term.

Regards,
Sherman

Sherman England
Bens Brae,
Antigonish, NS
B2G 2X3

Beth Schumacher

From: Toni Wilson
Sent: April 29, 2022 5:21 PM
To: Owen McCarron
Subject: Exploring Municipal Consolidation

Owen McCarron:

We would like to see a plebiscite used, so the people can vote for or against the consolidation of the Town & County. With twenty plus thousand people in the Town and the County of Antigonish, we don't think it should NOT come down to a few people who are deciding this big step to consolidate the Town and County.

Owen we helped vote you in and like what you have done in the district in our county.

Your truly:

Bill & Toni Wilson

Marydale Beauly Road, St. Andrew's, Antigonish County Sent from my iPad

Hughie Stewart

From: Shirley Maclellan <
Sent: April 29, 2022 6:02 PM
To: Hughie Stewart
Subject: Re: Consolidation

We want a plebiscite.

Collie & Shirley MacLellan

Beth Schumacher

From: Shirley Maclellan <
Sent: April 29, 2022 6:06 PM
To: Owen McCarron
Subject: Re.: Consolidation

We want a plebiscite.

Collie & Shirley MacLellan

Harris McNamara

From: Shirley Maclellan
Sent: April 29, 2022 6:11 PM
To: Harris McNamara
Subject: Re.: Consolidation

We want a plebiscite.

Collie & Shirley MacLellan

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: April 29, 2022 6:50 PM
To: info@antigonish.ca
Subject: FW: Re.: Consolidation

From: Shirley Maclellan
Sent: April 29, 2022 6:11 PM
To: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Re.: Consolidation

We want a plebiscite.

Collie & Shirley MacLellan

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: April 29, 2022 6:50 PM
To: Sherman England
Subject: RE: Consolidation

Sherman;

I certainly respect your opinion and your view of consolidation but we live in a democracy, residents have the right to have their say by a plebiscite. I would love to discuss with you the pros and cons from the county perspective. You are the first individual that has wrote me out of hundreds of views that the people should chose, not the councillors. If you get a chance to look on the facebook site "Antigonish Town & County for a plebiscite" and look at 800 plus residents comments I think you will change your mind. I can also provide emails and letters from residents.

Is that your concrete slab in Auld's Cove or are you further in?

Have a great evening!

Harris

From: Sherman England
Sent: April 29, 2022 5:05 PM
To: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; mayor@townofantigonish.ca
Cc: Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; wcmormier@townofantigonish.ca; dmacinnis@townofantigonish.ca; scameron@townofantigonish.ca; amurray@townofantigonish.ca; mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca; droberts@townofantigonish.ca
Subject: Re: Consolidation

Good evening Owen and Laurie,

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Regards,
Sherman

Sherman England
Bens Brae,
Antigonish, NS
B2G 2X3

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: April 29, 2022 6:53 PM
To: Anne-Marie Long
Subject: FW: Proposed Consolidation Engagement Weekly Update

Latest email, now they are a team, notice the conflict of interest comment
harris

From: The Engagement Team Exploring Potential Consolidation <howspace@in.howspace.com>
Sent: April 29, 2022 4:18 PM
To: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Proposed Consolidation Engagement Weekly Update

Hi Harris,

After taking a week to allow for the required isolation of some Council members as they recover from COVID, we will be back out in communities this week to meet with residents. The upcoming meetings dates and locations can be found [here](#).

This past Wednesday night we held a well attended online engagement session where 68 people heard a presentation and asked questions. Many excellent questions were asked, so many in fact that we did not have time to answer them all. A video of this meeting is available to watch at your leisure. Follow the link below to watch the video (It will be up sometime later tonight. Thanks for your patience). We intend to hold a lunch and learn webinar on May 5th to answer the remaining questions and respond to new ones. Please register for this at <https://bit.ly/3MDINZX>.

One of the main questions that arose this week was, "What happens if a Councillor declares a conflict of interest." Here is some information that may help clarify this issue. There is provincial legislation, the [Municipal Conflict of Interest Act](#), that clearly sets out what conditions create a conflict of interest. When the conditions are met by a Councillor, then they are not eligible to vote. This is a common occurrence in municipal government, especially in smaller communities. When a conflict occurs, this does not mean a specific area or district's view is not represented. It then becomes the responsibility for the rest

of Council to integrate the comments and concerns of the residents into the final decision.

We continue to encourage residents to contact info@antigonish.ca with your comments and questions, post a comment or question on the online portal or attend one of the community drop in sessions. The drop-in sessions are organized to provide you with flexibility to come anytime to have those important one on one or small group conversations with Councillors and staff. So far, we have found that the last hour of meetings is less busy then the first hour so keep that in mind when making your plans to attend a session. Childcare is also provided during the meetings. Remember, you don't have to live in the community to attend the meeting there.

We look forward to seeing or hearing from this week.

Log in to Antigonish workspace as Harris McNamara

The Engagement Team

Please note that this email contains your personal <https://antigonish.in.howspace.com/1/f7237053/hmcnamara> access link. Don't forward this email to anyone.

Powered by [Howspace](#)

Beth Schumacher

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: April 29, 2022 7:00 PM
To: info
Subject: Fwd: . Consolidation

Warden Owen McCarron
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
902-968-1290

Begin forwarded message:

From: Shirley Maclellan <shirley.maclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Date: April 29, 2022 at 6:05:59 PM ADT
To: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Re: Consolidation

We want a plebiscite.

Collie & Shirley MacLellan

Beth Schumacher

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: April 29, 2022 7:01 PM
To: info
Subject: Fwd: Exploring Municipal Consolidation

Warden Owen McCarron
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
902-968-1290

Begin forwarded message:

From: Toni Wilson
Date: April 29, 2022 at 5:21:09 PM ADT
To: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Exploring Municipal Consolidation

Owen McCarron:

We would like to see a plebiscite used, so the people can vote for or against the consolidation of the Town & County. With twenty plus thousand people in the Town and the County of Antigonish, we don't think it should NOT come down to a few people who are deciding this big step to consolidate the Town and County.

Owen we helped vote you in and like what you have done in the district in our county.

Your truly:

Bill & Toni Wilson

Marydale Beaulieu Road, St. Andrew's, Antigonish County

Sent from my iPad

Hughie Stewart

From: Terry Penny <
Sent: April 29, 2022 8:32 PM
To: Donnie MacDonald
Cc: Owen McCarron; Harris McNamara; Hughie Stewart; Remi Deveau; Mary MacLellan; Gary Mattie; Shawn Brophy; John Dunbar; Bill MacFarlane
Subject: Consolidation

Hello Donnie

I am not debating the merits of Consolidation. I am requesting that you recognize the democratic right of the voters of Antigonish Town and County and advocate and support the call for a plebiscite on the issue of Consolidation.

If you deny this call for a vote, I ask you "Why? Why are you afraid of my vote?"

Terry Penny

Beth Schumacher

From: Town of Antigonish Mayor <mayor@townofantigonish.ca>
Sent: April 29, 2022 8:38 PM
To: Glenn Horne; Owen McCarron; Willie Cormier; Hughie Stewart; Jeff Lawrence; Shirlyn Donovan; Kate Gorman; Alisha Bowie
Subject: Re: [EXTERNAL] NO Consolidation Steering Committee Meeting on May 3

Thank you Glenn,
See you tomorrow
Laurie

Mayor Laurie Boucher
Town of Antigonish
274 Main St, Antigonish, N.S
B2G 2C4
mayor@townofantigonish.ca | 902•870•7795

From: Glenn Horne <glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Sent: Friday, April 29, 2022 11:10:13 AM
To: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Town of Antigonish Mayor <mayor@townofantigonish.ca>; Willie Cormier <wcormier@townofantigonish.ca>; Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Jeff Lawrence <jlawrence@townofantigonish.ca>; Shirlyn Donovan <shirlyn.donovan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Kate Gorman <kgorman@townofantigonish.ca>; Alisha Bowie <alisha.bowie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NO Consolidation Steering Committee Meeting on May 3

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

We will just connect before one of our engagement sessions instead if needed.

Have a great weekend!
Glenn



Glenn Horne | Chief Administrative Officer
Municipality of the County of Antigonish | 902.863.1117
285 Beech Hill Road, Beech Hill, NS | B2G 0B4
www.antigonishcounty.ns.ca | [@AntigonishCo](https://www.facebook.com/AntigonishCo) | [facebook](#)

Honour Yesterday, Act Today, Inspire Tomorrow

Harris McNamara

From: Town of Antigonish Mayor <mayor@townofantigonish.ca>
Sent: April 30, 2022 8:24 AM
To: Sherman England; Owen McCarron
Cc: Mary MacLellan; Donnie MacDonald; Hughie Stewart; Shawn Brophy; Remi Deveau; John Dunbar; Harris McNamara; Gary Mattie; Bill MacFarlane; Willie Cormier; Donnie MacInnis; Sean Cameron; Andrew Murray; Mary Farrell; Diane Roberts
Subject: Re: [EXTERNAL] Re: Consolidation

Thank you for your email Sherman, your email will be forwarded to the consultants to be included with the final report.

Best,
Laurie

Mayor Laurie Boucher
Town of Antigonish
274 Main St, Antigonish, N.S
B2G 2C4
mayor@townofantigonish.ca | 902•870•7795

From: Sherman England
Sent: Friday, April 29, 2022 5:04:33 PM
To: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Town of Antigonish Mayor <mayor@townofantigonish.ca>
Cc: mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Willie Cormier <wcormier@townofantigonish.ca>; Donnie MacInnis <dmacinnis@townofantigonish.ca>; Sean Cameron <scameron@townofantigonish.ca>; Andrew Murray <amurray@townofantigonish.ca>; Mary Farrell <mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca>; Diane Roberts <droberts@townofantigonish.ca>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Re: Consolidation

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Good evening Owen and Laurie,

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with a dual set of infrastructure - to the approximate 20,000 residents who reside within the 1500 sq/km that make up the present municipal units.

I fully appreciate the concern of some, as changes often come with fear and some interpretation. Staying the same is often comfortable, but what is creating comfort today and where we will be in 10 years are two entirely different situations. To have two distinct municipal governments to provide services to our small area / population is not likely going to serve anyone well as we look ahead.

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I wish both you and your fellow councils the greatest success as you explore consolidation and all it has to offer. As avoiding change and staying comfortable in the short term does not ensure continued growth and success in the long term.

Regards,
Sherman

Sherman England
Bens Brae,
Antigonish, NS
B2G 2X3

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: April 30, 2022 8:37 AM
To: Terry Penny
Subject: RE: Consolidation

Terry;

Thank you, it is important that all residents have their say with a plebiscite. I have only received on email from an individual supporting consolidation and many against. I myself have received over 100 calls and emails with our views. I am sure other councillors received emails and calls also. The evidence is overwhelming that it is not good for the county. We need councillors to take a position, I have.

Harris

District 9 Councillor
902-318-8333

-----Original Message-----

From: Terry Penny <[redacted]>
Sent: April 29, 2022 8:32 PM
To: Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Cc: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Consolidation

Hello Donnie

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Terry Penny

Beth Schumacher

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: April 30, 2022 8:45 AM
To: Sherman England
Subject: Re: Consolidation

Thanks Sherman for this message. We appreciate hearing your comments and knowing you have lived experience in this is important.

Owen

Sent from my iPhone

On Apr 29, 2022, at 5:04 PM, Sherman England > wrote:

Good evening Owen and Laurie,

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Regards,
Sherman

Sherman England
Bens Brae,
Antigonish, NS
B2G 2X3

Beth Schumacher

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: April 30, 2022 8:45 AM
To: info
Subject: Fwd: Consolidation

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Sherman England
Date: April 29, 2022 at 5:04:49 PM ADT
To: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, mayor@townofantigonish.ca
Cc: Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, wgormier@townofantigonish.ca, dmaccinnis@townofantigonish.ca, scameron@townofantigonish.ca, amurray@townofantigonish.ca, mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca, droberts@townofantigonish.ca
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Regards,
Sherman

Sherman England
Bens Brae,
Antigonish, NS
B2G 2X3

Beth Schumacher

From: Leona Williams
Sent: April 30, 2022 10:54 AM
To: mayor@townofantigonish.ca
Cc: Owen McCarron; Leona Williams
Subject: Consolidation - yes? No? How?

Hi Laurie and Owen, I have tried to send this email to all the councillors multiple times this morning and each time I am having troubles with the addresses, for some reason. Would you mind sending it on to your groups, mentioning at the same time that the message is being sent to both sets of councillors? Sorry for the inconvenience.

Hello there, Leona Williams here with comments regarding the upcoming thorny decisions that will need to be taken regarding the above topic....

First, may I mention that I was a long-time member of the Antigonish Town Recreation Commission when the decision to disband was made so many years ago. I cannot even remember the exact year, but I do remember the conflicts and "bad feelings" that the issue caused.

Fast forward to today, the progress that has been made over all those years has been amazing, thanks to the dedicated work of our councillors, both town and county. And, by the way, we (the public) do not stop and thank you often enough for the tremendous amount of work you do on our behalf. When considering the number of meetings you attend, as well as the amount of background information you need to make decisions on our behalf, it is extremely impressive!

In that vein, I confess that in the matter of the considerations surrounding consolidation, I feel that I, myself, do not have enough background information to make an informed decision, considering that there is a plethora of background knowledge and statistics of which I am not aware- including the inner workings of separate councils, the cooperative efforts of both councils, government regulations and statistics, etc.. All to say that I would personally feel strongly (although some may not agree) that both sets of councillors are best equipped to together research the question and collaboratively hammer out the best solution possible. I wish you good luck with the work that will be required.

Leona

Leona Williams
! Sunrise Crescent
Antigonish, NS, B2G 2R7

Hughie Stewart

From: Ambrose Landry <ambrose.landry@state.gov>
Sent: April 30, 2022 11:22 AM
To: [Hughie Stewart](mailto:hughie.stewart@state.gov)

We want a Plebiscite

Get [Outlook for Android](#)

Harris McNamara

From: Ambrose Landry <
Sent: April 30, 2022 11:24 AM
To: Harris McNamara

We want a Plebiscite

Get [Outlook for Android](#)

Hughie Stewart

From: pauline spin <
Sent: April 30, 2022 11:32 AM
To: Hughie Stewart
Subject: Consolidation

Greetings,

I am writing concerning the proposed consolidation. I want you to know that my voice needs to be heard with regards to this matter. As a concerned constituent, I feel that I should have a vote; therefore, I am demanding a plebiscite.

Sincerely yours,
Paul Spin

Beth Schumacher

From: pauline spin <
Sent: April 30, 2022 11:35 AM
To: Owen McCarron
Subject: Consolidation

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Sincerely yours,
Paul Spin

Harris McNamara

From: pauline spin
Sent: April 30, 2022 11:37 AM
To: Harris McNamara
Subject: Consolidation

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Sincerely yours,
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Sent: April 30, 2022 11:37 AM
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Sincerely yours,
Paul Spin

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: April 30, 2022 11:51 AM
To: info@antigonish.ca
Subject: FW: Consolidation

-----Original Message-----

From: pauline spin <>
Sent: April 30, 2022 11:37 AM
To: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Consolidation

Greetings,

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Sincerely yours,
Paul Spin

Beth Schumacher

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: April 30, 2022 5:09 PM
To: info
Subject: Fwd: Concern about Consolidation -Hoping for a Plebiscite

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: alice mattie <amattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Date: April 30, 2022 at 12:40:41 PM ADT
To: Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Concern about Consolidation -Hoping for a Plebiscite

Dear County Council:

I am a resident of Antigonish County and have lived here in Bayfield all of my life.

I along with the rest of the residents of this County deserve meaningful consultation on this momentous decision.

I feel that the question of Consolidation should be put to a Plebiscite of all residents.

Sincerely,
Alice Mattie

Harris McNamara

From: Maureen Bowman
Sent: April 30, 2022 5:36 PM
To: Mary MacLellan; Donnie MacDonald; Hughie Stewart; Shawn Brophy; Remi Deveau; Owen McCarron; John Dunbar; Gary Mattie; Harris McNamara; Bill MacFarlane; mayor@townofantigonish.ca; wcornier@townofantigonish.ca; dmacinnis@townofantigonish.ca; scameron@townofantigonish.ca; amurray@townofantigonish.ca; mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca; droberts@townofantigonish.ca
Subject: Fwd: Consolidation/ Plebiscite

>
> To all the elected officials who were voted in to represent the people in their home riding.
> I believe I can speak for everyone when I ask for the opportunity to be able to have a voice by plebiscite in the matter of consolidation between the County Municipalities and the Town of Antigonish.
>
> As was stated in the brochure "You've elected us to do what's in your best interest and part of our job is to explore opportunities like this".
> Good on you to do this, however excluding the people who voted you in by taking away their voice in this very important matter seems unfair to us.
>
> Now that you have explored consolidation, and we can only believe that you have been well informed, it seems only fair that this information be shared with all the people who will benefit or not. If there is nothing to hide let us the constituents see what you have explored, and give us the right to vote on our future.
>
> Prove to everyone that you really do want what's best for them and give us a plebiscite vote in accordance with the Municipal Government Act of Nova Scotia.
>
> Respectfully yours,
> Charles and Maureen Bowman
> Monastery
>
> District 8
>
>
> Sent from my iPad

Harris McNamara

From: Anita Stewart
Sent: April 30, 2022 5:57 PM
To: Harris McNamara
Subject: Consolidation

Good evening Harris,

I hope this email finds you well. I have been hearing a lot of buzz regarding consolidation between town and county. I will be perfectly up front and state I am unaware of the pros and cons. I have been invited to a Facebook group where discussions are taking place. We are being urged to reach out to our councillors. I always have and will continue to believe in transparency and a clear understanding of all the "issues" before making an informed decision. From what I have been hearing and reading it appears many people are unsure of the pros and cons therefore most of what I read/hear is that people want to have a plebiscite, only after they become informed before any consolidation process occurs. Please accept this email as my support for a plebiscite.

Kind regards,
Anita Stewart
Frankville

Harris McNamara

From: Anne-Marie Long <[redacted]>
Sent: April 30, 2022 11:57 AM
To: Harris McNamara
Subject: Re: FW: Proposed Consolidation Engagement Weekly Update

I got one also, to log in with part of my email address.

On Fri., Apr. 29, 2022, 6:53 p.m. Harris McNamara, <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca> wrote:

Latest email, now they are a team, notice the conflict of interest comment

harris

From: The Engagement Team Exploring Potential Consolidation <howspace@in.howspace.com>
Sent: April 29, 2022 4:18 PM
To: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Proposed Consolidation Engagement Weekly Update

Hi Harris,

After taking a week to allow for the required isolation of some Council members as they recover from COVID, we will be back out in communities this week to meet with residents. The upcoming meetings dates and locations can be found [here](#).

This past Wednesday night we held a well attended online engagement session where 68 people heard a presentation and asked questions. Many excellent questions were asked, so many in fact that we did not have time to answer them all. A video of this meeting is available to watch at your leisure. Follow the

link below to watch the video (It will be up sometime later tonight. Thanks for your patience). We intend to hold a lunch and learn webinar on May 5th to answer the remaining questions and respond to new ones. Please register for this at <https://bit.ly/3MDINZX>.

One of the main questions that arose this week was, "What happens if a Councillor declares a conflict of interest." Here is some information that may help clarify this issue. There is provincial legislation, the [Municipal Conflict of Interest Act](#), that clearly sets out what conditions create a conflict of interest. When the conditions are met by a Councillor, then they are not eligible to vote. This is a common occurrence in municipal government, especially in smaller communities. When a conflict occurs, this does not mean a specific area or district's view is not represented. It then becomes the responsibility for the rest of Council to integrate the comments and concerns of the residents into the final decision.

We continue to encourage residents to contact info@antigonish.ca with your comments and questions, post a comment or question on the online portal or attend one of the community drop in sessions. The drop-in sessions are organized to provide you with flexibility to come anytime to have those important one on one or small group conversations with Councillors and staff. So far, we have found that the last hour of meetings is less busy than the first hour so keep that in mind when making your plans to attend a session. Childcare is also provided during the meetings. Remember, you don't have to live in the community to attend the meeting there.

We look forward to seeing or hearing from this week.

[Log in to Antigonish workspace as Harris McNamara](#)

The Engagement Team

Please note that this email contains your personal
<https://antigonish.in.howspace.com/1/f7237053/hmcnamara> access link. Don't forward this
email to anyone.

Powered by [Howspace](#)

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: April 30, 2022 11:57 AM
To: pauline spin
Subject: RE: Consolidation

Pauline / Paul;

How are you guys? Long time no see! Thanks for you for your support, I need to get other councillors and warden to hear the residents. Could you send your position, contact information below, best to email then we have a record.

Harris
902-318-8333

2020-2024 Term

Looking for a Councillor? Find their information below.

District 1
Councillor Mary Maclellan

mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca
902-863-1101

District 2
Councillor Donnie MacDonald

dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca
902-863-5449

Deputy Warden Hughie Stewart
District 3
Deputy Warden Hughie Stewart

hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca
902-872-0420

District 4
Councillor Shawn Brophy

sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca
902-863-8485

District 5
Councillor Remi Deveau

rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca

902-870-2866

Owen McCarron, Warden
District 6
Warden Owen McCarron

omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca
902-968-1290

District 7
Councillor John Dunbar

jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca
902-338-2200

District 8
Councillor Gary Mattie

gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca
902-968-1175

District 9
Councillor Harris McNamara

hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca
902-318-8333

District 10
Councillor Bill MacFarlane

bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca
902-870-7737

-----Original Message-----

From: pauline spin <pauline.spin@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Sent: April 30, 2022 11:37 AM
To: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Consolidation

Greetings,

I am writing concerning the proposed consolidation. I want you to know that my voice needs to be heard with regards to this matter. As a concerned constituent, I feel that I should have a vote; therefore, I am demanding a plebiscite.

Sincerely yours,
Paul Spin

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: April 30, 2022 11:58 AM
To: info@antigonish.ca
Subject: FW:

From: Ambrose Landry <
Sent: April 30, 2022 11:24 AM
To: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject:

We want a Plebiscite

Get [Outlook for Android](#)

Harris McNamara

From: alice mattie < >
Sent: April 30, 2022 12:34 PM
To: Mary MacLellan; Donnie MacDonald; Owen McCarron; John Dunbar; Gary Mattie; Harris McNamara; Bill MacFarlane; Hughie Stewart; Shawn Brophy; Remi Deveau
Subject: Concern about Consolidation -Hoping for a Plebiscite

Dear County Council:

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I along with the rest of the residents of this County deserve meaningful consultation on this momentous decision.

I feel that the question of Consolidation should be put to a Plebiscite of all residents.

Sincerely,
Alice Mattie



Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Antigonish Town Financial Report

1 message

Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>
To: Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>

Sat, Apr 30, 2022 at 1:11 PM

Gary;

Can you send me a copy of the town's financial report, want to review it and i think you found it.

Thanks

Harris

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: April 30, 2022 1:12 PM
To: info@antigonish.ca
Subject: FW: Concern about Consolidation -Hoping for a Plebiscite

From: alice mattie <
Sent: April 30, 2022 12:34 PM
To: Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
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Sincerely,
Alice Mattie

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: April 30, 2022 1:13 PM
To: alice mattie
Subject: RE: Concern about Consolidation -Hoping for a Plebiscite

Alice;
Thank You!
Harris

From: alice mattie <
Sent: April 30, 2022 12:34 PM
To: Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
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Sincerely,
Alice Mattie

Hughie Stewart

From: gloria boudreau <
Sent: April 30, 2022 1:38 PM
To: Mary MacLellan; Donnie MacDonald; Hughie Stewart; Shawn Brophy; Remi Deveau;
Owen McCarron; jdundar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca; Gary Mattie; Harris McNamara; Bill
MacFarlane
Subject: Regarding..... Antigonish town amalgamating with the County

I am in favor of a plebiscite, in regards to the amalgamation of the town of Antigonish and Antigonish County. 1 person =1 vote. I strongly believe that the County of Antigonish as "not" been advised nor informed well enough (or at all !) on the long term effects this amalgamation will have, on the County and Town. I also feel that the discussion and decision to move forward , with this amalgamation without a plebiscite will further confirm what I and most of the county believe to be a deceitful and corrupt action on behalf the town of Antigonish and 100% at the expense of the county ! I want my voice heard ! I want to vote ! As a land holder and TAX PAYER I have a right to be heard and informed before, anymore action is taken towards an amalgamation .



Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Gerry's FaceBook Post re Consolidation

2 messages

Anne Marie McKeough

Sat, Apr 30, 2022 at 4:22 PM

To: Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Hi Harris:

As you requested – Gerry's Facebook post.

Gerry and I have been thinking about your plan to make a motion re a plebiscite. He wonders if the councillors who vote against the plebiscite on May 10 will be unwilling to back down later.

You spoke about targeting those councillors who vote against the plebiscite motion. I think we (you and me/Gerry and I'm sure some others) know who these people are. Shouldn't we blanket them with e-mails and phone calls? What about asking people who have posted on Facebook to copy their comments to the anti-plebiscite councillors by both email and snail mail.

Gerry just suggested that's risky, so maybe we can just encourage everyone who has posted to email it to all councillors. Maybe they've done that already. What do you think?

Anne

 **Gerry Consolidation FaceBook.docx**
14K

Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Sat, Apr 30, 2022 at 5:16 PM

To: Anne Marie McKeough <

Gerry;

Very good assessment, sometimes it takes someone not close to see clearly the situation and suggest a path forward. Thank you so much for this.

Have great afternoon!

Harris

Sent from my iPhone

On Apr 30, 2022, at 4:22 PM, Anne Marie McKeough <

> wrote:

[Quoted text hidden]

 **Gerry Consolidation FaceBook.docx**
14K

Hughie Stewart

From: Mike Moeller <
Sent: April 30, 2022 4:39 PM
To: Hughie Stewart
Subject: Want and request and demand a plebiscite on such a critical decision. This is not what councillors were elected to do.

Hello Hughie

I am sending again as I heard some councillors did not receive this from me yesterday.

Mike

----- Forwarded Message -----

Subject:We want and request and demand a plebiscite on such a critical decision. This is not what councillors were elected to do.

Date:Fri, 29 Apr 2022 15:37:21 -0300

From:Mike Moeller

To:mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca, omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca, mayor@townofantigonish.ca wcormier@townofantigonish.ca dmacinnis@townofantigonish.ca scameron@townofantigonish.ca amurray@townofantigonish.ca, mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca droberts@townofantigonish.ca

Dear Councillors of Antigonish Town and County

I am a resident of the County of Antigonish and I demand that we have a plebiscite and open town and county halls with all people able to hear each others questions and answers on the pros and cons of amalgamation/consolidation. In no manner, should this consolidation of Town and County power that the councillors that do not want a vote, be exercised on my behalf with their vote. You are all residents also, and your vote should be one of 20,000 in the Town and County. This is democracy not working for the people, when you have the majority of councillors taking it upon themselves to vote for consolidation of two entities (town and county) without giving the people the opportunity to vote. We never elected you councillors to make such a decision. I was involved Nationally and Regionally and Locally with my Union for over 30 years, being elected every three years. If it ever came to merging our Union with another union or having a strike vote (both of these examples are analogies of what is happening with your councils), the members of both unions were given the opportunity to vote or the members voted to strike or not, were given the right and opportunity to vote.. We the elected Officers, NEVER would even dream of voting on something of that magnitude, which you councillors who do not want a vote/plebiscite are doing. We did not give you that right, and you do not have that right to speak on my behalf of something so important. And who decided to have almost a quarter of a million dollars spent on "consultants" that are not even from our community, to answer the questions that we elected you to answer? If the councillors will not give the residents the right to vote, then there should be legal action taken to stop this pre-determined decision. Being an elected official is at times thankless, and it is a hard task. However, the process taken by the majority of both Councils in this dissolution of either the town or County, called consolidation, must have a plebiscite. Pictou gave their residents a voice and vote. The comments made that a vote was decided against, because we do not have the information and it would be based on emotions, was actually insulting to say the least at what some councillors think of who they are supposed to represent. To say it will be divisive is also not within the knowledge of

councillors. If we do not have a vote, then you will see divisiveness, but then it will be TOO LATE to rectify the concerns of thousands of residents. Why not run on this campaign in the next electon, if you are so confidant? This whole process smells.

Thanks

Mike Moeller-County of Antigonish

Beth Schumacher

From: Mike Moeller <
Sent: April 30, 2022 4:53 PM
To: Owen McCarron
Subject: Want and request and demand a plebiscite on such a critical decision. This is not what councillors were elected to do.

Hello Warden

I am sending again as I heard some councillors did not receive this from me yesterday. This is not democratic and the resistance is growing exponentially every day. Try listening to the people, not Council. A vote is what we need and insulting us by saying that we are uninformed is insulting.

Mike

----- Forwarded Message -----

Subject: We want and request and demand a plebiscite on such a critical decision. This is not what councillors were elected to do.

Date: Fri, 29 Apr 2022 15:37:21 -0300

From: Mike Moeller <

To: "mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca, "omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca"@antigonishcounty.ns.ca, "mayor@townofantigonish.ca wcormier@townofantigonish.ca dmacinnis@townofantigonish.ca scameron@townofantigonish.ca amurray@townofantigonish.ca, "mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca droberts@townofantigonish.ca"@townofantigonish.ca

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we do not have the information and it would be based on emotions, was actually insulting to say the least at what some councillors think of who they are supposed to represent. To say it will be divisive is also not within the knowledge of councillors. If we do not have a vote, then you will see divisiveness, but then it will be TOO LATE to rectify the concerns of thousands of residents. Why not run on this campaign in the next election, if you are so confident? This whole process smells.

Thanks

Mike Moeller-County of Antigonish

Harris McNamara

From: Mike Moeller
Sent: April 30, 2022 5:04 PM
To: Harris McNamara
Subject: Want and request and demand a plebiscite on such a critical decision. This is not what councillors were elected to do.

Hello Councillor

I am sending again as I heard some councillors did not receive this from me yesterday.

Mike

----- Forwarded Message -----

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Thanks

Mike Moeller-County of Antigonish

Shirlyn Donovan

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: Saturday, April 30, 2022 5:09 PM
To: info
Subject: Fwd: Concern about Consolidation -Hoping for a Plebiscite

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: alice mattie
Date: April 30, 2022 at 12:40:41 PM ADT
To: Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: **Concern about Consolidation -Hoping for a Plebiscite**

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Sincerely,
Alice Mattie

Shirlyn Donovan

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: Saturday, April 30, 2022 5:13 PM
To: info
Subject: Fwd: Consolidation - yes? No? How?

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Leona Williams
Date: April 30, 2022 at 10:54:30 AM ADT
To: mayor@townofantigonish.ca
Cc: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Leona Williams
Subject: Consolidation - yes? No? How?

Hi Laurie and Owen, I have tried to send this email to all the councillors multiple times this morning and each time I am having troubles with the addresses, for some reason. Would you mind sending it on to your groups, mentioning at the same time that the message is being sent to both sets of councillors? Sorry for the inconvenience.

Hello there, Leona Williams here with comments regarding the upcoming thorny decisions that will need to be taken regarding the above topic....

First, may I mention that I was a long-time member of the Antigonish Town Recreation Commission when the decision to disband was made so many years ago. I cannot even remember the exact year, but I do remember the conflicts and "bad feelings" that the issue caused.

Fast forward to today, the progress that has been made over all those years has been amazing, thanks to the dedicated work of our councillors, both town and county. And, by the way, we (the public) do not stop and thank you often enough for the tremendous amount of work you do on our behalf. When considering the number of meetings you attend, as well as the amount of background information you need to make decisions on our behalf, it is extremely impressive!

In that vein, I confess that in the matter of the considerations surrounding consolidation, I feel that I, myself, do not have enough background information to make an informed decision, considering that there is a plethora of background knowledge and statistics of which I am not aware- including the inner workings of separate councils, the cooperative efforts of both councils, government regulations and statistics, etc.. All to say that I would personally feel strongly (although some may not agree) that both sets of councillors are best equipped to together research the question and collaboratively hammer out the best solution possible. I wish you good luck with the work that will be required.

Leona

Leona Williams
Sunrise Crescent
Antigonish, NS, B2G 2R7

Hughie Stewart

From: Maureen Bowman
Sent: April 30, 2022 5:36 PM
To: Mary MacLellan; Donnie MacDonald; Hughie Stewart; Shawn Brophy; Remi Deveau; Owen McCarron; John Dunbar; Gary Mattie; Harris McNamara; Bill MacFarlane; mayor@townofantigonish.ca; wcmier@townofantigonish.ca; dmacinnis@townofantigonish.ca; scameron@townofantigonish.ca; amurray@townofantigonish.ca; mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca; droberts@townofantigonish.ca
Subject: Fwd: Consolidation/ Plebiscite

>
> To all the elected officials who were voted in to represent the people in their home riding.
> I believe I can speak for everyone when I ask for the opportunity to be able to have a voice by plebiscite in the matter of consolidation between the County Municipalities and the Town of Antigonish.
>
> As was stated in the brochure "You've elected us to do what's in your best interest and part of our job is to explore opportunities like this".
> Good on you to do this, however excluding the people who voted you in by taking away their voice in this very important matter seems unfair to us.
>
> Now that you have explored consolidation, and we can only believe that you have been well informed, it seems only fair that this information be shared with all the people who will benefit or not. If there is nothing to hide let us the constituents see what you have explored, and give us the right to vote on our future.
>
> Prove to everyone that you really do want what's best for them and give us a plebiscite vote in accordance with the Municipal Government Act of Nova Scotia.
>
> Respectfully yours,
> Charles and Maureen Bowman
> Monastery
>
> District 8
>
>
> Sent from my iPad

Hughie Stewart

From: Shaun Chisholm <
Sent: April 30, 2022 7:10 PM
To: Hughie Stewart
Subject: Not Interested!

Hello Hughie. I'm sure you're getting plenty of emails asking you to vote against joining with the town and I'm also asking you to represent our voice on the council when you say we're NOT interested.

Thank you and have a great weekend,

Shaun Chisholm

Get [Outlook for Android](#)

Hughie Stewart

From: Russell Pettipas <rpettipas@cityofmontreal.ca>
Sent: April 30, 2022 8:41 PM
To: Hughie Stewart
Subject: Plebiscite

Dear Mr McNamara,

I am a resident of District 9, Havre Boucher. I am writing to you regarding the plebiscite. There is not enough information on this matter. I am a taxpayer and I feel I have a right to vote on this matter.

Sincerely,
Russell Pettipas

Harris McNamara

From: Town of Antigonish Mayor <mayor@townofantigonish.ca>
Sent: May 1, 2022 12:17 AM
To: Maureen Bowman; Mary MacLellan; Donnie MacDonald; Hughie Stewart; Shawn Brophy; Remi Deveau; Owen McCarron; John Dunbar; Gary Mattie; Harris McNamara; Bill MacFarlane; Willie Cormier; Donnie MacInnis; Sean Cameron; Andrew Murray; Mary Farrell; Diane Roberts
Cc: Lise Roy
Subject: Re: [EXTERNAL] Fwd: Consolidation/ Plebiscite

Good morning Mr and Mrs Bowman,
Thank you for your email. I understand from your email that you are in favour of a plebiscite. Can you tell me if you have any concerns with regards to consolidation itself?

We have shared the information we have learned on the website at antigonish.ca. I do understand you may have questions and concerns, so I look forward to seeing you at a consultation session at your convenience.

If you cannot attend a session and have questions or concerns about consolidation I would be happy to address them with you. You can email me at this account, phone me at (902) 870-7795, or come by my office to meet, whatever is convenient for you. I have included Lise Roy on this email, please let lise know if you would like to meet and she can arrange an appointment.

Best,
Laurie

Mayor Laurie Boucher
Town of Antigonish
274 Main St, Antigonish, N.S
B2G 2C4
mayor@townofantigonish.ca | 902•870•7795

From: Maureen Bowman
Sent: Saturday, April 30, 2022 5:35:39 PM
To: mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Town of Antigonish Mayor <mayor@townofantigonish.ca>; Willie Cormier <wcormier@townofantigonish.ca>; Donnie MacInnis <dmacinnis@townofantigonish.ca>; Sean Cameron <scameron@townofantigonish.ca>; Andrew Murray <amurray@townofantigonish.ca>; Mary Farrell <mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca>; Diane Roberts <droberts@townofantigonish.ca>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Fwd: Consolidation/ Plebiscite

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

- >
- > To all the elected officials who were voted in to represent the people in their home riding.
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- > Now that you have explored consolidation, and we can only believe that you have been well informed, it seems only fair that this information be shared with all the people who will benefit or not. If there is nothing to hide let us the constituents see what you have explored, and give us the right to vote on our future.
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- > Respectfully yours,
- > Charles and Maureen Bowman
- > Monastery
- >
- > District 8
- >
- >
- > Sent from my iPad

Beth Schumacher

From: Town of Antigonish Mayor <mayor@townofantigonish.ca>
Sent: May 1, 2022 12:28 AM
To: Leona Williams; Owen McCarron
Subject: Re: [EXTERNAL] Consolidation - yes? No? How?

Good morning Leona,
Thank you for taking the time to write and for having trust in our councils. I will make sure your thoughts are recorded in the final report.

Best,
Laurie

Mayor Laurie Boucher
Town of Antigonish
274 Main St, Antigonish, N.S
B2G 2C4
mayor@townofantigonish.ca | 902•870•7795

From: Leona Williams >
Sent: Saturday, April 30, 2022 10:54:26 AM
To: Town of Antigonish Mayor <mayor@townofantigonish.ca>
Cc: omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Leona Williams <georgeandleonawilliams@gmail.com>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Consolidation - yes? No? How?

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hi Laurie and Owen, I have tried to send this email to all the councillors multiple times this morning and each time I am having troubles with the addresses, for some reason. Would you mind sending it on to your groups, mentioning at the same time that the message is being sent to both sets of councillors ? Sorry for the inconvenience.

Hello there, Leona Williams here with comments regarding the upcoming thorny decisions that will need to be taken regarding the above topic....

First, may I mention that I was a long-time member of the Antigonish Town Recreation Commission when the decision to disband was made so many years ago. I cannot even remember the exact year, but I do remember the conflicts and "bad feelings" that the issue caused.

Fast forward to today, the progress that has been made over all those years has been amazing, thanks to the dedicated work of our councillors, both town and county. And, by the way, we (the public) do not stop and thank you often enough for the tremendous amount of work you do on our behalf. When considering the number of meetings you attend, as well as the amount of background information you need to make decisions on our behalf, it is extremely impressive!

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although some may not agree) that both sets of councillors are best equipped to together research the question and collaboratively hammer out the best solution possible. I wish you good luck with the work that will be required.

Leona

Leona Williams
Sunrise Crescent
Antigonish, NS, B2G 2R7

Beth Schumacher

From: Michelle Keizer <
Sent: May 1, 2022 8:50 AM
To: Owen McCarron
Cc: Matthew Doherty
Subject: Consolidation

To the councillors and warden of the county of Antigonish,

I am writing this email regarding the consolidation of Antigonish Town and County. I would like to voice my concerns and opinions in this letter to the people making these decisions.

I am a resident of the county of Antigonish and I am very disappointed and frustrated with the approach in which this merger has been taken. In my opinion this is a decision that the residents of this community should be making to actually reflect what is in the best interest for town and county. I feel like one of the reasons this approach has been taken is because back in 2006 this same motion was voted down with very strong numbers (in the 74% range) and I suspect that's what would happen again if residents got to vote. I've talked to many people from town and county and every person I've spoken to it oppose to this happening without a vote. I am in favour of a plebiscite.

In the last election I didn't hear one person speak about a merger with the town in their platform. This would have been the appropriate time to present the idea, so the people running could voice their stance and we could make an appropriate vote. Again I 100% believe this is a decision for the people/residents.

Now that I've voiced my stance on wanting a plebiscite, I also have concerns about what will happen if this goes to a successful vote by the town and county.

I happen to live in an area that borders the town, if this merger happens we are at risk of our taxes raising if the town decides to expand it borders even though the prediction is that taxes won't increase.

I participated in Wednesdays April 27 webinar, lots of questions were asked but very few clear answers were given. Some questions that I felt were not answered adequately are:

1. How is this going to benefit us? The answer from the mayor is that we will be stronger together. How, specifically? Tell us specifics and not generalizations. I have concerns that tax dollars will benefit the major centre of Antigonish more than other areas.
2. Are there plans to expand Town limits, where current County residents enjoying a more affordable tax rate will see their tax nearly double? Among County residents there seems to be a feeling that Town Council is all for Consolidation, where County Councillors are against... That is troubling for us. Why would there be any conflict of interest with where Councillors live, if everything is transparent?
3. Why can't the simple question of WILL TAX RATES INCREASE be answered with a yes or no? If planning for this event has been so poor that it can't be answered, why are we proceeding?

There are still so many unknowns on cost and fees (RCMP and such) and how grants for town or county will work. It was mentioned in the comments that in the Windsor West Hants merger their administrative cost decreased but the RCMP and other miscellaneous costs increased due to consolidation by 2 million dollars. How will this effect fire departments and other services that are funded? These changes have had negative impacts on other communities in the province. What are more 'cons' from other merger examples in our province?

I can't help but feel like this is already a done deal. That's the impression being given to many of us. My opinion represents my family including my parents, in-laws, siblings who all reside in the county of Antigonish.

Regards,
Michelle Keizer and Matthew Doherty

County Resident B2G2K1

Harris McNamara

From: Michelle Keizer
Sent: May 1, 2022 9:21 AM
To: Harris McNamara
Subject: Consolidation

To the councillors of the county of Antigonish,

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County Resident B2G2K1

Hughie Stewart

From: Michelle Keizer < >
Sent: May 1, 2022 9:42 AM
To: Hughie Stewart
Subject: Consolidation

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Regards,
Michelle Keizer and Matthew Doherty

County Resident B2G2K1

Hughie Stewart

From: Maureen Bowman < >
Sent: May 1, 2022 11:21 AM
To: mayor@townofantigonish.ca
Cc: Mary MacLellan; Donnie MacDonald; Hughie Stewart; Shawn Brophy; Remi Deveau; Owen McCarron; John Dunbar; Gary Mattie; Harris McNamara; Bill MacFarlane; wcmormier@townofantigonish.ca; dmacinnis@townofantigonish.ca; scameron@townofantigonish.ca; amurray@townofantigonish.ca; mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca; droberts@townofantigonish.ca
Subject: Reply to request for plebiscite vote

Thank you Mayor Laurie Boucher for replying to our request for a plebiscite vote. You asked if we had any concerns regarding consolidation, and yes we do have questions.

First and foremost our main concern is what we will gain/lose as a community, as an identity? Will we have a voice after consolidation or will our councillor be so overwhelmed by the number of constituent concerns due to the fact that the area they will be covering will become larger, as we get the feel that the districts will be larger therefore not requiring as many councillors perhaps? Correct me if I'm wrong.

How much will it cost us personally if consolidation is approved; Fire services, protective services and taxes. What would be some of the benefits we might expect to see in our communities? We are under the assumption that it will be too late to voice concerns regarding the plans that will be set in motion once approval for consolidation is voted in by council. Plans that we know nothing about.

Yes we have read the information on the website, however we find the information to be very vague. There are no specifics regarding the pros and cons to consolidation, therefore this raises a red flag as to what if any underlying issues could be in the minds of the people who would be voting for us.

I'm sure you can understand if we feel a bit skittish about all of this. We are expected to put our trust and faith in the few who are making the decisions of what is best for us.

Give us some reasons to trust.

Respectfully yours,

Charles and Maureen Bowman

District 8

Sent from my iPad

Beth Schumacher

From: Seward Delorey <
Sent: May 1, 2022 11:40 AM
To: Owen McCarron
Subject: Plebiscite

Please note: Our residents are requesting a plebiscite vote be held to determine the outcome of the proposed consolidation between town & county!

Thank you!

Seward & Ann DeLorey
Monastery

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: May 1, 2022 12:16 PM
To: info@antigonish.ca
Subject: FW: Reply to request for plebiscite vote

-----Original Message-----

From: Maureen Bowman
Sent: May 1, 2022 11:21 AM
To: mayor@townofantigonish.ca
Cc: Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; wcormier@townofantigonish.ca; dmacinnis@townofantigonish.ca; scameron@townofantigonish.ca; amurray@townofantigonish.ca; mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca; droberts@townofantigonish.ca
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District 8

Sent from my iPad

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: May 1, 2022 12:17 PM
To: info@antigonish.ca
Subject: FW: Consolidation

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

From: Michelle Keizer
Sent: May 1, 2022 9:21 AM
To: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Consolidation

To the councillors of the county of Antigonish,

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Regards,
Michelle Keizer and Matthew Doherty

County Resident B2G2K1

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: May 1, 2022 12:19 PM
To: info@antigonish.ca
Subject: FW: Consolidation

From: Michelle Keizer
Sent: May 1, 2022 9:21 AM
To: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Consolidation

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1. How is this going to benefit us? The answer from the mayor is that we will be stronger together. How, specifically? Tell us specifics and not generalizations. I have concerns that tax dollars will benefit the major centre of Antigonish more than other areas.
2. Are there plans to expand Town limits, where current County residents enjoying a more affordable tax rate will see their tax nearly double? Among County residents there seems to be a feeling that Town Council is all for Consolidation, where County Councillors are against... That is troubling for us. Why would there be any conflict of interest with where Councillors live, if everything is transparent?
3. Why can't the simple question of WILL TAX RATES INCREASE be answered with a yes or no? If planning for this event has been so poor that it can't be answered, why are we proceeding?

There are still so many unknowns on cost and fees (RCMP and such) and how grants for town or county will work. It was mentioned in the comments that in the Windsor West Hants merger their administrative cost decreased but the RCMP and other miscellaneous costs increased due to consolidation by 2 million dollars. How will this affect fire departments and other services that are funded? These changes have had negative impacts on other communities in the province. What are more 'cons' from other merger examples in our province?

I can't help but feel like this is already a done deal. Thats the impression being given to many of us. My opinion represents my family including my parents, in-laws, siblings who all reside in the county of Antigonish.

Regards,
Michelle Keizer and Matthew Doherty

County Resident B2G2K1

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: May 1, 2022 12:23 PM
To: info@antigonish.ca
Subject: FW: Consolidation/ Plebiscite

-----Original Message-----

From: Maureen Bowman
Sent: April 30, 2022 5:36 PM
To: Mary MacLellan <mmacellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; mayor@townofantigonish.ca; wgormier@townofantigonish.ca; dmaccinnis@townofantigonish.ca; scameron@townofantigonish.ca; amurray@townofantigonish.ca; mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca; droberts@townofantigonish.ca
Subject: Fwd: Consolidation/ Plebiscite

>
> To all the elected officials who were voted in to represent the people in their home riding.
> I believe I can speak for everyone when I ask for the opportunity to be able to have a voice by plebiscite in the matter of consolidation between the County Municipalities and the Town of Antigonish.
>
> As was stated in the brochure "You've elected us to do what's in your best interest and part of our job is to explore opportunities like this".
> Good on you to do this, however excluding the people who voted you in by taking away their voice in this very important matter seems unfair to us.
>
> Now that you have explored consolidation, and we can only believe that you have been well informed, it seems only fair that this information be shared with all the people who will benefit or not. If there is nothing to hide let us the constituents see what you have explored, and give us the right to vote on our future.
>
> Prove to everyone that you really do want what's best for them and give us a plebiscite vote in accordance with the Municipal Government Act of Nova Scotia.
>
> Respectfully yours,
> Charles and Maureen Bowman
> Monastery
>
> District 8
>
>
> Sent from my iPad

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: May 1, 2022 12:24 PM
To: 'info@antigonish.ca'
Subject: FW: Consolidation/ Plebiscite

-----Original Message-----

From: Maureen Bowman
Sent: April 30, 2022 5:36 PM
To: Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; mayor@townofantigonish.ca; wgormier@townofantigonish.ca; dmacinnis@townofantigonish.ca; scameron@townofantigonish.ca; amurray@townofantigonish.ca; mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca; droberts@townofantigonish.ca
Subject: Fwd: Consolidation/ Plebiscite

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- > Charles and Maureen Bowman
- > Monastery
- >
- > District 8
- >
- >
- > Sent from my iPad

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: May 1, 2022 12:24 PM
To: info@antigonish.ca
Subject: FW: Want and request and demand a plebiscite on such a critical decision. This is not what councillors were elected to do.

From: Mike Moeller
Sent: April 30, 2022 5:04 PM
To: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Want and request and demand a plebiscite on such a critical decision. This is not what councillors were elected to do.

Hello Councillor

I am sending again as I heard some councillors did not receive this from me yesterday.

Mike

----- Forwarded Message -----

Subject:We want and request and demand a plebiscite on such a critical decision. This is not what councillors were elected to do.

Date:Fri, 29 Apr 2022 15:37:21 -0300

From:Mike Moeller :

To:mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca, omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca, mayor@townofantigonish.ca wcmormier@townofantigonish.ca dmacinnis@townofantigonish.ca scameron@townofantigonish.ca amurray@townofantigonish.ca, mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca droberts@townofantigonish.ca

Dear Councillors of Antigonish Town and County

I am a resident of the County of Antigonish and I demand that we have a plebiscite and open town and county halls with all people able to hear each others questions and answers on the pros and cons of amalgamation/consolidation. In no manner, should this consolidation of Town and County power that the councillors that do not want a vote, be exercised on my behalf with their vote. You are all residents also, and your vote should be one of 20,000 in the Town and County. This is democracy not working for the people, when you have the majority of councillors taking it upon themselves to vote for consolidation of two entities (town and county) without giving the people the opportunity to vote. We never elected you councillors to make such a decision. I was involved Nationally and Regionally and Locally with my Union for over 30 years, being elected every three years. If it ever came to merging our Union with another union or having a strike vote (both of these examples are analogies of what is happening with your councils), the members of both unions were given the opportunity to vote or the members voted to strike or not, were given the right and opportunity to vote.. We the elected Officers, NEVER would even dream of voting on something of that magnitude, which you

councillors who do not want a vote/plebiscite are doing. We did not give you that right, and you do not have that right to speak on my behalf of something so important. And who decided to have almost a quarter of a million dollars spent on "consultants" that are not even from our community, to answer the questions that we elected you to answer? If the councillors will not give the residents the right to vote, then there should be legal action taken to stop this pre-determined decision. Being an elected official is at times thankless, and it is a hard task. However, the process taken by the majority of both Councils in this dissolution of either the town or County, called consolidation, must have a plebiscite. Pictou gave their residents a voice and vote. The comments made that a vote was decided against, because we do not have the information and it would be based on emotions, was actually insulting to say the least at what some councillors think of who they are supposed to represent. To say it will be divisive is also not within the knowledge of councillors. If we do not have a vote, then you will see divisiveness, but then it will be TOO LATE to rectify the concerns of thousands of residents. Why not run on this campaign in the next election, if you are so confident? This whole process smells.

Thanks

Mike Moeller-County of Antigonish

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: May 1, 2022 12:24 PM
To: info@antigonish.ca
Subject: FW: Regarding..... Antigonish town amalgamating with the County

From: gloria boudreau
Sent: April 30, 2022 1:38 PM
To: Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; jdundar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca; Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Regarding..... Antigonish town amalgamating with the County

I am in favor of a plebiscite, in regards to the amalgamation of the town of Antigonish and Antigonish County. 1 person =1 vote. I strongly believe that the County of Antigonish as "not" been advised nor informed well enough (or at all !) on the long term effects this amalgamation will have, on the County and Town. I also feel that the discussion and decision to move forward , with this amalgamation without a plebiscite will further confirm what I and most of the county believe to be a deceitful and corrupt action on behalf the town of Antigonish and 100% at the expense of the county ! I want my voice heard ! I want to vote ! As a land holder and TAX PAYER I have a right to be heard and informed before, anymore action is taken towards an amalgamation .

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: May 1, 2022 12:28 PM
To: info@antigonish.ca
Subject: FW: Regarding..... Antigonish town amalgamating with the County

From: gloria boudreau
Sent: April 30, 2022 1:38 PM
To: Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; jdundar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca; Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
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Beth Schumacher

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: May 1, 2022 12:32 PM
To: info
Subject: Fwd: Plebiscite

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Seward Delorey
Date: May 1, 2022 at 11:39:41 AM ADT
To: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Plebiscite

Please note: Our residents are requesting a plebiscite vote be held to determine the outcome of the proposed consolidation between town & county!

Thank you!

Seward & Ann DeLorey
Monastery

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: May 1, 2022 12:36 PM
To: Maureen Bowman
Subject: RE: Reply to request for plebiscite vote

Maureen;

Thank you for getting involved and asking questions! I don't believe such an important issue should be decided by a few councillors, it will affect our children and our grandchildren.

Harris McNamara
District 9 Antigonish County Councillor

-----Original Message-----

From: Maureen Bowman
Sent: May 1, 2022 11:21 AM
To: mayor@townofantigonish.ca
Cc: Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; wccormier@townofantigonish.ca; dmacinnis@townofantigonish.ca; scameron@townofantigonish.ca; amurray@townofantigonish.ca; mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca; droberts@townofantigonish.ca
Subject: Reply to request for plebiscite vote

Thank you Mayor Laurie Boucher for replying to our request for a plebiscite vote.
You asked if we had any concerns regarding consolidation, and yes we do have questions.

First and foremost our main concern is what we will gain/lose as a community, as an identity?
Will we have a voice after consolidation or will our councillor be so overwhelmed by the number of constituent concerns due to the fact that the area they will be covering will become larger, as we get the feel that the districts will be larger therefore not requiring as many councillors perhaps? Correct me if I'm wrong.

How much will it cost us personally if consolidation is approved; Fire services, protective services and taxes.
What would be some of the benefits we might expect to see in our communities?
We are under the assumption that it will be too late to voice concerns regarding the plans that will be set in motion once approval for consolidation is voted in by council. Plans that we know nothing about.

Yes we have read the information on the website, however we find the information to be very vague. There are no specifics regarding the pros and cons to consolidation, therefore this raises a red flag as to what if any underlying issues could be in the minds of the people who would be voting for us.

I'm sure you can understand if we feel a bit skittish about all of this. We are expected to put our trust and faith in the few who are making the decisions of what is best for us.

Give us some reasons to trust.

Respectfully yours,

Charles and Maureen Bowman

District 8

Sent from my iPad

Harris McNamara

From: Bonnie Decoste ·
Sent: May 1, 2022 12:40 PM
To: Mary MacLellan; Hughie Stewart; Remi Deveau; John Dunbar; Owen McCarron; Harris McNamara; Donnie MacDonald; Shawn Brophy; Gary Mattie; Bill MacFarlane
Subject: Fwd: Re : consolidation with town

Sent from my Galaxy Tab® E

----- Original message -----

From: Bonnie Decoste ·
Date: 2022-05-01 12:28 PM (GMT-04:00)
To: omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca
Subject: Re : consolidation with town

Warden McCarron

Please be aware we are against the proposed consolidation with the town .There are too many unanswered questions .We don't understand the rush to make this decision. Second we feel that we have the right to vote on this individually. When we are given more information as to how this consolidation would unfold and affect us in Havre Boucher we know we are educated enough to make a decision on our own and not through a councillor. Especially in light of the fact that our councillor may be exempt from the vote to a percieved conflict of interest.

Give the people of the county the necessary information and trust us to individually vote in a county wide plebisite.

Thank you for your time,

Gerard and Bonnie DeCoste

Sent from my Galaxy T

Beth Schumacher

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: May 1, 2022 12:41 PM
To: info
Subject: Fwd: consolidation with town

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Bonnie Decoste
Date: May 1, 2022 at 12:39:47 PM ADT
To: Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
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Give the people of the county the necessary information and trust us to individually vote in a county wide plebisite.

Thank you for your time,

Gerard and Bonnie DeCoste

Sent from my Galaxy T

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: May 1, 2022 1:38 PM
To: Michelle Keizer
Subject: RE: Consolidation

Michelle;

I completely agree with you. I have been saying it's a bad deal for county residents in my opinion since late last year. I did vote to explore consolidation but the consultants hired act more like cheerleader, that's why I held a community meeting in Havre Boucher (118 residents attended) on April 18th, all wanted a plebiscite. We had a second community meeting in Tracadie (April 27th) with over 200 residents and again spoke on reasons why the county should not amalgamate with town. I don't think a few councillors should make this important decision that will affect our children and grandchildren, a plebiscite is required.

Harris McNamara
District 9 Councillor (Antigonish County)

From: Michelle Keizer
Sent: May 1, 2022 9:21 AM
To: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Consolidation

To the councillors of the county of Antigonish,

I am writing this email regarding the consolidation of Antigonish Town and County. I would like to voice my concerns and opinions in this letter to the people making these decisions.

I am a resident of the county of Antigonish and I am very disappointed and frustrated with the approach in which this merger has been taken. In my opinion this is a decision that the residents of this community should be making to actually reflect what is in the best interest for town and county. I feel like one of the reasons this approach has been taken is because back in 2006 this same motion was voted down with very strong numbers (in the 74% range) and I suspect that's what would happen again if residents got to vote. I've talked to many people from town and county and every person I've spoken to opposes this happening without a vote. I am in favour of a plebiscite.

In the last election I didn't hear one person speak about a merger with the town in their platform. This would have been the appropriate time to present the idea, so the people running could voice their stance and we could make an appropriate vote. Again I 100% believe this is a decision for the people/residents.

Now that I've voiced my stance on wanting a plebiscite, I also have concerns about what will happen if this goes to a successful vote by the town and county.

I happen to live in an area that borders the town, if this merger happens we are at risk of our taxes raising if the town decides to expand its borders even though the prediction is that taxes won't increase.

I participated in Wednesday's April 27 webinar, lots of questions were asked but very few clear answers were given. Some questions that I felt were not answered adequately are:

1. How is this going to benefit us? The answer from the mayor is that we will be stronger together. How, specifically? Tell us specifics and not generalizations. I have concerns that tax dollars will benefit the major centre of Antigonish more than other areas.
2. Are there plans to expand Town limits, where current County residents enjoying a more affordable tax rate will see their tax nearly double? Among County residents there seems to be a feeling that Town Council is all for Consolidation, where County Councillors are against... That is troubling for us. Why would there be any conflict of interest with where Councillors live, if everything is transparent?

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There are still so many unknowns on cost and fees (RCMP and such) and how grants for town or county will work. It was mentioned in the comments that in the Windsor West Hants merger their administrative cost decreased but the RCMP and other miscellaneous costs increased due to consolidation by 2 million dollars. How will this effect fire departments and other services that are funded? These changes have had negative impacts on other communities in the province. What are more 'cons' from other merger examples in our province?

I can't help but feel like this is already a done deal. That's the impression being given to many of us. My opinion represents my family including my parents, in-laws, siblings who all reside in the county of Antigonish.

Regards,
Michelle Keizer and Matthew Doherty

County Resident B2G2K1

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: May 1, 2022 1:52 PM
To: Bonnie Decoste
Subject: RE: Re : consolidation with town

Bonnie Gerrard:

Thanks for taking the time to contact the councillors and warden, we are having an effect, seeing cracks in their position. It makes no sense from the county's perspective. I did vote to explore consolidation but the consultants hired act more like cheerleader, that why I held a community meeting in Havre Boucher (118 residents attended) on April 18th, all wanted a plebiscite. We had a second community meeting in Tracadie (April 27th) with over 200 residents and again spoke on reasons why the county should not amalgamate with town. I don't think a few councillors should make this important decision that will effect our children and grandchildren, a plebiscite is required.

Please come to the dog and pony show on May 11 at the HB Community Centre and ask for a plebiscite.

Harris

From: Bonnie Decoste
Sent: May 1, 2022 12:40 PM
To: Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Fwd: Re : consolidation with town

Sent from my Galaxy Tab® E

----- Original message -----

From: Bonnie Decoste <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Date: 2022-05-01 12:28 PM (GMT-04:00)
To: omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca
Subject: Re : consolidation with town

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Give the people of the county the necessary information and trust us to individually vote in a county wide plebisite.

Thank you for your time,

Gerard and Bonnie DeCoste

Sent from my Galaxy T

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: May 1, 2022 1:56 PM
To: Anita Stewart
Subject: RE: Consolidation

Anita;

Thanks for taking the time to contact the councillors and warden, we are having an effect, seeing cracks in their position. It makes no sense from the county's perspective. I did vote to explore consolidation but the consultants hired act more like cheerleader, that why I held a community meeting in Havre Boucher (118 residents attended) on April 18th, all wanted a plebiscite. We had a second community meeting in Tracadie (April 27th) with over 200 residents and again spoke on reasons why the county should not amalgamate with town. I don't think a few councillors should make this important decision that will effect our children and grandchildren, a plebiscite is required.

Please come to the meeting on May 11 at the HB Community Centre and ask for a plebiscite.

Harris

From: Anita Stewart
Sent: April 30, 2022 5:57 PM
To: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Consolidation

Good evening Harris,

I hope this email finds you well. I have been hearing a lot of buzz regarding consolidation between town and county. I will be perfectly up front and state I am unaware of the pros and cons. I have been invited to a Facebook group where discussions are taking place. We are being urged to reach out to our councillors. I always have and will continue to believe in transparency and a clear understanding of all the "issues" before making an informed decision. From what I have been hearing and reading it appears many people are unsure of the pros and cons therefore most of what I read/hear is that people want to have a plebiscite, only after they become informed before any consolidation process occurs. Please accept this email as my support for a plebiscite.

Kind regards,
Anita Stewart
Frankville

Harris McNamara

From: Town of Antigonish Mayor <mayor@townofantigonish.ca>
Sent: May 1, 2022 3:46 PM
To: Maureen Bowman
Cc: Mary MacLellan; Donnie MacDonald; Hughie Stewart; Shawn Brophy; Remi Deveau; Owen McCarron; John Dunbar; Gary Mattie; Harris McNamara; Bill MacFarlane; Willie Cormier; Donnie MacInnis; Sean Cameron; Andrew Murray; Mary Farrell; Diane Roberts
Subject: Re: [EXTERNAL] Reply to request for plebiscite vote

Good afternoon Mr and Mrs Bowman, I have answered you questions below. If any of the answers are unsatisfactory or you need more information please let me know...

First and foremost our main concern is what we will gain/lose as a community, as an identity?

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- If the final vote is Yes, a transition team (equal representatives from the town and county) will work together to create the new Municipality. This will be done by using the Guiding Principles agreed to, unanimously, by both councils. You will see that we had thought about what matters most to the larger community. The Guiding Principles are below. We

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are going well so let's just leave it". It is our responsibility to look for new opportunities that could be beneficial to our community.

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I will be in Tracadie on Monday evening to answer questions and talk about your concerns. I would be honoured if you introduced yourself to me and we can talk more.

Again, thank you for taking the time to write and I hope I get to meet you Monday night in Tracadie.

Best,
Laurie

Mayor Laurie Boucher
Town of Antigonish
274 Main St, Antigonish, N.S
B2G 2C4
mayor@townofantigonish.ca | 902•870•7795

From: Maureen Bowman <
Sent: Sunday, May 1, 2022 11:20:47 AM
To: Town of Antigonish Mayor <mayor@townofantigonish.ca>
Cc: mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Willie Cormier <wcormier@townofantigonish.ca>; Donnie MacInnis <dmacinnis@townofantigonish.ca>; Sean Cameron

<scameron@townofantigonish.ca>; Andrew Murray <amurray@townofantigonish.ca>; Mary Farrell <mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca>; Diane Roberts <droboterts@townofantigonish.ca>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Reply to request for plebiscite vote

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Thank you Mayor Laurie Boucher for replying to our request for a plebiscite vote.
You asked if we had any concerns regarding consolidation, and yes we do have questions.

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Give us some reasons to trust.

Respectfully yours,

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District 8

Sent from my iPad

Harris McNamara

From: Town of Antigonish Mayor <mayor@townofantigonish.ca>
Sent: May 1, 2022 3:49 PM
To: Maureen Bowman
Cc: Mary MacLellan; Donnie MacDonald; Hughie Stewart; Shawn Brophy; Remi Deveau; Owen McCarron; John Dunbar; Gary Mattie; Harris McNamara; Bill MacFarlane; Willie Cormier; Donnie MacInnis; Sean Cameron; Andrew Murray; Mary Farrell; Diane Roberts
Subject: Re: [EXTERNAL] Reply to request for plebiscite vote

Sorry...correction, I will be in Tracadie Wednesday evening not Monday evening.

Best,
Laurie

Mayor Laurie Boucher
Town of Antigonish
274 Main St, Antigonish, N.S
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Sent: Sunday, May 1, 2022 3:46:02 PM
To: Maureen Bowman
Cc: mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Willie Cormier <wcormier@townofantigonish.ca>; Donnie MacInnis <dmacinnis@townofantigonish.ca>; Sean Cameron <scameron@townofantigonish.ca>; Andrew Murray <amurray@townofantigonish.ca>; Mary Farrell <mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca>; Diane Roberts <droberts@townofantigonish.ca>
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274 Main St, Antigonish, N.S
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Sent: Sunday, May 1, 2022 11:20:47 AM
To: Town of Antigonish Mayor <mayor@townofantigonish.ca>
Cc: mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Willie Cormier <wcormier@townofantigonish.ca>; Donnie MacInnis <dmacinnis@townofantigonish.ca>; Sean Cameron <scameron@townofantigonish.ca>; Andrew Murray <amurray@townofantigonish.ca>; Mary Farrell <mf Farrell@townofantigonish.ca>; Diane Roberts <d Roberts@townofantigonish.ca>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Reply to request for plebiscite vote

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Give us some reasons to trust.

Respectfully yours,

Charles and Maureen Bowman

District 8

Sent from my iPad

Harris McNamara

From: Bonnie Decoste <
Sent: May 1, 2022 4:23 PM
To: Harris McNamara
Subject: Re: consolidation with town

Thanks Harris for your feedback and thanks for giving the community a venue to meet, share opinions and discuss this proposed consolidation.

Sent from my iPhone

On May 1, 2022, at 1:52 PM, Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca> wrote:

Bonnie Gerrard:

Thanks for taking the time to contact the councillors and warden, we are having an effect, seeing cracks in their position. It makes no sense from the county's perspective. I did vote to explore consolidation but the consultants hired act more like cheerleader, that why I held a community meeting in Havre Boucher (118 residents attended) on April 18th, all wanted a plebiscite. We had a second community meeting in Tracadie (April 27th) with over 200 residents and again spoke on reasons why the county should not amalgamate with town. I don't think a few councillors should make this important decision that will effect our children and grandchildren, a plebiscite is required.

Please come to the dog and pony show on May 11 at the HB Community Centre and ask for a plebiscite.

Harris

From: Bonnie Decoste <
Sent: May 1, 2022 12:40 PM
To: Mary MacLellan <mmacellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Fwd: Re : consolidation with town

Sent from my Galaxy Tab® E

----- Original message -----

From: Bonnie Decoste <
Date: 2022-05-01 12:28 PM (GMT-04:00)
To: omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca
Subject: Re : consolidation with town

Warden McCarron

Please be aware we are against the proposed consolidation with the town .There are too many unanswered questions .We don't understand the rush to make this decision. Second we feel that we have the right to vote on this individually. When we are given more information as to how this consolidation would unfold and affect us in Havre Boucher we know we are educated enough to make a decision on our own and not through a councillor. Especially in light of the fact that our councillor may be exempt from the vote to a percieved conflict of interest.

Give the people of the county the necessary information and trust us to individually vote in a county wide plebisite.

Thank you for your time,

Gerard and Bonnie DeCoste

Sent from my Galaxy T

Hughie Stewart

From: Christene Vickers crosby <
Sent: May 1, 2022 4:33 PM
To: Mary MacLellan
Cc: Donnie MacDonald
Subject: Amalgamation of the County and Town Antigonish

Good Afternoon

I am writing to voice our opinions on this planned amalgamation.

We feel that this is a very important decision and the people should have their say. A vote is the only way to find the true feelings of the people you represent.

We are very satisfied with our taxes and see no gains with joining the town.

As for attending this meetings in different communities Due to Covid we do not feel comfortable being with large groups. It is a poor time to try and rush this through.

A response would be greatly appreciate

Grant and Christene Crosby

Dear Councilors,

I attended a community meeting on April 27th, at The Monsignor Donnelly Hall, in Tracadie. I agree with many of my fellow Tracadonians, that consolidation is NOT the way to go for Antigonish County residents. In my opinion, it only benefits the town. I didn't hear of any advantages and/or improvements helpful for the county.

There also didn't seem to be any specific answers to several questions that, we as a small community, had asked. We don't seem to be getting the whole story!

I am writing this letter to voice my disapproval, and to ask that a plebiscite be enacted. I don't want only a handful of people deciding the future of our community.

Yours truly,

William Delorey

Hughie Stewart

From: Bonnie Decoste <
Sent: May 1, 2022 12:40 PM
To: Mary MacLellan; Hughie Stewart; Remi Deveau; John Dunbar; Owen McCarron; Harris
McNamara; Donnie MacDonald; Shawn Brophy; Gary Mattie; Bill MacFarlane
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Sent from my Galaxy T

Shirlyn Donovan

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: Sunday, May 1, 2022 12:41 PM
To: info
Subject: Fwd: consolidation with town

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Bonnie Decoste <
Date: May 1, 2022 at 12:39:47 PM ADT
To: Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
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Subject: Re : consolidation with town

Warden McCarron

Please be aware we are against the proposed consolidation with the town .There are too many unanswered questions .We don't understand the rush to make this decision. Second we feel that we have the right to vote on this individually. When we are given more information as to how this consolidation would unfold and affect us in Havre Boucher we know we are educated enough to make a decision on our own and not through a councillor. Especially in light of the fact that our councillor may be exempt from the vote to a perceived conflict of interest.

Give the people of the county the necessary information and trust us to individually vote in a county wide plebisite.

Thank you for your time,

Gerard and Bonnie DeCoste

Sent from my Galaxy T

Hughie Stewart

From: Kim Connors <
Sent: May 1, 2022 8:24 PM
To: Mary MacLellan; Donnie MacDonald; Hughie Stewart; Shawn Brophy; Remi Deveau;
Owen McCarron; John Dunbar; Gary Mattie; Harris McNamara; Bill MacFarlane
Subject: Consolidation - ??s

What is your position on this matter at this time?

Why should I believe that this will be of any benefit to members of the municipalities?

Why are we led to believe that there will be no negative impact - nothing is 100%?

Looking forward to hearing from our elected representatives.

Kind regards,
Kim Connors

Beth Schumacher

From: Kim Connors
Sent: May 1, 2022 8:24 PM
To: Mary MacLellan; Donnie MacDonald; Hughie Stewart; Shawn Brophy; Remi Deveau; Owen McCarron; John Dunbar; Gary Mattie; Harris McNamara; Bill MacFarlane
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Kind regards,
Kim Connors

Beth Schumacher

From: Heighton, Andrew ·
Sent: May 2, 2022 8:32 AM
To: Owen McCarron
Subject: Consolidation Breakfast Event

Hi Owen and Good morning

Wondering if you have a few min this week, or if you can reply back via this email. We have confirmation from Mayor Boucher that it works on her end, so looking to confirm with yourself.

We - The Chamber of Commerce are hoping to push the consolidation breakfast out a few weeks to June 3 if possible.

Is this possible and doable with your schedule?

Andrew

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: May 2, 2022 9:17 AM
To: info@antigonish.ca
Subject: FW: Amalgamation of the County and Town Antigonish

-----Original Message-----

From: Christene Vickers crosby
Sent: May 1, 2022 4:33 PM
To: Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Cc: Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Amalgamation of the County and Town Antigonish

Good Afternoon

I am writing to voice our opinions on this planned amalgamation.

We feel that this is a very important decision and the people should have their say. A vote is the only way to find the true feelings of the people you represent.

We are very satisfied with our taxes and see no gains with joining the town.

As for attending this meetings in different communities Due to Covid we do not feel comfortable being with large groups. It is a poor time to try and rush this through.

A response would be greatly appreciate

Grant and Christene Crosby

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: May 2, 2022 9:28 AM
To: Kim Connors
Subject: RE: Consolidation - ??s

Kim;

My name is Harris McNamara, Councillor for District 9 (Havre Boucher) and from the beginning I have been against amalgamation. It does not make sense to county residents as we are in the best financial position ever. This is being rushed through with no pros and cons, a cost benefit analysis needs to be done on every component of amalgamation . Most importantly county residents won't have a say in what happens. Six councillors (maybe less) will make the decision for you. We need a plebiscite, that way 15000 residents will make the decision. Some don't want a plebiscite because they know it will not pass.

If you want more information, please give me a call at 318-8333.

Harris

From: Kim Connors
Sent: May 1, 2022 8:24 PM
To: Mary MacLellan <maclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
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Looking forward to hearing from our elected representatives.

Kind regards,
Kim Connors

Shirlyn Donovan

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: Monday, May 2, 2022 9:28 AM
To: info
Subject: FW: Consolidation - ??s

From: Kim Connors
Sent: May 1, 2022 8:24 PM
To: Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
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Looking forward to hearing from our elected representatives.

Kind regards,
Kim Connors

Beth Schumacher

From: Shirlyn Donovan
Sent: May 2, 2022 10:05 AM
To: Kate Gorman; Jeff Lawrence; mayor@townofantigonish.ca; Owen McCarron; Chrystal Fuller; Brian Smith; Robyn McIsaac; Glenn Horne
Subject: Saltwire Article

https://www.saltwire.com/halifax/news/plebiscites-called-for-on-consolidation-of-antigonish-town-and-county-100724356/?utm_medium=Social&utm_source=Twitter#Echobox=1651493721

Shirlyn Donovan

Strategic Initiatives Coordinator
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
285 Beech Hill Road
Antigonish, NS B2G 0B4
902-863-1117



www.antigonishcounty.ns.ca
www.twitter.com/antigonishco

Honour Yesterday, Act Today, Inspire Tomorrow

Beth Schumacher

From: Jeff Lawrence <jlawrence@townofantigonish.ca>
Sent: May 2, 2022 10:07 AM
To: Shirlyn Donovan; Kate Gorman; mayor@townofantigonish.ca; Owen McCarron; Chrystal Fuller; Brian Smith; Robyn McIsaac; Glenn Horne
Subject: RE: [EXTERNAL] Saltwire Article

Saw that one this morning.
Jeff

From: Shirlyn Donovan <shirlyn.donovan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Sent: Monday, May 02, 2022 10:05 AM
To: Kate Gorman <kgorman@townofantigonish.ca>; Jeff Lawrence <jlawrence@townofantigonish.ca>; Town of Antigonish Mayor <mayor@townofantigonish.ca>; Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Chrystal Fuller <chrystal@brighterplanning.ca>; Brian Smith <smithrsx@yahoo.ca>; Robyn McIsaac <robyn@prhive.ca>; Glenn Horne <glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Saltwire Article

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

https://www.saltwire.com/halifax/news/plebiscites-called-for-on-consolidation-of-antigonish-town-and-county-100724356/?utm_medium=Social&utm_source=Twitter#Echobox=1651493721

Shirlyn Donovan
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 www.twitter.com/antigonishco

Honour Yesterday, Act Today, Inspire Tomorrow

Harris McNamara

From: Glenn Horne
Sent: May 2, 2022 10:33 PM
To: Council
Cc: info; Shirlyn Donovan
Subject: Fwd: Letter
Attachments: Amalgamation letter.docx

Good evening, folks - Please find attached a letter from Steve Smith addressed to County Councillors.

Cheers,
Glenn

Glenn Horne
CAO
Municipality of the County of Antigonish

From: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Sent: Monday, May 2, 2022 5:05:47 PM
To: Glenn Horne <glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Fwd: Letter

Have a look
Owen

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Steve Smith <[redacted]>
Date: May 2, 2022 at 3:39:48 PM ADT
To: "Laurie Boucher (lboucher@townofantigonish.ca)" <lboucher@townofantigonish.ca>, Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Letter

Hi Laurie and Owen

Please look at this and if you feel you want something different or more please contact me.

Thanks Steve

Letter from Steve Smith – May 2, 2022

To: The Warden, Deputy Warden and Councillors of The Municipality of the County of Antigonish and the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Councillors of the town of Antigonish.

I want to express to you that I am completely in favor of the amalgamation of the Town and The Municipality of the County of Antigonish.

I have worked with both councils for the over 45 years of my business life and although both have been capable and well meaning, there have also been delays, frustrations and the feeling on my part that responses could be more efficient. I have built subdivisions and developments in both the town and county, including Whidden Street, Centennial Drive, Sylvan Valley, Lower South River, Market Street, Keating Court and Mount Cameron.

I believe we are at a point in time that is perfect for amalgamation of the town and county. Unlike the last consideration, which came as a surprise annexation attempt and then amalgamation, there is a much higher level of trust and co-operation between both parties. The idea has been discussed for some time and is now progressing in an orderly and open way.

Think about this: Did any of us think that Russia would attack The Ukraine? Did any of us foresee Covid changing how we live? Why should we think that the climate for amalgamation will be like it is today in 3-, 5- or 10-years time? Consider that we can now amalgamate on our terms, with experienced Councillors, who care about our residents, working together to do what is best for all. Who is to say that

the province won't force amalgamation on us in the future, and on their terms, not ours?

As a resident of both the town and county for 60 years and as a businessman who has never even thought of moving out of our area, I feel I have some credibility in talking about the benefits of amalgamation.

To begin I will iterate an example of an amalgamation I undertook in Pictou County. I was running two stores in the area, one on the West Side where the Hyundai/Subaru Dealer is now, and one on East River Road. Both stores had very capable staff who got along well with each other. The problem was that we weren't making money at either store. When I analyzed the problem, it became obvious that each store was competing against each other. I amalgamated the two stores into one, all jobs were kept, and everyone got along great, and they worked together. Our business thrived after this, we became profitable, we grew as one team, lots of opportunities opened for our employees, our customers got much better service, and we doubled our size. It was a huge win for all.

I see the same thing happening with the amalgamation of the town and county. With the present state of co-operation and ability among the Mayor, Warden and Councillors, you would work side by side to achieve the absolute best outcome for all our residents.

We would have one Recreation Dept, one Public Works Dept, one Accounting Dept, one Council etc. A newly elected council, which I am sure would include many of you, would come in with the best intentions for all. The gains you would achieve in efficiency would be a huge benefit to all residents. Programs would improve and offer more.

I realize people will try to find negatives and of course they exist. To stop this process, that will have many benefits for our residents forever, because of some possible negatives doesn't make sense. It is natural that the present councils and the eventual newly elected councils will find a way to solve any pitfalls that exist. That's what you are here for.

I urge you to think about the fact that this opportunity may not come along on your terms again. Together you are the reason that amalgamation is possible now. Without your will, and commitment to your residents this could and would not happen.

I have heard talk of some councillors wishing a plebiscite to let the residents of the Town and County decide the outcome of amalgamation. Your residents have elected You to represent them and make the best decisions for the future of our area. I believe that a plebiscite would deeply divide our residents, whatever the outcome and it would be influenced by opinions instead of facts. It is the job of management (i.e. – both Councils) to make the decision to move forward with amalgamation or not. In my 45 years of owning businesses, I listened to my employees, but Management made all the decisions. That's what we do and that is what you were elected to do.

Thank you for taking the time to consider my thoughts on this very important decision. I believe it is time to move forward together as one entity, to help grow our area and to build a better future for all residents. We will be looked upon with respect and awe by many who didn't have the foresight or initiative to do the right thing.

Respectfully:

Steve Smith

Beth Schumacher

From: Hilda < . >
Sent: May 2, 2022 10:34 AM
To: Mary MacLellan; Donnie MacDonald; Hughie Stewart; Shawn Brophy; Remi Deveau; Owen McCarron; John Dunbar; Gary Mattie; Harris McNamara; Bill MacFarlane
Subject: no consolidation
Attachments: Dear Councillors -no consolidation.docx; Hurley To the Councils of the Town of Antigonish and the Municipality.docx

To the Councils of the Town of Antigonish and the Municipality,

I am opposed to the consolidation of the Town and County as proposed.

I wish to cite some vast differences between the Town and County; since I have lived in both regions.

1. The Town has an electrical department, whereby it buys power from Nova Scotia Power ,and in turn charges a rate to all customers within the town boundaries. This requires a few employees, such as linesmen, to do all necessary repairs and maintenance to the system. It also has to provide trucks and all equipment necessary to do its job. The county has no such operation; all is covered by Nova Scotia Power.
2. The town has to pave its streets, lanes, avenues, etc. within its boundaries. As well as keep crosswalk markings, street signs (ex: St. Mary's St.) and all directional markings on roadways up to date and visible. It also has to maintain the traffic lights (ex. Main and College St.).

To the best of my knowledge, all of the above is the responsibility of the Department of Transportation, for the County.

3. The Town has to provide for winter plowing of all the streets and salting of them. This involves more trucks, equipment for snow removal, salt trucks, and any related equipment to do this effectively. More manpower is required as well; again, the Department of Transportation would be responsible for all roads within the County.

Number 2 & 3 probably requires about 40-50 % of the budget in each and every year. I can well imagine this figure is extremely high.

I, and all county residents, should not have to bear the burden of the finances, since the County has enough expenses for its own operations.

The town also has a much older water and sewer system, therefore experiencing more breaks and repairs. The county systems are newer, but have to be maintained too; we are susceptible to breaks as well.

The only way I could support consolidation of the two bodies, would be to maintain the two tax rates (County and Town separately) as exists now.

This should be an easy fix, since both could maintain separate income and expense statements, to keep our rates down. This doesn't mean that they cannot have one bank account and put all revenues into one, and pay all expenses from that one account. I have been doing accounting and budgeting for forty plus years, so I don't see any major problems with this format.

Hurley Delorey
Resident of District 10

Dear Councilors,

I attended a community meeting on April 27th, at The Monsignor Donnelly Hall, in Tracadie. I agree with many of my fellow Tracadonians, that consolidation is NOT the way to go for Antigonish County residents. In my opinion, it only benefits the town. I didn't hear of any advantages and/or improvements helpful for the county.

There also didn't seem to be any specific answers to several questions that, we as a small community, had asked. We don't seem to be getting the whole story!

I am writing this letter to voice my disapproval, and to ask that a plebiscite be enacted. I don't want only a handful of people deciding the future of our community.

Yours truly,

William Delorey

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: May 2, 2022 11:24 AM
To: info@antigonish.ca
Subject: FW: no consolidation
Attachments: Dear Councillors -no consolidation.docx; Hurley To the Councils of the Town of Antigonish and the Municipality.docx

From: Hilda
Sent: May 2, 2022 10:34 AM
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Hurley Delorey
Resident of District 10

Beth Schumacher

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: May 2, 2022 11:50 AM
To: Clarence Deyoung
Subject: Re: Consolidation

Hi Clarence,

Thank you very much for taking time to outline these points. I appreciate this support, and we are trying our best to help move our community forward together. Again thanks. Hope to see you at the session in Pomquet.

Owen

Sent from my iPhone

On May 2, 2022, at 10:52 AM, Clarence Deyoung

> wrote:

Good Morning Mayor Laurie and Warden Owen;

All my life, I have had no interest in Municipal or any other kind of politics, so I have been very thankful for people like you folks, along with your other elected officials, like your councillors. My interest lie elsewhere.

Since Mary Ann and I relocated back to the area almost 12 years ago, I have seen and heard, how well the Town and the Municipality of the County of Antigonish, separate identities, have come together and successfully completed many projects.

While Mary Ann and I were away from the community for 40 years, we kept in touch with family and friends along with an annual subscription to the Casket. We were often reminded that Town and County Councils did not always enjoy the relationship that exist today.

With this in mind, why would 2 separate councils who work so well together, suggest that they consolidate, if it wasn't a good thing for both Town and County.

1. People will continue to pay for services they receive just like they do today.(not like the rumor mill is indicating)
2. If taxes are to increase, they are going to increase, consolidation or not.(not like the fake news is out in the community, that taxes are going to increase due to consolidation)
3. Consolidation or not, constituents should not blame Town or County Councils if their councillor is not doing his/her job. Just like now, they will get a chance to do something about that at election time.

One of the most difficult things we all have to deal with in life is that we cannot predict the future. At some point, the future will affect every part of our lives.

If Town and County stay as they are, we will never know, what we missed/gained by not consolidating and if we consolidate we will never know what we missed or would have gained by not consolidating, but we have often heard, there is strength in numbers.

Sorry to ramble on but I am going with the facts that I know;

1. You two would not intentionally mis guide your councils.
2. You have done your homework by speaking to other areas who have done this.
3. You see opportunities for both Town and County

All you have to do now is try and control some of the mis-- information that is being spread out in our communities. Here is some of the things I am hearing which i suspect you have heard as well:

1. Councilors in new identity will be getting a raise
2. Laurie is not running again so Owen will get the big job
3. Consolidation is being pushed through too fast
4. There will be no benefit to my community
5. People will lose their jobs
6. Town is financially broke
7. Process is undemocratic
8. Why can't we have a plebisite
9. Individual cultures will lose their identity

Good Luck--you have my vote.

Clarence

P S Owen, I have copied the best councillor on County Council, Hope it doesn't go to his head. LOL

Harris McNamara

From: Brian Kepez <
Sent: May 2, 2022 4:40 PM
To: Mary MacLellan; Donnie MacDonald; Hughie Stewart; Shawn Brophy; Remi Deveau; Owen McCarron; John Dunbar; gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca; Harris McNamara; Bill MacFarlane
Subject: Consolidation

My name is Brian Kepez and I live in Afton Station. I would like to add my name to the others that are calling for a Plebiscite on the issue of consolidation. At the present time I am opposed to the consolidation in its present process. This issue is far too important and far reaching to be left in the hands of a few. I would also ask that the full list of pros and cons that was reached by the consultants hired be made publicly available to all voting residents.

Regards Brian Kepez and Nicole Kepez

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: May 2, 2022 4:51 PM
To: info@antigonish.ca
Subject: FW: Consolidation

From: Brian Kepez
Sent: May 2, 2022 4:40 PM
To: Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
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Regards Brian Kepez and Nicole Kepez

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: May 2, 2022 4:54 PM
To: Brian Kepez
Subject: RE: Consolidation

Brian;

My name is Harris McNamara, Councillor for District 9 (Havre Boucher) and from the beginning I have been against amalgamation. It does not make sense to county residents as we are in the best financial position ever. This is being rushed through with no pros and cons, a cost benefit analysis needs to be done on every component of amalgamation . Most importantly county residents won't have a say in what happens. Six councillors (maybe less) will make the decision for you. We need a plebiscite, that way 15000 county residents will make the decision. Some don't want a plebiscite because they know it will not pass.

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Regards Brian Kepez and Nicole Kepez

Hughie Stewart

From: cory decoste <...>
Sent: May 2, 2022 8:41 PM
To: Hughie Stewart
Subject: Consolidation

> Hi my name is Cory DeCoste I live at Mattie road Antigonish county, I attended the exploration of consolidation meeting at the hall in Tracadie on April, 27/2022. I would like to say that I am totally disgusted with the lack of answers to the very basic questions because of what the 2 councillors called a total lack of transparency, I have lived in this community for 40 years and I believe that a decision to be of this importance should be made by all people who make a contribution to this beautiful community, answers to these basic questions asked tonight will be welcomed with open ears , so I am demanding a plebiscite so we can decide our future as a community the same way we built it together, thanks for your time. Regards, Cory DeCoste.

Sent from my iPhone

Beth Schumacher

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From: cory decoste
Sent: May 2, 2022 8:50 PM
To: Harris McNamara
Subject: Consolation

> Hi my name is Cory DeCoste I live at Mattie road Antigonish county, I attended the exploration of consolidation meeting at the hall in Tracadie on April, 27/2022. I would like to say that I am totally disgusted with the lack of answers to the very basic questions because of what the 2 councillors called a total lack of transparency, I have lived in this community for 40 years and I believe that a decision to be of this importance should be made by all people who make a contribution to this beautiful community, answers to these basic questions asked tonight will be welcomed with open ears , so I am demanding a plebiscite so we can decide our future as a community the same way we built it together, thanks for your time. Regards, Cory DeCoste.

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Glenn Horne](#)
To: [Council](#)
Cc: [info](#); [Shirlyn Donovan](#)
Subject: Fwd: Letter
Date: May 2, 2022 10:32:45 PM
Attachments: [Amalgamation letter.docx](#)

Good evening, folks - Please find attached a letter from Steve Smith addressed to County Councillors.

Cheers,
Glenn

Glenn Horne
CAO
Municipality of the County of Antigonish

From: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Sent: Monday, May 2, 2022 5:05:47 PM
To: Glenn Horne <glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Fwd: Letter

Have a look
Owen

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Steve Smith <
Date: May 2, 2022 at 3:39:48 PM ADT
To: "Laurie Boucher (lboucher@townofantigonish.ca)"
<lboucher@townofantigonish.ca>, Owen McCarron
<omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Letter

Hi Laurie and Owen

Please look at this and if you feel you want something different or more please contact me.

Thanks Steve

Letter from Steve Smith – May 2, 2022

To: The Warden, Deputy Warden and Councillors of The Municipality of the County of Antigonish and the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Councillors of the town of Antigonish.

I want to express to you that I am completely in favor of the amalgamation of the Town and The Municipality of the County of Antigonish.

I have worked with both councils for the over 45 years of my business life and although both have been capable and well meaning, there have also been delays, frustrations and the feeling on my part that responses could be more efficient. I have built subdivisions and developments in both the town and county, including Whidden Street, Centennial Drive, Sylvan Valley, Lower South River, Market Street, Keating Court and Mount Cameron.

I believe we are at a point in time that is perfect for amalgamation of the town and county. Unlike the last consideration, which came as a surprise annexation attempt and then amalgamation, there is a much higher level of trust and co-operation between both parties. The idea has been discussed for some time and is now progressing in an orderly and open way.

Think about this: Did any of us think that Russia would attack The Ukraine? Did any of us foresee Covid changing how we live? Why should we think that the climate for amalgamation will be like it is today in 3-, 5- or 10-years time? Consider that we can now amalgamate on our terms, with experienced Councillors, who care about our residents, working together to do what is best for all. Who is to say that

the province won't force amalgamation on us in the future, and on their terms, not ours?

As a resident of both the town and county for 60 years and as a businessman who has never even thought of moving out of our area, I feel I have some credibility in talking about the benefits of amalgamation.

To begin I will iterate an example of an amalgamation I undertook in Pictou County. I was running two stores in the area, one on the West Side where the Hyundai/Subaru Dealer is now, and one on East River Road. Both stores had very capable staff who got along well with each other. The problem was that we weren't making money at either store. When I analyzed the problem, it became obvious that each store was competing against each other. I amalgamated the two stores into one, all jobs were kept, and everyone got along great, and they worked together. Our business thrived after this, we became profitable, we grew as one team, lots of opportunities opened for our employees, our customers got much better service, and we doubled our size. It was a huge win for all.

I see the same thing happening with the amalgamation of the town and county. With the present state of co-operation and ability among the Mayor, Warden and Councillors, you would work side by side to achieve the absolute best outcome for all our residents.

We would have one Recreation Dept, one Public Works Dept, one Accounting Dept, one Council etc. A newly elected council, which I am sure would include many of you, would come in with the best intentions for all. The gains you would achieve in efficiency would be a huge benefit to all residents. Programs would improve and offer more.

I realize people will try to find negatives and of course they exist. To stop this process, that will have many benefits for our residents forever, because of some possible negatives doesn't make sense. It is natural that the present councils and the eventual newly elected councils will find a way to solve any pitfalls that exist. That's what you are here for.

I urge you to think about the fact that this opportunity may not come along on your terms again. Together you are the reason that amalgamation is possible now. Without your will, and commitment to your residents this could and would not happen.

I have heard talk of some councillors wishing a plebiscite to let the residents of the Town and County decide the outcome of amalgamation. Your residents have elected You to represent them and make the best decisions for the future of our area. I believe that a plebiscite would deeply divide our residents, whatever the outcome and it would be influenced by opinions instead of facts. It is the job of management (i.e. – both Councils) to make the decision to move forward with amalgamation or not. In my 45 years of owning businesses, I listened to my employees, but Management made all the decisions. That's what we do and that is what you were elected to do.

Thank you for taking the time to consider my thoughts on this very important decision. I believe it is time to move forward together as one entity, to help grow our area and to build a better future for all residents. We will be looked upon with respect and awe by many who didn't have the foresight or initiative to do the right thing.

Respectfully:

Steve Smith

Beth Schumacher

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: May 2, 2022 11:03 PM
To: info
Subject: Fwd: no consolidation
Attachments: Dear Councillors -no consolidation.docx; Hurley To the Councils of the Town of Antigonish and the Municipality.docx

Warden Owen McCarron
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
902-968-1290

Begin forwarded message:

From: Hilda <hilda@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Date: May 2, 2022 at 10:34:30 AM ADT
To: Mary MacLellan <maclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: no consolidation

To the Councils of the Town of Antigonish and the Municipality,

I am opposed to the consolidation of the Town and County as proposed.

I wish to cite some vast differences between the Town and County; since I have lived in both regions.

1. The Town has an electrical department, whereby it buys power from Nova Scotia Power ,and in turn charges a rate to all customers within the town boundaries. This requires a few employees, such as linesmen, to do all necessary repairs and maintenance to the system. It also has to provide trucks and all equipment necessary to do its job. The county has no such operation; all is covered by Nova Scotia Power.
2. The town has to pave its streets, lanes, avenues, etc. within its boundaries. As well as keep crosswalk markings, street signs (ex: St. Mary's St.) and all directional markings on roadways up to date and visible. It also has to maintain the traffic lights (ex. Main and College St.).

To the best of my knowledge, all of the above is the responsibility of the Department of Transportation, for the County.

3. The Town has to provide for winter plowing of all the streets and salting of them. This involves more trucks, equipment for snow removal, salt trucks, and any related equipment to do this effectively. More manpower is required as well; again, the Department of Transportation would be responsible for all roads within the County.

Number 2 & 3 probably requires about 40-50 % of the budget in each and every year. I can well imagine this figure is extremely high.

I, and all county residents, should not have to bear the burden of the finances, since the County has enough expenses for its own operations.

The town also has a much older water and sewer system, therefore experiencing more breaks and repairs. The county systems are newer, but have to be maintained too; we are susceptible to breaks as well.

The only way I could support consolidation of the two bodies, would be to maintain the two tax rates (County and Town separately) as exists now.

This should be an easy fix, since both could maintain separate income and expense statements, to keep our rates down. This doesn't mean that they cannot have one bank account and put all revenues into one, and pay all expenses from that one account. I have been doing accounting and budgeting for forty plus years, so I don't see any major problems with this format.

Hurley Delorey
Resident of District 10

Dear Councilors,

I attended a community meeting on April 27th, at The Monsignor Donnelly Hall, in Tracadie. I agree with many of my fellow Tracadonians, that consolidation is NOT the way to go for Antigonish County residents. In my opinion, it only benefits the town. I didn't hear of any advantages and/or improvements helpful for the county.

There also didn't seem to be any specific answers to several questions that, we as a small community, had asked. We don't seem to be getting the whole story!

I am writing this letter to voice my disapproval, and to ask that a plebiscite be enacted. I don't want only a handful of people deciding the future of our community.

Yours truly,

William Delorey

Shirlyn Donovan

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: Monday, May 2, 2022 11:05 PM
To: info
Subject: Fwd: Amalgamation of the County and Town Antigonish

Warden Owen McCarron
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
902-968-1290

Begin forwarded message:

From: Christene Vickers crosby <
Date: May 1, 2022 at 4:33:23 PM ADT
To: Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Cc: Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Amalgamation of the County and Town Antigonish

Good Afternoon

I am writing to voice our opinions on this planned amalgamation.

We feel that this is a very important decision and the people should have their say. A vote is the only way to find the true feelings of the people you represent.

We are very satisfied with our taxes and see no gains with joining the town.

As for attending this meetings in different communities Due to Covid we do not feel comfortable being with large groups. It is a poor time to try and rush this through.

A response would be greatly appreciate

Grant and Christene Crosby

Beth Schumacher

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: May 3, 2022 6:43 AM
To: info
Subject: Fwd: Consolidation

Warden Owen McCarron
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
902-968-1290

Begin forwarded message:

From: Brian Kepez <brian.kepez@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Date: May 2, 2022 at 4:39:39 PM ADT
To: Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca, Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Consolidation

My name is Brian Kepez and I live in Afton Station. I would like to add my name to the others that are calling for a Plebiscite on the issue of consolidation. At the present time I am opposed to the consolidation in its present process. This issue is far too important and far reaching to be left in the hands of a few. I would also ask that the full list of pros and cons that was reached by the consultants hired be made publicly available to all voting residents.

Regards Brian Kepez and Nicole Kepez

Harris McNamara

From: alice mattie
Sent: May 3, 2022 10:22 AM
To: Harris McNamara
Subject: Re: Concern about Consolidation -Hoping for a Plebiscite

Thanks for responding, Harris and have a great day.

On Saturday, April 30, 2022, 01:12:59 p.m. ADT, Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca> wrote:

Alice;

Thank You!

Harris

From: alice mattie
Sent: April 30, 2022 12:34 PM
To: Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Concern about Consolidation -Hoping for a Plebiscite

Dear County Council:

I am a resident of Antigonish County and have lived here in Bayfield all of my life.

I along with the rest of the residents of this County deserve meaningful consultation on this momentous decision.

I feel that the question of Consolidation should be put to a Plebiscite of all residents.

Sincerely,

Alice Mattie

Beth Schumacher

From: Kate Gorman <kgorman@townofantigonish.ca>
Sent: May 3, 2022 11:56 AM
To: mayor@townofantigonish.ca; Robyn Mclsaac; Owen McCarron
Cc: Shirlyn Donovan
Subject: Re: [EXTERNAL] Re: CBC Interview - Topics for Discussion
Attachments: CBC Interview Notes - May 4.docx

Hi Laurie and Owen,

Please find attached speaking notes for your interview tomorrow.

Reminder the interview is tomorrow (Wednesday) at Town Hall at 1 p.m.

Thanks!

Kate

Kate Gorman
Marketing and Communications Officer
kgorman@townofantigonish.ca
902-318-6758
www.townofantigonish.ca | [Nest Cam](#) | [Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#)

From: Town of Antigonish Mayor <mayor@townofantigonish.ca>
Sent: Friday, April 29, 2022 4:43 PM
To: Robyn Mclsaac <robyn@prhive.ca>; Kate Gorman <kgorman@townofantigonish.ca>; Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Cc: Shirlyn Donovan <shirlyn.donovan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Re: [EXTERNAL] Re: CBC Interview - Topics for Discussion

A few points would be good.

Thank you

Mayor Laurie Boucher
Town of Antigonish
274 Main St, Antigonish, N.S
B2G 2C4
mayor@townofantigonish.ca | 902•870•7795

From: Robyn Mclsaac <robyn@prhive.ca>
Sent: Friday, April 29, 2022 4:41:08 PM
To: Kate Gorman <kgorman@townofantigonish.ca>; Town of Antigonish Mayor <mayor@townofantigonish.ca>; Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Cc: Shirlyn Donovan <shirlyn.donovan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Re: CBC Interview - Topics for Discussion

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Happy to help if you want to practice.

R

From: Kate Gorman <kgorman@townofantigonish.ca>

Date: Friday, April 29, 2022 at 4:10 PM

To: Town of Antigonish Mayor <mayor@townofantigonish.ca>, Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>

Cc: Shirlyn Donovan <shirlyn.donovan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Robyn McIsaac <robyn@prhive.ca>

Subject: CBC Interview - Topics for Discussion

Hi Laurie and Owen,

These are the points Jon Tattrie is looking to discuss on Wednesday:

I'll ask about what started the process of looking at merging, where things stand now, and how the decision will be made this summer. Some residents say it should go to a plebiscite, so I'll ask about that, too. I'd also like to hear what they think would be the advantages and disadvantages of either path.

I know you both have the key messaging down, but if you'd like us to write out more extensive speaking points on any topic, please let me know. I've cc'ed Robyn so she can provide any direction needed.

Thanks!

Kate

Kate Gorman

Marketing and Communications Officer

kgorman@townofantigonish.ca

902-318-6758

www.townofantigonish.ca | [Nest Cam](#) | [Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#)

Specific messages:

- We know most councillors have not made up their minds, including us. We are still in the process of engaging our community and we'll all have an opportunity to review what we've heard in a report prepared by the consultants.
- There does appear to be more advantages than disadvantages based on researching other mergers in Nova Scotia, specifically best practices from Windsor – West Hants.
- Nothing is currently broken, but it's good practice to explore new opportunities so that we can continue to build a community where everyone benefits.
- For years, residents have said they wanted to see more collaboration and a stronger partnership between the Town and County. We've put in the work and our partnership is stronger than ever. We've reached this point where we believe it is worth exploring consolidation. There are multiple facets and large and small details to consider, none of which we are taking lightly.
- For example, many of the issues facing our communities, such as climate change, economic development, infrastructure planning, accessibility and housing, require or would significantly benefit from a regional approach.
- The materials that have been put together by the consultants are factual and we've tried to provide neutral information to address the questions we're hearing – taxes, community identity, impact on staff, boundaries, utilities, volunteer fire departments, etc.
- Some of the feedback we've heard is that these fact sheets and materials are all positive and optimistic. We wouldn't be exploring this if there weren't a strong list of positives. There are still some outstanding items. There is the potential for RCMP costs to increase significantly if we merge into a new unit. Staff are currently investigating this challenge and we will need this piece of critical information before a final decision by Council can be made.
- There are some pieces of information we will not know until after the decision is made. Boundaries and Council size is one. If the decision is made to move forward, the UARB would conduct a boundary review. We have ways to feed into that process through another round of community consultation and we can present our recommendation. However, the UARB has the final decision. Tax rates are another element we cannot set in stone. Current councils cannot determine tax rates for the future. That would be irresponsible and tie the hands of future councils, no matter if that is one council or two. What we can do is make an educated assumption based on our current financial standings that we do not foresee any significant changes in tax rates. The last thing we want to do is trigger an unexpected tax increase for the community.

- We know there is a group of citizens who are calling for a plebiscite. Plebiscites are not the norm for municipal units. The only municipal units to use a plebiscite process in recent years were the Town and County of Antigonish in 2006 and the Towns of Stellarton, New Glasgow, Pictou and the Municipality of Pictou County in 2015. Multiple plebiscites were conducted in the Town of Canso resulting in both positive and negative results as it considered its future before dissolving into the District of Guysborough.
- Our intention is to engage the community in a thorough consultation process that gives residents ample opportunity to share concerns, learn, and give feedback that will help Councils in the final decision making.
- (While some people are asking for a plebiscite) We'd like to note that we have had excellent questions and discussions with hundreds of people. Most people who have participated are doing so to have their questions answered.

If needed:

- We have had mixed reaction to the format. We realize this isn't what people are used to.
- What we like about the format, and what we've heard people tell us, is that it allows people to have one-on-one conversations with us and any number of councillors and staff with this format. Town Halls don't allow for this kind of personal interaction, and we would never get to answer the number of questions in a Town Hall format.
- We were elected to do what's in the best interest of our communities and part of our job is to explore opportunities.
- In order to make the best possible decision and determine whether both the Town and County would be better served by consolidation, we have put together a very broad engagement program that includes:
 - Public information / drop in sessions
 - Webinars
 - An email for people to send their comments
 - A toll free line for people to leave messages

Beth Schumacher

From: margie mattie
Sent: May 3, 2022 12:07 PM
To: Owen McCarron; Shawn Brophy
Subject: Consolidation

We need more information and a plebiscite. Voice of the people is extremely important. Thank you
Margaret Mattie

Sent from my iPhone

Harris McNamara

From: Camilla Benoit
Sent: May 3, 2022 12:17 AM
To: Harris McNamara
Subject: Re consolidation

Good morning Harris

- >
- >
- > I have no doubt you have been working hard at ensuring county residents attend their information session.
- > Both Tony and I are away till the 17 th, however I am following the thread of conversations happening, it is good to see the engagement seeking plebiscite.
- >
- > I wanted to touch base with regards to Pomquet, I am not getting a sense of involvement although their have been a couple of signs posted in the area of Taylor's Rd which could possibly be from the Glen Air estate.
- > I suspect the only group who would be interested is the Fire Dept and they are probably behind Rémi and also receive the highest tax rate.
- > There maybe some folks who would attend but don't be surprised if they don't offer input. The folks in the area keep to themselves (French culture) and most residents work in Antigoinish town.
- >
- > Again thanks for your efforts and stay well

Sent from my iPhone

"Practice acts of kindness"

Camilla

From: [Shirlyn Donovan](#)
To: [Council](#)
Subject: Meeting Minutes - Business & Community Leaders Session on April 7
Date: May 3, 2022 12:31:55 PM
Attachments: [Business and Community Leaders - Meeting Minutes - April 7 2022.pdf](#)

Please see the minutes from the business and community leader session from April 7.

Thanks,
Shirlyn

Shirlyn Donovan

Strategic Initiatives Coordinator
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
285 Beech Hill Road
Antigonish, NS B2G 0B4
902-863-1117



www.antigonishcounty.ns.ca

www.twitter.com/antigonishco

Honour Yesterday, Act Today, Inspire Tomorrow

ANTIGONISH

Our Community

Community & Business Leaders

Information Session – Vesgo Hall, StFX University Campus

April 7, 2022

Attendance

Len Robertson, Hughie O’Neil, Brendan Brothers, Lorena Brothers, Jeff Dee, Lindsay Ross, Jack Thompson, Steve Smith, Ken Farrell, Paul Landry, Alicia Baxter, Heather Murphy, Bill Fraser, Raymond Teasdale, Pierre Venedam, Andy Hakin, Lloyd Tate, Harris McNamara, Bill MacFarlane, Shawn Brophy, Gary Mattie, Hughie Stewart, Mary Farrell, Diane Roberts, Andrew Murray, Willie Cormier,

Welcome

Warden McCarron and Mayor Boucher provided welcome remarks and an introduced the Brighter Community Planning & Consulting team members.

Presentation

Chrystal Fuller and Brian Smith led a presentation on how Town and County Councils arrived at this point, the exploration process to date, upcoming community engagement, and timelines for decision making. Topics covered in the presentation, included:

- How Council Arrived Here: History of success, joint infrastructure investments, partnerships with community groups, etc.
- Exploration – September 2021 Councils voted to unanimously explore consolidation.
- Voice of the Community – Councils recognize the importance of talking to the community to determine if consolidation should be pursued.
- Review of the Guiding Principles
- Engagement and Communications Plan
- Process – Timelines and schedule for Brighter Community Planning’s involvement in this process.

Question and Answer

**Questions were answered by Warden McCarron, Mayor Boucher, Chrystal Fuller, Brian Smith, Glenn Horne, and Jeff Lawrence. The fact sheets, community consultation guide, and financial indicators documents were provided as handouts.*

Question – The County has one of the best tax rates in the province, the lowest commercial rate, we’re happy. How would this improve things?

Answer – We have all seen when things were not so great for Antigonish and the butting heads that occurred around the Council tables, especially when the previous annexation amalgamation discussions were had. We’ve worked together to put that in the past and build this relationship. The Town and County are in great shape financially, which you can see from the financial indicator documents provided. We looked at past experiences to establish a benchmark, and Queens/Liverpool made the decision to consolidate 25 years ago. There were some kinks to work out, but fast forward 20 years and the new municipal unit has \$16 million in accumulated surplus, and they have put \$75 million worth of infrastructure in the ground. That is the kind of power you have when you come together. It is also about capacity building, being able to do things in house and maintaining consistency. As for taxes,

ANTIGONISH

Our Community

nothing in the consolidation process should trigger a rate change. When two municipalities are merged the rates are likely to stay the same to keep services running at the same level and if you need to bring some rates higher or lower then you make a plan, but even then, it would be phased. The last thing you want to do is trigger an unplanned tax increase for your community.

Question – It is no secret that the other municipalities you mentioned were broke, but the Town and County are in pretty good shape. Do you have a forecast for the next 3 to 5 years?

Answer - What we can do is make educated assumptions based on our current financial position and the examples of other municipal mergers. The most important objective is to keep those tax rates stable.

Question - Antigonish has a long history of farming, and our farms are some of the most sustainable businesses in the area, and I would hate to see consolidation impact the production of local food and fiber. The agriculture voice may be small, but it is important

Answer - It is important that we don't forget our past and how the community was built. Things that are working will continue and remain the same. At this point nothing is going to change, and we see no need for change. If things need to change and we need to look at policy or programs to assist our farmers, we are open to that. To be a successful government, at any size, we need input from our landowners in all their forms that that we have policy and planning documents that accurately reflect the community.

Question – This process isn't being driven by the people, the people don't really seem to have a say. If this were on the table prior to the last election I think a lot of residents would have reconsidered who they elected to sit around the table.

Answer – You elected the people who sit around the table. You trust them to make big decisions about multimillion dollar budgets, infrastructure projects, and community investments. Exploring this opportunity and its potential is one of those big decisions. You most definitely have a say, this is why we are committed to the community engagement process. We are here to listen to the community concerns, comments, and feedback about consolidation. If there are valid and educated concerns, then there is a good chance it won't go through.

Question – If you are not looking at changing land use policies that will enhance economic development opportunities, then why are you looking at this?

Answer – One of the Guiding Principles speaks to the importance of taking a regional approach. With one body making decisions, you naturally think about the Town and County as a whole, which speaks to economic development, expansion, and future opportunities. If consolidation occurs, then policies would be reviewed, it is a natural piece of the transition process.

Question – Is there any talk of a plebiscite?

Answer – The question of a plebiscite has come up, but that is not something we are planning to undertake in this process. With a plebiscite, there is no opportunity to correct misinformation or speak with people about the process to understand their point of view. We believe the community engagement process we have chosen is the right direction.

ANTIGONISH

Our Community

Question – The County went through a strategic planning process and the result was that you can up with 10 strategic goals. Part of that was collaboration and relationships with Guysborough and Paqtnkek. Where does this show up in your strategic goals?

Answer – That was a strategic initiatives session, not a strategic plan, and it is driven internally. After the election, we go through a lengthy process to determine priorities and as we accomplish items on that list new ones get added. Things shift as the landscape changes or new opportunities, like this, arise. These strategic initiatives represent the needs and how we can grow each district in the County.

Question – Why should businesses support this? Can I get information to provide directly to the business community?

Answer – Yes, we can be sure to provide businesses specific information. We will be sure to include information on commercial tax rates and have that ready for the Chamber Breakfast in May.

Closing Remarks

Final remarks from Warden McCarron and Mayor Boucher.

Adjournment

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: May 3, 2022 1:22 PM
To: info@antigonish.ca
Subject: FW: Consolidation of town and County Letter of Concern
Attachments: County Plebiscite.docx

From: Sharon Desoste <sharon@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Sent: May 3, 2022 12:34 PM
To: Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Consolidation of town and County Letter of Concern

Please see attached letter concerning Consolidation

Stay Safe!
Sharon DeCoste
Resident of Antigonish County



M.V. OSPREY LTD.

Sharon DeCoste
Accounts Manager

P.O. Box 188
North Sydney, NS B2A 3M3
Email: sharon@antigonishcounty.ns.ca

Fax: (902) 794-1416
Website: www.mvosprey.org

Disclaimer: This email is intended solely for the person or entity to which it is addressed and may contain confidential and/or privileged information. Any review, dissemination, copying, printing or other use of this email by persons or entities other than the addressee is prohibited. If you have received this email in error, please contact the sender immediately and delete the material from any computer.

22 Linwood Harbour Road
Monastery, Antigonish County, NS
B0H1W0

May 3, 2022

**Attention: Warden, Deputy Warden & Councillors of the Municipality of
the County of Antigonish**

As a resident of Antigonish County I would like to express my concern with the proposed consolidation of the town and county.

I do not believe that it is in the County's best interest to enter such an agreement without a plebiscite being carried out on an important decision such as this. It shouldn't only be councillors that vote on this matter; but each and every resident should have their say by placing a checkmark in box on a ballot.

I urge you, as our representatives for the county, to demand a plebiscite so we are all able to have our voices heard on this matter.

Best regards,

Sharon DeCoste
Resident of Antigonish County

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: May 3, 2022 1:23 PM
To: info@antigonish.ca
Subject: FW: Consolidation

-----Original Message-----

From: margie mattie
Sent: May 3, 2022 1:17 PM
To: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Consolidation

We need to be heard! More information is required and a plebiscite. Voice of the people. Thank you!!!
Margaret Mattie

Sent from my iPhone

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: May 3, 2022 1:24 PM
To: 'info@antigonish.ca'
Subject: FW: Consolation

-----Original Message-----

From: cory decoste
Sent: May 2, 2022 8:50 PM
To: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Consolation

> Hi my name is Cory DeCoste I live at Mattie road Antigonish county, I attended the exploration of consolidation meeting at the hall in Tracadie on April, 27/2022. I would like to say that I am totally disgusted with the lack of answers to the very basic questions because of what the 2 councillors called a total lack of transparency, I have lived in this community for 40 years and I believe that a decision to be of this importance should be made by all people who make a contribution to this beautiful community, answers to these basic questions asked tonight will be welcomed with open ears , so I am demanding a plebiscite so we can decide our future as a community the same way we built it together, thanks for your time. Regards, Cory DeCoste.

Sent from my iPhone

Beth Schumacher

From: Glenn Horne
Sent: May 3, 2022 2:29 PM
To: Heighton, Andrew
Cc: Owen McCarron, Shirlyn Donovan
Subject: RE: Consolidation Breakfast

Thanks, Andrew. I don't see an issue with that. I've cced Owen on this reply.

Thanks!
Glenn



Glenn Horne | Chief Administrative Officer
Municipality of the County of Antigonish | 902.863.1117
285 Beech Hill Road, Beech Hill, NS | B2G 0B4
www.antigonishcounty.ns.ca | [@AntigonishCo](https://www.facebook.com/AntigonishCo) | [facebook](https://www.facebook.com/AntigonishCo)

Honour Yesterday, Act Today, Inspire Tomorrow

From: Heighton, Andrew
Sent: May 3, 2022 2:21 PM
To: Glenn Horne <glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Consolidation Breakfast

Good Afternoon Glenn ,

I have reached out to Owen regarding below: - we have heard back from Laurie and the town and they are ok moving it, looking to see if this works you and Owen as well.

Hi Owen and Good morning

Wondering if you have a few min this week, or if you can reply back via this email. We have confirmation from Mayor Boucher that is works on her end, so looking to confirm with yourself.

We - The Chamber of Commerce are hoping to push the consolidation breakfast out a few weeks to June 3 if possible.

Is this possible and doable with you schedule?

Andrew



Andrew J Heighton MBA, BScN, CHE
(He/Him)
Director, Covid-19 Response - Eastern Zone
Facility Manager St. Martha's Hospital

St. Martha's Regional Hospital
25 Bay Street
Antigonish, NS B2G 2G4



www.nshealth.ca



[visit](#) | [like](#) | [follow](#) | [subscribe](#)

Beth Schumacher

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: May 3, 2022 4:37 PM
To: Glenn Horne
Subject: Accepted: Consolidation Engagement with Paqtnkek Band Council

Beth Schumacher

From: Lenita Hanson <
Sent: May 3, 2022 4:39 PM
To: Owen McCarron; mayor@townofantigonish.ca
Cc: Shirlyn Donovan; Glenn Horne; wgormier@townofantigonish.ca; Heighton, Andrew
Subject: Antigonish Chamber Consolidation Breakfast Meeting

Good afternoon Mayor Boucher and Warden McCarron,

I believe that we are confirmed to move the planned Consolidation breakfast discussion from May 13th to June 3rd. Before we begin advertising the event I wanted to settle on a format for the event that we all feel will be the most productive for the Town, County and attending Business leaders.

I wanted to propose the following format for discussion?

1. 10 minutes for each of you to discuss:
Why your councils are proposing consolidation now? Why would this be particularly good for the business community? Maybe some specific examples of business success that would not have been possible without consolidation? If it doesn't happen risks/issues for the business community to consider? Main piece of misinformation that is circulating in the community that you want to address?
2. 20 minutes for each of you to answer the top 4-5 questions emerging from the business community so far?
These would be provided to you in advance and you would each have 4-5 minutes per topic

If you have other ideas that you feel would be more productive use of the time please feel free to suggest it.

I look forward to your thoughts.

Thank you,

Lenita Hanson
Operations / R & D Manager
Tony's Meats Ltd.
475 Landing Road
Antigonish, NS B2G 2L2
(T) 902-863-9313
(F) 902-863-9313
(M)

www.tonys-meats.com

www.mrdonair.ca



Hughie Stewart

From: Lloyd Mattie <
Sent: May 3, 2022 6:56 PM
To: Bill MacFarlane; Donnie MacDonald; Gary Mattie; Hughie Stewart; Harris McNamara;
John Dunbar; mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ca; Owen McCarron;
rdeveau@antigonish.ns.ca; Shawn Brophy
Subject: Consolidation

I'd like to hear more understandable information and a vote. We need a voice in this matter. Thank You
Lloyd Mattie

Hughie Stewart

From: sharon boudreau
Sent: May 3, 2022 8:00 PM
To: Owen McCarron; Gary Mattie; Remi Deveau; Mary MacLellan; Hughie Stewart
Subject: Amalgamation!

Good evening all !

We are not home this week so we will not be there to voice our concerns with this upcoming Amalgamation!

We do not want not having a say in such a big part of our future with the Town of Antigonish!

We can honestly say we do not see this as a step in the right direction for the County !

With the aging town water and sewer systems, all the flooding that seems to be getting worse and worse every single year , we can not see how this will actually help us in the county at all except to possibly raise our tax rates to help the town with the upkeep .

We want the chance to actually vote on this .Too many unanswered variables to not have a say in our future, but especially our children's future !

Please make this available for us to vote Thank you Sharon and David Boudreau

Sent from my iPhone

Beth Schumacher

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: May 3, 2022 9:07 PM
To: info
Subject: Fwd: Consolidation

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Lloyd Mattie <
Date: May 3, 2022 at 6:56:10 PM ADT
To: Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ca, Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, rdeveau@antigonish.ns.ca, Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Consolidation

I'd like to hear more understandable information and a vote. We need a voice in this matter. Thank You
Lloyd Mattie

Shirlyn Donovan

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: Tuesday, May 3, 2022 9:20 PM
To: info
Subject: Fwd: Consolidation of town and County Letter of Concern
Attachments: image001.jpg; County Plebiscite.docx

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Sharon Desoste
Date: May 3, 2022 at 12:34:32 PM ADT
To: Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Consolidation of town and County Letter of Concern

Please see attached letter concerning Consolidation

Stay Safe!
Sharon DeCoste
Resident of Antigonish County

Linwood Harbour Road
Monastery, Antigonish County, NS
B0H1W0

May 3, 2022

Attention: Warden, Deputy Warden & Councillors of the Municipality of the County of Antigonish

As a resident of Antigonish County I would like to express my concern with the proposed consolidation of the town and county.

I do not believe that it is in the County's best interest to enter such an agreement without a plebiscite being carried out on an important decision such as this. It shouldn't only be councillors that vote on this matter; but each and every resident should have their say by placing a checkmark in box on a ballot.

I urge you, as our representatives for the county, to demand a plebiscite so we are all able to have our voices heard on this matter.

Best regards,

Sharon DeCoste
Resident of Antigonish County

Beth Schumacher

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: May 3, 2022 9:20 PM
To: info
Subject: Fwd: Consolidation

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: margie mattie
Date: May 3, 2022 at 12:07:08 PM ADT
To: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Shawn Brophy
<sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Consolidation

We need more information and a plebiscite. Voice of the people is extremely important. Thank you
Margaret Mattie

Sent from my iPhone

Shirlyn Donovan

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: Tuesday, May 3, 2022 9:37 PM
To: info
Subject: Fwd: Amalgamation!

Warden Owen McCarron
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
902-968-1290

Begin forwarded message:

From: sharon boudreau <sboudreau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Date: May 3, 2022 at 8:00:11 PM ADT
To: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Amalgamation!

Good evening all !

We are not home this week so we will not be there to voice our concerns with this upcoming Amalgamation!

We do not want not having a say in such a big part of our future with the Town of Antigonish!

We can honestly say we do not see this as a step in the right direction for the County !

With the aging town water and sewer systems, all the flooding that seems to be getting worse and worse every single year , we can not see how this will actually help us in the county at all except to possibly raise our tax rates to help the town with the upkeep .

We want the chance to actually vote on this .Too many unanswered variables to not have a say in our future, but especially our children's future !

Please make this available for us to vote

Thank you

Sharon and David Boudreau

Sent from my iPhone

Beth Schumacher

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: May 3, 2022 9:40 PM
To: info
Subject: Fwd: Consolation

Warden Owen McCarron
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
902-968-1290

Begin forwarded message:

From: cory decoste
Date: May 2, 2022 at 8:47:19 PM ADT
To: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Consolation

Hi my name is Cory DeCoste I live at Mattie road Antigonish county, I attended the exploration of consolidation meeting at the hall in Tracadie on April, 27/2022. I would like to say that I am totally disgusted with the lack of answers to the very basic questions because of what the 2 councillors called a total lack of transparency, I have lived in this community for 40 years and I believe that a decision to be of this importance should be made by all people who make a contribution to this beautiful community, answers to these basic questions asked tonight will be welcomed with open ears , so I am demanding a plebiscite so we can decide our future as a community the same way we built it together, thanks for your time. Regards, Cory DeCoste.

Sent from my iPhone

Beth Schumacher

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: May 3, 2022 9:52 PM
To: Heighton, Andrew
Subject: Re: Consolidation Breakfast Event

Hi Andrew,
I am ok with pushing the meeting out to June 3rd. Thanks
Owen

Warden Owen McCarron
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
902-968-1290

On May 2, 2022, at 8:32 AM, Heighton, Andrew wrote:

Hi Owen and Good morning

Wondering if you have a few min this week, or if you can reply back via this email. We have confirmation from Mayor Boucher that is works on her end, so looking to confirm with yourself.

We - The Chamber of Commerce are hoping to push the consolidation breakfast out a few weeks to June 3 if possible.

Is this possible and doable with you schedule?

Andrew

Beth Schumacher

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: May 3, 2022 9:55 PM
To: Lenita Hanson
Cc: mayor@townofantigonish.ca; Shirlyn Donovan; Glenn Horne; wcmier@townofantigonish.ca; Heighton, Andrew
Subject: Re: Antigonish Chamber Consolidation Breakfast Meeting

Hi Lenita,
I am fine with the format as outlined. Thanks

Warden Owen McCarron
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
902-968-1290

On May 3, 2022, at 4:38 PM, Lenita Hanson < > wrote:

Good afternoon Mayor Boucher and Warden McCarron,

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I look forward to your thoughts.

Thank you,

Lenita Hanson
Operations / R & D Manager
Tony's Meats Ltd.

475 Landing Road
Antigonish, NS B2G 2L2
(T)
(F) 902
(M) 902

www.tonys-meats.com
www.mrdonair.ca



Shirlyn Donovan

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: Tuesday, May 3, 2022 9:55 PM
To: Lenita Hanson
Cc: mayor@townofantigonish.ca; Shirlyn Donovan; Glenn Horne; wcmier@townofantigonish.ca; Heighton, Andrew
Subject: Re: Antigonish Chamber Consolidation Breakfast Meeting

Hi Lenita,
I am fine with the format as outlined. Thanks

Warden Owen McCarron
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
902-968-1290

On May 3, 2022, at 4:38 PM, Lenita Hanson <lenita@antigonish.ca> > wrote:

Good afternoon Mayor Boucher and Warden McCarron,

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I look forward to your thoughts.

Thank you,

Lenita Hanson
Operations / R & D Manager
Tony's Meats Ltd.

Landing Road
Antigonish, NS B2G 2L2

www.tonys-meats.com
www.mrdonair.ca



Beth Schumacher

From: Glenn Horne
Sent: May 4, 2022 8:18 AM
To: Barr, Nick; Mark A Peck; MacDonald, Ross
Cc: Jeff Lawrence
Subject: RCMP Contract

Good morning, gentlemen –

Any update on the RCMP contract issue? We are approaching the end of our public consultation and will now need to move focus to our outstanding questions and issues. The RCMP contract clarification has come up numerous times, and even if it hadn't, it is by far the most pressing issue we face in considering consolidation. We would appreciate an official update from the Department of Justice on where this matter stands and the anticipated timeline.

Thanks,
Glenn



Glenn Horne | Chief Administrative Officer
Municipality of the County of Antigonish | 902.863.1117
285 Beech Hill Road, Beech Hill, NS | B2G 0B4
www.antigonishcounty.ns.ca | [@AntigonishCo](https://www.facebook.com/AntigonishCo) | [facebook](https://www.facebook.com/AntigonishCo)

Honour Yesterday, Act Today, Inspire Tomorrow

Harris McNamara

From: Helen Kennedy
Sent: May 4, 2022 9:36 AM
To: Harris McNamara
Subject: Fwd: Input to Consultations on Consolidation
Attachments: consolidation.docx

Please see below. Unfortunately, I misspelled your name the first time around.

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Helen Kennedy
Date: Wed, May 4, 2022 at 9:32 AM
Subject: Input to Consultations on Consolidation
To: Laurie M. Boucher <lboucher@townofantigonish.ca>, Mary Farrell <mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca>, <dmacinnis@townofantigonish.ca>, <droberts@townofantigonish.ca>, Andrew Murray <amurray@townofantigonish.ca>, <scameron@townofantigonish.ca>, <wcormier@townofantigonish.ca>, <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, <hmacnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Cc: <glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, <kgorman@townofantigonish.ca>, <jlawrence@townofantigonish.ca>, <shirlyn.donovan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>

Please accept the attached letter as my contribution to your deliberations on consolidation.
I hope you find it helpful.

Helen Kennedy
St. Mary's St.
Antigonish, N.S.

To the Members of the Councils of the Town and County of Antigonish:

I would like to take this opportunity to comment on your approach to the issue of consolidating the municipal councils for the town and county of Antigonish. I have been following this debate because as a resident of the town, I have a stake in this matter as do all my fellow citizens. I also feel I have a responsibility to contribute to the discussion; for it is a rare and special privilege to have the chance to shape the model of how one is governed. I attended the public session on May 2, 2022 and offer a few observations which I hope will be helpful.

I grew up in the county of Antigonish. After graduating from St. Francis Xavier University, I attended Queen's University where I obtained a Masters in Arts in Political Studies. I then went on to become a career public servant at the federal level where for more than thirty years I provided advice to various governments on policies and programs in the areas of culture, national unity, broadcasting and telecommunications. Stakeholder and citizen consultations were always key. In my last position, I was the Director-General responsible for supporting the federally-appointed expert panel in its review of the legislation governing Canada's broadcasting and telecommunications sector. This included the design and management of a national consultation process which informed the final report and recommendations to government.

Having been involved in a number of governance related initiatives, I can say that I think you are going about this the right way. I see the strategic value in Councils taking the initiative. Provincial governments across the country have been mandating amalgamations since the mid-nineties in response to their own internal political dynamics. There is a considerable literature on the results and implications of these exercises; suffice it to say that it strikes me as very smart to approach it as a voluntary and collaborative effort now rather than have it imposed possibly at a future date. It is worth noting that the Mandate Letter to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing in September 2021 specifies that he must "review the Municipal Act, Municipal Charters, including their size and scope, the concept of shared service authorities, with a goal of refining the delivery and governance model for all municipalities in the province". The Department of Municipal Affairs and Housing's Business Plan for 2022-2023 indicates that such a review of the Act is underway and that it will support the Town and County of Antigonish as they explore consolidation. Given the generality of the language in the Minister's Mandate letter and the uncertainty of the outcome of the legislative review, it is much better that our local representatives and the staff who have the knowledge and expertise should drive the process, should it go forward. The lines of accountability could not be clearer which helps makes our democracy effective.

On speed and timing:

I know some have questioned the speed and timing of the process. I do not believe the process is being rushed; you voted unanimously in September 2021 to explore the option. That was made public, as was your promise to conduct an open and inclusive consultation process. This gave us all time to do our own thinking and to come to the table prepared to have fruitful conversations on the issue. Many avenues have been provided to have our voices heard, both in person and online, which means that the process is open and inclusive. As mentioned earlier, I attended one of the public sessions and received clear answers to my questions. My sister, Mary Farrell, has been impressed with how constructive the comments and concerns have been as she has attended a number of sessions and has had conversations with various individuals. Indeed, this process was recently cited by Ray Bates in his editorial to the

Casket as a good example of a government seeking to make a decision based on “stakeholder and taxpayer input”.

With respect to timing, while there is no good time for a bad idea, it is never too early for a good one – in this case to explore the possibility of consolidation. Practically speaking, should councils proceed, the current timeline has the advantage of allowing for an orderly transition to the new model in time for the next municipal election.

On whether consolidation is the only option.....

Consolidation clearly is not the only option and from what I see, it is not being positioned that way in the consultation process. One must not confuse myth-busting with a final decision. For Council members to listen and gather as much information as they can before making a final decision lends credibility to the process.

Councils could decide to maintain the status quo. The *Municipal Government Act* also provides that municipalities may be amalgamated or some or all of a territory may be annexed by the Utility and Review Board (UARB) on application by the Minister, the Municipality or a sufficient number of electors.

In weighing the options on whether or not to proceed with consolidation, I think it is useful to place Antigonish within the larger provincial, federal and even international context. Antigonish is competing with other towns and cities, many of which are larger and better resourced, to attract financial support, investment and human talent. Given all the challenges we face – from health care to affordable housing to economic development and climate change, it only makes sense to me to find ways to maximize our presence and our leverage. While it is true that our current councils are working very well together, this is inherently fragile because it relies on the incumbents and is therefore not a guarantee of ongoing collaboration.

On not all questions are being answered.....

In my experience, it is unrealistic to expect anyone to answer every conceivable question in a governance exercise such as this. What is needed is a step by step approach which is orderly, transparent and grounded in general principles that will guide future work on specific issues. Therefore, I was reassured to see that Councils adopted a set of such guiding principles. These principles cover both the outcomes that are desired for the municipality and the way in which the government will function. Should consolidation proceed, these principles, or ones that have been adjusted to reflect the public’s input, will not only help Councils make further decisions on specifics, such as boundaries or staffing issues, but that they will also be instruments of accountability for the public.

In addition to the principles, other substantive materials have been provided, thereby ensuring we are all working from a common fact base – another necessary element to a healthy democracy. These materials help counter misinformation about the impacts of consolidation. It is a sad fact that information calculated to alarm or cause fear spreads more quickly on social media than accurate and sometimes more nuanced information.

I understand that comments and concerns are being recorded and a full report will be made to Councils. I would encourage Councils to give due consideration to making that report public. This would have the dual benefit of demonstrating to people that their voices have been heard and of informing the public on what all the concerns or questions were during the process.

On the need for a plebiscite:

It will be up to Councils of course to decide whether a plebiscite is a good idea. In my view, it should not be necessary. The quality of the information and the extensiveness of the opportunities for the public to provide substantive input to the process would seem to me to be a better way for Councils to obtain a real sense of what the public's questions and concerns are which would then govern the final decision on whether or not to proceed.

The process has been managed in a way that is fully consistent with democratic principles. Clear lines of accountability have been established; decisions have been communicated openly and on a regular basis, research and facts have been shared with the public to inform the conversation and multiple ways have been provided to allow for public input. It is my hope that there been a significant level of engagement.

It would seem to me that if Councils can demonstrate that issues and concerns raised by the public can be addressed, that would be sufficient to justify a decision to proceed with the next steps in consolidation. Conversely, if the public has identified an insurmountable problem with the option, you will have the justification needed to deny going forward. Finally, there would be future opportunities for public input, particularly when it comes to the important issue of establishing electoral districts by the Transition Committee and the UARB before final decisions are made.

My understanding also is that the exploration of consolidation follows upon a deep process of engagement with the community on a strategic plan – meaning that the priorities for this area are well known and have been developed in consultation with the community.

Leadership with a track record of listening, consulting and engaging the community has in my view earned the trust needed to make the call on consolidation. With the talent, cumulative years of experience and commitment to the public interest around these tables, I believe that the people of Antigonish Town and County are in very safe hands.

Helen C. Kennedy

St. Mary's St.

Antigonish, N.S.

Beth Schumacher

From: Helen Kennedy < -->
Sent: May 4, 2022 9:32 AM
To: Laurie M. Boucher; Mary Farrell; dmacinnis@townofantigonish.ca; droberts@townofantigonish.ca; Andrew Murray; scameron@townofantigonish.ca; wcmormier@townofantigonish.ca; Owen McCarron; Mary MacLellan; Donnie MacDonald; Hughie Stewart; Shawn Brophy; Remi Deveau; John Dunbar; hmacnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca; Gary Mattie; Bill MacFarlane
Cc: Glenn Horne; kgorman@townofantigonish.ca; jlawrence@townofantigonish.ca; Shirlyn Donovan
Subject: Input to Consultations on Consolidation
Attachments: consolidation.docx

Please accept the attached letter as my contribution to your deliberations on consolidation.
I hope you find it helpful.

Helen Kennedy
; St. Mary's St.
Antigonish, N.S.

Casket as a good example of a government seeking to make a decision based on “stakeholder and taxpayer input”.

With respect to timing, while there is no good time for a bad idea, it is never too early for a good one – in this case to explore the possibility of consolidation. Practically speaking, should councils proceed, the current timeline has the advantage of allowing for an orderly transition to the new model in time for the next municipal election.

On whether consolidation is the only option.....

Consolidation clearly is not the only option and from what I see, it is not being positioned that way in the consultation process. One must not confuse myth-busting with a final decision. For Council members to listen and gather as much information as they can before making a final decision lends credibility to the process.

Councils could decide to maintain the status quo. The *Municipal Government Act* also provides that municipalities may be amalgamated or some or all of a territory may be annexed by the Utility and Review Board (UARB) on application by the Minister, the Municipality or a sufficient number of electors.

In weighing the options on whether or not to proceed with consolidation, I think it is useful to place Antigonish within the larger provincial, federal and even international context. Antigonish is competing with other towns and cities, many of which are larger and better resourced, to attract financial support, investment and human talent. Given all the challenges we face – from health care to affordable housing to economic development and climate change, it only makes sense to me to find ways to maximize our presence and our leverage. While it is true that our current councils are working very well together, this is inherently fragile because it relies on the incumbents and is therefore not a guarantee of ongoing collaboration.

On not all questions are being answered.....

In my experience, it is unrealistic to expect anyone to answer every conceivable question in a governance exercise such as this. What is needed is a step by step approach which is orderly, transparent and grounded in general principles that will guide future work on specific issues. Therefore, I was reassured to see that Councils adopted a set of such guiding principles. These principles cover both the outcomes that are desired for the municipality and the way in which the government will function. Should consolidation proceed, these principles, or ones that have been adjusted to reflect the public’s input, will not only help Councils make further decisions on specifics, such as boundaries or staffing issues, but that they will also be instruments of accountability for the public.

In addition to the principles, other substantive materials have been provided, thereby ensuring we are all working from a common fact base – another necessary element to a healthy democracy. These materials help counter misinformation about the impacts of consolidation. It is a sad fact that information calculated to alarm or cause fear spreads more quickly on social media than accurate and sometimes more nuanced information.

I understand that comments and concerns are being recorded and a full report will be made to Councils. I would encourage Councils to give due consideration to making that report public. This would have the dual benefit of demonstrating to people that their voices have been heard and of informing the public on what all the concerns or questions were during the process.

To the Members of the Councils of the Town and County of Antigonish:

I would like to take this opportunity to comment on your approach to the issue of consolidating the municipal councils for the town and county of Antigonish. I have been following this debate because as a resident of the town, I have a stake in this matter as do all my fellow citizens. I also feel I have a responsibility to contribute to the discussion; for it is a rare and special privilege to have the chance to shape the model of how one is governed. I attended the public session on May 2, 2022 and offer a few observations which I hope will be helpful.

I grew up in the county of Antigonish. After graduating from St. Francis Xavier University, I attended Queen's University where I obtained a Masters in Arts in Political Studies. I then went on to become a career public servant at the federal level where for more than thirty years I provided advice to various governments on policies and programs in the areas of culture, national unity, broadcasting and telecommunications. Stakeholder and citizen consultations were always key. In my last position, I was the Director-General responsible for supporting the federally-appointed expert panel in its review of the legislation governing Canada's broadcasting and telecommunications sector. This included the design and management of a national consultation process which informed the final report and recommendations to government.

Having been involved in a number of governance related initiatives, I can say that I think you are going about this the right way. I see the strategic value in Councils taking the initiative. Provincial governments across the country have been mandating amalgamations since the mid-nineties in response to their own internal political dynamics. There is a considerable literature on the results and implications of these exercises; suffice it to say that it strikes me as very smart to approach it as a voluntary and collaborative effort now rather than have it imposed possibly at a future date. It is worth noting that the Mandate Letter to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing in September 2021 specifies that he must "review the Municipal Act, Municipal Charters, including their size and scope, the concept of shared service authorities, with a goal of refining the delivery and governance model for all municipalities in the province". The Department of Municipal Affairs and Housing's Business Plan for 2022-2023 indicates that such a review of the Act is underway and that it will support the Town and County of Antigonish as they explore consolidation. Given the generality of the language in the Minister's Mandate letter and the uncertainty of the outcome of the legislative review, it is much better that our local representatives and the staff who have the knowledge and expertise should drive the process, should it go forward. The lines of accountability could not be clearer which helps makes our democracy effective.

On speed and timing:

I know some have questioned the speed and timing of the process. I do not believe the process is being rushed; you voted unanimously in September 2021 to explore the option. That was made public, as was your promise to conduct an open and inclusive consultation process. This gave us all time to do our own thinking and to come to the table prepared to have fruitful conversations on the issue. Many avenues have been provided to have our voices heard, both in person and online, which means that the process is open and inclusive. As mentioned earlier, I attended one of the public sessions and received clear answers to my questions. My sister, Mary Farrell, has been impressed with how constructive the comments and concerns have been as she has attended a number of sessions and has had conversations with various individuals. Indeed, this process was recently cited by Ray Bates in his editorial to the

On the need for a plebiscite:

It will be up to Councils of course to decide whether a plebiscite is a good idea. In my view, it should not be necessary. The quality of the information and the extensiveness of the opportunities for the public to provide substantive input to the process would seem to me to be a better way for Councils to obtain a real sense of what the public's questions and concerns are which would then govern the final decision on whether or not to proceed.

The process has been managed in a way that is fully consistent with democratic principles. Clear lines of accountability have been established; decisions have been communicated openly and on a regular basis, research and facts have been shared with the public to inform the conversation and multiple ways have been provided to allow for public input. It is my hope that there been a significant level of engagement.

It would seem to me that if Councils can demonstrate that issues and concerns raised by the public can be addressed, that would be sufficient to justify a decision to proceed with the next steps in consolidation. Conversely, if the public has identified an insurmountable problem with the option, you will have the justification needed to deny going forward. Finally, there would be future opportunities for public input, particularly when it comes to the important issue of establishing electoral districts by the Transition Committee and the UARB before final decisions are made.

My understanding also is that the exploration of consolidation follows upon a deep process of engagement with the community on a strategic plan – meaning that the priorities for this area are well known and have been developed in consultation with the community.

Leadership with a track record of listening, consulting and engaging the community has in my view earned the trust needed to make the call on consolidation. With the talent, cumulative years of experience and commitment to the public interest around these tables, I believe that the people of Antigonish Town and County are in very safe hands.

Helen C. Kennedy

St. Mary's St.

Antigonish, N.S.

Hughie Stewart

From: Rosie Glenn <
Sent: May 4, 2022 9:54 AM
To: Owen McCarron; Gary Mattie; John Dunbar; Shawn Brophy; Remi Deveau; Mary MacLellan; Donnie MacDonald; Hughie Stewart; Bill MacFarlane; harris.mcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca
Subject: Plebiscite

Dear Warden and Councillors:

Firstly, I want to say Thank You and that I wouldn't want your job. I am sure that each decision that is made requires a lot of thought.

I also realize you have your positions because of the people who voted for you, and felt that you would represent them. That comes

to my question.. Why Not a Plebiscite on the Town and County proposed Amalgamation? I feel that there are too many unanswered questions

to push this through. Please consider our request.

Thank You.

Lorne and Rosie Glenn

Beth Schumacher

From: Zoom <no-reply@zoom.us>
Sent: May 4, 2022 10:35 AM
To: Owen McCarron
Subject: Panelist for Exploration of Consolidation Lunch and Learn

Hi Warden Owen McCarron,

You are invited to a Zoom webinar.

Date Time: May 5, 2022 12:00 PM Halifax
Topic: Exploration of Consolidation Lunch and Learn

Join from a PC, Mac, iPad, iPhone or Android device:

[Click Here to Join](#)

Note: This link should not be shared with others; it is unique to you.

Passcode: 028852

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Or One tap mobile:

US: +16465588656,,81270000908# or +16699009128,,81270000908#

Or Telephone:

Dial(for higher quality, dial a number based on your current location):

US: +1 646 558 8656 or +1 669 900 9128 or +1 253 215 8782 or +1 301 715 8592 or +1 312 626 6799 or +1 346 248 7799

Webinar ID: 812 7000 0908

Participant ID: 360353

Passcode: 028852

International numbers available: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/kc2mKFWUQu>

Beth Schumacher

From: Kate Gorman <kgorman@townofantigonish.ca>
Sent: May 4, 2022 3:13 PM
To: Owen McCarron; mayor@townofantigonish.ca
Cc: Shirlyn Donovan
Subject: Intro Speaking Notes for Online Session
Attachments: Online Engagement Session - Introduction - May 5.docx

Hi Laurie and Owen,

Here are your introduction speaking notes for tomorrow's online session.

Thanks!

Kate

Kate Gorman
Marketing and Communications Officer
kgorman@townofantigonish.ca
902-318-6758
www.townofantigonish.ca | [Nest Cam](#) | [Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#)

Owen:

Good afternoon everyone.

Mayor Boucher and I appreciate you all for taking the time to join us virtually.

I'd also like to acknowledge we are gathered here today in Mi'kma'ki, the traditional unceded territory of the Mi'kmaw people.

Tonight, we will have a presentation from Brighter Community Planning and Consulting. They are going to provide some background on the exploration process, how we've gotten to where we are today, and what is upcoming. Then we are going to open the floor for discussion and questions. This is your session, so anything that comes to mind please don't hesitate to ask.

The Brighter Community Planning team are well versed in the municipal landscape in Nova Scotia. They have experience with past mergers, service reviews, planning, economic development, and community engagement. We trust their expertise to help facilitate this process. They are here to listen, gather feedback, and report on what was heard.

Laurie:

Back in September, both Councils voted unanimously to explore consolidation.

For the last number of years, the relationship between the Town and County has been incredibly positive. We are working well together at the Council and staff level.

The relationship we have built continues to grow based on our shared foundation of trust, consistency, and hard work. These values have resulted in a lot of positive investment for our community including infrastructure, capacity building, increased support for community groups, and events attraction.

Together, we have been putting in the work to learn what consolidation could mean for the future of Antigonish.

The big question we are trying to answer is, would our citizens, businesses, and community groups would be better served if we did consolidate into one municipal unit?

Thank you and we look forward to the discussion.

Harris McNamara

From: Debbie Cameron MacDonald
Sent: May 4, 2022 4:52 PM
To: mayor@townofantigonish.ca; wcornier@townofantigonish.ca; dmacinnis@townofantigonish.ca; scameron@townofantigonish.ca; Andrew Murray; mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca; droberts@townofantigonish.ca; Mary MacLellan; Donnie MacDonald; Hughie Stewart; Shawn Brophy; Remi Deveau; Owen McCarron; John Dunbar; Gary Mattie; Harris McNamara; Bill MacFarlane
Subject: Consolidation

Dear Mayor, Warden, and Councillors,

I am writing this today with a heavy heart. I have studied all the information provided on Consolidation and have attended the first online engagement session. These served to trigger far more questions than there were answers. This seems to be the same result for most concerned folks. I do not see the benefits of Consolidation outweighing the risks and expenses. To be clear, I am not in favour of Consolidation nor the process being followed.

Despite your protestations to the opposite, Consolidation seems like a done deal without having listened to the residents of Antigonish Town and County. These citizens who ask questions or express that they are not in favour of Consolidation are deemed to be misinformed and not forward-thinking. This does a great disservice to your constituents.

You, our elected or acclaimed representatives, were chosen by the people to govern within an established framework of government, not to change the framework of government, unless the people agree. The way to determine if the people agree is through a vote. Just as a vote is required to elect a government, a vote is required to change a government in a democracy because the vote gives the people a direct say in a decision that will affect everyone, now and in the future. That is the democratic way.

To propose such a huge change at the height of the pandemic in Antigonish, was either short-sighted or a deliberate attempt to hope that folks might not take notice, or would be too cautious to attend an in-person session. Their non-attendance is being misconstrued by the proponents of Consolidation as acquiescence. When the residents do take the risk and attend an in-person session or take one in online, they quickly find out that no one is taking note of their concerns and they are receiving glib answers to their questions.

The current engagement format is intentionally isolating. No one gets to hear what concerns others have and the non-answers they are receiving. This way you are better able to control the narrative. The Mayor has expressed many times that a plebiscite wouldn't yield accurate results because people would be operating under a "false narrative". This, along with other sound bites from the consulting firm, has done nothing to alleviate the distrust of this whole process by the residents of both Town and County. The only "false narrative" that we can see is the one being pushed by exclaiming only the pros of Consolidation and the statements that indicate that Town and County will not be able to work together effectively without it. How quickly you seem to have forgotten all the good projects completed with Town and County co-operation. To name a few: People's Place Library, The Antigonish Arena, The Eastern NS Exhibition, The R.K. MacDonald Guest Home, Special Olympics, plus many, many more.

If any of you had run on a platform of Consolidation in the last election, I highly suspect we would be looking at a very different configuration of elected officials. If you were so sure that most citizens would support Consolidation, then you would have chosen the UARB route with its mandatory plebiscite rather than working through the province and very expensive consultants to control how much information is released, and how questions are answered.

Several of you have indicated that you will not be re-offering in 2024. Is this the legacy with which you wish to leave - destroying the Town and County and leaving it to others to muddle through the chaos? For those of you thinking of re-offering, choosing to go along with Consolidation at the urging of the Mayor, Warden, CAOs, and consultants rather than listening to your constituents may find you not getting re-elected. After the next election, you won't be there, but you will have taken Antigonish with you when you left.

The latest Facebook posts purporting to answer common questions are patronizing, dismissive, and do not contain substantive answers to the very real concerns and questions raised. To be told repeatedly that most answers will not be available until after Consolidation occurs amounts to "buying a pig in a bag." Furthermore, the Mayor has been quoted in the Chronicle Herald as saying that Consolidation is not a given. That she, the Warden, and the councillors are open to the wishes of the people. Then she hastily added that the only councillors who have made up their minds are those who are against Consolidation, as if this was somehow disparaging to them. Today's quote from The Reporter, "We want to become one," dispels any illusion that the Mayor is unbiased and open-minded concerning Consolidation.

I implore all of you to take a step back from this extremely rushed and manipulated proposal and look carefully at what can be achieved by maintaining the status quo with cooperation between Town and County. This decision should be put to a vote by all residents.

Sincerely yours,
Debbie Cameron MacDonald

Harris McNamara

From: Lorraine Bowie ·
Sent: May 4, 2022 4:56 PM
To: Mary MacLellan; Donnie MacDonald; Hughie Stewart; Shawn Brophy; Remi Deveau; Owen McCarron; John Dunbar; jmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca; Harris McNamara; bmacfarlene@antigonishcounty.ns.ca
Subject: Consolidation Between Town and County

Good Morning

We are sending this email out to ask Antigonish County Council to please have a plebiscite. Let the residents of the County and also the Town decide the outcome of a potential consolidation.

Leo and Lorraine Bowie
Heatherton Village Road
Antigonish

Hughie Stewart

From: Pati Myette <
Sent: May 4, 2022 4:57 PM
To: Owen McCarron; mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ca; Donnie MacDonald; Hughie Stewart; Shawn Brophy; Remi Deveau; John Dunbar; Gary Mattie; Harris McNamara; Bill MacFarlane; mayor@townofantigonish.ca; wcmormier@townofantigonish.ca; dmacinnis@townofantigonish.ca; scameron@townofantigonish.ca; amurray@townofantigonish.ca; mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca; droberts@townofantigonish.ca
Subject: Plebiscite Wanted for Amalgamation / Consolidation

Dear Warden, Mayor and Councillors:

Please reconsider your vote process for a **Plebiscite** - would be the honourable thing to do for the Town and County residences as a whole

We want our voices heard and is our right
We live in a democracy ... We do not live in Russia !!

Plebiscite wanted for Amalgamation or Consolidation of Town and County

As a home owner and life long resident of the county of Antigonish we want a Plebiscite on the Amalgamation of the Town and County.

No town or county councils should have the right or authority to take our privilege to vote away. We as community members pay our taxes, support our town and counties, volunteer our time and support our own community that we live. To make decisions that will impact us all for the rest of our lives there should be a plebiscite.

My interpretation of an amalgamation of the town and county is a combination of two entering into a new entity. Instead, a completely new entity is formed to house the combined assets and liabilities of both. Amalgamations generally take place between larger and smaller entities, where the larger one takes over smaller. To amalgamate the town and county together which no one has answers too, I believe is extreme; when there is so much uncertainty.

What is the councils urgency to put forth amalgamation without knowledge of and not giving people the right to a plebiscite? Is council afraid of a few difficulties with the vote or not achieving what they want without any effort on their part?

It seems that the consultants, with the support of Municipal Affairs and their financial contribution, have given one way to get this done and you've totally accepted that advice.

What is behind the actions of town and county council not allowing all Councillors to vote?
The excuse of conflict of interest is being used too widely and frequently, not what it is meant for.

Give the people what they want, a plebiscite.

Councils proposal of amalgamation causes a lot of unnecessary stress and anxiety in our lives. As if not under enough stress with covid, gas and diesel prices, housing shortages, homelessness and most of all the mental state that is being put on the people during these difficult times.

Where will this lead us to in the future? - No voice, too much uncertainty and not to say, divide town and county residences.

A vast amount of research has found that amalgamation fails to produce cost savings, rarely leads to more efficient service delivery, and reduces the ability of citizens to be involved in the life of their local governments.

Willard and Pati Myette
Tracadie

Beth Schumacher

From: Lenita Hanson <
Sent: May 4, 2022 5:38 PM
To: Owen McCarron
Cc: mayor@townofantigonish.ca; Shirlyn Donovan; Glenn Horne;
wcormier@townofantigonish.ca; Heighton, Andrew
Subject: RE: Antigonish Chamber Consolidation Breakfast Meeting

Thank you Owen.

Lenita

From: Owen McCarron [mailto:omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca]
Sent: May 3, 2022 9:55 PM
To: Lenita Hanson
Cc: mayor@townofantigonish.ca; Shirlyn Donovan; Glenn Horne; wcormier@townofantigonish.ca; Heighton, Andrew
Subject: Re: Antigonish Chamber Consolidation Breakfast Meeting

Hi Lenita,
I am fine with the format as outlined. Thanks

Warden Owen McCarron
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
902-968-1290

On May 3, 2022, at 4:38 PM, Lenita Hanson wrote:

Good afternoon Mayor Boucher and Warden McCarron,

I believe that we are confirmed to move the planned Consolidation breakfast discussion from May 13th to June 3rd. Before we begin advertising the event I wanted to settle on a format for the event that we all feel will be the most productive for the Town, County and attending Business leaders.

I wanted to propose the following format for discussion?

1. 10 minutes for each of you to discuss:
Why your councils are proposing consolidation now? Why would this be particularly good for the business community? Maybe some specific examples of business success that would not have been possible without consolidation? If it doesn't happen risks/issues for the business community to consider? Main piece of misinformation that is circulating in the community that you want to address?
2. 20 minutes for each of you to answer the top 4-5 questions emerging from the business community so far?
These would be provided to you in advance and you would each have 4-5 minutes per topic

If you have other ideas that you feel would be more productive use of the time please feel free to suggest it.

I look forward to your thoughts.

Thank you,

Lenita Hanson

Operations / R & D Manager

Tony's Meats Ltd.

475 Landing Road

Antigonish, NS B2G 2L2

(T)

(F) 902-

(M) 902

www.tonys-meats.com

www.mrdonair.ca





Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Greg Morrow meeting

2 messages

Maureen Parks <>

Wed, May 4, 2022 at 7:06 PM

To: Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

We are meeting with Greg at 11:00 on May 9. Do you have any still-relevant issues you would us to bring up? We certainly do!!
Maureen

Sent from my iPhone

Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Sun, May 8, 2022 at 12:06 PM

To: Maureen Parks <>

Maureen / Ron;

Couple of items that residents have been demanding, use what you want. I have replied to over 300 emails this week on amalgamation and apologize for the delay in getting back to you.

Have a great day!

Harris

1. Amalgamation - residents are not happy with information to date and want a plebiscite.
2. Road conditions - Breen's Pond and concerns of residents that the road could be undermined unless the pond is vented like it used to be. We have been trying for a year to get some action and he knows about the issue.
3. Residents use the Cape Jack to Linwood road to walk / jog to get exercise. The bushes need to be cut not in the fall but in the summer when residents are exercising.
4. We have been promised fiber internet and still nothing. Bell has a contract and I understand we have a point person with the county . It was first December 2022 we were supposed to receive, then it was July 2022, now I understand it's March 2023. I understand COVID contributed to some delay but unpopulated areas compared to our have not seen as a priority.
5. Many residents have had problems with their landlines and internet, somee for weeks on end. The Bell techs say the system is 25 years out of date and is breaking down. Some seniors only have a landline, no internet and they rely on the phone system.
6. Thanks for the repealing of the property tax.

[Quoted text hidden]

Beth Schumacher

From: Town of Antigonish Mayor <mayor@townofantigonish.ca>
Sent: May 5, 2022 12:08 AM
To: Lenita Hanson; Owen McCarron
Cc: Shirlyn Donovan; Glenn Horne; Willie Cormier; Heighton, Andrew
Subject: Re: [EXTERNAL] RE: Antigonish Chamber Consolidation Breakfast Meeting

Thank you Lenita, looks good to me.
Best,
Laurie

Mayor Laurie Boucher
Town of Antigonish
274 Main St, Antigonish, N.S
B2G 2C4
mayor@townofantigonish.ca | 902•870•7795

From: Lenita Hanson <
Sent: Wednesday, May 4, 2022 5:38:22 PM
To: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Cc: Town of Antigonish Mayor <mayor@townofantigonish.ca>; Shirlyn Donovan <shirlyn.donovan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Glenn Horne <glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Willie Cormier <wcormier@townofantigonish.ca>; Heighton, Andrew <Andrew.Heighton@nshealth.ca>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] RE: Antigonish Chamber Consolidation Breakfast Meeting

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Thank you Owen.

Lenita

From: Owen McCarron [mailto:omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca]
Sent: May 3, 2022 9:55 PM
To: Lenita Hanson
Cc: mayor@townofantigonish.ca; Shirlyn Donovan; Glenn Horne; wcormier@townofantigonish.ca; Heighton, Andrew
Subject: Re: Antigonish Chamber Consolidation Breakfast Meeting

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Warden Owen McCarron
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
902-968-1290

On May 3, 2022, at 4:38 PM, Lenita Hanson <lhanson@antigonishcounty.ns.ca> wrote:

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I look forward to your thoughts.

Thank you,

Lenita Hanson
Operations / R & D Manager

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!

www.tonys-meats.com

www.mrdonair.ca





Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Mayor, Warden disappointed consolidation being undermined

1 message

Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Thu, May 5, 2022 at 7:35 AM

To: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>

Cc: Glenn Home <glenn.home@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>

Owen;

I want to express my extreme disappointment with the article that has as its headline "**Mayor, Warden disappointed consolidation being undermined repeated three times in article**" I don't believe you agreed with this, but your name in the headline and it's out in the public. This smacks of "trump style" politics by Laurie. Am I one of the councillors undermining the process as a quote from Laurie says; "It is very unfortunate that we do have a few councillors who're undermining the process by spreading misinformation". Another quote; we are coming in as 100% partners and we want to become one", does this mean we're wasting time as it's a foregone conclusion? Another sentence attributed to Laurie "a couple of county councillors have been legally advised that they should not participate in the vote; noting it wasn't something that came from the town or county". This needs to be discussed at council and a special session needed. I will take a few days to consider options but would like to have councillors discuss first.

Harris

Beth Schumacher

From: Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>
Sent: May 5, 2022 7:35 AM
To: Owen McCarron
Cc: Glenn Horne
Subject: Mayor, Warden disappointed consolidation being undermined

Owen;

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Harris

Harris McNamara

From: Ed Watson
Sent: May 5, 2022 9:14 AM
To: Owen McCarron
Cc: Mary MacLellan; Donnie MacDonald; Hughie Stewart; Shawn Brophy; Remi Deveau; John Dunbar; Gary Mattie; Harris McNamara; Bill MacFarlane; mayor@townofantigonish.ca; wcmier@townofantigonish.ca; dmacinnis@townofantigonish.ca; scameron@townofantigonish.ca; amurray@townofantigonish.ca; mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca; droberts@townofantigonish.ca
Subject: consolidation

Hi Everyone

Some of you know me and some I have already spoken to on this issue but in the interest of expressing my views and observations consistently I am writing to you all.

To be clear personally I am not against any good idea and therefore not against the status quo or consolidation but after examination of everything related to an issue it has to be a good deal, this situation does not fit that criteria. With that said I can sum up very quickly in saying that I am not in favour of consolidation as presented this time. My reasons are as follows:

1. From the outset there has been no down side presented that is really significant, this is a huge problem mostly because it indicates that there has been no examination of a down side. I have after investigation discovered a few big problems which largely are not being discussed which is another problem; people are thinking either my counsellors are incompetent, or stands to gain personally at our expense giving rise to several different unsubstantiated ideas that are taking hold.
2. This is an initiative from the province. With that in mind it is they who stand to gain, otherwise why would they care, so I don't buy that it will be good for us in the long run.
3. No plans for a plebiscite. Especially with this scripted message that is being presented there has to be a display of respect for a democratic process, regardless this is too big an issue to be decided in council.
4. This process is contributing to a breakdown of the fabric of our society and our well functioning democracy. After the events of the last few years there has been a slippage of respect for our rights as people who reside in a free and democratic country with a respected and strong constitution. This coupled with a condescending demeanour from governments that we the common folk are not capable of making proper decisions for ourselves. This process is adding fuel to that fire.

If this was presented as an idea and it was obvious that all of you were truly just presenting facts good and bad and leaving it to us to decide we wouldn't be having this problem. Being told that you are neutral and yet speaking so positively about this appears to be two faced. In examination of historical patterns of unrest in our world point 4 is by far the most important. Not that we are on the verge of revolt at this time, more that this is an early warning sign which makes it the ideal time to act on this.

I urge you all to scrutinize, investigate, and be decision makers not sheep afraid to rock the boat. Most of all restore our confidence in democracy, have a plebiscite the results of which are respected and followed after further and open

public discussions, debates and consultation all of which are messy but a necessary pattern of good functioning democracy. This is something that we all must strive for and not be complacent about please join us in this endeavour.

Ed Watson

Maryvale Antigonish County

Harris McNamara

From: Susan Cameron <
Sent: May 5, 2022 11:05 AM
To: Harris McNamara
Subject: You are our voice

Mr. McNamara,

We are very concerned about the upcoming vote by councillors regarding the proposed consolidation of Antigonish Town and County. We are also extremely disappointed that after 20 years the councils are revisiting this amalgamation issue. Call it what you may but it is still amalgamation, only this time you don't have to go through the URB. Shameful.

As our representatives (and it states this in the Responsibilities of Municipal Councils of Nova Scotia) it is "your responsibility to govern the local area in a way that is democratic and accountable to the local communities that elected them" and also to "ensure that local residents have a say in decisions they take", and for you to "represent collective interests of the whole community".

We don't see any of this happening. Remember what you swore to?The push from Municipal affairs and the Mayor and Warden is unprecedented bullying in a very subtle way. It is your responsibility to correct this and stand up against such flagrant dictatorship.

You need to own up to the responsibilities put on you when you were elected. We expect to see us either get a say in a plebiscite or for you to vote down the consolidation when it comes to a vote by council.

Susan and Owen Cameron
Taxpayers in the County of Antigonish

Beth Schumacher

From: Susan Cameron
Sent: May 5, 2022 11:10 AM
To: Owen McCarron
Subject: You are our voice

Warden MacCarron,

We are very concerned about the upcoming vote by you and councillors regarding the proposed consolidation of Antigonish Town and County. We are also extremely disappointed that after 20 years the councils are revisiting this amalgamation issue. Call it what you may but it is still amalgamation, only this time you don't have to go through the URB. Shameful.

As our representatives (and it states this in the Responsibilities of Municipal Councils of Nova Scotia) it is "your responsibility to govern the local area in a way that is democratic and accountable to the local communities that elected them" and also to "ensure that local residents have a say in decisions they take", and for you to "represent collective interests of the whole community".

We don't see any of this happening. Do you remember what you swore to when you took office? The push from Municipal affairs and the Mayor and you - Warden is unprecedented bullying in a very subtle way. That is such flagrant dictatorship.

You need to own up to the responsibilities put on you when you were elected. We expect to see us either get a say in a plebiscite or for you to vote down the consolidation when it comes to a vote by council.

Susan and Owen Cameron
Taxpayers in the County of Antigonish

Harris McNamara

From: Valerie Haskett-Chugg <[redacted]>
Sent: May 5, 2022 11:15 AM
To: Mary MacLellan; dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ca; hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ca; sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ca; rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ca; omccarron@antigonishcounty.ca; jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ca; gmattie@antigonishcounty.ca; hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ca; bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ca; mayor@townofantigonish.ca; wcornier@townofantigonish.ca; dmacinnis@townofantigonish.ca; amurray@townofantigonish.ca; mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca; droberts@townofantigonish.ca
Subject: Proposed consolidation

Hello everyone: I live in District 1 and I attended an information session held at Mini Trail Community Centre in Lakevale - I have read the booklet which came by mail prior to that information meeting and I have reviewed the information on the website for the consolidation.

I have yet to feel that I have sufficient information to decide that the proposed consolidation is the best way forward for the Town and County. I feel the system of delivering this to the constituents is flawed, lacking transparency. During the present time when covid cases continue to rise all around us, the attendance at these meetings is not representative of the population that will be affected if consolidation proceeds.

Consolidation was not on anyone's platform when you were all running for election. The timing for councillors voting on this seems to be quite a 'rushed' event and I absolutely feel as a constituent that I should have a vote for something that could affect me for the rest of my life. I continue to think that there is just not enough information available to constituents and I hope that all of you will open your minds to putting this process on hold and allow the town and county to have a plebiscite. This would allow everyone eligible to have a say - after all isn't this the way of democracy??

Best regards, Valerie Chugg, Cape George

Beth Schumacher

From: Quincy K ·
Sent: May 5, 2022 11:26 AM
To: Owen McCarron
Subject: Consolidation

There are so many concerns around consolidation and they start with the process which frankly seems flawed, rushed and full of unanswered questions.

As we sit on this runaway train heading to the altar of a uncertain and poorly conceived marriage, I suggest it is time to put on the brakes and hit the pause button.

As this process stands and the long term impact for the community I do not support consolidation and call for a plebiscite on the matter.

If this is such a good idea in June 2022 it will still be a good idea in June 2023. The community needs more time, this process needs more time,

the people of both communities deserve to be heard and their voice counted.

Respectfully
Carolyn Krug

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows

Harris McNamara

From: Quincy K
Sent: May 5, 2022 11:27 AM
To: Harris McNamara
Subject: Consolidation

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the people of both communities deserve to be heard and their voice counted.

Respectfully
Carolyn Krug

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows

Harris McNamara

From: Valerie Haskett-Chugg <vchugg@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Sent: May 5, 2022 11:29 AM
To: Mary MacLellan; Donnie MacDonald; Hughie Stewart; Shawn Brophy; Remi Deveau; Owen McCarron; John Dunbar; Gary Mattie; Harris McNamara; Bill MacFarlane
Subject: Fwd: Proposed consolidation

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Valerie Haskett-Chugg <vchugg@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Date: May 5, 2022 at 11:15:10 AM ADT
To: mary maclellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ca, hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ca, sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ca, rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ca, omccarron@antigonishcounty.ca, jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ca, gmattie@antigonishcounty.ca, hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ca, bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ca, mayor@townofantigonish.ca, wcmormier@townofantigonish.ca, dmacinnis@townofantigonish.ca, amurray@townofantigonish.ca, mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca, droberts@townofantigonish.ca
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Best regards, Valerie Chugg, Cape George

Beth Schumacher

From: Mary Farrell <mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca>
Sent: May 5, 2022 11:46 AM
To: mayor@townofantigonish.ca; Owen McCarron
Subject: Fwd: [EXTERNAL] Proposed consolidation

Mary Farrell
Councillor
Town of Antigonish
274 Main Street
Antigonish Nova Scotia
B2G 2T2
902-863-2741
902-870-0286

Begin forwarded message:

From: Valerie Haskett-Chugg <vchugg@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Date: May 5, 2022 at 11:06:51 AM ADT
To: mary maclellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ca, hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ca, sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ca, rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ca, omccarron@antigonishcounty.ca, jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ca, gmattie@antigonishcounty.ca, hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ca, bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ca, Town of Antigonish Mayor <mayor@townofantigonish.ca>, Willie Cormier <wcormier@townofantigonish.ca>, Donnie MacInnis <dmacinnis@townofantigonish.ca>, Andrew Murray <amurray@townofantigonish.ca>, Mary Farrell <mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca>, Diane Roberts <droberts@townofantigonish.ca>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Proposed consolidation

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hello everyone: I live in District 1 and I attended an information session held at Mini Trail Community Centre in Lakevale - I have read the booklet which came by mail prior to that information meeting and I have reviewed the information on the website for the consolidation.

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constituent that I should have a vote for something that could affect me for the rest of my life. I continue to think that there is just not enough information available to constituents and I hope that all of you will open your minds to putting this process on hold and allow the town and county to have a plebiscite. This would allow everyone eligible to have a say - after all isn't this the way of democracy??

Best regards, Valerie Chugg, Cape George

Beth Schumacher

From: Mary Farrell <mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca>
Sent: May 5, 2022 11:46 AM
To: mayor@townofantigonish.ca; Owen McCarron
Subject: Fwd: [EXTERNAL] You are our voice

Mary Farrell
Councillor
Town of Antigonish
274 Main Street
Antigonish Nova Scotia
B2G 2T2
902-863-2741
902-870-0286

Begin forwarded message:

From: Mary Farrell <mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca>
Date: May 5, 2022 at 11:21:17 AM ADT
To: Susan Cameron <>
Subject: Re: [EXTERNAL] You are our voice

Hello Susan,

Having been involved in a number of governance related initiatives this last six years on Council and for the past thirty-six years with the Association of Nova Scotia Hairdressers , I can say that I believe we are going about this the right way. I see the strategic value in Councils taking the initiative. Provincial governments across the country have been mandating amalgamations since the mid-nineties in response to their own internal political dynamics. There is a considerable literature on the results and implications of these exercises; suffice it to say that it strikes me as very smart to approach it as a voluntary and collaborative effort now rather than have it imposed possibly at a future date. It is worth noting that the Mandate Letter to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing in September 2021 specifies that he must "review the Municipal Act, Municipal Charters, including their size and scope, the concept of shared service authorities, with a goal of refining the delivery and governance model for all municipalities in the province". The Department of Municipal Affairs and Housing's Business Plan for 2022-2023 indicates that such a review of the Act is underway and that it will support the Town and County of Antigonish as they explore consolidation. Given the generality of the language in the Minister's Mandate letter and the uncertainty of the outcome of the legislative review, it is much better that our local representatives and the staff who have the knowledge and expertise should drive the process, should it go forward. The lines of accountability could not be clearer which helps makes our democracy effective.

On speed and timing:

I know some have questioned the speed and timing of the process. I do not believe the process is being rushed; we voted unanimously in September 2021 to explore the option. That was made public, as was our promise to conduct an open and inclusive consultation process. This gave us all time to do our own thinking and to come to the table prepared to have fruitful conversations on the issue. Many avenues

have been provided to have our voices heard, both in person and online, which means that the process is open and inclusive. As mentioned earlier, I attended almost all to date of the public sessions and I discussed with many constituents the idea of consolidation and why now? I have been very impressed with how constructive the comments and concerns have been with various individuals. Indeed, this process was recently cited by Ray Bates in his editorial to the Casket as a good example of a government seeking to make a decision based on “stakeholder and taxpayer input”. With respect to timing, while there is no good time for a bad idea, it is never too early for a good one – in this case to explore the possibility of consolidation. Practically speaking, should councils proceed, the current timeline has the advantage of allowing for an orderly transition to the new model in time for the next municipal election.

On whether consolidation is the only option.....

Consolidation clearly is not the only option and from what I see, it is not being positioned that way in the consultation process. One must not confuse myth-busting with a final decision. For Council members to listen and gather as much information as they can before making a final decision lends credibility to the process.

Councils could decide to maintain the status quo. The *Municipal Government Act* also provides that municipalities may be amalgamated or some or all of a territory may be annexed by the Utility and Review Board (UARB) on application by the Minister, the Municipality or a sufficient number of electors.

In weighing the options on whether or not to proceed with consolidation, I think it is useful to place Antigonish within the larger provincial, federal and even international context. Antigonish is competing with other towns and cities, many of which are larger and better resourced, to attract financial support, investment and human talent. Given all the challenges we face – from health care to affordable housing to economic development and climate change, it only makes sense to me to find ways to maximize our presence and our leverage. While it is true that our current councils are working very well together, this is inherently fragile because it relies on the incumbents and is therefore not a guarantee of ongoing collaboration.

On not all questions are being answered.....

In my experience, it is unrealistic to expect anyone to answer every conceivable question in a governance exercise such as this. What is needed is a step by step approach which is orderly, transparent and grounded in general principles that will guide future work on specific issues. Therefore, I wanted and was reassured to see that Councils adopted a set of such guiding principles. These principles cover both the outcomes that are desired for the municipality and the way in which the government will function. Should consolidation proceed, these principles, or ones that have been adjusted to reflect the public’s input, will not only help Councils make further decisions on specifics, such as boundaries or staffing issues, but that they will also be instruments of accountability for the public.

In addition to the principles, other substantive materials have been provided, thereby ensuring we are all working from a common fact base – another necessary element to a healthy democracy. These materials help counter misinformation about the impacts of consolidation. It is a sad fact that information calculated to alarm or cause fear spreads more quickly on social media than accurate and sometimes more nuanced information.

I know that comments and concerns are being recorded and a full report will be made to Councils. This report we will receive after the engagement process and I hoping it will be available to the public. I think that is important. This would have the dual benefit of demonstrating to people that their voices have been heard and of informing the public on what all the concerns or questions were during the process.

On the need for a plebiscite:

It will be up to Councils of course to decide whether a plebiscite is a good idea. In my view, it should not be necessary. The quality of the information and the extensiveness of the opportunities for the public to provide substantive input to the process would seem to me to be a better way for Councils to

obtain a real sense of what the public's questions and concerns are which would then govern the final decision on whether or not to proceed.

The process has been managed in a way that is fully consistent with democratic principles. Clear lines of accountability have been established; decisions have been communicated openly and on a regular basis, research and facts have been shared with the public to inform the conversation and multiple ways have been provided to allow for public input. Since last fall there been a significant level of engagement.

It would seem to me that if Councils can demonstrate that issues and concerns raised by the public can be addressed, that would be sufficient to justify a decision to proceed with the next steps in consolidation. Conversely, if the public has identified an insurmountable problem with the option, we will have the justification needed to deny going forward. Finally, there would be future opportunities for public input, particularly when it comes to the important issue of establishing electoral districts by the Transition Committee and the UARB before final decisions are made.

My understanding also is that the exploration of consolidation follows upon a deep process of engagement with the community on a strategic plan – meaning that the priorities for this area are well known and have been developed in consultation with the community.

Leadership with a track record of listening, consulting and engaging the community has in my view earned the trust needed to make the call on consolidation. Yes I did swear that my time on council would be the best for our community not for the advancement of my political career. These are the tough decisions that the people put their trust in me to make and my integrity is worth more than to be swayed by negative social media bashing and false information that's out there. I promise I will make a decision with the facts and findings. If I already made a decision I am not listening to all the community. I will pass this email along to our consultants to be counted.

With the talent, cumulative years of experience and commitment to the public interest around these tables, I believe that the people of Antigonish Town and County are in very safe hands.

Sincerely,

Mary

Mary Farrell
Councillor
Town of Antigonish
274 Main Street
Antigonish Nova Scotia
B2G 2T2
902-863-2741
902-870-0286

On May 5, 2022, at 10:44 AM, Susan Cameron < > wrote:

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hi Mary,

We are very concerned about the upcoming vote by councillors regarding the proposed consolidation of Antigonish Town and County. We are also extremely disappointed that after 20 years the councils are revisiting this amalgamation issue. Call it what you may but it is still amalgamation, only this time you don't have to go through the URB. Shameful.

As our representatives (and it states this in the Responsibilities of Municipal Councils of Nova Scotia) it is “your responsibility to govern the local area in a way that is democratic and accountable to the local communities that elected them” and also to “ensure that local residents have a say in decisions they take”, and for you to “represent collective interests of the whole community”.

We don't see any of this happening. Do you remember what you swore to? The push from Municipal affairs and the Mayor and Warden is unprecedented bullying in a very subtle way. It is your responsibility to correct this and stand up against such flagrant dictatorship.

You need to own up to the responsibilities put on you when you were elected. We expect to see us either get a say in a plebiscite or for you to vote down the consolidation when it comes to a vote by council.

Susan and Owen Cameron
Taxpayers in the town of Antigonish

Beth Schumacher

Subject: Exploration of Consolidation Lunch and Learn Webinar
Location: Zoom Webinar

Start: Thu 2022-05-05 12:00 PM
End: Thu 2022-05-05 1:30 PM
Show Time As: Tentative

Recurrence: (none)

Meeting Status: Not yet responded

Organizer: Shirlyn Donovan
Required Attendees: Council, SLT

Please see the invitation below for the zoom webinar for Thursday, May 5 from 12-1:30pm. You must register in advance to attend. This session will attempt to answer some of the questions that we remaining after our last webinar.

Thanks,
Shirlyn

Hi there,

You are invited to a Zoom webinar.
When: May 5, 2022 12:00 PM Halifax
Topic: Exploration of Consolidation Lunch and Learn

Register in advance for this webinar:
https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_YSxqOZFfQKmMZHdv0qxLSQ

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar.

Beth Schumacher

From: Shirlyn Donovan
Sent: May 5, 2022 4:12 PM
To: Owen McCarron; mayor@townofantigonish.ca
Cc: Kate Gorman
Subject: Invitation Exploration of Consolidation Information Session
Attachments: Current and Former Elected Officials - New Date.png; Consolidation Booklet.pdf

Good afternoon,

On behalf of Mayor Laurie Boucher and Warden Owen McCarron, I would like to invite you to attend an information session on the potential consolidation of Antigonish Town and County.

This is a specific session for current and former elected officials. Our goal is to provide an opportunity for you to gain insight into the process, ask questions, and share what you think about consolidation for Antigonish.

The session will take place on Thursday, May 12, 2022 from 2:30pm-3:30pm at the John Paul Centre, 308 Main Street.

For up-to-date information about the Town and County's exploration of consolidation, please visit: www.antigonish.ca

Please RSVP if you are able to attend.

Thank you,
Shirlyn

Shirlyn Donovan
Strategic Initiatives Coordinator
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
285 Beech Hill Road
Antigonish, NS B2G 0B4
902-863-1117



www.antigonishcounty.ns.ca
www.twitter.com/antigonishco

Honour Yesterday, Act Today, Inspire Tomorrow

Beth Schumacher

From: Daniel Ross
Sent: May 5, 2022 6:28 PM
To: Shirlyn Donovan
Cc: Owen McCarron; mayor@townofantigonish.ca; Kate Gorman; Mary MacLellan
Subject: Re: Invitation Exploration of Consolidation Engagement Session

Hi Shirlyn,

My son's 19th Birthday! Unreal how the time flies.

I'll be there for sure. Just making sure I have the timelines correct, as the flyer and the website have different dates for engagements. Your last engagement is May 18th... and of course this is on the 12th... so is this issue not on the table for either council on May 10th?

I just want to be sure that I'm participating in a process, not just an information session.

Thanks,

Daniel Ross

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www.rossscreenprint.com

On Thu, May 5, 2022 at 4:15 PM Shirlyn Donovan <shirlyn.donovan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca> wrote:

Good afternoon,

On behalf of Mayor Laurie Boucher and Warden Owen McCarron, I would like to invite you to attend an information session on the potential consolidation of Antigonish Town and County.

This is a specific session for community leaders and non-profit organizations. Our goal is to provide an opportunity for you to gain insight into the process, ask questions, and share what you think about consolidation for Antigonish.

The session will take place on Thursday, May 12, 2022 from 1:00pm-2:00pm at the John Paul Centre, 308 Main Street.

For up-to-date information about the Town and County's exploration of consolidation, please visit: www.antigonish.ca

Please RSVP if you able to attend.

Thank you,

Shirlyn

Shirlyn Donovan

Strategic Initiatives Coordinator

Municipality of the County of Antigonish

285 Beech Hill Road

Antigonish, NS B2G 0B4

902-863-1117



www.antigonishcounty.ns.ca



www.twitter.com/antigonishco

Honour Yesterday, Act Today, Inspire Tomorrow

Harris McNamara

From: Donnie Chisholm
Sent: May 5, 2022 8:17 PM
To: Hughie Stewart
Cc: Donnie MacDonald; Shawn Brophy; Gary Mattie; mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca; mayor@townofantigonish.ca; scameron@townofantigonish.ca; Bill MacFarlane; John Dunbar; Harris McNamara
Subject: Amalgamation

Hi Mr Stewart

I like many other residents of the town and county feel that we have a right to vote on this very important issue just to be told that the councillors can make a decision for us is wrong as it was never campaigned on And if it is such a great move why are the councillors afraid of our vote

Both Councils are pushing forward with the amalgamation very swiftly so what is the big rush councillors have not held a proper meeting where the public could asked fair questions and hopefully get honest answers and just maybe we could learn about the hidden agenda I fail to understand why two of the councillors cannot vote as they should have a right to represent their voters

About conflict the councillors should also be looking at Mary Farrell who's husband works at the RK MacDonald and the Wardens wife is a board member which is owned by the town and county Furthermore we would like to know what the town is bringing to the table as the county has a lot more to offer all that we in the county will get is higher taxes and less service and of course paying for the town infrastructure

It is time to give all residents a vote

Donnie Chisholm

Sent from my iPad

Harris McNamara

From: Mike and Shirley Davidson
Sent: May 5, 2022 8:21 PM
To: Harris McNamara
Subject: Plea for a plebiscite for consolidation

Dear Ms. McNamara,

After attending the community meeting about consolidation I am asking all councillors to allow community members to have a vote in this process!

Sincerely,
Shirley Davidson
Old Antigonish Road
Afton B0H1A0

Sent from my iPad

Beth Schumacher

From: Mike and Shirley Davidson <
Sent: May 5, 2022 8:25 PM
To: Owen McCarron
Subject: A plea for a plebiscite for consolidation

Dear Mr. McCarron,

After attending the community meeting about consolidation I am asking all councillors to allow community members to have a vote in this process!

Sincerely,
Shirley Davidson
1 Old Antigonish Road
Afton BOH1A0 Sent from my iPad

Shirlyn Donovan

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: Thursday, May 5, 2022 10:39 PM
To: info
Subject: Fwd:

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Janie Landry <
Date: May 5, 2022 at 6:44:04 PM ADT
To: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>

Hi Owen... I'm certainly against joining the town with the county but I certainly hope we get the chance to vote on it. Thank you

Sent from my iPhone

Shirlyn Donovan

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: Thursday, May 5, 2022 11:01 PM
To: info
Subject: Fwd: Plebiscite

Warden Owen McCarron
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
902-968-1290

Begin forwarded message:

From: Melinda Babin
Date: May 5, 2022 at 1:02:00 PM ADT
To: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Plebiscite

Hi Owen
We need a plebiscite

Thank you
Melinda Babin
Antigonish County Resident

Sent from my iPhone

Beth Schumacher

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: May 5, 2022 11:10 PM
To: info
Subject: Fwd: Plebiscite Wanted for Amalgamation / Consolidation

Warden Owen McCarron
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
902-968-1290

Begin forwarded message:

From: Pati Myette
Date: May 4, 2022 at 4:56:41 PM ADT
To: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ca, Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, mayor@townofantigonish.ca, wcmormier@townofantigonish.ca, dmacinnis@townofantigonish.ca, scameron@townofantigonish.ca, amurray@townofantigonish.ca, mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca, droberts@townofantigonish.ca
Subject: Plebiscite Wanted for Amalgamation / Consolidation

Dear Warden, Mayor and Councillors:

Please reconsider your vote process for a **Plebiscite** - would be the honourable thing to do for the Town and County residences as a whole

We want our voices heard and is our right
We live in a democracy ... We do not live in Russia !!

Plebiscite wanted for Amalgamation or Consolidation of Town and County

As a home owner and life long resident of the county of Antigonish we want a Plebiscite on the Amalgamation of the Town and County.
No town or county councils should have the right or authority to take our privilege to vote away. We as community members pay our taxes, support our town and counties, volunteer our time and support our own community that we live. To make decisions that will impact us all for the rest of our lives there should be a plebiscite.

My interpretation of an amalgamation of the town and county is a combination of two entering into a new entity. Instead, a completely new entity is formed to house the combined assets and liabilities of both. Amalgamations generally take place between larger and smaller entities, where the larger one takes over smaller. To amalgamate the town and county together which no one has answers too, I believe is extreme; when there is so much uncertainty.

What is the councils urgency to put forth amalgamation without knowledge of and not giving people the right to a plebiscite? Is council afraid of a few difficulties with the vote or not achieving what they want without any effort on their part?

It seems that the consultants, with the support of Municipal Affairs and their financial contribution, have given one way to get this done and you've totally accepted that advice.

What is behind the actions of town and county council not allowing all Councillors to vote? The excuse of conflict of interest is being used too widely and frequently, not what it is meant for.

Give the people what they want, a plebiscite.

Councils proposal of amalgamation causes a lot of unnecessary stress and anxiety in our lives. As if not under enough stress with covid, gas and diesel prices, housing shortages, homelessness and most of all the mental state that is being put on the people during these difficult times.

Where will this lead us to in the future? - No voice, too much uncertainty and not to say, divide town and county residences.

A vast amount of research has found that amalgamation fails to produce cost savings, rarely leads to more efficient service delivery, and reduces the ability of citizens to be involved in the life of their local governments.

Willard and Pati Myette
Tracadie

Beth Schumacher

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: May 5, 2022 11:10 PM
To: info
Subject: Fwd: Consolidation Between Town and County

Warden Owen McCarron
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
902-968-1290

Begin forwarded message:

From: Lorraine Bowie
Date: May 4, 2022 at 4:56:14 PM ADT
To: Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, jmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca, Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, bmacfarlene@antigonishcounty.ns.ca
Subject: Consolidation Between Town and County

Good Morning

We are sending this email out to ask Antigonish County Council to please have a plebiscite. Let the residents of the County and also the Town decide the outcome of a potential consolidation.

Leo and Lorraine Bowie
Heatherton Village Road
Antigonish

Beth Schumacher

From: Elaine MacLean <r
Sent: May 5, 2022 11:42 PM
To: Owen McCarron
Subject: Consolidation Process

Dear Warden Owen MacCarron,

While I appreciate that being responsible for governing The Municipality of the County of Antigonish must be a difficult task, I feel that it is important for you to know that I am not supportive of the current process for determining whether or not the municipality consolidates with the town. I have 4 main concerns and questions too numerous for an email exchange. I hope to have those answered when my first concern is resolved.

- 1. The lack of a reasonable and democratic process for consultation.** A drop-in, kiosk style interaction does not meet the needs of the community for information sharing. We need a town hall style meeting in which questions/answers are heard by all.
- 2. The timeline is too short.** This question of consolidation is going from a "consideration" to a "final vote" by councillors in too short a time. What's the rush? Slow down and do this right.
- 3. The information being shared is not balanced.** It was compiled by consultants showing only the positives for a consolidation. It can't be all positive. We need a fair analysis of the pros/cons.
- 4. The citizens of the Municipality of the County of Antigonish have no vote.** The question of consolidation must be put to the citizens. Otherwise this huge decision which will impact everything about our day to day lives in the county for generations to come is being made by a few Councillors who frankly appear to have little knowledge of the repercussions now and more importantly for the future. This question needs more consideration and study prior to making the yes/no decision.

Thank you for listening.

Elaine MacLean
Old Beaver Rd.
James River

Harris McNamara

From: Elaine MacLean
Sent: May 6, 2022 12:10 AM
To: Harris McNamara
Subject: Consolidation Process

Dear Councillor Harris McNamara,

While I appreciate that being responsible for governing The Municipality of the County of Antigonish must be a difficult task, I feel that it is important for you to know that I am not supportive of the current process for determining whether or not the municipality consolidates with the town. I have 4 main concerns and questions too numerous for an email exchange. I hope to have those answered when my first concern is resolved.

1. The lack of a reasonable and democratic process for consultation. A drop-in, kiosk style interaction does not meet the needs of the community for information sharing. We need a town hall style meeting in which questions/answers are heard by all.
2. The timeline is too short. This question of consolidation is going from a "consideration" to a "final vote" by councillors in too short a time. What's the rush? Slow down and do this right.
3. The information being shared is not balanced. It was compiled by consultants showing only the positives for a consolidation. It can't be all positive. We need a fair analysis of the pros/cons.
4. The citizens of the Municipality of the County of Antigonish have no vote. The question of consolidation must be put to the citizens. Otherwise this huge decision which will impact everything about our day to day lives in the county for generations to come is being made by a few Councillors who frankly, with all due respect, appear to have little knowledge of the repercussions now, and more importantly, for the future. This question needs more consideration and study prior to making the yes/no decision.

Thank you for listening.

Elaine MacLean
Old Beaver Rd.
James River

From: [Glenn Horne](#)
To: [MCA Staff](#)
Cc: [Qwen McCarron](#)
Subject: Follow-Up Questions from County Public Works
Date: May 6, 2022 8:47:49 AM
Attachments: [2022-02-28+Final+First+Staff+Fact+Sheet \(1\).pdf](#)
[2022-02-28+Final+Second+Staff+Fact+Sheet \(1\).pdf](#)

Good morning, folks –

Public Works staff had further questions related to the transition to a combined workforce as it relates to union and non-union staffing. Responses to those questions are attached below. Happy to chat about any of this during the drop-in this afternoon or any other time.

Cheers,
Glenn



Glenn Horne | Chief Administrative Officer
Municipality of the County of Antigonish | 902.863.1117
285 Beech Hill Road, Beech Hill, NS | B2G 0B4
www.antigonishcounty.ns.ca | [@AntigonishCo](#) | [facebook](#)

Honour Yesterday, Act Today, Inspire Tomorrow

From: Glenn Horne
Sent: May 4, 2022 5:06 PM
To: dmyers@antigonishcounty.ns.ca; [Josh Chisholm \(josh.chisholm@antigonishcounty.ns.ca\)](mailto:josh.chisholm@antigonishcounty.ns.ca)
<josh.chisholm@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; [Debbie Cormier](mailto:Debbie.Cormier@antigonishcounty.ns.ca)
<debbie.cormier@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; [Kevin Day \(kevin.day@antigonishcounty.ns.ca\)](mailto:Kevin.Day@antigonishcounty.ns.ca); [Harold \(harold.macgillivray@antigonishcounty.ns.ca\)](mailto:Harold.MacGillivray@antigonishcounty.ns.ca)
<harold.macgillivray@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; [Tyler MacPherson \(tyler.macpherson@antigonishcounty.ns.ca\)](mailto:Tyler.MacPherson@antigonishcounty.ns.ca); [Tony Giebrecht](mailto:Tony.Giebrecht@antigonishcounty.ns.ca)
<tgiesbrecht@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; [Matt McKeen \(matt.mckeen@antigonishcounty.ns.ca\)](mailto:Matt.McKeen@antigonishcounty.ns.ca)
Cc: shirlyn.donovan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca; [SLT <slt@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>](mailto:SLT@antigonishcounty.ns.ca)
Subject: Follow-Up Questions from County Public Works

Good afternoon, folks –

After speaking with a few of you over the past few weeks I wanted to share a little more information on some of the potential affects on our workplace if consolidation were to move forward. In addition to what is below, I have also attached the two staff fact sheets that were previously posted on HowSpace.

To provide a little more detail so staff can understand the potential processes and outcomes associated with consolidation, we will make the following assumptions:

1. Councils agree to consolidate the two municipal units into one.
2. Consolidation legislation is passed by the Province in the Fall 2022 sitting of the House of

Assembly.

3. The decision is made to combine the County and Town staff teams who work on water / sewer and roads / maintenance, respectively.

The following questions and responses are based on those assumptions. If either of those assumptions does not occur, the responses below will be different.

- How will the tenure of non-union employees be treated if they go into a union?
 - If Consolidation occurs it is likely that the water / sewer operations as well as the roads / maintenance operations in the Town and County would be combined in some fashion.
 - Public Works employees at the Town (water, sewer, roads) are unionized under the IBEW Local 1928.
 - In Nova Scotia trade unions have successor rights when the workplace changes. Therefore, if the County and Town water/sewer operations and the roads/maintenance operations were combined and if we follow the example of West Hants, it appears there would be a vote among all employees who might be considered for inclusion in the PW union local.
 - The Consolidation Act for the Regional Municipality of West Hants protected the successor rights of the existing unions and states, “where an employee of a municipal government is employed by the Regional Municipality in a position which becomes a bargaining unit position, the employees rights to employment in the position is not affected by whether that employee was previously employed pursuant to a collective agreement and the employee is deemed to have seniority credits with the Regional Municipality equal to the employee’s service with that municipal government.”
 - That means, if we combine with the Town and the combined workforce votes to become unionized the seniority of the previously non-union employees (County employees) is counted toward their seniority within the union.
 - The Consolidation Act for the Regional Municipality of West Hants also states that, “no provision of a collective agreement with a municipal government that purports to favour employees of one municipal government in obtaining employment with the Regional Municipality over those of another municipal government has any force or effect.”
 - That means, Town unionized employees will not be favoured for employment opportunities over County employees and vice versa. All employees are on an equal playing field.
 - We fully expect these provisions in the Consolidation Act for the Regional Municipality of West Hants will also be part of legislation that combines the County and Town.
 - Because the Town does not have a solid waste operation and the County does, they would not be part of this process. However, they may be given the option to unionize if they so desired.
- How will pensions and benefits be blended / adjusted if unionized or not?
 - If unionized, pensions/benefits/working conditions outlined as per the collective agreement.
 - If not unionized, pension/benefits/working conditions outlined as per the HR manual which will be harmonized between the County and Town prior to the transferring of staff.

How will the organization be built, jobs identified, filled, etc... (process & timeline)?

- Hiring of the CAO - fall /winter 2022/23
- Determining basic organizational structure (ie: departments and what functions go where) – winter 2023
- Hiring of Department Directors (winter /spring 2023)
- Determining specific organizational structure (ie: number of positions, reporting relationships, functional requirements, etc...) – spring 2023
- Hiring of all staff - spring / summer / fall 2023
- Determine if water / sewer and roads / maintenance staff will be unionized or not – fall 2023 / winter 2024
- Opening of merged municipality - April 1, 2024

I'll be by at 8am tomorrow with Brian Smith to meet with you all, review this material and answer any additional questions you have.

Cheers,
Glenn



Glenn Horne | Chief Administrative Officer
Municipality of the County of Antigonish | 902.863.1117
285 Beech Hill Road, Beech Hill, NS | B2G 0B4
www.antigonishcounty.ns.ca | [@AntigonishCo](https://www.facebook.com/AntigonishCo) | [facebook](https://www.facebook.com/AntigonishCo)

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First Staff Fact Sheet - Consolidation and Staff

Revised February 28, 2022

The question: How will the two organizations be combined in terms of staffing?

The Timing: Should Town and County decide to move forward with consolidation, there will be four key stages for that are important for staff engagement:

- a) The passing of special transition legislation to establish a merged municipality.
- b) Creating a joint Transition Committee, appointment of a Transition Coordinator and commencement of a comprehensive merger work plan.
- c) Retaining third-party HR expertise to help assess the staffing structure of a merged municipality through a Human Resources Analysis and to support existing staff in the transition.
- d) Recruiting a Chief Administrative Officer to manage and staff a merged municipality.

Special Note:

Looking at the Windsor and West Hants consolidation as a benchmark, in terms of the actual recruitment process, the special transition legislation to establish a merged municipality provided the following important requirement:

Preference in employment by the Regional Municipality shall be given to an employee of a municipal government where that employee meets the basic requirements for a position. (Region of Windsor and West Hants Municipality Act, 2018 Section 9 (2))

What is a Human Resource Analysis?

In the example of Windsor West Hants, very soon after the establishment of a Transition Coordinating Committee, the CAO's of the Town and County developed a Request for Proposals (RFP) for a Human Resources Analysis. Gerald Walsh & Associates Inc. was hired to provide a comprehensive analysis of both Town and County human resource elements. Following the analysis, Gerald Walsh & Associates Inc. recommended a merged system, and worked with the Committee and Staff during the transition process.

One of the consultant's first steps was to hold one-on-one meetings with all staff members. This was an opportunity to gain a better understanding of their perspectives and provide staff with a connection point for questions and answers during the transition.

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The Human Resource Analysis included the following:

- Develop an organizational structure that would include a role for current staff.
- Review and update existing job descriptions for all positions within the new structure.
- Identify any positions that would overlap or change significantly and provide recommendations for new positions, training, or options for attrition and severance.
- Attrition and severance options would be shared with staff who indicate interest in these options.
- Complete a salary comparison and market review, recommending new salary bands and scales.
- Complete a benefits comparison and market review, recommending options to merge programs.
- Recommend the placement of Departments and staff in terms of space, shared work, effectiveness.
- Assess implications of alternate forms of municipal service delivery, such as working from home, etc.
- Analyze and identify options for effective service delivery involving unionized and non-union workers, considering all legal and contractual obligations.
- Review and develop combined Human Resources manuals, policies, and procedures.
- Provide an evidence-based structure and methods for employee performance reviews.
- Develop an implementation plan with timelines to achieve consolidation of staff.

In practise, this process provided a mechanism to support staff throughout the merger. The early meetings with every staff member were a key element in the process, and they were followed up with things like organizing several half day workshops on resume writing and interview skills to support individuals going through the process. In many cases staff would provide a resume and sit down for an interview before new positions would be assigned to existing staff. The details of this process can vary depending on arrangements made by the new CAO.

The Transition Co-ordinating Committee and the new council of the merged municipal unit would be responsible for the approval and adoption of new policies, benefits packages, changes to service delivery, etc. The new CAO would work with the Coordinating Committee and council on the adoption of all elements needed for a new organizational structure.

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Summary: Existing staff in the Town and County, and the human resource management systems that exist today are critical considerations in developing a consolidated municipal organization. The Human Resource Analysis would build upon current human resource manuals, policies, and procedures. As important as the technical elements of this work are, so are the opportunities to speak with and work with existing staff along the way. There are several steps and considerations to make before determining a new staffing structure. If both councils decide to move ahead with consolidation, the tentative start date for a new merged municipality would be April 1, 2024.

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Second Staff Fact Sheet

Consolidation and Union Labour Relations

Revised February 28, 2022

The question: How will the two organizations be combined in terms of union and non-union staff?

The Timing: Should the Town and County decide to move forward with consolidation there will be a detailed Human Resources Analysis early in the Transition Co-ordinating Committee work program.

Using Windsor West Hants as an example, this Human Resource Analysis would include this key element:

“Analyze and identify options for effective municipal service delivery involving unionized and non-unionized workers, taking into consideration the current situation of Windsor and West Hants and all legal statutory and contractual obligations.”

It is not possible at this early stage where Councils are just in the process of considering consolidation to suggest what those “options for effective service delivery” might be, or whether there is a need to change anything in terms of existing Public Works staff groups. Those decisions would not be made until after Council decides to move forward or not.

The consolidated organization might want to maintain several separate work teams under public works, in the same way that the Town has maintained separate Electric Utility, Water Treatment, and Public Works teams.

Those answers on the structure of a new organization would be based on the findings from the Human Resources Analysis and will fall under the discretion of the new CAO and new Council of the merged unit.

Are existing union contracts protected in a consolidation process?

The special transition legislation, in the Windsor West Hants example, includes specific provisions to protect unionized staff:

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- 16 (1) *In this Section, "employee" means an employee as defined in Section 2 of the Trade Union Act, excluding those described in subsection 2(2) of that Act.*
- (2) *The Regional Municipality is a transferee for the purpose of Section 31 of the Trade Union Act and, for greater certainty,*
- (a) *the Regional Municipality is bound by successor rights as determined pursuant to the Trade Union Act; and*
- (b) *subject to the Trade Union Act, the Regional Municipality and the employees, who are covered by collective agreements, of a municipal government are bound by the collective agreements as if the Regional Municipality were a party to them.*
- (3) *Where an employee of a municipal government is employed by the Regional Municipality, the period of employment and seniority of that employee with the municipal government at the time of the incorporation of the Regional Municipality is deemed to have been employment and seniority with the Regional Municipality and the continuity of employment and seniority is not broken.*
- (4) *Where an employee of a municipal government is employed by the Regional Municipality in a position which becomes a bargaining unit position, the employee's right to employment in the position is not affected by whether that employee was previously employed pursuant to a collective agreement and the employee is deemed to have seniority credits with the Regional Municipality equal to the employee's service with that municipal government.*
- (5) *No provision of a collective agreement with a municipal government that purports to favour the employees of one municipal government in obtaining employment with the Regional Municipality over those of another municipal government has any force or effect. (Region of Windsor and West Hants Municipality Act, 2018)*

How are union/non-union issues addressed in a consolidation process?

The process of merging existing work teams may or may not require significant changes in existing bargaining units such as the two IBEW Locals in the Town of Antigonish.

Using Public Works staff as the example, there are currently different work groups in both Town and County supported by combined management, supplies, and equipment management systems. From the management perspective, it would be important to consider the options for different methods of integrating union and non-union teams before deciding how to proceed.

The Nova Scotia Trade Union Act provides an independent review process, should

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management, union or both groups want to change the membership of existing unionized groups in any workplace.

The Nova Scotia Labour Board would consider any change in certification for the two IBEW Locals, based on a history of other mergers of union and non-union workplaces. The Board would review evidence about the impact of a merger on:

- The history of the existing locals;
- the number of union and non-union staff;
- how significant the intermingling of staff might be in a merged organization; and
- whether employees are in favour of collective bargaining and representation by a particular union.

The Labour Board can order a representation vote among an employee group if needed to complete their review of the issue.

Summary: The question of how to combine union and non-union staff in Town and County would not be resolved during the exploration process. If the decision is made by Councils to move forward, then the structure will become clearer when options are presented through the Human Resource Analysis.

Special Transition legislation would protect existing collective bargaining and representation arrangements for Town Public Works, Water Treatment, and Electric Utility employees. Should either management or union representatives want to change existing arrangements, there is a well-established review process through the Nova Scotia Labour Board.

Special Note: The information in this Fact Sheet is intended to be objective and helpful to all staff, but it does not take the place of consultation between the Town of Antigonish and IBEW about potential consolidation.

Beth Schumacher

From: Jeff Teasdale
Sent: May 6, 2022 9:05 AM
To: Shirlyn Donovan
Cc: Owen McCarron; mayor@townofantigonish.ca; Kate Gorman
Subject: Re: Invitation Exploration of Consolidation Engagement Session

I will be attending. Thanks, Jeff

On Thu, May 5, 2022 at 4:15 PM Shirlyn Donovan <shirlyn.donovan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca> wrote:

Good afternoon,

On behalf of Mayor Laurie Boucher and Warden Owen McCarron, I would like to invite you to attend an information session on the potential consolidation of Antigonish Town and County.

This is a specific session for community leaders and non-profit organizations. Our goal is to provide an opportunity for you to gain insight into the process, ask questions, and share what you think about consolidation for Antigonish.

The session will take place on Thursday, May 12, 2022 from 1:00pm-2:00pm at the John Paul Centre, 308 Main Street.

For up-to-date information about the Town and County's exploration of consolidation, please visit: www.antigonish.ca

Please RSVP if you able to attend.

Thank you,

Shirlyn

Shirlyn Donovan

Strategic Initiatives Coordinator

Municipality of the County of Antigonish

285 Beech Hill Road

Antigonish, NS B2G 0B4

902-863-1117



www.antigonishcounty.ns.ca



www.twitter.com/antigonishco

Honour Yesterday, Act Today, Inspire Tomorrow



Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

I made the Chronicle Herald

3 messages

Anne Marie McKeough
To: Bunny and Brian

Fri, May 6, 2022 at 10:21 AM

Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Antigonish politicians must listen to voters (The Chronicle Herald (Provincial)), May 06, 2022

<http://saltwire.pressreader.com/article/281621013917094>

Get Outlook for iOS



FFE2A736-C4EA-4222-A546-DC4556A1B1F8.jpeg
11K

Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>
To: Anne Marie McKeough
Cc: Bunny and Briar

Fri, May 6, 2022 at 10:39 AM

Anne

I could hug you !! I have had phone calls already referencing your article, another inroad for public opinion. I was reading it at 6am and thought about calling, then I realized the 3 hour time difference. Yes it is well written and the Herald recognized this. I was in St Andrew's (Warden's district) last night and what is surprising is that the majority of people has serious reservations and we're vocal.

Sent from my iPhone

On May 6, 2022, at 10:21 AM, Anne Marie McKeough

wrote:

Antigonish politicians must listen to voters (The Chronicle Herald (Provincial)), May 06, 2022

<http://saltwire.pressreader.com/article/281621013917094>

Get Outlook for iOS



Bunny and Brian Roberts

Fri, May 6, 2022 at 2:04 PM

To: Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Hi Harris,

That's our Anne! Any wonder I call her a terrier? Once she gets something in her teeth she can't let go.

Yay, Havre Boucher Power!!

Best, Bunny

[Quoted text hidden]

--

Bunny and Brian Roberts

Harris McNamara

From: Richard Gilbert
Sent: May 6, 2022 10:44 AM
To: Harris McNamara
Subject: Anne McKeough opinion piece

Hi Harris,

I am in full agreement with the opinions expressed in the Herald by Anne McKeough.

(<https://www.saltwire.com/nova-scotia/opinion/anne-mckeough-antigonish-politicians-must-listen-to-voters-on-amalgamation-100725418/>) and would like to chat with you sometime (or write) to get your position on this fraught proposal.

I hope to be allowed to go to the local presentation, this Wednesday sometime, I believe, to learn more.

Yours
Richard

Sent from my iPad

Beth Schumacher

From: Tony Wood <tony.wood@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Sent: May 6, 2022 12:05 PM
To: Owen McCarron
Cc: gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns; John Dunbar; Shawn Brophy; Remi Deveau; Mary MacLellan; Donnie MacDonald; Hughie Stewart; Bill MacFarlane; harris.mcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca
Subject: Consolidation of town and county

Please be aware we are against the proposed consolidation with the town! We don't understand the rush to make this decision. We feel we have the right to vote, especially in light of the fact that our councillor may be exempt from the vote to a perceived conflict of interest. The people of the county deserve to be heard and we need to individually vote in a county wide plebiscite!

Thank you

Marion and Tony Wood

Auld's Cove

Harris McNamara

From: Tony Wood · [\[redacted\]](#)
Sent: May 6, 2022 12:23 PM
To: Harris McNamara
Subject: Fwd: Consolidation of town and county

Sent from my iPad

Begin forwarded message:

From: Tony Wood · [\[redacted\]](#)
Date: May 6, 2022 at 12:16:01 PM ADT
To: "hmcnamara@antigonis.ns.ca" <hmcnamara@antigonis.ns.ca>
Cc: "gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca" <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Fwd: Consolidation of town and county

Sent from my iPad

From: [\[redacted\]](#)
Date: May 6, 2022 at 12:04:33 PM ADT
To: omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca
Cc: gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca, jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca,
sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca, rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca,
mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca, dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca,
hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca, bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca,
harris.mcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca
Subject: Consolidation of town and county

Please be aware we are against the proposed consolidation with the town! We don't understand the rush to make this decision. We feel we have the right to vote, especially in light of the fact that our councillor may be exempt from the vote to a perceived conflict of interest. The people of the county deserve to be heard and we need to individually vote in a county wide plebiscite!

Thank you
Marion and Tony Wood
Auld's Cove



Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Fw: My original posting

3 messages

wmfougere ·
To: harris.mcnamara@gmail.com

Fri, May 6, 2022 at 12:28 PM

From: wmfougere (
Date: 05/06/22 11:10 am
To: McNamara, Harris (harris.mcnamara@emera.com)
Subject: My original posting

I've included the posting and the comments linked to my posting -- still no answers:

In a previous answer the following was stated:History suggests tax rates for County or Town shouldn't rise because of consolidation itself. With or without consolidation, rising costs, infrastructure maintenance and other events may require tax changes in the future.So what is the state of the infrastructure in the town and the county? If one area needs upgrades will the cost go to the residents in that area or will it be shared with all taxpayers as an consolidation expense? I would expect that someone has a long range projected budget - what are the anticipated revenues and expenses for both the town and county?

You mention we will be eligible for more services - are you able to specifically identify the resources or services that we will be able to access that we can't now. You talk/write a lot about what we could get without naming specifically the benefits.

Yes this could be a good thing but it could also not be a good thing. I have a lot of questions and concerns about the consolidation due to the lack of concrete details. Maybe we should have a plan as to what we will do about taxes, sustainability, job retention, reduction of duplication of services, membership and makeup of new council etc before we vote with the hope that things will work out.

Who made the decision not to bring this consolidation to a vote to all taxpayers? An why was this decision made? You state that it will be a cost benefit , but then no jobs will be lost, but there is duplication of services that we can reduce ... This is confusing - where are you getting the cost savings for taxpayers and how are you eliminating the duplication of services without getting rid jobs?

What will be the make up of the new council with regards to representation? - My understanding is that the town has approximately 5000ish people and the county has 15000ish. Will the county have 3 times the members on the council as the town? The fact sheet does not clearly answer this as it states adjustments might need to happen.

The county currently has a healthy financial surplus - Will that money be earmarked for projects in the county or will it go into a general account for all? At present do both the town and county have financial surpluses and if so how much?

What will happen between union and non union workers? I was told that some employees in the county are not unionized whereas the town employees belong to a union. How will you merge the two groups of people and in a decision, which employees will lose their jobs?

The county currently receives police support from the RCMP. Do we pay for this - How much and if we amalgamate will we have to pay for RCMP service and at what cost?

To date the information about the pros from other areas have been shared. In my experience, every decision has advantages and disadvantages. From your story, all I have heard are advantages. Why aren't the pros and cons being shared? Can you honestly say that there have been no issues or problems in all the areas that have consolidated?

Linked comments;

You can only say that taxes "shouldn't" rise with this amalgamation/consolidation. You have no idea. Taxes are the 2nd lowest in Nova Scotia for residential. The Town pays far more, and cannot expand anymore. The County has a huge surplus, and more houses and sub divisions are going in so there will be more money in the county. This is a disgrace on the process. There MUST be a vote by the citizens of town and county.

Well written but no answers! This is what makes it frustrating and why people want a plebiscite!

Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Sun, May 8, 2022 at 11:33 AM

To:

Anne- Marie

an example of a resident who hasn't got a response.

H

[Quoted text hidden]

Anne-Marie Long

Sun, May 8, 2022 at 12:12 PM

To: Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Similar points to my letter. No answers as to what's in if gor the county

[Quoted text hidden]

Harris McNamara

From: Angela DeCoste
Sent: May 6, 2022 1:26 PM
To: Harris McNamara
Subject: ANTIGONISH TOWN AND COUNTY CONSOLIDATION

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows
Dear Counsellor McNamara,

My husband and I feel that we are not given a choice to voice our opinion for this consolidation. You are providing us with too many questions that you can't provide answers too. We think we have the right to have a plebiscite for such an important decision to be made for the future of ourselves, our children and grandchildren.

WE WANT A PLEBISCITE TO HAVE A SAY IN OUR FUTURE.

Sincerely,

Angela DeCoste

Colin DeCoste

Old Linwood Road
Frankville, NS B0H 1P0

Harris McNamara

From: Angela DeCoste
Sent: May 6, 2022 1:53 PM
To: WCORMIER@TOWNOFANTIGONISH.CA; DMACINNIS@TOWNOFANTIGONISH.CA; SCAMERON@TOWNOFANTIGONISH.CA; AMURRAY@TOWNOFANTIGONISH.CA; MFARRELL@TOWNOFANTIGONISH.CA; DROBERTS@TOWNOFANTIGONISH.CA; MMACELLAN@ANTIGONISHCOUNTY.NS.CA; Donnie MacDonald; Hughie Stewart; Shawn Brophy; Remi Deveau; Owen McCarron; John Dunbar; Gary Mattie; Harris McNamara; BMACFARLANE@ANTIGONISCOUNTY.NS.CA
Subject: CONSOLIDATION OF THE COUNTY AND TOWN

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows

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Sincerely,

Angela DeCoste

Colin DeCoste

Old Linwood Road
Frankville, NS B0H 1P0

Harris McNamara

From: The Engagement Team Exploring Potential Consolidation
<howspace@in.howspace.com>
Sent: May 6, 2022 3:29 PM
To: Harris McNamara
Subject: Weekly updates regarding potential consolidation

Hi Harris,

Log in to Antigonish workspace as Harris McNamara

This week was a busy one for both Councils and staff with seven engagement sessions, including one virtual session. In all, over 300 people attended. So far, there have been over 800 attendees at the formal in-person and online sessions. If you include emails, phone calls and the online platform, its even more then that.

In response to the feedback we've heard from you, the in drop in/open house sessions now include small group break out sessions where the Mayor/Warden would sit with smaller groups and answer questions. Remember, the community session are drop-in/open house format so drop in anytime and, if you wish, take advantage of participating in a small group session too.

Next week, the in-person sessions will conclude with the final three in Pomquet, Harvre Boucher and Lochaber. We hope to see you there.

To wrap up planned engagement, there will be an virtual session that will take place at 7 p.m. on May 18. To register, please visit: <https://bit.ly/3y3q0IC>

If you are unable to make any of the sessions listed above, please visit us at our online engagement forum to post your thoughts and comments. We monitor it regularly and the link to is included in this email. You can also send an email to info@antigonish.ca

Many have asked about what will be provided to Council after the engagement is complete. A “What We Heard Report” will summarize the variety of input we receive. It is important to understand that the engagement process is not intended to measure support for or opposition to consolidation. It is to understand what concerns people may have and identify what both Councils should consider when deciding the next steps. The “What We Heard Report” will reflect the comments you make back to Councils. The Report will be made available to the public.

We have appreciated the participation so far and look forward to even more. The respectful and open nature of the conversations is helping us better understand the many different points of view. Thank you.

Best regards,
The Engagement Team

Please note that this email contains your personal <https://antigonish.in.howspace.com/1/k8841699/hmcmamara> access link. Don't forward this email to anyone.

Powered by [Howspace](#)

Beth Schumacher

From: The Engagement Team Exploring Potential Consolidation
<howspace@in.howspace.com>
Sent: May 6, 2022 3:29 PM
To: Owen McCarron
Subject: Weekly updates regarding potential consolidation

Hi Owen,

Log in to Antigonish workspace as Owen McCarron

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Best regards,
The Engagement Team

Please note that this email contains your personal <https://antigonish.in.howspace.com/1/d0499134/omccarron> access link. Don't forward this email to anyone.

Powered by [Howspace](#)

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: May 6, 2022 4:27 PM
To: info@antigonish.ca
Subject: FW: CONSOLIDATION OF THE COUNTY AND TOWN

From: Angela DeCoste
Sent: May 6, 2022 1:53 PM
To: WCORMIER@TOWNOFANTIGONISH.CA; DMACINNIS@TOWNOFANTIGONISH.CA; SCAMERON@TOWNOFANTIGONISH.CA; AMURRAY@TOWNOFANTIGONISH.CA; MFARRELL@TOWNOFANTIGONISH.CA; DROBERTS@TOWNOFANTIGONISH.CA; MMACELLAN@ANTIGONISHCOUNTY.NS.CA; Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; BMACFARLANE@ANTIGONISCOUNTY.NS.CA
Subject: CONSOLIDATION OF THE COUNTY AND TOWN

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows

Dear Counsellors,

My husband and I feel that we are not given a choice to voice our opinion for this consolidation. You are providing us with too many questions that you can't provide answers too. We think we have the right to have a plebiscite for such an important decision to be made for the future of ourselves, our children and grandchildren.

WE WANT A PLEBISCITE TO HAVE A SAY IN OUR FUTURE.

Sincerely,

Angela DeCoste

Colin DeCoste

Old Linwood Road
Frankville, NS B0H 1P0

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: May 6, 2022 4:28 PM
To: 'info@antigonish.ca'
Subject: FW: Consolidation of town and county

From: Tony Wood ·
Sent: May 6, 2022 12:23 PM
To: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Fwd: Consolidation of town and county

Sent from my iPad

Begin forwarded message:

From: Tony Wood ·
Date: May 6, 2022 at 12:16:01 PM ADT
To: "hmcnamara@antigonis.ns.ca" <hmcnamara@antigonis.ns.ca>
Cc: "gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca" <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Fwd: Consolidation of town and county

Sent from my iPad

From: _____
Date: May 6, 2022 at 12:04:33 PM ADT
To: omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca
Cc: gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca, jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca,
sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca, rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca,
mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca, dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca,
hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca, bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca,
harris.mcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca
Subject: Consolidation of town and county

Please be aware we are against the proposed consolidation with the town! We don't understand the rush to make this decision. We feel we have the right to vote, especially in light of the fact that our councillor may be exempt from the vote to a perceived conflict of interest. The people of the county deserve to be heard and we need to individually vote in a county wide plebiscite!

Thank you
Marion and Tony Wood
Auld's Cove

Harris McNamara

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Sent: May 6, 2022 4:28 PM
To: info@antigonish.ca
Subject: FW: ANTIGONISH TOWN AND COUNTY CONSOLIDATION

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Sent: May 6, 2022 1:26 PM
To: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
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Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows
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Sincerely,

Angela DeCoste

Colin DeCoste

Old Linwood Road
Frankville, NS B0H 1P0

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: May 6, 2022 4:34 PM
To: Angela DeCoste
Subject: RE: ANTIGONISH TOWN AND COUNTY CONSOLIDATION

Angela/ Collie;

Thanks for the support! From the beginning I have been against amalgamation. It does not make sense to county residents as we are in the best financial position ever. This is being rushed through with no pros and cons, a cost benefit analysis needs to be done on every component of amalgamation . Most importantly county residents won't have a say in what happens. Six councillors (maybe less) will make the decision for you. We need a plebiscite, that way 15000 residents will make the decision.

If you want more information, please give me a call at 318-8333.

Harris

From: Angela DeCoste
Sent: May 6, 2022 1:26 PM
To: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: ANTIGONISH TOWN AND COUNTY CONSOLIDATION

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows

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Sincerely,

Angela DeCoste

Colin DeCoste

Old Linwood Road
Frankville, NS B0H 1P0

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: May 6, 2022 4:36 PM
To: Tony Wood
Subject: RE: Consolidation of town and county

Tony

Thanks for the support, from the beginning I have been against amalgamation. It does not make sense to county residents as we are in the best financial position ever. This is being rushed through with no pros and cons, a cost benefit analysis needs to be done on every component of amalgamation. Most importantly county residents won't have a say in what happens. Six councillors (maybe less) will make the decision for you. We need a plebiscite, that way 15000 residents will make the decision. Some don't want a plebiscite because they know it will not pass.

If you want more information, please give me a call at 318-8333.

Harris

From: Tony Wood
Sent: May 6, 2022 12:23 PM
To: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Fwd: Consolidation of town and county

Sent from my iPad

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From: Tony Wood
Date: May 6, 2022 at 12:16:01 PM ADT
To: "hmcnamara@antigonis.ns.ca" <hmcnamara@antigonis.ns.ca>
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Cc: gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca, jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca, sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca, rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca, mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca, dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca, hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca, bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca, harris.mcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca
Subject: Consolidation of town and county

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understand the rush to make this decision. We feel we have the right to vote, especially in light of the fact that our councillor may be exempt from the vote to a perceived conflict of interest. The people of the county deserve to be heard and we need to individually vote in a county wide plebiscite!

Thank you

Marion and Tony Wood

Auld's Cove

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: May 6, 2022 4:42 PM
To: Richard Gilbert
Subject: RE: Anne McKeough opinion piece

Richard

Thanks for your support, from the beginning I have been against amalgamation. It does not make sense to county residents as we are in the best financial position ever. This is being rushed through with no pros and cons, a cost benefit analysis needs to be done on every component of amalgamation . Most importantly county residents won't have a say in what happens. Six councillors (maybe less) will make the decision for you. We need a plebiscite, that way 15000 residents will make the decision. The meeting on May11th at the HB Community Centre is an opportunity for you to express your support for a plebiscite, you will hear from consultants, warden, CAOs about how good amalgamation is but may people have different view. We don't have enough concrete information to accept or reject amalgamation.

If you want more information, please give me a call at 318-8333.
Harris

From: Richard Gilbert
Sent: May 6, 2022 10:44 AM
To: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Anne McKeough opinion piece

Hi Harris,

I am in full agreement with the opinions expressed in the Herald by Anne McKeough.
(<https://www.saltwire.com/nova-scotia/opinion/anne-mckeough-antigonish-politicians-must-listen-to-voters-on-amalgamation-100725418/>) and would like to chat with you sometime (or write) to get your position on this fraught proposal.

I hope to be allowed to go to the local presentation, this Wednesday sometime, I believe, to learn more.

Yours
Richard

Sent from my iPad

Harris McNamara

From: Mike Moeller <
Sent: May 6, 2022 7:06 PM
To: Shawn Brophy; Harris McNamara
Subject: Re: Want and request and demand a plebiscite on such a critical decision. This is not what councillors were elected to do.

Hi Sean and Mr McNamara,

I just want you to know that what the County has advised you of regarding being possibly put in jail for a year or a 25,000 dollar fine for a conflict of interest, should be made public. This is not a conflict in my opinion and I have been involved with Unions all my life when people were in an actual conflict. It is one thing to recuse yourself for personal reasons that you may have, but for the County to hire a lawyer(to threaten you and Mr McNamara with jail time and a fine is wrong. Mr. McNamara is also not in conflict, as his Daughter is an adult working for the town, and she has a family. that is inferring that he could not vote without his Daughter's benefits, and you would vote to benefit yourself. i find it insulting to say the least.

If I were representing you two, I would investigate this threat from the County to you both, as it is keeping both of you from voting and voicing your opinions on this consolidation/amalgamation//merge of the County and Town. It is also possible discrimination, as well as harassment to you both are being brought forward by the County. Please look into this, and in my personal experience with being an elected National officer for a Union for 31 years, you are not in any conflict for working for either the county or town. This is about councillors not being able to vote and keeping you both from voting. I would seek legal advice, from a lawyer, paid by the County Council, just as they had legal advise paid by County Council.

Thanks

Mike

----- Forwarded Message -----

Subject:We want and request and demand a plebiscite on such a critical decision. This is not what councillors were elected to do.

Date:Fri, 29 Apr 2022 15:37:21 -0300

From:Mike Moeller

To:mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca, omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca, mayor@townofantigonish.ca wcmormier@townofantigonish.ca dmacinnis@townofantigonish.ca scameron@townofantigonish.ca amurray@townofantigonish.ca, mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca droberts@townofantigonish.ca

Dear Councillors of Antigonish Town and County

I am a resident of the County of Antigonish and I demand that we have a plebiscite and open town and county halls with all people able to hear each others questions and answers on the pros and cons of amalgamation/consolidation. In no manner, should this consolidation of Town and County power that the councillors that do not want a vote, be exercised on my behalf with their vote. You are all residents

also, and your vote should be one of 20,000 in the Town and County. This is democracy not working for the people, when you have the majority of councillors taking it upon themselves to vote for consolidation of two entities (town and county) without giving the people the opportunity to vote. We never elected you councillors to make such a decision. I was involved Nationally and Regionally and Locally with my Union for over 30 years, being elected every three years. If it ever came to merging our Union with another union or having a strike vote (both of these examples are analogies of what is happening with your councils), the members of both unions were given the opportunity to vote or the members voted to strike or not, were given the right and opportunity to vote.. We the elected Officers, NEVER would even dream of voting on something of that magnitude, which you councillors who do not want a vote/plebiscite are doing. We did not give you that right, and you do not have that right to speak on my behalf of something so important. And who decided to have almost a quarter of a million dollars spent on "consultants" that are not even from our community, to answer the questions that we elected you to answer? If the councillors will not give the residents the right to vote, then there should be legal action taken to stop this pre-determined decision. Being an elected official is at times thankless, and it is a hard task. However, the process taken by the majority of both Councils in this dissolution of either the town or County, called consolidation, must have a plebiscite. Pictou gave their residents a voice and vote. The comments made that a vote was decided against, because we do not have the information and it would be based on emotions, was actually insulting to say the least at what some councillors think of who they are supposed to represent. To say it will be divisive is also not within the knowledge of councillors. If we do not have a vote, then you will see divisiveness, but then it will be TOO LATE to rectify the concerns of thousands of residents. Why not run on this campaign in the next electon, if you are so confidant? This whole process smells.

Thanks

Mike Moeller-County of Antigonish

Beth Schumacher

From: Town of Antigonish Mayor <mayor@townofantigonish.ca>
Sent: May 7, 2022 8:57 PM
To: Owen McCarron
Subject: Susan Cameron

We've tried this twenty years ago in this district and the URB recommended against it (the town was 74.5% against it).

A lot has changed since then, twenty years ago the town and county were in a clash with amalgamation/annexation.

The UARB actually recommended amalgamation and the financial savings were estimated to be around 600,000 a year. The town wanted to annex and the county wanted to amalgamate and a legal battle ensued. A process that cost 1,000,000 to the tax payers, no definite results (county was 84% in favour of amalgamation) and a lot of hard feelings. It was only when the plebiscite took place that the UARB reversed their recommendation. Some of those feelings are still apparent today with statements like...

- the town only wants us for our land
- The town is responsible for this
- The mayor and the warden have something to gain from this.
- The mayor is selling out to the county

Statements like these are false and harmful to the community.

Twenty years later we have been working closely with the county on a number of projects. Our staff and councils work closely on a day to day basis and the communication between the two units is open and consistent. It is during these times we can see the redundancy between the two municipalities. A reduction of redundancy could increase our capacity to do more for the community as a whole.

Look back at the history. Is this why you chose not to go through the URB?

No Susan, the reason we went with the consolidation process is because, if the vote is yes to consolidation, both municipalities build the new municipality together and have control of the process. Amalgamation is in the hands of the UARB. From choosing a transition coordinator, hiring the CAO, to conducting the election for the new council.

We are exploring consolidation because we want to see if the town and county residents, businesses and community would be better served as one unit. If the vote is yes, we will have control of our own destiny. We don't have to look too far to see what the province can do if they want. CBRM and HRM were forced to amalgamate and had no choice in what or how many other municipalities they had to amalgamate with.

If we look to New Brunswick we see the provincial government reducing the number of municipalities from 340 to 90.

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/new-brunswick/new-brunswick-local-governance-reform-1.6253482>

PEI is trying to force smaller municipalities to amalgamate by changing the Municipal Government Act to put added pressures on the smaller municipalities. The financial pressures are forcing them to amalgamate.

We do not know what the future will be, so why not explore now when we are both in good financial shape and collaborating on a number of projects. We also see some challenges coming that would be best tackled with a regional approach. For example:

- water supply
- Infrastructure planning
- Affordable housing
- Accessibility
- Economic development

To name a few.

The speed with which you are trying to push this through leaves many with suspicions as to whose agenda is being met.

In September both municipalities, independently, unanimously voted to explore consolidation. That vote was in open council with media present. I gave updates regarding consolidation on the radio and in the print media consistently after every council meeting.

The exploration did consist of other steps besides Community Engagement.

- The first step was to meet with Municipal Affairs (MA) to see where consolidation would put us in the provincial setting. MA came down to take questions from both councils. MA was neutral and answered all of our questions. At no time did MA state what they wanted us to do. MA stated that it was a council decision and they would support whatever the outcome. At that time they did tell us about some grant money that we could apply for to help the exploration process.
- The second step was to meet with Queens/Liverpool. They have been consolidated for 25 years now.
- The third step was to meet with the most recent consolidation Windsor/West Hants. They have been consolidated for two years now. Although this is relatively very recent, you will see in the chart below that town tax actually went down.



you will notice that Cumberland County took a slight jump but this not due to consolidation, it is because the province deemed they didn't have enough of a reserve and they were forced to create more reserves through taxes.

- Now we are out in the public to listen and to relay the information we have learned from the other municipalities and financial findings of our staff.
- When the consultations are complete we will have a "What We Heard" report presented to us (available to the public).
- After some time to review the report, the final step will be a council vote. We are anticipating a mid July vote but only if there are no interruptions. COVID did delay the timeline.

The entire process will be 9-10 months. Federal, Provincial and municipal elections have a timeline of 6-8 weeks. I understand this may seem rushed, but I do believe we'll have done our due diligence at the end of the consultation process.

There is no agenda on anyone's part. Really, this has been a journey for quite awhile, probably since the last amalgamation/annexation application to the UARB. Warden Delorey with Mayor Carl Chisholm, along with their councils, began the process to work together, followed by Warden Boucher and Carl, again, with councils and Russell and myself and councils. I have been working with Owen for over 9 years with 5 as mayor. Our municipalities are so entwined we feel it is a good time to look at new opportunities and this exploration is one of them.

Transparency and the democratic process seems to have lost its way. There are too many people (councillors included) and myself who have unanswered questions regarding finances, taxes, services, and future governance.

The transparency in the process has been very open. We are conducting over 20 sessions. Taking questions, listening to the concerns re consolidation and capturing all the feedback good, bad or indifferent. The councillors are privy to the same information Owen and I have. After the initial vote to explore we have had all discovery meetings together. I have repeatedly stated on the radio and in the written press that it is important for people to attend the consultation sessions. We have scheduled them at different times to meet people's needs as well as 4 virtual sessions, a website for people to get information and a dedicated phone line where we encourage people to leave their comments and questions. To date we've had 6 sessions in town (including St Andrew's Junior School) as well as 3 virtual sessions. I also give the message that my door is always open and anyone can come by, email, text or phone, I will answer any questions people have. Owen also has the same message. To say we are not answering questions or not being transparent is a false narrative.

We have answered questions on taxes, services and future governance.

- Taxes cannot be predicted even if we do not consolidate, we have no idea what will happen between now and the next budget. But we can look back, study the trends and forecast. From looking at the other consolidations, amalgamations, and dissolutions we can show that taxes have not increased significantly as a direct result of a merger of any kind.
- Municipal Services. Both town and county provide a high level of service to the community, there is no reason to believe this will change. Again, this is a question we had asked the other consolidations of Windsor/West Hants and Queens Liverpool. Both units stated that services increased due to a decrease in duplication. This was true even with the districts further from the town centers.
- Future governance is a bit more difficult to explain over email. The fringe area of the county (Mt Cameron, Annie's Bluff, over by the Junior High, out the #7 etc) has the same municipal services as the town and is considered part of the urban hub of the community. Most of these residents have the same interests as the town residents. If we divide the total population into urban and rural there is a 52/48% division. We could possibly (remember the UARB has final say) have equal number of councillors in the urban and rural areas. This would provide a fair and balanced approach to representation.

All of this information is, or should be, known by all of the councillors.

The Provincial government may want this to go through only to save them money but it will cost us more in the long run. 20 years after it was forced upon HRM and CRBM they still can't solidly say whether it benefits the taxpayers in those areas. Surly you have family or friends in New Waterford who can attest to that.

The province has been talking about "Municipal Reform" for years now. I want to be clear, at no time did the province approach either municipality to suggest amalgamation or consolidation. We had requested they come down to talk with us. As I stated earlier, we don't know what the future will bring, the province just might start mandating amalgamation between municipalities or maybe not, we don't know.

It is unfair to compare HRM and CBRM to the town and county.

- First of all, they were both forced to amalgamate, had no say in the process, and they didn't have a say in who they amalgamated with.
- New Waterford's challenge is the closure of the mines where the majority of people were employed. They are also losing their youth and young families to other areas. Their tax base is declining and with provincial downsizing

(education and health care) even more employment opportunities are lost. I would say that if they did not amalgamate they would probably have to go through dissolution like Springhill and Bridgetown.

- As far as comparing this to HRM the size differential is massive. It could take up to 1 1/2-2 hours to get from the outer edge of HRM to center city. The town and county have a combined population of roughly 20,000, the districts in HRM are over 20,000.
- The total population is just under 418,000 with a mayor and 16 councillors. That is about an average of, just over, 26,000 per district.
- If we were to keep the same amount of councillors we would have an average of 1,176 per councillor. But, to be fair, in all probability the total number of councillors would be less and that is decided by the UARB. But, historically, the UARB goes with the recommendation of the two municipalities consolidating.

It would be more accurate to compare this process to Windsor/West Hants or Queens/ Liverpool. Who both are doing very well. In Queens/Liverpool they have managed to accrue 16,000,000 in reserves and brought 75,000,000 in infrastructure to the community. They managed to do this while losing a 1,000,000 tax industry of Bowater Mill and a decreasing population from 12,000 to 10,000.

We've heard too much rhetoric about no taxes going up but put two and two together and you still get 4. In other words, the tax rate doesn't change but some assessments go up and inevitably you pay more taxes.

Taxes is the most asked question that we have heard from the beginning and I'm not surprised, it was one of the many questions councils asked when we spoke with the other municipalities.

The town has the lowest tax rate of all the towns in NS, the county is in the bottom 3rd percentile. Taxes rise when the tax base declines or the tax rate is too low to support municipal service. Neither of these points pertain to the town or the county. We both had a growth in the past year and we are able to cover the cost of our required municipal services and many projects while maintaining a stable tax rate.

You are correct in saying that our assessments continue to rise but that is true today with or without consolidation. Actually that is the trend across Canada. There is no reason to believe consolidation will cause assessments to exponentially rise. Assessments are determined by Property Valuation Services Corporation (PVSC).

Two and two does make four, maybe I'm looking at it with a different perspective. When I add it together I see two municipalities who are in good financial standing, showing growth, a stable workforce, who depend on one another to create a high standard of living.

The cost of this venture inevitably gets passed on to the tax payer. Why not divulge the cost of this and who is consulting with you?

By the cost of this venture, I think you are talking about the exploration process. We expect this process to cost 200,000 by the end. 25,000 from each the town and county and 150,000 from the province. As for who is consulting with us, that would be a number of groups.

We've consulted with:

- Queens/Liverpool
- Windsor/West Hants
- The province
- Our federal representatives

- Brighter Communities

If we are in such great financial position why would you want to throw that away?

We are in a good financial position and I don't want to throw that away. Just because we are doing well doesn't mean we can't do better or that we should rest on our laurels and stop looking for new opportunities. If previous councils did that we wouldn't have the Ellershouse Wind Farm that produces 40% of the Antigonish Electric Utility's energy (green energy) or we wouldn't have asked staff to find a way to solar opportunities for our users.

We would not like to remember you as the Mayor who helped destroy the very fabric of Antigonish in such a non-democratic way.

Of course not Susan, I would like to be remembered as someone who made a difference, someone who worked hard to further our community and secured a future in Antigonish for future generations whether we consolidate or not.

I would like to believe I have a reputation of being transparent, telling the truth, and working for the community as well as not backing away from difficult decisions but I am far from perfect, I have my strengths and weaknesses just like everyone else.

I have a book that I often refer to when making decisions, it's called "13 Ways to Kill Your Community" by Doug Griffiths. The author gives advice if you don't want your community to survive. Chapter 8 talks about living in the past and it's one of my favourite.

Live in the Past

To destroy a community takes the right attitude. Living in the past is absolutely an essential attitude to kill your community. You could be a happy person that just thinks the future is fraught with peril and we should never move forward, but return to the glory days of old, or you could be one of those that dwell on past problems, mistakes, and failures. They either long for the glory days of old, or they dwell on the things that went wrong yesterday. They want everything to return yesterday or complain about past injustices that can never be fixed. In every community, there are plenty with this attitude. They speak first and are the angriest, or they are kind and soft spoken. Either way, at all costs, they never let the conversation turn to the future, and without a future, your community has only a past.

All of that being said, I have yet to decide which way I would vote. I am waiting for the decision from the Federal Government on policing as well as the end the consultation process and looking forward to seeing the final report.

Susan, please take the time to attend a session or come see me and we can talk about this, I will go to your house if you want. Contrary to what you've been told, I am not hiding any information.

I love Antigonish, we've raised our family here, we'll retire here, ask yourself, why would I do anything to make Antigonish less than what it is today.

Sincerely,
Laurie

Mayor Laurie Boucher
Town of Antigonish
274 Main St, Antigonish, N.S
B2G 2C4
mayor@townofantigonish.ca | 902•870•7795



Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Councillor Harris McNamara

1 message

Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Sun, May 8, 2022 at 6:07 AM

To: drakelowthers@porthawkesburyreporter.com

Drake;

I am the councillor for District 9 on Antigonish County Council and have a request in support of many residents of Antigonish County. Could you come to the Committee of the Whole (COW) Meeting at 5:30 pm on Tuesday May 10th to hear two presentations from concerned residents and discussions afterwards. Most business is conducted in the COW, with regular council meetings (at 7:30pm) approving actions from COW. As you can tell I am not a fan of consolidation / amalgamation (the result is same thing).

Harris McNamara
District 9 Councillor

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: May 8, 2022 6:19 AM
To: 'Quincy K'
Subject: RE: Consolidation

Carol;

My name is Harris McNamara, Councillor for District 9 (Havre Boucher) and from the beginning I have been against amalgamation. It does not make sense to county residents as we are in the best financial position ever. This is being rushed through with no pros and cons, a cost benefit analysis needs to be done on every component of amalgamation . Most importantly county residents won't have a say in what happens. Six councillors (maybe less) will make the decision for you. We need a plebiscite, that way 15000 county residents will make the decision.

If you want more information, please give me a call at 318-8333.

Harris

From: Quincy K
Sent: May 5, 2022 11:27 AM
To: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Consolidation

There are so many concerns around consolidation and they start with the process which frankly seems flawed, rushed and full of unanswered questions.

As we sit on this runaway train heading to the altar of a uncertain and poorly conceived marriage, I suggest it is time to put on the brakes and hit the pause button.

As this process stands and the long term impact for the community I do not support consolidation and call for a plebiscite on the matter.

If this is such a good idea in June 2022 it will still be a good idea in June 2023. The community needs more time, this process needs more time,

the people of both communities deserve to be heard and their voice counted.

Respectfully
Carolyn Krug

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: May 8, 2022 6:20 AM
To: info@antigonish.ca
Subject: FW: Plea for a plebiscite for consolidation

-----Original Message-----

From: Mike and Shirley Davidson <
Sent: May 5, 2022 8:21 PM
To: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Plea for a plebiscite for consolidation

Dear Ms. McNamara,

After attending the community meeting about consolidation I am asking all councillors to allow community members to have a vote in this process!

Sincerely,
Shirley Davidson
Old Antigonish Road
Afton B0H1A0

Sent from my iPad

Beth Schumacher

From: MACDONALD, Yvette <[redacted]>
Sent: May 8, 2022 6:21 PM
To: Donnie MacDonald; Hughie Stewart; Shawn Brophy; Remi Deveau; Owen McCarron;
John Dunbar; Gary Mattie; Harris McNamara; Bill MacFarlane
Subject: Exploration of Consolidation

Good evening everyone,

I am a ratepayer in District 1 and have already sent a couple of emails to my Councillor, Mary MacLellan, explaining my position on this proposed Consolidation of the County of Antigonish and the Town of Antigonish. I had attended the meeting at the Minitrail Community Center and did have an opportunity to speak with the Mayor, the Warden and a couple of Councillors as well as one of the consultants. I found the whole format very frustrating and felt that it would leave room for miscommunication. The County Connect had simply been received the day before, on Monday, in the mail and then our session was on Tuesday. I understand that we are all busy and that does not mean that we cannot take the time to do our research prior to such meetings but even with all of that, there is still not enough information being given to us all. I will be honest as I felt slighted as it was insulting to hear that we as ratepayers would not be individually voting on this and if I hear just one more time about "historical low voter turnout"that is even more insulting. I can tell you with great certainty that my Grandfather and all other Veterans did not sacrifice so that a select few could be making these extremely important decisions!!

I consider myself open-minded most of the time and if given the information required can make informed decisions. That being said I do not feel that we have been given enough information and I don't feel that the Councillors, Mayor or Warden have enough either!! I guess that we are all looking for fairness, equity and above all transparency in any process.

Problems with the Consulting Process.....where do I start? Was it strategic to have these sessions on the heels of the restrictions being lifted when Omicron was circulating and individuals have either contracted the virus or have been in close contact so were not able to attend a session? And yes there were other options either via phone or online sessions...well if someone isn't feeling well then I am sorry but they aren't going to be able to focus on the information given. Come on there should be some common sense and if someone has to have a checkmark besides something on their scorecard then speak to it all and make the right decision. We need leaders!! As far as the Councillors go my heart goes out to them as I am sure that this wasn't something that they ever thought that they would be on the hook to do. I asked my Councillor how she was expected to keep track of all the feedback from her ratepayers....does she have a list with all of our names and if and when we contact her to discuss is she expected to keep a tally. Why would they be expected to do this? This is just another area where there is a disconnect and disrespect for our Councillors. I would never expect her to have these extra duties....a disregard of time management indeed.

Then I hear that 2 of the Councillors are not able to vote because of a Conflict of Interest. After all that I had seen up to that point and then for this to come up I guess that really was it for me. We live in Antigonish and as all of you know we are all connected one way or another or know of someone who is....I am sure that if you dug deep enough with the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act you would find that it might just apply to you all!! I want my right to vote!!

The next important part for me would be the financials. We all run our households and understand budgets so please do not insult my intelligence. We need more information on the costs associated with the Proposed Consolidation and good leaders would be explaining what the benefits would be if indeed there were any at all. Someone had asked one of the consultants at one of the sessions how much it was costing for the "Consulting Process" and he replied that "He wasn't at liberty to disclose that information." So then the Mayor was asked and she gave an amount and then a

Councillor was asked and he gave a different amount.....where is the transparency and why wasn't this information given? And please do not think that I am naïve enough to think that it is ok as this was coming from a different silo, the Provincial Government.....it is all taxpayers' money!!! Even the 2 year "Transition Fund" would be coming from the Provincial Government (so again, all of our money) and then afterwards look out as the costs will be truly shown and too late to reverse. What about the policing costs that will increase if the Proposed Consolidation does proceed?

I will end on a high note.....I do appreciate that The Mayor and the County Warden have a great working relationship. Why would we expect any less? I do understand that in the past that wasn't necessarily the case and professionally speaking it isn't always easy. That being said though it does not justify wanting two completely different entities that are in great financial shape to become one when representation and so many other factors will be changed forever. We do not need to be going backwards.

"People will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you make them feel" - **Maya Angelou**

I am definitely a "NO" at this time due to lack of information and/or a skewing of information.

Thanks,

Yvette MacDonald, BA

Retail Development Officer - Atlantic Region | Canada Post

[Unit 1- 133 Church St | Antigonish NS, B2G 2R8](#)

I respectfully acknowledge that the land of which I'm working in is located in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and traditional lands of the Mi'kmaq people. The Mi'kmaq are caretakers of this land in past, present, and future.

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: May 8, 2022 6:21 AM
To: info@antigonish.ca
Subject: FW: Amalgamation

-----Original Message-----

From: Donnie Chisholm < >
Sent: May 5, 2022 8:17 PM
To: Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Cc: Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca; mayor@townofantigonish.ca; scameron@townofantigonish.ca; Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Amalgamation

Hi Mr Stewart

I like many other residents of the town and county feel that we have a right to vote on this very important issue just to be told that the councillors can make a decision for us is wrong as it was never campaigned on And if it is such a great move why are the councillors afraid of our vote

Both Councils are pushing forward with the amalgamation very swiftly so what is the big rush councillors have not held a proper meeting where the public could asked fair questions and hopefully get honest answers and just maybe we could learn about the hidden agenda I fail to understand why two of the councillors cannot vote as they should have a right to represent their voters

About conflict the councillors should also be looking at Mary Farrell who's husband works at the RK MacDonald and the Wardens wife is a board member which is owned by the town and county Furthermore we would like to know what the town is bringing to the table as the county has a lot more to offer all that we in the county will get is higher taxes and less service and of course paying for the town infrastructure

It is time to give all residents a vote

Donnie Chisholm

Sent from my iPad

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: May 8, 2022 6:22 AM
To: Donnie Chisholm
Subject: RE: Amalgamation

Donnie;

My name is Harris McNamara, Councillor for District 9 (Havre Boucher) and from the beginning I have been against amalgamation. It does not make sense to county residents as we are in the best financial position ever. This is being rushed through with no pros and cons, a cost benefit analysis needs to be done on every component of amalgamation . Most importantly county residents won't have a say in what happens. Six councillors (maybe less) will make the decision for you. We need a plebiscite, that way 15000 county residents will make the decision. Some don't want a plebiscite because they know it will not pass.

If you want more information, please give me a call at 318-8333.

Harris

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From: Donnie Chisholm <donnie.chisholm@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Sent: May 5, 2022 8:17 PM
To: Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Cc: Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca; mayor@townofantigonish.ca; scameron@townofantigonish.ca; Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
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It is time to give all residents a vote

Donnie Chisholm

Sent from my iPad

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: May 8, 2022 6:25 AM
To: Valerie Haskett-Chugg
Subject: RE: Proposed consolidation

Valerie;

I agree with your assessment, thanks for making your position known to council, it does make a difference. From the beginning I have been against amalgamation. It does not make sense to county residents as we are in the best financial position ever. This is being rushed through with no pros and cons, a cost benefit analysis needs to be done on every component of amalgamation. Most importantly county residents won't have a say in what happens. Six councillors (maybe less) will make the decision for you. We need a plebiscite, that way 15000 county residents will make the decision. Some don't want a plebiscite because they know it will not pass.

If you want more information, please give me a call at 318-8333.

Harris

From: Valerie Haskett-Chugg <vchugg@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Sent: May 5, 2022 11:29 AM
To: Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Fwd: Proposed consolidation

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Valerie Haskett-Chugg <vchugg@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Date: May 5, 2022 at 11:15:10 AM ADT
To: mary maclellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ca, hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ca, sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ca, rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ca, omccarron@antigonishcounty.ca, jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ca, gmattie@antigonishcounty.ca, hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ca, bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ca, mayor@townofantigonish.ca, wgormier@townofantigonish.ca, dmacinnis@townofantigonish.ca, amurray@townofantigonish.ca, mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca, droberts@townofantigonish.ca
Subject: Proposed consolidation

Hello everyone: I live in District 1 and I attended an information session held at Mini Trail Community Centre in Lakevale - I have read the booklet which came by mail prior to that information meeting and I have reviewed the information on the website for the consolidation.

I have yet to feel that I have sufficient information to decide that the proposed consolidation is the best way forward for the Town and County. I feel the system of delivering this to the constituents is flawed, lacking transparency. During the present time when covid cases continue to rise all around us, the attendance at these meetings is not representative of the population that will be affected if consolidation proceeds.

Consolidation was not on anyone's platform when you were all running for election. The timing for councillors voting on this seems to be quite a 'rushed' event and I absolutely feel as a constituent that I should have a vote for something that could affect me for the rest of my life. I continue to think that there is just not enough information available to constituents and I hope that all of you will open your minds to putting this process on hold and allow the town and county to have a plebiscite. This would allow everyone eligible to have a say - after all isn't this the way of democracy??

Best regards, Valerie Chugg, Cape George

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: May 8, 2022 6:26 AM
To: info@antigonish.ca
Subject: FW: Proposed consolidation

From: Valerie Haskett-Chugg
Sent: May 5, 2022 11:29 AM
To: Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Fwd: Proposed consolidation

Sent from my iPhone

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Date: May 5, 2022 at 11:15:10 AM ADT
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constituent that I should have a vote for something that could affect me for the rest of my life. I continue to think that there is just not enough information available to constituents and I hope that all of you will open your minds to putting this process on hold and allow the town and county to have a plebiscite. This would allow everyone eligible to have a say - after all isn't this the way of democracy??

Best regards, Valerie Chugg, Cape George

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: May 8, 2022 6:29 AM
To: Elaine MacLean
Subject: RE: Consolidation Process

Elaine;

Thank you for your support! Excellent email, you succinctly covered all concerns of the majority of county residents! From the beginning I have been against amalgamation. It does not make sense to county residents as we are in the best financial position ever. This is being rushed through with no pros and cons, a cost benefit analysis needs to be done on every component of amalgamation. Most importantly county residents won't have a say in what happens. Six councillors (maybe less) will make the decision for you. We need a plebiscite, that way 15000 county residents will make the decision. Some don't want a plebiscite because they know it will not pass.

If you want more information, please give me a call at 318-8333.

Harris

From: Elaine MacLean
Sent: May 6, 2022 12:10 AM
To: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Consolidation Process

Dear Councillor Harris McNamara,

While I appreciate that being responsible for governing The Municipality of the County of Antigonish must be a difficult task, I feel that it is important for you to know that I am not supportive of the current process for determining whether or not the municipality consolidates with the town. I have 4 main concerns and questions too numerous for an email exchange. I hope to have those answered when my first concern is resolved.

1. The lack of a reasonable and democratic process for consultation. A drop-in, kiosk style interaction does not meet the needs of the community for information sharing. We need a town hall style meeting in which questions/answers are heard by all.
2. The timeline is too short. This question of consolidation is going from a "consideration" to a "final vote" by councillors in too short a time. What's the rush? Slow down and do this right.
3. The information being shared is not balanced. It was compiled by consultants showing only the positives for a consolidation. It can't be all positive. We need a fair analysis of the pros/cons.
4. The citizens of the Municipality of the County of Antigonish have no vote. The question of consolidation must be put to the citizens. Otherwise this huge decision which will impact everything about our day to day lives in the county for generations to come is being made by a few Councillors who frankly, with all due respect, appear to have little knowledge of the repercussions now, and more importantly, for the future. This question needs more consideration and study prior to making the yes/no decision.

Thank you for listening.

Elaine MacLean
-- Old Beaver Rd.

James River

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: May 8, 2022 6:30 AM
To: info@antigonish.ca
Subject: FW: Consolidation Process

From: Elaine MacLean ·
Sent: May 6, 2022 12:10 AM
To: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Consolidation Process

Dear Councillor Harris McNamara,

While I appreciate that being responsible for governing The Municipality of the County of Antigonish must be a difficult task, I feel that it is important for you to know that I am not supportive of the current process for determining whether or not the municipality consolidates with the town. I have 4 main concerns and questions too numerous for an email exchange. I hope to have those answered when my first concern is resolved.

1. The lack of a reasonable and democratic process for consultation. A drop-in, kiosk style interaction does not meet the needs of the community for information sharing. We need a town hall style meeting in which questions/answers are heard by all.
2. The timeline is too short. This question of consolidation is going from a "consideration" to a "final vote" by councillors in too short a time. What's the rush? Slow down and do this right.
3. The information being shared is not balanced. It was compiled by consultants showing only the positives for a consolidation. It can't be all positive. We need a fair analysis of the pros/cons.
4. The citizens of the Municipality of the County of Antigonish have no vote. The question of consolidation must be put to the citizens. Otherwise this huge decision which will impact everything about our day to day lives in the county for generations to come is being made by a few Councillors who frankly, with all due respect, appear to have little knowledge of the repercussions now, and more importantly, for the future. This question needs more consideration and study prior to making the yes/no decision.

Thank you for listening.

Elaine MacLean
Old Beaver Rd.
James River

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: May 8, 2022 6:40 AM
To: Mike Moeller
Subject: RE: Want and request and demand a plebiscite on such a critical decision. This is not what councillors were elected to do.

Mike;

Thanks for the support, really appreciate. I have retained a lawyer and have made residents of District 9 aware in a public meeting that I may not be able to vote as their representative as the fine and possible jail time is certainly a deterrent. As you know legal fees are expensive and to fight this is not something I should put my family through.
Harris

From: Mike Moeller
Sent: May 6, 2022 7:06 PM
To: Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Re: Want and request and demand a plebiscite on such a critical decision. This is not what councillors were elected to do.

Hi Sean and Mr McNamara,

I just want you to know that what the County has advised you of regarding being possibly put in jail for a year or a 25,000 dollar fine for a conflict of interest, should be made public. This is not a conflict in my opinion and I have been involved with Unions all my life when people were in an actual conflict. It is one thing to recuse yourself for personal reasons that you may have, but for the County to hire a lawyer(to threaten you and Mr McNamara with jail time and a fine is wrong. Mr. McNamara is also not in conflict, as his Daughter is an adult working for the town, and she has a family. that is inferring that he could not vote without his Daughter's benefits, and you would vote to benefit yourself. i find it insulting to say the least.

If I were representing you two, I would investigate this threat from the County to you both, as it is keeping both of you from voting and voicing your opinions on this consolidation/amalgamation//merge of the County and Town. It is also possible discrimination, as well as harassment to you both are being brought forward by the County. Please look into this, and in my personal experience with being an elected National officer for a Union for 31 years, you are not in any conflict for working for either the county or town. This is about councillors not being able to vote and keeping you both from voting. I would seek legal advice, from a lawyer, paid by the County Council, just as they had legal advise paid by County Council.

Thanks

Mike

----- Forwarded Message -----

Subject:We want and request and demand a plebiscite on such a critical decision. This is not what councillors were elected to do.

Date:Fri, 29 Apr 2022 15:37:21 -0300

From:Mike Moeller

To: "mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca, omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca, mayor@townofantigonish.ca wcmormier@townofantigonish.ca dmacinnis@townofantigonish.ca scameron@townofantigonish.ca amurray@townofantigonish.ca, mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca droberts@townofantigonish.ca"

Dear Councillors of Antigonish Town and County

I am a resident of the County of Antigonish and I demand that we have a plebiscite and open town and county halls with all people able to hear each others questions and answers on the pros and cons of amalgamation/consolidation. In no manner, should this consolidation of Town and County power that the councillors that do not want a vote, be exercised on my behalf with their vote. You are all residents also, and your vote should be one of 20,000 in the Town and County. This is democracy not working for the people, when you have the majority of councillors taking it upon themselves to vote for consolidation of two entities (town and county) without giving the people the opportunity to vote. We never elected you councillors to make such a decision. I was involved Nationally and Regionally and Locally with my Union for over 30 years, being elected every three years. If it ever came to merging our Union with another union or having a strike vote (both of these examples are analogies of what is happening with your councils), the members of both unions were given the opportunity to vote or the members voted to strike or not, were given the right and opportunity to vote.. We the elected Officers, NEVER would even dream of voting on something of that magnitude, which you councillors who do not want a vote/plebiscite are doing. We did not give you that right, and you do not have that right to speak on my behalf of something so important. And who decided to have almost a quarter of a million dollars spent on "consultants" that are not even from our community, to answer the questions that we elected you to answer? If the councillors will not give the residents the right to vote, then there should be legal action taken to stop this pre-determined decision. Being an elected official is at times thankless, and it is a hard task. However, the process taken by the majority of both Councils in this dissolution of either the town or County, called consolidation, must have a plebiscite. Pictou gave their residents a voice and vote. The comments made that a vote was decided against, because we do not have the information and it would be based on emotions, was actually insulting to say the least at what some councillors think of who they are supposed to represent. To say it will be divisive is also not within the knowledge of councillors. If we do not have a vote, then you will see divisiveness, but then it will be TOO LATE to rectify the concerns of thousands of residents. Why not run on this campaign in the next electon, if you are so confidant? This whole process smells.

Thanks

Mike Moeller-County of Antigonish

Beth Schumacher

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: May 5, 2022 10:38 PM
To: info
Subject: Fwd: A plea for a plebiscite for consolidation

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Mike and Shirley Davidson <
Date: May 5, 2022 at 8:25:23 PM ADT
To: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: A plea for a plebiscite for consolidation

Dear Mr. McCarron,

After attending the community meeting about consolidation I am asking all councillors to allow community members to have a vote in this process!

Sincerely,
Shirley Davidson
Old Antigonish Road
Afton B0H1A0 Sent from my iPad

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: May 8, 2022 6:41 AM
To: info@antigonish.ca
Subject: FW: Proposed consolidation

From: Valerie Haskett-Chugg
Sent: May 5, 2022 11:15 AM
To: Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ca; hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ca; sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ca; rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ca; omccarron@antigonishcounty.ca; jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ca; gmattie@antigonishcounty.ca; hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ca; bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ca; mayor@townofantigonish.ca; wcmormier@townofantigonish.ca; dmacinnis@townofantigonish.ca; amurray@townofantigonish.ca; mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca; droberts@townofantigonish.ca
Subject: Proposed consolidation

Hello everyone: I live in District 1 and I attended an information session held at Mini Trail Community Centre in Lakevale - I have read the booklet which came by mail prior to that information meeting and I have reviewed the information on the website for the consolidation.

I have yet to feel that I have sufficient information to decide that the proposed consolidation is the best way forward for the Town and County. I feel the system of delivering this to the constituents is flawed, lacking transparency. During the present time when covid cases continue to rise all around us, the attendance at these meetings is not representative of the population that will be affected if consolidation proceeds.

Consolidation was not on anyone's platform when you were all running for election. The timing for councillors voting on this seems to be quite a 'rushed' event and I absolutely feel as a constituent that I should have a vote for something that could affect me for the rest of my life. I continue to think that there is just not enough information available to constituents and I hope that all of you will open your minds to putting this process on hold and allow the town and county to have a plebiscite. This would allow everyone eligible to have a say - after all isn't this the way of democracy??

Best regards, Valerie Chugg, Cape George

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: May 8, 2022 6:46 AM
To: Susan Cameron
Subject: RE: You are our voice

Susan;

Thank you for the kind words! From the beginning I have been against amalgamation. It does not make sense to county residents as we are in the best financial position ever. This is being rushed through with no pros and cons, a cost benefit analysis needs to be done on every component of amalgamation . Most importantly county residents won't have a say in what happens. Six councillors (maybe less) will make the decision for you. We need a plebiscite, that way 15000 county residents will make the decision. I agree with you If you want more information, please give me a call at 318-8333.

-----Original Message-----

From: Susan Cameron
Sent: May 5, 2022 11:05 AM
To: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: You are our voice

Mr. McNamara,

We are very concerned about the upcoming vote by councillors regarding the proposed consolidation of Antigonish Town and County. We are also extremely disappointed that after 20 years the councils are revisiting this amalgamation issue. Call it what you may but it is still amalgamation, only this time you don't have to go through the URB. Shameful.

As our representatives (and it states this in the Responsibilities of Municipal Councils of Nova Scotia) it is "your responsibility to govern the local area in a way that is democratic and accountable to the local communities that elected them" and also to "ensure that local residents have a say in decisions they take", and for you to "represent collective interests of the whole community".

We don't see any of this happening. Remember what you swore to?The push from Municipal affairs and the Mayor and Warden is unprecedented bullying in a very subtle way. It is your responsibility to correct this and stand up against such flagrant dictatorship.

You need to own up to the responsibilities put on you when you were elected. We expect to see us either get a say in a plebiscite or for you to vote down the consolidation when it comes to a vote by council.

Susan and Owen Cameron
Taxpayers in the County of Antigonish

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: May 8, 2022 6:47 AM
To: info@antigonish.ca
Subject: FW: consolidation

-----Original Message-----

From: Ed Watson <
Sent: May 5, 2022 9:14 AM
To: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Cc: Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; mayor@townofantigonish.ca; wgormier@townofantigonish.ca; dmacinnis@townofantigonish.ca; scameron@townofantigonish.ca; amurray@townofantigonish.ca; mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca; droberts@townofantigonish.ca
Subject: consolidation

Hi Everyone

Some of you know me and some I have already spoken to on this issue but in the interest of expressing my views and observations consistently I am writing to you all.

To be clear personally I am not against any good idea and therefore not against the status quo or consolidation but after examination of everything related to an issue it has to be a good deal, this situation does not fit that criteria. With that said I can sum up very quickly in saying that I am not in favour of consolidation as presented this time. My reasons are as follows:

1. From the outset there has been no down side presented that is really significant, this is a huge problem mostly because it indicates that there has been no examination of a down side. I have after investigation discovered a few big problems which largely are not being discussed which is another problem; people are thinking either my counsellors are incompetent, or stands to gain personally at our expense giving rise to several different unsubstantiated ideas that are taking hold.
2. This is an initiative from the province. With that in mind it is they who stand to gain, otherwise why would they care, so I don't buy that it will be good for us in the long run.
3. No plans for a plebiscite. Especially with this scripted message that is being presented there has to be a display of respect for a democratic process, regardless this is too big an issue to be decided in council.
4. This process is contributing to a breakdown of the fabric of our society and our well functioning democracy. After the events of the last few years there has been a slippage of respect for our rights as people who reside in a free and democratic country with a respected and strong constitution. This coupled with a condescending demeanour from governments that we the common folk are not capable of making proper decisions for ourselves. This process is adding fuel to that fire.

If this was presented as an idea and it was obvious that all of you were truly just presenting facts good and bad and leaving it to us to decide we wouldn't be having this problem. Being told that you are neutral and yet speaking so positively about this appears to be two faced. In examination of historical patterns of unrest in our world point 4 is by far the most important. Not that we are on the verge of revolt at this time, more that this is an early warning sign which makes it the ideal time to act on this.

I urge you all to scrutinize, investigate, and be decision makers not sheep afraid to rock the boat. Most of all restore our confidence in democracy, have a plebiscite the results of which are respected and followed after further and open public discussions, debates and consultation all of which are messy but a necessary pattern of good functioning democracy. This is something that we all must strive for and not be complacent about please join us in this endeavour.

Ed Watson

Maryvale Antigonish County

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: May 8, 2022 6:48 AM
To: Ed Watson
Subject: RE: consolidation

Ed;

My name is Harris McNamara, Councillor for District 9 (Havre Boucher) and from the beginning I have been against amalgamation. It does not make sense to county residents as we are in the best financial position ever. This is being rushed through with no pros and cons, a cost benefit analysis needs to be done on every component of amalgamation . Most importantly county residents won't have a say in what happens. Six councillors (maybe less) will make the decision for you. We need a plebiscite, that way 15000 county residents will make the decision. If you want more information, please give me a call at 318-8333.

Harris

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To: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Cc: Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; mayor@townofantigonish.ca; wcmormier@townofantigonish.ca; dmacinnis@townofantigonish.ca; scameron@townofantigonish.ca; amurray@townofantigonish.ca; mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca; droberts@townofantigonish.ca
Subject: consolidation

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Ed Watson

Maryvale Antigonish County

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: May 8, 2022 6:51 AM
To: Lorraine Bowie
Subject: RE: Consolidation Between Town and County

Lorraine;

Thanks for Leo and your support, it is an uphill battle! My name is Harris McNamara, Councillor for District 9 (Havre Boucher) and from the beginning I have been against amalgamation. It does not make sense to county residents as we are in the best financial position ever. This is being rushed through with no pros and cons, a cost benefit analysis needs to be done on every component of amalgamation . Most importantly county residents won't have a say in what happens. Six councillors (maybe less) will make the decision for you. We need a plebiscite, that way 15000 county residents will make the decision.

If you want more information, please give me a call at 318-8333.

Harris

Lorraine Bowie

Sent: May 4, 2022 4:56 PM

To: Mary MacLellan <maclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; jmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; bmacfarlene@antigonishcounty.ns.ca

Subject: Consolidation Between Town and County

Good Morning

We are sending this email out to ask Antigonish County Council to please have a plebiscite. Let the residents of the County and also the Town decide the outcome of a potential consolidation.

Leo and Lorraine Bowie
Heatherton Village Road
Antigonish

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: May 8, 2022 6:51 AM
To: info@antigonish.ca
Subject: FW: Consolidation Between Town and County

From: Lorraine Bowie <lbowie@antigonish.ca>
Sent: May 4, 2022 4:56 PM
To: Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; jmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; bmacfarlene@antigonishcounty.ns.ca
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Leo and Lorraine Bowie
Heatherton Village Road
Antigonish

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: May 8, 2022 6:52 AM
To: info@antigonish.ca
Subject: FW: Plebiscite Wanted for Amalgamation / Consolidation

From: Pati Myette
Sent: May 4, 2022 4:57 PM
To: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ca; Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; mayor@townofantigonish.ca; wcmormier@townofantigonish.ca; dmacinnis@townofantigonish.ca; scameron@townofantigonish.ca; amurray@townofantigonish.ca; mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca; droberts@townofantigonish.ca
Subject: Plebiscite Wanted for Amalgamation / Consolidation

Dear Warden, Mayor and Councillors:

Please reconsider your vote process for a **Plebiscite** - would be the honourable thing to do for the Town and County residences as a whole

We want our voices heard and is our right
We live in a democracy ... We do not live in Russia !!

Plebiscite wanted for Amalgamation or Consolidation of Town and County

As a home owner and life long resident of the county of Antigonish we want a Plebiscite on the Amalgamation of the Town and County.

No town or county councils should have the right or authority to take our privilege to vote away. We as community members pay our taxes, support our town and counties, volunteer our time and support our own community that we live. To make decisions that will impact us all for the rest of our lives there should be a plebiscite.

My interpretation of an amalgamation of the town and county is a combination of two entering into a new entity. Instead, a completely new entity is formed to house the combined assets and liabilities of both. Amalgamations generally take place between larger and smaller entities, where the larger one takes over smaller. To amalgamate the town and county together which no one has answers too, I believe is extreme; when there is so much uncertainty.

What is the councils urgency to put forth amalgamation without knowledge of and not giving people the right to a plebiscite? Is council afraid of a few difficulties with the vote or not achieving what they want without any effort on their part?

It seems that the consultants, with the support of Municipal Affairs and their financial contribution, have given one way to get this done and you've totally accepted that advice.

What is behind the actions of town and county council not allowing all Councillors to vote?
The excuse of conflict of interest is being used too widely and frequently, not what it is meant for.

Give the people what they want, a plebiscite.

Councils proposal of amalgamation causes a lot of unnecessary stress and anxiety in our lives. As if not under enough stress with covid, gas and diesel prices, housing shortages, homelessness and most of all the mental state that is being put on the people during these difficult times.

Where will this lead us to in the future? - No voice, too much uncertainty and not to say, divide town and county residences.

A vast amount of research has found that amalgamation fails to produce cost savings, rarely leads to more efficient service delivery, and reduces the ability of citizens to be involved in the life of their local governments.

Willard and Pati Myette
Tracadie

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: May 8, 2022 6:55 AM
To: Pati Myette
Subject: RE: Plebiscite Wanted for Amalgamation / Consolidation

Pati /Willard

Thanks for your support! From the beginning I have been against amalgamation. It does not make sense to county residents as we are in the best financial position ever. This is being rushed through with no pros and cons, a cost benefit analysis needs to be done on every component of amalgamation . Most importantly county residents won't have a say in what happens. Six councillors (maybe less) will make the decision for you. We need a plebiscite, that way 15000 county residents will make the decision.

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Amalgamations generally take place between larger and smaller entities, where the larger one takes over smaller. To amalgamate the town and county together which no one has answers too, I believe is extreme; when there is so much uncertainty.

What is the councils urgency to put forth amalgamation without knowledge of and not giving people the right to a plebiscite? Is council afraid of a few difficulties with the vote or not achieving what they want without any effort on their part?

It seems that the consultants, with the support of Municipal Affairs and their financial contribution, have given one way to get this done and you've totally accepted that advice.

What is behind the actions of town and county council not allowing all Councillors to vote?
The excuse of conflict of interest is being used too widely and frequently, not what it is meant for.

Give the people what they want, a plebiscite.

Councils proposal of amalgamation causes a lot of unnecessary stress and anxiety in our lives. As if not under enough stress with covid, gas and diesel prices, housing shortages, homelessness and most of all the mental state that is being put on the people during these difficult times.

Where will this lead us to in the future? - No voice, too much uncertainty and not to say, divide town and county residences.

A vast amount of research has found that amalgamation fails to produce cost savings, rarely leads to more efficient service delivery, and reduces the ability of citizens to be involved in the life of their local governments.

Willard and Pati Myette
Tracadie

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: May 8, 2022 6:59 AM
To: info@antigonish.ca
Subject: FW: Consolidation

From: Lloyd Mattie
Sent: May 3, 2022 6:56 PM
To: Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ca; Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; rdeveau@antigonish.ns.ca; Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Consolidation

I'd like to hear more understandable information and a vote. We need a voice in this matter. Thank You
Lloyd Mattie

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: May 8, 2022 6:59 AM
To: Lloyd Mattie
Subject: RE: Consolidation

Lloyd;

My name is Harris McNamara, Councillor for District 9 (Havre Boucher) and from the beginning I have been against amalgamation. It does not make sense to county residents as we are in the best financial position ever. This is being rushed through with no pros and cons, a cost benefit analysis needs to be done on every component of amalgamation . Most importantly county residents won't have a say in what happens. Six councillors (maybe less) will make the decision for you. We need a plebiscite, that way 15000 county residents will make the decision.

If you want more information, please give me a call at 318-8333.

Harris

From: Lloyd Mattie
Sent: May 3, 2022 6:56 PM
To: Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ca; Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; rdeveau@antigonish.ns.ca; Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Consolidation

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Lloyd Mattie

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: May 8, 2022 7:00 AM
To: 'info@antigonish.ca'
Subject: FW: Consolidation

-----Original Message-----

From: margie mattie <[redacted]>
Sent: May 3, 2022 1:17 PM
To: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Consolidation

We need to be heard! More information is required and a plebiscite. Voice of the people. Thank you!!!
Margaret Mattie

Sent from my iPhone

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: May 8, 2022 7:02 AM
To: margie mattie
Subject: RE: Consolidation

Margie;

Thanks for your support! From the beginning I have been against amalgamation. It does not make sense to county residents as we are in the best financial position ever. This is being rushed through with no pros and cons, a cost benefit analysis needs to be done on every component of amalgamation . Most importantly county residents won't have a say in what happens. Six councillors (maybe less) will make the decision for you. We need a plebiscite, that way 15000 county residents will make the decision.

If you want more information, please give me a call at 318-8333.

Harris

-----Original Message-----

From: margie mattie
Sent: May 3, 2022 1:17 PM
To: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Consolidation

We need to be heard! More information is required and a plebiscite. Voice of the people. Thank you!!!
Margaret Mattie

Sent from my iPhone

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: May 8, 2022 7:07 AM
To: info@antigonish.ca
Subject: FW: Consolidation

From: Debbie Cameron MacDonald
Sent: May 4, 2022 4:52 PM
To: mayor@townofantigonish.ca; wcornier@townofantigonish.ca; dmacinnis@townofantigonish.ca; scameron@townofantigonish.ca; Andrew Murray <amurray@townofantigonish.ca>; mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca; droberts@townofantigonish.ca; Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Consolidation

Dear Mayor, Warden, and Councillors,

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Despite your protestations to the opposite, Consolidation seems like a done deal without having listened to the residents of Antigonish Town and County. These citizens who ask questions or express that they are not in favour of Consolidation are deemed to be misinformed and not forward-thinking. This does a great disservice to your constituents.

You, our elected or acclaimed representatives, were chosen by the people to govern within an established framework of government, not to change the framework of government, unless the people agree. The way to determine if the people agree is through a vote. Just as a vote is required to elect a government, a vote is required to change a government in a democracy because the vote gives the people a direct say in a decision that will affect everyone, now and in the future. That is the democratic way.

To propose such a huge change at the height of the pandemic in Antigonish, was either short-sighted or a deliberate attempt to hope that folks might not take notice, or would be too cautious to attend an in-person session. Their non-attendance is being misconstrued by the proponents of Consolidation as acquiescence. When the residents do take the risk and attend an in-person session or take one in online, they quickly find out that no one is taking note of their concerns and they are receiving glib answers to their questions.

The current engagement format is intentionally isolating. No one gets to hear what concerns others have and the non-answers they are receiving. This way you are better able to control the narrative. The Mayor has expressed many times that a plebiscite wouldn't yield accurate results because people would be operating under a "false narrative". This, along with other sound bites from the consulting firm, has done nothing to alleviate the distrust of this whole process by the residents of both Town and County. The only "false narrative" that we can see is the one being pushed by exclaiming only the pros of Consolidation and the statements that indicate that Town and County will not be able to work together effectively without it. How quickly you seem to have forgotten all the good projects completed with Town and County co-operation. To name a few: People's Place Library, The Antigonish Arena, The Eastern NS Exhibition, The R.K. MacDonald Guest Home, Special Olympics, plus many, many more.

If any of you had run on a platform of Consolidation in the last election, I highly suspect we would be looking at a very different configuration of elected officials. If you were so sure that most citizens would support Consolidation, then you would have chosen the UARB route with its mandatory plebiscite rather than working through the province and very expensive consultants to control how much information is released, and how questions are answered.

Several of you have indicated that you will not be re-offering in 2024. Is this the legacy with which you wish to leave - destroying the Town and County and leaving it to others to muddle through the chaos? For those of you thinking of re-offering, choosing to go along with Consolidation at the urging of the Mayor, Warden, CAOs, and consultants rather than listening to your constituents may find you not getting re-elected. After the next election, you won't be there, but you will have taken Antigonish with you when you left.

The latest Facebook posts purporting to answer common questions are patronizing, dismissive, and do not contain substantive answers to the very real concerns and questions raised. To be told repeatedly that most answers will not be available until after Consolidation occurs amounts to "buying a pig in a bag." Furthermore, the Mayor has been quoted in the Chronicle Herald as saying that Consolidation is not a given. That she, the Warden, and the councillors are open to the wishes of the people. Then she hastily added that the only councillors who have made up their minds are those who are against Consolidation, as if this was somehow disparaging to them. Today's quote from The Reporter, "We want to become one," dispels any illusion that the Mayor is unbiased and open-minded concerning Consolidation.

I implore all of you to take a step back from this extremely rushed and manipulated proposal and look carefully at what can be achieved by maintaining the status quo with cooperation between Town and County. This decision should be put to a vote by all residents.

Sincerely yours,

Debbie Cameron MacDonald

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: May 8, 2022 7:12 AM
To: Debbie Cameron MacDonald
Subject: RE: Consolidation

Debbie;

My name is Harris McNamara, Councillor for District 9 (Havre Boucher) and from the beginning I have been against amalgamation. This is being rushed through with no pros and cons, a cost benefit analysis needs to be done on every component of amalgamation. Most importantly town & county residents won't have a say in what happens. A few councillors will make the decision for you. We need a plebiscite, that way 15000 county residents will make the decision. Some don't want a plebiscite because they know amalgamation will not pass. If you want more information, please give me a call at 318-8333.

Harris

From: Debbie Cameron MacDonald
Sent: May 4, 2022 4:52 PM
To: mayor@townofantigonish.ca; wgormier@townofantigonish.ca; dmacinnis@townofantigonish.ca; scameron@townofantigonish.ca; Andrew Murray <amurray@townofantigonish.ca>; mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca; droberts@townofantigonish.ca; Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Consolidation

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Sincerely yours,

Debbie Cameron MacDonald

Harris McNamara

From: Debbie Cameron MacDonald
Sent: May 8, 2022 7:40 AM
To: Harris McNamara
Subject: Re: Consolidation

Thank you for your response, Harris.

I agree with you.

What must be especially frustrating for you is that your voice is being silenced. You are being denied a vote on a very flimsy excuse. Have you consulted a lawyer?

Debbie

Sent from my iPhone

On May 8, 2022, at 7:11 AM, Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca> wrote:

Debbie;

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Harris

From: Debbie Cameron MacDonald
Sent: May 4, 2022 4:52 PM
To: mayor@townofantigonish.ca; wgormier@townofantigonish.ca; dmacinnis@townofantigonish.ca; scameron@townofantigonish.ca; Andrew Murray <amurray@townofantigonish.ca>; mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca; droberts@townofantigonish.ca; Mary MacLellan <maclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
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Sincerely yours,

Debbie Cameron MacDonald

Harris McNamara

From: Donnie Chisholm
Sent: May 8, 2022 8:21 AM
To: Harris McNamara
Subject: Re: Amalgamation

Thank you for responding and yes I fully agree with you and the councillors that are against this amalgamation it is time for the public to have their say

Many people know that this is a move made by politicians that are scared of the voters

Shan Cameron has been very good at keeping us informed over our morning coffee but I do appreciate your concern for the people and I do appreciate your reply as I have not heard back from any other county councillors and if I have any further concerns I will be in touch with you

Donnie

Sent from my iPhone

> On May 8, 2022, at 6:21 AM, Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca> wrote:

>

> Donnie;

> My name is Harris McNamara, Councillor for District 9 (Havre Boucher) and from the beginning I have been against amalgamation. It does not make sense to county residents as we are in the best financial position ever. This is being rushed through with no pros and cons, a cost benefit analysis needs to be done on every component of amalgamation . Most importantly county residents won't have a say in what happens. Six councillors (maybe less) will make the decision for you. We need a plebiscite, that way 15000 county residents will make the decision. Some don't want a plebiscite because they know it will not pass.

> If you want more information, please give me a call at 318-8333.

> Harris

>

> -----Original Message-----

> From: Donnie Chisholm

> Sent: May 5, 2022 8:17 PM

> To: Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>

> Cc: Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shawn

> Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Gary Mattie

> <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca;

> mayor@townofantigonish.ca; scameron@townofantigonish.ca; Bill

> MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; John Dunbar

> <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Harris McNamara

> <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>

> Subject: Amalgamation

>

> Hi Mr Stewart

> I like many other residents of the town and county feel that we have a

> right to vote on this very important issue just to be told that the

> councillors can make a decision for us is wrong as it was never campaigned on And if it is such a great move why are

the councillors afraid of our vote Both Councils are pushing forward with the amalgamation very swiftly so what is the

big rush councillors have not held a proper meeting where the public could asked fair questions and hopefully get

honest answers and just maybe we could learn about the hidden agenda I fail to understand why two of the councillors

cannot vote as they should have a right to represent their voters About conflict the councillors should also be looking at

Mary Farrell who's husband works at the RK MacDonald and the Wardens wife is a board member which is owned by the town and county Furthermore we would like to know what the town is bringing to the table as the county has a lot more to offer all that we in the county will get is higher taxes and less service and of course paying for the town infrastructure

> It is time to give all residents a vote

> Donnie Chisholm

>

>

>

>

> Sent from my iPad

Harris McNamara

From: Mike Moeller
Sent: May 8, 2022 11:43 AM
To: Harris McNamara
Subject: Re: Want and request and demand a plebiscite on such a critical decision. This is not what councillors were elected to do.

You are welcome, Harris. I am so opposed to the process of not having the residents vote on this. Whether it passes after we all vote, at least that is democratic.

Also, did the County Council already break their interpretation of "conflict rules" if they allowed you and Sean to vote on the "exploration" of consolidation?

Thanks

Mike

On 5/8/2022 6:39 AM, Harris McNamara wrote:

Mike;
Thanks for the support, really appreciate. I have a retained a lawyer and have made residents of District 9 aware in a public meeting that I may not be able to vote as their representative as the fine and possible jail time is certainly a deterrent. As you know legal fees are expensive and to fight this is not something I should put my family through.
Harris

From: Mike Moeller
Sent: May 6, 2022 7:06 PM
To: Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Re: Want and request and demand a plebiscite on such a critical decision. This is not what councillors were elected to do.

Hi Sean and Mr McNamara,

I just want you to know that what the County has advised you of regarding being possibly put in jail for a year or a 25,000 dollar fine for a conflict of interest, should be made public. This is not a conflict in my opinion and I have been involved with Unions all my life when people were in an actual conflict. It is one thing to recuse yourself for personal reasons that you may have, but for the County to hire a lawyer(to threaten you and Mr McNamara with jail time and a fine is wrong. Mr. McNamara is also not in conflict, as his Daughter is an adult working for the town, and she has a family. that is inferring that he could not vote without his Daughter's benefits, and you would vote to benefit yourself. i find it insulting to say the least.

If I were representing you two, I would investigate this threat from the County to you both, as it is keeping both of you from voting and voicing your opinions on this consolidation/amalgamation//merge of the County and Town. It is also possible discrimination, as well as harassment to you both are being brought forward by the County. Please look into this, and in my personal experience with being an

elected National officer for a Union for 31 years, you are not in any conflict for working for either the county or town. This is about councillors not being able to vote and keeping you both from voting. I would seek legal advice, from a lawyer, paid by the County Council, just as they had legal advice paid by County Council.

Thanks

Mike

----- Forwarded Message -----

Subject:We want and request and demand a plebiscite on such a critical decision. This is not what councillors we elected to do.

Date:Fri, 29 Apr 2022 15:37:21 -0300

From:Mike Moeller

To:mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca, mayer@townofantigonish.ca wcormier@townofantigonish.ca dmacinnis@townofantigonish.ca scameron@townofantigonish.ca amurray@townofantigonish.ca, mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca droberts@townofantigonish.ca

Dear Councillors of Antigonish Town and County

I am a resident of the County of Antigonish and I demand that we have a plebiscite and open town and county halls with all people able to hear each others questions and answers on the pros and cons of amalgamation/consolidation. In no manner, should this consolidation of Town and County power that the councillors that do not want a vote, be exercised on my behalf with their vote. You are all residents also, and your vote should be one of 20,000 in the Town and County. This is democracy not working for the people, when you have the majority of councillors taking it upon themselves to vote for consolidation of two entities (town and county) without giving the people the opportunity to vote. We never elected you councillors to make such a decision. I was involved Nationally and Regionally and Locally with my Union for over 30 years, being elected every three years. If it ever came to merging our Union with another union or having a strike vote (both of these examples are analogies of what is happening with your councils), the members of both unions were given the opportunity to vote or the members voted to strike or not, were given the right and opportunity to vote.. We the elected Officers, NEVER would even dream of voting on something of that magnitude, which you councillors who do not want a vote/plebiscite are doing. We did not give you that right, and you do not have that right to speak on my behalf of something so important. And who decided to have almost a quarter of a million dollars spent on "consultants" that are not even from our community, to answer the questions that we elected you to answer? If the councillors will not give the residents the right to vote, then there should be legal action taken to stop this pre-determined decision. Being an elected official is at times thankless, and it is a hard task. However, the process taken by the majority of both Councils in this dissolution of either the town or County, called consolidation, must have a plebiscite. Pictou gave their residents a voice and vote. The comments made that a vote was decided against, because we do not have the information and it would be based on emotions, was actually insulting to say the least at what some councillors think of who they are supposed to represent. To say it will be

divisive is also not within the knowledge of councillors. If we do not have a vote, then you will see divisiveness, but then it will be TOO LATE to rectify the concerns of thousands of residents. Why not run on this campaign in the next election, if you are so confident? This whole process smells.

Thanks

Mike Moeller-County of Antigonish

Harris McNamara

From: Anne-Marie Long
Sent: May 8, 2022 11:58 AM
To: Harris McNamara
Subject: Re: FW: You are our voice

I will definitely use this piece!

On Sun., May 8, 2022, 6:44 a.m. Harris McNamara, <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca> wrote:

Anne-Marie;

Thought this was an interesting email, received many. Could you use my personal email when responding;

harris.mcnamara@gmail.com

Harris

-----Original Message-----

From: Susan Cameron

Sent: May 5, 2022 11:05 AM

To: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>

Subject: You are our voice

Mr. McNamara,

We are very concerned about the upcoming vote by councillors regarding the proposed consolidation of Antigonish Town and County. We are also extremely disappointed that after 20 years the councils are revisiting this amalgamation issue. Call it what you may but it is still amalgamation, only this time you don't have to go through the URB. Shameful.

As our representatives (and it states this in the Responsibilities of Municipal Councils of Nova Scotia) it is "your responsibility to govern the local area in a way that is democratic and accountable to the local communities that elected them" and also to "ensure that local residents have a say in decisions they take", and for you to "represent collective interests of the whole community".

We don't see any of this happening. Remember what you swore to?The push from Municipal affairs and the Mayor and Warden is unprecedented bullying in a very subtle way. It is your responsibility to correct this and stand up against such flagrant dictatorship.

You need to own up to the responsibilities put on you when you were elected. We expect to see us either get a say in a plebiscite or for you to vote down the consolidation when it comes to a vote by council.

Susan and Owen Cameron
Taxpayers in the County of Antigonish

Harris McNamara

From: Susan Cameron
Sent: May 8, 2022 3:57 PM
To: Harris McNamara
Subject: Re: You are our voice

Mr. McNamara,

Thank you for the response and I'm very glad to hear your stance on the matter. Good luck standing against those who want their hidden agenda met. We're behind you! Susan and Owen Cameron

Have a great one.

> On May 8, 2022, at 6:46 AM, Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca> wrote:

>

> Susan;

>

> Thank you for the kind words! From the beginning I have been against

> amalgamation. It does not make sense to county residents as we are in the best financial position ever. This is being rushed through with no pros and cons, a cost benefit analysis needs to be done on every component of amalgamation . Most importantly county residents won't have a say in what happens. Six councillors (maybe less) will make the decision for you. We need a plebiscite, that way 15000 county residents will make the decision. I agree with you If you want more information, please give me a call at 318-8333.

>

> -----Original Message-----

> From: Susan Cameron

> Sent: May 5, 2022 11:05 AM

> To: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>

> Subject: You are our voice

>

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>

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>

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>

> Susan and Owen Cameron

> Taxpayers in the County of Antigonish

v
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v

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: May 8, 2022 4:34 PM
To: Debbie Cameron MacDonald
Subject: RE: Consolidation

Debbie;

Thanks for the support, yes, I have consulted a lawyer and he has provided me a legal opinion but it's all I can say right now. It was a flimsy excuse in my opinion.

From: Debbie Cameron MacDonald
Sent: May 8, 2022 7:40 AM
To: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Re: Consolidation

Thank you for your response, Harris.

I agree with you.

What must be especially frustrating for you is that your voice is being silenced. You are being denied a vote on a very flimsy excuse. Have you consulted a lawyer?

Debbie

Sent from my iPhone

On May 8, 2022, at 7:11 AM, Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca> wrote:

Debbie;

My name is Harris McNamara, Councillor for District 9 (Havre Boucher) and from the beginning I have been against amalgamation. This is being rushed through with no pros and cons, a cost benefit analysis needs to be done on every component of amalgamation. Most importantly town & county residents won't have a say in what happens. A few councillors will make the decision for you. We need a plebiscite, that way 15000 county residents will make the decision. Some don't want a plebiscite because they know amalgamation will not pass.

If you want more information, please give me a call at 318-8333.

Harris

From: Debbie Cameron MacDonald
Sent: May 4, 2022 4:52 PM
To: mayer@townofantigonish.ca; wcormier@townofantigonish.ca; dmacinnis@townofantigonish.ca; scameron@townofantigonish.ca; Andrew Murray <amurray@townofantigonish.ca>; mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca; droberts@townofantigonish.ca; Mary MacLellan

<mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Consolidation

Dear Mayor, Warden, and Councillors,

I am writing this today with a heavy heart. I have studied all the information provided on Consolidation and have attended the first online engagement session. These served to trigger far more questions than there were answers. This seems to be the same result for most concerned folks. I do not see the benefits of Consolidation outweighing the risks and expenses. To be clear, I am not in favour of Consolidation nor the process being followed.

Despite your protestations to the opposite, Consolidation seems like a done deal without having listened to the residents of Antigonish Town and County. These citizens who ask questions or express that they are not in favour of Consolidation are deemed to be misinformed and not forward-thinking. This does a great disservice to your constituents.

You, our elected or acclaimed representatives, were chosen by the people to govern within an established framework of government, not to change the framework of government, unless the people agree. The way to determine if the people agree is through a vote. Just as a vote is required to elect a government, a vote is required to change a government in a democracy because the vote gives the people a direct say in a decision that will affect everyone, now and in the future. That is the democratic way.

To propose such a huge change at the height of the pandemic in Antigonish, was either short-sighted or a deliberate attempt to hope that folks might not take notice, or would be too cautious to attend an in-person session. Their non-attendance is being misconstrued by the proponents of Consolidation as acquiescence. When the residents do take the risk and attend an in-person session or take one in online, they quickly find out that no one is taking note of their concerns and they are receiving glib answers to their questions.

The current engagement format is intentionally isolating. No one gets to hear what concerns others have and the non-answers they are receiving. This way you are better able to control the narrative. The Mayor has expressed many times that a plebiscite

wouldn't yield accurate results because people would be operating under a "false narrative". This, along with other sound bites from the consulting firm, has done nothing to alleviate the distrust of this whole process by the residents of both Town and County. The only "false narrative" that we can see is the one being pushed by exclaiming only the pros of Consolidation and the statements that indicate that Town and County will not be able to work together effectively without it. How quickly you seem to have forgotten all the good projects completed with Town and County co-operation. To name a few: People's Place Library, The Antigonish Arena, The Eastern NS Exhibition, The R.K. MacDonald Guest Home, Special Olympics, plus many, many more.

If any of you had run on a platform of Consolidation in the last election, I highly suspect we would be looking at a very different configuration of elected officials. If you were so sure that most citizens would support Consolidation, then you would have chosen the UARB route with its mandatory plebiscite rather than working through the province and very expensive consultants to control how much information is released, and how questions are answered.

Several of you have indicated that you will not be re-offering in 2024. Is this the legacy with which you wish to leave - destroying the Town and County and leaving it to others to muddle through the chaos? For those of you thinking of re-offering, choosing to go along with Consolidation at the urging of the Mayor, Warden, CAOs, and consultants rather than listening to your constituents may find you not getting re-elected. After the next election, you won't be there, but you will have taken Antigonish with you when you left.

The latest Facebook posts purporting to answer common questions are patronizing, dismissive, and do not contain substantive answers to the very real concerns and questions raised. To be told repeatedly that most answers will not be available until after Consolidation occurs amounts to "buying a pig in a bag." Furthermore, the Mayor has been quoted in the Chronicle Herald as saying that Consolidation is not a given. That she, the Warden, and the councillors are open to the wishes of the people. Then she hastily added that the only councillors who have made up their minds are those who are against Consolidation, as if this was somehow disparaging to them. Today's quote from The Reporter, "We want to become one," dispels any illusion that the Mayor is unbiased and open-minded concerning Consolidation.

I implore all of you to take a step back from this extremely rushed and manipulated proposal and look carefully at what can be achieved by maintaining the status quo with cooperation between Town and County. This decision should be put to a vote by all residents.

Sincerely yours,

Debbie Cameron MacDonald

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: May 8, 2022 4:42 PM
To: Mike Moeller
Subject: RE: Want and request and demand a plebiscite on such a critical decision. This is not what councillors were elected to do.

Mike;

I supported the exploration of consolidation as I thought it would be explore. What it has turned out in my opinion is a group of consultants that are not exploring but leading the consolidation along with the warden, mayor and CAOs. I think the only democratic way is to have a plebiscite now as the process has been tainted. It a rush job and information available is not sufficient.

Have a great afternoon.

harris

From: Mike Moeller
Sent: May 8, 2022 11:43 AM
To: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Re: Want and request and demand a plebiscite on such a critical decision. This is not what councillors were elected to do.

You are welcome, Harris. I am so opposed to the process of not having the residents vote on this. Whether it passes after we all vote, at least that is democratic.

Also, did the County Council already break their interpretation of "conflict rules" if they allowed you and Sean to vote on the "exploration" of consolidation?

Thanks

Mike

On 5/8/2022 6:39 AM, Harris McNamara wrote:

Mike;

Thanks for the support, really appreciate. I have a retained a lawyer and have made residents of District 9 aware in a public meeting that I may not be able to vote as their representative as the fine and possible jail time is certainly a deterrent. As you know legal fees are expensive and to fight this is not something I should put my family through.

Harris

From: Mike Moeller
Sent: May 6, 2022 7:06 PM
To: Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Re: Want and request and demand a plebiscite on such a critical decision. This is not what councillors were elected to do.

Hi Sean and Mr McNamara,

I just want you to know that what the County has advised you of regarding being possibly put in jail for a year or a 25,000 dollar fine for a conflict of interest, should be made public. This is not a conflict in my opinion and I have been involved with Unions all my life when people were in an actual conflict. It is one thing to recuse yourself for personal reasons that you may have, but for the County to hire a lawyer(to threaten you and Mr McNamara with jail time and a fine is wrong. Mr. McNamara is also not in conflict, as his Daughter is an adult working for the town, and she has a family. that is inferring that he could not vote without his Daughter's benefits, and you would vote to benefit yourself. i find it insulting to say the least.

If I were representing you two, I would investigate this threat from the County to you both, as it is keeping both of you from voting and voicing your opinions on this consolidation/amalgamation//merge of the County and Town. It is also possible discrimination, as well as harassment to you both are being brought forward by the County. Please look into this, and in my personal experience with being an elected National officer for a Union for 31 years, you are not in any conflict for working for either the county or town. This is about councillors not being able to vote and keeping you both from voting. I would seek legal advice, from a lawyer, paid by the County Council, just as they had legal advise paid by County Council.

Thanks

Mike

----- Forwarded Message -----

Subject:We want and request and demand a plebiscite on such a critical decision. This is not what councillors we elected to do.

Date:Fri, 29 Apr 2022 15:37:21 -0300

From:Mike Moeller

To:mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca, mayor@townofantigonish.ca wcmormier@townofantigonish.ca dmacinnis@townofantigonish.ca scameron@townofantigonish.ca amurray@townofantigonish.ca, mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca droberts@townofantigonish.ca

Dear Councillors of Antigonish Town and County

I am a resident of the County of Antigonish and I demand that we have a plebiscite and open town and county halls with all people able to hear each others questions and answers on the pros and cons of amalgamation/consolidation. In no manner, should this consolidation of Town and County power that the councillors that do not want a vote, be exercised on my behalf with their vote. You are all residents also, and your vote should be one of 20,000 in the Town and County. This is democracy not working for the people, when you have the majority of councillors taking it upon themselves to vote for consolidation of two entities (town and county) without giving the people the opportunity to vote. We never elected you councillors to make such a decision. I was involved Nationally and Regionally and Locally with my Union for over 30 years, being elected every three years. If it ever came to merging our Union with another union or having a strike vote (both of these examples are analogies of what is happening with

your councils), the members of both unions were given the opportunity to vote or the members voted to strike or not, were given the right and opportunity to vote.. We the elected Officers, NEVER would even dream of voting on something of that magnitude, which you councillors who do not want a vote/plebiscite are doing. We did not give you that right, and you do not have that right to speak on my behalf of something so important. And who decided to have almost a quarter of a million dollars spent on "consultants" that are not even from our community, to answer the questions that we elected you to answer? If the councillors will not give the residents the right to vote, then there should be legal action taken to stop this pre-determined decision. Being an elected official is at times thankless, and it is a hard task. However, the process taken by the majority of both Councils in this dissolution of either the town or County, called consolidation, must have a plebiscite. Pictou gave their residents a voice and vote. The comments made that a vote was decided against, because we do not have the information and it would be based on emotions, was actually insulting to say the least at what some councillors think of who they are supposed to represent. To say it will be divisive is also not within the knowledge of councillors. If we do not have a vote, then you will see divisiveness, but then it will be TOO LATE to rectify the concerns of thousands of residents. Why not run on this campaign in the next election, if you are so confident? This whole process smells.

Thanks

Mike Moeller-County of Antigonish

Harris McNamara

From: Mike Moeller
Sent: May 8, 2022 5:42 PM
To: Harris McNamara
Subject: Re: Want and request and demand a plebiscite on such a critical decision. This is not what councillors were elected to do.

Hang in there Harris and make sure that you at least use your voice. These are threats in my opinion to stifle you and Sean.

On 5/8/2022 4:42 PM, Harris McNamara wrote:

Mike;

I supported the exploration of consolidation as I thought it would be explore. What it has turned out in my opinion is a group of consultants that are not exploring but leading the consolidation along with the warden, mayor and CAOs. I think the only democratic way is to have a plebiscite now as the process has been tainted. It a rush job and information available is not sufficient.

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[<hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>](mailto:hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca)

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Thanks

Mike Moeller-County of Antigonish

Harris McNamara

From: Valerie Haskett-Chugg --
Sent: May 8, 2022 6:16 PM
To: Harris McNamara
Subject: Re: Proposed consolidation

Harris I appreciate the time you have taken to respond to my email. I know this is a busy time for you. I plan to attend the council meeting on Tuesday!! Best regards. Valerie

Sent from my iPhone

On May 8, 2022, at 6:25 AM, Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca> wrote:

Valerie;

I agree with your assessment, thanks for making your position known to council, it does make a difference. From the beginning I have been against amalgamation. It does not make sense to county residents as we are in the best financial position ever. This is being rushed through with no pros and cons, a cost benefit analysis needs to be done on every component of amalgamation . Most importantly county residents won't have a say in what happens. Six councillors (maybe less) will make the decision for you. We need a plebiscite, that way 15000 county residents will make the decision. Some don't want a plebiscite because they know it will not pass. If you want more information, please give me a call at 318-8333.
Harris

From: Valerie Haskett-Chugg ---
Sent: May 5, 2022 11:29 AM
To: Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Fwd: Proposed consolidation

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Valerie Haskett-Chugg
Date: May 5, 2022 at 11:15:10 AM ADT
To: mary maclellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ca, hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ca, sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ca, rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ca, omccarron@antigonishcounty.ca, jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ca,

gmattie@antigonishcounty.ca, hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ca,
bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ca, mayor@townofantigonish.ca,
wcormier@townofantigonish.ca, dmacinnis@townofantigonish.ca,
amurray@townofantigonish.ca, mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca,
droberts@townofantigonish.ca

Subject: Proposed consolidation

Hello everyone: I live in District 1 and I attended an information session held at Mini Trail Community Centre in Lakevale - I have read the booklet which came by mail prior to that information meeting and I have reviewed the information on the website for the consolidation.

I have yet to feel that I have sufficient information to decide that the proposed consolidation is the best way forward for the Town and County. I feel the system of delivering this to the constituents is flawed, lacking transparency. During the present time when covid cases continue to rise all around us, the attendance at these meetings is not representative of the population that will be affected if consolidation proceeds.

Consolidation was not on anyone's platform when you were all running for election. The timing for councillors voting on this seems to be quite a 'rushed' event and I absolutely feel as a constituent that I should have a vote for something that could affect me for the rest of my life. I continue to think that there is just not enough information available to constituents and I hope that all of you will open your minds to putting this process on hold and allow the town and county to have a plebiscite. This would allow everyone eligible to have a say - after all isn't this the way of democracy??

Best regards, Valerie Chugg, Cape George

Harris McNamara

From: MACDONALD, Yvette
Sent: May 8, 2022 6:21 PM
To: Donnie MacDonald; Hughie Stewart; Shawn Brophy; Remi Deveau; Owen McCarron; John Dunbar; Gary Mattie; Harris McNamara; Bill MacFarlane
Subject: Exploration of Consolidation

Good evening everyone,

I am a ratepayer in District 1 and have already sent a couple of emails to my Councillor, Mary MacLellan, explaining my position on this proposed Consolidation of the County of Antigonish and the Town of Antigonish. I had attended the meeting at the Minitrail Community Center and did have an opportunity to speak with the Mayor, the Warden and a couple of Councillors as well as one of the consultants. I found the whole format very frustrating and felt that it would leave room for miscommunication. The County Connect had simply been received the day before, on Monday, in the mail and then our session was on Tuesday. I understand that we are all busy and that does not mean that we cannot take the time to do our research prior to such meetings but even with all of that, there is still not enough information being given to us all. I will be honest as I felt slighted as it was insulting to hear that we as ratepayers would not be individually voting on this and if I hear just one more time about "historical low voter turnout"that is even more insulting. I can tell you with great certainty that my Grandfather and all other Veterans did not sacrifice so that a select few could be making these extremely important decisions!!

I consider myself open-minded most of the time and if given the information required can make informed decisions. That being said I do not feel that we have been given enough information and I don't feel that the Councillors, Mayor or Warden have enough either!! I guess that we are all looking for fairness, equity and above all transparency in any process.

Problems with the Consulting Process.....where do I start? Was it strategic to have these sessions on the heels of the restrictions being lifted when Omicron was circulating and individuals have either contracted the virus or have been in close contact so were not able to attend a session? And yes there were other options either via phone or online sessions...well if someone isn't feeling well then I am sorry but they aren't going to be able to focus on the information given. Come on there should be some common sense and if someone has to have a checkmark besides something on their scorecard then speak to it all and make the right decision. We need leaders!! As far as the Councillors go my heart goes out to them as I am sure that this wasn't something that they ever thought that they would be on the hook to do. I asked my Councillor how she was expected to keep track of all the feedback from her ratepayers....does she have a list with all of our names and if and when we contact her to discuss is she expected to keep a tally. Why would they be expected to do this? This is just another area where there is a disconnect and disrespect for our Councillors. I would never expect her to have these extra duties....a disregard of time management indeed.

Then I hear that 2 of the Councillors are not able to vote because of a Conflict of Interest. After all that I had seen up to that point and then for this to come up I guess that really was it for me. We live in Antigonish and as all of you know we are all connected one way or another or know of someone who is....I am sure that if you dug deep enough with the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act you would find that it might just apply to you all!! I want my right to vote!!

The next important part for me would be the financials. We all run our households and understand budgets so please do not insult my intelligence. We need more information on the costs associated with the Proposed Consolidation and good leaders would be explaining what the benefits would be if indeed there were any at all. Someone had asked one of the consultants at one of the sessions how much it was costing for the "Consulting Process" and he replied that "He wasn't at liberty to disclose that information." So then the Mayor was asked and she gave an amount and then a

Councillor was asked and he gave a different amount.....where is the transparency and why wasn't this information given? And please do not think that I am naïve enough to think that it is ok as this was coming from a different silo, the Provincial Government.....it is all taxpayers' money!!! Even the 2 year "Transition Fund" would be coming from the Provincial Government (so again, all of our money) and then afterwards look out as the costs will be truly shown and too late to reverse. What about the policing costs that will increase if the Proposed Consolidation does proceed?

I will end on a high note.....I do appreciate that The Mayor and the County Warden have a great working relationship. Why would we expect any less? I do understand that in the past that wasn't necessarily the case and professionally speaking it isn't always easy. That being said though it does not justify wanting two completely different entities that are in great financial shape to become one when representation and so many other factors will be changed forever. We do not need to be going backwards.

"People will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you make them feel" - **Maya Angelou**

I am definitely a "NO" at this time due to lack of information and/or a skewing of information.

Thanks,

Yvette MacDonald, BA

Retail Development Officer - Atlantic Region | Canada Post

[Unit 1- 133 Church St | Antigonish NS, B2G 2R8](#)

I respectfully acknowledge that the land of which I'm working in is located in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and traditional lands of the Mi'kmaq people. The Mi'kmaq are caretakers of this land in past, present, and future.



Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

County council presentation

2 messages

Anne-Marie Long

Mon, May 9, 2022 at 8:56 AM

To: garymattie@hotmail.com, Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Hi Guys

At 12:45 am I decided to try and put my thoughts together for a presentation on Tuesday.

I have several appts on Tuesday before the Council meeting and I have to be in Port Hawkesbury by 8:00am Tuesday. So I'll have to be in bed early tonight.

I'd really appreciate if both of you would read this and be really critical for me as to what you think should stay or come out, and what you think that I should add. Right now, I need sleep and to walk away from it.

Please do not call me before 2:00PM./

Thanks

Anne Marie



Town & County Consolidation Proposal.docx

29K

Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Mon, May 9, 2022 at 1:10 PM

To: garymattie@hotmail.com

[Quoted text hidden]



Town & County Consolidation Proposal.docx

29K

Beth Schumacher

From: Glenn Horne
Sent: May 9, 2022 9:16 AM
To: Darryl McDonald; Tma Francis
Cc: Owen McCarron; mayor@townofantigonish.ca; Jeff Lawrence
Subject: Discussion of County & Town Consolidation

Good morning, Chief Francis & Darryl –

In preparation of our meeting tomorrow I wanted to share background materials related to Consolidation of the County and Town. You can find everything we've produced to date here: <https://antigonish.ca/>. Included at that link are frequently asked questions, fact sheets related to specific issues and financial condition assessments.

We are looking forward to sitting down with you tomorrow and discussing Consolidation and any perspectives the Band Council may have.

Cheers,
Glenn



Glenn Horne | Chief Administrative Officer
Municipality of the County of Antigonish | 902.863.1117
285 Beech Hill Road, Beech Hill, NS | B2G 0B4
www.antigonishcounty.ns.ca | [@AntigonishCo](https://www.facebook.com/AntigonishCo) | [facebook](https://www.facebook.com/AntigonishCo)

Honour Yesterday, Act Today, Inspire Tomorrow

Harris McNamara

From: Beth Latwaitis
Sent: May 9, 2022 10:32 AM
To: Owen McCarron; mayor@townofantigonish.ca
Cc: Mary MacLellan; Donnie MacDonald; Hughie Stewart; Shawn Brophy; John Dunbar; Gary Mattie; Harris McNamara; Bill MacFarlane; wcmier@townofantigonish.ca; dmacinnis@townofantigonish.ca; Sean Cameron; amurray@townofantigonish.ca; Mary Farrell; droberts@townofantigonish.ca
Subject: The People

To: The Warden of the municipality of Antigonish, The Mayor of the Town of Antigonish, Councillors

This letter is being sent to ask you as leaders and councillors of our wonderful Town and County to rethink your approach in putting forward the consultants report on amalgamation and allow your constituents time to really understand the proposal and then have a vote on whether to proceed or not.

How could you think that this growing discontent would not simmer and come to a boil when the people realized they would not have a vote? You should have known from day one when the concept of amalgamation was again being considered, that to exclude a vote would be a divisive, insulting action to your constituents. It must also pose difficulty for their Elected councillors.

How could you ever discredit their thoughts, ideas, suggestions and intelligence? Writing on little cards during sparsely attended sessions is not how we come together. This matter is far too serious for that.

Why would you spoil all of the great and good cooperative will that you have worked so hard to create by once again creating disharmony? Why would you not continue to look for new and creative solutions to those problems that do exist?

The Premier has just revoked his recent (poor) decision to tax out of province residents. He has been lauded for his courage to change an ill conceived action and also for his acknowledgement it was not a good idea.

Now, obviously, most of these people were unknown to the premier and his planners.

BUT The PEOPLE asking for a chance to have a proper understanding of this issue and then a chance to have their vote counted.....

They are your people.

Sincerely, Beth Latwaitis. Southside Harbour Road.

Harris McNamara

From: Debbie Cameron MacDonald
Sent: May 9, 2022 12:17 PM
To: Harris McNamara
Subject: Re: Consolidation

The exact words I have used. Flimsy and contrived.

Use the power of your lawyer's opinion. Bullies hate it when you stand up to them.

Sent from my iPhone

On May 8, 2022, at 4:34 PM, Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca> wrote:

Debbie;

Thanks for the support, yes, I have consulted a lawyer and he has provided me a legal opinion but it's all I can say right now. It was a flimsy excuse in my opinion.

From: Debbie Cameron MacDonald
Sent: May 8, 2022 7:40 AM
To: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Re: Consolidation

Thank you for your response, Harris.

I agree with you.

What must be especially frustrating for you is that your voice is being silenced. You are being denied a vote on a very flimsy excuse. Have you consulted a lawyer?

Debbie

Sent from my iPhone

On May 8, 2022, at 7:11 AM, Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca> wrote:

Debbie;

My name is Harris McNamara, Councillor for District 9 (Havre Boucher) and from the beginning I have been against amalgamation. This is being rushed through with no pros and cons, a cost benefit analysis needs to be done on every component of amalgamation. Most importantly town & county residents won't have a say in what happens. A few councillors will make the decision for you. We need a plebiscite, that

way 15000 county residents will make the decision. Some don't want a plebiscite because they know amalgamation will not pass.
If you want more information, please give me a call at 318-8333.

Harris

From: Debbie Cameron MacDonald
Sent: May 4, 2022 4:52 PM
To: mayor@townofantigonish.ca; wcormier@townofantigonish.ca; dmacinnis@townofantigonish.ca; scameron@townofantigonish.ca; Andrew Murray <amurray@townofantigonish.ca>; mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca; droberts@townofantigonish.ca; Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Consolidation

Dear Mayor, Warden, and Councillors,

I am writing this today with a heavy heart. I have studied all the information provided on Consolidation and have attended the first online engagement session. These served to trigger far more questions than there were answers. This seems to be the same result for most concerned folks. I do not see the benefits of Consolidation outweighing the risks and expenses. To be clear, I am not in favour of Consolidation nor the process being followed.

Despite your protestations to the opposite, Consolidation seems like a done deal without having listened to the residents of Antigonish Town and County. These citizens who ask questions or express that they are not in favour of Consolidation are deemed to be misinformed and not forward-thinking. This does a great disservice to your constituents.

You, our elected or acclaimed representatives, were chosen by the people to govern within an established framework of government, not to change the framework of government, unless the people agree. The way to determine if the people agree is through a vote. Just as a vote is required to elect a government, a vote is required to change a government in a

democracy because the vote gives the people a direct say in a decision that will affect everyone, now and in the future. That is the democratic way.

To propose such a huge change at the height of the pandemic in Antigonish, was either short-sighted or a deliberate attempt to hope that folks might not take notice, or would be too cautious to attend an in-person session. Their non-attendance is being misconstrued by the proponents of Consolidation as acquiescence. When the residents do take the risk and attend an in-person session or take one in online, they quickly find out that no one is taking note of their concerns and they are receiving glib answers to their questions.

The current engagement format is intentionally isolating. No one gets to hear what concerns others have and the non-answers they are receiving. This way you are better able to control the narrative. The Mayor has expressed many times that a plebiscite wouldn't yield accurate results because people would be operating under a "false narrative". This, along with other sound bites from the consulting firm, has done nothing to alleviate the distrust of this whole process by the residents of both Town and County. The only "false narrative" that we can see is the one being pushed by exclaiming only the pros of Consolidation and the statements that indicate that Town and County will not be able to work together effectively without it. How quickly you seem to have forgotten all the good projects completed with Town and County co-operation. To name a few: People's Place Library, The Antigonish Arena, The Eastern NS Exhibition, The R.K. MacDonald Guest Home, Special Olympics, plus many, many more.

If any of you had run on a platform of Consolidation in the last election, I highly suspect we would be looking at a very different configuration of elected officials. If you were so sure that most citizens would support Consolidation, then you would have chosen the UARB route with its mandatory plebiscite rather than working through the province and very expensive consultants to control how much information is released, and how questions are answered.

Several of you have indicated that you will not be re-offering in 2024. Is this the legacy with which you wish to leave - destroying the Town and County and leaving it to others to muddle through the chaos? For those of you thinking of re-offering, choosing to go along with Consolidation at the urging of the Mayor, Warden, CAOs, and consultants rather than listening to your constituents may find you not getting re-elected. After the next

election, you won't be there, but you will have taken Antigonish with you when you left.

The latest Facebook posts purporting to answer common questions are patronizing, dismissive, and do not contain substantive answers to the very real concerns and questions raised. To be told repeatedly that most answers will not be available until after Consolidation occurs amounts to "buying a pig in a bag." Furthermore, the Mayor has been quoted in the Chronicle Herald as saying that Consolidation is not a given. That she, the Warden, and the councillors are open to the wishes of the people. Then she hastily added that the only councillors who have made up their minds are those who are against Consolidation, as if this was somehow disparaging to them. Today's quote from The Reporter, "We want to become one," dispels any illusion that the Mayor is unbiased and open-minded concerning Consolidation.

I implore all of you to take a step back from this extremely rushed and manipulated proposal and look carefully at what can be achieved by maintaining the status quo with cooperation between Town and County. This decision should be put to a vote by all residents.

Sincerely yours,

Debbie Cameron MacDonald

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: May 9, 2022 12:38 PM
To: info@antigonish.ca
Subject: FW: The People

-----Original Message-----

From: Beth Latwaitis
Sent: May 9, 2022 10:32 AM
To: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; mayor@townofantigonish.ca
Cc: Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; wcmormier@townofantigonish.ca; dmacinnis@townofantigonish.ca; Sean Cameron <scameron@townofantigonish.ca>; amurray@townofantigonish.ca; Mary Farrell <mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca>; droberts@townofantigonish.ca
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The Premier has just revoked his recent (poor) decision to tax out of province residents. He has been lauded for his courage to change an ill conceived action and also for his acknowledgement it was not a good idea.

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Sent from my iPad

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: May 9, 2022 12:39 PM
To: Beth Latwaitis
Subject: RE: The People

Beth;

Thank you for speaking out! My name is Harris McNamara, Councillor for District 9 (Havre Boucher) and from the beginning I have been against amalgamation. It does not make sense to county residents as we are in the best financial position ever. This is being rushed through with no pros and cons, a cost benefit analysis needs to be done on every component of amalgamation . Most importantly county residents won't have a say in what happens. Six councillors (maybe less) will make the decision for you. We need a plebiscite, that way 15000 county residents will make the decision.

If you want more information, please give me a call at 318-8333.

Harris

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Sent from my iPad

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: May 9, 2022 12:48 PM
To: Mary MacLellan
Subject: FW: Exploration of Consolidation

Mary;

For information

Saw you were not copied, I would want to know if a resident of District 9 sent email to other councillors and did not copy me. She said she sent you a couple of emails.

Harris

From: MACDONALD, Yvette
Sent: May 8, 2022 6:21 PM
To: Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
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Thanks,

Yvette MacDonald, BA

Retail Development Officer - Atlantic Region | Canada Post

[Unit 1- 133 Church St | Antigonish NS, B2G 2R8](#)

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Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: May 9, 2022 12:53 PM
To: MACDONALD, Yvette
Subject: RE: Exploration of Consolidation

Yvette;

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Sent: May 8, 2022 6:21 PM
To: Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Exploration of Consolidation

Good evening everyone,

I am a ratepayer in District 1 and have already sent a couple of emails to my Councillor, Mary MacLellan, explaining my position on this proposed Consolidation of the County of Antigonish and the Town of Antigonish. I had attended the meeting at the Minitrail Community Center and did have an opportunity to speak with the Mayor, the Warden and a couple of Councillors as well as one of the consultants. I found the whole format very frustrating and felt that it would leave room for miscommunication. The County Connect had simply been received the day before, on Monday, in the mail and then our session was on Tuesday. I understand that we are all busy and that does not mean that we cannot take the time to do our research prior to such meetings but even with all of that, there is still not enough information being given to us all. I will be honest as I felt slighted as it was insulting to hear that we as ratepayers would not be individually voting on this and if I hear just one more time about "historical low voter turnout"that is even more insulting. I can tell you with great certainty that my Grandfather and all other Veterans did not sacrifice so that a select few could be making these extremely important decisions!!

I consider myself open-minded most of the time and if given the information required can make informed decisions. That being said I do not feel that we have been given enough information and I don't feel that the Councillors, Mayor or Warden have enough either!! I guess that we are all looking for fairness, equity and above all transparency in any process.

Problems with the Consulting Process.....where do I start? Was it strategic to have these sessions on the heels of the restrictions being lifted when Omicron was circulating and individuals have either contracted the virus or have been in close contact so were not able to attend a session? And yes there were other options either via phone or online

sessions...well if someone isn't feeling well then I am sorry but they aren't going to be able to focus on the information given. Come on there should be some common sense and if someone has to have a checkmark besides something on their scorecard then speak to it all and make the right decision. We need leaders!! As far as the Councillors go my heart goes out to them as I am sure that this wasn't something that they ever thought that they would be on the hook to do. I asked my Councillor how she was expected to keep track of all the feedback from her ratepayers....does she have a list with all of our names and if and when we contact her to discuss is she expected to keep a tally. Why would they be expected to do this? This is just another area where there is a disconnect and disrespect for our Councillors. I would never expect her to have these extra duties....a disregard of time management indeed.

Then I hear that 2 of the Councillors are not able to vote because of a Conflict of Interest. After all that I had seen up to that point and then for this to come up I guess that really was it for me. We live in Antigonish and as all of you know we are all connected one way or another or know of someone who is....I am sure that if you dug deep enough with the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act you would find that it might just apply to you all!! I want my right to vote!!

The next important part for me would be the financials. We all run our households and understand budgets so please do not insult my intelligence. We need more information on the costs associated with the Proposed Consolidation and good leaders would be explaining what the benefits would be if indeed there were any at all. Someone had asked one of the consultants at one of the sessions how much it was costing for the "Consulting Process" and he replied that "He wasn't at liberty to disclose that information." So then the Mayor was asked and she gave an amount and then a Councillor was asked and he gave a different amount....where is the transparency and why wasn't this information given? And please do not think that I am naïve enough to think that it is ok as this was coming from a different silo, the Provincial Government.....it is all taxpayers' money!!! Even the 2 year "Transition Fund" would be coming from the Provincial Government (so again, all of our money) and then afterwards look out as the costs will be truly shown and too late to reverse. What about the policing costs that will increase if the Proposed Consolidation does proceed?

I will end on a high note....I do appreciate that The Mayor and the County Warden have a great working relationship. Why would we expect any less? I do understand that in the past that wasn't necessarily the case and professionally speaking it isn't always easy. That being said though it does not justify wanting two completely different entities that are in great financial shape to become one when representation and so many other factors will be changed forever. We do not need to be going backwards.

"People will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you make them feel" - **Maya Angelou**

I am definitely a "NO" at this time due to lack of information and/or a skewing of information.

Thanks,

Yvette MacDonald, BA

Retail Development Officer - Atlantic Region | Canada Post

[Unit 1- 133 Church St | Antigonish NS, B2G 2R8](#)

I respectfully acknowledge that the land of which I'm working in is located in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and traditional lands of the Mi'kmaq people. The Mi'kmaq are caretakers of this land in past, present, and future.



Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Antigonish Town Financial Report 2021

1 message

Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Mon, May 9, 2022 at 1:00 PM

To: Maureen Parks ·

Ron;

Just obtained the full consolidated report, happy reading! Look forward to your thoughts

Harris

 **Antigonish Town 2021 Consolidated Financial Statement.pdf**
1050K

Town of Antigonish
Consolidated Financial Statements
March 31, 2021

Independent Auditor's Report

To the Mayor and Council of Town of Antigonish:

Opinion

We have audited the consolidated financial statements of Town of Antigonish (the "Town") on pages 4 - 20, which comprise the consolidated statement of financial position as at March 31, 2021, and the consolidated statements of operations, change in net debt and cash flows for the year then ended, and a summary of significant accounting policies.

In our opinion, the accompanying consolidated financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the consolidated financial position of the Town as at March 31, 2021, and the results of its consolidated financial performance and its consolidated cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian public sector accounting standards.

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Consolidated Financial Statements section of our report. We are independent of the Town in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the consolidated financial statements in Canada, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Other Matter - Supplemental Information

Our audit was conducted for the purpose of forming an opinion on the consolidated financial statements taken as a whole. The supplementary information included on pages 21 - 30 is presented for purposes of additional information and is not a required part of the consolidated financial statements. Such supplementary information has been subjected to the auditing procedures applied, only to the extent necessary to express an opinion on the audit of consolidated financial statements as a whole.

Responsibilities of Management and Those Charged with Governance for the Consolidated Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the consolidated financial statements in accordance with Canadian public sector accounting standards, and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of consolidated financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the consolidated financial statements, management is responsible for assessing the Town's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless management either intends to liquidate the Town or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Those charged with governance are responsible for overseeing the Town's financial reporting process.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Consolidated Financial Statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the consolidated financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these consolidated financial statements.

As part of an audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards, we exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the consolidated financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.

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- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Town's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by management.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of management's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Town's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the consolidated financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Town to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the consolidated financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the consolidated financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.
- Obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence regarding the financial information of the entities or business activities within the Town to express an opinion on the consolidated financial statements. We are responsible for the direction, supervision and performance of the group audit. We remain solely responsible for our audit opinion.

We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

Sydney, Nova Scotia
September 29, 2021

MNP **LLP**
Chartered Professional Accountants

Town of Antigonish
Consolidated Financial Statements

For the year ended March 31, 2021

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Management's Responsibility for the Consolidated Financial Statements

The accompanying consolidated financial statements of the Town of Antigonish (the "Town") are the responsibility of the Town's management and have been prepared in compliance with legislation, and in accordance with Canadian public sector accounting standards. A summary of the significant accounting policies are described in Note 1 to the consolidated financial statements. The preparation of financial statements necessarily involves the use of estimates based on management's judgment, particularly when transactions affecting the current accounting period cannot be finalized with certainty until future periods.

The Town's management maintains a system of internal controls designed to provide reasonable assurance that assets are safeguarded, transactions are properly authorized and recorded in compliance with legislative and regulatory requirements, and reliable financial information is available on a timely basis for preparation of the consolidated financial statements. These systems are monitored and evaluated by management.

The audit committee meets with management and the external auditors to review the consolidated financial statements and discuss any significant financial reporting or internal control matters prior to their approval of the consolidated financial statements.

The consolidated financial statements have been audited by MNP LLP, Chartered Professional Accountants, independent external auditors appointed by the Town. The accompanying Independent Auditors' Report outlines their responsibilities, the scope of their examination and their opinion on the Town's consolidated financial statements.



Mr. Jeffrey Lawrence
Chief Administrative Officer

Town of Antigonish
Consolidated Statement of Financial Position

As at March 31, 2021

	2021	2020
FINANCIAL ASSETS		
Cash (note 2)	\$ 7,572,384	\$ 5,636,212
Taxes receivable (note 3)	140,986	165,930
Other receivables (note 4)	4,405,145	4,757,525
	12,118,515	10,559,667
FINANCIAL LIABILITIES		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	3,624,323	3,520,098
Deferred revenue	599,635	302,380
Long-term debt (note 5)	32,261,151	33,995,100
	36,485,109	37,817,578
NET DEBT	(24,366,594)	(27,257,911)
NON-FINANCIAL ASSETS		
Tangible capital assets (note 7)	55,686,018	56,422,344
Inventory and prepaid expenses	882,114	719,030
	56,568,132	57,141,374
ACCUMULATED SURPLUS (note 8)	\$ 32,201,538	\$ 29,883,463

Contingencies (note 15)

See accompanying notes to consolidated financial statements.

On behalf of the Town of Antigonish:

 Mayor

 Chief Administrative Officer

Town of Antigonish
Consolidated Statement of Operations

For the year ended March 31, 2021

	Budget (Unaudited)	2021	2020
REVENUES			
Taxes	\$ 4,656,771	\$ 4,614,636	\$ 4,647,262
Grants in lieu of taxes	1,104,269	1,104,269	1,108,743
Services provided to other governments	468,286	415,686	364,814
Unconditional transfers from other governments	228,556	562,920	230,995
Conditional transfers from other governments	-	320,767	642,230
Capital grants	-	172,958	932,766
Sale of services	21,975,343	22,110,175	20,211,286
Other revenue from own sources	128,800	184,391	164,697
Interest and service charge	32,873	70,344	126,966
Other transfers	2,500	2,000	2,500
	28,597,398	29,558,146	28,432,259
EXPENSES			
General government services	1,666,217	1,612,798	1,632,637
Protective services	2,126,865	2,092,425	2,181,483
Transportation services	1,596,609	2,042,870	1,971,350
Environmental health services	1,057,122	1,203,485	1,174,821
Environmental development services	604,834	695,250	809,084
Recreation and cultural services	539,371	625,594	649,778
Electric utility expenses	9,730,276	9,822,722	10,853,333
Water utility expenses	1,020,313	1,090,001	1,167,041
AREA expenses	8,844,997	8,054,926	5,954,174
	27,186,604	27,240,071	26,393,701
ANNUAL SURPLUS	1,410,794	2,318,075	2,038,558
ACCUMULATED SURPLUS, BEGINNING OF YEAR		29,883,463	27,844,905
ACCUMULATED SURPLUS, END OF YEAR	\$	\$ 32,201,538	\$ 29,883,463

See accompanying notes to consolidated financial statements.

Town of Antigonish
Consolidated Statement of Change in Net Debt
For the year ended March 31, 2021

	2021	2020
ANNUAL SURPLUS	\$ 2,318,075	\$ 2,038,558
Other non-financial assets		
Amortization of tangible capital assets	2,908,156	2,787,810
Additions to tangible capital assets	(2,179,128)	(3,189,678)
Loss on disposal of tangible capital assets	7,298	-
Increase in inventory, prepaid expenses and work in progress	(163,084)	(53,554)
DECREASE IN NET DEBT	2,891,317	1,583,136
NET DEBT, BEGINNING OF YEAR	(27,257,911)	(28,841,047)
NET DEBT, END OF YEAR	\$ (24,366,594)	\$ (27,257,911)

See accompanying notes to consolidated financial statements.

Town of Antigonish
Consolidated Statement of Cash Flows
Year ended March 31, 2021

	2021	2020
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES		
Annual surplus	\$ 2,318,075	\$ 2,038,558
Add		
Amortization of tangible capital assets	2,908,156	2,787,810
Loss on disposal of tangible capital assets	7,298	-
Change in non-cash items		
Decrease in taxes receivable	24,944	138,681
Decrease (increase) in other accounts receivable	352,380	(864,506)
Increase (decrease) in accounts payable and accrued liabilities	104,225	(205,585)
Increase (decrease) in deferred revenue	297,255	(376,105)
Increase in inventory, prepaid expenses and work in progress	(163,084)	(53,554)
	<u>5,849,249</u>	<u>3,465,299</u>
CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES		
Repayment of long-term debt	(1,733,949)	(1,816,261)
Repayment of temporary borrowing	-	(86,481)
	<u>(1,733,949)</u>	<u>(1,902,742)</u>
CASH FLOWS FROM CAPITAL ACTIVITIES		
Additions to tangible capital assets	(2,179,128)	(3,189,678)
INCREASE (DECREASE) IN CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS	<u>1,936,172</u>	<u>(1,627,121)</u>
CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS, BEGINNING OF YEAR	5,636,212	7,263,333
CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS, END OF YEAR	<u>\$ 7,572,384</u>	<u>\$ 5,636,212</u>

See accompanying notes to consolidated financial statements.

Town of Antigonish
Notes to Consolidated Financial Statements

For the year ended March 31, 2021

1. SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

(a) Basis of presentation

These consolidated financial statements of Town of Antigonish (the "Town") have been prepared, in all material respects, in accordance with Canadian public sector accounting standards.

(b) Basis of consolidation

These consolidated financial statements reflect the assets, liabilities, revenue, expenses and changes in fund balances of all resources of the Town. The Town is comprised of all organizations, committees and local boards accountable for the administration of their financial affairs and resources to the Town and that are owned or controlled by the Town. Inter-fund and inter-corporate balances and transactions have been eliminated. The entities included are as follows:

- General Operating and Capital Funds
- Water Operating and Capital Funds
- Electric Operating and Capital Funds
- Reserve Funds

Consistent with generally accepted accounting principles for government partnerships, the Town has accounted for Alternative Resource Energy Authority (AREA) using the proportionate consolidation method: Alternative Resource Energy Authority (AREA) – 63% (2020 – 63%).

(c) School boards

The assets, liabilities, taxation and other revenue and expenses with respect to the operations of the school boards are not reflected in these consolidated financial statements as they are provincial government entities.

School boards in Nova Scotia were created by the Province under provisions in the Education Act, and, under provincial statute, every Town is required to make a mandatory contribution to its school board. The mandatory contribution is set at the value of the Education Rate, set by the Province each year, multiplied by the previous year's Uniform Assessment. The funding for this contribution to the Strait Regional School Board are recovered by the Town by an area rate levied on the assessed value of the taxable property and business occupancy assessments and is shown on the consolidated statement of financial activities as a reduction of taxation revenue.

Town of Antigonish
Notes to Consolidated Financial Statements

For the year ended March 31, 2021

1. SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (CONTINUED)

(d) R. K. MacDonald Nursing Home Corporation

The R. K. MacDonald Nursing Home Corporation is jointly controlled by the Town of Antigonish and the Municipality of the County of Antigonish, and is not consolidated in these financial statements.

(e) Fund accounting

The resources and operations of the Town are comprised of the operating, capital and reserve funds. Transfers between funds are recorded as adjustments to the appropriate fund balance. Supporting schedules to the consolidated financial statements are included to show the financial activities and change in the balance of each fund.

(f) Basis of accounting

Revenue and expenses are recorded on the accrual basis of accounting. The accrual basis of accounting recognizes revenue as they are earned and measurable; expenses are recognized as they are incurred and measurable as a result of the receipt of goods or services and the creation of a legal obligation to pay.

(g) Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents is defined as cash on hand and on deposit at banks net of any outstanding cheques or deposits.

(h) Tangible capital assets

Tangible capital assets are reported in the statement of financial position at cost net of accumulated amortization. They are amortized on a straight-line basis over their estimated useful lives at the following rates:

General Fund	Basis	Rate
Buildings	Straight-line	2.5 – 5%
Office equipment	Straight-line	20%
Heavy equipment	Straight-line	4 – 10%
Canals and bridges	Straight-line	2.5%
Paving, curbs and sidewalks	Straight-line	4 – 10%
Sewer systems	Straight-line	2%
Recreation facilities	Straight-line	2 – 10%
Electric transmission and distribution	Straight-line	2.4 – 12.5%
Water purification	Straight-line	4 – 5%
Water transmission and distribution	Straight-line	1.33 – 20%
AREA	Straight-line	2 – 10%

Town of Antigonish
Notes to Consolidated Financial Statements

For the year ended March 31, 2021

1. SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (CONTINUED)

The amortization charge in the electric operating fund is required to be transferred to a special bank account in the electric capital fund which is used to help fund replacement of existing equipment. The amortization charge in water operating fund is required to be transferred to a special bank account in the water capital fund which is used to help fund replacement of existing equipment, or subject to approval by the Utility and Review Board, to repay principal of capital debt.

No amortization is taken in the year of acquisition.

(i) Government transfers

Government transfers are recognized in the consolidated financial statements in the period in which events giving rise to the transfer occur, providing the transfers are authorized, any eligibility criteria have been met, and reasonable estimates of the amounts can be made.

(j) Deferred revenue

Deferred revenue represents user charges, prepayment of taxes, and other fees that have been collected, for which the related services have yet to be performed. These amounts will be recognized as revenue in the fiscal year the services are performed.

(k) Reserve funds

Certain amounts, as approved by Council of the Town, are set aside in reserve funds for future operating and capital purposes. Transfers to and or from reserves funds are an adjustment to the respective fund when approved.

(l) Taxation and related revenues

Property tax billings are prepared by the Town based on assessment rolls issued by the Property Valuation Services Corporation. Tax rates are established annually by Council, incorporating amounts to be raised for local services and the requisition made by the Province in respect of education taxes and other mandatory contributions. Taxation revenues are recorded at the time tax billings are due. Assessments and the related property taxes are subject to appeal. Tax adjustments as a result of appeals are recorded when the results of the appeal process are known. An allowance for unresolved assessment appeals is also provided.

(m) Use of estimates

The preparation of financial statements in conformity with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets, liabilities, the disclosure of contingencies and the reported amounts of revenue and expenses in the consolidated financial statements and accompanying notes. Significant items subject to management's estimate and assumptions include the valuation of receivables and carrying amount of tangible capital assets. Due to the inherent uncertainty in making estimates, actual results could differ from those estimates.

Town of Antigonish
Notes to Consolidated Financial Statements

For the year ended March 31, 2021

2. CASH

	2021	2020
Cash		
General operating fund	\$ 1,317,165	\$ 265,551
Water capital fund	228,560	322,428
Electric capital fund	2,142,992	2,112,146
Capital reserve fund	2,202,062	1,575,847
Operating reserve fund	1,131,214	738,807
AREA	550,391	609,603
	7,572,384	5,624,382
Restricted cash		
General operating fund	-	11,830
	\$ 7,572,384	\$ 5,636,212

3. TAXES RECEIVABLE

	2021	2020
Balance, beginning of year	\$ 224,598	\$ 372,791
Current year's levy of property taxes and rates	5,281,118	5,186,825
Subtotal	5,505,716	5,559,616
Less		
Current year's collections	5,296,829	5,329,941
Reduced taxes	9,233	5,077
	5,306,062	5,335,018
Gross taxes receivable, end of year	199,654	224,598
Less allowance for uncollectible taxes	(58,668)	(58,668)
Taxes receivable, net	\$ 140,986	\$ 165,930

Town of Antigonish
Notes to Consolidated Financial Statements

For the year ended March 31, 2021

4. OTHER RECEIVABLES

	2021	2020
Water rates	\$ 275,767	\$ 281,661
Electric rates	1,966,938	2,272,763
Sewer rates	150,892	142,237
Harmonized sales taxes receivable	25,727	70,501
Other	2,286,364	2,254,540
	4,705,688	5,021,702
Allowance	(300,543)	(264,177)
	\$ 4,405,145	\$ 4,757,525

5. LONG-TERM DEBT

The schedule of long-term debt details the outstanding balance, terms and conditions related to each debt agreement.

Principal payments required in each of the next five years on debt held as of March 31, 2021 are as follows:

2022	\$ 2,557,900
2023	1,624,700
2024	1,654,700
2025	1,687,300
2026	1,688,800

6. OPERATING LINE OF CREDIT

The Town has an operating line of credit of \$1,000,000 at an annual interest rate of prime minus .50% per annum, repayable on demand of which \$Nil was used at March 31, 2021 (2020 - \$Nil).

Town of Antigonish
Notes to Consolidated Financial Statements
For the year ended March 31, 2020

7. TANGIBLE CAPITAL ASSETS

	2020		2021		Amortization End of Year	Net Book Value	Net Book Value
	Cost Beginning of Year	Additions	Disposals and Write-downs	Cost End of Year			
General government services	\$ 242,506	\$ —	\$ —	\$ 242,506	\$ —	\$ 242,506	\$ 242,506
Land	1,393,110	21,457	—	1,414,567	438,305	925,922	954,805
Plant and equipment	159,634	8,958	—	168,592	117,882	43,171	41,752
Protective services	132,007	—	—	132,007	86,434	42,838	45,573
Buildings	1,933,122	—	—	1,933,122	1,136,630	679,230	796,492
Transportation services	200,176	57,172	—	257,348	77,805	172,394	122,371
Buildings	16,007,960	805,466	82,516	16,730,910	6,258,641	9,982,267	9,749,319
Plant and equipment	64,809	—	—	64,809	—	64,809	64,809
Environmental health services	8,341,405	272,234	—	8,613,639	4,848,704	3,597,887	3,492,701
Land	3,666,940	262,261	20,852	3,908,349	1,127,310	2,658,613	2,539,630
Plant and equipment	13,380,542	474,319	—	13,854,861	5,475,265	8,011,722	7,905,277
Water utility assets	7,262,949	205,369	—	7,468,318	4,592,815	2,656,491	2,670,134
Electric utility assets	32,384,302	71,892	—	32,456,194	4,587,327	26,608,168	27,796,975
AREA assets	\$ 85,169,462	\$ 2,179,128	\$ 103,368	\$ 87,245,222	\$ 28,747,118	\$ 55,686,018	\$ 56,422,344
				\$ 2,908,156	\$ 31,559,204	\$ 96,070	\$ 55,686,018

Town of Antigonish
Notes to Consolidated Financial Statements

For the year ended March 31, 2021

8. ACCUMULATED SURPLUS

	2021	2020
General operating fund	\$ -	\$ -
Water operating fund	(387,909)	(271,936)
Electric operating fund	1,226,318	718,854
Capital reserve fund	2,202,062	1,575,847
Operating reserve fund	1,377,062	1,074,212
General capital fund	16,005,157	15,330,794
Water capital fund	7,280,286	7,107,708
Electric capital fund	4,792,234	4,775,031
AREA	(293,672)	(427,047)
	\$ 32,201,538	\$ 29,883,463

9. GOVERNMENT PARTNERSHIPS

Alternative Resource Energy Authority (AREA) is a partnership between the towns of Antigonish, Berwick and Mahone Bay. The individual towns operate electric utilities and distribute power to customers within their service area. AREA was primarily created to construct and operate a windfarm facility in Ellershouse, Nova Scotia. The Town of Antigonish receives 63% of the net income, the Town of Berwick receives 27% and the Town of Mahone Bay receives 10%. The revenues, expenses, assets and liabilities are shared between the municipalities based on each municipality's share of the power generated.

Town of Antigonish
Notes to Consolidated Financial Statements
For the year ended March 31, 2021

9. GOVERNMENT PARTNERSHIPS (CONTINUED)

A summary of financial information for AREA for the fiscal years 2021 and 2020 as per their audited financial statements are as follows:

Consolidated Statement of Financial Position

March 31, 2021, with comparative figures for 2020

	2021	2020
FINANCIAL ASSETS	\$ 3,877,137	\$ 3,879,452
FINANCIAL LIABILITIES		
Long-term debt	44,995,795	46,993,650
Other financial liabilities	1,755,982	1,705,873
	46,751,777	48,699,523
NET FINANCIAL DEBT	(42,874,640)	(44,820,071)
NON-FINANCIAL ASSETS		
Tangible capital assets	42,235,188	44,122,182
Prepaid expenses	173,306	20,036
	42,408,494	44,142,218
NET DEFICIT	\$ (466,146)	\$ (677,853)

Consolidated Statement of Operations

March 31, 2021, with comparative figures for 2020

	2021	2020
TOTAL REVENUE	\$ 14,190,918	\$ 10,622,356
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	12,785,596	9,451,070
ANNUAL SURPLUS	\$ 1,405,322	\$ 1,171,286

Included in total revenue is power sold to the Town in the amount of \$6,003,719 (2020 - \$5,219,305). These revenues were not eliminated in the consolidation.

Town of Antigonish
Notes to Consolidated Financial Statements
For the year ended March 31, 2021

10. INVESTMENT IN R. K. MACDONALD NURSING HOME CORPORATION

R. K. MacDonald Nursing Home Corporation is jointly governed by the Town and County and is not consolidated. The following table provides condensed supplementary financial information for the Nursing Home:

	2021	2020
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION		
Current assets	\$ 5,358,580	\$ 4,192,167
Capital assets	9,694,774	9,753,541
Total assets	15,053,354	13,945,708
Current liabilities	2,585,170	2,226,546
Long-term liabilities	8,650,329	8,828,346
Total liabilities	11,235,499	11,054,892
NET ASSETS	\$ 3,817,855	\$ 2,890,816

STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS

Revenues	\$ 14,145,876	\$ 13,571,643
Operating expenses	(12,243,520)	(11,816,080)
Financing and capital	(975,317)	(895,477)
EXCESS OF REVENUES OVER EXPENSES	\$ 927,039	\$ 860,086

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

Cash flows from		
Operating activities	\$ 1,667,318	\$ 1,595,212
Financing and investing activities	(564,076)	(559,950)

11. DEFINED BENEFIT PENSION PLAN

The Town provides a defined benefit pension plan to the Town Clerk through participation in the municipal clerks' pension plan (the Plan) with nine other units. The last valuation was completed at March 31, 2020 with an extrapolation of the results completed for March 31, 2021.

Town of Antigonish
Notes to Consolidated Financial Statements
For the year ended March 31, 2021

11. DEFINED BENEFIT PENSION PLAN (CONTINUED)

The significant assumptions adopted in measuring the Town's accrued benefit obligation are as follows:

	2021	2020
Interest rate, net of expenses	4.75%	4.75%
Inflation	2.0%	2.0%
Mortality	CPM 2014 projected with mortality improvements scale CPM-B	CPM 2014 projected with mortality improvements scale CPM-B
	2021	2020
Market value of assets	\$ 516,688	\$ 453,970
Estimated liability	461,883	467,473
	\$ 54,805	\$ (13,503)

During the year the Town made contributions of \$Nil (2020 - \$Nil). Benefits paid during the year were \$25,857 (2020 - \$25,486).

12. SCHOOL CAPITAL FUND

On January 1, 1982, the Town of Antigonish joined with the County of Antigonish to form the Antigonish District School Board. Under the agreement, all school buildings on hand at December 31, 1982 will remain assets of the municipal units but will be under the operational control of the Strait Regional School Board until such time as the Board no longer requires the assets for school purposes. At that time, control will revert back to the municipal units. School buildings are not included in tangible capital assets as they are not under control of the Town.

Town of Antigonish
Notes to Consolidated Financial Statements
For the year ended March 31, 2020

13. SEGMENT DISCLOSURE

	2021							2020			
	General Government Services	Protective Services	Transportation Services	Environmental Health Services	Environmental Development Services	Recreation and Culture Services	Electric Utility	Water Utility	AREA	Total	Total
REVENUES											
Taxes	\$ 4,132,188	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 482,448	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 4,614,636	\$ 4,647,262
Grants in lieu of taxes	1,104,269	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,104,269	1,108,743
Services provided to other governments	-	-	-	254,710	-	-	-	160,976	-	415,686	364,814
Unconditional transfers from other governments	530,701	-	-	32,219	-	-	-	-	-	562,920	230,995
Conditional transfers from other governments	320,767	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	320,767	642,230
Capital grants	-	-	-	-	-	172,958	-	-	-	172,958	932,766
Sale of services	-	36,000	35,753	628,342	-	75,409	11,086,895	1,307,498	8,940,278	22,110,175	20,211,286
Other revenue from own sources	184,391	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	184,391	164,697
Interest and service charge	20,451	-	-	-	-	-	42,189	7,704	-	70,344	126,966
Other transfers	2,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2,000	2,500
	6,294,767	36,000	35,753	1,397,719	-	248,367	11,129,084	1,476,178	8,940,278	29,558,146	28,432,259
EXPENSES											
Salaries and benefits	953,829	294,391	429,347	167,141	200,043	265,782	592,452	152,287	160,731	3,216,003	3,075,454
Goods, services and other	582,786	1,665,837	998,893	869,296	495,207	203,462	9,011,258	521,770	5,758,846	20,107,355	19,476,845
Amortization	57,879	119,997	579,667	167,048	-	135,980	219,012	367,874	1,260,699	2,908,156	2,787,810
Interest	18,304	12,200	34,963	-	-	20,370	-	48,070	874,650	1,008,557	1,053,592
	1,612,798	2,092,425	2,042,870	1,203,485	695,250	625,594	9,822,722	1,090,001	8,054,926	27,240,071	26,393,701
ANNUAL SURPLUS (DEFICIT)	\$ 4,681,969	\$(2,056,425)	\$(2,007,117)	\$ 194,234	\$(695,250)	\$(377,227)	\$ 1,306,362	\$ 386,177	\$ 885,352	\$ 2,318,075	\$ 2,038,558

Town of Antigonish
Notes to Consolidated Financial Statements
For the year ended March 31, 2021

14. TRANSFERS TO PROVINCIAL BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

The Town of Antigonish is required to share in financing the operations of various Boards and Commissions. In addition to any budgeted contributions, the Town shares in the deficits or surpluses of these Boards based on their sharing percentages. The Town's share of the deficit is to be paid in the next fiscal year, while a surplus is to be taken into the next year's estimates.

	2021 Contribution	2020 Contribution
Antigonish Regional Housing Authority	\$ 126,000	\$ 85,683
Pictou – Antigonish Regional Library	38,821	38,821
Antigonish Arena Association	50,168	61,188
Strait Regional School Board	1,476,243	1,446,812
Corrections contribution	77,824	78,609
Assessment services contribution	77,188	77,234

15. CONTINGENCIES

- a) The Town has guaranteed or committed to guarantee loans of the R. K. MacDonald Nursing Home Corporation to a maximum of \$4,097,897.
- b) The Town has guaranteed or committed to guarantee a 63% share of loans to Alternative Resource Energy Authority to a maximum of \$29,605,000. The Town's share of AREA loans outstanding at March 31, 2021 is \$28,347,351.
- c) The Town ceased using the Beech Hill landfill site, operated by the Municipality of the County of Antigonish, on September 30, 1996. The Town has a financial obligation to the Municipality for a portion of the costs associated with the eventual closure and post closure maintenance of that site. The Municipality has not billed the Town for these costs and consultants retained by the Town to estimate those costs have been denied access to the site. Accordingly, complete information on the nature and estimated amount of cost of closure, accrued to September 30, 1996, is not available to the Town.

The Town has not accrued an estimate of their obligation nor provided funding for closure costs which, if material are required under Canadian public sector accounting standards.

When the amount, if any, is determined or settlement reached it will be accounted for at that time.

- d) The Town has guaranteed that power brokered from NB Power by AREA will be paid for by the Town's electric utility if AREA defaults. The Town's exposure relates only to the power that is imported on their behalf.

Town of Antigonish
Notes to Consolidated Financial Statements
For the year ended March 31, 2021

16. RATE OF RETURN ON BASE

Water Utility

For the year ended March 31, 2021 the Town of Antigonish Water Utility had a rate of return on rate base of 1.19% (2020 – 2.41%).

Electric Utility

For the year ended March 31, 2021 the Town of Antigonish Electric Utility had a rate of return on rate base of 74.30% (2020 – 24.78%).

17. FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

Fair value of financial instruments

The fair value of the Town's financial instruments that are comprised of cash, taxes receivable, other accounts receivable, and accounts payable and accrued liabilities approximate their carrying value due to their short-term nature.

The fair value of long-term debt is based on rates currently available to the Town with similar terms and maturities and approximates its carrying value.

Unless otherwise noted, it is management's opinion that the Town is not exposed to significant interest, currency or credit risks arising from these financial instruments.

18. REMUNERATION OF MEMBERS OF COUNCIL AND CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

The total remuneration paid to the Mayor, Council and Chief Administrative Officer of the Town are as follows:

Name	Title	Annual Remuneration	Travel and Other Expenses	Total
Laurie Boucher	Mayor	\$ 40,776	\$ –	\$ 40,776
Sean Cameron	Councillor	11,730	45	11,775
William Cormier	Councillor	23,461	543	24,004
Diane Roberts	Councillor	23,461	206	23,667
Mary Farrell	Deputy Mayor/Councillor	24,978	180	25,158
John K. MacPherson	Councillor	11,731	135	11,866
Donnie MacInnis	Deputy Mayor/Councillor	23,461	180	23,641
Andrew Murray	Councillor	24,545	365	24,910
Jeff Lawrence	Chief Administrative Officer	148,447	5,253	153,700
		\$ 332,590	\$ 6,907	\$ 339,497

Town of Antigonish
Notes to Consolidated Financial Statements
For the year ended March 31, 2021

19. COVID-19

In early March 2020 the impact of the global outbreak of COVID-19 (coronavirus) began to have a significant impact on businesses through the restrictions put in place by the Canadian, provincial and municipal governments regarding travel, business operations and isolation/quarantine orders.

At this time, it is unknown the extent of the impact the COVID-19 outbreak may have on the Town as this will depend on future developments that are highly uncertain and that cannot be predicted with confidence. These uncertainties arise from the inability to predict the ultimate geographic spread of the disease, and the duration of the outbreak, including the duration of travel restrictions, business closures or disruptions, and quarantine/isolation measures that are currently, or may be put, in place by Canada and other countries to fight the virus.

20. COMPARATIVE FIGURES

Certain 2020 comparative figures have been reclassified to conform to the financial statement presentation adopted for the current year.

Town of Antigonish
Consolidated Schedule of Long-Term Debt
For the year ended March 31, 2021

Interest rate - %	Matures	Balance March 31, 2020	Issued	Redeemed	Balance March 31, 2021
General Capital Fund					
Nova Scotia Municipal Finance Corporation					
3.471 - 4.026	2026	\$ 540,000	\$ -	\$ 45,000	\$ 495,000
2.516 - 3.347	2024	175,000	-	35,000	140,000
1.809 - 2.925	2026	198,100	-	28,300	169,800
1.475 - 3.209	2032	1,876,000	-	147,000	1,729,000
2.132 - 3.073	2027	480,000	-	60,000	420,000
		3,269,100	-	315,300	2,953,800
Water Capital Fund					
Nova Scotia Municipal Finance Corporation					
4.57 - 4.59	2021	1,120,000	-	160,000	960,000
AREA					
Nova Scotia Municipal Finance Corporation					
1.15 - 3.475	2030	13,363,403	-	602,847	12,760,556
1.2 - 3.209	2032	9,009,567	-	385,532	8,624,035
2.06 - 3.501	2033	7,233,030	-	270,270	6,962,760
		29,606,000	-	1,258,649	28,347,351
		\$ 33,995,100	\$ -	\$ 1,733,949	\$ 32,261,151

Town of Antigonish
Water Utility Section
Statement of Financial Position - Operating Fund
As at March 31, 2021
(Unaudited)

	2021	2020
ASSETS		
Receivables, net	\$ 264,608	\$ 269,713
Inventory held for use	153,849	109,571
	\$ 418,457	\$ 379,284
LIABILITIES		
Accrued liabilities	\$ 19,074	\$ 22,380
Due to general operating fund	787,292	628,840
	806,366	651,220
DEFICIT	(387,909)	(271,936)
	\$ 418,457	\$ 379,284

Town of Antigonish
Water Utility Section
Statement of Operations and Deficit - Operating Fund

For the year ended March 31, 2021

(Unaudited)

	2021	2020	
	Budget	Actual	Actual
OPERATING REVENUES			
Operating			
Metered	\$ 1,333,571	\$ 1,282,726	\$ 1,274,872
Public fire protection	238,994	238,994	213,379
Private fire protection	160,970	160,976	154,271
Sprinkler service and hydrants	25,000	20,149	22,666
Other operating revenue	-	3,050	2,021
	<u>1,758,535</u>	<u>1,705,895</u>	<u>1,667,209</u>
OPERATING EXPENSES			
Source of supply	36,639	40,262	35,064
Pumping and power	70,886	67,371	67,176
Water treatment	452,705	427,749	441,383
Transmission and distribution	428,254	417,197	458,110
Administration and general	147,379	259,827	108,340
Depreciation	378,006	367,874	343,099
Taxes	38,100	38,646	38,647
	<u>1,551,969</u>	<u>1,618,926</u>	<u>1,491,819</u>
NET OPERATING REVENUE	206,566	86,969	175,390
NON-OPERATING REVENUES			
Interest on account	7,000	3,722	5,498
Interest on depreciation fund	-	-	(8,692)
Miscellaneous income	250	1,406	200
	<u>7,250</u>	<u>5,128</u>	<u>(2,994)</u>
NON-OPERATING EXPENSES			
Principal payments	(160,000)	(160,000)	(160,000)
Interest on debentures	(48,400)	(48,070)	(55,627)
	<u>(208,400)</u>	<u>(208,070)</u>	<u>(215,627)</u>
CHANGE IN FUND BALANCE	5,416	(115,973)	(43,231)
DEFICIT, BEGINNING OF YEAR		(271,936)	(228,705)
DEFICIT, END OF YEAR	\$	\$ (387,909)	\$ (271,936)

Town of Antigonish
Water Utility Section
Statement of Financial Position - Capital Fund
As at March 31, 2021
(Unaudited)

	2021	2020
ASSETS		
Depreciation fund		
Restricted cash	\$ 228,560	\$ 322,428
Tangible capital assets		
Utility plant and equipment	13,854,859	13,380,542
	\$ 14,083,419	\$ 13,702,970
LIABILITIES		
Term debenture	\$ 960,000	\$ 1,120,000
Deferred assistance	222,719	239,404
Accumulated depreciation	5,843,136	5,475,265
	7,025,855	6,834,669
FUND BALANCE	7,057,564	6,868,301
	\$ 14,083,419	\$ 13,702,970

Town of Antigonish
Water Utility Section
Statement of Investment in Capital Assets - Capital Fund
For the year ended March 31, 2021
(Unaudited)

	2021	2020
BALANCE, BEGINNING OF YEAR	\$ 6,868,301	\$ 6,585,775
Province of Nova Scotia grants	15,300	124,925
Government of Canada grants	1,305	76,504
Other grants	10,081	720
Term debt retired	160,000	160,000
Capital retired	—	(95,830)
Interest and other	2,577	16,207
BALANCE, END OF YEAR	\$ 7,057,564	\$ 6,868,301

Town of Antigonish
Water Utility Section
Schedule of Tangible Capital Assets

As at March 31, 2021

(Unaudited)

			2021	2020
	Cost	Accumulated Amortization	Net Book Value	Net Book Value
Land				
Source of supply	\$ 500,211	\$ -	\$ 500,211	\$ 500,211
Reservoir	12,965	-	12,965	12,965
Reservoir land study	47,448	8,636	38,812	36,670
Transmission	123,442	-	123,442	123,442
Buildings				
Source of supply	1,556,067	855,161	700,906	738,004
Purification	4,274,380	2,251,475	2,022,905	2,147,481
Distribution reservoirs and stand pipes	969,872	407,829	562,043	579,394
Transmission mains	2,024,787	953,722	1,071,065	1,082,725
Distribution mains	2,233,098	514,084	1,719,014	1,461,742
Services	461,264	140,978	320,286	289,650
Meters	1,065,273	537,925	527,348	577,516
Hydrants	349,914	57,583	292,331	261,402
Equipment				
Transportation services	112,201	64,405	47,796	13,767
Tools and work	119,583	49,770	69,813	76,593
Office	4,354	1,568	2,786	3,715
	\$ 13,854,859	\$ 5,843,136	\$ 8,011,723	\$ 7,905,277

Town of Antigonish
Electric Operating Section
Statement of Financial Position - Operating Fund
As at March 31, 2021
(Unaudited)

	2021	2020
ASSETS		
Receivables	\$ 1,695,461	\$ 2,038,502
Due from own funds	434,409	-
Inventory	497,681	461,460
	\$ 2,627,551	\$ 2,499,962
LIABILITIES		
Trade payables	\$ 822,837	\$ 888,829
Due to general operating fund	-	579,518
Fuel credit	311,268	-
Reserve for customer deposits	267,128	312,761
	1,401,233	1,781,108
SURPLUS	1,226,318	718,854
	\$ 2,627,551	\$ 2,499,962

Town of Antigonish
Electric Utility Section
Statement of Operations and Surplus - Operating Fund
For the year ended March 31, 2021
(Unaudited)

	2021	2020	
	Budget	Actual	
OPERATING REVENUES			
Operating			
Domestic service	\$ 4,087,496	\$ 4,525,957	
Commercial service	5,195,896	5,306,982	
Large general service	1,453,821	1,428,782	
Street lighting	162,188	168,544	
Service connections and meter rental	24,905	32,340	
	<u>10,924,306</u>	<u>11,462,605</u>	
NON-OPERATING REVENUES (EXPENSES)			
Interest	25,873	24,986	
Interest on consumer deposits	(5,450)	(5,111)	
	<u>20,423</u>	<u>19,875</u>	
	<u>10,944,729</u>	<u>11,482,480</u>	
OPERATING EXPENSES			
Power purchased	2,381,005	2,438,587	
Power generation and delivery	5,952,540	6,003,719	
Substations and buildings	28,711	22,678	
Distribution	168,538	168,087	
Administration and general	1,032,674	1,010,337	
Property taxes	2,777	2,777	
Depreciation	225,000	219,012	
Wages	515,986	534,819	
	<u>10,307,231</u>	<u>10,400,016</u>	
CHANGE IN FUND BALANCE	637,498	1,082,464	
SURPLUS, BEGINNING OF YEAR	718,854	718,854	
Transfer to general operating fund	(575,000)	(575,000)	
SURPLUS, END OF YEAR	<u>\$ 781,352</u>	<u>\$ 1,226,318</u>	

Town of Antigonish
Electric Utility Section
Statement of Financial Position - Capital Fund

As at March 31, 2021
(Unaudited)

	2021	2020
ASSETS		
Restricted cash - depreciation fund	\$ 2,142,992	\$ 2,112,146
Tangible capital assets	7,468,317	7,262,949
	\$ 9,611,309	\$ 9,375,095
LIABILITIES		
Due to general operating fund	\$ -	\$ -
Reserve for future expenditures	7,252	7,252
Accumulated depreciation	4,811,823	4,592,815
	4,819,075	4,600,067
FUND BALANCE	4,792,234	4,775,028
	\$ 9,611,309	\$ 9,375,095

Town of Antigonish
Electric Utility Section
Statement of Investment in Capital Assets - Capital Fund
For the year ended March 31, 2021
(Unaudited)

	2021	2020
BALANCE, BEGINNING OF YEAR	\$ 4,775,028	\$ 4,803,063
Interest and other	17,206	39,569
Capital retired	-	(67,604)
BALANCE, END OF YEAR	\$ 4,792,234	\$ 4,775,028

Town of Antigonish
Electric Utility Section
Schedule of Tangible Capital Assets

As at March 31, 2021

(Unaudited)

	2021		2020	
	Cost	Accumulated Amortization	Net Book Value	Net Book Value
Garage	\$ 164,170	\$ 40,350	\$ 123,820	\$ 91,249
Substation	408,731	291,309	117,422	127,641
Primary	1,771,444	1,148,038	623,406	646,633
Secondary	473,125	334,650	138,475	149,435
Transformers	2,242,332	1,804,926	437,406	427,920
Service	676,442	419,690	256,752	267,941
Other	90,467	19,693	70,774	2,473
Street lights	421,936	113,401	308,535	313,587
Meters	346,393	256,205	90,188	100,176
Transportation	644,904	323,810	321,094	371,624
Shop	62,805	54,722	8,083	10,671
Office	4,294	4,294	-	-
Rate study equipment	161,274	735	160,539	160,784
	\$ 7,468,317	\$ 4,811,823	\$ 2,656,494	\$ 2,670,134



Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Interesting take on Amalgamation

1 message

Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Mon, May 9, 2022 at 1:05 PM

To:

Good evening everyone,

I am a ratepayer in District 1 and have already sent a couple of emails to my Councillor, Mary MacLellan, explaining my position on this proposed Consolidation of the County of Antigonish and the Town of Antigonish. I had attended the meeting at the Minitrail Community Center and did have an opportunity to speak with the Mayor, the Warden and a couple of Councillors as well as one of the consultants. I found the whole format very frustrating and felt that it would leave room for miscommunication. The County Connect had simply been received the day before, on Monday, in the mail and then our session was on Tuesday. I understand that we are all busy and that does not mean that we cannot take the time to do our research prior to such meetings but even with all of that, there is still not enough information being given to us all. I will be honest as I felt slighted as it was insulting to hear that we as ratepayers would not be individually voting on this and if I hear just one more time about "historical low voter turnout"that is even more insulting. I can tell you with great certainty that my Grandfather and all other Veterans did not sacrifice so that a select few could be making these extremely important decisions!!

I consider myself open-minded most of the time and if given the information required can make informed decisions. That being said I do not feel that we have been given enough information and I don't feel that the Councillors, Mayor or Warden have enough either!! I guess that we are all looking for fairness, equity and above all transparency in any process.

Problems with the Consulting Process.....where do I start? Was it strategic to have these sessions on the heels of the restrictions being lifted when Omicron was circulating and individuals have either contracted the virus or have been in close contact so were not able to attend a session? And yes there were other options either via phone or online sessions...well if someone isn't feeling well then I am sorry but they aren't going to be able to focus on the information given. Come on there should be some common sense and if someone has to have a checkmark besides something on their scorecard then speak to it all and make the right decision. We need leaders!! As far as the Councillors go my heart goes out to them as I am sure that this wasn't something that they ever thought that they would be on the hook to do. I asked my Councillor how she was expected to keep track of all the feedback from her ratepayers....does she have a list with all of our names and if and when we contact her to discuss is she expected to keep a tally. Why would they be expected to do this? This is just another area where there is a disconnect and disrespect for our Councillors. I would never expect her to have these extra duties....a disregard of time management indeed.

Then I hear that 2 of the Councillors are not able to vote because of a Conflict of Interest. After all that I had seen up to that point and then for this to come up I guess that really was it for me. We live in Antigonish and as all of you know we are all connected one way or another or know of someone who is....I am sure that if you dug deep enough with the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act you would find that it might just apply to you all!! I want my right to vote!!

The next important part for me would be the financials. We all run our households and understand budgets so please do not insult my intelligence. We need more information on the costs associated with the Proposed Consolidation and good leaders would be explaining what the benefits would be if indeed there were any at all. Someone had asked one of the consultants at one of the sessions how much it was costing for the "Consulting Process" and he replied that "He wasn't at liberty to disclose that information." So then the Mayor was asked and she gave an amount and then a Councillor was asked and he gave a different amount.....where is the transparency and why wasn't this information given? And please do not think that I am naïve enough to think that it is ok as this was coming from a different silo, the Provincial

Government.....it is all taxpayers' money!!! Even the 2 year "Transition Fund" would be coming from the Provincial Government (so again, all of our money) and then afterwards look out as the costs will be truly shown and too late to reverse. What about the policing costs that will increase if the Proposed Consolidation does proceed?

I will end on a high note.....I do appreciate that The Mayor and the County Warden have a great working relationship. Why would we expect any less? I do understand that in the past that wasn't necessarily the case and professionally speaking it isn't always easy. That being said though it does not justify wanting two completely different entities that are in great financial shape to become one when representation and so many other factors will be changed forever. We do not need to be going backwards.

"People will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you make them feel"
- **Maya Angelou**

I am definitely a "NO" at this time due to lack of information and/or a skewing of information.

Thanks,

Harris McNamara

From: Jeanne Doiron
Sent: May 9, 2022 5:00 PM
To: Mary MacLellan; Donnie MacDonald; Hughie Stewart; Shawn Brophy; Remi Deveau; Owen McCarron; John Dunbar; Gary Mattie; Harris McNamara; Bill MacFarlane
Subject: Consolidation process

Good afternoon everyone

I am writing to you all today out of concern with regards to the consultation process regarding consolidation of town and county.

As a resident of the county, I am calling on all of you who were elected by your constituents to put this issue back to your constituents and am therefore requesting a plebiscite. This issue is not an issue that any of you campaigned on and if this decision is made by the residents, it is not a decision any of you will have to wear going forward. Regardless of how this turns out, the right thing to do is to allow residents to have their voice heard by allowing them to cast a vote.

I urge you to slow down this process and bring this to your council meeting agenda tomorrow evening and do the right thing by calling a plebiscite on this issue.

Sincerely

Jeanne Doiron
District 5 resident

Harris McNamara

From: Audrey MacDonald
Sent: May 9, 2022 8:10 PM
To: mayor@townofantigonish.ca; wcornier@townofantigonish.ca; dmacinnis@townofantigonish.ca; scameron@townofantigonish.ca; amurray@townofantigonish.ca; mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca; droberts@townofantigonish.ca; Mary MacLellan; Donnie MacDonald; Hughie Stewart; Shawn Brophy; Remi Deveau; Owen McCarron; John Dunbar; Gary Mattie; Harris McNamara; Bill MacFarlane
Subject: Re: Prospective Consolidation of Antigonish Town and County Municipalities

I feel compelled to provide my perspective on the prospective merger of the municipalities of the town and county of Antigonish.

Firstly, I commend you for your willingness to engage in municipal politics with the intent of addressing the needs of your constituents. Further, from what I have seen in the few years since I have returned to the area, the positive cooperation between the two councils has resulted in programs and activities beneficial to the residents of both municipalities. That seems to be, in no small part, because of the individuals who are representing us. However, sometimes an issue goes beyond the regular mandate provided by the electorate and, as such, requires a different approach. This proposed merger is such an issue. It was not on the "agenda" during the last municipal election; therefore, I suggest our mayor, warden, and councillors have not been provided a mandate to decide an issue of this magnitude for us. Instead, to me at least, it feels like a rather paternalistic approach.

I am adding my name to the list of constituents requesting a plebiscite.

Initially, I was rather ambivalent about the issue. I understood information was to be gathered; research was to be conducted. I anticipated the results of this investigation -- both pros and cons -- would be presented and we would be provided the opportunity to make an informed decision either through what would be my preferred format -- a plebiscite -- or, at the very least, as an election issue at the time of the next municipal election. Unfortunately, that currently is not the case. Instead, I feel we are being provided a less than balanced picture leading to a vote by some of our elected officials.

In addition, I am requesting a pause in the process so that a more robust and transparent approach might occur. I have attended a drop-in session and, while I appreciated the willingness of the CAO and consultant with whom I spoke to provide answers to my questions, I felt I left knowing little more than I knew upon arrival. I also appreciated my discussion with Councillor Dunbar. His track record of standing up for his constituents is commendable. However, he, like many of our councillors, is reserving judgement until he has gathered more input from the public. I believe the more traditional town-hall type meeting will provide that input in a far more clear and transparent manner. I believe it is important for individuals to be able to ask their questions and share their concerns in a manner that allows others to also gain information.

Currently, I really don't know whether we would benefit from the proposed merger. I, too, require more time and information to make an informed decision, should I be allowed to vote on this issue. I have read the literature posted on the website, which leans heavily toward the advantages, and followed whatever social media information I have been able to access, which leans heavily toward the disadvantages. This debate

needs to be held in public for the benefit of all. While there very well may be benefits to a merger, so far, I have not seen evidence sufficiently compelling to convince me it is necessary. I am, however, open to being convinced. In my opinion, change can be beneficial, and this change might be for the best. However, I believe it is incumbent on those who propose a change to provide compelling proof. I don't think we are there yet.

In summary please allow us to vote on this significant issue, preferably after providing opportunities for robust discussion.

I look forward to seeing where this process might go.

Audrey

Harris McNamara

From: Adam Powers <...>
Sent: May 9, 2022 8:53 PM
To: Harris McNamara
Subject: Need for plebiscite or election for large issues

Hello councillor McNamara:

My name is Adam Powers, and I live in Frankville. I moved here in September 2020. I am originally from Cape Breton, but had been living away in Ontario for 20 years.

I am writing about the proposed consolidation between Antigonish town and county.

I have major concerns about the proposed vote without meaningful public voice on this issue. I am neither for or against the change yet; however, I am against the change being proposed since it is deeply anti-democratic.

In order to make a change like this, there either has to be one of two things done:

1. Have an election and campaign openly with your position on whether you will vote for the joining or not. People can choose candidates accordingly.
2. Have a plebiscite if is important to get a decision sooner.

In both of these options, the council must provide a lot of information to people—even hire people to study the merger first, then provide that unbiased information to the people, especially regarding finances and how services would be affected.

I am a well educated person and have the ability to make informed choices. The people who live here are adults, and the councils of town and county need to treat us as such and give us information to help us decide what is in our best interests in the future.

As an adult, I can also hear other people's opinions without getting upset or yelling. Letting people talk and then vote is civilized. Democracy can be messy, but is an important principal upon which our country is founded. Please respect it and push for a plebiscite or build the next election around this issue.

Adam Powers

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows

Beth Schumacher

From: Adam Powers ·
Sent: May 9, 2022 9:17 PM
To: Owen McCarron
Subject: Deeply concerned about consolidation procedures

Hello Warden McCarron:

My name is Adam Powers, and I live in Frankville. I moved here in September 2020. I am originally from Cape Breton, but had been living away in Ontario for 20 years.

I am writing about the proposed consolidation between Antigonish town and county.

I have major concerns about the proposed vote without meaningful public voice on this issue. I am neither for or against the change yet; however, I am against the change being proposed since it is deeply anti-democratic as it is being currently approached.

In order to make a change like this, there either has to be one of two things done:

1. Have an election and campaign openly with your position on whether you will vote for the joining or not. People can choose candidates accordingly.
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In both of these options, the council must provide a lot of information to people—even hire people to study the merger first, then provide that unbiased information to the people, especially regarding finances and how services would be affected.

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Adam Powers

Frankville Road, Frankville

Harris McNamara

From: debbie fougere · [redacted]
Sent: May 9, 2022 9:32 PM
To: Hughie Stewart
Cc: Mary MacLellan; jdunbar@antigonish.ns.ca; Gary Mattie; Donnie MacDonald; Shawn Brophy; Remi Deveau; Bill MacFarlane; Harris McNamara
Subject: Amalgamation

You need to give this decision to the people of the county !

Harris McNamara

From: Mary MacLellan
Sent: May 10, 2022 7:22 AM
To: Harris McNamara
Subject: RE: Exploration of Consolidation

Yvette, I understand your frustration and concerns. I have attended most sessions and heard your sons questions at Pomquet last night. They echo your concerns. They probably told you the format of the sessions has changed to sit down, ask questions, receive more detailed answers. Unfortunately that doesn't help the communities that already had their session. I am going to ask for a similar session in district one after this schedule has finished. I am hoping to have success with this and, at least, people will have a chance to participate. Mary

From: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Sent: May 9, 2022 12:48 PM
To: Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: FW: Exploration of Consolidation

Mary;

For information

Saw you were not copied, I would want to know if a resident of District 9 sent email to other councillors and did not copy me. She said she sent you a couple of emails.

Harris

From: MACDONALD, Yvette <y_____
Sent: May 8, 2022 6:21 PM
To: Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Exploration of Consolidation

Good evening everyone,

I am a ratepayer in District 1 and have already sent a couple of emails to my Councillor, Mary MacLellan, explaining my position on this proposed Consolidation of the County of Antigonish and the Town of Antigonish. I had attended the meeting at the Minitrail Community Center and did have an opportunity to speak with the Mayor, the Warden and a couple of Councillors as well as one of the consultants. I found the whole format very frustrating and felt that it would leave room for miscommunication. The County Connect had simply been received the day before, on Monday, in the mail and then our session was on Tuesday. I understand that we are all busy and that does not mean that we cannot take the time to do our research prior to such meetings but even with all of that, there is still not enough information being given to us all. I will be honest as I felt slighted as it was insulting to hear that we as ratepayers would not be individually voting on this and if I hear just one more time about "historical low voter turnout"that is even more insulting. I can tell you with great certainty that my Grandfather and all other Veterans did not sacrifice so that a select few could be making these extremely important decisions!!

I consider myself open-minded most of the time and if given the information required can make informed decisions. That being said I do not feel that we have been given enough information and I don't feel that the

Councillors, Mayor or Warden have enough either!! I guess that we are all looking for fairness, equity and above all transparency in any process.

Problems with the Consulting Process.....where do I start? Was it strategic to have these sessions on the heels of the restrictions being lifted when Omicron was circulating and individuals have either contracted the virus or have been in close contact so were not able to attend a session? And yes there were other options either via phone or online sessions...well if someone isn't feeling well then I am sorry but they aren't going to be able to focus on the information given. Come on there should be some common sense and if someone has to have a checkmark besides something on their scorecard then speak to it all and make the right decision. We need leaders!! As far as the Councillors go my heart goes out to them as I am sure that this wasn't something that they ever thought that they would be on the hook to do. I asked my Councillor how she was expected to keep track of all the feedback from her ratepayers....does she have a list with all of our names and if and when we contact her to discuss is she expected to keep a tally. Why would they be expected to do this? This is just another area where there is a disconnect and disrespect for our Councillors. I would never expect her to have these extra duties....a disregard of time management indeed.

Then I hear that 2 of the Councillors are not able to vote because of a Conflict of Interest. After all that I had seen up to that point and then for this to come up I guess that really was it for me. We live in Antigonish and as all of you know we are all connected one way or another or know of someone who is....I am sure that if you dug deep enough with the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act you would find that it might just apply to you all!! I want my right to vote!!

The next important part for me would be the financials. We all run our households and understand budgets so please do not insult my intelligence. We need more information on the costs associated with the Proposed Consolidation and good leaders would be explaining what the benefits would be if indeed there were any at all. Someone had asked one of the consultants at one of the sessions how much it was costing for the "Consulting Process" and he replied that "He wasn't at liberty to disclose that information." So then the Mayor was asked and she gave an amount and then a Councillor was asked and he gave a different amount.....where is the transparency and why wasn't this information given? And please do not think that I am naïve enough to think that it is ok as this was coming from a different silo, the Provincial Government.....it is all taxpayers' money!!! Even the 2 year "Transition Fund" would be coming from the Provincial Government (so again, all of our money) and then afterwards look out as the costs will be truly shown and too late to reverse. What about the policing costs that will increase if the Proposed Consolidation does proceed?

I will end on a high note.....I do appreciate that The Mayor and the County Warden have a great working relationship. Why would we expect any less? I do understand that in the past that wasn't necessarily the case and professionally speaking it isn't always easy. That being said though it does not justify wanting two completely different entities that are in great financial shape to become one when representation and so many other factors will be changed forever. We do not need to be going backwards.

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I am definitely a "NO" at this time due to lack of information and/or a skewing of information.

Thanks,

Yvette MacDonald, BA

Retail Development Officer - Atlantic Region | Canada Post

[Unit 1- 133 Church St | Antigonish NS, B2G 2R8](#)

I respectfully acknowledge that the land of which I'm working in is located in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and traditional lands of the Mi'kmaq people. The Mi'kmaq are caretakers of this land in past, present, and future.

Harris McNamara

From: Mary MacLellan
Sent: May 10, 2022 7:49 AM
To: Harris McNamara
Subject: RE: Exploration of Consolidation

Who was the resident, Harris, I got an awful lot of emails. Mary

From: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Sent: May 9, 2022 12:48 PM
To: Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: FW: Exploration of Consolidation

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For information

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To: Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
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Thanks,

Yvette MacDonald, BA

Retail Development Officer - Atlantic Region | Canada Post

[Unit 1- 133 Church St | Antigonish NS, B2G 2R8](#)

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Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: May 10, 2022 8:20 AM
To: info@antigonish.ca
Subject: FW: Amalgamation

From: debbie fougere · - - -
Sent: May 9, 2022 9:32 PM
To: Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Cc: Mary MacLellan <maclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; jdunbar@antigonish.ns.ca; Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Amalgamation

You need to give this decision to the people of the county !

Shirlyn Donovan

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: Tuesday, May 10, 2022 8:20 AM
To: info
Subject: FW: Amalgamation

From: debbie fougere <
Sent: May 9, 2022 9:32 PM
To: Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Cc: Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; jdunbar@antigonish.ns.ca; Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Amalgamation

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Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: May 10, 2022 8:23 AM
To: Adam Powers
Subject: RE: Need for plebiscite or election for large issues

Adam;

Thank you for questioning the process! My name is Harris McNamara, Councillor for District 9 (Havre Boucher) and from the beginning I have been against amalgamation. It does not make sense to county residents as we are in the best financial position ever. This is being rushed through with no pros and cons, a cost benefit analysis needs to be done on every component of amalgamation . Most importantly county residents won't have a say in what happens. Six councillors (maybe less) will make the decision for you. We need a plebiscite, that way 15000 county residents will make the decision.

If you want more information, please give me a call at 318-8333.

Harris

From: Adam Powers <
Sent: May 9, 2022 8:53 PM
To: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Need for plebiscite or election for large issues

Hello councillor McNamara:

My name is Adam Powers, and I live in Frankville. I moved here in September 2020. I am originally from Cape Breton, but had been living away in Ontario for 20 years.

I am writing about the proposed consolidation between Antigonish town and county.

I have major concerns about the proposed vote without meaningful public voice on this issue. I am neither for or against the change yet; however, I am against the change being proposed since it is deeply anti-democratic.

In order to make a change like this, there either has to be one of two things done:

1. Have an election and campaign openly with your position on whether you will vote for the joining or not. People can choose candidates accordingly.
2. Have a plebiscite if is important to get a decision sooner.

In both of these options, the council must provide a lot of information to people—even hire people to study the merger first, then provide that unbiased information to the people, especially regarding finances and how services would be affected.

I am a well educated person and have the ability to make informed choices. The people who live here are adults, and the councils of town and county need to treat us as such and give us information to help us decide what is in our best interests in the future.

As an adult, I can also hear other people's opinions without getting upset or yelling. Letting people talk and then vote is civilized. Democracy can be messy, but is an important principal upon which our country is founded. Please respect it and push for a plebiscite or build the next election around this issue.

Adam Powers

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows

Harris McNamara

From: Valerie Haskett-Chugg
Sent: May 10, 2022 8:25 AM
To: Mary MacLellan
Subject: County council meeting this evening

Good morning Mary. It's great to see sunshine which gets me energized to start gardening. I have been following the group that are questioning the consolidation process. It's very evident this process has been pushed along quickly whether by the consultants or the mayor and warden and I have not yet talked to anyone who is in favour of the format. People need their say and the present meetings that allow you to complete a card and chat with councillors is just not adequate. This process needs to be much more transparent. Comments made by the mayor indicate her preference for consolidation although she says she has not made up her mind. That's a mixed message! There is just not enough information available and until there is, at this evening's council meeting would you please ask for this process to be delayed. I also would like you to ask that a plebiscite be held to allow voters the right to have their say! Both units appear to be operating well without consolidating- it's great that everyone now gets along but merging as one after all this time and with the perceived impression of lack of transparency with the present process change of the process needs to take place. The change needed I feel is to allow constituents the right to vote on such an important issue which will affect everyone in both town and county!
I will attend this evening's meeting !

Best regards. Valerie

Sent from my iPhone

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: May 10, 2022 8:28 AM
To: debbie fougere
Subject: RE: Amalgamation

Hi Debbie;

Beautiful day! The sun energizes me, I am tired of cold weather. I was up on your road with Terry, he was showing me progress on their house. You got a beautiful home!

Thank you for questioning the process! From the beginning I have been against amalgamation. It does not make sense to county residents as we are in the best financial position ever. This is being rushed through with no pros and cons, a cost benefit analysis needs to be done on every component of amalgamation . Most importantly county residents won't have a say in what happens. Six councillors (maybe less) will make the decision for you. We need a plebiscite, that way 15000 county residents will make the decision.

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Sent: May 9, 2022 9:32 PM
To: Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Cc: Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; jdunbar@antigonish.ns.ca; Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Amalgamation

You need to give this decision to the people of the county !

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: May 10, 2022 8:31 AM
To: Mary MacLellan
Subject: RE: Exploration of Consolidation

Mary;
Can you give me a call? I only forwarded you, Yvette MacDonald's email because she did not copy you.
Harris

From: Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Sent: May 10, 2022 7:49 AM
To: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: RE: Exploration of Consolidation

Who was the resident, Harris, I got an awful lot of emails. Mary

From: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Sent: May 9, 2022 12:48 PM
To: Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: FW: Exploration of Consolidation

Mary;
For information
Saw you were not copied, I would want to know if a resident of District 9 sent email to other councillors and did not copy me. She said she sent you a couple of emails.
Harris

From: MACDONALD, Yvette <
Sent: May 8, 2022 6:21 PM
To: Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
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Good evening everyone,

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individually voting on this and if I hear just one more time about “historical low voter turnout”that is even more insulting. I can tell you with great certainty that my Grandfather and all other Veterans did not sacrifice so that a select few could be making these extremely important decisions!!

I consider myself open-minded most of the time and if given the information required can make informed decisions. That being said I do not feel that we have been given enough information and I don't feel that the Councillors, Mayor or Warden have enough either!! I guess that we are all looking for fairness, equity and above all transparency in any process.

Problems with the Consulting Process.....where do I start? Was it strategic to have these sessions on the heels of the restrictions being lifted when Omicron was circulating and individuals have either contracted the virus or have been in close contact so were not able to attend a session? And yes there were other options either via phone or online sessions...well if someone isn't feeling well then I am sorry but they aren't going to be able to focus on the information given. Come on there should be some common sense and if someone has to have a checkmark besides something on their scorecard then speak to it all and make the right decision. We need leaders!! As far as the Councillors go my heart goes out to them as I am sure that this wasn't something that they ever thought that they would be on the hook to do. I asked my Councillor how she was expected to keep track of all the feedback from her ratepayers....does she have a list with all of our names and if and when we contact her to discuss is she expected to keep a tally. Why would they be expected to do this? This is just another area where there is a disconnect and disrespect for our Councillors. I would never expect her to have these extra duties....a disregard of time management indeed.

Then I hear that 2 of the Councillors are not able to vote because of a Conflict of Interest. After all that I had seen up to that point and then for this to come up I guess that really was it for me. We live in Antigonish and as all of you know we are all connected one way or another or know of someone who is....I am sure that if you dug deep enough with the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act you would find that it might just apply to you all!! I want my right to vote!!

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"People will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you make them feel" - **Maya Angelou**

I am definitely a “NO” at this time due to lack of information and/or a skewing of information.

Thanks,

Yvette MacDonald, BA

Retail Development Officer - Atlantic Region | Canada Post

Unit 1- 133 Church St | Antigonish NS, B2G 2R8

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Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: May 10, 2022 8:35 AM
To: info@antigonish.ca
Subject: FW: Prospective Consolidation of Antigonish Town and County Municipalities

From: Audrey MacDonald ·
Sent: May 9, 2022 8:10 PM
To: mayor@townofantigonish.ca; wcornier@townofantigonish.ca; dmacinnis@townofantigonish.ca; scameron@townofantigonish.ca; amurray@townofantigonish.ca; mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca; droberts@townofantigonish.ca; Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Re: Prospective Consolidation of Antigonish Town and County Municipalities

I feel compelled to provide my perspective on the prospective merger of the municipalities of the town and county of Antigonish.

Firstly, I commend you for your willingness to engage in municipal politics with the intent of addressing the needs of your constituents. Further, from what I have seen in the few years since I have returned to the area, the positive cooperation between the two councils has resulted in programs and activities beneficial to the residents of both municipalities. That seems to be, in no small part, because of the individuals who are representing us. However, sometimes an issue goes beyond the regular mandate provided by the electorate and, as such, requires a different approach. This proposed merger is such an issue. It was not on the "agenda" during the last municipal election; therefore, I suggest our mayor, warden, and councillors have not been provided a mandate to decide an issue of this magnitude for us. Instead, to me at least, it feels like a rather paternalistic approach.

I am adding my name to the list of constituents requesting a plebiscite.

Initially, I was rather ambivalent about the issue. I understood information was to be gathered; research was to be conducted. I anticipated the results of this investigation -- both pros and cons -- would be presented and we would be provided the opportunity to make an informed decision either through what would be my preferred format -- a plebiscite -- or, at the very least, as an election issue at the time of the next municipal election. Unfortunately, that currently is not the case. Instead, I feel we are being provided a less than balanced picture leading to a vote by some of our elected officials.

In addition, I am requesting a pause in the process so that a more robust and transparent approach might occur. I have attended a drop-in session and, while I appreciated the willingness of the CAO and consultant with whom I spoke to provide answers to my questions, I felt I left knowing little more than I knew upon arrival. I also appreciated my discussion with Councillor Dunbar. His track record of standing up for his

constituents is commendable. However, he, like many of our councillors, is reserving judgement until he has gathered more input from the public. I believe the more traditional town-hall type meeting will provide that input in a far more clear and transparent manner. I believe it is important for individuals to be able to ask their questions and share their concerns in a manner that allows others to also gain information.

Currently, I really don't know whether we would benefit from the proposed merger. I, too, require more time and information to make an informed decision, should I be allowed to vote on this issue. I have read the literature posted on the website, which leans heavily toward the advantages, and followed whatever social media information I have been able to access, which leans heavily toward the disadvantages. This debate needs to be held in public for the benefit of all. While there very well may be benefits to a merger, so far, I have not seen evidence sufficiently compelling to convince me it is necessary. I am, however, open to being convinced. In my opinion, change can be beneficial, and this change might be for the best. However, I believe it is incumbent on those who propose a change to provide compelling proof. I don't think we are there yet.

In summary please allow us to vote on this significant issue, preferably after providing opportunities for robust discussion.

I look forward to seeing where this process might go.

Audrey

Shirlyn Donovan

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: Tuesday, May 10, 2022 8:35 AM
To: info
Subject: FW: Prospective Consolidation of Antigonish Town and County Municipalities

From: Audrey MacDonald ·
Sent: May 9, 2022 8:10 PM
To: mayor@townofantigonish.ca; wcmormier@townofantigonish.ca; dmacinnis@townofantigonish.ca; scameron@townofantigonish.ca; amurray@townofantigonish.ca; mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca; droberts@townofantigonish.ca; Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
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Audrey

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: May 10, 2022 8:36 AM
To: Audrey MacDonald
Subject: RE: Prospective Consolidation of Antigonish Town and County Municipalities

Audrey;

Thank you for questioning the process! My name is Harris McNamara, Councillor for District 9 (Havre Boucher) and from the beginning I have been questioning amalgamation. It does not make sense to county residents as we are in the best financial position ever. This is being rushed through with no pros and cons, a cost benefit analysis needs to be done on every component of amalgamation . Most importantly county residents won't have a say in what happens. Six councillors (maybe less) will make the decision for you. We need a plebiscite, that way 15000 county residents will make the decision.

If you want more information, please give me a call at 318-8333.

Harris

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Sent: May 9, 2022 8:10 PM
To: mayor@townofantigonish.ca; wcornier@townofantigonish.ca; dmacinnis@townofantigonish.ca; scameron@townofantigonish.ca; amurray@townofantigonish.ca; mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca; droberts@townofantigonish.ca; Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
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Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: May 10, 2022 8:37 AM
To: Jeanne Doiron
Subject: RE: Consolidation process

Jeanne;

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Harris

From: Jeanne Doiron
Sent: May 9, 2022 5:00 PM
To: Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Consolidation process

Good afternoon everyone

I am writing to you all today out of concern with regards to the consultation process regarding consolidation of town and county.

As a resident of the county, I am calling on all of you who were elected by your constituents to put this issue back to your constituents and am therefore requesting a plebiscite. This issue is not an issue that any of you campaigned on and if this decision is made by the residents, it is not a decision any of you will have to wear going forward. Regardless of how this turns out, the right thing to do is to allow residents to have their voice heard by allowing them to cast a vote.

I urge you to slow down this process and bring this to your council meeting agenda tomorrow evening and do the right thing by calling a plebiscite on this issue.

Sincerely

Jeanne Doiron
District 5 resident

Harris McNamara

From: Mary MacLellan
Sent: May 10, 2022 8:43 AM
To: Harris McNamara
Subject: RE: Exploration of Consolidation

Harris, I have been getting Yvette's emails. She must send them to me personally. I will give you a call when Angie comes to look after AD. I can only spend small amounts of time unless there is some one else to answer, as he is frequently calling for assistance . Mary

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Sent: May 10, 2022 8:31 AM
To: Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: RE: Exploration of Consolidation

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I am definitely a "NO" at this time due to lack of information and/or a skewing of information.

Thanks,

Yvette MacDonald, BA

Retail Development Officer - Atlantic Region | Canada Post

[Unit 1- 133 Church St | Antigonish NS, B2G 2R8](#)

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From: [Terry Penny](#)
To: [Owen McCarron](#); [Mary MacLellan](#); [Donnie MacDonald](#); [Hughie Stewart](#); [Harris McNamara](#); [Gary Mattie](#); [John Dunbar](#); [Bill MacFarlane](#); [Remi Deveau](#); [Shawn Brophy](#); [Beth Schumacher](#)
Subject: Consolidation Presentation
Date: May 10, 2022 10:09:51 AM
Attachments: [Council Presentation.pdf](#)

Good Morning

Unfortunately due to a household Covid positive case I am unable to safely participate in tonights Council meeting. I have attached my document for your review and, if possible, would appreciate them being included in the minutes of the meeting.

Thank you

Terry Penny, Lakevale

Good Evening Warden and Members of Council.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my thoughts on the Process being used to decide the issue of Consolidation.

I am not here to argue the merits of Consolidation. Not being privy to the extensive research completed by Council, but only being presented with those aspects of the research that support a position in favour of Consolidation I cannot make a valid argue of support for or against either side of the issue.

What I am here to argue is that while, as the Warden has stated “he was elected to make decisions” I do not believe he, or any of the Councillors, was elected to make a decision on Consolidation. Consolidation is an issue that affects every aspect of our communities. Consolidation cannot be reversed. Therefore weighing the benefits and liabilities of consolidating the town and county is the responsibility and **right** of the residents of Antigonish County.

I believe every eligible voter in Antigonish County has the right to participate in this decision making either by electing municipal officials who have campaigned on the issue or by voting in a plebiscite on Consolidation. Since candidates in the last municipal election of 2020 failed to raise Consolidation as part of their platform, unless a motion is made and accepted to set aside the present process, a plebiscite is the only option.

I find the rationale for Council’s decision to proceed with a Council vote rather than a public vote to be flawed, insulting and demeaning to the intellectual capacity of the residents of Antigonish County.

The very divisiveness that the Warden and Mayor claim will occur if a vote is allowed is being created and fuelled by their very actions of ignoring the voices of the people. The people of Antigonish Town and County are not so weak that they need the protection of the Municipal governments in order to express their opinions. To continually suggest that people are afraid to publicly support an issue for fear of being attacked is insulting to the great people of this community. As with all issues facing our town, county , indeed our province and country - there are often two sides to an issues and yet these issues are decided upon through the democratic process of voting. All of us have long been raised to believe that voting is our opportunity to exercise our position on an issue. All of us have been raised to respect the decision of the electorate.

To suggest that Social Media only flares an issue and leads to the dissemination of misleading or wrong information is speaking out of both sides of your mouth. Both the Town and County have been relentless in presenting their arguments for Consolidation through Social Media Channels. Indeed it seems that daily videos are being released presenting the Warden and Mayor's perspective on the issue. This information is presented as 100% factual yet any discussion questioning the presented one-sided research is summarily dismissed as either invalid and untrue, or misleading and wrong.

Statements have been made that the drop-in engagement session format was chosen as opposed to open discussion meetings as the drop-in engagement sessions encourages 1:1 chats where accurate information could be shared and that open discussion meetings were intimidating to many residents. If indeed you are challenged in creating a space where residents can speak without fear of retribution, the privacy of our most democratic right, the secret ballot, allows every resident to speak without fear of intimidation.

Statements have been made suggesting that if a vote was held, voters would be relying on "inaccurate social media information" rather than the facts. It has also been stated that social media discussion encourages an emotional rather than a factual response to the ballot question. Again this type of statement insults the capacity of Antigonish residents to think objectively on an issue. I am no more emotional on the issue of consolidation than is the Warden or Mayor.

Stating as your information package does that Consolidation is a "BOTTOM-UP" process suggests that the residents have control of this issue when in fact, the Mayor and Warden have set up the process that while giving a superficial reassurance of listening to the people, leaves the ultimate decision in the hands of Council. Both the Mayor and Warden have stated repeatedly that their minds are not made up, they are open but yet their comments such as "we want to become one" (Mayor, May 4, The Reporter) and the Warden Mc Carron statement in a released video "If not now, when?" suggest, that despite the voices being raised in opposition to the process, they have decided the outcome of this issue

The voices heard in the 18 guided, poster presentation, in person engagement sessions, emails and phone calls (estimated by the the mayor at 800+) cannot and do not represent the 18,000 + population of our communities. The voices of 1000+ members of the Facebook Group have provided both Councils with more information than the Engagement Sessions. Please listen.

The process you have evoked to disseminate your information and collect the opinion of the residents rather than the issue of Consolidation itself is dividing

our communities. The disagreement between and amongst our councillors is dividing our Councils. Trust is being eroded at an alarming pace. The process is flawed. It is perceived as unfair and perception is reality. Please put an end to this process before it destroys our communities.

If Consolidation is the most positive way forward for our communities then please do not be afraid to present the voters with all information - the pros, the cons and the unknown. Let there be open discussion to allay fears. Only then can an informed decision be made. If consolidation is good today it will still be good in six months, a year. Slow down. Stop rushing.

The recent change in non-resident property tax plan introduced by the Provincial Government followed by a complete abolition of the tax should serve as an example to our Municipal Government. In the words of Premier Houston "when you move fast sometimes you need to pause and adjust course. We are not so arrogant that we can't admit when we need to adjust." I ask that you demonstrate the leadership you speak of and again, in the words of the Premier, "put personal pride to the side" and stop the present closed process.

I ask that our Municipal Government follow the Provincial lead, "admit they need to adjust course" and present and support a motion to table or dismiss the present consolidation decision making process and make the possibility of consolidation a platform in the next municipal election.

In the words of Maya Angelou

"I did then what I knew how to do. Now that I know better, I do better."

It appears to be within your hands to destroy or heal our community. Please choose wisely.

Thank you for your time

Terry Penny, Lakevale

From: [Beth Schumacher](#)
To: [Council](#)
Subject: Materials for Tonight's Committee of the Whole Delegation
Date: May 10, 2022 10:33:00 AM
Attachments: [Town & County Consolidation Presentation.docx](#)

Good morning everyone,

Further to the email that came out this morning from Ms. Penny with the material that she was looking to present at the Committee of the Whole meeting, I am also sending along material from Anne Marie Long that she sent me this morning for the meeting tonight.

I have printed copies of these that will be placed at your desks.

Cheers,

Beth

Town & County Consolidation Presentation

To try and give some context to my concerns about the process being used, my interpretation about how the Warden defines due diligence, and the timeline to date, on the consolidation discussions, I am presenting my findings in a chronological fashion.

The Sept 13/21, Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes of The County of Antigonish (County Minutes) reflected the Warden's introduction to the Councillors, "to the discussion regarding consideration of consolidating the County & Town of Antigonish". Each of the Councillors are recorded as asking questions and one specifically referred to whether the taxpayers would have a final say; another stressed the possibility of a plebiscite; and my Councillor "clarified the ability of the Municipality to back out of the process if it chose to". The Minutes also reflect that the Councillors were told during this meeting that discussions had already taken place with the Dept of Municipal Affairs. The Minutes also reflect the carried resolution: "The Committee recommends that the Town of Antigonish and the Municipality of the County of Antigonish work with the Department of Municipal Affairs to explore consolidation of the two municipal units."

The Town & County joint press release on September 13, 2021, stated that they had voted to gather the information needed to consider consolidating the two municipal units into one regional government. It spoke to the "exploration phase" involving ***"assessing if residents, businesses, and communities would be better served by combining efforts on all municipal services ..."***. It also said that there was still a lot that they needed to determine and investigate further. Our Warden said that ***"We are committed to doing our due diligence by engaging the community and keeping them informed on the process as we assess this opportunity further."***

The Sept 28/21 County Minutes reflect that Council had met with Municipal Affairs and a steering committee was formed and terms of reference presented for it.

The Oct 26/21 Minutes referred to a debrief process on the Queens Consolidation, cost savings identified (savings were not identified in the Minutes), and the amount of work done by their Public Works Dept, as opposed to using external contractors. It is important to note that the Queens merger was a 1996 amalgamation under the Municipal Government Act and it was not a modern-day consolidation as being considered currently for the town and county. For later reference I want to emphasize that Queens became more profitable after the merger. They have said that having their own in-house heavy equipment and trades people in Public Works, contributed significantly to their success over the 26 years since their merger.

At the Nov 9/21 Council Meeting, the CAO presented council with one recommendation, from the RFP group of bids, that he and presumably the office staff reviewed. A resolution was carried to engage *Brighter Community Planning Consulting* for the bid price of \$142,628.75 (incl HST).

At the Nov 30/21 meeting, the CAO announced that the provincial gov't was providing \$150K in funding, and that kickoff meetings were to start later in the week with the consultants.

Minutes of the joint council meeting on January 20/22, are not available on the county website or at *antigonish.ca*, nor are the Jan 25th or any other Minutes of the Steering Committee. The February 8th Minutes have no definite information on the merger progress. A draft of the "updated Guiding Principles" was provided for review at the March 8/22 meeting.

What has happened since?

Shortly after mid-March 2022, we had delivered to our homes, a glossy two-sided page: *“Invitation to join the Consolidation Discussion”*. It had a community engagement schedule for “drop in” styled meetings and a letter on the reverse side basically telling us that the councils would make a consolidation decision on our behalf, after those of us with an interest in our future took part in the process, by the on-line website, in person, by phone or email. We were told that: *“Consolidation may be a more efficient use of existing resources to provide a high level of service to residents living in our communities. Many of the issues facing our communities, such as climate change, economic development, infrastructure planning, accessibility and housing, require or would benefit significantly from a regional approach.”*

So, I went on-line on March 25/22, and visited *antigonish.ca* and printed out the FAQs and other material to read. I found nothing informative as to any identified benefits for the county to join the town. I continued to monitor the site for updates and there were none forthcoming for quite a while. The information, and lack thereof, made me more curious because it said that the Council reps would gather and assess information on the Windsor-West Hants (*2020 Consolidation*) and the Liverpool-Queens (*1996 Amalgamation*) mergers. I think that a reasonable person could presume that the facts of the pros and cons of these mergers, and the relative financial costs/benefits, would have been available and presented on the website and in the planned kiosk-style sessions. A reasonable person would also expect that the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats/risks would have been identified.

You said that you wanted public input that would be used to help the Councils understand the values and issues that are important to residents. You have been told loudly and clearly at information sessions, to date, that the people want:

1. To know the identified pros and cons, benefits/risks and related costs of the previous mergers and how we would mitigate the cons and risks;
2. And that we, the taxpayers/constituents want to vote on this issue of consolidation.

I have to wonder about the *“Guiding Principles for Consolidating Antigonish Town & County”*. For example, what do you mean with respect to # 3 that says :*“Communicate regularly about progress and decisions”*; and that the communication will be frequent, transparent, and inclusive? Until many complaints about the inability of the Warden, Mayor and councillors to answer questions on the facts identified in the mergers reviewed, and the form and substance of the new regional municipality, there was nothing in print. To date, there is still nothing on the benefits and/or risks with their respective financial implications.

Then, in May 2022, the website contained a document, prepared by the hired consultants, called: *“Community Engagement Liaison Project Exploring Consolidation with the Town & County of Antigonish”*. It contains a January 2022 date on the front page, and it should have been put on the website and distributed much earlier than in May. So, in reading that document I made some interesting observations about their analysis. There is an absolute lie on page 2 with respect to the 2001-2006 Antigonish Annexation request. There was not “limited support” from the county residents. The County voted 84% to amalgamate with the town in an act of retaliation for the town wanting to annex far more land than they may have wanted for their specific objectives. And an important part that is missing from the piece, is that after the UARB recommended an amalgamation, the town took the issue to court. They were not successful; however, the UARB backed off on the merger.

To combine all the 1990's amalgamations on page 3 and not speak to the costly items in the HRM merger, for example, is an absolute disservice to the reader who wants to understand the pros and cons. It speaks of the success of the 1996 Liverpool/Queens amalgamation, guided jointly by the town and county, as opposed to the "appointed coordinators" for HRM and CBRM. Where is the consultants', or the Council's Steering Committee, analysis that explains to us why a "friendly" amalgamation, with town & county direct participation, under the UARB rules, (*where the rules are more clearly defined*), is considered inferior to a Consolidation? In a consolidation procedure, you don't get to create the substance of the regional municipality until a Transition Committee is trusted to accomplish the merger, after a favourable consolidation vote is held. If Queens didn't need a UARB "appointed coordinator", why would we? Why was there a failure to draw on your available expertise to tell us how you differentiate between the two models of a "friendly" amalgamation and a consolidation?

It seems from the information on the Windsor/Hants consolidation, that the citizens were quite engaged at the early stages of the process. It seems that another flame was ignited between the town & county, in 2015, with a decision by West Hants to drop the Windsor Fire service and create their own fire dept. The town & county tensions rose and in 2016 a citizens' group applied to the UARB for an amalgamation of the two municipalities, citing a "dysfunctional" relationship between the two local governments. The town supported it and West Hants did not. Abraham Zebian was a West Hants councillor and may have also been the Warden. Then, In 2017, the application for amalgamation was adjourned and an MOU was created to reflect the desire of the two municipalities to work together collaboratively, to strengthen their communities. It took another year for the two municipalities to agree on a process for merging, based on their collaborative efforts for the good of all their residents. On April 1/21, per CBC News report, the first Mayor of the regional municipality, Abraham Zebian, said that the consolidation had been a success, although he admitted that it would be years before the benefits can be properly measured. He admitted that it will take at least a few years to formally assess the merger. Then Municipal Affairs Minister, Brendan Maguire, agreed with Zebian in its success, and said, "Really, it's about financial stability and just having a path forward."

The information provided states that the elected officials in Windsor/Hants canvassed their communities prior to the 2016 municipal elections, and there was lots of interest in the structure of local government in the area. They took their time and were able to get the public and businesses to buy into the merger and to do it under a consolidation approach after they had identified all the issues and costs and that they could work together harmoniously.

What is the rush for us to do this now? There is no established level of trust or confidence that this process is good for the county at this time. We have been pushed into a process being driven by the Mayor, the Warden, their deputies and the CAOs.

The county taxpayers want to know whether a consolidation would be beneficial to us. We want due diligence applied to identifying our strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats or risks, and their financial effects, in each of our municipalities.

Within our strengths, we want you to identify what are we doing well and do we have a competitive advantage in one or more areas? What makes us stronger than the town and how will they also benefit? What do we have that is valuable? What draws people and business to come to or stay in the county? For example, the types of questions to which I'd like answers for the county (and the town):

. In the county we have lots of space for residential and business expansion, at a significantly lower commercial assessment rate than the town. Have we costed/projected our ability to increase developmental plans and our projected incremental tax base over the next X years, based on the data of the past X years.

. In the county we have our own garbage & recycling pickups and it's far less costly than having a contracted service. Given that we keep the profits, what is our financial advantage to this practice?

. The current age of our infrastructure, overall, should be in good shape. Is it? Part of a transition to a merger should be a review of all physical inventory and the state of all linear infrastructure including all water & sewer lines, roads and sidewalks, etc. What are the projected costs to maintain, upgrade over the next few years?

. Capped assessments, that are a way of retaining people where they are. What is the forecast on this issue with respect to the provincial government?

What are our weaknesses in the county? What could we be doing better and to save dollars? Do we struggle with obtaining timely resources of any type? Are we lacking assets of any type? Are we lacking funding to cover needed projects? Etc. For example:

. By contracting out to third party businesses for sewer and water, what are we losing in speed of response time for service, profits that could be ours, etc, by acquiring heavy equipment, employing our own trades people, mechanics, and a project manager? Queens saw their reliance on their own Public Works staff as a distinct advantage for timeliness and retained profits. Hants also saw having a robust Public Works Department as a distinct advantage. What will it cost to have unionized wage parity with the town?

What unique opportunities do we have in the county that we could use to benefit the county, and perhaps the town and region, that we are not developing? Do we have access to materials, land, etc that could be employed to our advantage, for example, for additional sewage treatment?

. We have a well field in Lower South River that has significant excess capacity according to our Warden (April 18/22 Chronicle Herald). He says that it could end the issue of summer water shortage in the town, if it were piped into the town system to complement the existing source at James River. Why not develop/expand the water piping to serve the county residents in the fringe areas of the town? Putting our fringe residents on county water should free up capacity in the town to address their summer shortages. What would this cost?

What are our exposable risks/threats? Can any identified risks be controlled?

For example, are there any government regulations that prevent us from utilizing any of our land? Are our water sources at risk for any reason, eg contaminants?

. The Warden is quoted as "suggesting that the county needs access to the town's water and sewer facilities, as their biggest growth is in the fringe area." (May 4/22 Reporter). What is stopping the county from being self-reliant given our resources and space?

. In the new glossy FAQs on the website and distributed at the municipally scheduled "meet & greets", the page on *Water, Electricity and Energy Leadership* says: "The Town has a water supply that draws its supply from the James River watershed and is distributed to Town Residents and some County users. There are approximately 1,600 connections to the Town's water utility. The County water utility provides water in the fringe area surrounding the Town

and to Lower South River, St Andrews and St Josephs. In 2020 the County amalgamated all of its water systems into one utility and harmonized rates for all 1,640 water utility customers.”

. Jeff Lawrence, CAO for the town, said that the existing sewer treatment plant, owned by the town but also used by many county residents on the fringe of Antigonish. He said that it was only pushed to its capacity during heavy rain. That problem, he said, could be handled by a stormwater diversion project. (April 18/22 Chronicle Herald).

. Is there a good reason why the county has to use the town water and deplete its resources? Does the town own the property at the James River watershed? Is there any reason why the county can't be self sufficient for water and what would be the cost?

. What are our financial risks with respect to fire service with our current assessments/levies, and to the county's coverage in protective services in a merged organization?

. After a taxpayer raised the issue of change to Hants Region in policing costs, from a 70/30 split with the feds, to a 90/10 split, there was concern expressed about this quite significant additional cost. Can we afford to absorb that cost? Have we costed having our own police force as we used to have? What other additional costs or savings did Hants Region experience.

. Given our financial strength, is the province agreeable to funding a merger? What would be our expected contribution to the costs?

The items stated above are not, by any stretch of the imagination, a full list of the issues to be considered in a S.W.O.T. assessment. It's a very short example to demonstrate what we and you need to know, from both municipalities, before deciding on a merger.

in the May 4/22 *Guysborough Journal*, the Mayor said that “We are going to continue down this road” (on consolidation) and she added that “the “Guiding Principles” established by both Councils when they agreed to explore a possible consolidation, did not include having residents vote on whether to become one municipality”. The article also said that “When it comes to the councils’ decision not to opt for a plebiscite, officials have pointed to the potential divisiveness created, along with the history of such votes garnering low voter turnout.” Well, the town & county residents are absolutely united on wanting a vote, and I want to note that 45% of the eligible voters voted in the 2006 plebiscite. Have you given any thought to the turnout for the election of municipal councillors and for the Mayor, in her initial election? Near the end of the article in the paper, it said, “Getting back to the plebiscite debate, Boucher noted that both councils-by consensus- agreed not to conduct one.” With respect to these statements that the councillors were complicit in not allowing a vote to the taxpayers, where is this agreement in any of the recorded Minutes? I suggest that there has been a huge gap in the message that was heard and understood by the Councillors, and what was intended by the people delivering the message. Even reading “between the lines” in all the printed promotional material, other than the Mayor's statements to the press, at the outset in the Sept 14/21 release, “Boucher downplayed the likelihood of holding a plebiscite on the matter, ...” does not indicate that there was never an intention of permitting a plebiscite. Additionally, the County's Sept 13, 2021 Minutes do not reflect that when Councillor Brophy stressed “the importance of consultation, including the possibility of a plebiscite, ...” , anyone said that there could be no plebiscite.

Finally, the May 4/22 issue of The Reporter speaks to the Mayor and the Warden feeling that the process is being undermined by 2 councillors not supporting a consolidation. Is this viewed as a greater abuse to the process than the 2 councillors who have said that they are voting for consolidation regardless of what their constituents want? I expect that it may be difficult for some people to deal with the conflict and controversy surrounding this priority to accomplish a consolidation. At the same time, it is unprofessional and beneath the dignity of the Office of both the Warden and the Mayor to publicly accuse councillors of undermining the process in what many of us consider to much of a rush to consolidation. These councillors have been elected by their constituents and we expect them to tell us the truth in their discussions with us. No decision to consolidate has been made by the council, yet, and until then, I want to remind you that the councillors voted to approve a resolution to explore consolidation, and many of them are doing so by going through that process with their constituents. I do believe that when councillors are given the information they should have before they vote on a finite issue, that, once the resolution is carried, they are expected to uphold the decision of the whole council with dignity, despite their personal opinions. So, please, do not rush to put this issue to a vote because you simply have not yet done the work that needs to happen before anyone should be making a decision.

The bottom line is that the majority of taxpayers from the town and county, who have participated in the process to date, have been unified in overwhelmingly stating that they want to vote on this issue. It has been expressed by some elected officials that the constituents are not well-enough informed to make this decision. Given that the elected officials have not produced any factual information to show that the county will be better served and in a better financial position from consolidation, or alternatively, refute that we won't be in a worse financial position, I respectfully state, that the elected officials have not earned the moral right to make this consolidation decision. They must provide us with the facts and figures to support the reasons for a merger. If we are to use Windsor/Hants as a model, the people started the process and were informed about the issues before they elected their council to deal with the issues. It took them 2 years to explore the issues and get answers to their questions, including financial impacts, and to test their ability to compromise in finding solutions, before agreeing to trust their elected officials without holding a plebiscite. I suggest that you show some good faith, slam the brakes on this process and start feeding us the relevant information. We deserve fairness and full transparency.

To quote from an October 9, 2019 document about the Windsor/West Hants Consolidation Restructuring Model:

***“The process needed to have the community’s understanding and trust. ...the community would need to believe that the key merger issues had been addressed thoughtfully and transparently and that, where necessary, reasonable compromises had been achieved.*”**

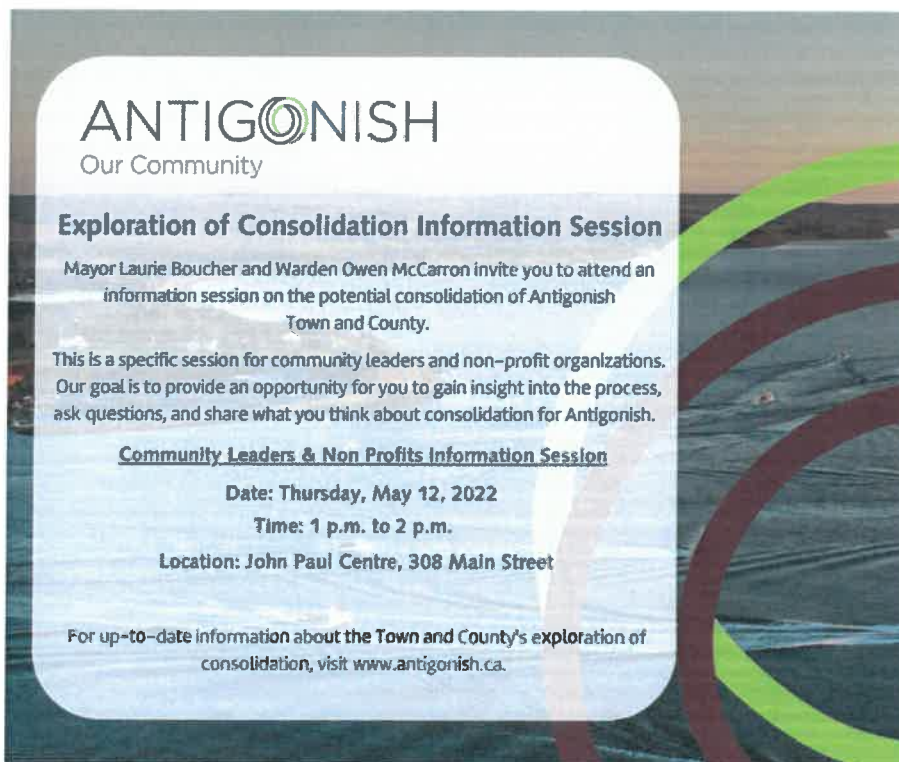
We recognize more residents of these municipalities will be drawn into the discussions. They will have their own learning curves as they increasingly become engaged; they will want information and they will want reassurance. And we need to listen. That’s the way it should be when you’re breaking new ground, following a new path. We will not have done a good job unless those who live in what will be the new regional municipality recognize that we have acted in their best interests.”

From: [Shirlyn Donovan](#)
To: Council
Subject: Exploration of Consolidation Session
Date: May 10, 2022 10:47:44 AM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

Hello everyone,

This Thursday, May 12 from 1 p.m. to 2 p.m. at the John Paul Centre we will be having a meeting with some Community Leaders & Non-Profit groups. Councillors are welcome to attend.

We will also be taking notes and circulate them afterwards so you will know what questions were asked. Please see the invitation for full details.



The Mayor, Warden, and Deputies will also be having an invite only meeting with Current & Former Elected Officials from the Antigonish area. This includes former Mayors, Wardens, MPs & MLAs. That meeting will be set up like the one held with the Fire Departments and will be a smaller group setting. Minutes will be taken and circulated afterwards for your review.

Thanks!
Shirlyn

Shirlyn Donovan
Strategic Initiatives Coordinator

Municipality of the County of Antigonish
285 Beech Hill Road
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www.twitter.com/antigonishco

Honour Yesterday, Act Today, Inspire Tomorrow

Harris McNamara

From: Angela DeCoste
Sent: May 10, 2022 11:46 AM
To: Harris McNamara
Subject: Re: ANTIGONISH TOWN AND COUNTY CONSOLIDATION

Hi Harris,

Those counsellors that will be voting how many of those are representing the County? It doesn't look like a plebiscite is going to happen. I know there has been numerous people contacting the counsellors and not getting a response. I sent an email to each one along with the mayor and I have received a response from yourself, Gary Mattie and Bill McFarland his response was thanks Angela. This meeting that's going to be happening tomorrow evening here is there any sense in going to it? From what I'm hearing people aren't getting any answers pro or con.
Thanks for your time.

Angela

Sent from my iPhone

On May 6, 2022, at 4:33 PM, Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca> wrote:

Angela/ Collie;

Thanks for the support! From the beginning I have been against amalgamation. It does not make sense to county residents as we are in the best financial position ever. This is being rushed through with no pros and cons, a cost benefit analysis needs to be done on every component of amalgamation . Most importantly county residents won't have a say in what happens. Six councillors (maybe less) will make the decision for you. We need a plebiscite, that way 15000 residents will make the decision.
If you want more information, please give me a call at 318-8333.
Harris

From: Angela DeCoste
Sent: May 6, 2022 1:26 PM
To: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: ANTIGONISH TOWN AND COUNTY CONSOLIDATION

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows

Dear Counsellor McNamara,

My husband and I feel that we are not given a choice to voice our opinion for this consolidation. You are providing us with too many questions that you can't provide answers too. We think we have the right to have a plebiscite for such an important decision to be made for the future of ourselves, our children and grandchildren.

WE WANT A PLEBISCITE TO HAVE A SAY IN OUR FUTURE.

Sincerely,

Angela DeCoste

Colin DeCoste

Old Linwood Road
Frankville, NS B0H 1P0

Beth Schumacher

From: George MacDonald ca>
Sent: May 10, 2022 11:55 AM
To: Owen McCarron
Subject: Fwd: Proposed Consolidation of Antigonish Town and County

Sorry Owen made a typo on your original email cc

Sent from my iPad

Begin forwarded message:

From: George MacDonald
Date: May 10, 2022 at 11:52:48 AM ADT
To: premier@novascotia.ca
Cc: johnlohrmla@gmail.com, mayor@townofantigonish.ca, omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca, sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca
Subject: Proposed Consolidation of Antigonish Town and County

Hi Tim:

I am writing to bring your attention to the issues surrounding the proposed consolidation of Antigonish Town and County. As a life long resident of the Antigonish area (my people landed here off the boat from Scotland) I am concerned about how the process has taken place. My understanding is that the Province has provided \$150,000 dollars to explore consolidation. So far it appears that the money has been spent on consultants who have been hired to grease the wheels to consolidation and not for the intended purpose of looking deeply into its pros and cons. It appears to most folks around here that the decision to consolidate has already been made and that the consultants are being paid to sell the idea.

It is difficult to find any detailed information, many people do not feel like they are being heard. Not really very democratic. Many of the Town and County councillors appear to be muted due either to conflicts of interest or the desire not to go against the Mayor or Warden. Local politics!

There are however, lessons to be learned from other Municipalities who have gone through a similar process. My research shows that every municipality in Nova Scotia who have consolidated/amalgamated have had to charge the residents higher taxes. Case in point is Windsor East Hants who initially looked like they would be saving money, only to be slapped with an unexpected bill of 1.5 m from the RCMP.

So they call it consolidation rather than amalgamation so that they do not have to go directly to the people for approval. The process of looking into the idea started in September and already in June the final decision is about to be made. You have been in politics for awhile, I will let you draw your own conclusions. What is the rush? Why not go to the people for a vote? Perhaps, they are concerned that they will receive a similar response to Pictou who just went through the process and voted NO.

I respectfully request that the Province get involved in this process. Many local residents are feeling powerless, that their voices are not being heard. Many of the local councillors are feeling the same. Thanking you in advance for your attention to this matter.

Your Respectfully;

GeorgeMacDonald

Sent from my iPad

Harris McNamara

From: Audrey MacDonald <
Sent: May 10, 2022 12:01 PM
To: Harris McNamara
Subject: Re: Prospective Consolidation of Antigonish Town and County Municipalities

Thank you, Harris, for your prompt response.

The concerns you express echo some of mine.

I was raised in Antigonish County, where I still have many relatives, but moved away for many years. Upon retirement, I chose to return to the area. Currently, I own a house in town and co-own property in the county. Therefore, I have made every effort to gain as much information as I can to more fully understand the ramifications of this proposed merger. Based on the lack of long-term planning — or at least the lack of information made available about any such planning — I see no pressing need for such a merger. Certainly, there is no apparent need that would be mutually beneficial, as must be the case for me to agree to this merger. In fact, I have read several very eloquently-written and convincing opinion pieces that lead me to believe the current process toward amalgamation is flawed. While there may be equally compelling arguments on the “pro” side, so far they have not been articulated publicly.

I applaud those of you who are willing to listen to your constituents and hope there are a sufficient number of you to at least slow down this process. I do not want our representatives — and in this case only some of them — making a decision of this magnitude for us.

I believe we require: a slower process; more information; public-hall type meetings where informed debate may occur; and, finally a plebiscite.

Premier Huston recently changed his mind once he recognized the validity of the arguments in opposition to his tax bill. I hope a sufficient number of our representatives will see the benefit of a pivot on the process they currently are following. There is no shame in changing one’s mind when additional information comes to light.

I trust that our town and county council members can regain the respect that has been strained — or in some cases broken — as we move forward.

Audrey

Sent from my iPhone

On May 10, 2022, at 8:35 AM, Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca> wrote:

Audrey;

Thank you for questioning the process! My name is Harris McNamara, Councillor for District 9 (Havre Boucher) and from the beginning I have been questioning amalgamation. It does not make sense to county residents as we are in the best financial position ever. This is being rushed through with no pros and cons, a cost benefit analysis needs to be done on every component of amalgamation . Most importantly county residents won’t have a say in what happens. Six councillors (maybe less) will make the decision for you. We need a plebiscite, that way 15000 county residents will make the decision. If you want more information, please give me a call at 318-8333.

Harris

From: Audrey MacDonald ·

Sent: May 9, 2022 8:10 PM

To: mayor@townofantigonish.ca; wcmier@townofantigonish.ca; dmacinnis@townofantigonish.ca; scameron@townofantigonish.ca; amurray@townofantigonish.ca; mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca; droberts@townofantigonish.ca; Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>

Subject: Re: Prospective Consolidation of Antigonish Town and County Municipalities

I feel compelled to provide my perspective on the prospective merger of the municipalities of the town and county of Antigonish.

Firstly, I commend you for your willingness to engage in municipal politics with the intent of addressing the needs of your constituents. Further, from what I have seen in the few years since I have returned to the area, the positive cooperation between the two councils has resulted in programs and activities beneficial to the residents of both municipalities. That seems to be, in no small part, because of the individuals who are representing us. However, sometimes an issue goes beyond the regular mandate provided by the electorate and, as such, requires a different approach. This proposed merger is such an issue. It was not on the "agenda" during the last municipal election; therefore, I suggest our mayor, warden, and councillors have not been provided a mandate to decide an issue of this magnitude for us. Instead, to me at least, it feels like a rather paternalistic approach.

I am adding my name to the list of constituents requesting a plebiscite.

Initially, I was rather ambivalent about the issue. I understood information was to be gathered; research was to be conducted. I anticipated the results of this investigation -- both pros and cons -- would be presented and we would be provided the opportunity to make an informed decision either through what would be my preferred format -- a plebiscite -- or, at the very least, as an election issue at the time of the next municipal election. Unfortunately, that currently is not the case. Instead, I feel we are being provided a less than balanced picture leading to a vote by some of our elected officials.

In addition, I am requesting a pause in the process so that a more robust and transparent approach might occur. I have attended a drop-in session and, while I appreciated the willingness of the CAO and consultant with whom I spoke to provide answers to my questions, I felt I left knowing little more than I knew upon arrival. I also appreciated my discussion with Councillor Dunbar. His track record of standing up for his constituents is commendable. However, he, like many of our councillors, is reserving judgement until he has gathered more input from the public. I believe the more traditional town-hall type meeting will provide that input in a far more clear and transparent manner. I believe it is important for

individuals to be able to ask their questions and share their concerns in a manner that allows others to also gain information.

Currently, I really don't know whether we would benefit from the proposed merger. I, too, require more time and information to make an informed decision, should I be allowed to vote on this issue. I have read the literature posted on the website, which leans heavily toward the advantages, and followed whatever social media information I have been able to access, which leans heavily toward the disadvantages. This debate needs to be held in public for the benefit of all. While there very well may be benefits to a merger, so far, I have not seen evidence sufficiently compelling to convince me it is necessary. I am, however, open to being convinced. In my opinion, change can be beneficial, and this change might be for the best. However, I believe it is incumbent on those who propose a change to provide compelling proof. I don't think we are there yet.

In summary please allow us to vote on this significant issue, preferably after providing opportunities for robust discussion.

I look forward to seeing where this process might go.
Audrey

Beth Schumacher

From: Garry Fidler
Sent: May 10, 2022 12:23 PM
To: Owen McCarron
Subject: Antigonish County

Dear Owen,

The discussions and meetings regarding consolidation during the last few weeks have caused great concern and widespread distress to many people. As a taxpayer and long time resident of Antigonish County I feel the need to express my concern to you, my councillor. I understand that you want the best for the citizens of Antigonish County and you have worked hard for many years to make the County a wonderful place in which to live. Like any issue there are pros and cons. Unfortunately, in the case of consolidation the public are not being adequately informed and the "so called" public consultation has led to even more anxiety and distrust. Mayor Boucher has stated that a plebiscite would be "divisive".

Unfortunately these past few weeks have indicated that people are very much divided and that is not in the best interest of either county or town. We all want to put the uncertainty of the pandemic behind us and strive for happier days of stability, hope and economic growth. Many people are still reluctant to attend gatherings and this means direct engagement is limited and their voices may not be heard. They should feel confident that their concerns are justified. Our municipal councillors should be well informed and in a position to answer the important and essential questions the people of the County deserve. Please take a step back, pause and hear the voices of those of us who are convinced this is not the time to make such a controversial decision.

Yours truly,
Garry Fidler

Sent from my iPhone

From: Harris McNamara
To: Shirlyn Donovan; Council
Subject: RE: Exploration of Consolidation Session
Date: May 10, 2022 12:54:24 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

Shirlyn;

Are councillors invited to the meeting below;

The Mayor, Warden, and Deputies will also be having an invite only meeting with Current & Former Elected Officials from the Antigonish area. This includes former Mayors, Wardens, MPs & MLAs. That meeting will be set up like the one held with the Fire Departments and will be a smaller group setting. Minutes will be taken and circulated afterwards for your review

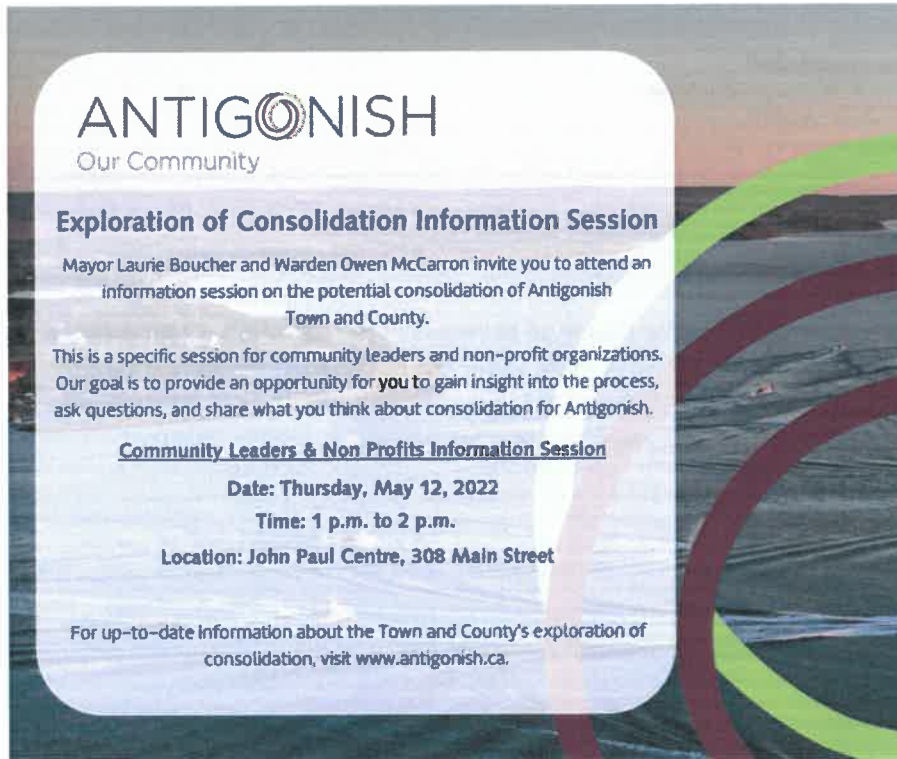
Harris

From: Shirlyn Donovan <shirlyn.donovan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Sent: May 10, 2022 10:48 AM
To: Council <council@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Exploration of Consolidation Session

Hello everyone,

This Thursday, May 12 from 1 p.m. to 2 p.m. at the John Paul Centre we will be having a meeting with some Community Leaders & Non-Profit groups. Councillors are welcome to attend.

We will also be taking notes and circulate them afterwards so you will know what questions were asked. Please see the invitation for full details.



The Mayor, Warden, and Deputies will also be having an invite only meeting with Current & Former Elected Officials from the Antigonish area. This includes former Mayors, Wardens, MPs & MLAs. That meeting will be set up like the one held with the Fire Departments and will be a smaller group setting. Minutes will be taken and circulated afterwards for your review.

Thanks!
Shirlyn

Shirlyn Donovan

Strategic Initiatives Coordinator
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
285 Beech Hill Road
Antigonish, NS B2G 0B4
902-863-1117



www.antigonishcounty.ns.ca

www.twitter.com/antigonishco

Honour Yesterday, Act Today, Inspire Tomorrow

Harris McNamara

From: Shirlyn Donovan
Sent: May 10, 2022 12:57 PM
To: Harris McNamara
Subject: RE: Exploration of Consolidation Session

The Current and Former Elected Officials meeting is just going to be the Mayor, Warden and Deputies.

Thanks,
Shirlyn

Shirlyn Donovan
Strategic Initiatives Coordinator
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
285 Beech Hill Road
Antigonish, NS B2G 0B4
902-863-1117



www.antigonishcounty.ns.ca
www.twitter.com/antigonishco

Honour Yesterday, Act Today, Inspire Tomorrow

From: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Sent: Tuesday, May 10, 2022 12:54 PM
To: Shirlyn Donovan <shirlyn.donovan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Council <council@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: RE: Exploration of Consolidation Session

Shirlyn;
Are councillors invited to the meeting below;

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Harris

From: Shirlyn Donovan <shirlyn.donovan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Sent: May 10, 2022 10:48 AM
To: Council <council@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Exploration of Consolidation Session

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Thanks!
Shirlyn

Shirlyn Donovan
Strategic Initiatives Coordinator
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
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 www.antigonishcounty.ns.ca
 www.twitter.com/antigonishco

Honour Yesterday, Act Today, Inspire Tomorrow



Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

George MacDaonald - Letter to Premier

1 message

Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Tue, May 10, 2022 at 1:40 PM

To: Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>

Shawn;

Can you send me the letter from George McDoanld to the Premier? I have heard that I should read and you were copied.

H

Harris McNamara

From: Jeanne Doiron
Sent: May 10, 2022 1:53 PM
To: Harris McNamara
Subject: Re: Consolidation process

Hi Harris

Thanks very much for your comments. I was at the session in Pomquet last night. There were lots of great questions and lots of not so great answers. Thanks for looking out for residents.

After last night one of the pros was something to do with the water. Not sure who pays who for what but are there services that the town and county can agree to help the other entity out with in a reciprocal manner without being married to each other. Perhaps that could be explored.

This process is being done way too fast with it being driven down peoples throats with no real answers as far as pros and cons for either entity.

I have registered for the committee of the whole tonight and hope that the councillors will vote in favor of a plebiscite.

Thanks again

Jeanne

On Tue., May 10, 2022, 8:37 a.m. Harris McNamara, <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca> wrote:

Jeanne;

Thank you for questioning the process! My name is Harris McNamara, Councillor for District 9 (Havre Boucher) and from the beginning I have questioned amalgamation. It does not make sense to county residents as we are in the best financial position ever. This is being rushed through with no pros and cons, a cost benefit analysis needs to be done on every component of amalgamation . Most importantly county residents won't have a say in what happens. Six councillors (maybe less) will make the decision for you. We need a plebiscite, that way 15000 county residents will make the decision.

If you want more information, please give me a call at 318-8333.

Harris

From: Jeanne Doiron <>

Sent: May 9, 2022 5:00 PM

To: Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>

Subject: Consolidation process

Good afternoon everyone

I am writing to you all today out of concern with regards to the consultation process regarding consolidation of town and county.

As a resident of the county, I am calling on all of you who were elected by your constituents to put this issue back to your constituents and am therefore requesting a plebiscite. This issue is not an issue that any of you campaigned on and if this decision is made by the residents, it is not a decision any of you will have to wear going forward. Regardless of how this turns out, the right thing to do is to allow residents to have their voice heard by allowing them to cast a vote.

I urge you to slow down this process and bring this to your council meeting agenda tomorrow evening and do the right thing by calling a plebiscite on this issue.

Sincerely

Jeanne Doiron

District 5 resident

Beth Schumacher

From: Joyce Smith <
Sent: May 10, 2022 3:13 PM
To: Owen McCarron; Remi Deveau; Mary MacLellan; mayor@townofantigonish.ca
Subject: Consolidation
Attachments: Consolidation.docx

Good afternoon,

Please find attached letter.

Thanks for your time,
Joyce Smith

May 10, 2022

Warden Owen McCarron
Councillor Mary MacLellan
Councillor Remi Deveau
Mayor Laurie Boucher

Hello,

I am writing this letter to express my opinions gathered from last nights' meeting in Pomquet and in my personal conversations of late with family and friends.

First, a big thanks for the public meeting last night, the interactive format was certainly helpful to my thought process. While not all constituents were respectful, it was handled relatively well.

I have the utmost respect for Remi, I did take issue near the end of the evening when he answered a constituents' question asking for a community meeting. I do not necessarily agree that this should happen, however I found the answer downright offensive. The idea that only the naysayers show up at this or any other meeting is an insult to the people you have been elected to serve. My immediate thought was, shouldn't you welcome the opportunity to correct any misconceptions those folks may have, ease their concerns or maybe discuss the negatives with them??

To be completely honest, I have not formed a firm opinion on the matter. Last night, I had folks around me who do have opinions one way or the other and a couple like me who have yet to decide.

We need time.

I fully understand that we are in a process, and to that end we are all owed the time to come to this decision. Wouldn't you want your constituents to be on board with a monumental decision such as this? While I do not think wasting tax dollars to hold a plebiscite is the answer, why not add it to the next municipal election ballots? This would buy time to gather all the data and address all concerns. Councillors can canvass door to door as they typically would and answer their constituents' questions, as they must when running for office. The reality is many people feel like they are being forced into a relationship, that they do not necessarily want or understand.

Time would sure help.

Sincerely,

Joyce Smith

Joyce Smith
Landowner in District 5/Resident of District 1

Beth Schumacher

From: Colette Chisholm <[redacted]>
Sent: May 10, 2022 5:19 PM
To: Donnie MacDonald; Owen McCarron
Subject: Consolidation

Hi Donnie, Owen,

I am one , of many, that have concerns of the proposed consolidation of the Town and County. One question is why wasn't this discussed during the past election?? If the pros and cons were discussed we (taxpayers) could have made our decision and voted for or against. I think we should have the right to vote on this important issue. I support the call for a plebiscite.

Thank you
Colette Chisholm
Highway 337

Sent from my iPad

Beth Schumacher

From: Mary MacLellan
Sent: May 10, 2022 10:26 PM
To: Owen McCarron; Glenn Horne
Subject: FW: Concerns

Owen, Glenn. Marcie asked me to read this at council tonight. I shortened it significantly. We have talked a lot about this the last while. I always took advice from his father, Angus, when I was confused ,especially during my boundary issue. He is very concerned and wants to be helpful. I invited him to the meeting last night. He said he had a good talk with you, Owen after the meeting. Too bad he came late as he would have learned a lot. Sadie Mac Quarrie passed away and the family is dealing with the funeral etc. So he can't make it tomorrow either. Maybe Lochaber Thursday. Valerie Chugg was one of the other people who asked me to present those questions. She is also leaning in support but doesn't like the process and wants more time. People like that could be influential if they get assurance that they are listened to . She was pleased with tonight's session, so was Anne Marie. Time for another bone! Mary

From: marciemacqt }>
Sent: May 10, 2022 12:45 PM
To: Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Concerns

Mary;

I want to add my concerns and comments to those of other constituents from District 1.

I support one municipal unit. However, under the circumstances I am having difficulty supporting consolidation due to the lack of transparency and relevant information. I disagree with the process. There are many valid questions being asked that need clear, concise responses. As an example, I would like to know, as a starter, the total value, in all respects, that each municipal unit brings to the discussion table and how it translates into a fair and equitable distribution to the citizens of the Town and County.

Too many citizens believe the process is flawed and rushed. We need to address all concerns in an open and forthright manner. I ask both Councils to delay the process a minimum of 6 months, to report back on the Engagement Sessions with answers and relevant data, provide financial projections including a cost/benefit analysis and bring this information to the citizens of the Town and County in several additional public sessions where citizens, in an open forum can voice their opinions, concerns as well as support. We need to do it right and that means revisiting the process.

If citizens of the Town and County have all the facts and Councils, heeding input from citizens, are better equipped to make an informed decision, then I believe we will see strong support for consolidation. At that point councils can determine if a plebiscite is necessary.

Regards,

Marcie



Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

May 11th Potential questions & information to make your own

1 message

Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Wed, May 11, 2022 at 7:50 AM

To: Carol MacEachern

Carol;

It was good last night, needed a few more demonstrating, hopefully tonight. Anne Marie was great. An example of question you could ask on conflict of interest. Please do not bring presentations attached to meeting, get you own questions from material.

Harris

Conflict of Interest

On April 18th at a community meeting Harris informed the residents that he could be in a potential " Conflict of Interest". We understand he would not be able to vote for District 9 if he is in conflict. He was informed that residents of District 9 could email / call other councillors to express their view and encouraged all to do that.

Residents want a say, the plebiscite would eliminate the conflict. **Has there been any plan to do this?**

2 attachments

 **Anne Marie Town & County Consolidation Presentation.docx**
37K

 **Terry Penny Presentation.pdf**
32K

Good Evening Warden and Members of Council.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my thoughts on the Process being used to decide the issue of Consolidation.

I am not here to argue the merits of Consolidation. Not being privy to the extensive research completed by Council, but only being presented with those aspects of the research that support a position in favour of Consolidation I cannot make a valid argue of support for or against either side of the issue.

What I am here to argue is that while, as the Warden has stated "he was elected to make decisions" I do not believe he, or any of the Councillors, was elected to make a decision on Consolidation. Consolidation is an issue that affects every aspect of our communities. Consolidation cannot be reversed. Therefore weighing the benefits and liabilities of consolidating the town and county is the responsibility and **right** of the residents of Antigonish County.

I believe every eligible voter in Antigonish County has the right to participate in this decision making either by electing municipal officials who have campaigned on the issue or by voting in a plebiscite on Consolidation. Since candidates in the last municipal election of 2020 failed to raise Consolidation as part of their platform, unless a motion is made and accepted to set aside the present process, a plebiscite is the only option.

I find the rationale for Council's decision to proceed with a Council vote rather than a public vote to be flawed, insulting and demeaning to the intellectual capacity of the residents of Antigonish County.

The very divisiveness that the Warden and Mayor claim will occur if a vote is allowed is being created and fuelled by their very actions of ignoring the voices of the people. The people of Antigonish Town and County are not so weak that they need the protection of the Municipal governments in order to express their opinions. To continually suggest that people are afraid to publicly support an issue for fear of being attacked is insulting to the great people of this community. As with all issues facing our town, county , indeed our province and country - there are often two sides to an issues and yet these issues are decided upon through the democratic process of voting. All of us have long been raised to believe that voting is our opportunity to exercise our position on an issue. All of us have been raised to respect the decision of the electorate.

To suggest that Social Media only flares an issue and leads to the dissemination of misleading or wrong information is speaking out of both sides of your mouth. Both the Town and County have been relentless in presenting their arguments for Consolidation through Social Media Channels. Indeed it seems that daily videos are being released presenting the Warden and Mayor's perspective on the issue. This information is presented as 100% factual yet any discussion questioning the presented one-sided research is summarily dismissed as either invalid and untrue, or misleading and wrong.

Statements have been made that the drop-in engagement session format was chosen as opposed to open discussion meetings as the drop-in engagement sessions encourages 1:1 chats where accurate information could be shared and that open discussion meeting were intimidating to many residents. If indeed you are challenged in creating a space where residents can speak without fear of retribution, the privacy of our most democratic right, the secret ballot, allows every resident to speak without fear of intimidation.

Statements have been made suggesting that if a vote was held, voters would be relying on "inaccurate social media information" rather than the facts. It has also been stated that social media discussion encourages an emotional rather than a factual response to the ballot question. Again this type of statement insults the capacity of Antigonish residents to think objectively on an issue. I am no more emotional on the issue of consolidation than is the Warden or Mayor.

Stating as your information package does that Consolidation is a "BOTTOM-UP" process suggests that the residents have control of this issue when in fact, the Mayor and Warden have set up the process that while giving a superficial reassurance of listening to the people, leaves the ultimate decision in the hands of Council. Both the Mayor and Warden have stated repeatedly that their minds are not made up, they are open but yet their comments such as "we want to become one" (Mayor, May 4, The Reporter) and the Warden Mc Carron statement in a released video "If not now, when?" suggest, that despite the voices being raised in opposition to the process, they have decided the outcome of this issue

The voices heard in the 18 guided, poster presentation, in person engagement sessions, emails and phone calls (estimated by the the mayor at 800+) cannot and do not represent the 18,000 + population of our communities. The voices of 1000+ members of the Facebook Group have provided both Councils with more information than the Engagement Sessions. Please listen.

The process you have evoked to disseminate your information and collect the opinion of the residents rather than the issue of Consolidation itself is dividing

our communities. The disagreement between and amongst our councillors is dividing our Councils. Trust is being eroded at an alarming pace. The process is flawed. It is perceived as unfair and perception is reality. Please put an end to this process before it destroys our communities.

If Consolidation is the most positive way forward for our communities then please do not be afraid to present the voters with all information - the pros, the cons and the unknown. Let there be open discussion to allay fears. Only then can an informed decision be made. If consolidation is good today it will still be good in six months, a year. Slow down. Stop rushing.

The recent change in non-resident property tax plan introduced by the Provincial Government followed by a complete abolition of the tax should serve as an example to our Municipal Government. In the words of Premier Houston "when you move fast sometimes you need to pause and adjust course. We are not so arrogant that we can't admit when we need to adjust." I ask that you demonstrate the leadership you speak of and again, in the words of the Premier, "put personal pride to the side" and stop the present closed process.

I ask that our Municipal Government follow the Provincial lead, "admit they need to adjust course" and present and support a motion to table or dismiss the present consolidation decision making process and make the possibility of consolidation a platform in the next municipal election.

In the words of Maya Angelou

"I did then what I knew how to do. Now that I know better, I do better."

It appears to be within your hands to destroy or heal our community. Please choose wisely.

Thank you for your time

Terry Penny, Lakevale

Town & County Consolidation Presentation

To try and give some context to my concerns about the process being used, my interpretation about how the Warden defines due diligence, and the timeline to date, on the consolidation discussions, I am presenting my findings in a chronological fashion.

The Sept 13/21, Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes of The County of Antigonish (County Minutes) reflected the Warden's introduction to the Councillors, "to the discussion regarding consideration of consolidating the County & Town of Antigonish". Each of the Councillors are recorded as asking questions and one specifically referred to whether the taxpayers would have a final say; another stressed the possibility of a plebiscite; and my Councillor "clarified the ability of the Municipality to back out of the process if it chose to". The Minutes also reflect that the Councillors were told during this meeting that discussions had already taken place with the Dept of Municipal Affairs. The Minutes also reflect the carried resolution: "The Committee recommends that the Town of Antigonish and the Municipality of the County of Antigonish work with the Department of Municipal Affairs to explore consolidation of the two municipal units."

The Town & County joint press release on September 13, 2021, stated that they had voted to gather the information needed to consider consolidating the two municipal units into one regional government. It spoke to the "exploration phase" involving ***"assessing if residents, businesses, and communities would be better served by combining efforts on all municipal services ..."***. It also said that there was still a lot that they needed to determine and investigate further. Our Warden said that ***"We are committed to doing our due diligence by engaging the community and keeping them informed on the process as we assess this opportunity further."***

The Sept 28/21 County Minutes reflect that Council had met with Municipal Affairs and a steering committee was formed and terms of reference presented for it.

The Oct 26/21 Minutes referred to a debrief process on the Queens Consolidation, cost savings identified (savings were not identified in the Minutes), and the amount of work done by their Public Works Dept, as opposed to using external contractors. It is important to note that **the Queens merger was a 1996 amalgamation under the Municipal Government Act and it was not a modern-day consolidation as being considered currently for the town and county.** For later reference I want to emphasize that Queens became more profitable after the merger. They have said that having their own in-house heavy equipment and trades people in Public Works, contributed significantly to their success over the 26 years since their merger.

At the Nov 9/21 Council Meeting, the CAO presented council with one recommendation, from the RFP group of bids, that he and presumably the office staff reviewed. A resolution was carried to engage *Brighter Community Planning Consulting* for the bid price of \$142,628.75 (incl HST).

At the Nov 30/21 meeting, the CAO announced that the provincial gov't was providing \$150K in funding, and that kickoff meetings were to start later in the week with the consultants.

Minutes of the joint council meeting on January 20/22, are not available on the county website or at *antigonish.ca*, nor are the Jan 25th or any other Minutes of the Steering Committee. The February 8th Minutes have no definite information on the merger progress. A draft of the "updated Guiding Principles" was provided for review at the March 8/22 meeting.

What has happened since?

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You said that you wanted public input that would be used to help the Councils understand the values and issues that are important to residents. You have been told loudly and clearly at information sessions, to date, that the people want:

1. To know the identified pros and cons, benefits/risks and related costs of the previous mergers and how we would mitigate the cons and risks;
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I have to wonder about the *“Guiding Principles for Consolidating Antigonish Town & County”*. For example, what do you mean with respect to # 3 that says :*“Communicate regularly about progress and decisions”*; and that the communication will be frequent, transparent, and inclusive? Until many complaints about the inability of the Warden, Mayor and councillors to answer questions on the facts identified in the mergers reviewed, and the form and substance of the new regional municipality, there was nothing in print. To date, there is still nothing on the benefits and/or risks with their respective financial implications.

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. In the county we have lots of space for residential and business expansion, at a significantly lower commercial assessment rate than the town. Have we costed/projected our ability to increase developmental plans and our projected incremental tax base over the next X years, based on the data of the past X years.

. In the county we have our own garbage & recycling pickups and it's far less costly than having a contracted service. Given that we keep the profits, what is our financial advantage to this practice?

. The current age of our infrastructure, overall, should be in good shape. Is it? Part of a transition to a merger should be a review of all physical inventory and the state of all linear infrastructure including all water & sewer lines, roads and sidewalks, etc. What are the projected costs to maintain, upgrade over the next few years?

. Capped assessments, that are a way of retaining people where they are. What is the forecast on this issue with respect to the provincial government?

What are our weaknesses in the county? What could we be doing better and to save dollars? Do we struggle with obtaining timely resources of any type? Are we lacking assets of any type? Are we lacking funding to cover needed projects? Etc. For example:

. By contracting out to third party businesses for sewer and water, what are we losing in speed of response time for service, profits that could be ours, etc, by acquiring heavy equipment, employing our own trades people, mechanics, and a project manager? Queens saw their reliance on their own Public Works staff as a distinct advantage for timeliness and retained profits. Hants also saw having a robust Public Works Department as a distinct advantage. What will it cost to have unionized wage parity with the town?

What unique opportunities do we have in the county that we could use to benefit the county, and perhaps the town and region, that we are not developing? Do we have access to materials, land, etc that could be employed to our advantage, for example, for additional sewage treatment?

. We have a well field in Lower South River that has significant excess capacity according to our Warden (April 18/22 Chronicle Herald). He says that it could end the issue of summer water shortage in the town, if it were piped into the town system to complement the existing source at James River. Why not develop/expand the water piping to serve the county residents in the fringe areas of the town? Putting our fringe residents on county water should free up capacity in the town to address their summer shortages. What would this cost?

What are our exposable risks/threats? Can any identified risks be controlled?

For example, are there any government regulations that prevent us from utilizing any of our land? Are our water sources at risk for any reason, eg contaminants?

. The Warden is quoted as "suggesting that the county needs access to the town's water and sewer facilities, as their biggest growth is in the fringe area." (May 4/22 Reporter). What is stopping the county from being self-reliant given our resources and space?

. In the new glossy FAQs on the website and distributed at the municipally scheduled "meet & greets", the page on *Water, Electricity and Energy Leadership* says: "The Town has a water supply that draws its supply from the James River watershed and is distributed to Town Residents and some County users. There are approximately 1,600 connections to the Town's water utility. The County water utility provides water in the fringe area surrounding the Town

and to Lower South River, St Andrews and St Josephs. In 2020 the County amalgamated all of its water systems into one utility and harmonized rates for all 1,640 water utility customers.”

. Jeff Lawrence, CAO for the town, said that the existing sewer treatment plant, owned by the town but also used by many county residents on the fringe of Antigonish. He said that it was only pushed to its capacity during heavy rain. That problem, he said, could be handled by a stormwater diversion project. (April 18/22 Chronicle Herald).

. Is there a good reason why the county has to use the town water and deplete its resources? Does the town own the property at the James River watershed? Is there any reason why the county can't be self sufficient for water and what would be the cost?

. What are our financial risks with respect to fire service with our current assessments/levies, and to the county's coverage in protective services in a merged organization?

. After a taxpayer raised the issue of change to Hants Region in policing costs, from a 70/30 split with the feds, to a 90/10 split, there was concern expressed about this quite significant additional cost. Can we afford to absorb that cost? Have we costed having our own police force as we used to have? What other additional costs or savings did Hants Region experience.

. Given our financial strength, is the province agreeable to funding a merger? What would be our expected contribution to the costs?

The items stated above are not, by any stretch of the imagination, a full list of the issues to be considered in a S.W.O.T. assessment. It's a very short example to demonstrate what we and you need to know, from both municipalities, before deciding on a merger.

in the May 4/22 *Guysborough Journal*, the Mayor said that “We are going to continue down this road” (on consolidation) and she added that “the “Guiding Principles” established by both Councils when they agreed to explore a possible consolidation, did not include having residents vote on whether to become one municipality”. The article also said that “When it comes to the councils’ decision not to opt for a plebiscite, officials have pointed to the potential divisiveness created, along with the history of such votes garnering low voter turnout.” Well, the town & county residents are absolutely united on wanting a vote, and I want to note that 45% of the eligible voters voted in the 2006 plebiscite. Have you given any thought to the turnout for the election of municipal councillors and for the Mayor, in her initial election? Near the end of the article in the paper, it said, “Getting back to the plebiscite debate, Boucher noted that both councils-by consensus- agreed not to conduct one.” With respect to these statements that the councillors were complicit in not allowing a vote to the taxpayers, where is this agreement in any of the recorded Minutes? I suggest that there has been a huge gap in the message that was heard and understood by the Councillors, and what was intended by the people delivering the message. Even reading “between the lines” in all the printed promotional material, other than the Mayor's statements to the press, at the outset in the Sept 14/21 release, “Boucher downplayed the likelihood of holding a plebiscite on the matter, ...” does not indicate that there was never an intention of permitting a plebiscite. Additionally, the County's Sept 13, 2021 Minutes do not reflect that when Councillor Brophy stressed “the importance of consultation, including the possibility of a plebiscite, ...” , anyone said that there could be no plebiscite.

Finally, the May 4/22 issue of The Reporter speaks to the Mayor and the Warden feeling that the process is being undermined by 2 councillors not supporting a consolidation. Is this viewed as a greater abuse to the process than the 2 councillors who have said that they are voting for consolidation regardless of what their constituents want? I expect that it may be difficult for some people to deal with the conflict and controversy surrounding this priority to accomplish a consolidation. At the same time, it is unprofessional and beneath the dignity of the Office of both the Warden and the Mayor to publicly accuse councillors of undermining the process in what many of us consider to much of a rush to consolidation. These councillors have been elected by their constituents and we expect them to tell us the truth in their discussions with us. No decision to consolidate has been made by the council, yet, and until then, I want to remind you that the councillors voted to approve a resolution to explore consolidation, and many of them are doing so by going through that process with their constituents. I do believe that when councillors are given the information they should have before they vote on a finite issue, that, once the resolution is carried, they are expected to uphold the decision of the whole council with dignity, despite their personal opinions. So, please, do not rush to put this issue to a vote because you simply have not yet done the work that needs to happen before anyone should be making a decision.

The bottom line is that the majority of taxpayers from the town and county, who have participated in the process to date, have been unified in overwhelmingly stating that they want to vote on this issue. It has been expressed by some elected officials that the constituents are not well-enough informed to make this decision. Given that the elected officials have not produced any factual information to show that the county will be better served and in a better financial position from consolidation, or alternatively, refute that we won't be in a worse financial position, I respectfully state, that the elected officials have not earned the moral right to make this consolidation decision. They must provide us with the facts and figures to support the reasons for a merger. If we are to use Windsor/Hants as a model, the people started the process and were informed about the issues before they elected their council to deal with the issues. It took them 2 years to explore the issues and get answers to their questions, including financial impacts, and to test their ability to compromise in finding solutions, before agreeing to trust their elected officials without holding a plebiscite. I suggest that you show some good faith, slam the brakes on this process and start feeding us the relevant information. We deserve fairness and full transparency.

To quote from an October 9, 2019 document about the Windsor/West Hants Consolidation Restructuring Model:

***“The process needed to have the community’s understanding and trust. ...the community would need to believe that the key merger issues had been addressed thoughtfully and transparently and that, where necessary, reasonable compromises had been achieved.*”**

We recognize more residents of these municipalities will be drawn into the discussions. They will have their own learning curves as they increasingly become engaged; they will want information and they will want reassurance. And we need to listen. That’s the way it should be when you’re breaking new ground, following a new path. We will not have done a good job unless those who live in what will be the new regional municipality recognize that we have acted in their best interests.”



Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Meeting tonight

1 message

Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Wed, May 11, 2022 at 8:06 AM

To: mickeyfouç

Mark;

Wanted to give you some material to assist you with questions you may want to ask, there will be consultants, councillors, mayor, Warden and CAOs from both town and county there. You are an influencer, ask questions. Use the material from presentation from Anne Marie & Terry to develop your questions. For example a question could be;

Boundaries

We have heard that there will be a reduction of councillors in a consolidated municipality. Harris has told us that the Utility And Review Board (UARB) sets the boundaries and reviews every 8 years.

District 9 is the most far east of the district and we most likely end up combining with other districts resulting in less representation or advocating for our district. **What is the recommendation that the steering committee is putting forward, assume you have one ? Why don't we develop a proposed plan to the UARB before we vote?** That way we can evaluate this consolidation for our area.

2 attachments



Anne Marie Town & County Consolidation Presentation.docx

37K



Terry Penny Presentation.pdf

32K

Good Evening Warden and Members of Council.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my thoughts on the Process being used to decide the issue of Consolidation.

I am not here to argue the merits of Consolidation. Not being privy to the extensive research completed by Council, but only being presented with those aspects of the research that support a position in favour of Consolidation I cannot make a valid argue of support for or against either side of the issue.

What I am here to argue is that while, as the Warden has stated “he was elected to make decisions” I do not believe he, or any of the Councillors, was elected to make a decision on Consolidation. Consolidation is an issue that affects every aspect of our communities. Consolidation cannot be reversed. Therefore weighing the benefits and liabilities of consolidating the town and county is the responsibility and **right** of the residents of Antigonish County.

I believe every eligible voter in Antigonish County has the right to participate in this decision making either by electing municipal officials who have campaigned on the issue or by voting in a plebiscite on Consolidation. Since candidates in the last municipal election of 2020 failed to raise Consolidation as part of their platform, unless a motion is made and accepted to set aside the present process, a plebiscite is the only option.

I find the rationale for Council’s decision to proceed with a Council vote rather than a public vote to be flawed, insulting and demeaning to the intellectual capacity of the residents of Antigonish County.

The very divisiveness that the Warden and Mayor claim will occur if a vote is allowed is being created and fuelled by their very actions of ignoring the voices of the people. The people of Antigonish Town and County are not so weak that they need the protection of the Municipal governments in order to express their opinions. To continually suggest that people are afraid to publicly support an issue for fear of being attacked is insulting to the great people of this community. As with all issues facing our town, county , indeed our province and country - there are often two sides to an issues and yet these issues are decided upon through the democratic process of voting. All of us have long been raised to believe that voting is our opportunity to exercise our position on an issue. All of us have been raised to respect the decision of the electorate.

To suggest that Social Media only flames an issue and leads to the dissemination of misleading or wrong information is speaking out of both sides of your mouth. Both the Town and County have been relentless in presenting their arguments for Consolidation through Social Media Channels. Indeed it seems that daily videos are being released presenting the Warden and Mayor's perspective on the issue. This information is presented as 100% factual yet any discussion questioning the presented one-sided research is summarily dismissed as either invalid and untrue, or misleading and wrong.

Statements have been made that the drop-in engagement session format was chosen as opposed to open discussion meetings as the drop-in engagement sessions encourages 1:1 chats where accurate information could be shared and that open discussion meeting were intimidating to many residents. If indeed you are challenged in creating a space where residents can speak without fear of retribution, the privacy of our most democratic right, the secret ballot, allows every resident to speak without fear of intimidation.

Statements have been made suggesting that if a vote was held, voters would be relying on "inaccurate social media information" rather than the facts. It has also been stated that social media discussion encourages an emotional rather than a factual response to the ballot question. Again this type of statement insults the capacity of Antigonish residents to think objectively on an issue. I am no more emotional on the issue of consolidation than is the Warden or Mayor.

Stating as your information package does that Consolidation is a "BOTTOM-UP" process suggests that the residents have control of this issue when in fact, the Mayor and Warden have set up the process that while giving a superficial reassurance of listening to the people, leaves the ultimate decision in the hands of Council. Both the Mayor and Warden have stated repeatedly that their minds are not made up, they are open but yet their comments such as "we want to become one" (Mayor, May 4, The Reporter) and the Warden Mc Carron statement in a released video "If not now, when?" suggest, that despite the voices being raised in opposition to the process, they have decided the outcome of this issue

The voices heard in the 18 guided, poster presentation, in person engagement sessions, emails and phone calls (estimated by the the mayor at 800+) cannot and do not represent the 18,000 + population of our communities. The voices of 1000+ members of the Facebook Group have provided both Councils with more information than the Engagement Sessions. Please listen.

The process you have evoked to disseminate your information and collect the opinion of the residents rather than the issue of Consolidation itself is dividing

our communities. The disagreement between and amongst our councillors is dividing our Councils. Trust is being eroded at an alarming pace. The process is flawed. It is perceived as unfair and perception is reality. Please put an end to this process before it destroys our communities.

If Consolidation is the most positive way forward for our communities then please do not be afraid to present the voters with all information - the pros, the cons and the unknown. Let there be open discussion to allay fears. Only then can an informed decision be made. If consolidation is good today it will still be good in six months, a year. Slow down. Stop rushing.

The recent change in non-resident property tax plan introduced by the Provincial Government followed by a complete abolition of the tax should serve as an example to our Municipal Government. In the words of Premier Houston "when you move fast sometimes you need to pause and adjust course. We are not so arrogant that we can't admit when we need to adjust." I ask that you demonstrate the leadership you speak of and again, in the words of the Premier, "put personal pride to the side" and stop the present closed process.

I ask that our Municipal Government follow the Provincial lead, "admit they need to adjust course" and present and support a motion to table or dismiss the present consolidation decision making process and make the possibility of consolidation a platform in the next municipal election.

In the words of Maya Angelou

"I did then what I knew how to do. Now that I know better, I do better."

It appears to be within your hands to destroy or heal our community. Please choose wisely.

Thank you for your time

Terry Penny, Lakevale

Town & County Consolidation Presentation

To try and give some context to my concerns about the process being used, my interpretation about how the Warden defines due diligence, and the timeline to date, on the consolidation discussions, I am presenting my findings in a chronological fashion.

The Sept 13/21, Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes of The County of Antigonish (County Minutes) reflected the Warden's introduction to the Councillors, "to the discussion regarding consideration of consolidating the County & Town of Antigonish". Each of the Councillors are recorded as asking questions and one specifically referred to whether the taxpayers would have a final say; another stressed the possibility of a plebiscite; and my Councillor "clarified the ability of the Municipality to back out of the process if it chose to". The Minutes also reflect that the Councillors were told during this meeting that discussions had already taken place with the Dept of Municipal Affairs. The Minutes also reflect the carried resolution: "The Committee recommends that the Town of Antigonish and the Municipality of the County of Antigonish work with the Department of Municipal Affairs to explore consolidation of the two municipal units."

The Town & County joint press release on September 13, 2021, stated that they had voted to gather the information needed to consider consolidating the two municipal units into one regional government. It spoke to the "exploration phase" involving ***"assessing if residents, businesses, and communities would be better served by combining efforts on all municipal services ..."***. It also said that there was still a lot that they needed to determine and investigate further. Our Warden said that ***"We are committed to doing our due diligence by engaging the community and keeping them informed on the process as we assess this opportunity further."***

The Sept 28/21 County Minutes reflect that Council had met with Municipal Affairs and a steering committee was formed and terms of reference presented for it.

The Oct 26/21 Minutes referred to a debrief process on the Queens Consolidation, cost savings identified (savings were not identified in the Minutes), and the amount of work done by their Public Works Dept, as opposed to using external contractors. It is important to note that the Queens merger was a 1996 amalgamation under the Municipal Government Act and it was not a modern-day consolidation as being considered currently for the town and county. For later reference I want to emphasize that Queens became more profitable after the merger. They have said that having their own in-house heavy equipment and trades people in Public Works, contributed significantly to their success over the 26 years since their merger.

At the Nov 9/21 Council Meeting, the CAO presented council with one recommendation, from the RFP group of bids, that he and presumably the office staff reviewed. A resolution was carried to engage *Brighter Community Planning Consulting* for the bid price of \$142,628.75 (incl HST).

At the Nov 30/21 meeting, the CAO announced that the provincial gov't was providing \$150K in funding, and that kickoff meetings were to start later in the week with the consultants.

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Finally, the May 4/22 issue of The Reporter speaks to the Mayor and the Warden feeling that the process is being undermined by 2 councillors not supporting a consolidation. Is this viewed as a greater abuse to the process than the 2 councillors who have said that they are voting for consolidation regardless of what their constituents want? I expect that it may be difficult for some people to deal with the conflict and controversy surrounding this priority to accomplish a consolidation. At the same time, it is unprofessional and beneath the dignity of the Office of both the Warden and the Mayor to publicly accuse councillors of undermining the process in what many of us consider to much of a rush to consolidation. These councillors have been elected by their constituents and we expect them to tell us the truth in their discussions with us. No decision to consolidate has been made by the council, yet, and until then, I want to remind you that the councillors voted to approve a resolution to explore consolidation, and many of them are doing so by going through that process with their constituents. I do believe that when councillors are given the information they should have before they vote on a finite issue, that, once the resolution is carried, they are expected to uphold the decision of the whole council with dignity, despite their personal opinions. So, please, do not rush to put this issue to a vote because you simply have not yet done the work that needs to happen before anyone should be making a decision.

The bottom line is that the majority of taxpayers from the town and county, who have participated in the process to date, have been unified in overwhelmingly stating that they want to vote on this issue. It has been expressed by some elected officials that the constituents are not well-enough informed to make this decision. Given that the elected officials have not produced any factual information to show that the county will be better served and in a better financial position from consolidation, or alternatively, refute that we won't be in a worse financial position, I respectfully state, that the elected officials have not earned the moral right to make this consolidation decision. They must provide us with the facts and figures to support the reasons for a merger. If we are to use Windsor/Hants as a model, the people started the process and were informed about the issues before they elected their council to deal with the issues. It took them 2 years to explore the issues and get answers to their questions, including financial impacts, and to test their ability to compromise in finding solutions, before agreeing to trust their elected officials without holding a plebiscite. I suggest that you show some good faith, slam the brakes on this process and start feeding us the relevant information. We deserve fairness and full transparency.

To quote from an October 9, 2019 document about the Windsor/West Hants Consolidation Restructuring Model:

“The process needed to have the community’s understanding and trust. ...the community would need to believe that the key merger issues had been addressed thoughtfully and transparently and that, where necessary, reasonable compromises had been achieved.

We recognize more residents of these municipalities will be drawn into the discussions. They will have their own learning curves as they increasingly become engaged; they will want information and they will want reassurance. And we need to listen. That’s the way it should be when you’re breaking new ground, following a new path. We will not have done a good job unless those who live in what will be the new regional municipality recognize that we have acted in their best interests.”



Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Meeting tonight at Fire Hall

1 message

Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Wed, May 11, 2022 at 8:15 AM

To: larrymeagher

Larry /Angela;

Hope you and Angela can attend this evening, it is important. I wanted to give you some material to review in anticipation of the meeting tonight, its presentations made at council last evening. I have put an example of a question you or someone else can ask;

Financial

At our community meeting we were told that the County is in great financial shape. We have a reserve fund that is the envy of many and in fact he said, we borrow from ourselves.

We were also informed that as a result of provincial assessments we would be receiving over a million more dollars in tax revenue this year.

We were also informed that the deed transfer tax (1% of all property sales in county) had doubled in the last fiscal year to approximately 800,000. We are growing.

Large reserve fund, growth in county, **Why now do we want to amalgamate?**

2 attachments



Anne Marie Town & County Consolidation Presentation.docx

37K



Terry Penny Presentation.pdf

32K

Good Evening Warden and Members of Council.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my thoughts on the Process being used to decide the issue of Consolidation.

I am not here to argue the merits of Consolidation. Not being privy to the extensive research completed by Council, but only being presented with those aspects of the research that support a position in favour of Consolidation I cannot make a valid argue of support for or against either side of the issue.

What I am here to argue is that while, as the Warden has stated "he was elected to make decisions" I do not believe he, or any of the Councillors, was elected to make a decision on Consolidation. Consolidation is an issue that affects every aspect of our communities. Consolidation cannot be reversed. Therefore weighing the benefits and liabilities of consolidating the town and county is the responsibility and right of the residents of Antigonish County.

I believe every eligible voter in Antigonish County has the right to participate in this decision making either by electing municipal officials who have campaigned on the issue or by voting in a plebiscite on Consolidation. Since candidates in the last municipal election of 2020 failed to raise Consolidation as part of their platform, unless a motion is made and accepted to set aside the present process, a plebiscite is the only option.

I find the rationale for Council's decision to proceed with a Council vote rather than a public vote to be flawed, insulting and demeaning to the intellectual capacity of the residents of Antigonish County.

The very divisiveness that the Warden and Mayor claim will occur if a vote is allowed is being created and fuelled by their very actions of ignoring the voices of the people. The people of Antigonish Town and County are not so weak that they need the protection of the Municipal governments in order to express their opinions. To continually suggest that people are afraid to publicly support an issue for fear of being attacked is insulting to the great people of this community. As with all issues facing our town, county , indeed our province and country - there are often two sides to an issues and yet these issues are decided upon through the democratic process of voting. All of us have long been raised to believe that voting is our opportunity to exercise our position on an issue. All of us have been raised to respect the decision of the electorate.

To suggest that Social Media only flames an issue and leads to the dissemination of misleading or wrong information is speaking out of both sides of your mouth. Both the Town and County have been relentless in presenting their arguments for Consolidation through Social Media Channels. Indeed it seems that daily videos are being released presenting the Warden and Mayor's perspective on the issue. This information is presented as 100% factual yet any discussion questioning the presented one-sided research is summarily dismissed as either invalid and untrue, or misleading and wrong.

Statements have been made that the drop-in engagement session format was chosen as opposed to open discussion meetings as the drop-in engagement sessions encourages 1:1 chats where accurate information could be shared and that open discussion meeting were intimidating to many residents. If indeed you are challenged in creating a space where residents can speak without fear of retribution, the privacy of our most democratic right, the secret ballot, allows every resident to speak without fear of intimidation.

Statements have been made suggesting that if a vote was held, voters would be relying on "inaccurate social media information" rather than the facts. It has also been stated that social media discussion encourages an emotional rather than a factual response to the ballot question. Again this type of statement insults the capacity of Antigonish residents to think objectively on an issue. I am no more emotional on the issue of consolidation than is the Warden or Mayor.

Stating as your information package does that Consolidation is a "BOTTOM-UP" process suggests that the residents have control of this issue when in fact, the Mayor and Warden have set up the process that while giving a superficial reassurance of listening to the people, leaves the ultimate decision in the hands of Council. Both the Mayor and Warden have stated repeatedly that their minds are not made up, they are open but yet their comments such as "we want to become one" (Mayor, May 4, The Reporter) and the Warden Mc Carron statement in a released video "If not now, when?" suggest, that despite the voices being raised in opposition to the process, they have decided the outcome of this issue

The voices heard in the 18 guided, poster presentation, in person engagement sessions, emails and phone calls (estimated by the the mayor at 800+) cannot and do not represent the 18,000 + population of our communities. The voices of 1000+ members of the Facebook Group have provided both Councils with more information than the Engagement Sessions. Please listen.

The process you have evoked to disseminate your information and collect the opinion of the residents rather than the issue of Consolidation itself is dividing

our communities. The disagreement between and amongst our councillors is dividing our Councils. Trust is being eroded at an alarming pace. The process is flawed. It is perceived as unfair and perception is reality. Please put an end to this process before it destroys our communities.

If Consolidation is the most positive way forward for our communities then please do not be afraid to present the voters with all information - the pros, the cons and the unknown. Let there be open discussion to allay fears. Only then can an informed decision be made. If consolidation is good today it will still be good in six months, a year. Slow down. Stop rushing.

The recent change in non-resident property tax plan introduced by the Provincial Government followed by a complete abolition of the tax should serve as an example to our Municipal Government. In the words of Premier Houston "when you move fast sometimes you need to pause and adjust course. We are not so arrogant that we can't admit when we need to adjust." I ask that you demonstrate the leadership you speak of and again, in the words of the Premier, "put personal pride to the side" and stop the present closed process.

I ask that our Municipal Government follow the Provincial lead, "admit they need to adjust course" and present and support a motion to table or dismiss the present consolidation decision making process and make the possibility of consolidation a platform in the next municipal election.

In the words of Maya Angelou

"I did then what I knew how to do. Now that I know better, I do better."

It appears to be within your hands to destroy or heal our community. Please choose wisely.

Thank you for your time

Terry Penny, Lakevale

Town & County Consolidation Presentation

To try and give some context to my concerns about the process being used, my interpretation about how the Warden defines due diligence, and the timeline to date, on the consolidation discussions, I am presenting my findings in a chronological fashion.

The Sept 13/21, Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes of The County of Antigonish (County Minutes) reflected the Warden's introduction to the Councillors, "to the discussion regarding consideration of consolidating the County & Town of Antigonish". Each of the Councillors are recorded as asking questions and one specifically referred to whether the taxpayers would have a final say; another stressed the possibility of a plebiscite; and my Councillor "clarified the ability of the Municipality to back out of the process if it chose to". The Minutes also reflect that the Councillors were told during this meeting that discussions had already taken place with the Dept of Municipal Affairs. The Minutes also reflect the carried resolution: "The Committee recommends that the Town of Antigonish and the Municipality of the County of Antigonish work with the Department of Municipal Affairs to explore consolidation of the two municipal units."

The Town & County joint press release on September 13, 2021, stated that they had voted to gather the information needed to consider consolidating the two municipal units into one regional government. It spoke to the "exploration phase" involving ***"assessing if residents, businesses, and communities would be better served by combining efforts on all municipal services ..."***. It also said that there was still a lot that they needed to determine and investigate further. Our Warden said that ***"We are committed to doing our due diligence by engaging the community and keeping them informed on the process as we assess this opportunity further."***

The Sept 28/21 County Minutes reflect that Council had met with Municipal Affairs and a steering committee was formed and terms of reference presented for it.

The Oct 26/21 Minutes referred to a debrief process on the Queens Consolidation, cost savings identified (savings were not identified in the Minutes), and the amount of work done by their Public Works Dept, as opposed to using external contractors. It is important to note that the Queens merger was a 1996 amalgamation under the Municipal Government Act and it was not a modern-day consolidation as being considered currently for the town and county. For later reference I want to emphasize that Queens became more profitable after the merger. They have said that having their own in-house heavy equipment and trades people in Public Works, contributed significantly to their success over the 26 years since their merger.

At the Nov 9/21 Council Meeting, the CAO presented council with one recommendation, from the RFP group of bids, that he and presumably the office staff reviewed. A resolution was carried to engage *Brighter Community Planning Consulting* for the bid price of \$142,628.75 (incl HST).

At the Nov 30/21 meeting, the CAO announced that the provincial gov't was providing \$150K in funding, and that kickoff meetings were to start later in the week with the consultants.

Minutes of the joint council meeting on January 20/22, are not available on the county website or at *antigonish.ca*, nor are the Jan 25th or any other Minutes of the Steering Committee. The February 8th Minutes have no definite information on the merger progress. A draft of the "updated Guiding Principles" was provided for review at the March 8/22 meeting.

What has happened since?

Shortly after mid-March 2022, we had delivered to our homes, a glossy two-sided page: *“Invitation to join the Consolidation Discussion”*. It had a community engagement schedule for “drop in” styled meetings and a letter on the reverse side basically telling us that the councils would make a consolidation decision on our behalf, after those of us with an interest in our future took part in the process, by the on-line website, in person, by phone or email. We were told that: *“Consolidation may be a more efficient use of existing resources to provide a high level of service to residents living in our communities. Many of the issues facing our communities, such as climate change, economic development, infrastructure planning, accessibility and housing, require or would benefit significantly from a regional approach.”*

So, I went on-line on March 25/22, and visited *antigonish.ca* and printed out the FAQs and other material to read. I found nothing informative as to any identified benefits for the county to join the town. I continued to monitor the site for updates and there were none forthcoming for quite a while. The information, and lack thereof, made me more curious because it said that the Council reps would gather and assess information on the Windsor-West Hants (2020 Consolidation) and the Liverpool-Queens (1996 Amalgamation) mergers. I think that a reasonable person could presume that the facts of the pros and cons of these mergers, and the relative financial costs/benefits, would have been available and presented on the website and in the planned kiosk-style sessions. A reasonable person would also expect that the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats/risks would have been identified.

You said that you wanted public input that would be used to help the Councils understand the values and issues that are important to residents. You have been told loudly and clearly at information sessions, to date, that the people want:

1. To know the identified pros and cons, benefits/risks and related costs of the previous mergers and how we would mitigate the cons and risks;
2. And that we, the taxpayers/constituents want to vote on this issue of consolidation.

I have to wonder about the *“Guiding Principles for Consolidating Antigonish Town & County”*. For example, what do you mean with respect to # 3 that says :*“Communicate regularly about progress and decisions”*; and that the communication will be frequent, transparent, and inclusive? Until many complaints about the inability of the Warden, Mayor and councillors to answer questions on the facts identified in the mergers reviewed, and the form and substance of the new regional municipality, there was nothing in print. To date, there is still nothing on the benefits and/or risks with their respective financial implications.

Then, in May 2022, the website contained a document, prepared by the hired consultants, called: *“Community Engagement Liaison Project Exploring Consolidation with the Town & County of Antigonish”*. It contains a January 2022 date on the front page, and it should have been put on the website and distributed much earlier than in May. So, in reading that document I made some interesting observations about their analysis. There is an absolute lie on page 2 with respect to the 2001-2006 Antigonish Annexation request. There was not “limited support” from the county residents. The County voted 84% to amalgamate with the town in an act of retaliation for the town wanting to annex far more land than they may have wanted for their specific objectives. And an important part that is missing from the piece, is that after the UARB recommended an amalgamation, the town took the issue to court. They were not successful; however, the UARB backed off on the merger.

To combine all the 1990's amalgamations on page 3 and not speak to the costly items in the HRM merger, for example, is an absolute disservice to the reader who wants to understand the pros and cons. It speaks of the success of the 1996 Liverpool/Queens amalgamation, guided jointly by the town and county, as opposed to the "appointed coordinators" for HRM and CBRM. Where is the consultants', or the Council's Steering Committee, analysis that explains to us why a "friendly" amalgamation, with town & county direct participation, under the UARB rules, (*where the rules are more clearly defined*), is considered inferior to a Consolidation? In a consolidation procedure, you don't get to create the substance of the regional municipality until a Transition Committee is trusted to accomplish the merger, after a favourable consolidation vote is held. If Queens didn't need a UARB "appointed coordinator", why would we? Why was there a failure to draw on your available expertise to tell us how you differentiate between the two models of a "friendly" amalgamation and a consolidation?

It seems from the information on the Windsor/Hants consolidation, that the citizens were quite engaged at the early stages of the process. It seems that another flame was ignited between the town & county, in 2015, with a decision by West Hants to drop the Windsor Fire service and create their own fire dept. The town & county tensions rose and in 2016 a citizens' group applied to the UARB for an amalgamation of the two municipalities, citing a "dysfunctional" relationship between the two local governments. The town supported it and West Hants did not. Abraham Zebian was a West Hants councillor and may have also been the Warden. Then, In 2017, the application for amalgamation was adjourned and an MOU was created to reflect the desire of the two municipalities to work together collaboratively, to strengthen their communities. It took another year for the two municipalities to agree on a process for merging, based on their collaborative efforts for the good of all their residents. On April 1/21, per CBC News report, the first Mayor of the regional municipality, Abraham Zebian, said that the consolidation had been a success, although he admitted that it would be years before the benefits can be properly measured. He admitted that it will take at least a few years to formally assess the merger. Then Municipal Affairs Minister, Brendan Maguire, agreed with Zebian in its success, and said, "Really, it's about financial stability and just having a path forward."

The information provided states that the elected officials in Windsor/Hants canvassed their communities prior to the 2016 municipal elections, and there was lots of interest in the structure of local government in the area. They took their time and were able to get the public and businesses to buy into the merger and to do it under a consolidation approach after they had identified all the issues and costs and that they could work together harmoniously.

What is the rush for us to do this now? There is no established level of trust or confidence that this process is good for the county at this time. We have been pushed into a process being driven by the Mayor, the Warden, their deputies and the CAOs.

The county taxpayers want to know whether a consolidation would be beneficial to us. We want due diligence applied to identifying our strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats or risks, and their financial effects, in each of our municipalities.

Within our strengths, we want you to identify what are we doing well and do we have a competitive advantage in one or more areas? What makes us stronger than the town and how will they also benefit? What do we have that is valuable? What draws people and business to come to or stay in the county? For example, the types of questions to which I'd like answers for the county (and the town):

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Finally, the May 4/22 issue of The Reporter speaks to the Mayor and the Warden feeling that the process is being undermined by 2 councillors not supporting a consolidation. Is this viewed as a greater abuse to the process than the 2 councillors who have said that they are voting for consolidation regardless of what their constituents want? I expect that it may be difficult for some people to deal with the conflict and controversy surrounding this priority to accomplish a consolidation. At the same time, it is unprofessional and beneath the dignity of the Office of both the Warden and the Mayor to publicly accuse councillors of undermining the process in what many of us consider to much of a rush to consolidation. These councillors have been elected by their constituents and we expect them to tell us the truth in their discussions with us. No decision to consolidate has been made by the council, yet, and until then, I want to remind you that the councillors voted to approve a resolution to explore consolidation, and many of them are doing so by going through that process with their constituents. I do believe that when councillors are given the information they should have before they vote on a finite issue, that, once the resolution is carried, they are expected to uphold the decision of the whole council with dignity, despite their personal opinions. So, please, do not rush to put this issue to a vote because you simply have not yet done the work that needs to happen before anyone should be making a decision.

The bottom line is that the majority of taxpayers from the town and county, who have participated in the process to date, have been unified in overwhelmingly stating that they want to vote on this issue. It has been expressed by some elected officials that the constituents are not well-enough informed to make this decision. Given that the elected officials have not produced any factual information to show that the county will be better served and in a better financial position from consolidation, or alternatively, refute that we won't be in a worse financial position, I respectfully state, that the elected officials have not earned the moral right to make this consolidation decision. They must provide us with the facts and figures to support the reasons for a merger. If we are to use Windsor/Hants as a model, the people started the process and were informed about the issues before they elected their council to deal with the issues. It took them 2 years to explore the issues and get answers to their questions, including financial impacts, and to test their ability to compromise in finding solutions, before agreeing to trust their elected officials without holding a plebiscite. I suggest that you show some good faith, slam the brakes on this process and start feeding us the relevant information. We deserve fairness and full transparency.

To quote from an October 9, 2019 document about the Windsor/West Hants Consolidation Restructuring Model:

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Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Meeting tonight

1 message

Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Wed, May 11, 2022 at 8:29 AM

To: Brenda Greencorn

Brenda;

Please have a look at presentations from last night by Ann Marie and Terry penny (he contracted COVID and just submitted it in writing. Make your own questions. Here is a sample question that I made;

Conflict of Interest

On April 18th at a community meeting Harris informed the residents that he could be in a potential " Conflict of Interest". We understand he would not be able to vote for District 9 if he is in conflict. He was informed that residents of District 9 could email / call other councillors to express their view and encouraged all to do that.

Residents want a say, the plebiscite would eliminate the conflict. **Has there been any plan to do this?**

2 attachments



Anne Marie Town & County Consolidation Presentation.docx

37K



Terry Penny Presentation.pdf

32K

Good Evening Warden and Members of Council.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my thoughts on the Process being used to decide the issue of Consolidation.

I am not here to argue the merits of Consolidation. Not being privy to the extensive research completed by Council, but only being presented with those aspects of the research that support a position in favour of Consolidation I cannot make a valid argue of support for or against either side of the issue.

What I am here to argue is that while, as the Warden has stated "he was elected to make decisions" I do not believe he, or any of the Councillors, was elected to make a decision on Consolidation. Consolidation is an issue that affects every aspect of our communities. Consolidation cannot be reversed. Therefore weighing the benefits and liabilities of consolidating the town and county is the responsibility and right of the residents of Antigonish County.

I believe every eligible voter in Antigonish County has the right to participate in this decision making either by electing municipal officials who have campaigned on the issue or by voting in a plebiscite on Consolidation. Since candidates in the last municipal election of 2020 failed to raise Consolidation as part of their platform, unless a motion is made and accepted to set aside the present process, a plebiscite is the only option.

I find the rationale for Council's decision to proceed with a Council vote rather than a public vote to be flawed, insulting and demeaning to the intellectual capacity of the residents of Antigonish County.

The very divisiveness that the Warden and Mayor claim will occur if a vote is allowed is being created and fuelled by their very actions of ignoring the voices of the people. The people of Antigonish Town and County are not so weak that they need the protection of the Municipal governments in order to express their opinions. To continually suggest that people are afraid to publicly support an issue for fear of being attacked is insulting to the great people of this community. As with all issues facing our town, county , indeed our province and country - there are often two sides to an issues and yet these issues are decided upon through the democratic process of voting. All of us have long been raised to believe that voting is our opportunity to exercise our position on an issue. All of us have been raised to respect the decision of the electorate.

To suggest that Social Media only flares an issue and leads to the dissemination of misleading or wrong information is speaking out of both sides of your mouth. Both the Town and County have been relentless in presenting their arguments for Consolidation through Social Media Channels. Indeed it seems that daily videos are being released presenting the Warden and Mayor's perspective on the issue. This information is presented as 100% factual yet any discussion questioning the presented one-sided research is summarily dismissed as either invalid and untrue, or misleading and wrong.

Statements have been made that the drop-in engagement session format was chosen as opposed to open discussion meetings as the drop-in engagement sessions encourages 1:1 chats where accurate information could be shared and that open discussion meeting were intimidating to many residents. If indeed you are challenged in creating a space where residents can speak without fear of retribution, the privacy of our most democratic right, the secret ballot, allows every resident to speak without fear of intimidation.

Statements have been made suggesting that if a vote was held, voters would be relying on "inaccurate social media information" rather than the facts. It has also been stated that social media discussion encourages an emotional rather than a factual response to the ballot question. Again this type of statement insults the capacity of Antigonish residents to think objectively on an issue. I am no more emotional on the issue of consolidation than is the Warden or Mayor.

Stating as your information package does that Consolidation is a "BOTTOM-UP" process suggests that the residents have control of this issue when in fact, the Mayor and Warden have set up the process that while giving a superficial reassurance of listening to the people, leaves the ultimate decision in the hands of Council. Both the Mayor and Warden have stated repeatedly that their minds are not made up, they are open but yet their comments such as "we want to become one" (Mayor, May 4, The Reporter) and the Warden Mc Carron statement in a released video "If not now, when?" suggest, that despite the voices being raised in opposition to the process, they have decided the outcome of this issue

The voices heard in the 18 guided, poster presentation, in person engagement sessions, emails and phone calls (estimated by the the mayor at 800+) cannot and do not represent the 18,000 + population of our communities. The voices of 1000+ members of the Facebook Group have provided both Councils with more information than the Engagement Sessions. Please listen.

The process you have evoked to disseminate your information and collect the opinion of the residents rather than the issue of Consolidation itself is dividing

our communities. The disagreement between and amongst our councillors is dividing our Councils. Trust is being eroded at an alarming pace. The process is flawed. It is perceived as unfair and perception is reality. Please put an end to this process before it destroys our communities.

If Consolidation is the most positive way forward for our communities then please do not be afraid to present the voters with all information - the pros, the cons and the unknown. Let there be open discussion to allay fears. Only then can an informed decision be made. If consolidation is good today it will still be good in six months, a year. Slow down. Stop rushing.

The recent change in non-resident property tax plan introduced by the Provincial Government followed by a complete abolition of the tax should serve as an example to our Municipal Government. In the words of Premier Houston "when you move fast sometimes you need to pause and adjust course. We are not so arrogant that we can't admit when we need to adjust." I ask that you demonstrate the leadership you speak of and again, in the words of the Premier, "put personal pride to the side" and stop the present closed process.

I ask that our Municipal Government follow the Provincial lead, "admit they need to adjust course" and present and support a motion to table or dismiss the present consolidation decision making process and make the possibility of consolidation a platform in the next municipal election.

In the words of Maya Angelou

"I did then what I knew how to do. Now that I know better, I do better."

It appears to be within your hands to destroy or heal our community. Please choose wisely.

Thank you for your time

Terry Penny, Lakevale

Town & County Consolidation Presentation

To try and give some context to my concerns about the process being used, my interpretation about how the Warden defines due diligence, and the timeline to date, on the consolidation discussions, I am presenting my findings in a chronological fashion.

The Sept 13/21, Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes of The County of Antigonish (County Minutes) reflected the Warden's introduction to the Councillors, "to the discussion regarding consideration of consolidating the County & Town of Antigonish". Each of the Councillors are recorded as asking questions and one specifically referred to whether the taxpayers would have a final say; another stressed the possibility of a plebiscite; and my Councillor "clarified the ability of the Municipality to back out of the process if it chose to". The Minutes also reflect that the Councillors were told during this meeting that discussions had already taken place with the Dept of Municipal Affairs. The Minutes also reflect the carried resolution: "The Committee recommends that the Town of Antigonish and the Municipality of the County of Antigonish work with the Department of Municipal Affairs to explore consolidation of the two municipal units."

The Town & County joint press release on September 13, 2021, stated that they had voted to gather the information needed to consider consolidating the two municipal units into one regional government. It spoke to the "exploration phase" involving ***"assessing if residents, businesses, and communities would be better served by combining efforts on all municipal services ..."***. It also said that there was still a lot that they needed to determine and investigate further. Our Warden said that ***"We are committed to doing our due diligence by engaging the community and keeping them informed on the process as we assess this opportunity further."***

The Sept 28/21 County Minutes reflect that Council had met with Municipal Affairs and a steering committee was formed and terms of reference presented for it.

The Oct 26/21 Minutes referred to a debrief process on the Queens Consolidation, cost savings identified (savings were not identified in the Minutes), and the amount of work done by their Public Works Dept, as opposed to using external contractors. It is important to note that the Queens merger was a 1996 amalgamation under the Municipal Government Act and it was not a modern-day consolidation as being considered currently for the town and county. For later reference I want to emphasize that Queens became more profitable after the merger. They have said that having their own in-house heavy equipment and trades people in Public Works, contributed significantly to their success over the 26 years since their merger.

At the Nov 9/21 Council Meeting, the CAO presented council with one recommendation, from the RFP group of bids, that he and presumably the office staff reviewed. A resolution was carried to engage *Brighter Community Planning Consulting* for the bid price of \$142,628.75 (incl HST).

At the Nov 30/21 meeting, the CAO announced that the provincial gov't was providing \$150K in funding, and that kickoff meetings were to start later in the week with the consultants.

Minutes of the joint council meeting on January 20/22, are not available on the county website or at *antigonish.ca*, nor are the Jan 25th or any other Minutes of the Steering Committee. The February 8th Minutes have no definite information on the merger progress. A draft of the "updated Guiding Principles" was provided for review at the March 8/22 meeting.

What has happened since?

Shortly after mid-March 2022, we had delivered to our homes, a glossy two-sided page: *“Invitation to join the Consolidation Discussion”*. It had a community engagement schedule for “drop in” styled meetings and a letter on the reverse side basically telling us that the councils would make a consolidation decision on our behalf, after those of us with an interest in our future took part in the process, by the on-line website, in person, by phone or email. We were told that: *“Consolidation may be a more efficient use of existing resources to provide a high level of service to residents living in our communities. Many of the issues facing our communities, such as climate change, economic development, infrastructure planning, accessibility and housing, require or would benefit significantly from a regional approach.”*

So, I went on-line on March 25/22, and visited *antigonish.ca* and printed out the FAQs and other material to read. I found nothing informative as to any identified benefits for the county to join the town. I continued to monitor the site for updates and there were none forthcoming for quite a while. The information, and lack thereof, made me more curious because it said that the Council reps would gather and assess information on the Windsor-West Hants (2020 Consolidation) and the Liverpool-Queens (1996 Amalgamation) mergers. I think that a reasonable person could presume that the facts of the pros and cons of these mergers, and the relative financial costs/benefits, would have been available and presented on the website and in the planned kiosk-style sessions. A reasonable person would also expect that the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats/risks would have been identified.

You said that you wanted public input that would be used to help the Councils understand the values and issues that are important to residents. You have been told loudly and clearly at information sessions, to date, that the people want:

1. To know the identified pros and cons, benefits/risks and related costs of the previous mergers and how we would mitigate the cons and risks;
2. And that we, the taxpayers/constituents want to vote on this issue of consolidation.

I have to wonder about the *“Guiding Principles for Consolidating Antigonish Town & County”*. For example, what do you mean with respect to # 3 that says: *“Communicate regularly about progress and decisions”*; and that the communication will be frequent, transparent, and inclusive? Until many complaints about the inability of the Warden, Mayor and councillors to answer questions on the facts identified in the mergers reviewed, and the form and substance of the new regional municipality, there was nothing in print. To date, there is still nothing on the benefits and/or risks with their respective financial implications.

Then, in May 2022, the website contained a document, prepared by the hired consultants, called: *“Community Engagement Liaison Project Exploring Consolidation with the Town & County of Antigonish”*. It contains a January 2022 date on the front page, and it should have been put on the website and distributed much earlier than in May. So, in reading that document I made some interesting observations about their analysis. There is an absolute lie on page 2 with respect to the 2001-2006 Antigonish Annexation request. There was not “limited support” from the county residents. The County voted 84% to amalgamate with the town in an act of retaliation for the town wanting to annex far more land than they may have wanted for their specific objectives. And an important part that is missing from the piece, is that after the UARB recommended an amalgamation, the town took the issue to court. They were not successful; however, the UARB backed off on the merger.

To combine all the 1990's amalgamations on page 3 and not speak to the costly items in the HRM merger, for example, is an absolute disservice to the reader who wants to understand the pros and cons. It speaks of the success of the 1996 Liverpool/Queens amalgamation, guided jointly by the town and county, as opposed to the "appointed coordinators" for HRM and CBRM. Where is the consultants', or the Council's Steering Committee, analysis that explains to us why a "friendly" amalgamation, with town & county direct participation, under the UARB rules, (*where the rules are more clearly defined*), is considered inferior to a Consolidation? In a consolidation procedure, you don't get to create the substance of the regional municipality until a Transition Committee is trusted to accomplish the merger, after a favourable consolidation vote is held. If Queens didn't need a UARB "appointed coordinator", why would we? Why was there a failure to draw on your available expertise to tell us how you differentiate between the two models of a "friendly" amalgamation and a consolidation?

It seems from the information on the Windsor/Hants consolidation, that the citizens were quite engaged at the early stages of the process. It seems that another flame was ignited between the town & county, in 2015, with a decision by West Hants to drop the Windsor Fire service and create their own fire dept. The town & county tensions rose and in 2016 a citizens' group applied to the UARB for an amalgamation of the two municipalities, citing a "dysfunctional" relationship between the two local governments. The town supported it and West Hants did not. Abraham Zebian was a West Hants councillor and may have also been the Warden. Then, In 2017, the application for amalgamation was adjourned and an MOU was created to reflect the desire of the two municipalities to work together collaboratively, to strengthen their communities. It took another year for the two municipalities to agree on a process for merging, based on their collaborative efforts for the good of all their residents. On April 1/21, per CBC News report, the first Mayor of the regional municipality, Abraham Zebian, said that the consolidation had been a success, although he admitted that it would be years before the benefits can be properly measured. He admitted that it will take at least a few years to formally assess the merger. Then Municipal Affairs Minister, Brendan Maguire, agreed with Zebian in its success, and said, "Really, it's about financial stability and just having a path forward."

The information provided states that the elected officials in Windsor/Hants canvassed their communities prior to the 2016 municipal elections, and there was lots of interest in the structure of local government in the area. They took their time and were able to get the public and businesses to buy into the merger and to do it under a consolidation approach after they had identified all the issues and costs and that they could work together harmoniously.

What is the rush for us to do this now? There is no established level of trust or confidence that this process is good for the county at this time. We have been pushed into a process being driven by the Mayor, the Warden, their deputies and the CAOs.

The county taxpayers want to know whether a consolidation would be beneficial to us. We want due diligence applied to identifying our strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats or risks, and their financial effects, in each of our municipalities.

Within our strengths, we want you to identify what are we doing well and do we have a competitive advantage in one or more areas? What makes us stronger than the town and how will they also benefit? What do we have that is valuable? What draws people and business to come to or stay in the county? For example, the types of questions to which I'd like answers for the county (and the town):

. In the county we have lots of space for residential and business expansion, at a significantly lower commercial assessment rate than the town. Have we costed/projected our ability to increase developmental plans and our projected incremental tax base over the next X years, based on the data of the past X years.

. In the county we have our own garbage & recycling pickups and it's far less costly than having a contracted service. Given that we keep the profits, what is our financial advantage to this practice?

. The current age of our infrastructure, overall, should be in good shape. Is it? Part of a transition to a merger should be a review of all physical inventory and the state of all linear infrastructure including all water & sewer lines, roads and sidewalks, etc. What are the projected costs to maintain, upgrade over the next few years?

. Capped assessments, that are a way of retaining people where they are. What is the forecast on this issue with respect to the provincial government?

What are our weaknesses in the county? What could we be doing better and to save dollars? Do we struggle with obtaining timely resources of any type? Are we lacking assets of any type? Are we lacking funding to cover needed projects? Etc. For example:

. By contracting out to third party businesses for sewer and water, what are we losing in speed of response time for service, profits that could be ours, etc, by acquiring heavy equipment, employing our own trades people, mechanics, and a project manager? Queens saw their reliance on their own Public Works staff as a distinct advantage for timeliness and retained profits. Hants also saw having a robust Public Works Department as a distinct advantage. What will it cost to have unionized wage parity with the town?

What unique opportunities do we have in the county that we could use to benefit the county, and perhaps the town and region, that we are not developing? Do we have access to materials, land, etc that could be employed to our advantage, for example, for additional sewage treatment?

. We have a well field in Lower South River that has significant excess capacity according to our Warden (April 18/22 Chronicle Herald). He says that it could end the issue of summer water shortage in the town, if it were piped into the town system to complement the existing source at James River. Why not develop/expand the water piping to serve the county residents in the fringe areas of the town? Putting our fringe residents on county water should free up capacity in the town to address their summer shortages. What would this cost?

What are our exposable risks/threats? Can any identified risks be controlled?

For example, are there any government regulations that prevent us from utilizing any of our land? Are our water sources at risk for any reason, eg contaminants?

. The Warden is quoted as "suggesting that the county needs access to the town's water and sewer facilities, as their biggest growth is in the fringe area." (May 4/22 Reporter). What is stopping the county from being self-reliant given our resources and space?

. In the new glossy FAQs on the website and distributed at the municipally scheduled "meet & greets", the page on *Water, Electricity and Energy Leadership* says: "The Town has a water supply that draws its supply from the James River watershed and is distributed to Town Residents and some County users. There are approximately 1,600 connections to the Town's water utility. The County water utility provides water in the fringe area surrounding the Town

and to Lower South River, St Andrews and St Josephs. In 2020 the County amalgamated all of its water systems into one utility and harmonized rates for all 1,640 water utility customers.”

. Jeff Lawrence, CAO for the town, said that the existing sewer treatment plant, owned by the town but also used by many county residents on the fringe of Antigonish. He said that it was only pushed to its capacity during heavy rain. That problem, he said, could be handled by a stormwater diversion project. (April 18/22 Chronicle Herald).

. Is there a good reason why the county has to use the town water and deplete its resources? Does the town own the property at the James River watershed? Is there any reason why the county can't be self sufficient for water and what would be the cost?

. What are our financial risks with respect to fire service with our current assessments/levies, and to the county's coverage in protective services in a merged organization?

. After a taxpayer raised the issue of change to Hants Region in policing costs, from a 70/30 split with the feds, to a 90/10 split, there was concern expressed about this quite significant additional cost. Can we afford to absorb that cost? Have we costed having our own police force as we used to have? What other additional costs or savings did Hants Region experience.

. Given our financial strength, is the province agreeable to funding a merger? What would be our expected contribution to the costs?

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Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Amalgamation Meeting Tonight 7-9 PM

1 message

Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Wed, May 11, 2022 at 8:41 AM

To: jocelynryson

Jocelyn / Gordie;

How are you? Nice yesterday, hope it warms up soon.

At the meeting tonight we will have the mayor, warden, consultants, councillors and CAOs from both the county and the town. I am hoping that you guys attend and ask questions. I have attached 2 presentations that were done last evening for council to spark questions. It is our opportunity to ask questions. I have put a couple of example questions but ask your own.

Thank you

Harris

Process

The rush to get this done is concerning, **why not wait?** The pros and cons of consolidation / amalgamation are not really clear. There is a clamoring for a cost benefit analysis to be done on every component (personnel, fixed assets, debt, infrastructure, etc.) Consolidation cannot be reversed we have to take our time.

Windsor Hants which is often quoted in the information in the flyer sent out residents had 3 years or more to prepare and canvassed their communities prior to the 2016 municipal elections

What is the rush?, let the 15,000 residents decide?

Financial

At our community meeting we were told that the County is in great financial shape. We have a reserve fund that is the envy of many and in fact he said, we borrow from ourselves.

We were also informed that as a result of provincial assessments we would be receiving over a million more dollars in tax revenue this year.

We were also informed that the deed transfer tax (1% of all property sales in county) had doubled in the last fiscal year to approximately 800,000. We are growing.

Large reserve fund, growth in county, **Why now?**

2 attachments



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37K

 **Terry Penny Presentation.pdf**
32K

Good Evening Warden and Members of Council.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my thoughts on the Process being used to decide the issue of Consolidation.

I am not here to argue the merits of Consolidation. Not being privy to the extensive research completed by Council, but only being presented with those aspects of the research that support a position in favour of Consolidation I cannot make a valid argue of support for or against either side of the issue.

What I am here to argue is that while, as the Warden has stated "he was elected to make decisions" I do not believe he, or any of the Councillors, was elected to make a decision on Consolidation. Consolidation is an issue that affects every aspect of our communities. Consolidation cannot be reversed. Therefore weighing the benefits and liabilities of consolidating the town and county is the responsibility and right of the residents of Antigonish County.

I believe every eligible voter in Antigonish County has the right to participate in this decision making either by electing municipal officials who have campaigned on the issue or by voting in a plebiscite on Consolidation. Since candidates in the last municipal election of 2020 failed to raise Consolidation as part of their platform, unless a motion is made and accepted to set aside the present process, a plebiscite is the only option.

I find the rationale for Council's decision to proceed with a Council vote rather than a public vote to be flawed, insulting and demeaning to the intellectual capacity of the residents of Antigonish County.

The very divisiveness that the Warden and Mayor claim will occur if a vote is allowed is being created and fuelled by their very actions of ignoring the voices of the people. The people of Antigonish Town and County are not so weak that they need the protection of the Municipal governments in order to express their opinions. To continually suggest that people are afraid to publicly support an issue for fear of being attacked is insulting to the great people of this community. As with all issues facing our town, county , indeed our province and country - there are often two sides to an issues and yet these issues are decided upon through the democratic process of voting. All of us have long been raised to believe that voting is our opportunity to exercise our position on an issue. All of us have been raised to respect the decision of the electorate.

To suggest that Social Media only flames an issue and leads to the dissemination of misleading or wrong information is speaking out of both sides of your mouth. Both the Town and County have been relentless in presenting their arguments for Consolidation through Social Media Channels. Indeed it seems that daily videos are being released presenting the Warden and Mayor's perspective on the issue. This information is presented as 100% factual yet any discussion questioning the presented one-sided research is summarily dismissed as either invalid and untrue, or misleading and wrong.

Statements have been made that the drop-in engagement session format was chosen as opposed to open discussion meetings as the drop-in engagement sessions encourages 1:1 chats where accurate information could be shared and that open discussion meeting were intimidating to many residents. If indeed you are challenged in creating a space where residents can speak without fear of retribution, the privacy of our most democratic right, the secret ballot, allows every resident to speak without fear of intimidation.

Statements have been made suggesting that if a vote was held, voters would be relying on "inaccurate social media information" rather than the facts. It has also been stated that social media discussion encourages an emotional rather than a factual response to the ballot question. Again this type of statement insults the capacity of Antigonish residents to think objectively on an issue. I am no more emotional on the issue of consolidation than is the Warden or Mayor.

Stating as your information package does that Consolidation is a "BOTTOM-UP" process suggests that the residents have control of this issue when in fact, the Mayor and Warden have set up the process that while giving a superficial reassurance of listening to the people, leaves the ultimate decision in the hands of Council. Both the Mayor and Warden have stated repeatedly that their minds are not made up, they are open but yet their comments such as "we want to become one" (Mayor, May 4, The Reporter) and the Warden Mc Carron statement in a released video "If not now, when?" suggest, that despite the voices being raised in opposition to the process, they have decided the outcome of this issue

The voices heard in the 18 guided, poster presentation, in person engagement sessions, emails and phone calls (estimated by the the mayor at 800+) cannot and do not represent the 18,000 + population of our communities. The voices of 1000+ members of the Facebook Group have provided both Councils with more information than the Engagement Sessions. Please listen.

The process you have evoked to disseminate your information and collect the opinion of the residents rather than the issue of Consolidation itself is dividing

our communities. The disagreement between and amongst our councillors is dividing our Councils. Trust is being eroded at an alarming pace. The process is flawed. It is perceived as unfair and perception is reality. Please put an end to this process before it destroys our communities.

If Consolidation is the most positive way forward for our communities then please do not be afraid to present the voters with all information - the pros, the cons and the unknown. Let there be open discussion to allay fears. Only then can an informed decision be made. If consolidation is good today it will still be good in six months, a year. Slow down. Stop rushing.

The recent change in non-resident property tax plan introduced by the Provincial Government followed by a complete abolition of the tax should serve as an example to our Municipal Government. In the words of Premier Houston "when you move fast sometimes you need to pause and adjust course. We are not so arrogant that we can't admit when we need to adjust." I ask that you demonstrate the leadership you speak of and again, in the words of the Premier, "put personal pride to the side" and stop the present closed process.

I ask that our Municipal Government follow the Provincial lead, "admit they need to adjust course" and present and support a motion to table or dismiss the present consolidation decision making process and make the possibility of consolidation a platform in the next municipal election.

In the words of Maya Angelou

"I did then what I knew how to do. Now that I know better, I do better."

It appears to be within your hands to destroy or heal our community. Please choose wisely.

Thank you for your time

Terry Penny, Lakevale

Town & County Consolidation Presentation

To try and give some context to my concerns about the process being used, my interpretation about how the Warden defines due diligence, and the timeline to date, on the consolidation discussions, I am presenting my findings in a chronological fashion.

The Sept 13/21, Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes of The County of Antigonish (County Minutes) reflected the Warden's introduction to the Councillors, "to the discussion regarding consideration of consolidating the County & Town of Antigonish". Each of the Councillors are recorded as asking questions and one specifically referred to whether the taxpayers would have a final say; another stressed the possibility of a plebiscite; and my Councillor "clarified the ability of the Municipality to back out of the process if it chose to". The Minutes also reflect that the Councillors were told during this meeting that discussions had already taken place with the Dept of Municipal Affairs. The Minutes also reflect the carried resolution: "The Committee recommends that the Town of Antigonish and the Municipality of the County of Antigonish work with the Department of Municipal Affairs to explore consolidation of the two municipal units."

The Town & County joint press release on September 13, 2021, stated that they had voted to gather the information needed to consider consolidating the two municipal units into one regional government. It spoke to the "exploration phase" involving ***"assessing if residents, businesses, and communities would be better served by combining efforts on all municipal services ..."***. It also said that there was still a lot that they needed to determine and investigate further. Our Warden said that ***"We are committed to doing our due diligence by engaging the community and keeping them informed on the process as we assess this opportunity further."***

The Sept 28/21 County Minutes reflect that Council had met with Municipal Affairs and a steering committee was formed and terms of reference presented for it.

The Oct 26/21 Minutes referred to a debrief process on the Queens Consolidation, cost savings identified (savings were not identified in the Minutes), and the amount of work done by their Public Works Dept, as opposed to using external contractors. It is important to note that **the Queens merger was a 1996 amalgamation under the Municipal Government Act and it was not a modern-day consolidation as being considered currently for the town and county.** For later reference I want to emphasize that Queens became more profitable after the merger. They have said that having their own in-house heavy equipment and trades people in Public Works, contributed significantly to their success over the 26 years since their merger.

At the Nov 9/21 Council Meeting, the CAO presented council with one recommendation, from the RFP group of bids, that he and presumably the office staff reviewed. A resolution was carried to engage *Brighter Community Planning Consulting* for the bid price of \$142,628.75 (incl HST).

At the Nov 30/21 meeting, the CAO announced that the provincial gov't was providing \$150K in funding, and that kickoff meetings were to start later in the week with the consultants.

Minutes of the joint council meeting on January 20/22, are not available on the county website or at *antigonish.ca*, nor are the Jan 25th or any other Minutes of the Steering Committee. The February 8th Minutes have no definite information on the merger progress. A draft of the "updated Guiding Principles" was provided for review at the March 8/22 meeting.

What has happened since?

Shortly after mid-March 2022, we had delivered to our homes, a glossy two-sided page: *“Invitation to join the Consolidation Discussion”*. It had a community engagement schedule for “drop in” styled meetings and a letter on the reverse side basically telling us that the councils would make a consolidation decision on our behalf, after those of us with an interest in our future took part in the process, by the on-line website, in person, by phone or email. We were told that: *“Consolidation may be a more efficient use of existing resources to provide a high level of service to residents living in our communities. Many of the issues facing our communities, such as climate change, economic development, infrastructure planning, accessibility and housing, require or would benefit significantly from a regional approach.”*

So, I went on-line on March 25/22, and visited *antigonish.ca* and printed out the FAQs and other material to read. I found nothing informative as to any identified benefits for the county to join the town. I continued to monitor the site for updates and there were none forthcoming for quite a while. The information, and lack thereof, made me more curious because it said that the Council reps would gather and assess information on the Windsor-West Hants (2020 Consolidation) and the Liverpool-Queens (1996 Amalgamation) mergers. I think that a reasonable person could presume that the facts of the pros and cons of these mergers, and the relative financial costs/benefits, would have been available and presented on the website and in the planned kiosk-style sessions. A reasonable person would also expect that the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats/risks would have been identified.

You said that you wanted public input that would be used to help the Councils understand the values and issues that are important to residents. You have been told loudly and clearly at information sessions, to date, that the people want:

1. To know the identified pros and cons, benefits/risks and related costs of the previous mergers and how we would mitigate the cons and risks;
2. And that we, the taxpayers/constituents want to vote on this issue of consolidation.

I have to wonder about the *“Guiding Principles for Consolidating Antigonish Town & County”*. For example, what do you mean with respect to # 3 that says :*“Communicate regularly about progress and decisions”*; and that the communication will be frequent, transparent, and inclusive? Until many complaints about the inability of the Warden, Mayor and councillors to answer questions on the facts identified in the mergers reviewed, and the form and substance of the new regional municipality, there was nothing in print. To date, there is still nothing on the benefits and/or risks with their respective financial implications.

Then, in May 2022, the website contained a document, prepared by the hired consultants, called: *“Community Engagement Liaison Project Exploring Consolidation with the Town & County of Antigonish”*. It contains a January 2022 date on the front page, and it should have been put on the website and distributed much earlier than in May. So, in reading that document I made some interesting observations about their analysis. There is an absolute lie on page 2 with respect to the 2001-2006 Antigonish Annexation request. There was not “limited support” from the county residents. The County voted 84% to amalgamate with the town in an act of retaliation for the town wanting to annex far more land than they may have wanted for their specific objectives. And an important part that is missing from the piece, is that after the UARB recommended an amalgamation, the town took the issue to court. They were not successful; however, the UARB backed off on the merger.

To combine all the 1990's amalgamations on page 3 and not speak to the costly items in the HRM merger, for example, is an absolute disservice to the reader who wants to understand the pros and cons. It speaks of the success of the 1996 Liverpool/Queens amalgamation, guided jointly by the town and county, as opposed to the "appointed coordinators" for HRM and CBRM. Where is the consultants', or the Council's Steering Committee, analysis that explains to us why a "friendly" amalgamation, with town & county direct participation, under the UARB rules, (*where the rules are more clearly defined*), is considered inferior to a Consolidation? In a consolidation procedure, you don't get to create the substance of the regional municipality until a Transition Committee is trusted to accomplish the merger, after a favourable consolidation vote is held. If Queens didn't need a UARB "appointed coordinator", why would we? Why was there a failure to draw on your available expertise to tell us how you differentiate between the two models of a "friendly" amalgamation and a consolidation?

It seems from the information on the Windsor/Hants consolidation, that the citizens were quite engaged at the early stages of the process. It seems that another flame was ignited between the town & county, in 2015, with a decision by West Hants to drop the Windsor Fire service and create their own fire dept. The town & county tensions rose and in 2016 a citizens' group applied to the UARB for an amalgamation of the two municipalities, citing a "dysfunctional" relationship between the two local governments. The town supported it and West Hants did not. Abraham Zebian was a West Hants councillor and may have also been the Warden. Then, In 2017, the application for amalgamation was adjourned and an MOU was created to reflect the desire of the two municipalities to work together collaboratively, to strengthen their communities. It took another year for the two municipalities to agree on a process for merging, based on their collaborative efforts for the good of all their residents. On April 1/21, per CBC News report, the first Mayor of the regional municipality, Abraham Zebian, said that the consolidation had been a success, although he admitted that it would be years before the benefits can be properly measured. He admitted that it will take at least a few years to formally assess the merger. Then Municipal Affairs Minister, Brendan Maguire, agreed with Zebian in its success, and said, "Really, it's about financial stability and just having a path forward."

The information provided states that the elected officials in Windsor/Hants canvassed their communities prior to the 2016 municipal elections, and there was lots of interest in the structure of local government in the area. They took their time and were able to get the public and businesses to buy into the merger and to do it under a consolidation approach after they had identified all the issues and costs and that they could work together harmoniously.

What is the rush for us to do this now? There is no established level of trust or confidence that this process is good for the county at this time. We have been pushed into a process being driven by the Mayor, the Warden, their deputies and the CAOs.

The county taxpayers want to know whether a consolidation would be beneficial to us. We want due diligence applied to identifying our strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats or risks, and their financial effects, in each of our municipalities.

Within our strengths, we want you to identify what are we doing well and do we have a competitive advantage in one or more areas? What makes us stronger than the town and how will they also benefit? What do we have that is valuable? What draws people and business to come to or stay in the county? For example, the types of questions to which I'd like answers for the county (and the town):

. In the county we have lots of space for residential and business expansion, at a significantly lower commercial assessment rate than the town. Have we costed/projected our ability to increase developmental plans and our projected incremental tax base over the next X years, based on the data of the past X years.

. In the county we have our own garbage & recycling pickups and it's far less costly than having a contracted service. Given that we keep the profits, what is our financial advantage to this practice?

. The current age of our infrastructure, overall, should be in good shape. Is it? Part of a transition to a merger should be a review of all physical inventory and the state of all linear infrastructure including all water & sewer lines, roads and sidewalks, etc. What are the projected costs to maintain, upgrade over the next few years?

. Capped assessments, that are a way of retaining people where they are. What is the forecast on this issue with respect to the provincial government?

What are our weaknesses in the county? What could we be doing better and to save dollars? Do we struggle with obtaining timely resources of any type? Are we lacking assets of any type? Are we lacking funding to cover needed projects? Etc. For example:

. By contracting out to third party businesses for sewer and water, what are we losing in speed of response time for service, profits that could be ours, etc, by acquiring heavy equipment, employing our own trades people, mechanics, and a project manager? Queens saw their reliance on their own Public Works staff as a distinct advantage for timeliness and retained profits. Hants also saw having a robust Public Works Department as a distinct advantage. What will it cost to have unionized wage parity with the town?

What unique opportunities do we have in the county that we could use to benefit the county, and perhaps the town and region, that we are not developing? Do we have access to materials, land, etc that could be employed to our advantage, for example, for additional sewage treatment?

. We have a well field in Lower South River that has significant excess capacity according to our Warden (April 18/22 Chronicle Herald). He says that it could end the issue of summer water shortage in the town, if it were piped into the town system to complement the existing source at James River. Why not develop/expand the water piping to serve the county residents in the fringe areas of the town? Putting our fringe residents on county water should free up capacity in the town to address their summer shortages. What would this cost?

What are our exposable risks/threats? Can any identified risks be controlled?

For example, are there any government regulations that prevent us from utilizing any of our land? Are our water sources at risk for any reason, eg contaminants?

. The Warden is quoted as "suggesting that the county needs access to the town's water and sewer facilities, as their biggest growth is in the fringe area." (May 4/22 Reporter). What is stopping the county from being self-reliant given our resources and space?

.In the new glossy FAQs on the website and distributed at the municipally scheduled "meet & greets", the page on *Water, Electricity and Energy Leadership* says: "The Town has a water supply that draws its supply from the James River watershed and is distributed to Town Residents and some County users. There are approximately 1,600 connections to the Town's water utility. The County water utility provides water in the fringe area surrounding the Town

and to Lower South River, St Andrews and St Josephs. In 2020 the County amalgamated all of its water systems into one utility and harmonized rates for all 1,640 water utility customers.”

. Jeff Lawrence, CAO for the town, said that the existing sewer treatment plant, owned by the town but also used by many county residents on the fringe of Antigonish. He said that it was only pushed to its capacity during heavy rain. That problem, he said, could be handled by a stormwater diversion project. (April 18/22 Chronicle Herald).

. Is there a good reason why the county has to use the town water and deplete its resources? Does the town own the property at the James River watershed? Is there any reason why the county can't be self sufficient for water and what would be the cost?

. What are our financial risks with respect to fire service with our current assessments/levies, and to the county's coverage in protective services in a merged organization?

. After a taxpayer raised the issue of change to Hants Region in policing costs, from a 70/30 split with the feds, to a 90/10 split, there was concern expressed about this quite significant additional cost. Can we afford to absorb that cost? Have we costed having our own police force as we used to have? What other additional costs or savings did Hants Region experience.

. Given our financial strength, is the province agreeable to funding a merger? What would be our expected contribution to the costs?

The items stated above are not, by any stretch of the imagination, a full list of the issues to be considered in a S.W.O.T. assessment. It's a very short example to demonstrate what we and you need to know, from both municipalities, before deciding on a merger.

in the May 4/22 *Guysborough Journal*, the Mayor said that “We are going to continue down this road” (on consolidation) and she added that “the “Guiding Principles” established by both Councils when they agreed to explore a possible consolidation, did not include having residents vote on whether to become one municipality”. The article also said that “When it comes to the councils' decision not to opt for a plebiscite, officials have pointed to the potential divisiveness created, along with the history of such votes garnering low voter turnout.” Well, the town & county residents are absolutely united on wanting a vote, and I want to note that 45% of the eligible voters voted in the 2006 plebiscite. Have you given any thought to the turnout for the election of municipal councillors and for the Mayor, in her initial election? Near the end of the article in the paper, it said, “Getting back to the plebiscite debate, Boucher noted that both councils-by consensus- agreed not to conduct one.” With respect to these statements that the councillors were complicit in not allowing a vote to the taxpayers, where is this agreement in any of the recorded Minutes? I suggest that there has been a huge gap in the message that was heard and understood by the Councillors, and what was intended by the people delivering the message. Even reading “between the lines” in all the printed promotional material, other than the Mayor's statements to the press, at the outset in the Sept 14/21 release, “Boucher downplayed the likelihood of holding a plebiscite on the matter, ...” does not indicate that there was never an intention of permitting a plebiscite. Additionally, the County's Sept 13, 2021 Minutes do not reflect that when Councillor Brophy stressed “the importance of consultation, including the possibility of a plebiscite, ...” , anyone said that there could be no plebiscite.

Finally, the May 4/22 issue of The Reporter speaks to the Mayor and the Warden feeling that the process is being undermined by 2 councillors not supporting a consolidation. Is this viewed as a greater abuse to the process than the 2 councillors who have said that they are voting for consolidation regardless of what their constituents want? I expect that it may be difficult for some people to deal with the conflict and controversy surrounding this priority to accomplish a consolidation. At the same time, it is unprofessional and beneath the dignity of the Office of both the Warden and the Mayor to publicly accuse councillors of undermining the process in what many of us consider to much of a rush to consolidation. These councillors have been elected by their constituents and we expect them to tell us the truth in their discussions with us. No decision to consolidate has been made by the council, yet, and until then, I want to remind you that the councillors voted to approve a resolution to explore consolidation, and many of them are doing so by going through that process with their constituents. I do believe that when councillors are given the information they should have before they vote on a finite issue, that, once the resolution is carried, they are expected to uphold the decision of the whole council with dignity, despite their personal opinions. So, please, do not rush to put this issue to a vote because you simply have not yet done the work that needs to happen before anyone should be making a decision.

The bottom line is that the majority of taxpayers from the town and county, who have participated in the process to date, have been unified in overwhelmingly stating that they want to vote on this issue. It has been expressed by some elected officials that the constituents are not well-enough informed to make this decision. Given that the elected officials have not produced any factual information to show that the county will be better served and in a better financial position from consolidation, or alternatively, refute that we won't be in a worse financial position, I respectfully state, that the elected officials have not earned the moral right to make this consolidation decision. They must provide us with the facts and figures to support the reasons for a merger. If we are to use Windsor/Hants as a model, the people started the process and were informed about the issues before they elected their council to deal with the issues. It took them 2 years to explore the issues and get answers to their questions, including financial impacts, and to test their ability to compromise in finding solutions, before agreeing to trust their elected officials without holding a plebiscite. I suggest that you show some good faith, slam the brakes on this process and start feeding us the relevant information. We deserve fairness and full transparency.

To quote from an October 9, 2019 document about the Windsor/West Hants Consolidation Restructuring Model:

“The process needed to have the community’s understanding and trust. ...the community would need to believe that the key merger issues had been addressed thoughtfully and transparently and that, where necessary, reasonable compromises had been achieved.

We recognize more residents of these municipalities will be drawn into the discussions. They will have their own learning curves as they increasingly become engaged; they will want information and they will want reassurance. And we need to listen. That’s the way it should be when you’re breaking new ground, following a new path. We will not have done a good job unless those who live in what will be the new regional municipality recognize that we have acted in their best interests.”



Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Questions

1 message

Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Wed, May 11, 2022 at 3:39 PM

To: larrymeagher

Larry;

Some more questions that could be asked, however I have sent these to others who asked me for questions. Ask what is important to you.



Question May 11th.docx

18K

Conflict of Interest

On April 18th at a community meeting Harris informed the residents that he could be in a potential “ Conflict of Interest”. We understand he would not be able to vote for District 9 if he is in conflict. He was informed that residents of District 9 could email / call other councillors to express their view and encouraged all to do that.

Residents want a say, the plebiscite would eliminate the conflict. **Has there been any plan to do this?**

Process

The rush to get this done is concerning, **why not wait?** The pros and cons of consolidation / amalgamation are not really clear. There is a clamoring for a cost benefit analysis to be done on every component (personnel, fixed assets, debt, infrastructure, etc.) Consolidation cannot be reversed we have to take our time.

Windsor Hants which is often quoted in the information in the flyer sent out residents had 3 years or more to prepare and canvassed their communities prior to the 2016 municipal elections

What is the rush?, let the 15,000 residents decide?

Financial

At our community meeting we were told that the County is in great financial shape. We have a reserve fund that is the envy of many and in fact he said, we borrow from ourselves.

We were also informed that as a result of provincial assessments we would be receiving over a million more dollars in tax revenue this year.

We were also informed that the deed transfer tax (1% of all property sales in county) had doubled in the last fiscal year to approximately 800,000. We are growing.

Large reserve fund, growth in county, **Why now?**

Infrastructure

We have not seen a comprehensive, assessment of the infrastructure in the town and county.

Are we going to have this kind of assessment before the vote?

Boundaries

We have heard that there will be a reduction of councillors in a consolidated municipality. Harris has told us that the Utility And Review Board (UARB) sets the boundaries and reviews every 8 years.

District 9 is the most far east of the district and we most likely end up combining with other districts resulting in less representation or advocating for our district. **What is the recommendation that the steering committee is putting forward, assume you have one ? Why don't we develop a proposed plan to the UARB before we vote?** That way we can evaluate this consolidation for our area.

Voting

Harris at the community informed residents that the county council will make the decision for the county. It requires a vote of 50% plus one councillors to give the go ahead for consolidation. This is assuming if all 10 councillors vote. Harris may not vote if he is in conflict of interest so that's nine so it would be 5 councillors that would speak for 15,000. This is not acceptable to residents of Antigonish County.

The only fair way in my mind is to have a plebiscite.

Policing

We understand that Winsor Hants needs to pay an extra million dollars per year for policing for the same service as a direct result of amalgamating ? That for sure is a deal breaker for residents.

What are you doing about this?

Did the province initiate consolidation?

They provided 150,000 to explore consolidation and the county and town I understand kicked in another 25,000 each. The province obviously want amalgamation.

History

The county voted 84% to amalgamate with the town in retaliation for the town effort to annex the fringe area of Antigonish County (1600 acres). After the UARB recommended amalgamation, the town took the issue to court. They were not successful; however, the UARB backed off on the merger.

Tax Issues

Rate for Commercial in town is 2.61, rate in fringe is 1.44, a 45% difference. If we amalgamate town residents that have the same service as the fringe would of course want theirs reduced or the fringe would have to go up.

Rates for Residential are 1.09 in town , rate in county is 88 cents plus fire protection (15cents here) which totals 1.03 which is pretty close to the same. 6 cents difference which on a 300K home is substantial.

Beth Schumacher

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: May 11, 2022 5:29 PM
To: Glenn Horne
Subject: Accepted: Consolidation Engagement with Community Non-Profit & Business Leaders

Harris McNamara

From: Shawn Brophy
Sent: May 11, 2022 7:08 PM
To: Harris McNamara
Subject: FW: Proposed Consolidation of Antigonish Town and County

-----Original Message-----

From: George MacDonald <
Sent: May 10, 2022 11:53 AM
To: premier@novascotia.ca
Cc: johnlohrmla@gmail.com; mayor@townofantigonish.ca; omccarron@antigonishcounty.na.ca; Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Proposed Consolidation of Antigonish Town and County

Hi Tim:

I am writing to bring your attention to the issues surrounding the proposed consolidation of Antigonish Town and County. As a life long resident of the Antigonish area (my people landed here off the boat from Scotland) I am concerned about how the process has taken place. My understanding is that the Province has provided \$150,000 dollars to explore consolidation. So far it appears that the money has been spent on consultants who have been hired to grease the wheels to consolidation and not for the intended purpose of looking deeply into its pros and cons. It appears to most folks around here that the decision to consolidate has already been made and that the consultants are being paid to sell the idea.

It is difficult to find any detailed information, many people do not feel like they are being heard. Not really very democratic. Many of the Town and County councillors appear to be muted due either to conflicts of interest or the desire not to go against the Mayor or Warden. Local politics!

There are however, lessons to be learned from other Municipalities who have gone through a similar process. My research shows that every municipality in Nova Scotia who have consolidated/amalgamated have had to charge the residents higher taxes. Case in point is Windsor East Hants who initially looked like they would be saving money, only to be slapped with an unexpected bill of 1.5 m from the RCMP.

So they call it consolidation rather than amalgamation so that they do not have to go directly to the people for approval. The process of looking into the idea started in September and already in June the final decision is about to be made. You have been in politics for awhile, I will let you draw your own conclusions. What is the rush? Why not go to the people for a vote? Perhaps, they are concerned that they will receive a similar response to Pictou who just went through the process and voted NO.

I respectfully request that the Province get involved in this process. Many local residents are feeling powerless, that their voices are not being heard. Many of the local councillors are feeling the same. Thanking you in advance for your attention to this matter.

Your Respectfully;

GeorgeMacDonald

Sent from my iPad

Beth Schumacher

From: Chisholm, Kathy <
Sent: May 12, 2022 10:16 AM
To: Shirlyn Donovan; Owen McCarron; mayor@townofantigonish.ca
Cc: Kate Gorman
Subject: RE: Invitation Exploration of Consolidation Engagement Session

Hi Shirlyn,

Thanks you all very much for the invitation however I am unable to free myself up to attend this session today.

Kathy Chisholm

From: Shirlyn Donovan <shirlyn.donovan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Sent: Thursday, May 5, 2022 4:16 PM
To: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; mayor@townofantigonish.ca
Cc: Kate Gorman <kgorman@townofantigonish.ca>
Subject: Invitation Exploration of Consolidation Engagement Session

Good afternoon,

On behalf of Mayor Laurie Boucher and Warden Owen McCarron, I would like to invite you to attend an information session on the potential consolidation of Antigonish Town and County.

This is a specific session for community leaders and non-profit organizations. Our goal is to provide an opportunity for you to gain insight into the process, ask questions, and share what you think about consolidation for Antigonish.

The session will take place on Thursday, May 12, 2022 from 1:00pm-2:00pm at the John Paul Centre, 308 Main Street.

For up-to-date information about the Town and County's exploration of consolidation, please visit: www.antigonish.ca

Please RSVP if you able to attend.

Thank you,
Shirlyn

Shirlyn Donovan
Strategic Initiatives Coordinator
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
285 Beech Hill Road
Antigonish, NS B2G 0B4
902-863-1117



www.antigonishcounty.ns.ca
www.twitter.com/antigonishco

10/10/2024

Beth Schumacher

From: Glenn Horne
Sent: May 12, 2022 12:24 PM
To: SLT; Administration; Reception
Cc: Council
Subject: Out this afternoon & tomorrow

Hi folks –

I will be attending the consolidation engagement sessions this afternoon and tonight – I am available by email or cell if needed.

I am out of the office tomorrow and unavailable unless its an emergency.

Thanks!
Glenn



Glenn Horne | Chief Administrative Officer
Municipality of the County of Antigonish | 902.863.1117
285 Beech Hill Road, Beech Hill, NS | B2G 0B4
www.antigonishcounty.ns.ca | [@AntigonishCo](https://www.facebook.com/AntigonishCo) | [facebook](https://www.facebook.com/AntigonishCo)

Honour Yesterday, Act Today, Inspire Tomorrow

Beth Schumacher

From: Zoom <no-reply@zoom.us>
Sent: May 13, 2022 9:17 AM
To: Owen McCarron
Subject: Panelist for Exploration of Consolidation

Hi Warden Owen McCarron,

You are invited to a Zoom webinar.

Date Time: May 18, 2022 07:00 PM Halifax

Topic: Exploration of Consolidation

Join from a PC, Mac, iPad, iPhone or Android device:

[Click Here to Join](#)

Note: This link should not be shared with others; it is unique to you.

Passcode: 153584

[Add to Calendar](#) [Add to Google Calendar](#) [Add to Yahoo Calendar](#)

Or One tap mobile:

US: +16699009128,,81864291187# or +12532158782,,81864291187#

Or Telephone:

Dial(for higher quality, dial a number based on your current location):

US: +1 669 900 9128 or +1 253 215 8782 or +1 301 715 8592 or +1 312 626 6799 or +1 346 248 7799 or +1 646 558 8656

Webinar ID: 818 6429 1187

Participant ID: 329048

Passcode: 153584

International numbers available: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/keJf92qysQ>

Beth Schumacher

From: Jack Beaton <info@townofantigonish.ca>
Sent: May 13, 2022 9:41 AM
To: info
Cc: mayor@townofantigonish.ca; Owen McCarron
Subject: consolidation

Thank you for the opportunity to take part in the May 12 consolidation discussion with community volunteer groups at the John Paul Centre. The meeting was well run and provided us with an opportunity to share and learn.

I commend both councils for the level of cooperation that has been evident, and for having the courage and foresight to bring the issue of consolidation forward for consideration.

The Antigonish community needs a strong, united voice as it negotiates with provincial and federal officials to find ways to improve the lives of residents. The confusion and duplication resulting from two municipal units representing the same community is not helpful.

Both councils were elected to make decisions. You were not elected to defer the difficult decisions to others.

I urge both councils to decide whether or not to proceed with consolidation. You have taken the time and made the effort to get a broad range of opinions from residents, and now it is time to carefully consider this information and decide how to move forward.

A plebiscite is a poor alternative to good governance.

Jack Beaton
Lower South River

Beth Schumacher

From: Town of Antigonish Mayor <mayor@townofantigonish.ca>
Sent: May 13, 2022 11:35 AM
To: Jack Beaton; info
Cc: Owen McCarron
Subject: Re: [EXTERNAL] consolidation

Thank you Jack, I will make sure to pass you email onto the rest of council. We appreciate you taking the time to join us yesterday.

Enjoy your weekend,
Laurie

Mayor Laurie Boucher
Town of Antigonish
274 Main St, Antigonish, N.S
B2G 2C4
mayor@townofantigonish.ca | 902•870•7795

From: Jack Beaton
Sent: Friday, May 13, 2022 9:40:56 AM
To: info@antigonish.ca <info@antigonish.ca>
Cc: Town of Antigonish Mayor <mayor@townofantigonish.ca>; Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] consolidation

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Thank you for the opportunity to take part in the May 12 consolidation discussion with community volunteer groups at the John Paul Centre. The meeting was well run and provided us with an opportunity to share and learn.

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A plebiscite is a poor alternative to good governance.

Jack Beaton
Lower South River

Beth Schumacher

From: Engagement Team <howspace@in.howspace.com>
Sent: May 13, 2022 3:00 PM
To: Owen McCarron
Subject: Weekly updates regarding potential consolidation

Hi Owen,

This week we have finished up our in person engagement sessions. To all of those who participated in these sessions, thank you. We appreciate your time and willingness to share your feedback. We would also like to thank everyone who has sent an email to their Councillor or the info@antigonish.ca email.

Over the past few weeks all members of Council have received a large volume of emails with questions and feedback related to the exploration of consolidation. It is important that you know, every email received will be logged and questions are being recorded and documented. The consultant team hired to assist with the engagement process will review every email and summarize the major themes, questions, and concerns to be included in the final 'What We Heard' report. That report will be presented to Councils and shared with the public once it is complete.

Due to the large volume of emails, many of which have the same list of questions, staff are working to group the questions received and post responses on www.antigonish.ca. Over the next few weeks, the FAQ section of www.antigonish.ca will be updated on a regular basis. The FAQs have already been updated with new information on the following topics:

- Maintenance of Streets and Roads
- The Town and County's Long-Term Debt
- Responsibility of Debt Payment
- The Engagement Process and Plebiscites
- The Consultants Report
- Representation & Cultural Identity

To read these new FAQs, visit: <https://antigonish.ca/frequently-asked-questions/>

As we work through all the emails and comments, we will do our best to answer as many questions as possible. However, there are some questions we will not be able to answer at this stage. That reality is frustrating to many, but it is the truth. We are working with the best information possible and know that we are committed to the community of Antigonish.

Your involvement is important throughout this process. We have said we wanted to hear from you, and we are listening. The engagement process was not designed to measure who is for and against consolidation. The process was developed to create an avenue for you to share your concerns and feedback so Councils could gain a better understanding of the distinct perspective from all the urban and rural areas of the community. Whether we move forward or maintain the status quo, these conversations are important and let us know what your priorities are in building a stronger future for Antigonish.

We will be hosting one final webinar on Wednesday, May 18 at 7:00 P.M. Please register [here](#).

Please continue to check www.antigonish.ca for the answers to your questions. If you have additional comments or feedback to share, please do not hesitate to reach out.

Log in to Antigonish workspace as Owen McCarron

Best regards,
The Engagement Team

Please note that this email contains your personal <https://antigonish.in.howspace.com/1/o9481170/omccarron> access link. Don't forward this email to anyone.

Powered by [Howspace](#)

Harris McNamara

From: Engagement Team <howspace@in.howspace.com>
Sent: May 13, 2022 3:00 PM
To: Harris McNamara
Subject: Weekly updates regarding potential consolidation

Hi Harris,

This week we have finished up our in person engagement sessions. To all of those who participated in these sessions, thank you. We appreciate your time and willingness to share your feedback. We would also like to thank everyone who has sent an email to their Councillor or the info@antigonish.ca email.

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Please continue to check www.antigonish.ca for the answers to your questions. If you have additional comments or feedback to share, please do not hesitate to reach out.

Log in to Antigonish workspace as Harris McNamara

Best regards,
The Engagement Team

Please note that this email contains your personal <https://antigonish.in.howspace.com/1/r2055090/hmcnamara> access link. Don't forward this email to anyone.

Powered by [Howspace](#)

Beth Schumacher

From: Rocky DeCoste
Sent: May 13, 2022 3:40 PM
To: Owen McCarron
Subject: HB Meeting - Contact info

Hello Owen,

Nice meeting you and thank you for taking the time to speak to me afterwards at the information session on consolidation in HB. (District 9)

I just wanted to provide you with my email address and contact information, I haven't received an email from your staff on the future/planning of the expansion of septic up to 470 Frankville rd. and those timelines.

I was glad to hear that HB treatment plant has more capacity, that the above expansion is in the queue.

Here is my contact information just encase my email was wrong, I am looking forward to hearing from you and your staff.

Regards

Rocky DeCoste MMP | TMP & BOP Maintenance Team Leader, QPL

Port Hawkesbury Paper
Box 9500, 120 Pulp Mill Road
Port Hawkesbury, NS, B9A 1A1

Harris McNamara

From: Linda Wood
Sent: May 13, 2022 6:14 PM
To: premier@novascotia.ca; mayor@townofantigonish.ca;
omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca; Mary MacLellan; Donnie MacDonald; Hughie
Stewart; Shawn Brophy; Remi Deveau; John Dunbar; Gary Mattie; Harris McNamara; Bill
MacFarlane; wcmormier@townofantigonish.ca; dmacinnis@townofantigonish.ca;
scameron@townofantigonish.ca; amurray@townofantigonish.ca;
mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca; droberts@townofantigonish.ca
Subject: Please....hear us!

To the Premier of N.S., Mayor, Warden, and town and county councillors of Antigonish, regarding the proposed consolidation/
amalgamation of town and county.

Please, please...take a breath and listen to your constituents. Please slow the process down, and hear us. We voted you in to
represent US, and this proposal was not on the election platform.

-We want a say in this, for/ or against, we deserve that!

-Simply put....We want a plebiscite!

-We want more info....not maybe projections!

We need to feel we have some input in this.... It's a big deal!

We are in District 9, and if our councillor is removed from voting, due to a " conflict of interest", where does that leave us?? We pay
taxes too, and I might add....reap very little benefits.

Please hear us,
Respectively, Linda & Larry Wood, Auld's Cove

Beth Schumacher

From: Linda Wood ·
Sent: May 13, 2022 6:20 PM
To: Owen McCarron
Subject: Please...hear us!

Subject: Please....hear us!

To the Premier of N.S., Mayor, Warden, and town and county councillors of Antigonish, regarding the proposed consolidation/ amalgamation of town and county.

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Please hear us,
Respectively, Linda & Larry Wood, Auld's Cove

Beth Schumacher

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: May 13, 2022 9:29 PM
To: Rocky DeCoste
Subject: Re: HB Meeting - Contact info

Hi Rocky,

It was nice chatting with you as well. I did forward your email address to our CAO and I will make sure staff follow up with the info. Thanks for reaching out.

Owen

Warden Owen McCarron
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
902-968-1290

On May 13, 2022, at 3:39 PM, Rocky DeCoste > wrote:

Hello Owen,

Nice meeting you and thank you for taking the time to speak to me afterwards at the information session on consolidation in HB. (District 9)

I just wanted to provide you with my email address and contact information, I haven't received an email from your staff on the future/planning of the expansion of septic up to 470 Frankville rd. and those timelines.

I was glad to hear that HB treatment plant has more capacity, that the above expansion is in the queue.

Here is my contact information just encase my email was wrong, I am looking forward to hearing from you and your staff.

Regards

Rocky DeCoste MMP | TMP & BOP Maintenance Team Leader, QPL

Port Hawkesbury Paper
Box 9500, 120 Pulp Mill Road
Port Hawkesbury, NS, B9A 1A1

Beth Schumacher

From: Rocky DeCoste
Sent: May 13, 2022 11:22 PM
To: Owen McCarron
Subject: Re: HB Meeting - Contact info

Thanks Owen

Get [Outlook for Android](#)

From: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Sent: Friday, May 13, 2022 9:29:05 PM
To: Rocky DeCoste
Subject: Re: HB Meeting - Contact info

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hi Rocky,

It was nice chatting with you as well. I did forward your email address to our CAO and I will make sure staff follow up with the info. Thanks for reaching out.

Owen

Warden Owen McCarron
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
902-968-1290

On May 13, 2022, at 3:39 PM, Rocky DeCoste <roky@antigonishcounty.ns.ca> > wrote:

Hello Owen,

Nice meeting you and thank you for taking the time to speak to me afterwards at the information session on consolidation in HB. (District 9)

I just wanted to provide you with my email address and contact information, I haven't received an email from your staff on the future/planning of the expansion of septic up to 470 Frankville rd. and those timelines.

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Regards

Rocky DeCoste MMP | TMP & BOP Maintenance Team Leader, QPL

Port Hawkesbury Paper
Box 9500, 120 Pulp Mill Road
Port Hawkesbury, NS, B9A 1A1



Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Fwd: handbill printouts

6 messages

Chad Brazier

Sun, May 15, 2022 at 8:01 AM

To: "harris.mcnamara@gmail.com" <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Hi Harris, yea yesterday was as great.. here they are.

The one with the train is sized to be a 1/4 page handbill, double sided.

The one that says "missing" is sized to go two to a page, double sided.

Hope you can spread them around. Maybe you can stick a couple full size versions up on bulletin boards in the county.

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Chad Brazier** <>

Date: Sat, May 14, 2022 at 9:20 PM

Subject:

To: Sarah Claudette <>

2 attachments

 **MISSING.pdf**
198K

 **MISSING1.pdf**
479K

Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Sun, May 15, 2022 at 7:21 PM

To: Chad Brazier

Chad

Can you include our member MLA Greg Morrow, his phone is 1-902-533-2777.

Sent from my iPhone

On May 15, 2022, at 8:01 AM, Chad Brazier <> wrote:

[Quoted text hidden]

2 attachments

 **MISSING.pdf**
198K

 **MISSING1.pdf**
479K

Chad Brazier

Mon, May 16, 2022 at 12:35 PM

To: Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Hi Harris,

Here, I've attached a new set of those pamphlets for you, with Greg Morrow added. The train one is set for 1/4 page printing, the Missing one is set to 1/2 page, or 2 per page. I hope this helps you have those conversations! Please encourage people to contact the other councillors about this! If you can direct people to the facebook page too, that would be great for keeping numbers and energy up. Town council meeting tonight - Sarah will be speaking for the plebiscite. We are hoping for a great crowd, like the other night. If you can direct any turnout there today for 6pm, it would be very effective for our goals.

Chad

[Quoted text hidden]

2 attachments

 **Why the rush.pdf**
167K

 **Missing.pdf**
435K

Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Mon, May 16, 2022 at 12:58 PM

To: Chad Brazier ·

Chad;

If you could put the email for our MLA Greg Morrow it would be greatly appreciated.

His email is; gregmorrow4gt@gmsil.com

Harris

[Quoted text hidden]

Chad Brazier ·

Mon, May 16, 2022 at 1:11 PM

To: Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Hi here they are!

[Quoted text hidden]

2 attachments

 **Missing.pdf**
435K

 **Why the rush.pdf**
167K

Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Mon, May 16, 2022 at 3:20 PM

To: Carol MacEachern <ca.

[Quoted text hidden]

2 attachments

 **MISSING.pdf**
198K

 **MISSING1.pdf**
479K

MISSING:



PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT IN THE CONSOLIDATION PROCESS!

WHAT'S HAPPENING ?

In September 2021 the Town and County Councils voted jointly to “explore Consolidation”. The exploration was done by a consulting company that held engagement activities in-person and online over the past two months.

WHAT'S THE ISSUE ?

A growing number of Town and County residents are dissatisfied with the engagement process, which has reached only a very limited number of people. The format of the sessions were, until recently, kiosk-style, where attendees could not benefit from hearing questions asked by other residents. The posterboards presented were no different than what came in the County Connect and answered no questions about the possible negative effects a merger might have. The bulk of detailed answers are exclusively available on www.antigonish.ca where they are in a timeline format that is difficult to search, and it requires decent internet access to use. The engagement process is rushed and flawed.

WHAT DO WE WANT ?

We want a pause and a plebiscite. All relevant information about the proposed merger - both pros and possible cons must be made public. If the process is to continue, we demand a plebiscite in both Town & County, a vote being the only legitimate means of ascertaining residents' true feelings on the matter. We deserve to vote on the future of our communities.

If you are also unsettled by the rush toward consolidation, please

contact our town and county councillors

and let them know that we as residents deserve meaningful consultation in this major and irreversible decision! We insist that the question of consolidation be paused, and put to the people in the form of a **plebiscite!**

Town Council:

Mayor Laurie Boucher: mayor@townofantigonish.ca

Deputy Mayor Willie Cormier: wcormier@townofantigonish.ca

Councillor Donnie MacInnis: dmacinnis@townofantigonish.ca

Councillor Sean Cameron: scameron@townofantigonish.ca

Councillor Andrew Murray: amurray@townofantigonish.ca

Councillor Mary Farrell: mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca

Councillor Diane Roberts: droberts@townofantigonish.ca

>> important Town Council meeting on

Monday, May 16th at 6pm at Town Hall.

Join us there!

County Council:

District 1: Coun. Mary Maclellan: mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca

District 2: Coun. Donnie MacDonald: dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca

District 3: Deputy Warden Hughie Stewart: hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca

District 4: Coun. Shawn Brophy: sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca

District 5: Coun. Remi Deveau: rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca

District 6: Warden Owen MacCarron: omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca

District 7: Coun. John Dunbar: jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca

District 8: Coun. Gary Mattie: gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca

District 9: Coun. Harris McNamara: hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca

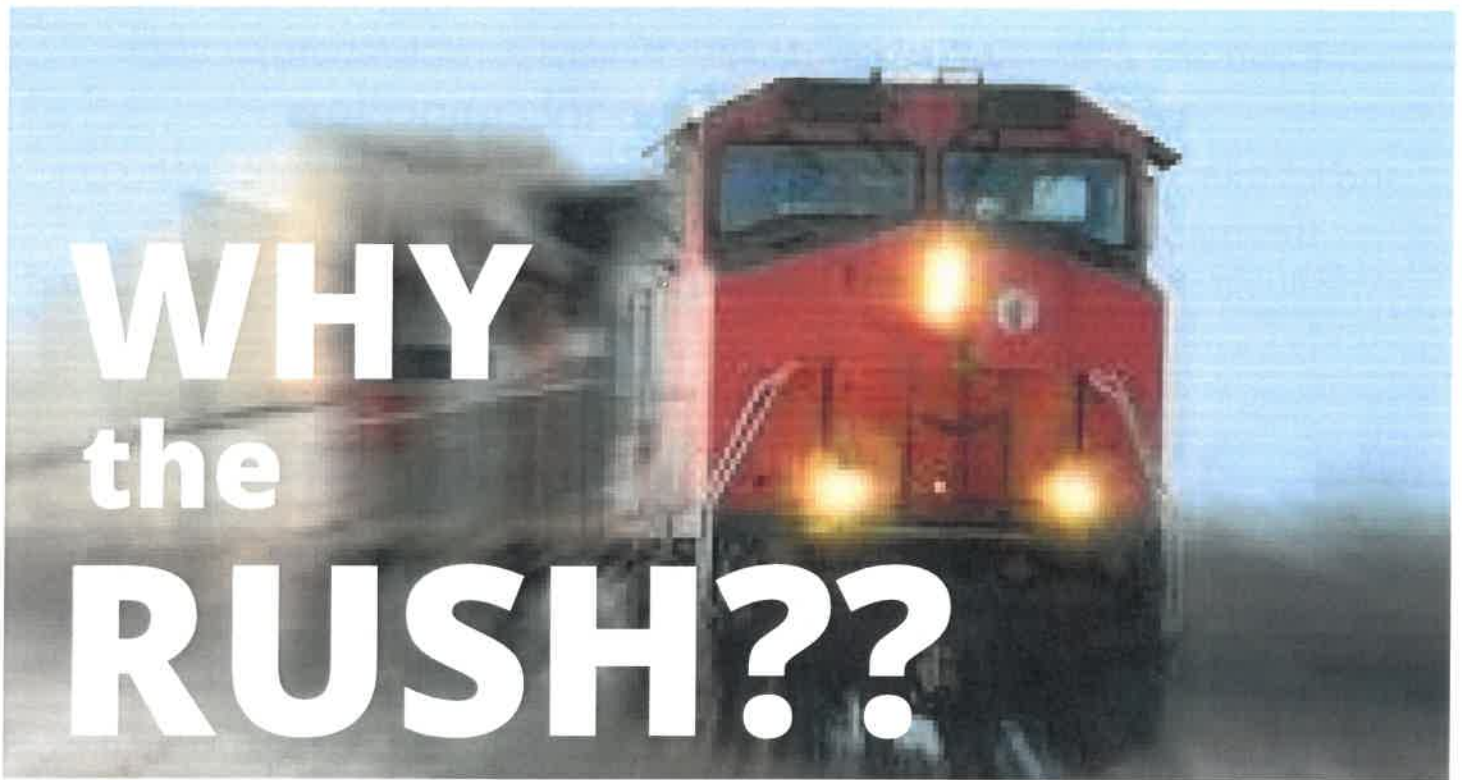
District 10: Coun. Bill MacFarlane: bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca

Next County Council meeting:

Tuesday, June 14th at 7:30pm. Plan to be there!

All municipal affairs are ultimately under **provincial** jurisdiction, so

Contact MLA Michelle Thompson too! michellethompsonmla@gmail.com



We are Antigonish town and county residents who care deeply for the place where we live and call home. This means that we must speak up now.

The two councils are considering the hugely important and consequential issue of municipal consolidation - despite zero popular mandate to do so. A consultant-led PR effort, anchored by polished online and printed materials, promotes the idea, offering residents highly-controlled, top-down "public engagement sessions", where attendance is noted, but feedback goes unrecorded.

The process of consolidation needs to pause!

Residents are alarmed that credible efforts at democratic consensus-building on such a major issue have been absent in this rushed process.

We demand that consolidation be put to the public in the form of a **plebiscite!**



Antigonish Town and County Residents in Favour of a Plebiscite
facebook group

If you are also unsettled by the rush toward consolidation, please

contact our town and county councillors

and let them know that we as residents deserve meaningful consultation in this major and irreversible decision! We insist that the question of consolidation be paused, and put to the people in the form of a **plebiscite!**

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Deputy Mayor Willie Cormier: wcormier@townofantigonish.ca

Councillor Donnie MacInnis: dmacinnis@townofantigonish.ca

Councillor Sean Cameron: scameron@townofantigonish.ca

Councillor Andrew Murray: amurray@townofantigonish.ca

Councillor Mary Farrell: mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca

Councillor Diane Roberts: droberts@townofantigonish.ca

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District 3: Deputy Warden Hughie Stewart: hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca

District 4: Coun. Shawn Brophy: sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca

District 5: Coun. Remi Deveau: rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca

District 6: Warden Owen MacCarron: omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca

District 7: Coun. John Dunbar: jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca

District 8: Coun. Gary Mattie: gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca

District 9: Coun. Harris McNamara: hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca

District 10: Coun. Bill MacFarlane: bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca

Beth Schumacher

From: Joanne
Sent: May 15, 2022 10:35 AM
To: Bill MacFarlane; Owen McCarron
Subject: Consolidation

Hi Bill and Owen

I just want to pass along my thoughts on the consolidation process.

I have attended information sessions and I have followed on line. I live in the county and have a business and property in the town. I have respect for both Mayor Boucher and Warden McCarron and I want what is best for both town and county BUT even after the interactive process I feel unease. I feel there are not the hard facts that tell me the gains and losses for town/county. It seems the engagement team (whose job it is to present) are not equipped with the hard facts of what the reality will be following consolidation. I seem to hear we will figure that out later, with emphasis on the positive experience of Hants County.

When getting married it's a very good idea to know **(as well as you can)** what strengths and weakness your partner is bringing into the relationship and how it is going to make your life better **before** you go to the altar. Some people who have tied the knot first, soon find out they were a heck of a lot better off single. Just relying on the fact that your neighbor next door seems to be getting along fine in marriage, doesn't mean you will.

Whether continuing in single status or married, I want the best for our community so hope all factors are carefully weighed in making the decision.

Thank you for the good work you do and the hard decisions you have to make.

Joanne Curry

Beth Schumacher

From: Glenn Horne
Sent: May 15, 2022 5:15 PM
To: Owen McCarron
Subject: Re: HB Meeting - Contact info

Thanks. I'll connect with him tomorrow.

Glenn Horne
CAO
Municipality of the County of Antigonish

From: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Sent: Friday, May 13, 2022 10:16:15 PM
To: Glenn Horne <glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Fwd: HB Meeting - Contact info

FYI
thanks

Warden Owen McCarron
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
902-968-1290

Begin forwarded message:

From: Rocky DeCoste
Date: May 13, 2022 at 3:39:38 PM ADT
To: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: HB Meeting - Contact info

Hello Owen,

Nice meeting you and thank you for taking the time to speak to me afterwards at the information session on consolidation in HB. (District 9)

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Regards

Rocky DeCoste MMP | TMP & BOP Maintenance Team Leader, QPL

Port Hawkesbury Paper
Box 9500, 120 Pulp Mill Road
Port Hawkesbury, NS, B9A 1A1

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: May 16, 2022 8:53 AM
To: Linda Wood
Subject: RE: Please....hear us!

Linda /Larry;

Thanks for the support! I was up at the Farmers Market in Antigonish over the weekend, lot of support for a plebiscite. Encourage others to email with their views like you guys did.

Harris

From: Linda Wood <
Sent: May 13, 2022 6:14 PM
To: premier@novascotia.ca; mayor@townofantigonish.ca; omccarron@antigonishcounty.na.ca; Mary MacLellan <mmacellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; wccormier@townofantigonish.ca; dmacinnis@townofantigonish.ca; scameron@townofantigonish.ca; amurray@townofantigonish.ca; mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca; droberts@townofantigonish.ca
Subject: Please....hear us!

To the Premier of N.S., Mayor, Warden, and town and county councillors of Antigonish, regarding the proposed consolidation/ amalgamation of town and county.

Please, please...take a breath and listen to your constituents. Please slow the process down, and hear us. We voted you in to represent US, and this proposal was not on the election platform.

-We want a say in this, for/ or against, we deserve that!

-Simply put...We want a plebiscite!

-We want more info....not maybe projections!

We need to feel we have some input in this.... It's a big deal!

We are in District 9, and if our councillor is removed from voting, due to a " conflict of interest", where does that leave us?? We pay taxes too, and I might add...reap very little benefits.

Please hear us,

Respectively, Linda & Larry Wood, Auld's Cove

Beth Schumacher

From: Bill MacFarlane
Sent: May 16, 2022 10:16 AM
To: Joanne; Owen McCarron
Cc: Owen McCarron
Subject: RE: Consolidation

Hello Joanne,

Thank you for your email. Please be assured that Council will determine the best outcome for residents going forward. Consolidation, status quo or possibly building capacity for more shared services between the two Municipal units. I would like to thank you, Joanne and your family for the invaluable service you provide to the community.

Sincerely,
Bill

From: Joanne <
Sent: May 15, 2022 10:35 AM
To: Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Consolidation

Hi Bill and Owen

I just want to pass along my thoughts on the consolidation process.

I have attended information sessions and I have followed on line. I live in the county and have a business and property in the town. I have respect for both Mayor Boucher and Warden McCarron and I want what is best for both town and county BUT even after the interactive process I feel unease. I feel there are not the hard facts that tell me the gains and losses for town/county. It seems the engagement team (whose job it is to present) are not equipped with the hard facts of what the reality will be following consolidation. I seem to hear we will figure that out later, with emphasis on the positive experience of Hants County.

When getting married it's a very good idea to know **(as well as you can)** what strengths and weakness your partner is bringing into the relationship and how it is going to make your life better **before** you go to the altar. Some people who have tied the knot first, soon find out they were a heck of a lot better off single. Just relying on the fact that your neighbor next door seems to be getting along fine in marriage, doesn't mean you will.

Whether continuing in single status or married, I want the best for our community so hope all factors are carefully weighed in making the decision.

Thank you for the good work you do and the hard decisions you have to make.

Joanne Curry

Harris McNamara

From: Carl
Sent: May 16, 2022 11:37 AM
To: mayor@townofantigonish.ca; Owen McCarron
Cc: mmaclellan@antigonish.ns.ca; Donnie MacDonald; Hughie Stewart; Shawn Brophy; Remi Deveau; John Dunbar; Gary Mattie; Harris McNamara; Bill MacFarlane; wcornier@townofantigonish.ca; dmacinnis@townofantigonish.ca; scameron@townofantigonish.ca; amurray@townofantigonish.ca; mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca; droberts@townofantigonish.ca
Subject: Consolidation

I am writing to you both to congratulate you and all your councillors for taking on this major challenge called consolidation. No one said or thought it would be easy. As former mayor of the town for eight years I can assure you that there are always tough decisions to be made when you are representing the people whether from the town or the county. You were all elected by the people to make those tough decisions. Those decisions will never please 100% of the people you represent but when you make them they are in the best interest of all.

As for the topic at hand, consolidation, it is a decision which will have a lasting effect on our community. I am in total agreement to consolidate at this time so all people from Antigonish town and county can benefit as one Antigonish. After having heard and read some of the comments about consolidation I feel very strongly that going forward we will all be better off as one, The Municipality of Antigonish.

I have looked at both financial statements, along with the respective tax rates, including area rates, and I only see good reasons for both municipalities to become one. As a former resident of the county and more recently the town, I can honestly say that whenever I was asked where I was from I always answered Antigonish; never the Town of Antigonish or the County of Antigonish. I would like to mention a few events that have happened over the last number of years that were not in 100% agreement by all residents.

1 – The People’s Place library – When people heard how much it was going to cost, not all people were in favor. Now it is the most used library in the province, based on per capita, and everyone speaks highly of it.

2 – Antigonish Skate Park – Again not everyone was in favor but just drive by on a sunny day and see how many people, both young and old, are enjoying it.

3 – Wind Farm – The wind farm that the town is part off was not something that everyone thought was a good idea, even some town staff and councillors. Today everyone is thankful for the results it has given the town.

I am sure there are others but I hope you get my point.

In closing I am asking everyone to please weigh out the pros and cons for EACH municipality and I am sure that the positives far out way the negatives to join as one and become The Municipality of Antigonish. You were all voted in to make decisions, tough decisions, on behalf of your constituents. Let's make one, the right one, vote for consolidation and let us move forward together in a positive way. I am sure the people will not be disappointed for years and centuries to come.

Thank you for your time.

Carl Chisholm



Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Handouts

1 message


Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Mon, May 16, 2022 at 3:13 PM

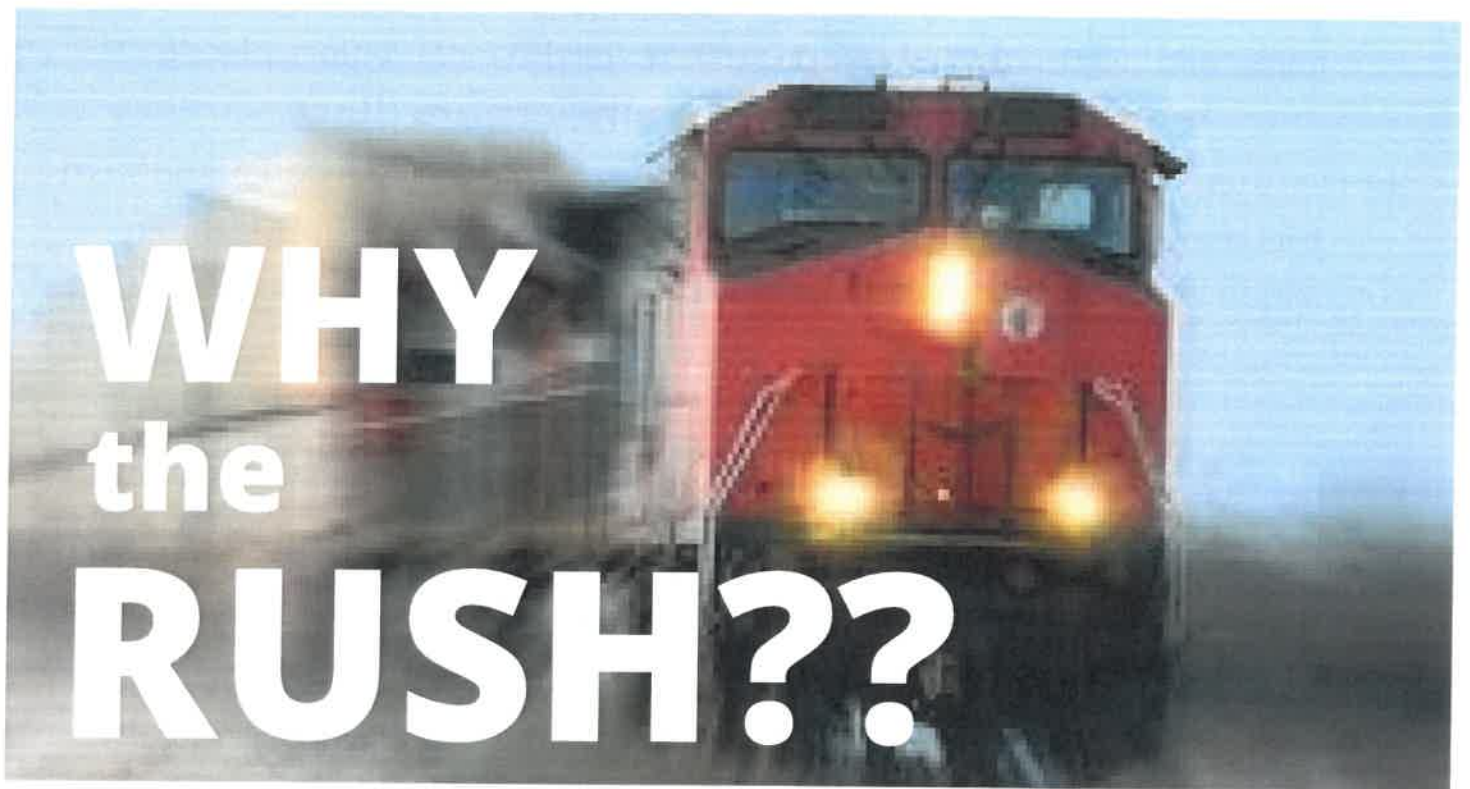
To: Carol MacEachern <

Carol;
Have a look at handouts.
I am on the phone now, can call afterward.
Harris

2 attachments

 **missing2.pdf**
479K

 **MISSING.pdf**
198K



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The process of consolidation needs to pause!

Residents are alarmed that credible efforts at democratic consensus-building on such a major issue have been absent in this rushed process.

We demand that consolidation be put to the public in the form of a **plebiscite!**



Antigonish Town and County Residents in Favour of a Plebiscite
facebook group

If you are also unsettled by the rush toward consolidation, please **contact our town and county councillors** and let them know that we as residents deserve meaningful consultation in this major and irreversible decision! We insist that the question of consolidation be paused, and put to the people in the form of a **plebiscite!**

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MISSING:



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Contact MLA Michelle Thompson too! michellethompsonmla@gmail.com

Beth Schumacher

From: Karen O'Shea ·
Sent: May 16, 2022 4:07 PM
To: mayor@townofantigonish.ca; Owen McCarron
Subject: Thank You

Dear Mayor Laurie and Warden Owen,

I would like to say thank you for all your hard work that the two of you and your committees have done regarding the consolidation. I know that it has been time consuming but I appreciate the hard work and the research that has gone into it.

I would much rather have you both come up with the best plan for the town than the government mandate it.

Once again, thank you.

Karen O'Shea (Van de Sande)



Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Flyers

1 message

Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>
To: Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>

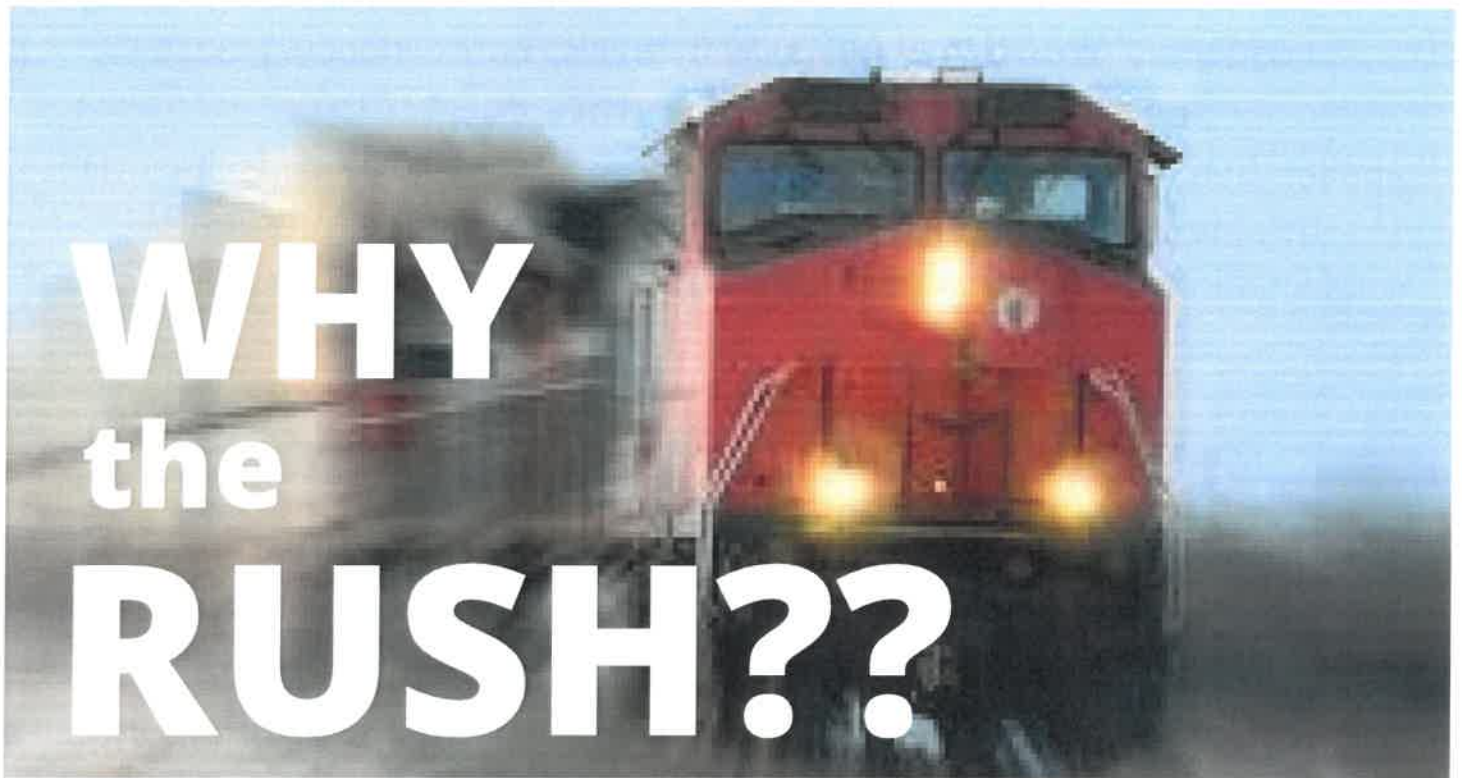
Mon, May 16, 2022 at 4:25 PM

Gary
have a look
Harris

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From: [Harris McNamara](#)
To: [Beth Schumacher](#)
Subject: Webinar on Wednesday May 18, 2022
Date: May 16, 2022 4:47:37 PM

Beth;

The webinar on Wednesday night I must have lost the email, can you send another invitation to register.

Harris

Harris McNamara

From: Andrew Murray <amurray@townofantigonish.ca>
Sent: May 16, 2022 11:19 PM
To: Carl; mayor@townofantigonish.ca; Owen McCarron
Cc: mmaclellan@antigonish.ns.ca; Donnie MacDonald; Hughie Stewart; Shawn Brophy; Remi Deveau; John Dunbar; Gary Mattie; Harris McNamara; Bill MacFarlane; Willie Cormier; Donnie MacInnis; Sean Cameron; Mary Farrell; Diane Roberts
Subject: Re: [EXTERNAL] Consolidation

Thank you Carl.

Councillor Andrew Murray
Town of Antigonish
902-968-1248

From: Carl
Sent: Monday, May 16, 2022 11:37:22 AM
To: Town of Antigonish Mayor <mayor@townofantigonish.ca>; omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Cc: mmaclellan@antigonish.ns.ca <mmaclellan@antigonish.ns.ca>; dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Willie Cormier <wcormier@townofantigonish.ca>; Donnie MacInnis <dmacinnis@townofantigonish.ca>; Sean Cameron <scameron@townofantigonish.ca>; Andrew Murray <amurray@townofantigonish.ca>; Mary Farrell <mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca>; Diane Roberts <droboterts@townofantigonish.ca>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Consolidation

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

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Thank you for your time.

Carl Chisholm



Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Consolidation / Amalgamation

1 message

Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Mon, May 16, 2022 at 11:43 AM

To: wsampson

Folks;

I hope you have a great stay in Havre Boucher this year and thank you very much for allowing my vette to be in your garage, i knew it was as safe asit was at my place.

I have attached the names, email addresses and phone numbers of councillors and warden of Antigonish County, email is best as you then have a record. If you can send an email to all councillors it would be best.

It does not make sense to county residents as we are in the best financial position ever. This is being rushed through with no pros and cons, a cost benefit analysis needs to be done on every component of amalgamation . Most importantly county residents won't have a say in what happens. Six councillors (maybe less) will make the decision for you. We need a plebiscite, that way 15000 county residents will make the decision.

Additionally you made a comment about taxes on your home and property, if you can, send me a photo I will investigate, not promising anything but I can ask questions, make them uncomfortable.

Harris



Contact Numbers.docx

14K

Contact Numbers & Email Addresses

NAME	EMAIL
Owen McCarron (Warden) PHONE 902-968-1290	omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca
Gary Mattie (Councillor) PHONE 902-968-1175	gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca
John Dunbar (Councillor) PHONE 902-338-2200	jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca
Shawn Brophy (Councillor) PHONE 902-863-8485	sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca
Remi Deveau (Councillor) PHONE 902-870-2866	rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca
Mary MacLellan(Councillor) PHONE 902-863-1101	mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca
Don MacDonald (Councillor) PHONE 902-863-5449	dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca
Hughie Stewart (D. Warden) PHONE 902-872-0420	hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca
Bill MacFarlane (Councillor) PHONE 902-870-7737	bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca
Harris McNamara(Councillor) PHONE 902-318-8333	hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca

Beth Schumacher

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: May 17, 2022 7:08 AM
To: Joanne; Bill MacFarlane
Subject: Re: Consolidation

Hi Joanne,

Thanks very much for your email and for attending the sessions, as we go through this process we are hearing a wide variety of thoughts and concerns, I for one have stated many times that I need to get a feel for where our residents sit on this important issue. Before any decision is made, the report on all info gathered will be made available to both Councils and the residents of both Town&County. Council will then need time to reflect on what we heard and then look at what possibilities will best serve our community. Again thanks for reaching out.

Owen

Warden Owen McCarron
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
902-968-1290

On May 15, 2022, at 10:35 AM, Joanne wrote:

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Whether continuing in single status or married, I want the best for our community so hope all factors are carefully weighed in making the decision.

Thank you for the good work you do and the hard decisions you have to make.

Joanne Curry

Harris McNamara

From: Town of Antigonish Mayor <mayor@townofantigonish.ca>
Sent: May 17, 2022 8:30 AM
To: Carl; Owen McCarron
Cc: mmacellan@antigonish.ns.ca; Donnie MacDonald; Hughie Stewart; Shawn Brophy; Remi Deveau; John Dunbar; Gary Mattie; Harris McNamara; Bill MacFarlane; Willie Cormier; Donnie MacInnis; Sean Cameron; Andrew Murray; Mary Farrell; Diane Roberts
Subject: Re: [EXTERNAL] Consolidation

Thank you for your email Carl, your words are much appreciated.

Best,
Laurie

Mayor Laurie Boucher
Town of Antigonish
274 Main St, Antigonish, N.S
B2G 2C4
mayor@townofantigonish.ca | 902•870•7795

From: Carl <
Sent: Monday, May 16, 2022 11:37:22 AM
To: Town of Antigonish Mayor <mayor@townofantigonish.ca>; omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Cc: mmacellan@antigonish.ns.ca <mmacellan@antigonish.ns.ca>; dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Willie Cormier <wcormier@townofantigonish.ca>; Donnie MacInnis <dmacinnis@townofantigonish.ca>; Sean Cameron <scameron@townofantigonish.ca>; Andrew Murray <amurray@townofantigonish.ca>; Mary Farrell <mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca>; Diane Roberts <droberts@townofantigonish.ca>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Consolidation

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

I am writing to you both to congratulate you and all your councillors for taking on this major challenge called consolidation. No one said or thought it would be easy. As former mayor of the town for eight years I can assure you that there are always tough decisions to be made when you are representing the people whether from the town or the county. You were all elected by the people to make those tough

decisions. Those decisions will never please 100% of the people you represent but when you make them they are in the best interest of all.

As for the topic at hand, consolidation, it is a decision which will have a lasting effect on our community. I am in total agreement to consolidate at this time so all people from Antigonish town and county can benefit as one Antigonish. After having heard and read some of the comments about consolidation I feel very strongly that going forward we will all be better off as one, The Municipality of Antigonish.

I have looked at both financial statements, along with the respective tax rates, including area rates, and I only see good reasons for both municipalities to become one. As a former resident of the county and more recently the town, I can honestly say that whenever I was asked where I was from I always answered Antigonish; never the Town of Antigonish or the County of Antigonish. I would like to mention a few events that have happened over the last number of years that were not in 100% agreement by all residents.

1 – The People’s Place library – When people heard how much it was going to cost, not all people were in favor. Now it is the most used library in the province, based on per capita, and everyone speaks highly of it.

2 – Antigonish Skate Park – Again not everyone was in favor but just drive by on a sunny day and see how many people, both young and old, are enjoying it.

3 – Wind Farm – The wind farm that the town is part off was not something that everyone thought was a good idea, even some town staff and councillors. Today everyone is thankful for the results it has given the town.

I am sure there are others but I hope you get my point.

In closing I am asking everyone to please weigh out the pros and cons for EACH municipality and I am sure that the positives far out way the negatives to join as one and become The Municipality of Antigonish. You were all voted in to make decisions, tough decisions, on behalf of your constituents. Let’s make one, the right one, vote for consolidation and let us move forward together in a positive

way. I am sure the people will not be disappointed for years and centuries to come.

Thank you for your time.

Carl Chisholm

Beth Schumacher

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: May 17, 2022 12:24 PM
To: Shirlyn Donovan
Subject: Accepted: Exploration of Consolidation Webinar

Beth Schumacher

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: May 17, 2022 12:31 PM
To: Carl
Subject: Re: Consolidation

Thanks Carl

Your perspective and experience means a great deal to me and Council. As we move along in this process we want to make sure we listen carefully, reflect and make the appropriate decisions for the benefit of all. Thanks again Carl.
Owen

Sent from my iPhone

On May 16, 2022, at 11:37 AM, Carl wrote:

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Thank you for your time.

Carl Chisholm

Alicia Carpenter's attended Town Council Meeting last evening

3 messages

Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Tue, May 17, 2022 at 12:38 PM

To: Anne Marie McKeough < >

Anne;

took a photo of Alicia's view of what transpired at the town council meeting. Haven't been able to reach her today. You will have to enlarge the print to read.

Harris



Alicia Carpenter -Vink.JPG
3068K

Anne Marie McKeough <

Tue, May 17, 2022 at 1:46 PM

To: Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Good for Alicia! The actions of the Deputy Mayor are beyond belief! And think those of the Mayor, as reported by Alicia, are highly questionable. Do you know if any employees of CJFX radio were present at the town council meeting? If so, could they be asked to seek clarification from all members of the town council? I'd be willing to call the station manager if you think that would help.

Re you first email: Gerry and I agree that a motion to delay the vote until the next election is the best approach. The councillors and the "hired help" need to gather and disseminate the information the public is requesting during the intervening period.

Also, we have been following the Facebook page on Gerry's account.

Bye for now, Harris

Anne and Gerry

[Get Outlook for iOS](#)

From: Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>**Sent:** Tuesday, May 17, 2022 9:38:41 AM**To:** Anne Marie McKeough**Subject:** Alicia Carpenter's attended Town Council Meeting last evening

[EXTERNAL]

[Quoted text hidden]

Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Tue, May 17, 2022 at 2:35 PM

To: Anne Marie McKeough

Anne / Gerry;

Yes, CJFX was there, very little on the news this morning on the radio. It is my opinion CJFX is supporting amalgamation as all through they reported very sparingly, not giving a balanced view.

As far as motion I believe the consultants are going to be recommending amalgamation in their report but need to wait for the report probably in a couple of weeks, then make the motion to delay until the next election cycle as it will be less than 1.5 years. We are continuing to get signatures on the petition, making presentations to groups and getting the media involved. You and Gerry have been great to support us.
Talk to you in the coming days.
Harris

[Quoted text hidden]

Alicia Vink's View of Town Meeting Last Night

3 messages

Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Tue, May 17, 2022 at 12:49 PM

To: Carol MacEachern <

>, Peggy Power

Carol / Peggy;

Have a look at Alicia's view of what transpired last night at the meeting. It is a photo of a post she made, you will have to enlarge the font.

Harris



Alicia Carpenter -Vink.JPG
3068K

Peggy Power <

To: Harris McNamara <narris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Tue, May 17, 2022 at 10:41 PM

Wow! Unbelievable that Mr Cormier got away with such disrespect. What an ass 🤬 Thanks Harris for sharing. Let me know if there's anything I can help with 😊 You take care of yourself & get some rest

[Quoted text hidden]

Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Wed, May 18, 2022 at 7:10 AM

To: Peggy Power <

Peggy

Yes, his comments were definitely wrong and condescending to the residents of District 9

Sent from my iPhone

On May 17, 2022, at 10:41 PM, Peggy Power

wrote:

Wow! Unbelievable that Mr Cormier got away with such disrespect. What an ass 🤬 Thanks Harris for sharing. Let me know if there's anything I can help with 😊 You take care of yourself & get some rest

[Quoted text hidden]

Hughie Stewart

From: Tony Sampson <[redacted]>
Sent: May 17, 2022 5:03 PM
To: Donnie MacDonald; Gary Mattie; Harris McNamara; Hughie Stewart; John Dunbar; Mary MacLellan; Owen McCarron; Remi Deveau; Shawn Brophy
Subject: Consolidation

ANTIGONISH To Whom it May concern:

As a concerned resident of the County of Antigonish I would like to weigh in on this consolidation/amalgamation issue that is before us. I have several concerns. Up to now I have been under the impression that we live in a democratic society here in Canada, where we elect our federal, provincial and municipal officials of whom represent the wishes of the people that have elected them. In recent weeks it seems that this might not be the case.

I was very insulted by the statement made to the fact that some of our elected municipal officials do not believe that the people they represent are not qualified to make an informed decision on what may possibly be the most important item concerning the future of the town and county of Antigonish. If we were not qualified enough then, as our representatives, you should be focusing your efforts on informing us of ALL the issues around this venture.

The meetings that have been held recently have done little to inform us as to the advantages and disadvantages of this very important decision. Instead, it feels like an attempt to sell us blindly on only its merits, by an outside entity. I believe this to be way too important an issue to be left to an outside company or to only our elected officials, who seem to have some agenda. Why so fast? Anything that seems to be fast tracked, without all the answers to all of our questions seems to me to be something to be leery of. Where did this come from, what are the effects on our tax rates, services, ie: fire departments and policing to be only a few. We only seem to be given scripted answers by the consultants hired at a very hefty price tag and not having our best interests at heart. Their only concern is to get this issue pushed through as fast as possible. I contend that the only reason this is being handled this way is that OUR representatives know very well what are the wishes of the people and by forcing it through is the only way to get their agendas passed. This is not responsible governing.

Another concern I have is the removal of two councilors who have spoken out against this move. There has not been an issue before of them voting on all the issues coming to the table. Looks like a duck, walks like a duck most definitely a duck. Shame of all the rest of you for not standing up when this was enacted. This process stinks the high heavens.

I'm not totally blaming our elected officials. We all have a part to play in this for not taking the process of electing our municipal councilors seriously. In too many cases over the last few years, these people have not been challenged and held responsible to the people they represent. I believe a five= year term limit would keep this from happening and bring new ideas to the council. Some individuals have been unchallenged and have lost touch with the people they should be representing.

Our counselor in District 9 , newly elected and very dedicated to his constituents, voiced his concerns. For this he was removed from voting on this issue, due to "so called conflict of interest". We need more counselors with this degree of integrity and dedication to the people who elected him. Come on people, it is time to stand up and demand more from our counselors. We cannot and should not go along with a Mayor and a Warden who says it's best for us without giving us all the answers to the questions we have. I for one feel this is too important a decision to be left to two councils and not the people who will have to live with the consequences of their choice. To the Mayor, Warden and councilors remember who voted to put you there as well as the fact that we will have the option to vote again in a few years. Maybe we would rather vote for someone else that will represent our wishes.

Mister Warden you were worried that a plebiscite would divide town and county, but what your decision has done is divide our elected officials and THE PEOPLE OF THE TOWN AND COUNTY OF ANTIGONISH

Harris McNamara

Subject: Exploration of Consolidation Webinar
Location: Zoom

Start: Wed 2022-05-18 7:00 PM
End: Wed 2022-05-18 8:30 PM
Show Time As: Tentative

Recurrence: (none)

Meeting Status: Not yet responded

Organizer: Shirlyn Donovan
Required Attendees: Shirlyn Donovan; Council; Kate Gorman
Optional Attendees: Owen McCarron; Glenn Horne

Hi there,

You are invited to a Zoom webinar.
When: May 18, 2022 07:00 PM Halifax
Topic: Exploration of Consolidation

Register in advance for this webinar:

https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_9AozyEkhQle72cwpmprozA

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar.

Beth Schumacher

From: Tony Sampson <
Sent: May 17, 2022 7:14 PM
To: Owen McCarron
Subject: consolidation

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Mister Warden you were worried that a plebiscite would divide town and county, but what your decision has done is divide our elected officials and THE PEOPLE OF THE TOWN AND COUNTY OF ANTIGONISH



Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

(no subject)

4 messages

Alicia Vink < >

Wed, May 18, 2022 at 9:07 AM

To: harris.mcnamara@gmail.com

Harris it would be helpful if we could find out who the lady was Cormier had the conversation with about hockey..... Paul Carpenter came to the meeting with me.

Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Wed, May 18, 2022 at 6:18 PM

To: Alicia Vink <v >

Alicia

I do know the lady that had the conversation with Cormier , she contacted me this morning and doesn't want me to release her name but the conversation she says was taken out of context and it occurred in the late 60s. She does live in our area.

Harris

Sent from my iPhone

> On May 18, 2022, at 9:07 AM, Alicia Vink < > wrote:

>
>

[Quoted text hidden]

Alicia Vink < >

Thu, May 19, 2022 at 8:19 AM

To: Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

I understand her point but interesting to see how Mr Cormier misrepresented what she said...but he did make that comment publicly among others giving the community of Havre Boucher a poor reputation . I'm not sure that the mayor gets a vote....she is not a councillor. Usually the chair does not vote unless there is a tie. Also people are allowed to abstain from voting providing a reason and Mr. McInnis said something like that he didn't have enough information yet.

I posted my comments cuz I think it is important to see who may be representing them.

I should have blocked comments.

Appreciate what you are doing for all the municipalities on this consolidation issue and hope you take time for you and

Doreen to enjoy this beautiful day. 😊

[Quoted text hidden]

Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Thu, May 19, 2022 at 2:13 PM

To: Alicia Vink <v >

Alicia

Councillors are allowed to abstain from voting, The mayor wanted to put pressure on MacInnis and from what I hear he doesn't like conflict of any sort and caved. The mayor I don't believe is allowed to vote except in a tie. Now in the county the warden is allowed to vote as he represents a district (in this case St. Andrew's). He was voted warden by the councillors at beginning of term . I still believe that term limits should be adopted, two terms is maximum, we get new ideas and don't get people using the system to further personal agendas.

Sent from my iPhone

On May 19, 2022, at 8:19 AM, Alicia Vink <v >

> wrote:

[Quoted text hidden]

Beth Schumacher

From: Kate Gorman <kgorman@townofantigonish.ca>
Sent: May 18, 2022 4:04 PM
To: mayor@townofantigonish.ca; Owen McCarron
Cc: Shirlyn Donovan
Subject: Introduction for Tonight
Attachments: Online Engagement Session - Introduction.docx

Hi Owen & Laurie,

Attached is your introduction for this evening!

Thanks,

Kate

Kate Gorman
Marketing and Communications Officer
kgorman@townofantigonish.ca
902-318-6758
www.townofantigonish.ca | [Nest Cam](#) | [Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#)

Owen:

Good evening everyone.

Mayor Boucher and I appreciate you all for taking the time to join us virtually.

I'd also like to acknowledge we are gathered here today in Mi'kma'ki, the traditional unceded territory of the Mi'kmaw people.

Tonight, we will have a presentation from Brighter Community Planning and Consulting. Then we are going to open the floor for discussion and questions. This is your session, so anything that comes to mind please don't hesitate to ask.

The Brighter Community Planning team are well versed in the municipal landscape in Nova Scotia. They have experience with past mergers, service reviews, planning, economic development, and community engagement. We trust their expertise to help facilitate this process. They are here to listen, gather feedback, and report on what was heard.

Laurie:

Back in September, both Councils unanimously voted to explore consolidation.

We've been asked Why Now?

The relationship between the Town and County is stronger than it has ever been. We are in a time where we are both in alignment, which is the ideal to explore an opportunity like consolidation.

With our shared values of trust, consistency, and hard work – we are committed to seeing this process through to determine if the community is better served as one municipal unit.

I encourage you to review the materials available at [antigonish dot ca](http://antigonish.ca) if you haven't done so already. If after tonight you have further questions, the Warden and I are happy to speak with you either over the phone or by email.

Thank you and we look forward to the discussion.

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: May 19, 2022 6:49 AM
To: Tony Sampson
Subject: RE: Consolidation

Tony;

Thanks for voicing your support! It's done in a rush, no pros & cons, no cost benefit analysis on every component and not listening to residents with regard to a plebiscite or delay to make it an election issue is not good governance.

Please continue to voice your concerns and don't forget about our MLA. Copy your email to him.

Did you guys have a good trip?

Harris

From: Tony Sampson < >
Sent: May 17, 2022 5:03 PM
To: Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Owen McCarron <omaccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
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Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Town Council Meeting

1 message

Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Thu, May 19, 2022 at 7:37 AM

To: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>

Owen;

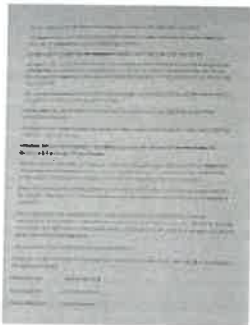
I received a number of calls about what was said at town council meeting this week about the engagement meeting in Havre Boucher by Willie Cormier (see attached email). I have confirmed with 3 people in attendance what was said. Willie called me right after the meeting to apologize for some comment he conveyed that he heard from an older lady playing ball in the late 60s from Havre Boucher. I accepted his apology for this as it was 50 years ago. What I didn't know and residents are upset about is

He said he felt lucky to get out the meeting in Havre Boucher with his life, this is wrong on so many levels. I hope the session was recorded as this is unbelievable. Laurie should have said he was out of order but didn't. I want to put it on the agenda for Tuesday's COW agenda.

Note he described town / county as urban / rural, rural as surrounded by woods, not understanding of county (Cape George, Havre Boucher, Tracadie) we are more than woods.

Please Owen, you are a good person, delay this madness that is dividing our county and town to fully vet all components of consolidation

Harris



20220517_111814.jpg
315K

This just happened at the town council meeting in Antigonish last night May 16 at 18:00 :

The deputy mayor- Mr. Cormier in defending his position to reject the motion on the floor regarding a plebiscite on consolidation made the following comments:

He felt lucky to escape from the Engagement Session held In Havre Boucher with his life

He shared the conversation he had with a lady he spoke to at the meeting in Havre Boucher where she said she was not interested in consolidation due to the fact that when she played hockey she did not feel accepted in Antigonish....the implication being that the people in Havre Boucher do not have sound reasoning skills

Mr. Cormier then proceeded to proclaim the knowledge and experience he has and that entitles him to be qualified to represent the people with a vote

He described the new situation not as town/county but as urban/rural, qualifying rural as being surrounded by woods

It is fine that Mr. Cormier showed his colours to those present at the Antigonish Town Council meeting which was open to the public.

However, what is not acceptable is that Mayor Laurie Boucher did not call him out of order for demeaning the people of Havre Boucher.

She was present at the May 11th meeting in Havre Boucher which was supposed to be an Engagement Session approved by town and county councils. The visiting councillors preferred it be a public forum facilitated by a consultant from Brighter Community Planning and so the format changed.

Mayor Boucher instead silenced a gentleman who attempted to address the insulting words made by Mr. Cormier .She called for a 5 minute break and once the meeting resumed went on to the agenda as scheduled.

Much respect goes out to the gentleman- Joseph Quesnel who was shut down for showing consideration to the people of Havre Boucher and a sincere thank you to councillor Roberts for pointing out that Mr. Cormier's remarks were inappropriate. At that point he felt obliged to apologize but did not specify what he was apologizing for.

The motion to accept a plebiscite was narrowly defeated.

Thank you to the following for showing general concern and respect for the well- being of the people in the town and county;

Diane Roberts Sarah Armstrong

Sean Cameron Cyndy Henderson

Donnie MacInnis Joseph Quesnel

Beth Schumacher

From: Glenn Horne
Sent: May 19, 2022 9:36 AM
To: Owen McCarron
Cc: Shirlyn Donovan; kgorman@townofantigonish.ca; Jeff Lawrence; mayor@townofantigonish.ca
Subject: RE: CBC question on merger process

Good morning, Owen –

Our discussions with Councils and the Department of Municipal Affairs have been around a consolidation process, which is outside the Municipal Government Act. If Councils were to vote in favour of consolidation I expect the process would be similar to the process used to consolidate the District of West Hants and the Town of Windsor, reflected in the Region of Windsor and West Hants Municipality Act.

Cheers,
Glenn



Glenn Horne | Chief Administrative Officer
Municipality of the County of Antigonish | 902.863.1117
285 Beech Hill Road, Beech Hill, NS | B2G 0B4
www.antigonishcounty.ns.ca | [@AntigonishCo](https://www.facebook.com/AntigonishCo) | [facebook](https://www.facebook.com/AntigonishCo)

Honour Yesterday, Act Today, Inspire Tomorrow

From: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Sent: May 19, 2022 9:26 AM
To: Glenn Horne <glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Fwd: CBC question on merger process

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Jon Tattrie < >
Date: May 18, 2022 at 11:24:39 AM ADT
To: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: CBC question on merger process

Hi Owen,

When we spoke before about the proposed merger of Antigonish town and county, you said if both councils vote in favour of it, they would then approach the province for permission to create a new municipality.

Do you intend to do that through the Municipal Government Act, or through some other process?

Thanks!

Jon Tattrie
CBC News

Harris McNamara

From: Tony Sampson <
Sent: May 19, 2022 9:47 AM
To: Harris McNamara
Subject: Re: Consolidation

Yes nice to get away. Weather was not the best.

Sent from my iPad

On May 19, 2022, at 06:49, Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca> wrote:

Tony;

Thanks for voicing your support! It's done in a rush, no pros & cons, no cost benefit analysis on every component and not listening to residents with regard to a plebiscite or delay to make it an election issue is not good governance.

Please continue to voice your concerns and don't forget about our MLA. Copy your email to him.

Did you guys have a good trip?

Harris

From: Tony Sampson
Sent: May 17, 2022 5:03 PM
To: Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Owen McCarron <omaccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Consolidation

ANTIGONISH To Whom it May concern:

As a concerned resident of the County of Antigonish I would like to weigh in on this consolidation/amalgamation issue that is before us. I have several concerns. Up to now I have been under the impression that we live in a democratic society here in Canada, where we elect our federal, provincial and municipal officials of whom represent the wishes of the people that have elected them. In recent weeks it seems that this might not be the case.

I was very insulted by the statement made to the fact that some of our elected municipal officials do not believe that the people they represent are not qualified to make an informed decision on what may possibly be the most important item concerning the future of the town and county of Antigonish. If we were not qualified enough then, as our representatives, you should be focusing your efforts on informing us of ALL the issues around this venture.

The meetings that have been held recently have done little to inform us as to the advantages and disadvantages of this very important decision. Instead, it feels like an attempt to sell us blindly on only its merits, by an outside entity. I believe this to be way too important an issue to be left to an outside

company or to only our elected officials, who seem to have some agenda. Why so fast? Anything that seems to be fast tracked, without all the answers to all of our questions seems to me to be something to be leery of. Where did this come from, what are the effects on our tax rates, services, ie: fire departments and policing to be only a few. We only seem to be given scripted answers by the consultants hired at a very hefty price tag and not having our best interests at heart. Their only concern is to get this issue pushed through as fast as possible. I contend that the only reason this is being handled this way is that OUR representatives know very well what are the wishes of the people and by forcing it through is the only way to get their agendas passed. This is not responsible governing.

Another concern I have is the removal of two councilors who have spoken out against this move. There has not been an issue before of them voting on all the issues coming to the table. Looks like a duck, walks like a duck most definitely a duck. Shame of all the rest of you for not standing up when this was enacted. This process stinks the high heavens.

I'm not totally blaming our elected officials. We all have a part to play in this for not taking the process of electing our municipal counselors seriously. In too many cases over the last few years, these people have not been challenged and held responsible to the people they represent. I believe a five= year term limit would keep this from happening and bring new ideas to the council. Some individuals have been unchallenged and have lost touch with the people they should be representing.

Our counselor in District 9 , newly elected and very dedicated to his constituents, voiced his concerns. For this he was removed from voting on this issue, due to "so called conflict of interest". We need more counselors with this degree of integrity and dedication to the people who elected him. Come on people, it is time to stand up and demand more from our counselors. We cannot and should not go along with a Mayor and a Warden who says it's best for us without giving us all the answers to the questions we have. I for one feel this is too important a decision to be left to two councils and not the people who will have to live with the consequences of their choice. To the Mayor, Warden and councilors remember who voted to put you there as well as the fact that we will have the option to vote again in a few years. Maybe we would rather vote for someone else that will represent our wishes.

Mister Warden you were worried that a plebiscite would divide town and county, but what your decision has done is divide our elected officials and THE PEOPLE OF THE TOWN AND COUNTY OF ANTIGONISH

Beth Schumacher

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: May 19, 2022 10:29 AM
To: Jon Tattrie
Subject: Re: CBC question on merger process

Hi Jon,

Our discussions with Councils and the Department of Municipal Affairs have been around a consolidation process, which is outside the Municipal Government Act. If Councils were to vote in favour of consolidation I expect the process would be similar to the process used to consolidate the District of West Hants and the Town of Windsor, reflected in the Region of Windsor and West Hants Municipality Act.

Jon, would you mind letting us know when the story will come out. Thanks

Owen

Sent from my iPhone

On May 19, 2022, at 10:13 AM, Jon Tattrie < > wrote:

Hi Owen and Glenn,

Just following up on my question from yesterday. For the proposed merger, do you intend to go through the Municipal Government Act, or some other process?

Thanks!

Jon

On Wed, 18 May 2022 at 11:23, Jon Tattrie < > wrote:

Hi Owen,

When we spoke before about the proposed merger of Antigonish town and county, you said if both councils vote in favour of it, they would then approach the province for permission to create a new municipality.

Do you intend to do that through the Municipal Government Act, or through some other process?

Thanks!

Jon Tattrie
CBC News

Shirlyn Donovan

From: info
Sent: Thursday, May 19, 2022 11:30 AM
To: info
Subject: FW: [EXTERNAL]

Shirlyn Donovan

Strategic Initiatives Coordinator
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
285 Beech Hill Road
Antigonish, NS B2G 0B4
902-863-1117



www.antigonishcounty.ns.ca
www.twitter.com/antigonishco

Honour Yesterday, Act Today, Inspire Tomorrow

From: jackie benoit <jackie@antigonishco.ns.ca>
Sent: Wednesday, May 4, 2022 12:26 PM
Subject: [EXTERNAL]

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear member of council,

As an uninformed, for lack of accessible information, member of the county I am writing to ask you to consider our voice in a vote for the consolidation of the town and county. Since I am unable to obtain answers to many questions I and many others have we would very much like you to consider a plebiscite for the public and also a public forum style meeting to answer questions that we have. Thank you for your time and in advance for responding to this email so I know you care enough about your constituents to do so.

Sincerely, Jacqueline Benoit

Shirlyn Donovan

From: info
Sent: Thursday, May 19, 2022 11:32 AM
To: info
Subject: FW: [EXTERNAL] Consolidation

Shirlyn Donovan

Strategic Initiatives Coordinator
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
285 Beech Hill Road
Antigonish, NS B2G 0B4
902-863-1117



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www.twitter.com/antigonishco

Honour Yesterday, Act Today, Inspire Tomorrow

From: Clarence Deyoung <
Sent: Monday, May 2, 2022 10:52 AM
To: mayor@townofantigonish.ca; Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Cc: Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Consolidation

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Good Morning Mayor Laurie and Warden Owen;

All my life, I have had no interest in Municipal or any other kind of politics, so I have been very thankful for people like you folks, along with your other elected officials, like your councillors. My interest lie elsewhere.

Since Mary Ann and I relocated back to the area almost 12 years ago, I have seen and heard, how well the Town and the Municipality of the County of Antigonish, separate identities, have come together and successfully completed many projects.

While Mary Ann and I were away from the community for 40 years, we kept in touch with family and friends along with an annual subscription to the Casket. We were often reminded that Town and County Councils did not always enjoy the relationship that exist today.

With this in mind, why would 2 separate councils who work so well together, suggest that they consolidate, if it wasn't a good thing for both Town and County.

1. People will continue to pay for services they receive just like they do today.(not like the rumor mill is indicating)

2. If taxes are to increase, they are going to increase, consolidation or not.(not like the fake news is out in the community, that taxes are going to increase due to consolidation)
3. Consolidation or not, constituents should not blame Town or County Councils if their councillor is not doing his/her job. Just like now, they will get a chance to do something about that at election time.

One of the most difficult things we all have to deal with in life is that we cannot predict the future. At some point, the future will affect every part of our lives.

If Town and County stay as they are, we will never know, what we missed/gained by not consolidating and if we consolidate we will never know what we missed or would have gained by not consolidating, but we have often heard, there is strength in numbers.

Sorry to ramble on but I am going with the facts that I know;

1. You two would not intentionally mis guide your councils.
2. You have done your homework by speaking to other areas who have done this.
3. You see opportunities for both Town and County

All you have to do now is try and control some of the mis-- information that is being spread out in our communities. Here is some of the things I am hearing which i suspect you have heard as well:

1. Councilors in new identity will be getting a raise
2. Laurie is not running again so Owen will get the big job
3. Consolidation is being pushed through too fast
4. There will be no benefit to my community
5. People will lose their jobs
6. Town is financially broke
7. Process is undemocratic
8. Why can't we have a plebisite
9. Individual cultures will lose their identity

Good Luck--you have my vote.

Clarence

P S Owen, I have copied the best councillor on County Council, Hope it doesn't go to his head. LOL

Shirlyn Donovan

From: info
Sent: Thursday, May 19, 2022 11:35 AM
To: info
Subject: FW: [EXTERNAL] Reply to request for plebiscite vote

Shirlyn Donovan
Strategic Initiatives Coordinator
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
285 Beech Hill Road
Antigonish, NS B2G 0B4
902-863-1117

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www.twitter.com/antigonishco

Honour Yesterday, Act Today, Inspire Tomorrow

-----Original Message-----

From: Maureen Bowman < >
Sent: Sunday, May 1, 2022 11:21 AM
To: mayor@townofantigonish.ca
Cc: Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Willie Cormier <wcormier@townofantigonish.ca>; Donnie MacInnis <dmacinnis@townofantigonish.ca>; Sean Cameron <scameron@townofantigonish.ca>; Andrew Murray <amurray@townofantigonish.ca>; Mary Farrell <mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca>; Diane Roberts <droberts@townofantigonish.ca>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Reply to request for plebiscite vote

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Thank you Mayor Laurie Boucher for replying to our request for a plebiscite vote.
You asked if we had any concerns regarding consolidation, and yes we do have questions.

First and foremost our main concern is what we will gain/lose as a community, as an identity?
Will we have a voice after consolidation or will our councillor be so overwhelmed by the number of constituent concerns due to the fact that the area they will be covering will become larger, as we get the feel that the districts will be larger therefore not requiring as many councillors perhaps? Correct me if I'm wrong.

How much will it cost us personally if consolidation is approved; Fire services, protective services and taxes.

What would be some of the benefits we might expect to see in our communities?

We are under the assumption that it will be too late to voice concerns regarding the plans that will be set in motion once approval for consolidation is voted in by council. Plans that we know nothing about.

Yes we have read the information on the website, however we find the information to be very vague. There are no specifics regarding the pros and cons to consolidation, therefore this raises a red flag as to what if any underlying issues could be in the minds of the people who would be voting for us.

I'm sure you can understand if we feel a bit skittish about all of this. We are expected to put our trust and faith in the few who are making the decisions of what is best for us.

Give us some reasons to trust.

Respectfully yours,

Charles and Maureen Bowman

District 8

Sent from my iPad

Shirlyn Donovan

From: info
Sent: Thursday, May 19, 2022 11:42 AM
To: info
Subject: FW: [EXTERNAL] Meeting Wednesday 27 April /22 from 7:00 to 9: 00, Tracadie

Shirlyn Donovan

Strategic Initiatives Coordinator
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
285 Beech Hill Road
Antigonish, NS B2G 0B4
902-863-1117



www.antigonishcounty.ns.ca
www.twitter.com/antigonishco

Honour Yesterday, Act Today, Inspire Tomorrow

From: Anne-Marie Long < >
Sent: Tuesday, April 26, 2022 1:11 PM
To: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Donnie MacDonald <dmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; mayor@townofantigonish.ca; Willie Cormier <wcormier@townofantigonish.ca>; Donnie MacInnis <dmacinnis@townofantigonish.ca>; Sean Cameron <scameron@townofantigonish.ca>; Andrew Murray <amurray@townofantigonish.ca>; Mary Farrell <mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca>; Diane Roberts <droberts@townofantigonish.ca>
Cc: decosteshirley
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Meeting wednesday 27 April /22 from 7:00 to 9: 00, Tracadie

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Good day everyone.

I have been asked by the coordinator of our meeting for District 8, Shirley DeCoste, to invite all Councillors from the town and county to our meeting at our parish hall in Tracadie, adjacent to St Peters church, tomorrow evening. This is a Q&A session on what is known about the proposed consolidation.

I understand that our Warden was previously invited and is unable to attend due to illness.

The consultants were apparently invited by our councillor and have declined.

I will be chairing the meeting and I do hope that those who are able to come will do so, if only to witness the questions being asked, and to observe that people want answers. Hopefully, all will observe that open forum meetings are not the disasters that some portray them to be.

Masks, sanitizers, and spacing will be accommodated.

I apologize for the late invitation!

Anne Marie Long

Shirlyn Donovan

From: info
Sent: Thursday, May 19, 2022 11:43 AM
To: info
Subject: FW: [EXTERNAL] Merger

Shirlyn Donovan

Strategic Initiatives Coordinator
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
285 Beech Hill Road
Antigonish, NS B2G 0B4
902-863-1117



www.antigonishcounty.ns.ca
www.twitter.com/antigonishco

Honour Yesterday, Act Today, Inspire Tomorrow

From: Kaitlin Knox <
Sent: Tuesday, April 26, 2022 12:42 PM
To: mayor@townofantigonish.ca
Cc: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Re: [EXTERNAL] Merger

Hi Laurie,

Thank you for the detailed answers to my questions. Correct me if I have misunderstood, but after reading over your email a few times, it seems to me that the main reason for the merger is so that the councils can obtain more government funding. It also seems that one of the main focuses for both councils has been to increase spending on recreational facilities (skate park, dog park, Keppoch, baseball fields, special Olympics). You mentioned that you currently have the revenues to cover your budgets now, so why would you require the increased government funds that you say could be more easily obtained by joining councils and applying as one? Currently it seems that the county is doing an excellent job maintaining and meeting the needs of multiple rural communities "such as Arisag, Cape George and Tracadie and others, as well as meeting the needs of the more urban areas like Mt Cameron, Annie's Bluff etc.". One of my concerns is, a merger with the town will take away some of the focus and perhaps funding to these communities in favor of the town.

You assume that the creation of the parks in town and around the county help improve the quality of life for my family. What really concerns me and my family is the ability to run our business and make ends meet. We are concerned about tax rates, county road conditions, job creation through private sector jobs and industry-friendly environments that allow businesses to thrive here. We want to see governments supporting the

growth of primary industries such as farming, forestry, and oil/gas. After all it is our tax dollars that pay the salaries of everyone in your office.

When you answered my question about tax caps you said "There is no evidence that consolidating to one municipal unit will *substantially* affect taxes in both the town and county." Which leads me to believe that there *could* be a tax change if the province deems that there should be due to a merger. For example, the province could decide after the merger, that the greater area of St. Andrews could be considered the suburbs of the town of Antigonish and start taxing residents accordingly.

I was not overly satisfied with your answer about farming as there was no assurance provided that an amalgamation would not affect livestock owners in the county. According to some articles out of Queens and Annapolis counties, their municipal zoning bylaws override the provincial right to farm legislation. Both you and Owen have told me that provincial legislation overrides municipal bylaws, but that does not seem to be the case in other municipalities in the province. Queens has also done a merger previously, which is more reason to add to my concern. See these articles;

<https://www.saltwire.com/atlantic-canada/federal-election/chicken-changes-coming-to-queens-91457/>

https://scontent-lga3-1.xx.fbcdn.net/v/t39.30808-6/277667509_1584536508582569_3138164702433579000_n.jpg?nc_cat=109&ccb=1-5&nc_sid=5cd70e&nc_ohc=litdxKNHdbwAX9V26cF&nc_ht=scontent-lga3-1.xx&oh=00AT-1tY2IjnQoaWZHXh2YjuD9VaaXAIIKoCjor0IGgztnPg&oe=626C34D6

You wrote that all council members voted to explore the option of the merger but you won't ask residents to vote because plebiscites are costly and divisive. Perhaps the reason they are so divisive is because most residents do not want their councils merging because they believe it is not in the best interest of the residents, especially in the county. How can you assure a few residents on a back county road that funding to help maintain their road will not be reallocated to fix main street again in the event of another flood? We know historically that funding is allocated to those areas with the most people (town), and the voices of a few individuals living in rural areas are often overlooked, this will be especially true in the event of a merger.

I am sure you are aware that there seems to be a fairly significant pushback against this merger. There are signs on the highway demanding a plebiscite, there are published opinion articles criticizing how it's being handled by the councils, angry posts all over Facebook and Facebook groups gaining traction in favor of a plebiscite. To ignore the demands of the residents would reflect poorly on both councils.

Best Regards,

Kaitlin Knox, MSc.

Winterwind Kigers

Carrondale Cattle Company Inc.
Nova Scotia, Canada



From: Town of Antigonish Mayor <mayor@townofantigonish.ca>
Sent: April 25, 2022 10:20 AM
To: Kaitlin Knox <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca
Subject: Re: [EXTERNAL] Merger

Hello Kaitlin and thank you for email. I understand your concerns about how consolidation may or may not affect your business. I've answered your questions below but first let me explain how we got to where we are now.

In September both councils voted to explore the possibility of consolidating to one unit.

- We started with having joint council meet with Municipal Affairs to see when a consolidated municipality would stand in the province. All council member had an opportunity to ask questions
- We then met with Queens/Liverpool, a municipality that had consolidated 25 years ago. We believe their experience would give all council insight into the result of consolidation in their community. We asked questions about their successes, has consolidation changed their community for the better, as well as what would they do differently.
- We then met with the newly formed municipality of Windsor/West Hants. Although they are just two years past consolidation we believed talking with them with a more recent event would be helpful to all council members as well.
- The next steps we're developing our guiding principles as well as the forum of the consultations going forward. We reached **unanimous consensus, not one councillor objected to the format**, on both the guiding principles and the consultation process.

We, as joint council have done our research and now we are meeting with the public to share our findings and listen to the concerns of the citizens.

1. First of all, what is in it for the county?

The reasoning behind exploring consolidation is not what's good for the county and what's good for the town. Over the past number of years we worked hard as two separate units to remember to think of what's good for the community. This is the mindset that helped both councils

- Bring a skatepark to the community that has been attempted for the past 25 years
- Complete The Sandlot (challenger baseball field)
- Dog park
- The growth of Keppoch as a four season recreation destination
- Bring the National Special Olympic Games to Antigonish
- Host multiple regional and provincial Special Olympic Games
- And more...

All of these accomplishments create a better quality of life for all residents. We know we have a stronger voice with both the provincial and the federal government if we come to the table as one. We sometimes compete for the same monies from other levels of government resulting being turned down because they couldn't give to both the town and county. The provincial and federal governments want to invest in an area that they know will be successful and we are exploring to see if we can be that area.

Both councils and staff work well together right now but this is not guaranteed for the future. Even though we are on the same page in many instances, time and resources are being used by both municipalities.

Exploring consolidation is to see if becoming one unit would better serve the residents and businesses as well as growing the community so that families like yours and mine can thrive.

1. Why aren't residents being told the details on how this merger will affect our government spending?

The two councils have been telling the details in a variety of formats.

- we are hosting 18 Consultation Sessions throughout the town and county at various times to make it accessible for all. Residents can attend any one of the sessions because the information is not unique to the area.
- The website antigonish.ca talks about what we've found during our exploration of consolidation. On the website there is places for comments as well as a survey.
- Understanding that not everyone feels comfortable on a computer or coming to the sessions in person, we've also set up a phone line dedicated to the process. Anyone can leave their concerns and comments and it will all be recorded.

1. Why aren't residents getting a vote?

Both councils unanimously agreed to the consultation and communication process at a joint council meeting, this included a council vote.

- Plebiscites are not the only way to engage the community. In fact, plebiscites are notorious for low turnouts so it is not always a true indication of the community's concerns.
- Plebiscites can be very expensive. The last plebiscite cost the town and county close to 1 million dollars.
- Plebiscites can be devious. We don't have to look further than our neighbours to the west of Antigonish, Pictou County, as well as the last time Antigonish held a plebiscite. I know I was given wrong information on a number of issues that determined my vote. We have already corrected a multitude of misinformation, for example the idea of taxes rising due to consolidation, county residents paying for town sidewalks, and to top it off...the rumour of the county putting in a new sewer treatment plant in Williams Point. We know that false information travels three to four times faster on social media than correct information.
- Engaging people, encouraging citizens to discuss issues and bring up their concerns is an effective way to gather information from the public.

1. Will this merger cause an increase in the commercial and residential tax rates for those of us living in the county?

There is no evidence that consolidating to one municipal unit will substantially affect taxes in both the town and county. Although we can not predict the future, and this is true even if council decides to remain separate, we can forecast the future based on data from the past. Using data from other municipalities that have consolidated, there is no evidence that taxes would increase. If you think about it, both town and county are in good financial standing. We have the revenues to cover our budgets now.

1. Currently the county has a cap on these tax rates that is lower than the cap in town.

The Capped Assessment Program (CAP) is legislated by the province for all municipalities, therefore, nothing will change.

1. How can you assure those of us with livestock in the county that our right to farm will not be changed with the ever-increasing urban sprawl happening in the province?

By urban sprawl, I assume, you are talking about growth. There is much research that indicates that sprawl is not the result of government policies or bad urban planning, but rather the ability of people to move further from town or city centres to live. We see growth in the fringe area of the county limits now. For example, Annie's Bluff, Mt Cameron, and Townsend (over by SAJS). We even see growth out the #7 and along The highway towards Lower Southriver, all of these areas receive the same municipal services as town and these areas are considered urban. I could not find any research that would support the two municipalities being one unit will expedite this growth.

Urban sprawl in bigger cities occur when services move out to the more rural areas. For example if Arisag or Harvre Boucher was to suddenly see an increase in population and we would see a Superstore or Walmart come to those areas. This would create another urban area. We still have people travelling to New Glasgow, Moncton and Halifax to shop.

The growth we are experiencing now is a natural growth due to both municipalities having very good financial indicators, therefore we are able to offer more services which makes the community more attractive for businesses, families and tourists.

1. We are seeing more and more bylaws being implemented in municipalities around the province that are prohibiting individuals from even owning laying hens and dictating how many livestock they can have per acre.

I will address questions 7, 8, and 9 together.

IF both councils vote to consolidate it is not that the town would be taking over the county or the county taking over the town, it would be one unit that would meet the needs of all residents. The county already does this by meeting the needs of the more rural areas, such as Arisag, Cape George and Tracadie and others, as well as meeting the needs of the more urban areas like Mt Cameron, Annie's Bluff etc.

Urban planning and rural planning are different and are required to meet the needs of the areas. IF we consolidate, we can't assume the county would allow someone to take down three or four houses and erect a farm on Main St. The same is true for the county, it would not make sense to enforce urban bylaws in rural areas, it just wouldn't work.

Our community is doing well because we have such a diverse workforce. It would be shortsighted to not see the importance of farming to the local economy, whether you reside in town or county. If consolidation goes ahead the motivation would be to improve our community and make it stronger for many generations to come. Farming has been in Antigonish for generations and is well rooted in our DNA it is part of who we are.

1. If the town and county merge, what is stopping the town from dictating similar requirements to the farmers?

1. What is stopping the town from telling the farmers when they can and cannot spread manure (convocation weekend for example)?

1. What is stopping the town from refusing to issue building permits for livestock barns, feedlots, etc. if they deem those structures too close to housing developments?

1. The NS Right to Farm legislation is only good until enough people vote to remove it, or municipal zoning bylaws override it.

The NS Right to Farm is legislated by the province. Provincial legislation overrides municipal bylaws.

I hope this helps answer some of your questions Kaitlin. If you need more answers please do not hesitate to share your concerns. You can contact Lise Roy at lroy@townofantigonish.ca to set up a meeting. I look forward to speaking to you in person at a consultation session new you.

Best,

Laurie

Mayor Laurie Boucher
Town of Antigonish
274 Main St, Antigonish, N.S
B2G 2C4
mayor@townofantigonish.ca | 902•870•7795

From: Kaitlin Knox < >
Sent: Saturday, April 23, 2022 6:43:55 PM
To: omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Town of Antigonish Mayor

<mayor@townofantigonish.ca>

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Merger

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hi Owen and Laurie,

As a resident of the county and agriculture business owner, I have a couple questions about the proposed town and county merger.

First of all, what is in it for the county? Why aren't residents being told the details on how this merger will affect our government spending? Why aren't residents getting a vote?

Second, will this merger cause an increase in the commercial and residential tax rates for those of us living in the county? Currently the county has a cap on these tax rates that is lower than the cap in town.

Third, how can you assure those of us with livestock in the county that our right to farm will not be changed with the ever-increasing urban sprawl happening in the province? We are seeing more and more bylaws being implemented in municipalities around the province that are prohibiting individuals from even owning laying hens and dictating how many livestock they can have per acre. If the town and county merge, what is stopping the town from dictating similar requirements to the farmers? What is stopping the town from telling the farmers when they can and cannot spread manure (convocation weekend for example)? What is stopping the town from refusing to issue building permits for livestock barns, feedlots, etc. if they deem those structures too close to housing developments? The NS Right to Farm legislation is only good until enough people vote to remove it, or municipal zoning bylaws override it.

Thank you for your time.

Best Regards,

Kaitlin Knox, MSc.

Winterwind Kigers

Carrondale Cattle Company Inc.

Nova Scotia, Canada



| www.WinterwindKigers.com

Carrondale Cattle Company Inc.

Shirlyn Donovan

From: info
Sent: Thursday, May 19, 2022 11:43 AM
To: info
Subject: FW: [EXTERNAL] Re: FW: Meeting Wednesday 27 April /22 from 7:00 to 9: 00, Tracadie
Attachments: image001.jpg

Shirlyn Donovan

Strategic Initiatives Coordinator
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
285 Beech Hill Road
Antigonish, NS B2G 0B4
902-863-1117



www.antigonishcounty.ns.ca



www.twitter.com/antigonishco

Honour Yesterday, Act Today, Inspire Tomorrow

From: Anne-Marie Long <>
Sent: Tuesday, April 26, 2022 3:07 PM
To: Glenn Horne <glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Cc: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; mayor@townofantigonish.ca; Willie Cormier <wcormier@townofantigonish.ca>; Sean Cameron <scameron@townofantigonish.ca>; Andrew Murray <amurray@townofantigonish.ca>; Mary Farrell <mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca>; Diane Roberts <droberts@townofantigonish.ca>; decosteshirley
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Re: FW: Meeting Wednesday 27 April /22 from 7:00 to 9: 00, Tracadie

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

I appreciate the notification, Glenn.

Anne-Marie

On Tue., Apr. 26, 2022, 3:02 p.m. Glenn Horne, <glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca> wrote:

Good afternoon, Mrs. Long –

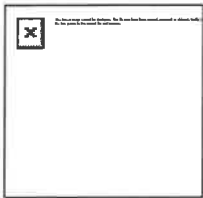
As you are likely aware, some members of both Town and County Council have tested positive for COVID-19. As a result, all the Community Engagement Sessions scheduled from Monday, April 25 to Thursday, April 28 are being rescheduled to later dates.

With these sessions being rescheduled, it provided us an opportunity to respond to comments received during the first week of in-community engagement, seeking another online session. We have scheduled another one for this same night, Wednesday, April 27 at 7:30pm. All councillors have also been invited to that session.

If you or anyone planning to attend the session in Tracadie would like to participate in the online session please register here: https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_4JbE4Zc3ST2iFj3oKyrndA. Participants will have an opportunity to ask questions during the online forum.

Thanks!

Glenn



Glenn Horne | Chief Administrative Officer

Municipality of the County of Antigonish | 902.863.1117

285 Beech Hill Road, Beech Hill, NS | B2G 0B4

www.antigonishcounty.ns.ca | [@AntigonishCo](https://www.facebook.com/AntigonishCo) | [facebook](#)

Honour Yesterday, Act Today, Inspire Tomorrow

From: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>

Sent: April 26, 2022 1:47 PM

To: Glenn Horne <glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>

Subject: Fwd: Meeting Wednesday 27 April /22 from 7:00 to 9: 00, Tracadie

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Anne-Marie Long <[redacted]>
Date: April 26, 2022 at 1:11:39 PM ADT
To: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, mayor@townofantigonish.ca, wormier@townofantigonish.ca, dmacinnis@townofantigonish.ca, Sean Cameron <scameron@townofantigonish.ca>, Andrew Murray <amurray@townofantigonish.ca>, mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca, droboters@townofantigonish.ca
Cc: decosteshirley
Subject: Meeting Wednesday 27 April /22 from 7:00 to 9: 00, Tracadie

Good day everyone.

I have been asked by the coordinator of our meeting for District 8, Shirley DeCoste, to invite all Councillors from the town and county to our meeting at our parish hall in Tracadie, adjacent to St Peters church, tomorrow evening.

This is a Q&A session on what is known about the proposed consolidation.

I understand that our Warden was previously invited and is unable to attend due to illness.

The consultants were apparently invited by our councillor and have declined.

I will be chairing the meeting and I do hope that those who are able to come will do so, if only to witness the questions being asked, and to observe that people want answers. Hopefully, all will observe that open forum meetings are not the disasters that some portray them to be.

Masks, sanitizers, and spacing will be accommodated.

I apologize for the late invitation!

Shirlyn Donovan

From: info
Sent: Thursday, May 19, 2022 11:44 AM
To: info
Subject: FW: [EXTERNAL] Proposed Consolidation of Antigonish Town & County

Shirlyn Donovan

Strategic Initiatives Coordinator
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
285 Beech Hill Road
Antigonish, NS B2G 0B4
902-863-1117



www.antigonishcounty.ns.ca

www.twitter.com/antigonishco

Honour Yesterday, Act Today, Inspire Tomorrow

From: Anne-Marie Long <>
Sent: Sunday, April 24, 2022 10:40 PM
To: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; mmacllan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca; Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; mayor@townofantigonish.ca; Willie Cormier <wcormier@townofantigonish.ca>; Donnie MacInnis <dmacinnis@townofantigonish.ca>; Sean Cameron <scameron@townofantigonish.ca>; Andrew Murray <amurray@townofantigonish.ca>; Mary Farrell <mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca>; Diane Roberts <droboterts@townofantigonish.ca>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Proposed Consolidation of Antigonish Town & County

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Warden, Mayor and Councillors:

This is my formal request that both town and county Councils reconsider the process taking place for the proposed consolidation of both municipalities; and ,after providing timely and relevant information to all the taxpayers, that you hold a plebiscite vote under S.53 of the Municipal Government Act of NS on this issue.

I must convey my absolute disappointment in the process chosen to date. I have had the utmost respect for both our current Warden and Mayor and most of the councillors who have served over the past years. I've been truly content and pleased with the degree of cooperation between the town and county Councils under Owen and Laurie. Actually, I believe that during my time since I returned to NS in 1994, Owen, you have been the best Warden the county

has had. I also dare to say that until these past few weeks, both our Warden and the Mayor enjoyed good public reputations that were respectively well earned.

I've been retired since early 2009 and prior to that I was an executive manager and a professional accountant for many years. And before that, I was president of a union with 4000 members. I have a good understanding of people and behaviours. I also understand government operations and the desire and need for change. I have worked with consultants who gave advice; however, they did not drive the change and we, the executives, made the decisions.

By now you must know that the dissatisfaction and disappointment in the process towards consolidation, being expressed by many, is due to the methodology being used and failure to propose a plebiscite. Since yesterday, after information was distributed at the Farmer's Market, over 400 people have joined a Facebook page looking for a plebiscite.

It seems that the consultants, with the support of Municipal Affairs and their financial contribution, have given one way to get this done and you've totally accepted that advice. The website and open forum meetings should have been used to provide information on the determined advantages and disadvantages of a merger. That should have happened prior to a plebiscite vote to enable people to become informed and to observe what is in it for them. Yes, you've scheduled meetings across both municipalities; however, they are totally controlled in this kiosk style manner. Anyone in a leadership role should know that many people will not go to a microphone and ask questions; yet, by attending an open forum meeting where there is perhaps an informed speaker and a Q&A session, people can hear the questions and answers that provide much information to the uninformed.

Make no mistake in presuming I was against a merger. I fully supported the exploration of a merger of the town and county. What has me hitting the Internet, websites and writing letters and posts is the apparent sudden rush to have this decided before, or early in, the summer; also, because I consider this process to be an abuse of power and an absolute failure to trust, that if you have given out sufficient information to enable people to make the decision, the ones who do vote will know that they have your respect.

While I believe that there has been a major error in judgement in the way this process has been handled, I believe that there is time for "redemption". With the delay in sessions due to unfortunate illnesses, it is possible to restructure the remaining meetings to be "open forum" style, with yourselves and the consultants answering questions. And you should offer a plebiscite. Quite frankly an apology for the process to date would also go a long way to getting people onside to listen.

My biggest concern is actually what happens if you continue with this process and get only a council approved vote to continue with the consolidation. The fact is that, after a consolidation decision, we will need a strong, experienced person as mayor and we will need some solid, experienced councillors to help the mayor. If you continue destroying the trust, that you've earned by your past work, we may end up with someone as mayor who is unskilled yet untainted, simply due to taxpayer frustration with the council members who voted for consolidation. *(Dare I say, remember how Donald Trump got elected.)* Solid leaders should also know that many people react emotionally and when faced with a stumbling block, such as feeling robbed of a vote in this decision, they are unable to separate the past good from the one current issue. That's reality and when it happens we all lose.

Respectfully,
Anne Marie Long
Tracadie

Shirlyn Donovan

From: info
Sent: Thursday, May 19, 2022 11:45 AM
To: info
Subject: FW: [EXTERNAL] Merger

Shirlyn Donovan

Strategic Initiatives Coordinator
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
285 Beech Hill Road
Antigonish, NS B2G 0B4
902-863-1117



www.antigonishcounty.ns.ca
www.twitter.com/antigonishco

Honour Yesterday, Act Today, Inspire Tomorrow

From: Kaitlin Knox <
Sent: Saturday, April 23, 2022 1:44 PM
To: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; mayor@townofantigonish.ca
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Merger

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hi Owen and Laurie,

As a resident of the county and agriculture business owner, I have a couple questions about the proposed town and county merger.

First of all, what is in it for the county? Why aren't residents being told the details on how this merger will affect our government spending? Why aren't residents getting a vote?

Second, will this merger cause an increase in the commercial and residential tax rates for those of us living in the county? Currently the county has a cap on these tax rates that is lower than the cap in town.

Third, how can you assure those of us with livestock in the county that our right to farm will not be changed with the ever-increasing urban sprawl happening in the province? We are seeing more and more bylaws being implemented in municipalities around the province that are prohibiting individuals from even owning laying hens and dictating how many livestock they can have per acre. If the town and county merge, what is stopping the town from dictating similar requirements to the farmers? What is stopping the town from telling the farmers when they can and cannot spread manure (convocation weekend for example)? What is stopping the

town from refusing to issue building permits for livestock barns, feedlots, etc. if they deem those structures too close to housing developments? The NS Right to Farm legislation is only good until enough people vote to remove it, or municipal zoning bylaws override it.

Thank you for your time.

Best Regards,

Kaitlin Knox, MSc.

Winterwind Kigers

Carrondale Cattle Company Inc.

Nova Scotia, Canada

 | www.WinterwindKigers.com



Shirlyn Donovan

From: info
Sent: Thursday, May 19, 2022 11:53 AM
To: info
Subject: FW: [EXTERNAL] Consolidation
Attachments: Consolidation.docx

Shirlyn Donovan

Strategic Initiatives Coordinator
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
285 Beech Hill Road
Antigonish, NS B2G 0B4
902-863-1117



www.antigonishcounty.ns.ca



www.twitter.com/antigonishco

Honour Yesterday, Act Today, Inspire Tomorrow

From: Joyce Smith
Sent: Tuesday, May 10, 2022 3:13 PM
To: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; mayor@townofantigonish.ca
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Consolidation

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Good afternoon,

Please find attached letter.

Thanks for your time,
Joyce Smith

Beth Schumacher

From: Glenn Horne
Sent: May 19, 2022 1:01 PM
To: Owen McCarron; Hughie Stewart; mayor@townofantigonish.ca; Willie Cormier; Jeff Lawrence; Chrystal Fuller
Cc: Shirlyn Donovan; kgorman@townofantigonish.ca; Brian Smith; Alisha Bowie
Subject: Consolidation Steering Committee Meeting

Good afternoon, folks –

Please note we will not be holding our weekly Steering Committee meeting on Tuesday morning. Rather, we would like to schedule a meeting of the Steering Committee to meet with Chrystal and debrief the engagement efforts of the past 6 weeks, as well as next steps.

Please let me know which of the following options works best for you:

- Thursday, May 26 at 2pm
- Friday, May 27 at 10am
- Monday, May 30 at 2pm
- Tuesday, May 31 at 8am

This meeting will likely be about 2 hours long.

Cheers,
Glenn



Glenn Horne | Chief Administrative Officer
Municipality of the County of Antigonish | 902.863.1117
285 Beech Hill Road, Beech Hill, NS | B2G 0B4
www.antigonishcounty.ns.ca | [@AntigonishCo](https://www.facebook.com/AntigonishCo) | [facebook](https://www.facebook.com/AntigonishCo)

Honour Yesterday, Act Today, Inspire Tomorrow

Harris McNamara

From: marciemacq
Sent: May 19, 2022 1:15 PM
To: Owen McCarron
Cc: Mary MacLellan; Donnie MacDonald; Hughie Stewart; Shawn Brophy; Remi Deveau; John Dunbar; Gary Mattie; Harris McNamara; Bill MacFarlane
Subject: FW: Owen and council
Attachments: Owen and council.docx

Owen;

As promised.

Regards,

Marcie

Beth Schumacher

From: Glenn Horne
Sent: May 19, 2022 1:36 PM
To: Owen McCarron
Cc: Shirlyn Donovan
Subject: RE: CBC question on merger process

Thanks!

From: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Sent: May 19, 2022 1:36 PM
To: Glenn Horne <glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Fwd: CBC question on merger process

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Jon Tattrie <____@____>
Date: May 19, 2022 at 10:35:14 AM ADT
To: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Re: CBC question on merger process

Thanks Owen. Just researching it now, so not sure when the story will come out, but I'll stay in touch.

On Thu, 19 May 2022 at 10:28, Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca> wrote:

Hi Jon,

Our discussions with Councils and the Department of Municipal Affairs have been around a consolidation process, which is outside the Municipal Government Act. If Councils were to vote in favour of consolidation I expect the process would be similar to the process used to consolidate the District of West Hants and the Town of Windsor, reflected in the Region of Windsor and West Hants Municipality Act.

Jon, would you mind letting us know when the story will come out. Thanks
Owen

Sent from my iPhone

On May 19, 2022, at 10:13 AM, Jon Tattrie <____@____> wrote:

Hi Owen and Glenn,

Just following up on my question from yesterday. For the proposed merger, do you intend to go through the Municipal Government Act, or some other process?

Thanks!

Jon

On Wed, 18 May 2022 at 11:23, Jon Tattrie < > wrote:

Hi Owen,

When we spoke before about the proposed merger of Antigonish town and county, you said if both councils vote in favour of it, they would then approach the province for permission to create a new municipality.

Do you intend to do that through the Municipal Government Act, or through some other process?

Thanks!

Jon Tattrie
CBC News

Beth Schumacher

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: May 19, 2022 1:36 PM
To: Glenn Horne
Subject: Fwd: CBC question on merger process

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Jon Tattrie ·
Date: May 19, 2022 at 10:35:14 AM ADT
To: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Re: CBC question on merger process

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Owen

Sent from my iPhone

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Thanks!

Jon

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Do you intend to do that through the Municipal Government Act, or through some other process?

Thanks!

Jon Tattrie
CBC News

Beth Schumacher

From: Willie Cormier <wcormier@townofantigonish.ca>
Sent: May 19, 2022 1:56 PM
To: Glenn Horne
Cc: Owen McCarron; Hughie Stewart; mayor@townofantigonish.ca; Jeff Lawrence; Chrystal Fuller; Shirlyn Donovan; Kate Gorman; Brian Smith; Alisha Bowie
Subject: Re: [EXTERNAL] Consolidation Steering Committee Meeting

All dates and times work for me.

WC

Sent from my iPhone

On May 19, 2022, at 1:00 PM, Glenn Horne <glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca> wrote:

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Good afternoon, folks –

Please note we will not be holding our weekly Steering Committee meeting on Tuesday morning. Rather, we would like to schedule a meeting of the Steering Committee to meet with Chrystal and debrief the engagement efforts of the past 6 weeks, as well as next steps.

Please let me know which of the following options works best for you:

- Thursday, May 26 at 2pm
- Friday, May 27 at 10am
- Monday, May 30 at 2pm
- Tuesday, May 31 at 8am

This meeting will likely be about 2 hours long.

Cheers,
Glenn



Glenn Horne | Chief Administrative Officer
Municipality of the County of Antigonish | 902.863.1117
285 Beech Hill Road, Beech Hill, NS | B2G 0B4
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Honour Yesterday, Act Today, Inspire Tomorrow

Beth Schumacher

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: May 19, 2022 2:44 PM
To: Willie Cormier
Cc: Glenn Horne; Hughie Stewart; mayor@townofantigonish.ca; Jeff Lawrence; Chrystal Fuller; Shirlyn Donovan; Kate Gorman; Brian Smith; Alisha Bowie
Subject: Re: [EXTERNAL] Consolidation Steering Committee Meeting

Any of those dates work for me. Thanks
Owen

Sent from my iPhone

On May 19, 2022, at 1:55 PM, Willie Cormier <wcormier@townofantigonish.ca> wrote:

All dates and times work for me.

WC

Sent from my iPhone

On May 19, 2022, at 1:00 PM, Glenn Horne <glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca> wrote:

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Glenn Horne | Chief Administrative Officer
Municipality of the County of Antigonish | 902.863.1117
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Honour Yesterday, Act Today, Inspire Tomorrow

Harris McNamara

From: Bill MacFarlane
Sent: May 19, 2022 7:58 PM
To: marciemacq; Owen McCarron
Cc: Mary MacLellan; Donnie MacDonald; Hughie Stewart; Shawn Brophy; Remi Deveau; John Dunbar; Gary Mattie; Harris McNamara
Subject: RE: Owen and council

Hey Marcie,
Thanks for the email. I have always considered criticism to be a great teacher.
Cheers,
Bill

From: marciemacq <marciemacq@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Sent: May 19, 2022 1:15 PM
To: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Cc: Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: FW: Owen and council

Owen;

As promised.

Regards,

Marcie

Harris McNamara

From: Gary Mattie
Sent: May 19, 2022 9:10 PM
To: marciemacq
Cc: Owen McCarron; Mary MacLellan; Donnie MacDonald; Hughie Stewart; Shawn Brophy; Remi Deveau; John Dunbar; Harris McNamara; Bill MacFarlane
Subject: Re: Owen and council
Attachments: Owen and council.docx

Thank you Marcie for Your email and your concerns. Gary

Sent from my iPad

On May 19, 2022, at 1:15 PM, marciemacq wrote:

Owen;

As promised.

Regards,

Marcie

Beth Schumacher

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: May 19, 2022 9:17 PM
To: Glenn Horne
Subject: Fwd: Owen and council
Attachments: Owen and council.docx

FYI

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: marciemacq
Date: May 19, 2022 at 1:15:39 PM ADT
To: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Cc: Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
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In theory, I support one municipal unit but not until all the relevant facts are on the table, so all constituents are able to make an informed decision. My father supported amalgamation but always prefaced his remarks with, "I am only one vote. The citizens of the County will decide."

I know you put in many long hours planning for consolidation and you want to do the right thing for constituents. From the outside looking in I disagree with the process, in particular the lack of relevant information. I believe this has led to considerable confusion, a mistrust of both councils and negative feedback that would result in a resounding NO to consolidation. However, its not too late to change direction. I believe that constituents will vote for consolidation with the confidence council has answered all concerns in a forthright, transparent manner.

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I suggest you delay the process for an appropriate time, report back on the Engagement Sessions with answers and relevant data, do projections including a cost/benefit analysis and bring this information to the citizens of the county in additional public sessions where citizens, in an open forum can voice their opinions as well as support.

I believe a vote today for consolidation would be a loud No. However, I honestly believe that constituents, fully equipped to make an informed decision, will vote Yes to consolidation.

Regards,

Marcie Macquarrie

Resident District 1

cc: All councillors

Beth Schumacher

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: May 19, 2022 9:23 PM
To: marcie
Subject: Re: Owen and council
Attachments: Owen and council.docx

Thanks Marcie!

I can assure you that Council will reflect on the report of what we have heard and we will make sure that our constituents are kept informed all along the way. Thanks for coming out to the Pomquet session.

Regards

Owen

Sent from my iPhone

On May 19, 2022, at 12:52 PM, marciemacq wrote:

Owen;

As promised.

Regards,

Marcie

Owen;

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Regards,

Marcie Macquarrie

Resident District 1

cc: All councillors

Harris McNamara

From: John Dunbar
Sent: May 19, 2022 10:02 PM
To: marciemacq ~ Owen McCarron
Cc: Mary MacLellan; Donnie MacDonald; Hughie Stewart; Shawn Brophy; Remi Deveau; Gary Mattie; Harris McNamara; Bill MacFarlane
Subject: Re: Owen and council

Hi Marcie,

Thank you for your email. I appreciate you have given considerable thought to the issue of Consolidation. You raise a number of good points and have given Council much to reflect on, which I feel we need to do. Thanks again.

John Dunbar

From: marciemacq <marciemacq
Sent: May 19, 2022 1:15 PM
To: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Cc: Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: FW: Owen and council

Owen;

As promised.

Regards,

Marcie

Beth Schumacher

From: Aaron Beswick
Sent: May 20, 2022 8:55 AM
To: Owen McCarron
Subject: Chronicle Herald request: consolidation

Hi Warden McCarron,

Aaron here from The Chronicle Herald.
I was hoping to speak with you for an update on the consolidation discussion.

Aaron

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: May 20, 2022 2:34 PM
To: marciemacq
Subject: RE: Owen and council

Marcie;

Thank you for your comments and suggestions to correct the process, I certainly agree with you. I too am not against consolidation / amalgamation, as a councillor for the Havre Boucher / Cape Jack / Linwood / Auld's Cove area (District 9) I need information to make an informed decision. I have been asking for a cost benefit analysis on each component , you wouldn't buy a company with out doing a cost benefit analysis, why should this be any different. Certainly the financial strength of the county is strong, we have an extra million dollars in tax revenue this year just from the increased provincial assessment of property in the county. As you probably know the county gets 1% of the deed transfer tax which has doubled last year to over 800,000 dollars, the county is growing and big time and do you know we lend money to ourselves from our surplus. We need to have time and not rush into this. The municipal election is less than 2 years, lets make it an election issue, residents will by then have information to make an informed decision. Our current path is so divisive, the consultants have not helped in my opinion (and many others).

Harris
902-318-8333

From: marciemacq
Sent: May 19, 2022 1:15 PM
To: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Cc: Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: FW: Owen and council

Owen;

As promised.

Regards,

Marcie

Harris McNamara

From: Shirlyn Donovan
Sent: May 20, 2022 4:04 PM
To: Council
Cc: Kate Gorman
Subject: Exploration of Consolidation Councillor Survey

Good afternoon,

The team at Brighter Community Planning & Consulting has asked that I share this survey with you, please complete it by Friday, May 27th. This is specifically for Councillors.

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=PHsSuVc4tkqgEhx9OdL7tnBChqgbF1pCtRBIXri3sFpUQ0tQNVFTMIdeSEILRVE5QUdXODRERkhYRy4u>

Thanks,
Shirlyn

Shirlyn Donovan
Strategic Initiatives Coordinator
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
285 Beech Hill Road
Antigonish, NS B2G 0B4
902-863-1117



www.antigonishcounty.ns.ca

www.twitter.com/antigonishco

Honour Yesterday, Act Today, Inspire Tomorrow

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Thanks,
Shirlyn

Shirlyn Donovan
Strategic Initiatives Coordinator
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
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Antigonish, NS B2G 0B4
902-863-1117

 www.antigonishcounty.ns.ca
 www.twitter.com/antigonishco

Honour Yesterday, Act Today, Inspire Tomorrow

Beth Schumacher

From: The Engagement Team Exploring Potential Consolidation
<howspace@in.howspace.com>
Sent: May 20, 2022 4:06 PM
To: Owen McCarron
Subject: Weekly Update and thank you!

Hi Owen,

The last six weeks have been a busy and productive time. The engagement component of the exploration of consolidation is almost over, with more than 22 online and in person session completed. Over the course of the engagements, we heard from well over 1,350 residents and businesspeople.

We enjoyed meeting with you in person and online and are glad you shared your feedback. As we moved along, we were able to adapt the format to accommodate those who wanted group question and answer sessions while still providing opportunities to those who liked the posterboards and one-on-one conversations. We also added two additional webinars because there was so much interest.

So, what happens now? The next step is to take a few weeks to prepare the "What We Heard Report." This report will summarize ALL feedback we received – from the online and in-person engagement sessions, emails and voice messages as well as comments through the website and Howspace. Once the report is ready, it will be shared publicly for your review and comment.

For those using the Howspace portal, please note that we will close this portal effective May 27th. After that, we encourage you to continue to use Antigonish.ca to provide comments or to get additional information.

Although you may not hear from us for a few weeks, we will be busy working on the "What We Heard Report" and look forward to sharing that with you soon.

Again, thank you so much to all who participated and shared their views and perspectives. Everyone's feedback is important.

Enjoy the long weekend!

Log in to Antigonish workspace as Owen McCarron

Best regards,
The Engagement Team

Please note that this email contains your personal
<https://antigonish.in.howspace.com/1/n0324682/omccarron> access link. Don't forward this email
to anyone.

Powered by [Howspace](#)

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The Engagement Team

Please note that this email contains your personal
<https://antigonish.in.howspace.com/1/m5036109/hmcnamara> access link. Don't forward this
email to anyone.

Powered by [Howspace](#)

Shirlyn Donovan

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: Friday, May 20, 2022 10:49 PM
To: info
Subject: Fwd: Amalgamation

Warden Owen McCarron
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
902-968-1290

Begin forwarded message:

From: larrymeagher _
Date: May 20, 2022 at 5:00:09 PM ADT
To: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Amalgamation

Mr. McCarron, There are so many unanswered questions, these community sessions have failed to provide concrete benefits for the amalgamation. The people would like to see some real numbers as in benefits and cost savings for each side. I as a resident of the county personally do not believe its in the best interest of the county for amalgamation. There are so many differences between town needs and county needs that I feel will be difficult to create a fair system where each are satisfied with how money and services are distributed when amalgamated. We need some real numbers of benefits rather than just here say the both will benefit.

From what I have heard at the community sessions the councillors are trying to control the narrative of this decision. They kept reverting back to the point that this will be decided by a council vote rather than a plebiscite because all of the past town/county amalgamations were done this way. And when countys went the plebiscite route amalgamation didnt go in there favour.

Finally I believe that all the councillors town and county should receive an affidavit if they are intending to persue a position with the newly formed amalgamated position of mayor/warden. In which they should not be able to vote as they would be putting there own personal interest ahead of there constituents.

Thanks Larry Meagher



Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Business Leader's Comments

1 message

Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Sun, May 22, 2022 at 12:55 PM

To: Irobertson@

Len;

Have a look on that business leader's thoughts on Consolidation. Talk to you later.

Harris



District 1 Business Leader's thoughts.docx

18K

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4. Financial Strength – It appears to me the County is in a healthier position than the Town. The Town is landlocked where the County has unlimited land to expand commercially and residentially. The County has development momentum and an expanding tax base. This is value that needs to be included and explained to constituents how impacts us in consolidation.

5. Cost/Benefit and SWOT Analysis - Consolidation is about the future yet, in your handouts and comments you state, "future tax rates can't be predicted"; "too early to forecast"; "No control over what future councils may do". I agree you cannot predict exactly but you can plan and project. The need for a Cost/Benefit analysis and financial projections is most urgent under the circumstances. This would include defining, in all aspects, our Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats. In your literature you state "should the consolidation process proceed, the Joint Transition committee would prepare an Operating and Capital Budget." If it can be done then, it can be done now.

6. Base Tax Rate: It is my understanding from comments tax rates will not increase with the likelihood of a decrease, according to comments by some consultants. You state a Base Rate will be set with adjustments for "area tax rates." How do you propose to establish the Base Rate without increasing County residential taxes? Will the Town rate be brought down to the current County rate of \$0.88 rate or will the County rate increase to a higher number? You need to explain how the Base Rate is determined. We all recognize that the tax rate will be adjusted in various parts of the County (and Town) for additional services, but it begins with the Base Tax rate. This needs to be clearly explained.

7. RCMP Service: It has been suggested that under consolidation, the cost of protection will increase. It's been suggested the increase could be as much as \$1 to \$2 million. This needs to be addressed with a complete explanation of changes expected with projected costs.

8. The Consultants- They need to be put on the shelf and removed from the immediate process. The general consensus is that the province wants fewer municipal units, they are paying most of the cost of the consultants and that the consultants are pushing for consolidation. There is a high mistrust of their intentions/motives. They may be needed later but were brought into the process far too early. For the next round of public sessions, Council ought not include the consultants but to step back and address the immediate concerns of constituents directly. The consultants can be available and brought in if needed anytime.

9. Councillors uninformed and Disqualified: Several councillors have stated in public they were not initially part of the process, as a result not as well informed and that the process is too rushed. I understand at least two councillors (representing approximately 20% of the population) may be disqualified from voting due to a conflict of interest. This needs to be fixed and all councillors able to represent their constituents.

There are councillors who will not re-offer and other councillors who may not be voted back, especially if citizens concerns are not satisfactorily addressed. It is most important the new council, especially under consolidation, has the support of constituents. Voters and those running for council need to have a good feel for what is ahead and what will be expected of them.

In summary, too many citizens believe the process is flawed, rushed and lacking in relevant information. Too many people feel there is a hidden agenda and that a decision to consolidate has already been made. There is a deep mistrust of both councils. The concerns of constituents need to be addressed in an honest, open and forthright manner. You need to build consensus from the bottom up, not from the top down.

I suggest you delay the process for an appropriate time, report back on the Engagement Sessions with answers and relevant data, do projections including a cost/benefit analysis and bring this information to the citizens of the county in additional public sessions where citizens, in an open forum can voice their opinions as well as support.

I believe a vote today for consolidation would be a loud No. However, I honestly believe that constituents, fully equipped to make an informed decision, will vote Yes to consolidation.

Regards,

Resident District 1

cc: All councillors



Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Amalgamation - Private Member Bill

2 messages

Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Mon, May 23, 2022 at 6:58 AM

To: Anne-Marie Long <

Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>

Anne-Marie and Gary;

It has been clear that our MLA has been quiet on this issue but the evidence is that the provincial government is behind this effort. Greg as our representative could introduce a private member bill that would change the water on the beans and it would have the effect of knowing where he stands? What do you guys think? What about wording of the attached?
Harris

 Private member Bill (2).docx
13K

Anne-Marie Long <

Mon, May 23, 2022 at 2:41 PM

To: Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>, garymattie@hotmail.com

hi Guys

Great idea!

Suggestions for amendment to the attachment:

In all sentences, replace amalgamation with consolidation.

2nd sentence replace ""when it has been stated" with "although it is now being stated"

3rd sentence ... I believe that you mean "elections" as opposed to "election's" ? Also, if you are referring to both "town and county elections" you should say so.

Any Municipality considering a merger (eg. by consolidation of amalgamation) with another municipality, where both units have met the test of financial conditions indicators, and neither are at risk of failure, are required to hold a vote of constituents by way of election or plebiscite.

I'm not familiar with the phrase "financial conditions indicators" with respect to the MGA & mergers. Have I missed something? Is this phrase stated somewhere? I used the word "merger", and put the forms in brackets, just in case there are other names that may be contemplated in the future.

Cheerio, Anne Marie

[Quoted text hidden]

 Private member Bill (2).docx
13K

PROPOSED PRIVATE MEMBERS BILL

Given that the province of NS's Financial Conditions Indicators show that both municipal units are independently strong and hence require no urgent action.

Given the County does not reflect amalgamation as having strategic importance in over 4 years of strategic priority setting when it has been stated consolidation / amalgamation has been discussed for the past 7 years

Given, as stated above, consolidation / amalgamation has been discussed for the past 7 years yet municipal elections were held without a whisper of consolidation / amalgamation and then shortly after the election's, it is learned consolidation / amalgamation will be decided by those same elected officials who chose to withhold the fact consolidation / amalgamation was being considered before the election.

Given the unusual circumstances where 20 % of the electorate may not be represented in the vote on amalgamation.

We, the citizens of Antigonish County, request our provincial MLAs Greg Morrow & Michelle Thompson introduce a private member's bill with the suggested wording:

Any municipal unit considering union with another where both units have met the test of Financial Conditions Indicators and neither are at risk of failure will be required to hold a vote of constituents by way of an election or a plebiscite.



Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Confidential Watermark Removal

1 message

Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Wed, Mar 23, 2022 at 2:05 PM

To: Glenn Home <glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>

Glenn

I made a mistake with the previous email, it was March 13th , not May 13th that I originally sent the email to councillors and yourself.

Harris



Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Resident's DRAFT letter

Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>
To: Anne-Marie Long <[redacted]>

Mon, May 23, 2022 at 6:08 PM

[Quoted text hidden]

 **Amalgamation Thoughts & Observations (2).docx**
25K

Consideration of Amalgamation

1. Thoughts:

- a. It is important to me, and I believe for my community to have a strong town and equally so, I think the town needs a strong county. I appreciate the cooperation both councils have shown in working together to build a better community.
- b. I am open to exploring a different municipal structure if done in the right manner and it is viewed as more than administrative efficiencies. It is not sufficient to point to other municipalities and say it worked for them. Most unions were the result of financial constraints and different circumstances than faced here. We should define who we want to be first.
- c. I do not believe elected County officials have the electoral or the moral mandate to execute this arrangement. Some have stated councillors were elected to make decisions for residents. This is true, but they were elected to make those decisions for residents in their districts within the county. They were not elected to decide to disband the county. They were not elected to remove constituents from the county.
- d. It might be in the best interest to change the municipal structure but if councillors really believed that, they would be confident enough to explain that to the people. When amalgamation has been talked about for 7 years, yet they chose to hide that amalgamation was on the agenda before the election is not encouraging. There need be no rush. This is not like other amalgamations that were forced. This does not have to be forced. What do Councillors have to fear by delaying this and standing for amalgamation in the next election? If they were elected by the people and they believe they represent their constituents' point of view, then surely this will be proven in the next election a short time away. Bargaining ahead is showing disdain, for the people and the democratic process.
- e. While municipal politicians decry the province forcing amalgamations and yet claiming as elected municipal politicians, they will decide on amalgamation is hypocritical because are not provincial representatives elected politicians. Is that not just as forced?
- f. Exploration leads and consultants say plebiscites are not effective because people vote with emotion. What more emotion (and mistrust) could be displayed than that shown by the Deputy Major and yet he was allowed to vote. This should be a wake-up call for all of us. The sense of privilege and superiority is alarming.

2. Vision vs Strategy

- a. Amalgamation is being treated as a destination (as a vision) and not a vehicle to get there. It is being treated as a starting point, but Amalgamation is a strategy and strategies are not starting points they are means of accomplishing previously defined goals and objectives to help achieve the vision you have defined. So, share your vision of the community, what do you want to achieve and how amalgamation is a strategy that helps you get there. The vision can't simply be one of eliminating redundancies.

3. Question on Rush:

- a. The County did a planning exercise (*not a Strategic Planning exercise per the Warden*) described as an internal process not involving wide consultation yet, taken from the County website is language associated with a Strategic Planning Process:
 - i. The process begins by looking to the future (*Visioning*)

- ii. Discussing the 5 distinct areas of a sustainable community – environment, infrastructure, economy, social and governance
 - iii. The vision for the region is informed by elected officials (and staff), contact with a wide range of residents and groups (Consultation)
 - iv. All participants responded to the question – what do you think are the significant issues and opportunities facing the organization and the community we serve? (SWOT)
 - v. Over 20 strategic items were identified but a union with Antigonish is not one of them even though governance is identified as part of a sustainable community, while the most recent amalgamation in Windsor-West Hants was in the news, while leaders are suggesting it has been talked about for a number of years and while leaders are saying how obvious consideration of a union is.
- b. I have been told the strategic priorities were reviewed in 2019, 2020 & 2021. It has not been identified where amalgamation or any partnership with Antigonish is mentioned. Yet in mid year (September 2021) after the priorities were reviewed/refreshed for the year, union with the town is identified.
 - c. At the Havre Boucher session we learn it has been discussed for 7 years but it is not given honorable mention as a county priority as late as 2021. So how could something so important and so obvious not be identified by even 1 councillor as part of strategic priority setting?
 - d. At a session in Antigonish an exploration leader is describing the success of West Hants and how successful it is and how happy people are there. When challenged that the situation was entirely different, and it was actually the people who stated the process there, the leader responded that is not what we heard. Yet given as stated, “we have been studying this for 7 months” exploration leaders were not aware of the circumstances of the most recent amalgamation that is a matter of public record. It suggests more work is necessary.
4. Question of Trust:
- a. At the Havre Boucher session the points raised by residents focused on a plebiscite, conflict of interest, the outcome being predetermined and county residents getting town liability. Why the lack of trust?
 - i. The profession (politician) based on surveys is the least trusted of all. It is not specific to this situation
 - ii. An election was held with no whisper of amalgamation, yet we learn it has been talked about for a while. Why? What changed so suddenly?
 - iii. There is no clear vision or statement of benefits for constituents other than reducing redundancies and your taxes should not go up because of this arrangement. Keeping people even though the position becomes redundant without a statement of purpose doesn't develop trust and saying “that will be up to the new council” doesn't help
 - iv. While we are 2 distinct municipal units considering becoming 1 and while stating exploration leaders are undecided, displaying a google map with land boundaries entitled “Community of Antigonish” suggests promotion of one

- agenda and not open mindedness. Similar language in interviews and in printed material like “Together” also suggest promotion of a common narrative. A community vision should be more than just a map.
- v. When exploration leaders’ responses are factually true but contextually false or incomplete, it suggests cherry picking to support an agenda and it is misleading. As an example, when someone says a plebiscite was not done in Windsor-West Hants that is factually true but when put into context it is misleading. In the Windsor West Hants situation, the pre-union situation was one of a total lack of cooperation between municipalities and so the people led a process toward a union. Plebiscites are one way of having the people have their say but in Windsor – West Hants the people made it an issue in the municipal election, they had their say so a plebiscite was unnecessary.
 - vi. If we are in the exploration stages and a position has not been taken why would exploration leaders be able to list the units that did not do plebiscites. This suggests planning beyond the decision point is being done.
 - vii. Exploration leaders have been firm on using a kiosk style consultation in community engagements and have advanced their reasons for doing this despite arguments from constituents. Yet in Havre Boucher the approach changed in 10 minutes. We learned one individual decided to completely flip flop the approach, no consultation. This hardly provides one with confidence in the decision-making process and it raises the question as to who is dictating the agenda
 - viii. There is still residual suspicion from prior amalgamation efforts. It was perceived as a land grab by the Town and offloading debt on the County. However, the Town CAO gave an excellent response to a question on the Town’s liabilities. So why not have the town and the counties financial situation independently verified that neither will be a liability to the other under a union and share this.
 - ix. When an elected official makes claims so far from reality in support of his vote not to have a plebiscite it doesn’t provide confidence one is being open minded or even qualified. When 1 of the panelists is overheard leaving the session in Havre Boucher saying “that wasn’t bad I expected a lot worse” it suggests humoring and not engaging the rural folks.

5. A Way Ahead

- a. Pause, back up, take a breath. There is no rush other than some self-imposed timeline that might suit someone’s undefined agenda. Did anyone ever say why June 2022? Is the province pushing you to get this done?
- b. Do a joint Strategic Planning Process and develop your vision of the community, one that goes beyond administrative efficiencies, with the people and not instead of the people. It is not just your community; it is our community too.
- c. If you have already done that planning, share the vision and identify what you need to do to achieve this vision.
- d. Take to time to build trust and eliminate some of the mistrust, doubt, and suspicion.

- e. And if it is obvious a union will achieve the goals then go ahead follow the Windsor-West Hants model that you are applauding. This way elected officials don't have a plebiscite, but constituents get their say through an election. Both sides win. If, as elected officials and consultants suggest, \$200,000 is not enough to ensure constituents get the right information or it is too complex for them to respond in a plebiscite vote, then surely it would make sense for candidates in an election to explain it face to face on voters' doorsteps.
- f. Elected officials should reflect, if you can't trust your constituents to make the right choices then how did you get to be in office.

Beth Schumacher

From: Town of Antigonish Mayor <mayor@townofantigonish.ca>
Sent: May 23, 2022 8:36 PM
To: Owen McCarron; Willie Cormier
Cc: Glenn Horne; Hughie Stewart; Jeff Lawrence; Chrystal Fuller; Shirlyn Donovan; Kate Gorman; Brian Smith; Alisha Bowie
Subject: Re: [EXTERNAL] Consolidation Steering Committee Meeting

Thank you Glenn,
All dates are good for me.

Best,
Laurie

Mayor Laurie Boucher
Town of Antigonish
274 Main St, Antigonish, N.S
B2G 2C4
mayor@townofantigonish.ca | 902•870•7795

From: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Sent: Thursday, May 19, 2022 2:44:14 PM
To: Willie Cormier <wcormier@townofantigonish.ca>
Cc: Glenn Horne <glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Town of Antigonish Mayor <mayor@townofantigonish.ca>; Jeff Lawrence <jlawrence@townofantigonish.ca>; Chrystal Fuller <chrystal@brighterplanning.ca>; Shirlyn Donovan <shirlyn.donovan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Kate Gorman <kgorman@townofantigonish.ca>; Brian Smith <smithrsx@yahoo.ca>; Alisha Bowie <alisha.bowie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Re: [EXTERNAL] Consolidation Steering Committee Meeting

Any of those dates work for me. Thanks
Owen

Sent from my iPhone

On May 19, 2022, at 1:55 PM, Willie Cormier <wcormier@townofantigonish.ca> wrote:

All dates and times work for me.

WC

Sent from my iPhone

On May 19, 2022, at 1:00 PM, Glenn Horne <glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca> wrote:

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Good afternoon, folks –

Please note we will not be holding our weekly Steering Committee meeting on Tuesday morning. Rather, we would like to schedule a meeting of the Steering Committee to meet with Chrystal and debrief the engagement efforts of the past 6 weeks, as well as next steps.

Please let me know which of the following options works best for you:

- Thursday, May 26 at 2pm
- Friday, May 27 at 10am
- Monday, May 30 at 2pm
- Tuesday, May 31 at 8am

This meeting will likely be about 2 hours long.

Cheers,
Glenn



Glenn Horne | Chief Administrative Officer
Municipality of the County of Antigonish | 902.863.1117
285 Beech Hill Road, Beech Hill, NS | B2G 0B4
www.antigonishcounty.ns.ca | [@AntigonishCo](https://www.facebook.com/AntigonishCo) | [facebook](#)

Honour Yesterday, Act Today, Inspire Tomorrow



Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Business Leader Thoughts

1 message

Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Tue, May 24, 2022 at 2:05 PM

To: Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>

Mary;

Have a look at an attachment from a business leader in my area. It accurately reflect the feeling in the county.

Harris



Amalgamation Thoughts & Observations (2).docx

25K

Consideration of Amalgamation

1. Thoughts:

- a. It is important to me, and I believe for my community to have a strong town and equally so, I think the town needs a strong county. I appreciate the cooperation both councils have shown in working together to build a better community.
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- f. Elected officials should reflect, if you can't trust your constituents to make the right choices then how did you get to be in office.

Harris McNamara

From: Greg Morrow <gregmorrow4gt@gmail.com>
Sent: May 25, 2022 11:35 AM
To: Harris McNamara
Subject: Hi Harris

Hope you are well.
I tried to reach you last week when I had your message on the VM.
My cell phone deleted your phone number.

Please call if I can help in any way
Charla

Charla Cosgrove
Constituency Assistant for
Hon. Greg Morrow MLA Guysborough-Tracadie
902-533-2777

From: [Shirlyn Donovan](#)
To: [Council](#)
Cc: [Kate Gorman](#)
Subject: RE: Exploration of Consolidation Councillor Survey
Date: May 26, 2022 12:10:56 PM

Good afternoon,

A friendly reminder to please complete this survey if you haven't had the chance yet. Please complete before Monday, May 30.

Thanks,
Shirlyn

Shirlyn Donovan

Strategic Initiatives Coordinator
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
285 Beech Hill Road
Antigonish, NS B2G 0B4
902-863-1117



www.antigonishcounty.ns.ca
www.twitter.com/antigonishco

Honour Yesterday, Act Today, Inspire Tomorrow

From: Shirlyn Donovan
Sent: Friday, May 20, 2022 4:04 PM
To: Council <council@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Cc: Kate Gorman <kgorman@townofantigonish.ca>
Subject: Exploration of Consolidation Councillor Survey

Good afternoon,

The team at Brighter Community Planning & Consulting has asked that I share this survey with you, please complete it by Friday, May 27th. This is specifically for Councillors.

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=PHsSuVc4tkqgEhx9OdL7tnBChqgbF1pCtRBIXri3sEpUQ0tQNVFTMldESEILRVE5QUdXODRERkhYRy4u>

Thanks,

Shirlyn

Shirlyn Donovan

Strategic Initiatives Coordinator
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
285 Beech Hill Road
Antigonish, NS B2G 0B4
902-863-1117



www.antigonishcounty.ns.ca



www.twitter.com/antigonishco

Honour Yesterday, Act Today, Inspire Tomorrow

Amalgamation

1 message

Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Thu, May 26, 2022 at 5:13 PM

To: Chad Brazier <

Chad / Sarah;

It's great that you are having a planning meeting on the 30th, we need to continue to keep it in the public eye.

What do you think about requesting a private members bill (attached) should be considered. Our MLA has been "hiding" on this issue. He lives next door to us. Let's see how he represents us. We are not asking him to cancel amalgamation but allow a vote in an election, doesn't have to be a plebiscite.

If he is running again then he will have to support doing the bill or saying no. Now we could possibly do the same thing for Michelle Thompson to get her position?

I have also attached one county resident's comments on the last town council meeting, I was surprised with town councillors comments which are not acceptable and show that they have their minds made up and not willing to listen to residents' concerns.

Also have included some good comments sent to me by residents for your reading pleasure especially the comments on West Hants

Are you and Coline setting up at the Farmers Market on Saturday? It's the grand opening and the Mayor, Warden and their entourage will be there.

I do plan to attend a meeting on the 30th, but we need actionable items to execute for the residents. If we had a call or meeting to prepare I am available. We need something more to ensure it's top of mind.

I am not available from 6-8 pm this evening as there is a mass for my next door neighbour, should be home around 8 pm.

Harris

4 attachments



20220517_111814.jpg
315K

 **Amalgamation Thoughts & Observations (2).docx**
25K

 **District 1 Business Leader's thoughts.docx**
18K

 **Private member Bill (2).docx**
13K

This is a follow-up to our brief conversation at the Pomquet Engagement Session. I went there expecting a one-on-one format but was pleasantly surprised to see an open forum of questions and answers. I want to thank you for changing the process. It should have been an open forum from the beginning. As well, I want to thank you and your council for your dedicated efforts to ensure the best possible outcome for constituents.

In theory, I support one municipal unit but not until all the relevant facts are on the table, so all constituents are able to make an informed decision. My father supported amalgamation but always prefaced his remarks with, "I am only one vote. The citizens of the County will decide."

I know you put in many long hours planning for consolidation and you want to do the right thing for constituents. From the outside looking in I disagree with the process, in particular the lack of relevant information. I believe this has led to considerable confusion, a mistrust of both councils and negative feedback that would result in a resounding NO to consolidation. However, its not too late to change direction. I believe that constituents will vote for consolidation with the confidence council has answered all concerns in a forthright, transparent manner.

There has been negative feedback, and many people feel the need for a plebiscite. It is therefore most urgent you re-group and go back to constituents with a new plan that addresses the concerns raised during the Engagement Sessions. Here are a few of my observations and recommendations on what I feel are some of the more basic issues:

1. The Engagement Process – You need to re-visit the process and delay a consolidation vote until all concerns are resolved. This is an opportune time to pause, review the feedback and findings of the Engagement Sessions and prepare for another round of Open forums with all the relevant information available for an informed decision. Sessions need to be held in each District with you, your councillor and immediate County advisors BUT without the consultants.

2. Net Value to the Table - Constituents need a clear understanding of the net value of assets and services each municipal unit brings to the table before looking at the benefits consolidation brings. The County appears to be in a much stronger place than the Town with lower tax rates, growth momentum and a healthy Balance Sheet. Constituents are worried about what they may have to give up to consolidation. You need to bring it all to a common denominator so people can clearly understand what each municipal unit brings to the table and how it will be allocated on a fair and equitable basis.

3. Remove Assets not shared - Any assets that will not be shared in consolidation needs to be removed from the process for these discussions. If the Town's Electric Utility will not be shared with the County, it needs to be removed from the Net Value they bring to the table. I realize they sell electricity to the fringe area, but the accountants can easily determine its value. If the Solar farm is to be part of the Electric Utility, it needs to be removed. By bringing it all to a common base, it will help constituents understand what is at stake and how it affects them.

4. Financial Strength – It appears to me the County is in a healthier position than the Town. The Town is landlocked where the County has unlimited land to expand commercially and residentially. The County has development momentum and an expanding tax base. This is value that needs to be included and explained to constituents how impacts us in consolidation.

5. Cost/Benefit and SWOT Analysis - Consolidation is about the future yet, in your handouts and comments you state, "future tax rates can't be predicted"; "too early to forecast"; "No control over what future councils may do". I agree you cannot predict exactly but you can plan and project. The need for a Cost/Benefit analysis and financial projections is most urgent under the circumstances. This would include defining, in all aspects, our Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats. In your literature you state "should the consolidation process proceed, the Joint Transition committee would prepare an Operating and Capital Budget." If it can be done then, it can be done now.

6. Base Tax Rate: It is my understanding from comments tax rates will not increase with the likelihood of a decrease, according to comments by some consultants. You state a Base Rate will be set with adjustments for "area tax rates." How do you propose to establish the Base Rate without increasing County residential taxes? Will the Town rate be brought down to the current County rate of \$0.88 rate or will the County rate increase to a higher number? You need to explain how the Base Rate is determined. We all recognize that the tax rate will be adjusted in various parts of the County (and Town) for additional services, but it begins with the Base Tax rate. This needs to be clearly explained.

7. RCMP Service: It has been suggested that under consolidation, the cost of protection will increase. It's been suggested the increase could be as much as \$1 to \$2 million. This needs to be addressed with a complete explanation of changes expected with projected costs.

8. The Consultants- They need to be put on the shelf and removed from the immediate process. The general consensus is that the province wants fewer municipal units, they are paying most of the cost of the consultants and that the consultants are pushing for consolidation. There is a high mistrust of their intentions/motives. They may be needed later but were brought into the process far too early. For the next round of public sessions, Council ought not include the consultants but to step back and address the immediate concerns of constituents directly. The consultants can be available and brought in if needed anytime.

9. Councillors uninformed and Disqualified: Several councillors have stated in public they were not initially part of the process, as a result not as well informed and that the process is too rushed. I understand at least two councillors (representing approximately 20% of the population) may be disqualified from voting due to a conflict of interest. This needs to be fixed and all councillors able to represent their constituents.

There are councillors who will not re-offer and other councillors who may not be voted back, especially if citizens concerns are not satisfactorily addressed. It is most important the new council, especially under consolidation, has the support of constituents. Voters and those running for council need to have a good feel for what is ahead and what will be expected of them.

In summary, too many citizens believe the process is flawed, rushed and lacking in relevant information. Too many people feel there is a hidden agenda and that a decision to consolidate has already been made. There is a deep mistrust of both councils. The concerns of constituents need to be addressed in an honest, open and forthright manner. You need to build consensus from the bottom up, not from the top down.

I suggest you delay the process for an appropriate time, report back on the Engagement Sessions with answers and relevant data, do projections including a cost/benefit analysis and bring this information to the citizens of the county in additional public sessions where citizens, in an open forum can voice their opinions as well as support.

I believe a vote today for consolidation would be a loud No. However, I honestly believe that constituents, fully equipped to make an informed decision, will vote Yes to consolidation.

Regards,

Resident District 1

cc: All councillors

Consideration of Amalgamation

1. Thoughts:

- a. It is important to me, and I believe for my community to have a strong town and equally so, I think the town needs a strong county. I appreciate the cooperation both councils have shown in working together to build a better community.
- b. I am open to exploring a different municipal structure if done in the right manner and it is viewed as more than administrative efficiencies. It is not sufficient to point to other municipalities and say it worked for them. Most unions were the result of financial constraints and different circumstances than faced here. We should define who we want to be first.
- c. I do not believe elected County officials have the electoral or the moral mandate to execute this arrangement. Some have stated councillors were elected to make decisions for residents. This is true, but they were elected to make those decisions for residents in their districts within the county. They were not elected to decide to disband the county. They were not elected to remove constituents from the county.
- d. It might be in the best interest to change the municipal structure but if councillors really believed that, they would be confident enough to explain that to the people. When amalgamation has been talked about for 7 years, yet they chose to hide that amalgamation was on the agenda before the election is not encouraging. There need be no rush. This is not like other amalgamations that were forced. This does not have to be forced. What do Councillors have to fear by delaying this and standing for amalgamation in the next election? If they were elected by the people and they believe they represent their constituents' point of view, then surely this will be proven in the next election a short time away. Bargaining ahead is showing disdain, for the people and the democratic process.
- e. While municipal politicians decry the province forcing amalgamations and yet claiming as elected municipal politicians, they will decide on amalgamation is hypocritical because are not provincial representatives elected politicians. Is that not just as forced?
- f. Exploration leads and consultants say plebiscites are not effective because people vote with emotion. What more emotion (and mistrust) could be displayed than that shown by the Deputy Major and yet he was allowed to vote. This should be a wake-up call for all of us. The sense of privilege and superiority is alarming.

2. Vision vs Strategy

- a. Amalgamation is being treated as a destination (as a vision) and not a vehicle to get there. It is being treated as a starting point, but Amalgamation is a strategy and strategies are not starting points they are means of accomplishing previously defined goals and objectives to help achieve the vision you have defined. So, share your vision of the community, what do you want to achieve and how amalgamation is a strategy that helps you get there. The vision can't simply be one of eliminating redundancies.

3. Question on Rush:

- a. The County did a planning exercise (*not a Strategic Planning exercise per the Warden*) described as an internal process not involving wide consultation yet, taken from the County website is language associated with a Strategic Planning Process:
 - i. The process begins by looking to the future (*Visioning*)

- ii. Discussing the 5 distinct areas of a sustainable community – environment, infrastructure, economy, social and governance
 - iii. The vision for the region is informed by elected officials (and staff), contact with a wide range of residents and groups (Consultation)
 - iv. All participants responded to the question – what do you think are the significant issues and opportunities facing the organization and the community we serve? (SWOT)
 - v. Over 20 strategic items were identified but a union with Antigonish is not one of them even though governance is identified as part of a sustainable community, while the most recent amalgamation in Windsor-West Hants was in the news, while leaders are suggesting it has been talked about for a number of years and while leaders are saying how obvious consideration of a union is.
- b. I have been told the strategic priorities were reviewed in 2019, 2020 & 2021. It has not been identified where amalgamation or any partnership with Antigonish is mentioned. Yet in mid year (September 2021) after the priorities were reviewed/refreshed for the year, union with the town is identified.
 - c. At the Havre Boucher session we learn it has been discussed for 7 years but it is not given honorable mention as a county priority as late as 2021. So how could something so important and so obvious not be identified by even 1 councillor as part of strategic priority setting?
 - d. At a session in Antigonish an exploration leader is describing the success of West Hants and how successful it is and how happy people are there. When challenged that the situation was entirely different, and it was actually the people who stated the process there, the leader responded that is not what we heard. Yet given as stated, “we have been studying this for 7 months” exploration leaders were not aware of the circumstances of the most recent amalgamation that is a matter of public record. It suggests more work is necessary.
4. Question of Trust:
- a. At the Havre Boucher session the points raised by residents focused on a plebiscite, conflict of interest, the outcome being predetermined and county residents getting town liability. Why the lack of trust?
 - i. The profession (politician) based on surveys is the least trusted of all. It is not specific to this situation
 - ii. An election was held with no whisper of amalgamation, yet we learn it has been talked about for a while. Why? What changed so suddenly?
 - iii. There is no clear vision or statement of benefits for constituents other than reducing redundancies and your taxes should not go up because of this arrangement. Keeping people even though the position becomes redundant without a statement of purpose doesn’t develop trust and saying “that will be up to the new council” doesn’t help
 - iv. While we are 2 distinct municipal units considering becoming 1 and while stating exploration leaders are undecided, displaying a google map with land boundaries entitled “Community of Antigonish” suggests promotion of one

agenda and not open mindedness. Similar language in interviews and in printed material like “Together” also suggest promotion of a common narrative. A community vision should be more than just a map.

- v. When exploration leaders’ responses are factually true but contextually false or incomplete, it suggests cherry picking to support an agenda and it is misleading. As an example, when someone says a plebiscite was not done in Windsor-West Hants that is factually true but when put into context it is misleading. In the Windsor West Hants situation, the pre-union situation was one of a total lack of cooperation between municipalities and so the people led a process toward a union. Plebiscites are one way of having the people have their say but in Windsor – West Hants the people made it an issue in the municipal election, they had their say so a plebiscite was unnecessary.
- vi. If we are in the exploration stages and a position has not been taken why would exploration leaders be able to list the units that did not do plebiscites. This suggests planning beyond the decision point is being done.
- vii. Exploration leaders have been firm on using a kiosk style consultation in community engagements and have advanced their reasons for doing this despite arguments from constituents. Yet in Havre Boucher the approach changed in 10 minutes. We learned one individual decided to completely flip flop the approach, no consultation. This hardly provides one with confidence in the decision-making process and it raises the question as to who is dictating the agenda
- viii. There is still residual suspicion from prior amalgamation efforts. It was perceived as a land grab by the Town and offloading debt on the County. However, the Town CAO gave an excellent response to a question on the Town’s liabilities. So why not have the town and the counties financial situation independently verified that neither will be a liability to the other under a union and share this.
- ix. When an elected official makes claims so far from reality in support of his vote not to have a plebiscite it doesn’t provide confidence one is being open minded or even qualified. When 1 of the panelists is overheard leaving the session in Havre Boucher saying “that wasn’t bad I expected a lot worse” it suggests humoring and not engaging the rural folks.

5. A Way Ahead

- a. Pause, back up, take a breath. There is no rush other than some self-imposed timeline that might suit someone’s undefined agenda. Did anyone ever say why June 2022? Is the province pushing you to get this done?
- b. Do a joint Strategic Planning Process and develop your vision of the community, one that goes beyond administrative efficiencies, with the people and not instead of the people. It is not just your community; it is our community too.
- c. If you have already done that planning, share the vision and identify what you need to do to achieve this vision.
- d. Take to time to build trust and eliminate some of the mistrust, doubt, and suspicion.

- e. And if it is obvious a union will achieve the goals then go ahead follow the Windsor-West Hants model that you are applauding. This way elected officials don't have a plebiscite, but constituents get their say through an election. Both sides win. If, as elected officials and consultants suggest, \$200,000 is not enough to ensure constituents get the right information or it is too complex for them to respond in a plebiscite vote, then surely it would make sense for candidates in an election to explain it face to face on voters' doorsteps.
- f. Elected officials should reflect, if you can't trust your constituents to make the right choices then how did you get to be in office.

PROPOSED PRIVATE MEMBERS BILL

Given that the province of NS's Financial Conditions Indicators show that both municipal units are independently strong and hence require no urgent action.

Given the County does not reflect amalgamation as having strategic importance in over 4 years of strategic priority setting when it has been stated consolidation / amalgamation has been discussed for the past 7 years

Given, as stated above, consolidation / amalgamation has been discussed for the past 7 years yet municipal elections were held without a whisper of consolidation / amalgamation and then shortly after the election's, it is learned consolidation / amalgamation will be decided by those same elected officials who chose to withhold the fact consolidation / amalgamation was being considered before the election.

Given the unusual circumstances where 20 % of the electorate may not be represented in the vote on amalgamation.

We, the citizens of Antigonish County, request our provincial MLAs Greg Morrow & Michelle Thompson introduce a private member's bill with the suggested wording:

Any municipal unit considering union with another where both units have met the test of Financial Conditions Indicators and neither are at risk of failure will be required to hold a vote of constituents by way of an election or a plebiscite.

Beth Schumacher

From: Glenn Horne
Sent: May 27, 2022 4:20 PM
To: Shirlyn Donovan; kgorman@townofantigonish.ca; Alisha Bowie; Willie Cormier; Robyn Mclsaac; mayor@townofantigonish.ca; Owen McCarron; Hughie Stewart; Jeff Lawrence; Brian Smith; Chrystal Fuller
Subject: RE: Consolidation Steering Committee Meeting
Attachments: Committee Agenda_May 30 2022.pdf

Hi folks –

Please find attached our agenda for Monday's meeting at 2pm. For those attending in person we will be meeting in the County Council Chamber. For those attending virtually, the MS Teams link is below.

Have a great weekend!

Glenn

-----Original Appointment-----

From: Glenn Horne <glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Sent: May 23, 2022 8:58 PM
To: Glenn Horne; Shirlyn Donovan; kgorman@townofantigonish.ca; Alisha Bowie; Willie Cormier; Robyn Mclsaac; mayor@townofantigonish.ca; Owen McCarron; Hughie Stewart; Jeff Lawrence; Brian Smith; Chrystal Fuller
Subject: Consolidation Steering Committee Meeting
When: May 30, 2022 2:00 PM-4:00 PM (UTC-04:00) Atlantic Time (Canada).
Where: Council Chambers

Microsoft Teams meeting

Join on your computer or mobile app

[Click here to join the meeting](#)

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**Consolidation Steering Committee
Municipal Council Chamber – 285 Beech Hill Road
Monday, May 30, 2022 @ 2pm
Meeting Agenda**

- 1) Debrief on Engagement Process
 - a. What went well? What could have been improved?
- 2) Review of Engagement Deliverables and Timeline
- 3) Discussion of Final Report & Close Out Report
- 4) Review of Decision Making Wheel
- 5) Discussion of Ongoing Public Communications
- 6) Update on RCMP Contract
- 7) Additions:
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.

Beth Schumacher

From: Glenn Horne
Sent: May 31, 2022 9:28 AM
To: Owen McCarron; mayor@townofantigonish.ca; Hughie Stewart; Willie Cormier
Cc: Jeff Lawrence; kgorman@townofantigonish.ca; Shirlyn Donovan; Alisha Bowie
Subject: FW: Follow up to steering committee
Attachments: Antigonish Decision Wheel-02[100] - draft.jpg; Antigonish Decision Wheel-03[1] draft.jpg; 2022 - May 30 Steering Committee Minutes.docx

Good morning, folks –

Below and attached you will find the action items from our Steering Committee meeting yesterday. I have also attached the notes from this meeting. Please let me know if any changes are required in the meeting notes.

Cheers,
Glenn

From: Chrystal Fuller <chrystal@brighterplanning.ca>
Sent: May 30, 2022 3:52 PM
To: Glenn Horne <glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Jeff Lawrence <jlawrence@townofantigonish.ca>; Shirlyn Donovan <shirlyn.donovan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Kate Gorman <kgorman@townofantigonish.ca>
Cc: Brian Smith <smithrsx@yahoo.ca>; Robyn McIsaac <robyn@prhive.ca>
Subject: Follow up to steering committee

Hi Folks,

Here are a few things that come from our meeting.

1. Comments on the decision wheel – Please give them to me by the end of the week. This will be used in the reports go forward and should reflect the elements that will go into Council's decision making on the question.
2. It was decided that there will not be a specific engagement event for the WWHR and that comments will be received by email and phone, and the report posted on Antigonish.ca
3. Robyn will work with Kate and Shirlyn on communications.
4. We reviewed the timeline and discussed it. The Steering Committee will share information with Council before it goes out to the public, which may impact the overall timelines.
5. The Final report will try to improve on the information in the fact sheets and add to it where additional information is readily available.

I think that was everything.

Thanks,

Chrystal Fuller, LPP, MCIP
Principal, **Brighter Community Planning & Consulting**
80 Water Street

Windsor, NS
902-790-0664



<http://www.brighterplanning.ca>

Steering Committee Meeting Notes

May 30, 2022 @ 2pm
Municipal Council Chamber

Attendance: Mayor Laurie Boucher (meeting Chair) Warden Owen McCarron, Deputy Warden Hughie Stewart, Deputy Mayor Willie Cormier, Jeff Lawrence, Kate Gorman, Glenn Horne (note taker), Chrystal Fuller, Robyn MacIsaac, Brian Smith.

- 1) Meeting called to order by Mayor Boucher at 2pm
- 2) Debrief on Engagement Process
 - Chrystal shared a draft SWOT analysis of the engagement process. Committee members provided feedback.
 - Members also shared their impressions of recent discussions with residents following the completion of the formal engagement process.
 - All felt learnings and discussions should continue to be shared.
- 3) Review of Decision-Making Wheel
 - Chrystal introduced the Decision Wheel as a tool to assist Councils in making its decisions re: Consolidation. Engagement is one piece of the wheel and among the many considerations in making a decision. Other considerations are also included on the wheel.
 - Committee members felt this was a helpful tool to frame the decision in a logical way. It appears to include all the major topics to be considered in making this decision.
 - Committee members will provide feedback on the wheel by June 3.
- 4) Review of Engagement Deliverables and Timeline
 - Chrystal shared the revised proposed timeline, which see final report submission by September.
 - Drafts of the What We Heard Report will be provided during the summer and time provided for public comment.
 - This round of public comment is to verify what was captured reflects the public's feedback. It is not a second round of public consultation.
 - Once in hand, staff will work with the Steering Committee and Council to address the findings in the What We Heard Report.
 - The What We Heard Report is to be released to and reviewed by Councils prior to public release.

ANTIGONISH

Our Community

5) Discussion of Final Report & Close Out Report

- In addition to the What We Heard Report, a Final Report inclusive of all materials produced and a summary of the engagement will also be provided. A Close Out Report will be provided as well, which is a requirement of the Municipal Innovation Program funding.

6) Discussion of Ongoing Public Communications

- Given the timeline for completion of the What We Heard Report and an eventual decision has been extended, communications on the process will continue through the summer. Brighter Communities will work with staff to determine what, how and when.

7) Update on RCMP Contract

- A response from the federal government on the status of our RCMP contract if consolidation occurs is expected soon.
- Once received, follow-up as appropriate.

Take a regional approach to municipal services

Build vibrant individual communities

Communicate regularly about progress and decisions

Continue fair taxation and user pay approaches



Enhance environmental sustainability

Ensure fair representation for urban and rural residents

Value our existing municipal staff





Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Question for Breakfast on Consolidation

2 messages

Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Tue, May 31, 2022 at 2:52 PM

To: contact@antigonishchamber.com

Lauren;

Thank you for reminding me about a question for the Mayor and Warden.

"

Hi Lauren;

Question for Mayor and Warden to answer;

" When a business is considering merging with another company, research is conducted to ensure it makes sense. Good business practice is looking at every component of the other company, a cost benefit analysis is conducted for every component; financial, physical assets, labour, market, specific opportunities for efficiencies and most importantly the shareholders support. Residents of the town and county (shareholders) have not been provided cost benefit analysis of every component with consolidation. The process is rushed and not in the strategic plan of either the town or county. What are you going to do to get resident's support by providing real cost benefit analysis for all components? Does this mean the Strategic Plans for town and county are not accurate as no mention of consolidation is contained in the last 5 years?"

Thanks

James McNamara

President

Safety Culture Systems

Lauren Kaiser <contact@antigonishchamber.com>

Tue, May 31, 2022 at 2:54 PM

To: Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Hi James,

Thanks for sending that along, I'll add it to our list!

See you Friday,

Lauren

[Quoted text hidden]

—

Lauren Kaiser

Executive Director

Antigonish Chamber of Commerce

www.antigonishchamber.com

Room 124

People's Place Library

283 Main St.

Antigonish, NS B2G 2C3

Tel: (902) 863-6308

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Beth Schumacher

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: June 1, 2022 6:44 AM
To: Council; Glenn Horne
Subject: Fwd: consolidation

FYI

Warden Owen McCarron
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
902-968-1290

Begin forwarded message:

From: Jack Beaton
Date: May 13, 2022 at 9:41:10 AM ADT
To: info <info@antigonish.ca>
Cc: mayor@townofantigonish.ca, Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: consolidation

Thank you for the opportunity to take part in the May 12 consolidation discussion with community volunteer groups at the John Paul Centre. The meeting was well run and provided us with an opportunity to share and learn.

I commend both councils for the level of cooperation that has been evident, and for having the courage and foresight to bring the issue of consolidation forward for consideration.

The Antigonish community needs a strong, united voice as it negotiates with provincial and federal officials to find ways to improve the lives of residents. The confusion and duplication resulting from two municipal units representing the same community is not helpful.

Both councils were elected to make decisions. You were not elected to defer the difficult decisions to others.

I urge both councils to decide whether or not to proceed with consolidation. You have taken the time and made the effort to get a broad range of opinions from residents, and now it is time to carefully consider this information and decide how to move forward.

A plebiscite is a poor alternative to good governance.

Jack Beaton
Lower South River

Harris McNamara

From: Lucille Harper <
Sent: June 1, 2022 9:43 AM
To: Mary MacLellan; Donnie MacDonald; Hughie Stewart; Shawn Brophy; Remi Deveau; Owen McCarron; John Dunbar; Gary Mattie; Harris McNamara; Bill MacFarlane; wcmormier@townofantigonish.ca; mayor@townofantigonish.ca; dmacinnis@townofantigonish.ca; scameron@townofantigonish.ca; amurray@townofantigonish.ca; mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca; droberts@townofantigonish.ca
Cc: michellethompsonmla@gmail.com; gregmorrow4gt@gmail.com
Subject: Antigonish Town and County Consolidation Process

Dear Councillors,

While I appreciate the intention of the Town and County Councils to explore together the benefits and drawbacks to the wider community of potential consolidation, I believe strongly that consolidation should not proceed without first going to a public vote on consolidation by the Town and County residents.

Any potential benefits coming from consolidation will be undermined by the perceived and real disregard for a true democratic process -- a process which would call upon all residents to approve or object to consolidation in a public vote.

My understanding is that the proposed consolidation was not a part of the strategic plan for either the Town or the County at the time of the last municipal election and, therefore, there is no mandate from the residents to proceed. Please pause the process and listen to the call for a plebiscite on this proposal, a proposal that would substantially change our current form of municipal government.

Lucille Harper
Pomquet, Nova Scotia



Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Signed Petition from Greg's Riding (2)

1 message

Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Wed, Jun 1, 2022 at 12:47 PM

To: "Cosgrove, Charla" <Charla.Cosgrove@novascotia.ca>

Charla
Second petition email
Harris

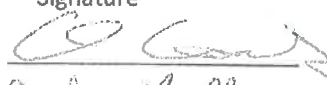
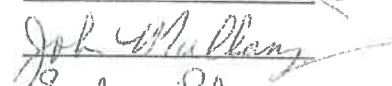


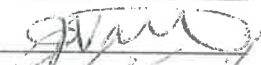
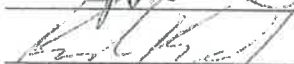
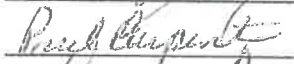
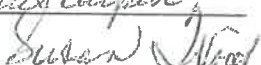
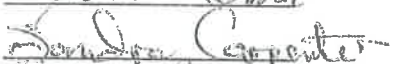
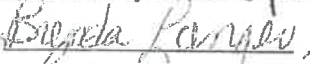
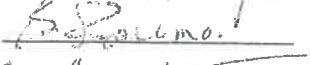

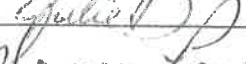


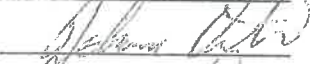


2 attachments

 **Antigonish County Residents Petition 2.pdf**
9505K

 **District 1 Business Leader's thoughts.docx**
18K

Petition to the Governments of Municipality of the County of Antigonish and the Town of Antigonish – Spring 2022

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Print Name	Civic Address	Signature
Chris Cook	Hwy 4 Cornwall	
John Mullaney	Old Post Road Frankville	
Evelyn Pedrine	HARVE Boucher Rd Haines Boucher	
Caroline Ch. Asson	Drum Run Rd NS	
Jessica Vink	Cape Jack Rd Harve Boucher	
Bradley Raymond	Harve Boucher Rd	
PAUL CARPENTER	CAPE JACK RD	
SUSAN WOOD	Old Wharf Rd.	
JAWARA CARPENTER	CAPE JACK RD HB.	
BRENDA LANGER	CAPE JACK RR. HB.	
Bernadette Bourne	Monland	
Nick Landry	Cape Jack Rd	
Julie DeYoung	Cape Jack Road	
MAUREEN PARKS	CAPE BLUE RD.	
RON PARKS	" " "	
ERIC ALLAIN	FRANKVILLE N.S.	
Schenna Ocker	Old Post Road. N.S.	
Belinda Campbell	NS 4 Harve Boucher	

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Print Name	Civic Address	Signature
Darlene DeCosta	High 4 Howe Boucher	Darlene DeCosta
Tony Murray	Sea Breeze Lane	Tony Murray
Frank MacCrath	Howe Boucher Rd.	Frank MacCrath
Jeremy Brown	Howe Boucher Road	Jeremy Brown
Matt Daniels	Palma Street	Matt Daniels
Wade Pappas	Acacia Rd	Wade Pappas
Mona Pelrine	Arlon	Mona Pelrine
Jackie Pettipas	Capetack Rd	Jackie Pettipas
Chris Purley	Howe Boucher	Chris Purley
Benjamin Delort	High 4 Mountain	Benjamin Delort
Cristy Bennett	East Howe Boucher	Cristy Bennett
Andy DeCosta	Frankville	Andy DeCosta
Michelle M. S.	Old Wharf Rd	Michelle M. S.
Michelle Foy	Northumberland in Coyville	Michelle Foy
Diane Foy	''	Diane Foy
Wanda DeCosta	Mill Rd	Wanda DeCosta
James Foy	Howe Boucher	James Foy
Jan Bennett	Howe Boucher	Jan Bennett

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Print Name	Civic Address	Signature
GARY BROW	Haver Boucher	Gary Brow
ANGELA MICHIEL	1 " "	Angela Michiel
ADELE ANDERSON	Haver Boucher Rd.	Adele Anderson
TREVOR DINELL	OLD POST RD.	Trevor Dineell
DAVID L. O'NEIL	Frankville Rd	David O'Neil
Betty POTTIER	Cape Jack Rd	Betty Pottier
Angela De Costa	Linwood Rd	Angela De Costa
Colin DeCosta	Old Linwood Road	Colin DeCosta
LEANNIE COPE	Cape Jack Rd.	Leannie Cope
Jane Melroy	New Rd. Capetank	Jane Melroy
DORNE FITZPATRICK	Hwy 4 H.B.	Dorne Fitzpatrick
Bernad Chirasson	Cape Jack Rd.	Bernad Chirasson
Edward Pelletier	Haver Boucher Rd.	Edward Pelletier
Charles Carpenter	Haver Boucher Rd	Charles Carpenter
Kenn O'Leary	Hwy 4 Linwood	Kenn O'Leary
Marlie Merritt	Cape Blue Rd. H.B. 115	Marlie Merritt
Ben Ben	Old What Rd 115	Ben Ben
Gilda DeYoung	Linwood Hbr Rd.	Gilda DeYoung

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Print Name	Civic Address	Signature
YVONNE FIANDER	Hwy #4 HAURE BOUCHER	Yvonne Fiander
GARY MELORE	CAPE JACK RD	Gary Melore
MARION WOOD	Hwy 4, HAURE BOUCHER	M Wood
Bonnie de Cost	Cape Jack Rd	B de Coste
Juelin Bayson	HAURE BOUCHER RD	J Bayson
Gordon Bayson	HAURE BOUCHER RD	Gordon Bayson
Josie Melore	CAPE JACK RD H.B	Josie Melore
Paul Melore	CAPE JACK RD H.B	Paul Melore
Harris McNamee	OLD WHARF ROAD H.B.	Jones Marie McNamee
Judy Fougere	Cape Jack Wharf Rd HB	Judy Fougere
Judith Melny	DM Wells Rd Cape Jack H.B.	Judith Melny
Brian Melore	NEW RD. NS	Brian Melore
Madeline Macdonald	FRANKVILLE ROAD	Madeline Macdonald
Clare Fougere	FRANKVILLE RD	Clare Fougere
Ann Macdonald	HAURE BOUCHER RD.	Ann Macdonald
PHYLLIS MACASKIE	HAURE BOUCHER RD	Phyllis MacAskie
Malcolm MacAskie	HAURE BOUCHER RD.	Malcolm MacAskie
Doreen Ferrell	Cape Jack Beach Rd.	Doreen Ferrell

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Print Name	Civic Address	Signature
<u>Dee McInay</u>	<u>Cape Jack RD Home Boucher</u>	<u>[Signature]</u>
<u>Bernadette Bauman</u>	<u>Medad</u>	<u>B Bauman</u>
<u>Kevin Bauman</u>	<u>medad</u>	<u>K Bauman</u>
<u>Sheila McKinnon</u>	<u>2 Mackay Rd</u>	<u>[Signature]</u>
<u>Mary McNamee</u>	<u>6 HIGHWAY 4 HAVER Boucher</u>	<u>Sheila McKinnon</u>
<u>Wally Bennett</u>	<u>Home Boucher</u>	
<u>Ed Bennett</u>	<u>Home Boucher</u>	
<u>Elaine Bennett</u>	<u>Home Boucher</u>	
<u>James Brown</u>	<u>Home Boucher</u>	
<u>Donald Dwyer</u>	<u>Home Boucher</u>	<u>[Signature]</u>
<u>Jessie Dubouché</u>	<u>Home Boucher</u>	<u>[Signature]</u>
<u>Sharon Goodwin</u>	<u>Home Boucher</u>	<u>Sharon Goodwin</u>
<u>Corrine Casey</u>	<u>Home Boucher</u>	<u>Corrine Casey</u>
<u>Ken McEneaney</u>	<u>Home Boucher</u>	<u>[Signature]</u>
<u>Bernie Bennett</u>	<u>Home Boucher</u>	<u>B. Bennett</u>
<u>Wispaw Bennett</u>	<u>" "</u>	<u>W Bennett</u>
<u>Judy Boucher</u>	<u>" "</u>	<u>Judy Boucher</u>

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Print Name	Civic Address	Signature
Russell Pettipas	1 West Harve Boucher	Russell Pettipas
Gerard O'Neil	2 Old Wharf Rd 175	Gerard O'Neil
MS O'Neil	3 Old Wharf Rd Rd	M. O'Neil
Coack Phillips	2 Melong Road Haver Boucher	Coack Phillips
Dianne Fitzpatrick	5 Highway 4 HB	Dianne Fitzpatrick
Karen Crispe	Old Antigonish Road	Karen Crispe
John Crispe	Old Antigonish Road	John Crispe
Tim Ferro	1 Garden Rd Harve Boucher	Tim Ferro
Mallory MacEachern	Havre Boucher Rd	Mallory MacEachern
Shirley Lewangie	Havre Boucher Rd	Shirley Lewangie
Catherine Bennett	Lighthouse Road	C. Bennett
Ann DeCoste	10 Havre Boucher Rd	Ann DeCoste
Ann Marie Moynihan	1 Hwy 4 H.B.	Ann Marie Moynihan
John Mott	Blueberries Lane, Mon. NS	John Mott
Mary Pettipas	Hwy 4 Havre Boucher	Mary Pettipas
Karen Lambert	Highway 4 ^{Antigonish} Havre Boucher	Karen Lambert
DANNIEL WOOD	Cape Jack Road	Daniel R. Wood
David Gault	Old Melong Rd	David Gault

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Print Name	Civic Address	Signature
Lori Boudreau	1 East Tracadie Rd.	Lori Boudreau
Clairie Bennett	8 Havre Boucher	Clairie Bennett
Danny Wood	old wharf Rd.	Danny Wood
Bertie Pettipas	2 Hwy 4 Linwood	Bertie Pettipas
Roxana Melong	2 Hwy 4 Havre Boucher	Roxana Melong
Bruce Melong	2 Hwy 4 Havre Boucher	Bruce Melong
Barb DeSousa	1 Melong Rd Havre Boucher	Barb DeSousa
Andrew DeSousa	Melong Rd Havre Boucher	Andrew DeSousa
Michael DeSousa	Melong Rd H B	Michael DeSousa
Diane DeSousa	Melong Rd H B	Diane DeSousa
Sophie Robertson	Havre Boucher Rd	Sophie Robertson
Felicia Sampson	Havre Boucher Rd	Felicia Sampson
Carmen Sampson	Havre Boucher Rd	Carmen Sampson
April Lukeman	cape Jack Rd	April Lukeman
Cathy DeSousa	Ocean View Dr	Cathy DeSousa
Helen Fougere	Hwy 4 Havre Boucher	Helen Fougere
Wendy Benoit	Lot 2 Linwood Hbr Rd	Wendy Benoit
Savanna Anko	Linwood Hbr Rd	Savanna Anko

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Print Name	Civic Address	Signature
Linda Williams	Wharf Road	[Signature]
April Pettipas	1 Union St. Rd.	April Pettipas
Joseph W. Crisp	1 Cape Jack R	[Signature]
MIKE McDOUGAL	Cape Jack Rm.	[Signature]
Xoanne Delabre	Tracadie	[Signature]
Giselle Carr	Cape Jack Rd	[Signature]
Donna Landry	Cape Jack Rd.	[Signature]
Sally Sampson	Harve Boucher	Sally Sampson
Marie Fougere	Linwood Rd.	Marie Fougere
Rosy Cote	1 East Tracadie	Rosy Cote
[Signature]		
[Signature]		
Bernard G. Pélletier	Harve Boucher Rd	Bernard Pélletier
Alma Ross	Linwood	Alma Ross
Alan Hagen	W. Harve Boucher	Alan Hagen
J. Ken DeCost	Harve Boucher	J. Kenneth DeCost
Margie Pelrine	Fougere Rd. Fankola	Margie Pelrine
Lucille Fougere		Lucille Fougere

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Print Name	Civic Address	Signature
Jeremy Benoit	? Garden Lane	Jeremy Benoit
Jace Benoit	Linwood Hbr	Jace Benoit
ASHLEY ALLEN	Langford Rd Frankville	Ashley Allen
James DeLoachy	Old Wharf Rd	James DeLoachy
Neil Bennett	Frankville	Neil Bennett
Aranda Webb	HAVERBOURHER	Aranda Webb
Sandy Webb	HWY 4 Haver Boucher	Sandy Webb
Debra Kelly	HWY 4 Haver Boucher	Debra Kelly
Sylvester Gorman	Frankville	Sylvester Gorman
Alex Whelan	Frankville	Alex Whelan
Alicia Vink	Haver Boucher	Alicia Vink
Paul Melony	Haver Boucher	Paul Melony
Mary Williams	Haver Boucher Rd	Mary Williams
Arlette Decoste	Pellucine Rd.	Arlette Decoste
Laurence Decoste	Pellucine Rd.	Laurence Decoste
Margaret Gorman	MacPherson Rd	Margaret Gorman
Ka Boucher	Frankville	Ka Boucher

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Print Name	Civic Address	Signature
ARTHUR Boucher	Havre Boucher	Arthur Boucher
Mathina Melong	Havre Boucher	Mathina Melong
Allana Mullaney	129 Old Post Rd, Frankville	Allana Mullaney
Berkley DeCoste	Frankville	Berkley DeCoste
Foster Tate	Monastery	Foster Tate
Weather Broussard	monastery	Weather Broussard
Wanda Fougere	Havre Boucher	Wanda Fougere
Theresa Bouchard	East Tracadie	Theresa Bouchard
Theresa DeCoste	Havre Boucher	Theresa DeCoste
Kappy O'Neill	FRANKVILLE	Kappy O'Neill
Sylvester Landry	Havre Boucher	Sylvester Landry
Jonathan Carr	East Tracadie	Jonathan Carr
Bob King	Frankville	
Joyce Ross	Linwood	Joyce Ross
Denise Pelletier	HAVRE BOUCHER	DENISE PELLETIER
Samie Brown	HB	Samie Brown
Sue Benoit	Linwood ^{Armenor Rd.}	Sue Benoit
Dorothy MacDonell	Havre Boucher	Dorothy MacDonell

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Print Name	Civic Address	Signature
THELMA MORRIS	old Post Rd Frankville	Thelma Morris
Connie DeCosta	Havre Boucher	Connie DeCosta
Amanda Delorey	old Post Rd Frankville NS	A Delorey
Albert LeBlond	old wharf Rd Havre Boucher	Albert LeBlond
Winnie Jackson	Bayfield Ant. Co. NS	Winnie Jackson
Bruce Jackson	Bayfield Ant Co	Bruce Jackson
JODY CROWE	RR. 2 Havre Boucher	Jody Crowe
Janie Brown	Hwy 4 HB	Janie Brown
Jack CARR	Linwood Rd	Jack Carr
DORREN CARR	" " "	Dorren Carr
SHARON FOLGER	OLD WHARF RD	Sharon Folger
Catherine Bennett	lighthouse Rd	C Bennett
Jon Pelletier	Co. T.	Jon Pelletier
Bernita MacLeod	Hwy 4	B MacLeod
GÉRARD LANDRY	Hwy 4	Gérard Landry
John Brown	Hwy 4	John Brown
Tammy Melong	Havre Boucher	Tammy Melong
Peter Rowan	BARACK ROAD	Peter Rowan

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Print Name	Civic Address	Signature
<u>Steve Ross</u>	<u>Governor Road, Antigonish NS</u>	<u>[Signature]</u>
<u>Walter Simpson</u>	<u>Highway 4 Home Boucher</u>	<u>[Signature]</u>
<u>TRACY SIMPSON</u>	<u>Highway 4 Home Boucher</u>	<u>[Signature]</u>
<u>Mitchell Williams</u>	<u>Hill Road, Home Boucher</u>	<u>[Signature]</u>
<u>Will Pittman</u>	<u>Linwood Station Road</u>	<u>[Signature]</u>
<u>Easton Ryan</u>	<u>Home Boucher</u>	<u>[Signature]</u>
<u>Mitchell Jarvis</u>	<u>Old Post Rd</u>	<u>[Signature]</u>
<u>Kim Guthrie</u>	<u>Hwy 4</u>	<u>[Signature]</u>
<u>Jay TERSTALE</u>	<u>Heathert edge Road</u>	<u>[Signature]</u>
<u>Jodie Skinner</u>	<u>Cape Jack Rd</u>	<u>[Signature]</u>
<u>JANINA MITCHELL</u>	<u>Cape Jack Rd</u>	<u>[Signature]</u>
<u>Mary MacLellan</u>	<u>Hill Road</u>	<u>[Signature]</u>
<u>Craig Green</u>	<u>Governor Rd</u>	<u>[Signature]</u>
<u>Paula Brennan</u>	<u>Redington Forbes Road</u>	<u>[Signature]</u>
<u>Cherise O'Neil</u>	<u>Frankville</u>	<u>[Signature]</u>
<u>Annelle DeLeste</u>		
<u>ERIC ANAN</u>	<u>FRANKVILLE NS</u>	<u>[Signature]</u>
<u>RAWLEY JOHNSON</u>	<u>CAPE JACK RD. NS</u>	<u>[Signature]</u>

This is a follow-up to our brief conversation at the Pomquet Engagement Session. I went there expecting a one-on-one format but was pleasantly surprised to see an open forum of questions and answers. I want to thank you for changing the process. It should have been an open forum from the beginning. As well, I want to thank you and your council for your dedicated efforts to ensure the best possible outcome for constituents.

In theory, I support one municipal unit but not until all the relevant facts are on the table, so all constituents are able to make an informed decision. My father supported amalgamation but always prefaced his remarks with, "I am only one vote. The citizens of the County will decide."

I know you put in many long hours planning for consolidation and you want to do the right thing for constituents. From the outside looking in I disagree with the process, in particular the lack of relevant information. I believe this has led to considerable confusion, a mistrust of both councils and negative feedback that would result in a resounding NO to consolidation. However, its not too late to change direction. I believe that constituents will vote for consolidation with the confidence council has answered all concerns in a forthright, transparent manner.

There has been negative feedback, and many people feel the need for a plebiscite. It is therefore most urgent you re-group and go back to constituents with a new plan that addresses the concerns raised during the Engagement Sessions. Here are a few of my observations and recommendations on what I feel are some of the more basic issues:

1. The Engagement Process – You need to re-visit the process and delay a consolidation vote until all concerns are resolved. This is an opportune time to pause, review the feedback and findings of the Engagement Sessions and prepare for another round of Open forums with all the relevant information available for an informed decision. Sessions need to be held in each District with you, your councillor and immediate County advisors BUT without the consultants.

2. Net Value to the Table - Constituents need a clear understanding of the net value of assets and services each municipal unit brings to the table before looking at the benefits consolidation brings. The County appears to be in a much stronger place than the Town with lower tax rates, growth momentum and a healthy Balance Sheet. Constituents are worried about what they may have to give up to consolidation. You need to bring it all to a common denominator so people can clearly understand what each municipal unit brings to the table and how it will be allocated on a fair and equitable basis.

3. Remove Assets not shared - Any assets that will not be shared in consolidation needs to be removed from the process for these discussions. If the Town's Electric Utility will not be shared with the County, it needs to be removed from the Net Value they bring to the table. I realize they sell electricity to the fringe area, but the accountants can easily determine its value. If the Solar farm is to be part of the Electric Utility, it needs to be removed. By bringing it all to a common base, it will help constituents understand what is at stake and how it affects them.

4. Financial Strength – It appears to me the County is in a healthier position than the Town. The Town is landlocked where the County has unlimited land to expand commercially and residentially. The County has development momentum and an expanding tax base. This is value that needs to be included and explained to constituents how impacts us in consolidation.

5. Cost/Benefit and SWOT Analysis - Consolidation is about the future yet, in your handouts and comments you state, "future tax rates can't be predicted"; "too early to forecast"; "No control over what future councils may do". I agree you cannot predict exactly but you can plan and project. The need for a Cost/Benefit analysis and financial projections is most urgent under the circumstances. This would include defining, in all aspects, our Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats. In your literature you state "should the consolidation process proceed, the Joint Transition committee would prepare an Operating and Capital Budget." If it can be done then, it can be done now.

6. Base Tax Rate: It is my understanding from comments tax rates will not increase with the likelihood of a decrease, according to comments by some consultants. You state a Base Rate will be set with adjustments for "area tax rates." How do you propose to establish the Base Rate without increasing County residential taxes? Will the Town rate be brought down to the current County rate of \$0.88 rate or will the County rate increase to a higher number? You need to explain how the Base Rate is determined. We all recognize that the tax rate will be adjusted in various parts of the County (and Town) for additional services, but it begins with the Base Tax rate. This needs to be clearly explained.

7. RCMP Service: It has been suggested that under consolidation, the cost of protection will increase. It's been suggested the increase could be as much as \$1 to \$2 million. This needs to be addressed with a complete explanation of changes expected with projected costs.

8. The Consultants- They need to be put on the shelf and removed from the immediate process. The general consensus is that the province wants fewer municipal units, they are paying most of the cost of the consultants and that the consultants are pushing for consolidation. There is a high mistrust of their intentions/motives. They may be needed later but were brought into the process far too early. For the next round of public sessions, Council ought not include the consultants but to step back and address the immediate concerns of constituents directly. The consultants can be available and brought in if needed anytime.

9. Councillors uninformed and Disqualified: Several councillors have stated in public they were not initially part of the process, as a result not as well informed and that the process is too rushed. I understand at least two councillors (representing approximately 20% of the population) may be disqualified from voting due to a conflict of interest. This needs to be fixed and all councillors able to represent their constituents.

There are councillors who will not re-offer and other councillors who may not be voted back, especially if citizens concerns are not satisfactorily addressed. It is most important the new council, especially under consolidation, has the support of constituents. Voters and those running for council need to have a good feel for what is ahead and what will be expected of them.

In summary, too many citizens believe the process is flawed, rushed and lacking in relevant information. Too many people feel there is a hidden agenda and that a decision to consolidate has already been made. There is a deep mistrust of both councils. The concerns of constituents need to be addressed in an honest, open and forthright manner. You need to build consensus from the bottom up, not from the top down.

I suggest you delay the process for an appropriate time, report back on the Engagement Sessions with answers and relevant data, do projections including a cost/benefit analysis and bring this information to the citizens of the county in additional public sessions where citizens, in an open forum can voice their opinions as well as support.

I believe a vote today for consolidation would be a loud No. However, I honestly believe that constituents, fully equipped to make an informed decision, will vote Yes to consolidation.

Regards,

Resident District 1

cc: All councillors

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: June 2, 2022 12:45 PM
To: 'Lucille Harper'
Subject: RE: Antigonish Town and County Consolidation Process

Lucille;

Thank you for the support. I too believe 6 councillors should not make the decision for 15K plus in the county. You are correct as this has not been part of the strategic plan in last election nor current strategic plan and not in our mandate in my opinion. Let your MLA Michelle Thompson know that this is not acceptable if you can.

Harris McNamara
District 9 Councillor
Antigonish County

From: Lucille Harper
Sent: June 1, 2022 9:43 AM
To: Mary MacLellan <mmacellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; wgormier@townofantigonish.ca; mayor@townofantigonish.ca; dmacinnis@townofantigonish.ca; scameron@townofantigonish.ca; amurray@townofantigonish.ca; mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca; droberts@townofantigonish.ca
Cc: michellethompsonmla@gmail.com; gregmorrow4gt@gmail.com
Subject: Antigonish Town and County Consolidation Process

Dear Councillors,

While I appreciate the intention of the Town and County Councils to explore together the benefits and drawbacks to the wider community of potential consolidation, I believe strongly that consolidation should not proceed without first going to a public vote on consolidation by the Town and County residents.

Any potential benefits coming from consolidation will be undermined by the perceived and real disregard for a true democratic process -- a process which would call upon all residents to approve or object to consolidation in a public vote.

My understanding is that the proposed consolidation was not a part of the strategic plan for either the Town or the County at the time of the last municipal election and, therefore, there is no mandate from the residents to proceed. Please pause the process and listen to the call for a plebiscite on this proposal, a proposal that would substantially change our current form of municipal government.

Lucille Harper
Pomquet, Nova Scotia

Harris McNamara

From: Diane Roberts <droboters@townofantigonish.ca>
Sent: June 2, 2022 12:59 PM
To: mayor@townofantigonish.ca; Carl; Owen McCarron
Cc: mmaclellan@antigonish.ns.ca; Donnie MacDonald; Hughie Stewart; Shawn Brophy; Remi Deveau; John Dunbar; Gary Mattie; Harris McNamara; Bill MacFarlane; Willie Cormier; Donnie MacInnis; Sean Cameron; Andrew Murray; Mary Farrell
Subject: Re: [EXTERNAL] Consolidation

Hi Carl!

Meant to get back to you before now.

Thank you! for taking the time to visit me here at my home.

Our discussion regarding the Consolidation of Town and County Municipalities gave both of us the opportunity to share our thoughts on the matter.

I appreciated your sharing as to how you felt about the issue and I appreciated your willingness to listen to my points.

We both agreed it was important to respect each others views when you were leaving.

Look forward to seeing you, Lillie and friends here at my patio in Beautiful Whidden Park.

Cheers!

Diane

Get [Outlook for iOS](#)

From: Town of Antigonish Mayor <mayor@townofantigonish.ca>
Sent: Tuesday, May 17, 2022 8:30:14 AM
To: Carl omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Cc: mmaclellan@antigonish.ns.ca <mmaclellan@antigonish.ns.ca>; dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Willie Cormier <wcormier@townofantigonish.ca>; Donnie MacInnis <dmacinnis@townofantigonish.ca>; Sean Cameron <scameron@townofantigonish.ca>; Andrew Murray <amurray@townofantigonish.ca>; Mary Farrell <mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca>; Diane Roberts <droboters@townofantigonish.ca>
Subject: Re: [EXTERNAL] Consolidation

Thank you for your email Carl, your words are much appreciated.

Best,
Laurie

Mayor Laurie Boucher
Town of Antigonish
274 Main St, Antigonish, N.S
B2G 2C4
mayor@townofantigonish.ca | 902•870•7795

From: Carl <

Sent: Monday, May 16, 2022 11:37:22 AM

To: Town of Antigonish Mayor <mayor@townofantigonish.ca>; omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>

Cc: mmaclellan@antigonish.ns.ca <mmaclellan@antigonish.ns.ca>; dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Willie Cormier <wcormier@townofantigonish.ca>; Donnie MacInnis <dmacinnis@townofantigonish.ca>; Sean Cameron <scameron@townofantigonish.ca>; Andrew Murray <amurray@townofantigonish.ca>; Mary Farrell <mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca>; Diane Roberts <droberts@townofantigonish.ca>

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Consolidation

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

I am writing to you both to congratulate you and all your councillors for taking on this major challenge called consolidation. No one said or thought it would be easy. As former mayor of the town for eight years I can assure you that there are always tough decisions to be made when you are representing the people whether from the town or the county. You were all elected by the people to make those tough decisions. Those decisions will never please 100% of the people you represent but when you make them they are in the best interest of all.

As for the topic at hand, consolidation, it is a decision which will have a lasting effect on our community. I am in total agreement to consolidate at this time so all people from Antigonish town and county can benefit as one Antigonish. After having heard and read some of the comments about consolidation I feel very strongly that going forward we will all be better off as one, The Municipality of Antigonish.

I have looked at both financial statements, along with the respective tax rates, including area rates, and I only see good reasons for both municipalities to become one. As a former resident of the county and more recently the town, I can honestly say that whenever I was asked where I was from I always answered Antigonish; never the Town of Antigonish or the County of Antigonish. I would like to mention a few events that have happened over the last number of years that were not in 100% agreement by all residents.

1 – The People’s Place library – When people heard how much it was going to cost, not all people were in favor. Now it is the most used library in the province, based on per capita, and everyone speaks highly of it.

2 – Antigonish Skate Park – Again not everyone was in favor but just drive by on a sunny day and see how many people, both young and old, are enjoying it.

3 – Wind Farm – The wind farm that the town is part of was not something that everyone thought was a good idea, even some town staff and councillors. Today everyone is thankful for the results it has given the town.

I am sure there are others but I hope you get my point.

In closing I am asking everyone to please weigh out the pros and cons for EACH municipality and I am sure that the positives far out weigh the negatives to join as one and become The Municipality of Antigonish. You were all voted in to make decisions, tough decisions, on behalf of your constituents. Let’s make one, the right one, vote for consolidation and let us move forward together in a positive way. I am sure the people will not be disappointed for years and centuries to come.

Thank you for your time.

Carl Chisholm

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: June 2, 2022 1:50 PM
To: charla.cosgrove@novascotia.ca
Subject: FW: Antigonish Town and County Consolidation Process

Charla;
Going to send you a sampling of emails I have received, two every business day.
Harris

From: Lucille Harper
Sent: June 1, 2022 9:43 AM
To: Mary MacLellan <mmacellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; wcormier@townofantigonish.ca; mayor@townofantigonish.ca; dmacinnis@townofantigonish.ca; scameron@townofantigonish.ca; amurray@townofantigonish.ca; mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca; droberts@townofantigonish.ca
Cc: michellethompsonmla@gmail.com; gregmorrow4gt@gmail.com
Subject: Antigonish Town and County Consolidation Process

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My understanding is that the proposed consolidation was not a part of the strategic plan for either the Town or the County at the time of the last municipal election and, therefore, there is no mandate from the residents to proceed. Please pause the process and listen to the call for a plebiscite on this proposal, a proposal that would substantially change our current form of municipal government.

Lucille Harper
Pomquet, Nova Scotia

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: June 2, 2022 1:52 PM
To: charla.cosgrove@novascotia.ca
Subject: FW: Consolidation

Charla
Second one, he is from HB
Harris

From: Tony Sampson <[redacted]>
Sent: May 17, 2022 5:03 PM
To: Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Owen McCarron <omaccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Consolidation

ANTIGONISH To Whom it May concern:

As a concerned resident of the County of Antigonish I would like to weigh in on this consolidation/amalgamation issue that is before us. I have several concerns. Up to now I have been under the impression that we live in a democratic society here in Canada, where we elect our federal, provincial and municipal officials of whom represent the wishes of the people that have elected them. In recent weeks it seems that this might not be the case.

I was very insulted by the statement made to the fact that some of our elected municipal officials do not believe that the people they represent are not qualified to make an informed decision on what may possibly be the most important item concerning the future of the town and county of Antigonish. If we were not qualified enough then, as our representatives, you should be focusing your efforts on informing us of ALL the issues around this venture.

The meetings that have been held recently have done little to inform us as to the advantages and disadvantages of this very important decision. Instead, it feels like an attempt to sell us blindly on only its merits, by an outside entity. I believe this to be way too important an issue to be left to an outside company or to only our elected officials, who seem to have some agenda. Why so fast? Anything that seems to be fast tracked, without all the answers to all of our questions seems to me to be something to be leery of. Where did this come from, what are the effects on our tax rates, services, ie: fire departments and policing to be only a few. We only seem to be given scripted answers by the consultants hired at a very hefty price tag and not having our best interests at heart. Their only concern is to get this issue pushed through as fast as possible. I contend that the only reason this is being handled this way is that OUR representatives know very well what are the wishes of the people and by forcing it through is the only way to get their agendas passed. This is not responsible governing.

Another concern I have is the removal of two councilors who have spoken out against this move. There has not been an issue before of them voting on all the issues coming to the table. Looks like a duck, walks like a duck most definitely a duck. Shame of all the rest of you for not standing up when this was enacted. This process stinks the high heavens.

I'm not totally blaming our elected officials. We all have a part to play in this for not taking the process of electing our municipal councilors seriously. In too many cases over the last few years, these people have not been challenged and held responsible to the people they represent. I believe a five-year term limit would keep this from happening and

bring new ideas to the council. Some individuals have been unchallenged and have lost touch with the people they should be representing.

Our counselor in District 9 , newly elected and very dedicated to his constituents, voiced his concerns. For this he was removed from voting on this issue, due to "so called conflict of interest". We need more counselors with this degree of integrity and dedication to the people who elected him. Come on people, it is time to stand up and demand more from our counselors. We cannot and should not go along with a Mayor and a Warden who says it's best for us without giving us all the answers to the questions we have. I for one feel this is too important a decision to be left to two councils and not the people who will have to live with the consequences of their choice. To the Mayor, Warden and councilors remember who voted to put you there as well as the fact that we will have the option to vote again in a few years. Maybe we would rather vote for someone else that will represent our wishes.

Mister Warden you were worried that a plebiscite would divide town and county, but what your decision has done is divide our elected officials and THE PEOPLE OF THE TOWN AND COUNTY OF ANTIGONISH

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: June 2, 2022 1:54 PM
To: charla.cosgrove@novascotia.ca
Subject: FW: Prospective Consolidation of Antigonish Town and County Municipalities

Charla
A few more coming at you today
Harris

From: Audrey MacDonald
Sent: May 10, 2022 12:01 PM
To: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Re: Prospective Consolidation of Antigonish Town and County Municipalities

Thank you, Harris, for your prompt response.

The concerns you express echo some of mine.

I was raised in Antigonish County, where I still have many relatives, but moved away for many years. Upon retirement, I chose to return to the area. Currently, I own a house in town and co-own property in the county. Therefore, I have made every effort to gain as much information as I can to more fully understand the ramifications of this proposed merger. Based on the lack of long-term planning — or at least the lack of information made available about any such planning — I see no pressing need for such a merger. Certainly, there is no apparent need that would be mutually beneficial, as must be the case for me to agree to this merger. In fact, I have read several very eloquently-written and convincing opinion pieces that lead me to believe the current process toward amalgamation is flawed. While there may be equally compelling arguments on the “pro” side, so far they have not been articulated publicly.

I applaud those of you who are willing to listen to your constituents and hope there are a sufficient number of you to at least slow down this process. I do not want our representatives — and in this case only some of them — making a decision of this magnitude for us.

I believe we require: a slower process; more information; public-hall type meetings where informed debate may occur; and, finally a plebiscite.

Premier Huston recently changed his mind once he recognized the validity of the arguments in opposition to his tax bill. I hope a sufficient number of our representatives will see the benefit of a pivot on the process they currently are following. There is no shame in changing one’s mind when additional information comes to light.

I trust that our town and county council members can regain the respect that has been strained — or in some cases broken — as we move forward.

Audrey

Sent from my iPhone

On May 10, 2022, at 8:35 AM, Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca> wrote:

Audrey;

Thank you for questioning the process! My name is Harris McNamara, Councillor for District 9 (Havre Boucher) and from the beginning I have been questioning amalgamation. It does not make sense to county residents as we are in the best financial position ever. This is being rushed through with no pros and cons, a cost benefit analysis needs to be done on every component of amalgamation . Most importantly county residents won't have a say in what happens. Six councillors (maybe less) will make the decision for you. We need a plebiscite, that way 15000 county residents will make the decision. If you want more information, please give me a call at 318-8333.
Harris

From: Audrey MacDonald <audrey@townofantigonish.ca>

Sent: May 9, 2022 8:10 PM

To: mayor@townofantigonish.ca; wormier@townofantigonish.ca; dmacinnis@townofantigonish.ca; scameron@townofantigonish.ca; amurray@townofantigonish.ca; mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca; droberts@townofantigonish.ca; Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>

Subject: Re: Prospective Consolidation of Antigonish Town and County Municipalities

I feel compelled to provide my perspective on the prospective merger of the municipalities of the town and county of Antigonish.

Firstly, I commend you for your willingness to engage in municipal politics with the intent of addressing the needs of your constituents. Further, from what I have seen in the few years since I have returned to the area, the positive cooperation between the two councils has resulted in programs and activities beneficial to the residents of both municipalities. That seems to be, in no small part, because of the individuals who are representing us. However, sometimes an issue goes beyond the regular mandate provided by the electorate and, as such, requires a different approach. This proposed merger is such an issue. It was not on the "agenda" during the last municipal election; therefore, I suggest our mayor, warden, and councillors have not been provided a mandate to decide an issue of this magnitude for us. Instead, to me at least, it feels like a rather paternalistic approach.

I am adding my name to the list of constituents requesting a plebiscite.

Initially, I was rather ambivalent about the issue. I understood information was to be gathered; research was to be conducted. I anticipated the results of this investigation -- both pros and cons -- would be presented and we would be provided the opportunity to make an informed decision either through what would be my preferred format -- a plebiscite -- or, at the very least, as an election issue at the time of the next municipal election. Unfortunately, that currently is not the case. Instead, I feel we are being provided a less than balanced picture leading to a vote by some of our elected officials.

In addition, I am requesting a pause in the process so that a more robust and transparent approach might occur. I have attended a drop-in session and, while I appreciated the willingness of the CAO and consultant with whom I spoke to provide answers to my questions, I felt I left knowing little more than I knew upon arrival. I also appreciated my discussion with Councillor Dunbar. His track record of standing up for his constituents is commendable. However, he, like many of our councillors, is reserving judgement until he has gathered more input from the public. I believe the more traditional town-hall type meeting will provide that input in a far more clear and transparent manner. I believe it is important for individuals to be able to ask their questions and share their concerns in a manner that allows others to also gain information.

Currently, I really don't know whether we would benefit from the proposed merger. I, too, require more time and information to make an informed decision, should I be allowed to vote on this issue. I have read the literature posted on the website, which leans heavily toward the advantages, and followed whatever social media information I have been able to access, which leans heavily toward the disadvantages. This debate needs to be held in public for the benefit of all. While there very well may be benefits to a merger, so far, I have not seen evidence sufficiently compelling to convince me it is necessary. I am, however, open to being convinced. In my opinion, change can be beneficial, and this change might be for the best. However, I believe it is incumbent on those who propose a change to provide compelling proof. I don't think we are there yet.

In summary please allow us to vote on this significant issue, preferably after providing opportunities for robust discussion.

I look forward to seeing where this process might go.
Audrey

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: June 2, 2022 1:57 PM
To: charla.cosgrove@novascotia.ca
Subject: FW: County council meeting this evening

-----Original Message-----

From: Valerie Haskett-Chugg < >
Sent: May 10, 2022 8:25 AM
To: Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: County council meeting this evening

Good morning Mary. It's great to see sunshine which gets me energized to start gardening. I have been following the group that are questioning the consolidation process. It's very evident this process has been pushed along quickly whether by the consultants or the mayor and warden and I have not yet talked to anyone who is in favour of the format. People need their say and the present meetings that allow you to complete a card and chat with councillors is just not adequate. This process needs to be much more transparent. Comments made by the mayor indicate her preference for consolidation although she says she has not made up her mind. That's a mixed message! There is just not enough information available and until there is, at this evening's council meeting would you please ask for this process to be delayed. I also would like you to ask that a plebiscite be held to allow voters the right to have their say! Both units appear to be operating well without consolidating- it's great that everyone now gets along but merging as one after all this time and with the perceived impression of lack of transparency with the present process change of the process needs to take place. The change needed I feel is to allow constituents the right to vote on such an important issue which will affect everyone in both town and county!
I will attend this evening's meeting !

Best regards. Valerie

Sent from my iPhone

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: June 2, 2022 1:58 PM
To: charla.cosgrove@novascotia.ca
Subject: FW: Amalgamation

From: debbie fougere
Sent: May 9, 2022 9:32 PM
To: Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Cc: Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; jdunbar@antigonish.ns.ca; Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Amalgamation

You need to give this decision to the people of the county !

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: June 2, 2022 1:58 PM
To: charla.cosgrove@novascotia.ca
Subject: FW: Need for plebiscite or election for large issues

From: Adam Powers <...>
Sent: May 9, 2022 8:53 PM
To: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Need for plebiscite or election for large issues

Hello councillor McNamara:

My name is Adam Powers, and I live in Frankville. I moved here in September 2020. I am originally from Cape Breton, but had been living away in Ontario for 20 years.

I am writing about the proposed consolidation between Antigonish town and county.

I have major concerns about the proposed vote without meaningful public voice on this issue. I am neither for or against the change yet; however, I am against the change being proposed since it is deeply anti-democratic.

In order to make a change like this, there either has to be one of two things done:

1. Have an election and campaign openly with your position on whether you will vote for the joining or not. People can choose candidates accordingly.
2. Have a plebiscite if it is important to get a decision sooner.

In both of these options, the council must provide a lot of information to people—even hire people to study the merger first, then provide that unbiased information to the people, especially regarding finances and how services would be affected.

I am a well educated person and have the ability to make informed choices. The people who live here are adults, and the councils of town and county need to treat us as such and give us information to help us decide what is in our best interests in the future.

As an adult, I can also hear other people's opinions without getting upset or yelling. Letting people talk and then vote is civilized. Democracy can be messy, but is an important principal upon which our country is founded. Please respect it and push for a plebiscite or build the next election around this issue.

Adam Powers

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: June 2, 2022 1:59 PM
To: charla.cosgrove@novascotia.ca
Subject: FW: Prospective Consolidation of Antigonish Town and County Municipalities

From: Audrey MacDonald
Sent: May 9, 2022 8:10 PM
To: mayor@townofantigonish.ca; wgormier@townofantigonish.ca; dmacinnis@townofantigonish.ca; scameron@townofantigonish.ca; amurray@townofantigonish.ca; mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca; droberts@townofantigonish.ca; Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Re: Prospective Consolidation of Antigonish Town and County Municipalities

I feel compelled to provide my perspective on the prospective merger of the municipalities of the town and county of Antigonish.

Firstly, I commend you for your willingness to engage in municipal politics with the intent of addressing the needs of your constituents. Further, from what I have seen in the few years since I have returned to the area, the positive cooperation between the two councils has resulted in programs and activities beneficial to the residents of both municipalities. That seems to be, in no small part, because of the individuals who are representing us. However, sometimes an issue goes beyond the regular mandate provided by the electorate and, as such, requires a different approach. This proposed merger is such an issue. It was not on the "agenda" during the last municipal election; therefore, I suggest our mayor, warden, and councillors have not been provided a mandate to decide an issue of this magnitude for us. Instead, to me at least, it feels like a rather paternalistic approach.

I am adding my name to the list of constituents requesting a plebiscite.

Initially, I was rather ambivalent about the issue. I understood information was to be gathered; research was to be conducted. I anticipated the results of this investigation -- both pros and cons -- would be presented and we would be provided the opportunity to make an informed decision either through what would be my preferred format -- a plebiscite -- or, at the very least, as an election issue at the time of the next municipal election. Unfortunately, that currently is not the case. Instead, I feel we are being provided a less than balanced picture leading to a vote by some of our elected officials.

In addition, I am requesting a pause in the process so that a more robust and transparent approach might occur. I have attended a drop-in session and, while I appreciated the willingness of the CAO and consultant with whom I spoke to provide answers to my questions, I felt I left knowing little more than I knew upon arrival. I also appreciated my discussion with Councillor Dunbar. His track record of standing up for his

constituents is commendable. However, he, like many of our councillors, is reserving judgement until he has gathered more input from the public. I believe the more traditional town-hall type meeting will provide that input in a far more clear and transparent manner. I believe it is important for individuals to be able to ask their questions and share their concerns in a manner that allows others to also gain information.

Currently, I really don't know whether we would benefit from the proposed merger. I, too, require more time and information to make an informed decision, should I be allowed to vote on this issue. I have read the literature posted on the website, which leans heavily toward the advantages, and followed whatever social media information I have been able to access, which leans heavily toward the disadvantages. This debate needs to be held in public for the benefit of all. While there very well may be benefits to a merger, so far, I have not seen evidence sufficiently compelling to convince me it is necessary. I am, however, open to being convinced. In my opinion, change can be beneficial, and this change might be for the best. However, I believe it is incumbent on those who propose a change to provide compelling proof. I don't think we are there yet.

In summary please allow us to vote on this significant issue, preferably after providing opportunities for robust discussion.

I look forward to seeing where this process might go.

Audrey

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: June 2, 2022 1:59 PM
To: 'charla.cosgrove@novascotia.ca'
Subject: FW: Consolidation process

From: Jeanne Doiron
Sent: May 9, 2022 5:00 PM
To: Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Consolidation process

Good afternoon everyone

I am writing to you all today out of concern with regards to the consultation process regarding consolidation of town and county.

As a resident of the county, I am calling on all of you who were elected by your constituents to put this issue back to your constituents and am therefore requesting a plebiscite. This issue is not an issue that any of you campaigned on and if this decision is made by the residents, it is not a decision any of you will have to wear going forward. Regardless of how this turns out, the right thing to do is to allow residents to have their voice heard by allowing them to cast a vote.

I urge you to slow down this process and bring this to your council meeting agenda tomorrow evening and do the right thing by calling a plebiscite on this issue.

Sincerely

Jeanne Doiron
District 5 resident

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: June 2, 2022 2:00 PM
To: charla.cosgrove@novascotia.ca
Subject: FW: Consolidation

From: Debbie Cameron MacDonald
Sent: May 9, 2022 12:17 PM
To: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Re: Consolidation

The exact words I have used. Flimsy and contrived.

Use the power of your lawyer's opinion. Bullies hate it when you stand up to them.

Sent from my iPhone

On May 8, 2022, at 4:34 PM, Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca> wrote:

Debbie;

Thanks for the support, yes, I have consulted a lawyer and he has provided me a legal opinion but it's all I can say right now. It was a flimsy excuse in my opinion.

From: Debbie Cameron MacDonald
Sent: May 8, 2022 7:40 AM
To: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Re: Consolidation

Thank you for your response, Harris.

I agree with you.

What must be especially frustrating for you is that your voice is being silenced. You are being denied a vote on a very flimsy excuse. Have you consulted a lawyer?

Debbie

Sent from my iPhone

On May 8, 2022, at 7:11 AM, Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca> wrote:

Debbie;

My name is Harris McNamara, Councillor for District 9 (Havre Boucher) and from the beginning I have been against amalgamation. This is being rushed through with no pros and cons, a cost benefit analysis needs to be done on every component of amalgamation. Most importantly town & county residents won't have a say in what happens. A few councillors will make the decision for you. We need a plebiscite, that way 15000 county residents will make the decision. Some don't want a plebiscite because they know amalgamation will not pass.
If you want more information, please give me a call at 318-8333.

Harris

From: Debbie Cameron MacDonald

Sent: May 4, 2022 4:52 PM

To: mayor@townofantigonish.ca; wcormier@townofantigonish.ca; dmacinnis@townofantigonish.ca; scameron@townofantigonish.ca; Andrew Murray <amurray@townofantigonish.ca>; mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca; droberts@townofantigonish.ca; Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>

Subject: Consolidation

Dear Mayor, Warden, and Councillors,

I am writing this today with a heavy heart. I have studied all the information provided on Consolidation and have attended the first online engagement session. These served to trigger far more questions than there were answers. This seems to be the same result for most concerned folks. I do not see the benefits of Consolidation outweighing the risks and expenses. To be clear, I am not in favour of Consolidation nor the process being followed.

Despite your protestations to the opposite, Consolidation seems like a done deal without having listened to the residents of Antigonish Town and County. These citizens who ask questions or express that they are not in favour of Consolidation are deemed to be misinformed and not forward-thinking. This does a great disservice to your constituents.

You, our elected or acclaimed representatives, were chosen by the people to govern within an established framework of government, not to change the framework of government, unless the people agree. The way to determine if the people agree is through a vote. Just as a vote is required to elect a government, a vote is required to change a government in a democracy because the vote gives the people a direct say in a decision that will affect everyone, now and in the future. That is the democratic way.

To propose such a huge change at the height of the pandemic in Antigonish, was either short-sighted or a deliberate attempt to hope that folks might not take notice, or would be too cautious to attend an in-person session. Their non-attendance is being misconstrued by the proponents of Consolidation as acquiescence. When the residents do take the risk and attend an in-person session or take one in online, they quickly find out that no one is taking note of their concerns and they are receiving glib answers to their questions.

The current engagement format is intentionally isolating. No one gets to hear what concerns others have and the non-answers they are receiving. This way you are better able to control the narrative. The Mayor has expressed many times that a plebiscite wouldn't yield accurate results because people would be operating under a "false narrative". This, along with other sound bites from the consulting firm, has done nothing to alleviate the distrust of this whole process by the residents of both Town and County. The only "false narrative" that we can see is the one being pushed by exclaiming only the pros of Consolidation and the statements that indicate that Town and County will not be able to work together effectively without it. How quickly you seem to have forgotten all the good projects completed with Town and County co-operation. To name a few: People's Place Library, The Antigonish Arena, The Eastern NS Exhibition, The R.K. MacDonald Guest Home, Special Olympics, plus many, many more.

If any of you had run on a platform of Consolidation in the last election, I highly suspect we would be looking at a very different configuration of elected officials. If you were so sure that most citizens would support Consolidation, then you would have chosen the UARB route with its mandatory plebiscite rather than working through the province and very expensive consultants to control how much information is released, and how questions are answered.

Several of you have indicated that you will not be re-offering in 2024. Is this the legacy with which you wish to leave - destroying the Town and County and leaving it to others to muddle through the chaos? For those of you thinking of re-offering, choosing to go along with Consolidation at the urging of the Mayor, Warden, CAOs, and consultants rather than listening to your constituents may find you not getting re-elected. After the next election, you won't be there, but you will have taken Antigonish with you when you left.

The latest Facebook posts purporting to answer common questions are patronizing, dismissive, and do not contain substantive answers to the very real concerns and questions raised. To be told repeatedly that most answers will not be available until after Consolidation occurs amounts to "buying a pig in a bag." Furthermore, the Mayor has been quoted in the Chronicle Herald as saying that Consolidation is not a given. That she, the Warden, and the councillors are open to the wishes of the people. Then she hastily added that the only councillors who have made up their minds are those who are against Consolidation, as if this was somehow disparaging to them. Today's quote from The Reporter, "We want to become one," dispels any illusion that the Mayor is unbiased and open-minded concerning Consolidation.

I implore all of you to take a step back from this extremely rushed and manipulated proposal and look carefully at what can be achieved by maintaining the status quo with cooperation between Town and County. This decision should be put to a vote by all residents.

Sincerely yours,

Debbie Cameron MacDonald

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: June 2, 2022 2:00 PM
To: charla.cosgrove@novascotia.ca
Subject: FW: Exploration of Consolidation

From: MACDONALD, Yvette <
Sent: May 8, 2022 6:21 PM
To: Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Exploration of Consolidation

Good evening everyone,

I am a ratepayer in District 1 and have already sent a couple of emails to my Councillor, Mary MacLellan, explaining my position on this proposed Consolidation of the County of Antigonish and the Town of Antigonish. I had attended the meeting at the Minitrail Community Center and did have an opportunity to speak with the Mayor, the Warden and a couple of Councillors as well as one of the consultants. I found the whole format very frustrating and felt that it would leave room for miscommunication. The County Connect had simply been received the day before, on Monday, in the mail and then our session was on Tuesday. I understand that we are all busy and that does not mean that we cannot take the time to do our research prior to such meetings but even with all of that, there is still not enough information being given to us all. I will be honest as I felt slighted as it was insulting to hear that we as ratepayers would not be individually voting on this and if I hear just one more time about "historical low voter turnout"that is even more insulting. I can tell you with great certainty that my Grandfather and all other Veterans did not sacrifice so that a select few could be making these extremely important decisions!!

I consider myself open-minded most of the time and if given the information required can make informed decisions. That being said I do not feel that we have been given enough information and I don't feel that the Councillors, Mayor or Warden have enough either!! I guess that we are all looking for fairness, equity and above all transparency in any process.

Problems with the Consulting Process.....where do I start? Was it strategic to have these sessions on the heels of the restrictions being lifted when Omicron was circulating and individuals have either contracted the virus or have been in close contact so were not able to attend a session? And yes there were other options either via phone or online sessions...well if someone isn't feeling well then I am sorry but they aren't going to be able to focus on the information given. Come on there should be some common sense and if someone has to have a checkmark besides something on their scorecard then speak to it all and make the right decision. We need leaders!! As far as the Councillors go my heart goes out to them as I am sure that this wasn't something that they ever thought that they would be on the hook to do. I asked my Councillor how she was expected to keep track of all the feedback from her ratepayers....does she have a list with all of our names and if and when we contact her to discuss is she expected to keep a tally. Why would they be expected to do this? This is just another area where there is a disconnect and disrespect for our Councillors. I would never expect her to have these extra duties....a disregard of time management indeed.

Then I hear that 2 of the Councillors are not able to vote because of a Conflict of Interest. After all that I had seen up to that point and then for this to come up I guess that really was it for me. We live in Antigonish and as all of you know we are all connected one way or another or know of someone who is....I am sure that if you dug deep enough with the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act you would find that it might just apply to you all!! I want my right to vote!!

The next important part for me would be the financials. We all run our households and understand budgets so please do not insult my intelligence. We need more information on the costs associated with the Proposed Consolidation and good leaders would be explaining what the benefits would be if indeed there were any at all. Someone had asked one of the consultants at one of the sessions how much it was costing for the "Consulting Process" and he replied that "He wasn't at liberty to disclose that information." So then the Mayor was asked and she gave an amount and then a Councillor was asked and he gave a different amount.....where is the transparency and why wasn't this information given? And please do not think that I am naïve enough to think that it is ok as this was coming from a different silo, the Provincial Government.....it is all taxpayers' money!!! Even the 2 year "Transition Fund" would be coming from the Provincial Government (so again, all of our money) and then afterwards look out as the costs will be truly shown and too late to reverse. What about the policing costs that will increase if the Proposed Consolidation does proceed?

I will end on a high note.....I do appreciate that The Mayor and the County Warden have a great working relationship. Why would we expect any less? I do understand that in the past that wasn't necessarily the case and professionally speaking it isn't always easy. That being said though it does not justify wanting two completely different entities that are in great financial shape to become one when representation and so many other factors will be changed forever. We do not need to be going backwards.

"People will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you make them feel" - **Maya Angelou**

I am definitely a "NO" at this time due to lack of information and/or a skewing of information.

Thanks,

Yvette MacDonald, BA

Retail Development Officer - Atlantic Region | Canada Post

[Unit 1- 133 Church St | Antigonish NS, B2G 2R8](#)

I respectfully acknowledge that the land of which I'm working in is located in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and traditional lands of the Mi'kmaq people. The Mi'kmaq are caretakers of this land in past, present, and future.

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: June 2, 2022 2:01 PM
To: charla.cosgrove@novascotia.ca
Subject: FW: Want and request and demand a plebiscite on such a critical decision. This is not what councillors were elected to do.

From: Mike Moeller
Sent: May 8, 2022 5:42 PM
To: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Re: Want and request and demand a plebiscite on such a critical decision. This is not what councillors were elected to do.

Hang in there Harris and make sure that you at least use your voice. These are threats in my opinion to stifle you and Sean.

On 5/8/2022 4:42 PM, Harris McNamara wrote:

Mike;

I supported the exploration of consolidation as I thought it would be explore. What it has turned out in my opinion is a group of consultants that are not exploring but leading the consolidation along with the warden, mayor and CAOs. I think the only democratic way is to have a plebiscite now as the process has been tainted. It a rush job and information available is not sufficient.

Have a great afternoon.

harris

From: Mike Moeller
Sent: May 8, 2022 11:43 AM
To: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Re: Want and request and demand a plebiscite on such a critical decision. This is not what councillors were elected to do.

You are welcome, Harris. I am so opposed to the process of not having the residents vote on this. Whether it passes after we all vote, at least that is democratic.

Also, did the County Council already break their interpretation of "conflict rules" if they allowed you and Sean to vote on the "exploration" of consolidation?

Thanks

Mike

On 5/8/2022 6:39 AM, Harris McNamara wrote:

Mike;

Thanks for the support, really appreciate. I have a retained a lawyer and have made residents of District 9 aware in a public meeting that I may not be able to vote as their representative as the fine and possible jail time is certainly a deterrent. As you know legal fees are expensive and to fight this is not something I should put my family through.
Harris

From: Mike Moeller
Sent: May 6, 2022 7:06 PM
To: Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Re: Want and request and demand a plebiscite on such a critical decision. This is not what councillors were elected to do.

Hi Sean and Mr McNamara,

I just want you to know that what the County has advised you of regarding being possibly put in jail for a year or a 25,000 dollar fine for a conflict of interest, should be made public. This is not a conflict in my opinion and I have been involved with Unions all my life when people were in an actual conflict. It is one thing to recuse yourself for personal reasons that you may have, but for the County to hire a lawyer{ to threaten you and Mr McNamara with jail time and a fine is wrong. Mr. McNamara is also not in conflict, as his Daughter is an adult working for the town, and she has a family. that is inferring that he could not vote without his Daughter's benefits, and you would vote to benefit yourself. i find it insulting to say the least.

If I were representing you two, I would investigate this threat from the County to you both, as it is keeping both of you from voting and voicing your opinions on this consolidation/amalgamation//merge of the County and Town. It is also possible discrimination, as well as harassment to you both are being brought forward by the County. Please look into this, and in my personal experience with being an elected National officer for a Union for 31 years, you are not in any conflict for working for either the county or town. This is about councillors not being able to vote and keeping you both from voting. I would seek legal advice, from a lawyer, paid by the County Council, just as they had legal advise paid by County Council.

Thanks

Mike

----- Forwarded Message -----

Subject:We want and request and demand a plebiscite on such a critical decision. This is not what council elected to do.
Date:Fri, 29 Apr 2022 15:37:21 -0300
From:Mike Moeller
To:"maclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca, mayor@townofar

Dear Councillors of Antigonish Town and County

I am a resident of the County of Antigonish and I demand that we have a plebiscite and open town and county halls with all people able to hear each others questions and answers on the pros and cons of amalgamation/consolidation. In no manner, should this consolidation of Town and County power that the councillors that do not want a vote, be exercised on my behalf with their vote. You are all residents also, and your vote should be one of 20,000 in the Town and County. This is democracy not working for the people, when you have the majority of councillors taking it upon themselves to vote for consolidation of two entities (town and county) without giving the people the opportunity to vote. We never elected you councillors to make such a decision. I was involved Nationally and Regionally and Locally with my Union for over 30 years, being elected every three years. If it ever came to merging our Union with another union or having a strike vote (both of these examples are analogies of what is happening with your councils), the members of both unions were given the opportunity to vote or the members voted to strike or not, were given the right and opportunity to vote.. We the elected Officers, NEVER would even dream of voting on something of that magnitude, which you councillors who do not want a vote/plebiscite are doing. We did not give you that right, and you do not have that right to speak on my behalf of something so important. And who decided to have almost a quarter of a million dollars spent on "consultants" that are not even from our community, to answer the questions that we elected you to answer? If the councillors will not give the residents the right to vote, then there should be legal action taken to stop this pre-determined decision. Being an elected official is at times thankless, and it is a hard task. However, the process taken by the majority of both Councils in this dissolution of either the town or County, called consolidation, must have a plebiscite. Pictou gave their residents a voice and vote. The comments made that a vote was decided against, because we do not have the information and it would be based on emotions, was actually insulting to say the least at what some councillors think of who they are supposed to represent. To say it will be divisive is also not within the knowledge of councillors. If we do not have a vote, then you will see divisiveness, but then it will be TOO LATE to rectify the concerns of thousands of residents. Why not run on this campaign in the next electon, if you are so confidant? This whole process smells.

Thanks

Mike Moeller-County of Antigonish

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: June 2, 2022 2:02 PM
To: charla.cosgrove@novascotia.ca
Subject: FW: You are our voice

-----Original Message-----

From: Susan Cameron
Sent: May 8, 2022 3:57 PM
To: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Re: You are our voice

Mr. McNamara,

Thank you for the response and I'm very glad to hear your stance on the matter. Good luck standing against those who want their hidden agenda met. We're behind you! Susan and Owen Cameron

Have a great one.

> On May 8, 2022, at 6:46 AM, Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca> wrote:

>

> Susan;

>

> Thank you for the kind words! From the beginning I have been against

> amalgamation. It does not make sense to county residents as we are in the best financial position ever. This is being rushed through with no pros and cons, a cost benefit analysis needs to be done on every component of amalgamation . Most importantly county residents won't have a say in what happens. Six councillors (maybe less) will make the decision for you. We need a plebiscite, that way 15000 county residents will make the decision. I agree with you If you want more information, please give me a call at 318-8333.

>

> -----Original Message-----

> From: Susan Cameron

> Sent: May 5, 2022 11:05 AM

> To: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>

> Subject: You are our voice

>

> Mr. McNamara,

>

> We are very concerned about the upcoming vote by councillors regarding the proposed consolidation of Antigonish Town and County. We are also extremely disappointed that after 20 years the councils are revisiting this amalgamation issue. Call it what you may but it is still amalgamation, only this time you don't have to go through the URB. Shameful.

>

> As our representatives (and it states this in the Responsibilities of Municipal Councils of Nova Scotia) it is "your responsibility to govern the local area in a way that is democratic and accountable to the local communities that elected them" and also to "ensure that local residents have a say in decisions they take", and for you to "represent collective interests of the whole community".

>

> We don't see any of this happening. Remember what you swore to?The push from Municipal affairs and the Mayor and Warden is unprecedented bullying in a very subtle way. It is your responsibility to correct this and stand up against such flagrant dictatorship.

>

> You need to own up to the responsibilities put on you when you were elected. We expect to see us either get a say in a plebiscite or for you to vote down the consolidation when it comes to a vote by council.

>

> Susan and Owen Cameron

> Taxpayers in the County of Antigonish

>

>

>

>

>

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: June 2, 2022 2:03 PM
To: charla.cosgrove@novascotia.ca
Subject: FW: Amalgamation

-----Original Message-----

From: Donnie Chisholm
Sent: May 8, 2022 8:21 AM
To: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Re: Amalgamation

Thank you for responding and yes I fully agree with you and the councillors that are against this amalgamation it is time for the public to have their say

Many people know that this is a move made by politicians that are scared of the voters

Shan Cameron has been very good at keeping us informed over our morning coffee but I do appreciate your concern for the people and I do appreciate your reply as I have not heard back from any other county councillors and if I have any further concerns I will be in touch with you

Donnie

Sent from my iPhone

> On May 8, 2022, at 6:21 AM, Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca> wrote:

>

> Donnie;

> My name is Harris McNamara, Councillor for District 9 (Havre Boucher) and from the beginning I have been against amalgamation. It does not make sense to county residents as we are in the best financial position ever. This is being rushed through with no pros and cons, a cost benefit analysis needs to be done on every component of amalgamation . Most importantly county residents won't have a say in what happens. Six councillors (maybe less) will make the decision for you. We need a plebiscite, that way 15000 county residents will make the decision. Some don't want a plebiscite because they know it will not pass.

> If you want more information, please give me a call at 318-8333.

> Harris

>

> -----Original Message-----

> **From:** Donnie Chisholm

> **Sent:** May 5, 2022 8:17 PM

> **To:** Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>

> **Cc:** Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shawn

> Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Gary Mattie

> <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca;

> mayor@townofantigonish.ca; scameron@townofantigonish.ca; Bill

> MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; John Dunbar

> <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Harris McNamara

> <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>

> **Subject:** Amalgamation

>

> Hi Mr Stewart

> I like many other residents of the town and county feel that we have a

> right to vote on this very important issue just to be told that the

> councillors can make a decision for us is wrong as it was never campaigned on And if it is such a great move why are the councillors afraid of our vote Both Councils are pushing forward with the amalgamation very swiftly so what is the big rush councillors have not held a proper meeting where the public could asked fair questions and hopefully get honest answers and just maybe we could learn about the hidden agenda I fail to understand why two of the councillors cannot vote as they should have a right to represent their voters About conflict the councillors should also be looking at Mary Farrell who's husband works at the RK MacDonald and the Wardens wife is a board member which is owned by the town and county Furthermore we would like to know what the town is bringing to the table as the county has a lot more to offer all that we in the county will get is higher taxes and less service and of course paying for the town infrastructure

> It is time to give all residents a vote

> Donnie Chisholm

>

>

>

>

> Sent from my iPad

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: June 2, 2022 2:03 PM
To: charla.cosgrove@novascotia.ca
Subject: FW: CONSOLIDATION OF THE COUNTY AND TOWN

From: Angela DeCoste
Sent: May 6, 2022 1:53 PM
To: WCORMIER@TOWNOFANTIGONISH.CA; DMACINNIS@TOWNOFANTIGONISH.CA; SCAMERON@TOWNOFANTIGONISH.CA; AMURRAY@TOWNOFANTIGONISH.CA; MFARRELL@TOWNOFANTIGONISH.CA; DROBERTS@TOWNOFANTIGONISH.CA; MMACELLAN@ANTIGONISHCOUNTY.NS.CA; Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; BMACFARLANE@ANTIGONISCOUNTY.NS.CA
Subject: CONSOLIDATION OF THE COUNTY AND TOWN

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows

Dear Counsellors,

My husband and I feel that we are not given a choice to voice our opinion for this consolidation. You are providing us with too many questions that you can't provide answers too. We think we have the right to have a plebiscite for such an important decision to be made for the future of ourselves, our children and grandchildren.

WE WANT A PLEBISCITE TO HAVE A SAY IN OUR FUTURE.

Sincerely,

Angela DeCoste

Colin DeCoste

Old Linwood Road
Frankville, NS B0H 1P0

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: June 2, 2022 2:04 PM
To: charla.cosgrove@novascotia.ca
Subject: FW: Consolidation of town and county

From: Tony Wood
Sent: May 6, 2022 12:23 PM
To: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Fwd: Consolidation of town and county

Sent from my iPad

Begin forwarded message:

From: Tony Wood
Date: May 6, 2022 at 12:16:01 PM ADT
To: "hmcnamara@antigonis.ns.ca" <hmcnamara@antigonis.ns.ca>
Cc: "gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca" <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Fwd: Consolidation of town and county

Sent from my iPad

From:
Date: May 6, 2022 at 12:04:33 PM ADT
To: omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca
Cc: gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca, jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca,
sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca, rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca,
mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca, dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca,
hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca, bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca,
harris.mcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca
Subject: Consolidation of town and county

Please be aware we are against the proposed consolidation with the town! We don't understand the rush to make this decision. We feel we have the right to vote, especially in light of the fact that our councillor may be exempt from the vote to a perceived conflict of interest. The people of the county deserve to be heard and we need to individually vote in a county wide plebiscite!

Thank you
Marion and Tony Wood
Auld's Cove

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: June 2, 2022 2:04 PM
To: charla.cosgrove@novascotia.ca
Subject: FW: Anne McKeough opinion piece

From: Richard Gilbert
Sent: May 6, 2022 10:44 AM
To: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Anne McKeough opinion piece

Hi Harris,

I am in full agreement with the opinions expressed in the Herald by Anne McKeough. (<https://www.saltwire.com/nova-scotia/opinion/anne-mckeough-antigonish-politicians-must-listen-to-voters-on-amalgamation-100725418/>) and would like to chat with you sometime (or write) to get your position on this fraught proposal.

I hope to be allowed to go to the local presentation, this Wednesday sometime, I believe, to learn more.

Yours
Richard

Sent from my iPad

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: June 2, 2022 2:04 PM
To: charla.cosgrove@novascotia.ca
Subject: FW: Consolidation Process

From: Elaine MacLean >
Sent: May 6, 2022 12:10 AM
To: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Consolidation Process

Dear Councillor Harris McNamara,

While I appreciate that being responsible for governing The Municipality of the County of Antigonish must be a difficult task, I feel that it is important for you to know that I am not supportive of the current process for determining whether or not the municipality consolidates with the town. I have 4 main concerns and questions too numerous for an email exchange. I hope to have those answered when my first concern is resolved.

1. The lack of a reasonable and democratic process for consultation. A drop-in, kiosk style interaction does not meet the needs of the community for information sharing. We need a town hall style meeting in which questions/answers are heard by all.
2. The timeline is too short. This question of consolidation is going from a "consideration" to a "final vote" by councillors in too short a time. What's the rush? Slow down and do this right.
3. The information being shared is not balanced. It was compiled by consultants showing only the positives for a consolidation. It can't be all positive. We need a fair analysis of the pros/cons.
4. The citizens of the Municipality of the County of Antigonish have no vote. The question of consolidation must be put to the citizens. Otherwise this huge decision which will impact everything about our day to day lives in the county for generations to come is being made by a few Councillors who frankly, with all due respect, appear to have little knowledge of the repercussions now, and more importantly, for the future. This question needs more consideration and study prior to making the yes/no decision.

Thank you for listening.

Elaine MacLean
Old Beaver Rd.
James River

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: June 2, 2022 2:05 PM
To: charla.cosgrove@novascotia.ca
Subject: FW: Plea for a plebiscite for consolidation

-----Original Message-----

From: Mike and Shirley Davidson
Sent: May 5, 2022 8:21 PM
To: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Plea for a plebiscite for consolidation

Dear Ms. McNamara,

After attending the community meeting about consolidation I am asking all councillors to allow community members to have a vote in this process!

Sincerely,
Shirley Davidson
Old Antigonish Road
Afton B0H1A0

Sent from my iPad

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: June 2, 2022 2:05 PM
To: charla.cosgrove@novascotia.ca
Subject: FW: Input to Consultations on Consolidation
Attachments: consolidation.docx

From: Helen Kennedy >
Sent: May 4, 2022 9:36 AM
To: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Fwd: Input to Consultations on Consolidation

Please see below. Unfortunately, I misspelled your name the first time around.

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Helen Kennedy
Date: Wed, May 4, 2022 at 9:32 AM
Subject: Input to Consultations on Consolidation
To: Laurie M. Boucher <loucher@townofantigonish.ca>, Mary Farrell <mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca>, <dmacinnis@townofantigonish.ca>, <droberts@townofantigonish.ca>, Andrew Murray <amurray@townofantigonish.ca>, <scameron@townofantigonish.ca>, <wcormier@townofantigonish.ca>, <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, <hmacnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Cc: <glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>, <kgorman@townofantigonish.ca>, <ilawrence@townofantigonish.ca>, <shirlyn.donovan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>

Please accept the attached letter as my contribution to your deliberations on consolidation.
I hope you find it helpful.

Helen Kennedy
St. Mary's St.
Antigonish, N.S.

To the Members of the Councils of the Town and County of Antigonish:

I would like to take this opportunity to comment on your approach to the issue of consolidating the municipal councils for the town and county of Antigonish. I have been following this debate because as a resident of the town, I have a stake in this matter as do all my fellow citizens. I also feel I have a responsibility to contribute to the discussion; for it is a rare and special privilege to have the chance to shape the model of how one is governed. I attended the public session on May 2, 2022 and offer a few observations which I hope will be helpful.

I grew up in the county of Antigonish. After graduating from St. Francis Xavier University, I attended Queen's University where I obtained a Masters in Arts in Political Studies. I then went on to become a career public servant at the federal level where for more than thirty years I provided advice to various governments on policies and programs in the areas of culture, national unity, broadcasting and telecommunications. Stakeholder and citizen consultations were always key. In my last position, I was the Director-General responsible for supporting the federally-appointed expert panel in its review of the legislation governing Canada's broadcasting and telecommunications sector. This included the design and management of a national consultation process which informed the final report and recommendations to government.

Having been involved in a number of governance related initiatives, I can say that I think you are going about this the right way. I see the strategic value in Councils taking the initiative. Provincial governments across the country have been mandating amalgamations since the mid-nineties in response to their own internal political dynamics. There is a considerable literature on the results and implications of these exercises; suffice it to say that it strikes me as very smart to approach it as a voluntary and collaborative effort now rather than have it imposed possibly at a future date. It is worth noting that the Mandate Letter to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing in September 2021 specifies that he must "review the Municipal Act, Municipal Charters, including their size and scope, the concept of shared service authorities, with a goal of refining the delivery and governance model for all municipalities in the province". The Department of Municipal Affairs and Housing's Business Plan for 2022-2023 indicates that such a review of the Act is underway and that it will support the Town and County of Antigonish as they explore consolidation. Given the generality of the language in the Minister's Mandate letter and the uncertainty of the outcome of the legislative review, it is much better that our local representatives and the staff who have the knowledge and expertise should drive the process, should it go forward. The lines of accountability could not be clearer which helps makes our democracy effective.

On speed and timing:

I know some have questioned the speed and timing of the process. I do not believe the process is being rushed; you voted unanimously in September 2021 to explore the option. That was made public, as was your promise to conduct an open and inclusive consultation process. This gave us all time to do our own thinking and to come to the table prepared to have fruitful conversations on the issue. Many avenues have been provided to have our voices heard, both in person and online, which means that the process is open and inclusive. As mentioned earlier, I attended one of the public sessions and received clear answers to my questions. My sister, Mary Farrell, has been impressed with how constructive the comments and concerns have been as she has attended a number of sessions and has had conversations with various individuals. Indeed, this process was recently cited by Ray Bates in his editorial to the

Casket as a good example of a government seeking to make a decision based on “stakeholder and taxpayer input”.

With respect to timing, while there is no good time for a bad idea, it is never too early for a good one – in this case to explore the possibility of consolidation. Practically speaking, should councils proceed, the current timeline has the advantage of allowing for an orderly transition to the new model in time for the next municipal election.

On whether consolidation is the only option.....

Consolidation clearly is not the only option and from what I see, it is not being positioned that way in the consultation process. One must not confuse myth-busting with a final decision. For Council members to listen and gather as much information as they can before making a final decision lends credibility to the process.

Councils could decide to maintain the status quo. The *Municipal Government Act* also provides that municipalities may be amalgamated or some or all of a territory may be annexed by the Utility and Review Board (UARB) on application by the Minister, the Municipality or a sufficient number of electors.

In weighing the options on whether or not to proceed with consolidation, I think it is useful to place Antigonish within the larger provincial, federal and even international context. Antigonish is competing with other towns and cities, many of which are larger and better resourced, to attract financial support, investment and human talent. Given all the challenges we face – from health care to affordable housing to economic development and climate change, it only makes sense to me to find ways to maximize our presence and our leverage. While it is true that our current councils are working very well together, this is inherently fragile because it relies on the incumbents and is therefore not a guarantee of ongoing collaboration.

On not all questions are being answered.....

In my experience, it is unrealistic to expect anyone to answer every conceivable question in a governance exercise such as this. What is needed is a step by step approach which is orderly, transparent and grounded in general principles that will guide future work on specific issues. Therefore, I was reassured to see that Councils adopted a set of such guiding principles. These principles cover both the outcomes that are desired for the municipality and the way in which the government will function. Should consolidation proceed, these principles, or ones that have been adjusted to reflect the public’s input, will not only help Councils make further decisions on specifics, such as boundaries or staffing issues, but that they will also be instruments of accountability for the public.

In addition to the principles, other substantive materials have been provided, thereby ensuring we are all working from a common fact base – another necessary element to a healthy democracy. These materials help counter misinformation about the impacts of consolidation. It is a sad fact that information calculated to alarm or cause fear spreads more quickly on social media than accurate and sometimes more nuanced information.

I understand that comments and concerns are being recorded and a full report will be made to Councils. I would encourage Councils to give due consideration to making that report public. This would have the dual benefit of demonstrating to people that their voices have been heard and of informing the public on what all the concerns or questions were during the process.

On the need for a plebiscite:

It will be up to Councils of course to decide whether a plebiscite is a good idea. In my view, it should not be necessary. The quality of the information and the extensiveness of the opportunities for the public to provide substantive input to the process would seem to me to be a better way for Councils to obtain a real sense of what the public's questions and concerns are which would then govern the final decision on whether or not to proceed.

The process has been managed in a way that is fully consistent with democratic principles. Clear lines of accountability have been established; decisions have been communicated openly and on a regular basis, research and facts have been shared with the public to inform the conversation and multiple ways have been provided to allow for public input. It is my hope that there been a significant level of engagement.

It would seem to me that if Councils can demonstrate that issues and concerns raised by the public can be addressed, that would be sufficient to justify a decision to proceed with the next steps in consolidation. Conversely, if the public has identified an insurmountable problem with the option, you will have the justification needed to deny going forward. Finally, there would be future opportunities for public input, particularly when it comes to the important issue of establishing electoral districts by the Transition Committee and the UARB before final decisions are made.

My understanding also is that the exploration of consolidation follows upon a deep process of engagement with the community on a strategic plan – meaning that the priorities for this area are well known and have been developed in consultation with the community.

Leadership with a track record of listening, consulting and engaging the community has in my view earned the trust needed to make the call on consolidation. With the talent, cumulative years of experience and commitment to the public interest around these tables, I believe that the people of Antigonish Town and County are in very safe hands.

Helen C. Kennedy

St. Mary's St.

Antigonish, N.S.

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: June 2, 2022 2:05 PM
To: charla.cosgrove@novascotia.ca
Subject: FW: Consolidation

From: Lloyd Mattie
Sent: May 3, 2022 6:56 PM
To: Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ca; Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; rdeveau@antigonish.ns.ca; Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Consolidation

I'd like to hear more understandable information and a vote. We need a voice in this matter. Thank You
Lloyd Mattie

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: June 2, 2022 2:06 PM
To: charla.cosgrove@novascotia.ca
Subject: FW: Consolidation of town and County Letter of Concern
Attachments: County Plebiscite.docx

From: Sharon Desoste <
Sent: May 3, 2022 12:34 PM
To: Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Consolidation of town and County Letter of Concern

Please see attached letter concerning Consolidation

Stay Safe!
Sharon DeCoste
Resident of Antigonish County



Sharon DeCoste
Accounts Manager

P.O. Box 188
North Sydney, NS B2A 3M3
Email:

Website: www.mvosprey.org

M.V. OSPREY LTD.

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Linwood Harbour Road
Monastery, Antigonish County, NS
B0H1W0

May 3, 2022

**Attention: Warden, Deputy Warden & Councillors of the Municipality of
the County of Antigonish**

As a resident of Antigonish County I would like to express my concern with the proposed consolidation of the town and county.

I do not believe that it is in the County's best interest to enter such an agreement without a plebiscite being carried out on an important decision such as this. It shouldn't only be councillors that vote on this matter; but each and every resident should have their say by placing a checkmark in box on a ballot.

I urge you, as our representatives for the county, to demand a plebiscite so we are all able to have our voices heard on this matter.

Best regards,

Sharon DeCoste
Resident of Antigonish County

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: June 2, 2022 2:06 PM
To: charla.cosgrove@novascotia.ca
Subject: FW: Concern about Consolidation -Hoping for a Plebiscite

From: alice mattie
Sent: May 3, 2022 10:22 AM
To: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Re: Concern about Consolidation -Hoping for a Plebiscite

Thanks for responding, Harris and have a great day.

On Saturday, April 30, 2022, 01:12:59 p.m. ADT, Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca> wrote:

Alice;

Thank You!

Harris

From: alice mattie
Sent: April 30, 2022 12:34 PM
To: Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Concern about Consolidation -Hoping for a Plebiscite

Dear County Council:

I am a resident of Antigonish County and have lived here in Bayfield all of my life.

I along with the rest of the residents of this County deserve meaningful consultation on this momentous decision.

I feel that the question of Consolidation should be put to a Plebiscite of all residents.

Sincerely,

Alice Mattie

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: June 2, 2022 2:07 PM
To: charla.cosgrove@novascotia.ca
Subject: FW: Re consolidation

-----Original Message-----

From: Camilla Benoit
Sent: May 3, 2022 12:17 AM
To: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Re consolidation

Good morning Harris

- >
- >
- > I have no doubt you have been working hard at ensuring county residents attend their information session.
- > Both Tony and I are away till the 17 th, however I am following the thread of conversations happening, it is good to see the engagement seeking plebiscite.
- >
- > I wanted to touch base with regards to Pomquet, I am not getting a sense of involvement although their have been a couple of signs posted in the area of Taylor's Rd which could possibly be from the Glen Air estate.
- > I suspect the only group who would be interested is the Fire Dept and they are probably behind Rémi and also receive the highest tax rate.
- > There maybe some folks who would attend but don't be surprised if they don't offer input. The folks in the area keep to themselves (French culture) and most residents work in Antigonish town.
- >
- > Again thanks for your efforts and stay well

Sent from my iPhone

"Practice acts of kindness"

Camilla

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: June 2, 2022 2:07 PM
To: charla.cosgrove@novascotia.ca
Subject: FW: Consolation

-----Original Message-----

From: cory decoste <
Sent: May 2, 2022 8:50 PM
To: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Consolation

> Hi my name is Cory DeCoste I live a Mattie road Antigonish county, I attended the exploration of consolidation meeting at the hall in Tracadie on April, 27/2022. I would like to say that I am totally disgusted with the lack of answers to the very basic questions because of what the 2 councillors called a total lack of transparency, I have lived in this community for 40 years and I believe that a decision to be of this importance should be made by all people who make a contribution to this beautiful community, answers to these basic questions asked tonight will be welcomed with open ears , so I am demanding a plebiscite so we can decide our future as a community the same way we built it together, thanks for your time. Regards, Cory DeCoste.

Sent from my iPhone

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: June 2, 2022 2:07 PM
To: 'charla.cosgrove@novascotia.ca'
Subject: FW: Consolidation

From: Brian Kepez
Sent: May 2, 2022 4:40 PM
To: Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Consolidation

My name is Brian Kepez and I live in Afton Station. I would like to add my name to the others that are calling for a Plebiscite on the issue of consolidation. At the present time I am opposed to the consolidation in its present process. This issue is far too important and far reaching to be left in the hands of a few. I would also ask that the full list of pros and cons that was reached by the consultants hired be made publicly available to all voting residents.

Regards Brian Kepez and Nicole Kepez

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: June 2, 2022 2:08 PM
To: charla.cosgrove@novascotia.ca
Subject: FW: no consolidation
Attachments: Dear Councillors -no consolidation.docx; Hurley To the Councils of the Town of Antigonish and the Municipality.docx

From: Hilda
Sent: May 2, 2022 10:34 AM
To: Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: no consolidation

Dear Councilors,

I attended a community meeting on April 27th, at The Monsignor Donnelly Hall, in Tracadie. I agree with many of my fellow Tracadonians, that consolidation is NOT the way to go for Antigonish County residents. In my opinion, it only benefits the town. I didn't hear of any advantages and/or improvements helpful for the county.

There also didn't seem to be any specific answers to several questions that, we as a small community, had asked. We don't seem to be getting the whole story!

I am writing this letter to voice my disapproval, and to ask that a plebiscite be enacted. I don't want only a handful of people deciding the future of our community.

Yours truly,

William Delorey

To the Councils of the Town of Antigonish and the Municipality,

I am opposed to the consolidation of the Town and County as proposed.

I wish to cite some vast differences between the Town and County; since I have lived in both regions.

1. The Town has an electrical department, whereby it buys power from Nova Scotia Power ,and in turn charges a rate to all customers within the town boundaries. This requires a few employees, such as linesmen, to do all necessary repairs and maintenance to the system. It also has to provide trucks and all equipment necessary to do its job. The county has no such operation; all is covered by Nova Scotia Power.
2. The town has to pave its streets, lanes, avenues, etc. within its boundaries. As well as keep crosswalk markings, street signs (ex: St. Mary's St.) and all directional markings on roadways up to date and visible. It also has to maintain the traffic lights (ex. Main and College St.).

To the best of my knowledge, all of the above is the responsibility of the Department of Transportation, for the County.

3. The Town has to provide for winter plowing of all the streets and salting of them. This involves more trucks, equipment for snow removal, salt trucks, and any related equipment to do this effectively. More manpower is required as well; again, the Department of Transportation would be responsible for all roads within the County.

Number 2 & 3 probably requires about 40-50 % of the budget in each and every year. I can well imagine this figure is extremely high.

I, and all county residents, should not have to bear the burden of the finances, since the County has enough expenses for its own operations.

The town also has a much older water and sewer system, therefore experiencing more breaks and repairs. The county systems are newer, but have to be maintained too; we are susceptible to breaks as well.

The only way I could support consolidation of the two bodies, would be to maintain the two tax rates (County and Town separately) as exists now.

This should be an easy fix, since both could maintain separate income and expense statements, to keep our rates down. This doesn't mean that they cannot have one bank account and put all revenues into one, and pay all expenses from that one account. I have been doing accounting and budgeting for forty plus years, so I don't see any major problems with this format.

Hurley Delorey
Resident of District 10

Beth Schumacher

From: Kate Gorman <kgorman@townofantigonish.ca>
Sent: June 2, 2022 3:54 PM
To: mayor@townofantigonish.ca; Owen McCarron
Cc: Jeff Lawrence; Glenn Horne
Subject: Talking Points for Chamber Breakfast
Attachments: 2022 04 05 Commercial Tax Rate Trends (1).pdf; Chamber Breakfast - June 3 - Speaking Points - Final.docx; Consolidation Breakfast Connects.pdf; Exploring Consolidation Breakfast Itinerary.docx; Chamber Breakfast - Submitted Questions - Final.docx

Hi Owen and Laurie,

Please find attached speaking notes for the breakfast meeting tomorrow. One attachment is general notes on the major themes the other is a copy of the pre-submitted questions with answers. I've also included information that Brian collected on past mergers in the province and commercial tax rates.

In addition, I've included an event itinerary forwarded from the Chamber. Ken Farrell will be the event emcee. I've also attached an attendee list so you're aware of who will be in the room.

I will have hard copies of the notes with me tomorrow as well as a packages of fact sheets for attendees.

Cheers,

Kate

Kate Gorman

Marketing and Communications Officer

kgorman@townofantigonish.ca

902-318-6758

www.townofantigonish.ca | [Nest Cam](#) | [Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#)

Exploring Consolidation Breakfast Connects Itinerary

7:30am – Registration opens, and guests are directed to the buffet as they arrive

7:50am - Ken Farrell, MC

Welcome everyone...

Thank the Credit Union for being the Signature sponsor for the breakfast

Introduce Mayor Boucher and Warden McCarron

8:05am – 7 minutes each for Mayor Boucher and Warden McCarron to discuss: (14 min)

- Why their councils are exploring consolidation now
- Why it could be good for the business community,
- Examples of business successes that have consolidations in other communities
- Risks/issues that could impact the business community if consolidation did/did not occur
- Address any misinformation that has been circulating in the community

8:20am – Question period begins, 4 minutes per question for a total of 7 questions from the following, beginning from the top, more questions if time allows (32 min)

1. If consolidation occurs, how many full-time jobs are expected to be eliminated between the town and county? Will a smaller workforce be able to serve the town and county adequately? What is the greatest recurring cost saving the town and county expect to come from consolidation?
2. What are the anticipated impacts on commercial tax rates if consolidation were to occur?
3. There are a number of people in the community that are very concerned that their voices will not be heard and are wanting to see a public vote on this issue. How can you assure the business community and community as a whole that their feedback and concerns have been taken under advisement if the majority feel it is not in the best interest of the community? Will the results of the public consultations be transparently made available to community taxpayers and stakeholders?
4. Residents of the town and county, stakeholders in this decision, have not been provided a cost benefit analysis of every component involved in the decision around consolidation. The process seems rushed and was not in the strategic plan of the town and county. What are you going to do to get resident's support by providing a real cost benefit analysis for all components? Does this mean the strategic plans for town and county are not accurate as there has been no mention of consolidation in the last five years?

5. Would residential and commercial assessments for the town and county change significantly if consolidation were to occur?
6. If consolidated, would the town and county be open to expanding their investment in affordable public transportation for both town and county residents to help the local business community address labour shortages?
7. As a business owner in the county, will our property taxes increase if consolidation occurs? If so, by how much? Will there be new bylaws put into place for businesses in the county to match the current town bylaws? Ex. Will there be any restriction on heat sources (wood docters), or landscaping, etc. for businesses currently in the county?
8. How would consolidation affect the planning and development departments of the town of county?

8:52am – Ken introduces Lauren

8:53am – Lauren provides closing remarks and thanks, announces door prize winner, and gives reminders of upcoming Chamber events

- Golf Classic on June 17th
- Farmer's Market event, celebrating the fishing, forestry, and farming industries

9:00am – Guests rise from tables and begin exiting the room

Chamber Breakfast

Pre submitted Questions

1. If consolidation occurs, how many full-time jobs are expected to be eliminated between the town and county? Will a smaller workforce be able to serve the town and county adequately? What is the greatest recurring cost saving the town and county expect to come from consolidation?

- Valuing of current municipal staff is included as one of our guiding principles.
- Not a downsizing exercise. However, we expect that if consolidation were to occur that some staff would not want to move into a new position and there are options for packages that happen with decisions of that nature. It's important to remember that both organizations have remained relatively lean in terms of staffing. Similar sized municipalities throughout Nova Scotia have much larger staff compliments.
- As an example, Antigonish County employees 32 permanent, full-time employees, more than half of who provide water, sewer, roads or solid waste services. Inverness County, with a slightly smaller population of about 13,500 has nearly 75 employees.
- The Town of Antigonish has 40 permanent full-time employees, with a number of additional part-time/seasonal staff.
- Building capacity with the people we have and reducing redundancies would be the primary aim. This would allow us to continue to provide a high service level that was more coordinated.
- That said, there will be savings and efficiencies. We will not have two CAOs, and other employees will leave the organization over time giving us the opportunity to assess if that position should be refilled, as an example. We won't be duplicating efforts and staff time in responding to community, provincial and federal inquiries. Based on preliminary assessments, we also think we can also find savings in solid waste collection.

2. What are the anticipated impacts on commercial tax rates if consolidation were to occur?

- Looking at historic data on past mergers in Nova Scotia we would not expect consolidation to have an impact on commercial tax rates.
- Town and County finance staff conducted an exercise to look at consolidating our finances and the results of that exercise showed that consolidation would have no impact on tax rates.

- We can maintain two different commercial tax rates, which is what occurred in every other municipal merger, and future councils can determine if those rates could fall.
- The last thing we want to do for businesses owners is to trigger an unplanned tax increase.

3. There are a number of people in the community that are very concerned that their voices will not be heard and are wanting to see a public vote on this issue. How can you assure the business community and community as a whole that their feedback and concerns have been taken under advisement if the majority feel it is not in the best interest of the community? Will the results of the public consultations be transparently made available to community taxpayers and stakeholders?

- The process Councils endorsed was designed to share information and give residents and business owners ample opportunity to ask questions and give their feedback, which will help inform Council's next steps.
- We had 24 engagement sessions, this makes 25. Those sessions were a combination of in-person and online sessions.
- We also have a toll free phone line set up, an email address, and residents could email any member of council and those emails were all collected as part of the community engagement process.
- The website Antigonish dot ca will remain up and staff are continuing to work on updates to the FAQs.
- Council's responsibility to listen to their constituents as part of their decision-making process, and I can tell you, they have been
- Once Council receives the final 'What We Heard' report it will then be made available to the public for review and comment. Timeline for the delivery of that report is undetermined at this stage.

4. Residents of the town and county, stakeholders in this decision, have not been provided a cost benefit analysis of every component involved in the decision around consolidation. The process seems rushed and was not in the strategic plan of the town and county. What are you going to do to get resident's support by providing a real cost benefit analysis for all components? Does this mean the strategic plans for town and county are not accurate as there has been no mention of consolidation in the last five years?

- If you look at the Town's and County's most 2021 strategic priorities, they are remarkably similar.

- Both include priorities around water system maintenance & development, renewable energy, accessibility, active transportation, infrastructure investment, affordable housing, events, and tourism, among other things.
- Both acknowledge that cooperation with the other isn't only helpful, its necessary to achieve these goals.
- Partnership on an issue-by-issue basis requires time and effort to coordinate at every level of the organization – staff and council. This leads to longer timeframes, multiple choke points and overly relies on the good will of the people around the table rather than a system that focuses on value for residents.
- The reality of our community is that we cannot be pulling in different directions. We must pull in the same direction to achieve and create value for our residents on
- We are exploring consolidation because we feel it is an opportunity to work toward these goals and serve our collective community more effectively.

5. Would residential and commercial assessments for the town and county change significantly if consolidation were to occur?

- Assessments are done by the Property Value Services Corporation, a provincial agency that completes assessments for every municipality in Nova Scotia.
- Assessments are based on local market conditions like sales, construction, etc... and are not based on the particular municipal government structure. Consolidation will have no affect on assessments. It hasn't had any affect in any other community that has merged, and we do not expect it to have an affect here.

6. If consolidated, would the town and county be open to expanding their investment in affordable public transportation for both town and county residents to help the local business community address labour shortages?

- Addressing larger community issues like this are one of the big reasons we are looking at a potential consolidation.
- We may be able to do a better job in serving the community as a merged unit and we can address these concerns with one voice.
- Individually, we have both increased our investments in Antigonish Community Transit each year.

7. As a business owner in the county, will our property taxes increase if consolidation occurs? If so, by how much? Will there be new bylaws put into place for businesses in the county to match the current town bylaws? Ex. Will there be any restriction on heat sources (wood doctors), or landscaping, etc. for businesses currently in the county?

- Town and County finance staff conducted an exercise to look at consolidating our finances and the results of that exercise showed that consolidation would have no impact on tax rates.
- We can maintain two different commercial tax rates, which is what occurred in every other municipal merger, and future councils can determine if those rates could fall.
- The last thing we want to do for businesses owners is to trigger an unplanned tax increase.
- We both currently use EDPC for planning and development. There service helps us provide consistency for development.
- If the decision is made to move forward, a review of by-laws would be completed as part of the transition process.

8. How would consolidation affect the planning and development departments of the town of county?

- Both units currently use EDPC for Planning. That would not change in a merged unit.

Ticketholder	Affiliated Business	# of tickets purchased
Coline Morrow	N/A	1
Richelle MacLaughlin	N/A	2
Susan Dee	Admiral Glass and Signs	2
Anne-Marie Long	N/A	1
James McNamara	Safety Culture Systems	1
Blake Beaton	Strum Consulting	1
Andrew Heighton	Nova Scotia Health	1
Kelsey Bowman	Bellwether Family Wealth	1
Lenita Hanson	Tony's Meats	2
Miranda Teasdale	Teasdale Apothecary	1
Heather Murphy	MacDonald & Murphy	3
County of Antigonish	County of Antigonish	8
DeCoste Interiors	DeCoste Interiors	8
Lauren Kaiser	Antigonish Chamber of Commerce	1
Tristan Bell	Antigonish Chamber of Commerce	1
Inez Forbes	989 XFM	1
Kenny Farrell	989 XFM	1
Harriet Cameron	989 XFM	1
Town of Antigonish	Town of Antigonish	4
Dan Fougere	East Coast Credit Union	1
Bud MacInnis	N/A	1
Lloyd Tate	Tate Construction	2
Jennifer MacEachern	Jennifer MacEachern Accounting Services	1
Town Comp	Town of Antigonish	1
County Comp	County of Antigonish	1
Sponsor Comp	East Coast Credit Union	2
Kanti Chaudhari	Maritime Inn	1
Lindsay Ross	MacLeod Group	1
W. Patrick Curry	C.L. Curry Funeral Services Ltd.	1
Stephen MacIntosh	Barrier Spray Foam Ltd	1
Steffen Mangold/Nicole	Probst & Partner Investments Ltd.	2?
Paul Curry	Claymore Inn	1
Veronique	East Coast - Chamber	4
		59

Chamber Breakfast
Discussion on Consolidation with Business Community
Talking Points

Commercial Taxes

We've looked at Annapolis County, Cumberland County, and Windsor West Hants to determine the impact past mergers in Nova Scotia had on tax rates. These mergers did not result in tax rate increases. In Cumberland County the commercial property tax rate increased for the same reasons they increased the residential tax rate, to appropriately fund reserve balances, which was an issue for that County long before its mergers.

Like the residential tax rate, a consolidated municipality is permitted to levy different commercial tax rates in different areas. It is reasonable to levy different tax rates based on the access to municipal infrastructure and services. Most Town businesses have access to on-street or municipal parking. Many front sidewalks and in-street stormwater systems making them highly walkable and accessible. While there are some exceptions, most County businesses, even in the fringe, do not have access to this kind of municipal infrastructure and services, and that is reflected in a lower tax rate. County businesses also pay a Fire Department Levy and

With that in mind, Town and County finance staff conducted an exercise to look at consolidating our finances and the results of that exercise showed that consolidation would have no impact on tax rates. Therefore, we can maintain two different commercial tax rates, which is what occurred in every other municipal merger, and future councils can determine if those rates could fall. The last thing we want to do for businesses owners is to trigger an unplanned tax increase.

Commercial Tax Rates 2021

Town: \$2.62/\$100 of assessment (now \$2.63 for the 2022-2023 approved municipal budget).

County: \$1.44 / \$100 of assessment + Fire Levy + UARB Fire Protection Rate (Hydrant Rate).

- Fringe: $\$1.44 + \$0.07 + \$0.113 = \1.623
- Rural: $\$1.44 + \$0.15 = \$1.59$

Residential Property Taxes

History shows us that municipal mergers in other parts of Nov Scotia have not created property tax rate increases in the years following a merger. Town and County finance staff conducted an exercise to look at consolidating our finances and the results of that exercise showed that consolidation would have no impact on tax rates.

1) Arisaig Tax bill

Description:	Assessment:	Rate:	Taxes:
Residential Assessment	\$ 200,000	\$ 0.880	\$ 1,760.00
4 Valley's Fire Levy (Max)			\$ 200.00
		Amount Due ->	\$ 1,960.00

2) Fringe Area Tax bill

Description:	Assessment:	Rate:	Taxes:
Residential Assessment	\$ 200,000	\$ 0.880	\$ 1,760.00
Fire Hydrant	\$ 200,000	\$ 0.118	\$ 236.00
ACVFD	\$ 200,000	\$ 0.070	\$ 140.00
Thorne Ridge Streetlights			\$ 21.34
Sewer (1 unit)			\$ 316.29
		Amount Due ->	\$ 2,473.63

3) Town Tax bill

Description:	Assessment:	Rate:	Taxes:
Residential Assessment	\$ 200,000	\$ 1.100	\$ 2,200.00
Fire Levy	\$ 200,000	\$ 0.036	\$ 72.00
Sewer (avg)			\$ 227.21
Solid Waste flat rate			\$ 319.29
		Amount Due ->	\$ 2,818.50

4) Heatherton Tax bill

Description:	Assessment:	Rate:	Taxes:
Residential Assessment	\$ 200,000	\$ 0.880	\$ 1,760.00
Pomquet Fire & Emergency	\$ 200,000	\$ 0.150	\$ 300.00
Sewer (1 unit)			\$ 316.29
		Amount Due ->	\$ 2,376.29

Plebiscite

Plebiscites are not the norm for municipal units considering structural change. The only municipal units to use a plebiscite process in recent years were the Town and County of Antigonish in 2006 and the Towns of Stellarton, New Glasgow, Pictou and the Municipality of Pictou County in 2015. Multiple plebiscites were conducted in the Town of Canso resulting in both positive and negative results as it considered its future before dissolving into the District of Guysborough.

The process Councils endorsed was designed to share information and give residents ample opportunity to ask questions and give their feedback, which will help inform Council's next steps.

At the last Regular Town Council meeting the plebiscite topic was added to the agenda. The result of the vote was 5-2 against including a plebiscite as part of the exploration process. No such motion has been brought to County Council. As it stands, we will complete the engagement process we agreed to and determine at that point if anything else should be considered.

Town and County Finances

Both Municipalities are financially healthy with a track record of maintain stable tax rates, investments in community infrastructure, programs, and saving for the future. We've released our financial statements as well as our financial condition indicators. Each document confirms that we are financially strong municipal units.

Why Now?

For years, residents have said they wanted to see more collaboration and a stronger partnership between the Town and County. We've put in the work and our partnership is stronger than ever. We've reached this point where we believe it is worth exploring consolidation. There are multiple facets and large and small details to consider, none of which we are taking lightly. There are many issues facing our communities, such as climate change, economic development, infrastructure planning, accessibility, and housing, require or would significantly benefit from a regional approach.

Why Fix what isn't broken?

Consolidation may be a more efficient use of existing resources to provide a high level of services to residents of both municipalities. Many issues facing our community such as climate change, economic development, infrastructure planning, accessibility, and housing, would benefit significantly from one voice.

There are specific examples of where services can be provided better as well:

- We have ploughs that clear snow on one end of a street and not the other.
- We have garbage trucks that collect on one end of a street and not the other, and on different days.
- We have a short window each year where there is pressure on the municipal water systems, and we've seen conservation measures put in place.
- We have separate staff doing many of the same things.
- We are making decisions on infrastructure investments in isolation of one another.

We agree, we are both doing well. However, the effort it takes to build and maintain cooperation at all levels of two separate organizations is significant. From the every-day services to the major challenges, it may make more sense to come together so we can continue to build a community where everyone benefits.

Decision

The timeline for exploration has been extended due to the extension of the community engagement process that was delayed due to COVID. The date for a final Council decision has not been determined.

Now that the engagement sessions have wrapped up, Council is waiting for the consultants to put together the 'What We Heard Report'. This report will summarize the themes that came from the community engagement and the feedback Councils received. Once Council receives the final 'What We Heard' report it will then be made available to the public for review and comment. Timeline for the delivery of that report is undetermined at this stage.

RCMP

We are working with our provincial and federal colleagues to understand if there will be an effect on our RCMP contract if we merge into one unit. When Windsor and West Hants consolidated it inadvertently triggered a change in their RCMP contract that resulting in an increase in costs for the merged municipality. This was discovered very late in the process, and nothing could be done to avoid it. We were made aware of this issue early and have been working to address it since day one. The level of service from the RCMP would not change and we don't think its reasonable that costs increase. This is a critical piece of information that we need before a final decision can be made.

Process

We've had mixed reaction to the format. What we like about the format, and what we've heard people tell us, is that it allows people to have one-on-one conversations with us and any number of Councillors and staff with this format. Town Halls don't allow for this kind of personal interaction, and we would never get to answer the number of questions in a Town Hall format. However, in some locations where the attendance was greater, we were able to pivot and host breakout sessions with more traditional Q&A formats.

Representation

If the decision is made to consolidate, a boundary review will be conducted to determine the number of electoral districts and their boundaries. This would be another public process with community consultations, input from the existing Councils and a recommendation made to the Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board, which makes the final decision. We've heard a lot from the community on this topic during our engagement sessions, like the need for balanced representation between rural and urban communities, representation of cultural communities, and having an appropriate number of elected officials. All of these considerations will be part of the process when it takes place.

Agriculture & Zoning

Councils have heard the concerns raised by the agricultural community about the ability to conduct farming activities in a consolidated municipality. There will be no changes to the use of agriculture land because of consolidation. If consolidation occurs, the by-laws that currently exist only apply to the areas where they are currently being used. Any future changes to land use by-law, which includes zoning, must go through a public process, and have consultation from the community. The provincial Farm Practices Act also supersedes any municipal by-law.

Municipal Debt

If consolidation were to move forward, it is anticipated that any outstanding debt would remain with the preexisting municipal unit. Payment for these services would be charged as an area rate. County residents would not be responsible for paying Town debt and Town residents would not be responsible for County debt.

Supplement to Antigonish Fact Sheet #2

Additional Information About Commercial Tax Rate Trends

A. Bridgetown and Annapolis County Commercial Tax Rate Trend

	2012	2013	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Bridgetown	\$3.79	3.90	3.93	3.93	3.40	3.40	3.39	3.39	3.39	3.39	3.39
County	\$1.18	1.18	1.18	1.18	1.18	1.18	1.80	1.80	1.80	1.80	1.80

B. Springhill, Parrsboro and Cumberland County Commercial Tax Rate Trend

	2012	2013	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Springhill	\$5.53	5.53	5.53	5.53	4.81	4.81	4.81	4.81	4.96	4.96	4.96
Parrsboro	\$4.17	4.15	4.13	3.99	3.85	3.85	3.80	3.93	3.97	3.97	3.97
County	\$2.63	2.63	2.63	2.63	2.63	2.63	2.63	2.76	2.78	2.78	2.78

C. Windsor, Hantsport, West Hants Commercial Tax Rate Trend

	2012	2013	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Windsor	\$4.08	4.08	4.08	3.99	3.99	3.99	3.99	3.95	3.95	3.91	3.90
Hantsport	\$3.69	3.85	3.85	3.82	3.82	3.82	3.82	3.82	3.82	3.81	3.80
County/RM	\$1.60	1.68	1.68	1.75	1.80	1.80	1.80	1.80	1.80	1.79	1.78

Bolded Tax Rate Figures indicate the last year a town issued separate tax bills, and the first year the County/Regional Municipality issued a combined tax bill for the town tax areas. The mergers have not created an increase in commercial tax rates, although some municipalities like Cumberland have raised rates subsequently because of other issues (increasing capital reserve funds in the case of Cumberland County).

Harris McNamara

From: Cosgrove, Charla <Charla.Cosgrove@novascotia.ca>
Sent: June 3, 2022 9:22 AM
To: Harris McNamara
Subject: Re: no consolidation

Thanks Harris.

I have printed every single one of these for Greg to read.

Cheers
Charla

Charla Cosgrove
*Constituency Assistant for
Hon. Greg Morrow, MLA Guysborough-Tracadie
Phone: 902-533-2777
Fax: 902-533-2778
Email: charla.cosgrove@novascotia.ca*

From: Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Sent: Thursday, June 2, 2022 2:07 PM
To: Cosgrove, Charla <Charla.Cosgrove@novascotia.ca>
Subject: FW: no consolidation

**** EXTERNAL EMAIL / COURRIEL EXTERNE ****

Exercice caution when opening attachments or clicking on links / Faites preuve de prudence si vous ouvrez une pièce jointe ou cliquez sur un lien

From: Hilda
Sent: May 2, 2022 10:34 AM
To: Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: no consolidation

Harris McNamara

From: Anne-Marie Long
Sent: June 3, 2022 1:24 PM
To: Lauren Kaiser
Cc: Gary Mattie; Harris McNamara
Subject: Re: Exploring Consolidation Breakfast Connects Feedback

Before providing feedback, Lauren, I have a couple of questions. One of my friends submitted a question 2 days after me and it was asked. Mine was not.

So I'd like to know

1. Who "cherry picked" the questions to put forward?
2. Did the Mayor and/or Warden see these questions before the session? And
3. Was it the Moderator who choose to ask only the 5 questions?

This was the first Chamber event I've attended and I was quite disappointed. The length of time the Mayor spoke, sometimes irrelevant to the question posed, and then without even answering the actual question, was not controlled. Also, the Mayor blatantly lied about the Windsor Hants consolidation, in response to the question regarding the rushed process. She suggested the Windsor Hants process was shorter than the one proposed in our situation. After much town & county fighting in Windsor/Hants, that escalated in 2015, there was an MOU signed by both in 2017, forced by the UARB before they took the step of forcing a UARB amalgamation that was requested by the taxpayers. The Mayor knows that this was not a smooth process until both were forced to work together under the MOU. As in their own forums, the Chamber allowed this session to be totally controlled and was another of their sales jobs. Respectfully, Anne Marie Long

On Fri., Jun. 3, 2022, 10:54 a.m. Lauren Kaiser, <contact@antigonishchamber.com> wrote:
Hello!

As an attendee of this morning's *Exploring Consolidation Breakfast Connects* event, the Antigonish Chamber of Commerce would like to receive your feedback on the event. This feedback will aid us in planning our next breakfast event, and will help us serve you better.

The survey can be completed via this link: <https://forms.gle/PRnsf6rGjdaEirTs5>

Thank you for supporting the Antigonish Chamber of Commerce!
Lauren

--

Lauren Kaiser
Executive Director
Antigonish Chamber of Commerce

www.antigonishchamber.com

Room 124
People's Place Library
283 Main St.
Antigonish, NS B2G 2C3
Tel: (902) 863-6308

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Beth Schumacher

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: June 4, 2022 8:39 AM
To: Glenn Horne
Cc: mayor@townofantigonish.ca; Jeff Lawrence
Subject: Re: Consolidation Next Steps

Hi Glenn,
This works for me. Thanks

Warden Owen McCarron
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
902-968-1290

> On Jun 3, 2022, at 2:20 PM, Glenn Horne <glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca> wrote:

>

> With Laurie in transit on Monday, I am proposing we move this meeting to Tuesday. Let me know if you have a conflict.

>

> Thanks!

> Glenn

>

Beth Schumacher

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: June 4, 2022 8:40 AM
To: Glenn Horne
Subject: Accepted: Consolidation Next Steps

Beth Schumacher

From: Town of Antigonish Mayor <mayor@townofantigonish.ca>
Sent: June 4, 2022 9:14 PM
To: Owen McCarron; Glenn Horne
Cc: Jeff Lawrence
Subject: Re: [EXTERNAL] Re: Consolidation Next Steps

Thank you Glenn!

Mayor Laurie Boucher
Town of Antigonish
274 Main St, Antigonish, N.S
B2G 2C4
mayor@townofantigonish.ca | 902•870•7795

From: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Sent: Saturday, June 4, 2022 5:38:42 AM
To: Glenn Horne <glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Cc: Town of Antigonish Mayor <mayor@townofantigonish.ca>; Jeff Lawrence <jlawrence@townofantigonish.ca>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Re: Consolidation Next Steps

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hi Glenn,
This works for me. Thanks

Warden Owen McCarron
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
902-968-1290

> On Jun 3, 2022, at 2:20 PM, Glenn Horne <glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca> wrote:

>

> With Laurie in transit on Monday, I am proposing we move this meeting to Tuesday. Let me know if you have a conflict.

>

> Thanks!

> Glenn

>

Beth Schumacher

From: Donnie MacDonald
Sent: June 6, 2022 7:31 AM
To: Glenn Horne; Owen McCarron
Cc: Shirlyn Donovan
Subject: FW: Want and request and demand a plebiscite on such a critical decision. This is not what councillors were elected to do.

FYI

From: Mike Moeller <
Sent: June 5, 2022 7:57 PM
To: Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Subject: Re: Want and request and demand a plebiscite on such a critical decision. This is not what councillors were elected to do.

Hello Donnie

Still never heard back from you. That is over a month ago.

This has to go to a vote by residents and NOT just Councillors. You NEVER ran on this in your campaign.

Regards

Mike

On 4/30/2022 4:37 PM, Mike Moeller wrote:

Hello Donnie

I am sending again as I heard some councillors did not receive this from me

Mike

----- Forwarded Message -----

Subject: We want and request and demand a plebiscite on such a critical decision. This is not what councillors were elected to do.

Date: Fri, 29 Apr 2022 15:37:21 -0300

From: Mike Moeller <

To: "mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca rdeveau" @antigonishcounty.ns.ca, "omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca bmacfarlane" @antigonishcounty.ns.ca, "mayor@townofantigonish.ca wgormier@townofantigonish.ca dmacinnis@townofantigonish.ca

Dear Councillors of Antigonish Town and County

I am a resident of the County of Antigonish and I demand that we have a plebiscite and open town and county halls with all people able to hear each others questions and answers on the pros and cons of amalgamation/consolidation. In no manner, should this consolidation of Town and County power that the councillors that do not want a vote, be exercised on my behalf with their vote. You are all residents also, and your vote should be one of 20,000 in the Town and County. This is democracy not working for the people, when you have the majority of councillors taking it upon themselves to vote for consolidation of two entities (town and county) without giving the people the opportunity to vote. We never elected you councillors to make such a decision. I was involved Nationally and Regionally and Locally with my Union for over 30 years, being elected every three years. If it ever came to merging our Union with another union or having a strike vote (both of these examples are analogies of what is happening with your councils), the members of both unions were given the opportunity to vote or the members voted to strike or not, were given the right and opportunity to vote.. We the elected Officers, NEVER would even dream of voting on something of that magnitude, which you councillors who do not want a vote/plebiscite are doing. We did not give you that right, and you do not have that right to speak on my behalf of something so important. And who decided to have almost a quarter of a million dollars spent on "consultants" that are not even from our community, to answer the questions that we elected you to answer? If the councillors will not give the residents the right to vote, then there should be legal action taken to stop this pre-determined decision. Being an elected official is at times thankless, and it is a hard task. However, the process taken by the majority of both Councils in this dissolution of either the town or County, called consolidation, must have a plebiscite. Pictou gave their residents a voice and vote. The comments made that a vote was decided against, because we do not have the information and it would be based on emotions, was actually insulting to say the least at what some councillors think of who they are supposed to represent. To say it will be divisive is also not within the knowledge of councillors. If we do not have a vote, then you will see divisiveness, but then it will be TOO LATE to rectify the concerns of thousands of residents. Why not run on this campaign in the next electon, if you are so confidant? This whole process smells.

Thanks

Mike Moeller-County of Antigonish

Beth Schumacher

From: Mary MacLellan
Sent: June 6, 2022 8:29 AM
To: Owen McCarron, Glenn Horne
Subject: FW: Amalgamation

Owen, Glenn, James lives in Mc Arras Brook. There have been quite a few people in that area who are upset with me because they have not received anything on Consolidation. There has to be a way to get their mail to them on a regular basis. I often put my newsletters in 175 boxes including Mc Arras Brook. I could do this if necessary. Mary

-----Original Message-----

From: James Sullivan <
Sent: June 5, 2022 5:20 PM
To: Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Cc: Josée Dessouroux <
Subject: Amalgamation

Mary, i was disturbed to hear about the amalgamation process, especially since i have only josee's hairdresser to thank. It seems to me that someone on the council doesn't want the public to have a voice in this process. Seems to me the county has no trouble notifying me that its tax time, but can't find me when important issues are at stake.

What the hell is going on?

James sullivan , mcarras brook

Sent from my iPad

Harris McNamara

From: Jeannette Benoit
Sent: June 7, 2022 3:33 PM
To: Owen McCarron; Mary MacLellan; Donnie MacDonald; Hughie Stewart; Shawn Brophy; Remi Deveau; John Dunbar; Gary Mattie; Harris McNamara; Bill MacFarlane; mayor@townofantigonish.ca; wcmier@townofantigonish.ca; dmacinnis@townofantigonish.ca; scameron@townofantigonish.ca; Andrew Murray; mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca; droberts@townofantigonish.ca
Subject: Consolidation

To you our elected Warden, Mayor and council of the county and the town of Antigonish. I am very disappointed in the way you are forcing this issue of consolidation on us. I am not for it or against it because there is absolutely no information for us out there. You should not be deciding what we the people want. I am at the point where I am ashamed of saying I live in Antigonish County!!!!!! We are a town with NO voice.... I am telling you what I am going to do if you continue to dictate to me. Yes you are DICTATING to us all. I will move ALL of my business to Port Hawkesbury.

Banks
Grocery stores
Hardware stores
Drug stores
And the list goes on. I think you get the drift. I have been using these businesses for years (yes I'm a senior) with great service. When I tell these business people why I am doing this I am blaming you!! Yes, I do have to pay my taxes because I live in the county. But that is where it stops! I will NOT put another 5 cents in Antigonish. I am hoping more of the people that are wanting a vote will do the same. By now I know you are saying that I am emotional. Well, Yes, I am. That emotion is ANGER! GIVE US THE CHANCE TO VOTE. GIVE US INFORMATION. You might get a surprise and it could very well go in your favor. Show us some respect!

Jeannette Benoit

Harris McNamara

From: Harris McNamara
Sent: June 7, 2022 5:37 PM
To: charla.cosgrove@novascotia.ca
Subject: FW: Consolidation

From: Jeannette Benoit
Sent: June 7, 2022 3:33 PM
To: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Mary MacLellan <mmaclellan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Donnie MacDonald <dfmacdonald@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Shawn Brophy <sbrophy@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Remi Deveau <rdeveau@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; John Dunbar <jdunbar@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Gary Mattie <gmattie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Harris McNamara <hmcnamara@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Bill MacFarlane <bmacfarlane@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; mayor@townofantigonish.ca; wcmormier@townofantigonish.ca; dmacinnis@townofantigonish.ca; scameron@townofantigonish.ca; Andrew Murray <amurray@townofantigonish.ca>; mfarrell@townofantigonish.ca; droberts@townofantigonish.ca
Subject: Consolidation

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I am hoping more of the people that are wanting a vote will do the same.

By now I know you are saying that I am emotional. Well, Yes, I am. That emotion is ANGER!

GIVE US THE CHANCE TO VOTE.

GIVE US INFORMATION.

You might get a surprise and it could very well go in your favor.

Show us some respect!

Jeannette Benoit

Beth Schumacher

From: Town of Antigonish Mayor <mayor@townofantigonish.ca>
Sent: June 13, 2022 6:18 PM
To: Glenn Horne; Willie Cormier; Hughie Stewart; Owen McCarron; Kate Gorman; Shirlyn Donovan; Alisha Bowie; Jeff Lawrence
Subject: Re: [EXTERNAL] No Consolidation Steering Committee Tomorrow

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Thank you Glenn,
Laurie

Mayor Laurie Boucher
Town of Antigonish
274 Main St, Antigonish, N.S
B2G 2C4
mayor@townofantigonish.ca | 902•870•7795

From: Glenn Horne <glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Sent: Monday, June 13, 2022 5:18:37 PM
To: Willie Cormier <wcormier@townofantigonish.ca>; Hughie Stewart <hdstewart@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Town of Antigonish Mayor <mayor@townofantigonish.ca>; Kate Gorman <kgorman@townofantigonish.ca>; Shirlyn Donovan <shirlyn.donovan@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Alisha Bowie <alisha.bowie@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Jeff Lawrence <jlawrence@townofantigonish.ca>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] No Consolidation Steering Committee Tomorrow

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Hi folks -

Given we've moved away from our weekly meetings I've deleted the calendar invitation. We will have to determine a new meeting frequency over the summer months.

Cheers,
Glenn

Glenn Horne
CAO
Municipality of the County of Antigonish

Beth Schumacher

From: Shirlyn Donovan
Sent: June 14, 2022 4:34 PM
To: Owen McCarron; Glenn Horne
Subject: Media Notes
Attachments: 2022-06-14 Media Notes.docx

Please see attached the media notes for tonight.

Thanks,
Shirlyn

Shirlyn Donovan
Strategic Initiatives Coordinator
Municipality of the County of Antigonish
285 Beech Hill Road
Antigonish, NS B2G 0B4
902-863-1117



www.antigonishcounty.ns.ca
www.twitter.com/antigonishco

Honour Yesterday, Act Today, Inspire Tomorrow

MEDIA NOTES – June 14, 2022

CONSOLIDATION

- Town and County officials continue to explore consolidation.
- We have completed over 20 in person and virtual sessions to date. The consulting team is now creating a “What We Heard Report” which will be made available to Council and the public prior to any final decision moving forward.
- The timeline moving forward:
 - Draft What We Heard Report to municipalities for comment: late June.
 - Final What We Heard Report for public review: early July.
 - Final Report to municipalities: late August.
 - Final decision on Consolidation: fall 2022.

Public engagement is one part of the decision-making process. In addition to public input Councils will want to consider several other factors in deciding on consolidation. Those other areas include:

- The implications for policing contracts & costs.
- Financial condition & capacity.
- Opportunities and opportunity costs.
- Service levels and administrative capacity.
- Finalizing guiding principles.

BUILDING PERMIT FEES

- Municipal Council approved an increase in the cost for building permit fees effective, July 1, 2022. For the first time since 2001, the Eastern District Planning Commission conducted a review of permit fees.

- The new fees for residential construction will be \$40 plus \$2.00 per every \$1000 of construction value. The current rate structure is \$40 plus \$0.16 per sq ft. Permit fees will also change for commercial and agricultural buildings and additions or alterations to an existing buildings. More information will be available at www.edpc.ca.
- Residential construction value per square foot (including additions or alterations) is determined by using the annual *Altus Group Canadian Cost Guide* for the low end of the range for Custom Built Single Family Residential in Halifax or the contracted price of construction.
- There are 7 mandatory inspections during the building process.

BUDGET 2022-23 HIGHLIGHTS

- Municipal Council approved its \$17,630,000 2022/23 Municipal Operating Budget and \$3,000,000 Capital Budget.
- Municipal Council approved the budget with no increases to the residential tax rate, commercial tax rate or sewer rates.
- Some of the major expenses included in this year's budget include mandatory contributions to education which accounts for 22.3% of the budget and protective services which accounts for 21.8% of the budget.
- Highlights of the budget include:
 - The ***residential rate will remain at \$0.88 per \$100 of assessment***. This is among the lowest rates in Nova Scotia and the thirteenth consecutive year that it has not increased.

- The ***commercial rate will remain at \$1.44 per \$100 of assessment.*** The Municipality remains the lowest commercial tax jurisdiction in the Province of Nova Scotia.
- Residential municipal sewer rates will remain at \$316.29/unit.
- Interest rate is 6% per annum.

- Key Initiatives include:
 - Low Income Property Tax Exemption has been increased so that households earning less than \$33,000 can receive up to \$300 toward their property taxes.
 - Approximately \$560,000 in grants and contributions to support community groups and projects.
 - Purchase of a new garbage truck and a new snowplow / salt spreader.
 - Improvements to the Beech Hill Transfer Station
 - Improvements to the Court House
 - Investments in Active Transportation and Renewable Energy.
 - Replacement of the Trunk 7 watermain between Keating Court and Lower West River Road.
 - Continued support of the People's Place Library, Antigonish Arena, Antigonish Heritage Museum, Antigonish Affordable Housing, Lifeguard services at Bayfield Beach, St. Martha's Hospital Foundation, Strait Area Search & Rescue and Beaver Mountain Park among other community facilities and service.

- Tax Bills have been mailed and will be due on July 8, 2022.



Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Antigonish County Residents Petition 4

2 messages

Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Wed, Jun 15, 2022 at 1:35 PM

To: "Cosgrove, Charla" <Charla.Cosgrove@novascotia.ca>

Charla;

Could you pass on another 72 signatures in Greg's area with the exception of 4 signatures from Tracadie and Merland which bring the total to approximately 600, more if I collect other locations. Residents are upset!! Another issue I would like to speak to Greg is PaQ'tnkek applying for a lease in Havre Boucher Harbour from NS Fisheries & Aquaculture They are proposing to take oysters from Pomquet Harbour which they can't sell because they are contaminated and take them to HB Harbour to cleanse them. They had a place in Monks Head but someone damaged testing equipment and they decided not to cleanse them there. More on this when he contacts me.

Harris

 **Antigonish County Residents Petition 4.pdf**
3003K

Cosgrove, Charla <Charla.Cosgrove@novascotia.ca>
To: Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>

Wed, Jun 15, 2022 at 1:56 PM

Thank you Harris!

I have passed this along to Greg.

Cheers
Charla

Charla Cosgrove
Constituency Assistant for
Hon. Greg Morrow, MLA Guysborough-Tracadie
Phone: 902-533-2777
Fax: 902-533-2778
Email: charla.cosgrove@novascotia.ca

From: Harris McNamara <harris.mcnamara@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, June 15, 2022 1:35 PM
To: Cosgrove, Charla <Charla.Cosgrove@novascotia.ca>
Subject: Antigonish County Residents Petition 4

** EXTERNAL EMAIL / COURRIEL EXTERNE **
Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking on links / Faites preuve de prudence si vous ouvrez une pièce jointe ou cliquez sur un lien

[Quoted text hidden]

 **Antigonish County Residents Petition 4.pdf**
3003K

Petition to the Governments of Municipality of the County of Antigonish and the Town of Antigonish – Spring 2022

We the residents of Antigonish Town or County do not agree with the joint councils in deciding about Consolidation of Town and County into one regional government. We want a plebiscite as per section 53 of the Nova Scotia Municipal Government Act to allow the people to make the decision on the proposed consolidation or amalgamation or merger of any description that affects our future. There are no known cost benefits analysis or facts on pros and cons, that have been completed and if so not shared. Engagement meetings are set up in a kiosk fashion for individual communication that does not allow for open transparent communication with residents. We ask that our councillors present this petition to the Councils of the municipalities of town and county, either voting jointly or as separate Councils on our behalf.

Print Name	Civic Address	Signature
Melissa Bennett	Haure Boucher Rd.	Melissa Bennett
LEONA C. BROW	Haure Boucher Rd.	Leona C. Brown
Peter Green	Hwy 4 - Moncton	Peter Green
Agnel Wilson	Hwy 4 - Moncton	Agnel Wilson
Camilla Bessil	Hwy 4 HB	Camilla Bessil
Mike Butler	Hwy 4 East HB	Mike Butler
Melanie Macdonald	Hwy #4 East HB.	Melanie Macdonald
Suey Peltone	H.B. Road	Suey Peltone
Jamie Crowe	110 Hwy 4	Jamie Crowe
TED CONNORS	Boyle LANE	Ted Connors
Benedette Bourman	Merland	Benedette Bourman
Clair Bennett	Haure Boucher	Clair Bennett
Donna Deloxy	Branch Road Frankville	Donna Deloxy
Gillis MacAspal	Haure Boucher Rd	Gillis MacAspal
Carol Ann Bowie	dd Mcgrave Rd.	Carol Ann Bowie
Dana Pettipas	Hwy 4 Linwood	Dana Pettipas
Noah BENNETT	Bennetts Rd. E. Haure Boucher	Noah Bennett
Jayne Bourdieu		

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Print Name	Civic Address	Signature
Elaine Bennett	Havre Boucher	Elaine Bennett
Sharon Bowden	East Tracadie Rd	[Signature]
David Bowden	East Tracadie Rd	[Signature]
NORM KENNEDY		
Jordan Kemp	East Tracadie Rd	[Signature]
Kelsey Bowman-White	5000 Frankville Rd	K Bowman-White
William White	11 11	William White
Jean de Coste	CAPE JACK RD	Jean de Coste
Melgan Bryan	1 Frankville	Melgan Bryan
Debbie Raymond	1 W. Havre Boucher	Debbie Raymond
Jackie Austin	Frankville Rd Frankville	Jackie Austin
HARRY RYAN	Bromener Rd	[Signature]
LEN ROBERTS	Home B. Road.	[Signature]
S. Yattar	Cape Jack Rd.	S. Yattar
Neil CORBETT	CAPE JACK	Neil Corbett
Benedette Berman	Merland	Benedette Berman
Edward Pelaine	Havre Boucher	Edward Pelaine
Len Gausson	Havre Boucher	Len Gausson

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Print Name	Civic Address	Signature
Tony Sampson	Hwy 4 HB	Makes A [Signature]
Waylan Pettipas	Linwood HB	Waylan Pettipas
MARTIN Stewart	Linwood	Martin Stewart
Kim Mackee	Frankville Rd	Kimberly Mackee
Will Pettipas	Linwood station Road	Will Pettipas
Tim Puro	Carden Rd H. Boucher	Tim Puro
Lloyd Desmond	Manastey	Lloyd Desmond
Dr. Ferguson	HARVE BOUCHER	Dr. Ferguson
Francis Dudley	HARVE BOUCHER	Francis Dudley
Ralph Mattie	Linwood	Ralph Mattie
Juliette Merritt	Cape Blue Rd.	Merritt
Elaine Burns	Cape Blue	Elaine Burns
Daniel Delat	Cape Sack	Daniel Delat
Ann deCaste	Frankville	Ann deCaste
DONALD GYRE	LINWOOD	DONALD GYRE
Hazel Tate	mathe settlement	Hazel Tate
Brian Mac Millan	Linwood	Brian Mac Millan
Albette White	Linwood	Albette White

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Print Name	Civic Address	Signature
Rose Bennett	East House Boucher	Rose Bennett
Everett Kinney	Linwood Harbour	Everett Kinney
Anthony Deet	Haute Boucher	Anthony Deet
Jan Raymond	Haute Boucher	Jan Raymond
JOHN GBENKATI	Linwood	John Gbenkati
NEIL MATTIE	Linwood	Neil Mattie
NORM KIEBLY	Haute	Norm Kieby
Jean DeRosey	Mattie Rd Monastery	Jean DeRosey
Ariah Cooper	East Tracadie	Ariah Cooper
Jacyn Holger	East Tracadie Rd	Jacyn Holger
TOM L LEM	Highway 4	Tom Lem
Jane Ross	Linwood	Jane Ross
Stephan Mattie	Monastery	Stephan Mattie
Mike Heatt	Monastery	Mike Heatt
Cathy Stubbs	Monastery	Cathy Stubbs
Kathryn Drysdale	Highway 4	Kathryn Drysdale
Sandra Welch	H.B. RD.	Sandra Welch
Keisey Mattie	East Tracadie Rd	Keisey Mattie

Beth Schumacher

From: Glenn Horne
Sent: June 15, 2022 7:40 PM
To: Owen McCarron; mayor@townofantigonish.ca; Jeff Lawrence
Subject: Fwd: Follow up

FYI - You guys available?

Glenn Horne
CAO
Municipality of the County of Antigonish

From: Heighton, Andrew
Sent: Wednesday, June 15, 2022 7:18:38 PM
To: Glenn Horne <glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Cc: Chamber Treasurer <treasurer@antigonishchamber.com>; Inez Forbes <inezforbes@antigonishchamber.com>; Lindsay Ross <lindsayross@antigonishchamber.com>; Lauren Kaiser <laurenkaiser@antigonishchamber.com>; Kelsey Bowman <kelseybowman@antigonishchamber.com>
Subject: Follow up

Good evening Glenn

Thank you for reaching out and providing some positive feedback around the Consolidation Breakfast June 3. I have briefly mentioned our conversation to Lauren and the Board Executive.

We would welcome the opportunity to have more information and the chance to speak with Owen and Laurie or yourself around consolidation.

Thinking at our next Board Meeting would be a good opportunity and platform. We meet at 7:30am - 9 June 30 at the library. We could fit who ever was willing to attend at a time that works.

Kate Gorman mentioned providing a one pager with some information specific to business and commercial impacts and taxes. Is this something we could obtain and provide to our board before the meeting.

Again thank you reaching out and offering this opportunity. Let us know what time works, thinking a brief overview, specific business community facts and myths and time for questions.

Andrew

Andrew Heighton

Beth Schumacher

From: Town of Antigonish Mayor <mayor@townofantigonish.ca>
Sent: June 16, 2022 4:00 PM
To: Glenn Horne; Owen McCarron; Jeff Lawrence
Subject: Re: [EXTERNAL] Fwd: Follow up

Yup! I'll be there.

Best,
Laurie

Mayor Laurie Boucher
Town of Antigonish
274 Main St, Antigonish, N.S
B2G 2C4
mayor@townofantigonish.ca | 902•870•7795

From: Glenn Horne <glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Sent: Wednesday, June 15, 2022 7:39:38 PM
To: Owen McCarron <omccarron@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>; Town of Antigonish Mayor <mayor@townofantigonish.ca>; Jeff Lawrence <jlawrence@townofantigonish.ca>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Fwd: Follow up

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FYI - You guys available?

Glenn Horne
CAO
Municipality of the County of Antigonish

From: Heighton, Andrew <andrew.HEIGHTON@antigonishchamber.com>
Sent: Wednesday, June 15, 2022 7:18:38 PM
To: Glenn Horne <glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Cc: Chamber Treasurer <treasurer@antigonishchamber.com>; Inez Forbes <inez@antigonishchamber.com>; Lindsay Ross <lindsay@antigonishchamber.com>; Lauren Kaiser <lauren@antigonishchamber.com>; Kelsey Bowman <kelsey@antigonishchamber.com>
Subject: Follow up

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Andrew

Andrew Heighton

Beth Schumacher

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: June 20, 2022 3:12 PM
To: Glenn Horne
Subject: Accepted: Consolidation Steering Committee Meeting

Beth Schumacher

From: Owen McCarron
Sent: June 20, 2022 3:53 PM
To: Glenn Horne
Subject: Declined: Consolidation Discussion with the Chamber of Commerce Board

Beth Schumacher

From: Alisha Bowie
Sent: June 21, 2022 10:45 AM
To: Glenn Horne; Jeff Lawrence; mayor@townofantigonish.ca; Owen McCarron; Willie Cormier; Hughie Stewart; Shirlyn Donovan; Kate Gorman
Subject: Steering Committee Minutes June 21st
Attachments: 2022 - June 21 Steering Committee minutes.docx

Please see attached minutes from this mornings meeting.

Thanks
Alisha

Alisha Bowie, Administrative Assistant
285 Beech Hill Rd
Beech Hill, NS B2G 0B4
Phone: (902) 863-1117
Fax: (902) 863-5751

MUNICIPALITY OF THE COUNTY OF
ANTIGONISH

Tuesday, June 21st, 2022

Steering Committee Minutes

Call to order 8:09 am

- Discussion on RCMP contract
- Discussion on Consolidation process
- Transition funding discussion
- Mayor Boucher & Warden McCarron to request a meeting with the Minister and Deputy Minister.

Meeting adjourned at 9:00am

Beth Schumacher

From: Glenn Horne
Sent: June 21, 2022 2:41 PM
To: Minister, DMA; paul.lafleche@novascotia.ca
Cc: Owen McCarron; mayor@townofantigonish.ca; Jeff Lawrence; Mark A Peck; Barr, Nick
Subject: Meeting Request Concerning Consolidation of Town and County of Antigonish
Attachments: 2022 - June 21 - Meeting Request re Antigonish Consolidation.pdf

Dear Minister Lohr –

On behalf of Warden McCarron and Mayor Boucher, please find attached a meeting request to discuss the Consolidation of the Municipality of the County of Antigonish and the Town of Antigonish. We look forward to hearing from you.

Respectfully,
Glenn



Glenn Horne | Chief Administrative Officer
Municipality of the County of Antigonish | 902.863.1117
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Honour Yesterday, Act Today, Inspire Tomorrow

June 21, 2022

Honourable John Lohr, Minister
Nova Scotia Department of Municipal Affairs and Housing
PO Box 216
Halifax NS B3J 2M4
Email: dmanim@novascotia.ca

Dear Minister Lohr:

RE: Exploration of the Consolidation of the Town and County of Antigonish

We write today to request a meeting with you and Deputy Minister LaFleche to discuss our ongoing process to explore Consolidation of the Town and County of Antigonish into one municipal unit.

In September 2021, our Councils voted to explore the potential of merging our municipalities into one through the legislative process of Consolidation. Since then, we have been working diligently to understand the implications of such a decision on our services, communities, and residents. We appreciate the assistance provided by your department as we've undertaken this significant body of work.

We have recently completed the public engagement component of our process and await the associated "What We Heard" report. That is one category of considerations weighing into this historic decision. Others include the implications for policing contracts & costs, financial condition & capacity, opportunities and opportunity costs, service levels and administrative capacity, finalizing guiding principles and provincial transition funding.

The Province of Nova Scotia is an important partner in this decision and the future of our municipalities and communities. Details and commitments concerning the process of a legislative merger and funding for transition and post-transition are crucial to our

decision. As our councils approach a decision point we want to take this opportunity share with you our process to date and discuss these two key areas in particular.

As we enter the summer months, we respectfully request this meeting take place as soon as possible. We will make ourselves available at your convenience.

Best regards,



Owen McCarron
Warden
Municipality of the County of Antigonish



Laurie Boucher,
Mayor
Town of Antigonish

Cc: Paul LaFleche, Deputy Minister, Department of Municipal Affairs and Housing
Mark Peck, Associate Deputy Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing
Nick Barr, Director, Governance & Advisory Services
Jeff Lawrence, CAO, Town of Antigonish
Glenn Home, CAO, Municipality of the County of Antigonish

Beth Schumacher

From: Glenn Horne
Sent: June 21, 2022 3:29 PM
To: Heighton, Andrew
Cc: Chamber Treasurer; Inez Forbes; Lindsay Ross; Lauren Kaiser; Kelsey Bowman; Owen McCarron; mayor@townofantigonish.ca; Jeff Lawrence
Subject: RE: Follow up

Good afternoon, Andrew -

Unfortunately, we are not available on the morning of June 30. Can you provide us with another date / time?

Also, it would be helpful if you could provide us with specific questions you'd like addressed. Over 25 public sessions, we have already poured over a lot of information. If there are specific issues, we can drill down on that would be helpful.

Cheers,
Glenn

-----Original Message-----

From: Heighton, Andrew
Sent: June 15, 2022 7:19 PM
To: Glenn Horne <glenn.horne@antigonishcounty.ns.ca>
Cc: Chamber Treasurer <treasurer@antigonishchamber.com>; Inez Forbes <inezforbes@antigonishchamber.com>; Lindsay Ross <lindsayross@antigonishchamber.com>; Lauren Kaiser <laurenkaiser@antigonishchamber.com>; Kelsey Bowman <kelseybowman@antigonishchamber.com>
Subject: Follow up

Good evening Glenn

Thank you for reaching out and providing some positive feedback around the Consolidation Breakfast June 3. I have briefly mentioned our conversation to Lauren and the Board Executive.

We would welcome the opportunity to have more information and the chance to speak with Owen and Laurie or yourself around consolidation.

Thinking at our next Board Meeting would be a good opportunity and platform. We meet at 7:30am - 9 June 30 at the library. We could fit who ever was willing to attend at a time that works.

Kate Gorman mentioned providing a one pager with some information specific to business and commercial impacts and taxes. Is this something we could obtain and provide to our board before the meeting.

Again thank you reaching out and offering this opportunity. Let us know what time works, thinking a brief overview, specific business community facts and myths and time for questions.

Andrew

Andrew Heighton

• 2016

• 2017

Beth Schumacher

Subject: Canceled: Consolidation Discussion with the Chamber of Commerce Board
Location: People's Place Library

Start: Thu 2022-06-30 7:30 AM
End: Thu 2022-06-30 9:00 AM
Show Time As: Free

Recurrence: (none)

Meeting Status: Not yet responded

Organizer: Glenn Horne
Required Attendees: Jeffery Lawrence; Laurie Boucher; Owen McCarron

Importance: High

Please confirm you are available to attend at your earliest opportunity.

Thanks!

