

Staff Report May 15, 2019

CAO – Alain Muise

Municipal Administration Building *Council Priority

Council recently approved the budget for a revised municipal building. The revisions decrease the amount of capital reserves used on the project and increase the amount of Gas tax to be used. The total budget increased by about \$365,000. Wildsalt has been tasked with the re-design and Council approved the use of a project manager that will be employed by the Municipality of Argyle to ensure the project runs on time, and within budget. The redesign will take place asap, with tenders being issued in the fall and winter of this fiscal year. We expect a sketch of the interior of the building by May 17th, and the exterior by May 24th. At our last meeting with staff, we determined that phase one would include rough grading of the site, movement of the house to its permanent location (including the foundation, and the construction of a public road. The remainder of the work will occur in the January tender as discussed.

Affordable and Alternative Housing *Council Priority 2017

The proposal to install a public road on our property is in planning stages. Staff's intention is to carry out Council's request, which is to develop lands on the east of our property for residential use, specifically, for alternative and affordable housing. An expression of interest will be prepared at the appropriate time, once we are clear on the development and the nature of the road that will be installed. An appropriate budget and status update will be made available to Council as soon as it is available.

Rural Internet – WREN *Council Priority

Nothing significant to update since the latest information from WREN and Develop NS.

Mariners Center expansion *Council Priority

The steering committee met in Halifax on Friday, May 10th to discuss potential expansion options and estimated costing for each option. .exp Consultants have been engaged to lead the infrastructure component of the application. As most of the members were in Truro for the NSFMC conference, the meeting was held at .exp office. The group of nine have identified an exterior track and field, an interior walking/running track, a fieldhouse, fitness center, aquatic center and space for other recreation activities (multipurpose rooms). This list has not been reduced yet. The next meeting is May 31st at the Municipality of the District of Yarmouth office.

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Yarmouth International Airport Corporation *Council Priority

The 60-day extension is in effect, and the CAO's have met once to negotiate. The Airport board representatives have met with the prospective buyer of land at the airport for the first time. That work is ongoing.

Yarmouth Area Industrial Commission (YAIC)

I was unable to attend the most recent Industrial Commission meeting. The agenda included the approval of the 2019-20 operating budget.

Sea Cucumber appeal

The appeal was held on May 14th, 2019, and both parties were able to go through their witnesses in one day. The lawyers are tasked with a written concluding position. The appellant will submit by June 7th, and the Municipality would have one week from that to present theirs. The decision after which would take up to 60 days.

Provincial Work, AMA and other

The next AMA meeting is a phone meeting and will be held May 24th. I will be in Halifax on May 23 for a special AMA meeting on modernization and will try to take some required CPA training to maximize the efficiency of the travel.

The Regional AMA will be meeting to discuss the concept of regionalization of Planning and building inspection services. This is an important exercise that is timely, and could be as large as Digby, Yarmouth and Shelburne Counties. CAO Chris Frotten and I are co-chairing the committee that will do the work. We intend on making an application to the Province of NS to fund a champion to do the work, if this is in fact the will of Councils.

By the time of our meeting, I will have attended 2 meetings for doctor recruitment. The meetings are informative and productive, and my hat goes off to the chair, the committee members and to the Chamber of Commerce for their efficient work on recruitment thus far. With the permission of the Chair, Patti Durkee, I sent an invitation to Acadia First Nations to invite a representative to talk about regional health issues and doctor shortages.

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Finance & Taxation Department – Marsha d’Eon

The Finance Department is busy working on the 2019-2020 Budget. The Tusket and Wedgeport Sewer Committees met on April 24, 2019 and the West Pubnico Sewer and East Pubnico Water Utility Committees on April 25, 2019 to approve their individual budgets.

The department is also working on year end/auditing preparations. Auditors will be in the week of June 17, 2019.

We are working on preparation for our tax bills and we hope to have them in the mail the first week of June. The deadline to apply for the low-income exemption was Friday, May 3, 2019.

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

Community Development – Charlene LeBlanc

1. Assisted with AFF applications for Dept of Fisheries & Aquaculture
2. Deadlines for scholarship have passed and 2 applications were received
3. Attended a couple doc recruitment meetings
4. Did some water testing for aquaculture
5. Webcam program had no applications despite having contacted 15 businesses
6. Directional signage program has had more applications and signs will be ordered next week
7. Joined the site selection committee for the Congres Mondiale 2024 for 2 days
8. Attended a MELP meeting in Bridgewater (Mun Energy Management)
9. Met with Village historique staff, and the new director
10. Met with the Seafood Extravaganza group on new ideas
11. Assisted in fishermen in Barrington for one day with AFF applications
12. Alain, Eilidh and I with the Western Counties Regional Library re: future
13. Working with summer students on workplace wellness activities
14. Made contact with NS power to get all banners up in our communities

Department of Public Works – Hans Pfeill

West Pubnico Sewer Treatment Plant (WPSTP)

Plant Operations

The plant operates at a high level of efficiency and is compliant with NSDoE guidelines. Operations are running smoothly and within budget so far.

All 12 pumping stations are being monitored on a regular interval and everything seems to work normal. We experienced a few minor issues due to heavy rainfall but were able to resolve the issues at very low cost and within a short time. A review of our main lines via video should be scheduled over the next year or two.

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We published a tender for the construction of the Dewatering truck Garage. We received two bids which were both over the anticipated estimate from the Engineering Team by 12% and 31%. We met with the lowest bidder (Garian Construction) to better understand their bid and to review of possible reductions. The negotiations resulted in a cost reduction of \$6,350 including all optional items of the tender. The West Pubnico Waste Water Committee had approved the optional items and had recommended to keep them and move forward with the project. Due to the operating cost reduction by running the dewatering truck, the cost of the garage would be recovered within 3-4 years. The project award was submitted to council and we should be able to move forward with the construction mid May and have the garage operational by end of July or early August 2019.

The dewatering truck was taken out of its winter storage and is operational again. Further improvements of the process is needed and we are continuing to investigate and learn.

Past Initiatives

The new mixer for the SBR2 tank was replaced and the plant is fully operational again. The new PC and updated SCADA system is working good.

Future Initiatives

We received a valuable tip and connection from one of our waste water technology sales persons regarding the chemical issue of our dewatering operation. We followed that recommendation and had our sludge and polymer tested for free, only cost was shipping, and received valuable feedback from a supplier in London, Ontario. They reported back to us that their polymer is reacting a bit better than our current solution. Their pricing appears to be better as well and we are inclined to test their product with the goal to make our dewatering truck operation more consistent and more efficient.

Tusket Sewer Treatment Plant

Plant Operations

The operation of this system continues in a relatively orderly basis, with our permit good until 2024. We are in compliance with NSDoE operating parameters. We submitted our annual NSDoE report and are awaiting to hear back from the local office. According to our records we are operating far under the effluent limits set out in our permit and we are hoping for a good record from the department. This month we did not experience any interruptions and the system is running smoothly. The Tusket Waste Water Committee met and approved the new operation budget of 2019/2020. We will be focusing this spring and summer on replacing some residential representation and will try to find a volunteer.

This month we did not receive any connection or disconnection request.

Past Initiatives

Louis is actively working on improvements on the plant and overall system and operations are getting less expensive. Staff was able to complete repair work on two properties were storm water

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infiltration during heavy rainstorms created issues at the sewer plant. These changes should decrease the incoming amount of sewage during rain events and operation of the plant is more manageable.

Future Initiatives

Staff is preparing to fix the overflow at the plant to avoid future flooding and breakdowns and we will take a more active approach on controlling grease and storm water infiltration. This all will help to assure the full life expectancy of the overall system. An investigation for a potential stormwater connection to our sewer system will be performed this spring/summer to further reduce the flow at the sewer plant.

Municipal Administration Building

The public works department is available to support the CAO with the next steps of the process. We are in close contact with FCM and are trying to maintain the funding as per contract and proposal. We are focused on helping the CAO and Council with project revisions and guidance of the process to the best of our knowledge. The current situation is of a complex nature and we all are part of the project and are focused on finding a good solution to move forward as soon as possible.

Staff is also involved in developing the remaining land beyond the new building location and we engaged ABLE Engineering to support us with detailed road and sewer design information to extend the road further east to allow for more developments. The consultant reviewed the survey information and provided us with a revised lot-layout plan and details for the new sewer alignment. This plan is providing a flexible solution and can be rolled out in two phases or all at once. Cost estimates of each option will be provided soon. Based on this information we will provide recommendations to council on how to proceed with the development.

Policy and By-Law Working Group

Due to a high priority on construction projects we postponed the process of registering our By-Laws for the use of SOT's. We are still recommending to review our by-laws in close coordination of an experienced lawyer before starting the registration process. This task is scheduled for summer/fall 2019. The new dangerous and unsightly policy is put on hold as well due to a high volume of capital projects and high volume of dangerous or unsightly cases being reported.

We are also reviewing the Tusket Waste Water Management By-law to improve the administration and allow for further development within the community. A first reading was performed and accepted by council on April 30, 2019.

East Pubnico Water Utility

System Operations

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Staff continues to monitor and make repairs as necessary. Meter readings are performed on a regular basis. We engaged WSP Canada Inc. from Dartmouth, NS to perform well capacity assessments for all three operating wells. WSP will also provide a full report about the wells and make further recommendations Tank upgrade. The Water utility committee met at the end of April and discussed budgets and projects. We received full support from the committee to continue our efforts on upgrading the system over time.

Past Initiatives

Staff finalized the service agreements in close coordination with the users and our legal team. All signatures for the revised agreement have been received and copies provided to the users.

Future Initiatives

We engaged WSP Canada Inc. to support our team with a well assessment to determine a proper size for the Willet Road Tank. The field work is completed and a full report on all three wells will be provided by end of June 2019 with recommendations for future use of the system. We also submitted a funding application under the Provincial Capital Assistance Program to help us with paying for some of the upgrades at the Popes Road Well house and some consultant fees for the well testing.

Wedgeport Sewer Improvement Program

System Operations

This month all 42 systems are operating well. During the construction of the last three systems we came across a potential boundary issue and the installation team may have made an error during completion. The situation is being handled by the consultant and does not affect our operation or create further costs to us. We are still receiving complaints from residents about their lawn reinstatement efforts despite our efforts from last year to have the situations resolved by the contractor. We will be helping these individuals with further overseeding of the affected areas and hope grass will start growing soon. The Wedgeport Sewer Committee met for the first time and we received good feedback about the sewer program from the two residents sitting on the committee. Budgets and a 3rd phase were discussed and the committee members were happy to see a reduction of the annual operating fee.

Past Initiatives

42 Systems have been installed and are operational.

Future Initiatives

Staff is committed to support the owners of the new systems with the lawn re-instatement and will provide help with over-seeding some sites to ensure even grass growth. These efforts will be performed during spring 2019. We submitted an application to the Province under the ICIP funding stream and ask for support to install another 50 new sewer systems. If funding is approved, we would be able to roll out another phase by spring 2020. We are still waiting for information from the Province.

Animal Control

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We didn't receive any complaints over the last few weeks and it seems that the residents are keeping good care of their animals. With the loss of the Yarmouth Dispatch center we also lost the service for dog control issues. The SPCA can be directly reached under 902-307-0475 in case of any dog issues.

Garbage Handling

This month all pickups were performed as per schedule. We are actively trying to find ways to improve our local garbage handling and will provide more information soon. With potential new regulations from the federal government we are monitoring the potential outcome and availability of funding to support our ideas.

Building Inspection Report

To date in this calendar year, 29 building permits and 12 development permits have been issued. There is a good mix of permit interest in residential dwellings and larger commercial/industrial operations. Last year the building season turned out to be very busy with 109 building permits issued and a further 29 Development Permits issued. Note that a Demolition Permit is tallied under the Building Permit numbers.

Last year there was more activity in medium sized commercial and industrial projects than in previous years. This trend is continuing again this year. Several years ago permit values were skewed by construction of free standing windmill towers.

Fire Inspections

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

Sub-Division Activity

To date in this calendar year we have taken in 3 Instrument of Subdivisions and 4 Final Plan of Subdivision, with a few waiting for more information to proceed. In comparison, we had 21 subdivision files on the go in 2018. The type of subdivision, be it Instrument of Subdivision or Final Plan of Subdivision, is pretty well equal last year. Last year we had several multi lot subdivisions with the largest being 40 lots. All this activity was on or just off Route 308, north of the 103.

The majority of subdivision activity continues to be 2-3 lot subdivisions or consolidation of existing lots.

Unsightly or Dangerous

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Out of the three recent cases all three responded and are in the process of cleaning up as soon as the weather permits. Last month we received 3 new complaints about unsightly properties and are in the process of investigating and contacting the owners. Two of the cases are reoccurrences from the last two years and we are trying to find ways to improve the situation. Two severe cases from last year are still open and we are following up with the situations once spring comes around and weather is more favorable for outside work.

We are working on the dangerous situations first with unsightly complaints receiving attention later.

The new dangerous and unsightly policy is under review and with the approval of the CAO it will be handed over to the committee for review and comments.

Maintenance

Field maintenance is picking up and spring and summer events are coming up fast. Field staff is working on fixing some dangerous situations on the East Kemptville ball field and was able to improve safety features at other fields as well. We came across missing gear and someone either borrowed or stole ground dragging gear stored at the fields. We are currently improving our OHS regulations and preparing Work safe procedures for our most dangerous situations. Staff is also using this time to update their safety certificates and training.

Industrial Park

Several lots are pending sales and staff is actively supporting the CAO with the process. 3 lots are under review by the UARB and development on hold for now. There are a few lots left for sale and more interest from developers is existing. More updates will follow once the UARB review is over and a decision is made.

Staff

Kim Rowley is leading the Community Litter Clean up project, which is in full effect and a lot of volunteers are helping to clean our road sides. She managed to increase participation for this year and more road side areas are being cleaned.

Sara Murphy from East Pubnico is helping us for 5 weeks as admin assistant in order to complete her work assignment for NSCC.

Luc deViller will be joining us as an Assistant to Louis over the summer and will help with any maintenance work under Public Works or Recreation.

Louis Boudreau was promoted to become our new Building Inspector and By-Law Enforcement Officer and his training for Building Inspection is starting this month. With the plans of John's retirement we are starting the transition now as it will take up to 2-3 years to complete all courses for the building inspection license and it will give both of them enough time to share knowledge and current building practices.

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With Louis promotion we are in need for a new facility coordinator and sewer operator. We posted a new position for an Environmental Service Coordinator and application will be accepted till May 15, 2019.

All safety training deficiencies have been resolved and our crew is up to date with all their needed licenses to perform their work

Software

All software is up to date and working good for us. The PC to run the SCADA software for our plant was replaced and the system is running more reliable than before and the contractor added a few features at no cost to make the operation even better for Vaughn.

Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee

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

We are actively working on our Safety Program and will report back once the program is completed and ready to be rolled out. Each month we are reviewing policies and program rules to make this program fit our needs. We are still in process of establishing the last few items and are actively reviewing our work safe procedures. New procedures will be established over the next months to create a high level standard for a safer work environment. Most of the previously identified safety issues have been resolved. Next goal is to review and improve our workplace violence protection program. A questionnaire will be rolled out soon to assess current issues and needs for the future.

During our last meeting we determined that all staff should have the latest version of WHMIS and we will provide more information about available e-learning programs via email soon.

Miscellaneous

1. Staff and CAO attended an Asset Management training course partially funded by FCM to help with the establishment of a local policy and better understanding of assets and operation. The training will continue over the winter/spring 2019 and could have a great outcome to future operation and service providing strategy. We established a new policy and are actively refining our level of service in order to better serve the community and use our resources more effectively. More info's will follow as we progress.
2. We are currently working on developing the remaining property at the new admin building location to offer opportunities for low income housing or further residential growth. We developed a plan to create 19 Single Family Home lots and one lot for a pocket community. Road and sewer extension designs are fully developed and ready to go for tender and construction, once the subdivision is approved and registered.

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Court House & Archives – Judy Frotten & Kaitlin Wood

The Argus

The spring 2019 issue was delivered to members the week of April 15th. **The Argus is our most important program and allows us to maintain the Argyle connection with our members from Canada and the US.**

AMGHS

AMHGS Board meeting was held April 15th and the next meeting is scheduled for May 21st. The Historical Society's Bldg. Committee is researching options to rectify the smell of oil in the Archives building, including replacement of oil tank or replacing heating system with electric furnace. They are also making arrangements to have the staff entrance stairs and railing replaced, by M. Doucette Cont. AMHGS is in the process of getting year-end bookkeeping done, and organizing their Annual General Meeting, scheduled for June 12th.

Student Funding

We have been successful in securing funding for two 16-week positions through Young Canada Works (Canadian Council of Archives), one 13-week position through Young Canada Works (Canadian Museums Association), two 14-week positions through Province of Nova Scotia's SKILL program, and two 8-wk positions funded through Canada Summer Jobs. Judy, Kaitlin and two AMHGS Directors, William (Bill) Bourque and Leona Doucette, conducted interviews all day on May 6th. We are in the process of hiring the summer staff this week. (Our first "senior" student was hired effective April 29th, and her interview was conducted on April 15th).

Court House

Museum and Gift Shop will open on May 29th.

Events

Austin Saulnier's presentation "Abram's River – Then and Now" took place at the Archives on Apr. 10th and had @52 people attend. Kaitlin worked with Austin to create a Power Point Presentation. Though he touched on (most) of the properties in the village, his focus was on the original properties and families. ****Please note that this event took place at the Archives rather than the Court House because the building is more accessible and climatically controlled.**

Professional Development

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Kaitlin will attend Council of Nova Scotia Archives' conference on May 9th and 10th. Judy will attend Association of Nova Scotia Museums (ANSM) Executive meeting on May 22nd in Halifax and the next ANSM Board meeting is scheduled for June 4th in Halifax.

Heritage Fair

Judy served as a French judge at the Heritage Fair at Drumlin Heights on Apr. 4th. Our student, Kaylie Albright, also served as a French judge at the Heritage Fair Regionals at Burr Ridge Campus, on May 2nd.

Joint Occupational Health & Safety Committee

The last meeting took place on March 19th and the next one will take place on May 9th. The committee continues to work on outstanding items from inspection report. Louis and Wayne have taken WHMIS, and we will look at making this available to other staff once Budget is approved. The committee is currently working on violence workplace assessments and evaluation of workplace safety procedures.

Forum Acadien 2019

Judy continues to work with a group of individuals/stakeholders, who are organizing a 3-day Acadian conference on Oct. 4, 5 & 6, 2019, in the Municipality of Argyle. The group submitted a Grants to Organization application to ask for funding and has also asked the Municipality if they are willing to take care of bookkeeping aspect for the conference (deposit the cheques received and issue cheques to vendors). We will keep you informed as details become available.

Research Requests

Kaitlin is training our senior student on reference services, and in the past couple of weeks has managed to greatly reduce our research request backlog. It will be much easier to take care of these with the assistance of the students.

Other

Judy and Kaitlin met with Stéphanie St-Pierre of University Ste. Anne's Centre acadien, on April 9th to discuss a proposed partnership on a project entitled titled "Mise en valeur du patrimoine culturel et historique des Acadiens et Acadiennes de la Nouvelle-Ecosse" - or, roughly translated, Project to enhance knowledge and appreciation of Acadian heritage and history in Nova-Scotia. This will be made available online on the Historic Nova Scotia platform. Stéphanie had made a presentation to Council in March. ATCHA has provided a letter of support for this project.

A local couple were married in April at St. Stephen's Church in Tusket and arranged to have wedding photos done at the Court House afterwards. We are always glad to see our heritage sites used in such ways.

Security incident

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There was a security incident at the Archives on April 10th and RCMP had to be called. This resulted in AMHGS filing a Protection of Property Act against an individual. Kaitlin and I greatly appreciate the support of MODA and staff and were impressed with how quickly new security measures were implemented! Thank you!

Recreation Programming and Active Living – Ginette d’Entremont

ParticipACTION Challenge

We are planning a ParticipACTION challenge from May 31st until June 16th. I have received a \$750 grant to assist with the planning and promoting of the Challenge. We are coordinating some activities with Yarmouth Recreation. The ParticipACTION travel team will be in the area on Tuesday May 14th to kick-off promotion of the challenge. They will be visiting École Belleville (9:30-10:30am) and then at the Mariners Centre (12-1pm). I will be assisting with both of these events.

Meetings attended

ParticipACTION planning session, Yarmouth – April 23
South Shore Active Communities, Shelburne – April 26
Yarmouth Shelburne Municipal Recreation Association AGM and Monthly meeting, Tusket – May 7
50+ Expo monthly planning session, Yarmouth – May 8

Summer Employment

Interviews are almost over and we have hired 3 office staff (see Natalie’s report) as well as a Maintenance Assistant (André d’Entremont). Day Camp and Teen Camp staff will be determined mid-May.

Argyle Minor Soccer Club

The registration for the summer soccer program will close on May 14. Teams will be formed afterwards and the summer league begins the first week of June. To date we have over 260 participants registered. The soccer club was successful in receiving \$3611.00 from Canada Summer Jobs to hire a summer student.

Training sessions for coaches are happening at École Belleville:
Fundamentals for levels U8 to U10 – May 14 & 16
Active Start for levels U4 and Soccer skills – May 29

Professional Development sessions

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I attended the MPAL and PAPE sessions in Truro on May 1-2.
I will be attending the Hike Summit at Oak Island on May 24-26.

Grants

I received the following amounts from various funding sources to hire summer students.
\$2058.25 - Young Canada Works
\$6069.00 - Canada Summer Jobs
\$3945.17 - Canadian Parks and Recreation Association

Director of Recreation Services – Natalie d’Entremont

Meetings attended

- Tri County Early Years Partnership meeting- April 23.
- Workplace Wellness – Grilled cheese day, May challenge, monthly meditation, Workplace Wellness Day activities on May 23
- ReSport: Transforming sport system for all: April 10, May 1 &2.
- Student Advisory Committee Drumlin – April 30
- Great Canadian Trail Western Loop connection meeting: April 16
- Yarmouth Shelburne Municipal Recreation Association AGM & general meeting hosted by Argyle: May 7.

Summer Staff

- Interviews began on April 24. Three office staff were hired and began work on Monday April 29.
 - Emilie Cottreau – Office Manager
 - Lucien d’Eon – Outdoor Programmer
 - Angele LeBlanc – Special Events Coordinator
- Interviews for Day Camp staff and Teen program are ongoing. All staff will be hired by May 15.

Teen Pilot Project

Ginette and I along with the office staff have been working to finalize the details of the teen pilot project. Ginette has surveyed the teens in the school and through our online system we were able to capture the opinions of the parents. Unfortunately, but as expected, both (parent & youth) do not have the same views. Generally, the teens would prefer a shorter day while the parents would prefer the 8-hour day. The teen pilot project will take place 3 times per week, for 4 weeks in July, from 8:30am to 4:30am, filled with activities most popular on the surveys. Registration will be online, and youth may register for any days they wish to attend. Fees will vary according to the activity. Maximum of 20 youth per day.

Argyle Minor Baseball AGM

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Registration deadline is May 17. We will be working closely with Yarmouth Minor baseball.

Women Active Nova Scotia Award Ceremony

I attended the women active NS award ceremony in Halifax on April 27.

Tamarack Institute Citizens at the Centre Workshop

I attended a workshop on community engagement thought-leader series by the Tamarack Institute on May 1st in Halifax. Drawing on case studies from Australia and Canada, as well as techniques and activities that demonstrate alternative ways to meaningfully engage communities/citizens throughout the lifespan of projects, workshop participants will leave with the confidence to design and lead efforts to generate effective solutions to address our most challenging community issues.