



EAST HANTS

MUNICIPAL NEWSLETTER - WINTER 2013

easthants.ca
1-866-758-2299

NEW MUNICIPAL OFFICE

Please be advised that council and all staff departments of the Municipality of East Hants are now operating out of the Lloyd E. Matheson Centre in Elmsdale. Please also note the following address & phone/fax # changes:

Phone/Fax # changes:

General Inquiries - 902-883-2299

Tax Collection - 902-883-4313

Planning & Development - 902-883-3387

Building Inspection - 902-883-3387

Recreation & Culture - 902-883-3387

Staff Directory - 902-883-7098

Fax - 1-888-684-5912

Toll free # remains the same: 1-866-758-2299



Mailing address for all departments:

Municipality of East Hants
230-15 Commerce Court
Elmsdale, NS B2S 3K5

WARDEN JIM SMITH



Warden Jim D. Smith was first elected to East Hants municipal council in 2008 representing district 10 (Enfield/Horne settlement). During his first term on council, he served as chair of the Engineering Services committee for four years and as Deputy Warden for 2009. Recently, following his re-election in 2012, he was selected as Warden by his fellow councillors.

Warden Smith is a lifelong resident of East Hants, currently residing in the Horne Settlement area of Enfield with his wife Carolyn and daughter MacGillivray. He has worked for the last 25 years in the construction industry, primarily in the glass and aluminum trades. He is the current President of Division 8 Architectural Glass and Aluminum, which provides window and door installation to projects throughout Nova Scotia.

Warden Smith is enthusiastic about working with his fellow councillors for the benefit of all East Hants residents.

Warden Smith currently serves on the following committees:

- Executive Committee
- Nominating Committee
- Northern Region Solid Waste Committee
- East Hants Regional Water Utility Source Water Protection Committee
- Police Advisory Committee
- Nova Scotia Shooting Federation (Board Member)
- Atlantic Marksmen Association (Board Member)

THE EFFECT OF CAPPING PROPERTY ASSESSMENTS

In East Hants, with few exceptions, property taxes are calculated by multiplying your taxable property assessment by the municipal tax rate. A number of years ago, the Provincial Government introduced a capping program to limit annual increases in the taxable property assessment to no more than the Consumer Price Index (CPI) each year.

By 2012, the CAP program resulted in a **taxable** assessed value of East Hants residential/resource properties that is \$152 million less than the **market** assessed value. Municipal services cost the same whether or not assessments are capped. With \$152 million less to bill taxes on, the rate of taxes per \$100 of assessment has to be higher. In 2012 the residential tax rate is 88¢ per \$100 of assessment instead of 78¢.

Under the CAP program, some people pay more property tax than they would otherwise, some people pay less. If you have recently purchased an existing home or built a new home, you are assessed at full market value for at least the first year. In this case you will certainly have a higher tax bill under the CAP program; your assessed value is the same as under a non capped system but your tax rate is higher. Even with a capped assessment, some people pay more.

Municipal Council and staff want to educate taxpayers on the negative effect the CAP program is having on many tax bills throughout East Hants. Contrary to popular opinion, having a capped assessment does not always mean that you pay less property tax. The CAP program results in a substantive redistribution of the tax burden. Moreover, the CAP program does not control the Municipalities ability to determine its own tax rates.

We encourage you to do the math for your own account. Your property assessment notice (sent from the Property Valuation Services Corporation in January of each year) has the information you need. Take the capped residential/resource assessment, divide that by 100 and multiply that number by .88 (this is your current general tax bill). Take the market value assessment of your property, divide that by 100 and multiply that number by .78 (this is what your tax bill would be without a CAP program). If the first number is lower, you are a “winner” under the CAP program. However, if the first number is higher, you are paying more in property tax **because of** the CAP program (calculations done on the general tax only, area rates are not included).

As an example, take a home in East Hants that has a market value of \$162,100 and a capped assessment of \$149,400 - the general tax bill under the current CAP program is \$1,314; under the old market value system, it would be \$1,264. This apparent “winner” is actually paying \$50 more in property tax because of the CAP program.

Even more revealing to some is the new homeowner, who purchased a similar \$162,000 home next door, is paying \$1,426 in taxes (market assessment x the higher tax rate). This is \$162 more than they would pay under the market value system. The higher the assessed value of the new or newly purchased home, the bigger this difference gets.

Based on a review of the program in 2011, the Provincial government continues to support the CAP program. East Hants played a primary role in assisting the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities (UNSM) with lobbying to improve the fairness of the program, to no avail. The UNSM position and the complete Provincial report are online at www.gov.ns.ca/snsmr/municipal/publications/capped-assessment-program.asp.

This is not a problem unique to East Hants, the effects are felt province wide. As each year passes, the program negatively affects more and more homeowners. East Hants is proof of that. Other than moving away from an assessment based tax system, there is little East Hants’ Council can do to minimize the effect this program is having on different property owners in the community.

DISTRICT RECREATION FUNDS

The new application can be found online at www.easthants.ca/content/district-recreation-fund-application/District%20Recreation%20Funding%20Application%20Updated%202013.pdf. Contact Jocelyn at jmacdonald@easthants.ca or 883-3387 prior to applying for assistance with the application. The application deadline for this grant is January 31st, 2013.

NEW PROGRAMS AT YOUR MUNICIPAL POOL

As the weather outside slowly becomes frightful this winter, under the arches at the Milford pool it's still a balmy (and delightful) 83 degrees. And, starting with the Winter session in January, there are some brand-new program offerings!

All the familiar favorites are still happening: lane swims, family swims and open swims, lessons, Aquafit, Arthritis Therapy and Parent & Tot swims. The Milford Mermaids meet for synchronized swimming twice a week. Young and old are learning about leadership and lifesaving and the pool and balcony are available for party rentals.

Expanded programming will also now include: Mommy & Me, a calm and gentle opportunity for moms to have some fun with their babies while getting an excellent post-natal workout in the pool. Babies must be 4 months old or be able to hold their own head up and are welcome up to 24 months old. Comfy floating "dolphin seats" are provided to keep baby safe and close by while Mom exercises. Sessions are at 10:15 - 11 am Fridays and punch-passes are available so visits work with baby's schedule.

For regular Aquafit fans there are a couple of new choices: Deep Water Aquafit is for those ready to take the next step in their aquatic aerobics and strength conditioning. These workouts will be conducted at the same time as daytime Aquafit classes, with another of the pool's experienced instructors, but in the deep end. All equipment is supplied. Fees are the same as for Aquafit and credit can be transferred between classes. For a higher-energy workout, Aqua-zumba is fun and challenging, and is now available at the East Hants Municipal Pool on Sunday mornings from 9 - 10 am.

Also on Sunday morning is a new Special Needs Swim. In addition to the daytime Family Swims on Tuesday and Thursday mornings, children with special needs and their families/caregivers now have a dedicated swim from 10:30 - 11:30 am on Sundays, with changing rooms (including a family change room) available for ½-hour before and after. For mobility-challenged persons, the pool is barrier-free and has a lift for ease of access in and out of the pool.

Don't forget the monthly Lions Free Swims, held on the second Friday of each month from 6:30-8 pm. See our full schedule at www.easthants.ca/content/winter-2013-pool-program/Winter Program Sheet 2013.pdf.

MUNICIPAL STAFF AND DEVELOPER MEETING

The Planning & Development department, along with other municipal staff, will be hosting a discussion with the development industry in early 2013. The meeting will offer the opportunity for municipal staff to provide some background on how the municipality is expanding and to explain current and future municipal projects that relate to the development industry. There will also be an opportunity for developers to ask questions and to raise issues they face. This is an opportunity for two-way, positive, communication between municipal staff and local developers.

In addition to staff from the Planning & Development department, staff will also be present from the departments of Recreation & Culture, Economic & Business Development and Infrastructure & Operations. Some of the topics to be discussed include: a socio-demographic update; development trends in the municipality; the floodplain mapping study; a study of the municipal sewer capacity; and the subdivision by-law review.

Invitations have been sent out to local people involved in the development industry. The meeting will be held on the morning of January 25, 2013. If you wish to know more about this meeting, please contact Rachel Gilbert, Senior Planner at 902-883-7098 ext 122.

COUNCIL MEETING SCHEDULE

Regular Council meetings are scheduled for the following dates in 2013:

January 23

February 27 (Setting of Tax Rates, if possible)

March 27

April 24

May 29

June 26

All meetings are open to the public and start at 7:00 pm and are held in the Council Chambers, Lloyd E. Matheson Building, 15 Commerce Court, Elmsdale. For information regarding Council meetings, please contact Gabryel Joseph, Municipal Clerk at 1-877-883-7098 Ext 216. Please check the Municipal website at www.easthants.ca/content/council-calendar for agendas and cancellation notices.



EAST HANTS

2013 DOG LICENSE REGISTRATION

Address: 230-15 Commerce Court, Elmsdale, NS, B2S 3K5 Phone: (902) 883-2299 Toll Free: 1-866-758-2299 www.easthants.ca

REGISTRATION DEADLINE: January 31st Every Year EXPIRATION: December 31st Every Year

Owner's Name:								
Mailing Address:								
Civic Address:								
Phone (h)			Phone (w)			Phone (c)		
Breed	Male/ Female	Spayed/ Neutered	Colour	Name	Characteristics	Age	Fee	Tag #
	M F	Yes No						
	M F	Yes No						
	M F	Yes No						
	M F	Yes No						
<small>\$12.00 for each dog. Kennel Licenses are \$50.00 each. Attach separate sheet for information if necessary. If you have questions, please contact the Dog Control Officer at 883-7098 Ext 207 or Toll free at 1-877-883-7098 ext 207.</small>			MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OFFICE USE ONLY		DATE LICENSED		TOTAL FEE:	