



Rural News and Views

46 Municipal Drive, Pictou, Nova Scotia - Fall 2020

Council Highlights

Even though COVID-19 has kept our Council from meeting in person, it has been meeting regularly online to conduct the business of the MOPC.

Here are some highlights from past Council meetings:

Approved an \$18 million operating budget for 2020-2021 fiscal year.

Maintained tax rates at 0.81 cents residents and \$1.82 commercial for the 2020-2021 fiscal year.

Approved all-electronic voting, no paper ballots, in the upcoming municipal elections.

Signed contract with Nova Communications, Rock Network, to start construction of phase one of the Rural Internet Project.

Minutes from past meetings can be viewed on our website at www.county.pictou.ns.ca



Thank you to Angie Larkin-Turner for this beautiful photo of the roadway leading up to the Green Hill lookoff. We are always happy to see your photos of rural Pictou County. Send them along via email or through our Facebook and Twitter pages and we will post them on our sites.

Don't Miss the latest in Municipality News and Events. Check out www.county.pictou.ns.ca as well as our Facebook and Twitter pages at Municipality of Pictou County.



Municipal Staff Directory

Chief Administrative Officer
Brian Cullen

brian.cullen@munpict.ca

Deputy Clerk

Carolyn MacIntosh

carolyn.macintosh@munpict.ca

Communications

Sueann Musick

sueann.musick@munpict.ca

Finance Office

Deputy Municipal Treasurer

Karen Cornish

karen.cornish@munpict.ca

Public Works

Ebon MacMillan

Public Works Director

ebon.macmillan@munpict.ca

By-law Officer

Anne MacCarthy

anne.maccarthy@munpict.ca

GIS Technician

Kevin Burley

kevin.burley@munpict.ca

Building Inspection

Mike McKenzie

mike.mckenzie@munpict.ca

Travis Spears

travis.spears@munpict.ca

buildingpermits@munpict.ca

Recreation

Cindy Fraser

cindy.fraser@munpict.ca

Clare Steele

clare.steel@munpict.ca

Main office phone number:

902-485-4311

902-752-1530

We are located at:

46 Municipal Drive,

Pictou, NS, B0K 1H0

Mailing Address:

P.O. Box 910, Pictou

NS B0K 1H0



A Message from the Warden

To All Residents and Businesses in Rural Pictou County:

It is my hope that you are all weathering the COVID-19 crisis and doing the best you can to assist those in our communities who need help. It has certainly been a difficult summer with most organized activities cancelled and many of our non-profit organizations, most run by volunteers, unable to operate or to raise funds. When this is over, we need to still have these community halls and other organizations to continue to make our rural lives as satisfying and enjoyable as they have been for many decades. Our recreation staff is available to talk with all organizations about their present and future plans.

Congratulations to our Volunteer of the Year Betty Lou Scott and our group volunteer recipients.

Our Council continues to push ahead to move our rural municipality into the modern age of high-speed internet. We recently signed a contract to build the network and hopefully by the end of this year, we will have the first group of residents connected. These will be mostly fibre to the home with a guarantee of 50 megabytes and possibly up to a gigabyte where needed.

This high-speed internet network will be owned and operated by our Municipality with private operators renting space from us and delivering services to your homes.

Our Council decided last year to have a study commissioned to explore opportunities with our 17 volunteer fire departments so that we ensure stable and fair funding for them. It is important that I emphasize that Council is very supportive of the top-notch job that our firefighters do in protecting our properties and our lives. Not only at fires, but at any emergency in our communities. They interrupt their personal lives at a moment's notice to protect us, all as volunteers, and we owe them our respect and a huge thank you.

This study is more related to the business end of running fire departments and how we can all work closer together to assist each other in the administrative and financial end of that business. The aim must be best use of taxpayer dollars, adequate funding for departments, close collaboration between all departments for the benefit for our residents and in the end, safety for our volunteer firefighters.

Stay safe, take care of each other and always be protective of yours and your family's mental health as we work our way together through this pandemic.

Sincerely, MOPC Warden Robert Parker

Pictou County begins Rural Internet Network Construction

PICTOU, NS – The Municipality of Pictou County (MOPC) has begun construction on phase one of its rural internet project.

Municipality of Pictou County Council recently approved \$11 million to fund the first phase of its rural internet project that will see residents in the areas of Lyons Brook, Hardwood Hill, Abercrombie, and Granton have access to high-speed internet.

“The COVID-19 pandemic both highlighted the need for the network and slowed down the start of our construction,” said Warden Robert Parker. “The COVID crises showed how much the world relies on digital networking for information and a sense of community. Rural residents see this as a fundamental utility – like electricity or roads,”.

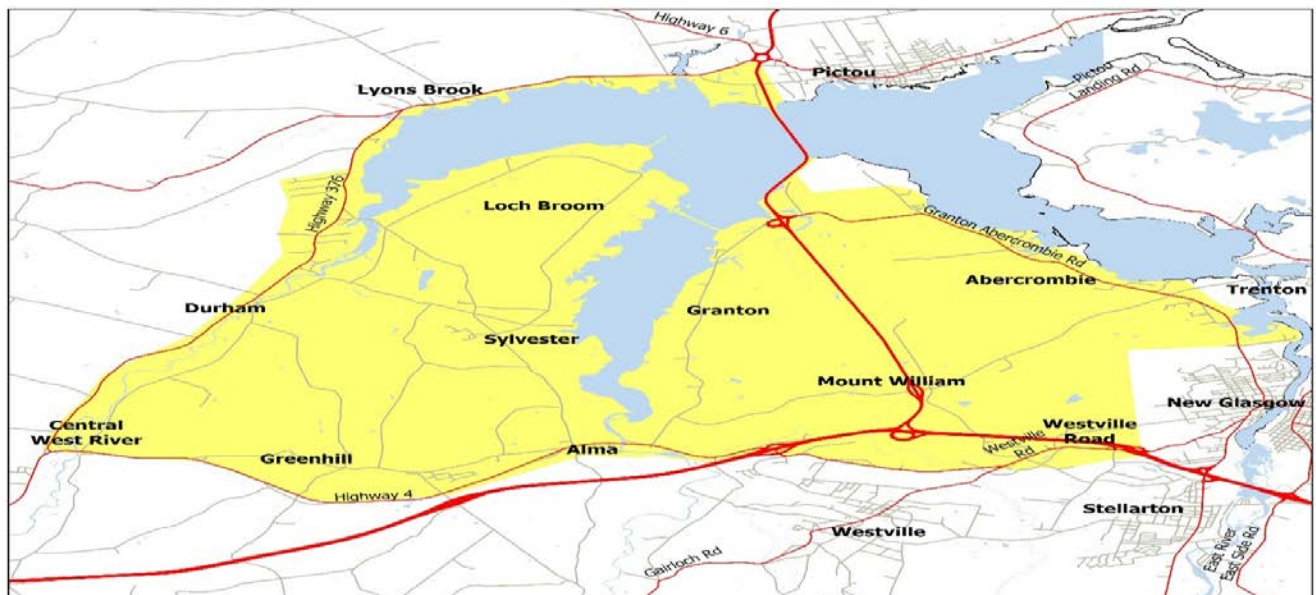
Municipality of Pictou County CAO Brian Cullen described the network design as a ‘fibre-rich’ plan, with extensive use of fibre optic cable to provide service to residents: “This will provide additional future-proofing of the network and give us the ability to better serve our community. The network will see approximately two-thirds of the homes served by fibre to the premises providing speeds up to 1 Gigabyte per second.

This Municipally led network combines revenue sharing and world-class quality with competitive Open Access pricing and choice. Public and private sectors will combine strengths for the quick delivery of a network that sparks new businesses and social initiatives, according to i-VALLEY President Terry Dalton which provides municipal oversight on the project.

The Municipality of Pictou County and i-VALLEY chose a consortium led by Nova Communications, a division of Rock Network, to perform engineering planning and network construction with NCS Network being the lead Internet Service Provider (ISP).

“The Municipality is exploring options that will provide an interim solution to serve more residents as the fibre optic network is built. The plan's objective is to allow for as many residents as possible to get access to internet services for educational needs and work from home solutions, should the pandemic necessitate. The plan does not supersede our network design; however, it would enable a short-term solution to address the immediate needs,” said Warden Parker.

A map of phase one of the project is available in more detail on our website at www.county.pictou.ns.ca Portions in yellow on this map are the areas included in phase one.



PICTOU COUNTY RURAL INTERNET PROJECT



Municipality of Pictou County Warden Robert Parker, left, and Deputy Warden Wayne Murray signed a contract with Nova Communications, a division of ROCK Network, to begin the engineering planning and network construction of phase one of the Municipality's rural internet project.

Why has the MOPC decided to take on this project?

One of the biggest concerns many councillors hear from MOPC residents is the lack of high speed internet in their districts so in 2017 it started investigating how it could improve internet service in the entire County.

What is the timeline of the project so far?

1. In 2017, The Municipality of the County of Pictou appointed an ad hoc communications committee to facilitate an accountable affordable and high-quality telecommunications network that serves anticipated residential and commerce needs.
2. In 2018, A consortium led by Nova Communications (Rock Networks) was chosen to lead the engineering and construction of the project.
3. In the fall of 2019, a design study was done to determine what infrastructure is already in place, what needs to be built.
4. In March 2020, Council committed \$11 million to phase one of the project.
5. In August 2020, MOPC signed contract for construction of phase one of the project with its partner Nova Communications, Rock Network.

How is the project funded?

The first phase of the project will cost \$11 million and federal gas tax money will cover \$4.4 million of the cost. The remainder of phase one will be funded through debt financing. The MOPC is currently seeking federal funding to assist with other phases.

Is the network wireless or fibre?

It could be both and every area could be different. There are many factors that play a role in determining what kind of network will be in your community. Our options are fibre (both in the ground and pole to pole) as well as wireless.

What speeds will the network allow?

When the network is completed, we are looking to meet or exceed the CRTC guidelines of wired speeds: 10 Mbps up and 50 Mbps down and wireless/satellite speeds: 5 Mbps up 25 Mbps down. (Mbps = Megabits per second). Our goal is to enable 1GB download speed for fibre connections and meet the requirements for wireless.

What will we be billed?

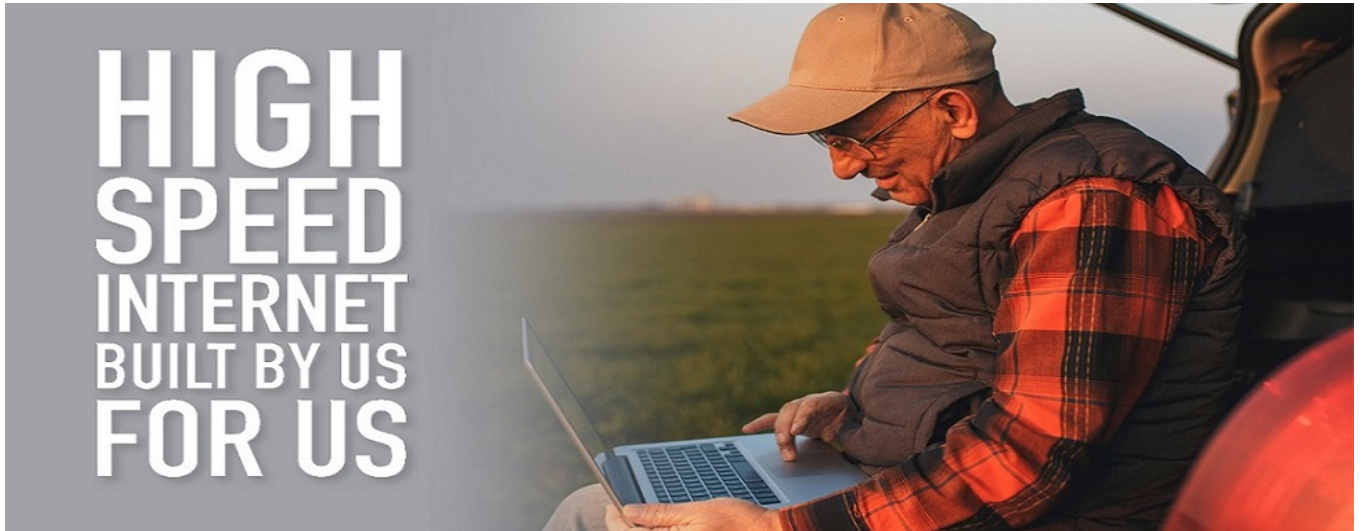
You will not be getting a bill from the MOPC for internet service. We are not in the telecommunications business and able to provide this type of service so we cannot tell you what your bill will be. This will be determined by the internet service provider that you select.

Who will be my service provider?

That is dependent upon which providers are interested in using our network to provide the service.

Will cellular service be available?

There will be opportunities on our network for cellular carrier to use our infrastructure.



What is Phase One of the project?

The design study divided the County into eight areas and phase one of the project focuses on the Abercrombie/Granton, Lyons Brook, Hardwood Hill area.

When will construction on phase one begin?

Construction on phase one will begin in the fall of 2020 and is expected to be completed by early 2021.

Why were these areas selected first?

The design study showed this area has good infrastructure in place so starting here made sense in terms of construction and cost. It also allows the network to easily hook up to the Truro line which is the central hub in Nova Scotia for the internet.

When will construction in other areas be announced?

We are still in the early stages of this project and there are many factors to consider when looking at other locations. When construction moves to new areas, it will be announced on our website, social media pages as well as direct emails to people who have signed up for the service at register.munpict.ca/internet.

What are the benefits to having 100 per cent coverage across the County?

Since the MOPC started this project we have heard from many people who want improved internet service. We believe more people will purchase homes and set up businesses in rural Pictou County if the best internet service is available to them. It is believed that better internet and cellular service will improve our local economy.



Sandy Townsend and Hugh Murray continue with maintenance work in the Kinsmen Building on the Pictou Exhibition Grounds.

Work Continues on Pictou Exhibition Grounds

The pandemic has cancelled the Pictou North Colchester Exhibition this fall, but maintenance work is continuing on the grounds and buildings as it looks ahead to the future. Exhibition Manager John Robinson said a new accessible bathroom is being installed in the Kinsmen Building which also has new lighting and walls. A parking lot will also be extended on the grounds and work has been done to accommodate Town of Pictou water meters. The Municipality of Pictou County granted the Agricultural Society \$10,000 this fiscal year to assist the projects.

2020 MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS

Municipal Elections will be held in Pictou County on October 17, 2020.

Six seats in the Municipality of Pictou County have been acclaimed meaning only one person ran for the seat and was automatically elected because there was no contest. Six other districts have been contested and will be electing a councillor on Oct. 17.

Acclaimed Districts in the Municipality of Pictou County



District 1
Don Butler
(Incumbent)



District 2
**Deborah
Wadden**
(Incumbent)



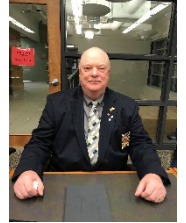
District 4
**Mary
Wooldridge-
Elliott**



District 5
**Wayne
Murray**
(Incumbent)



District 7
**David
Parker**
(Incumbent)



District 9
**Peter
Boyles**
(Incumbent)

Contested Districts in the Municipality of Pictou County

District 3



**Darla
MacKeil**
902-759-2792



**Robbie
MacInnis**
902-485-5340

District 8



Peter Baird
902-301-3547



Larry Turner
902-921-1227

District 11



**Gregg
MacDonald**
902-759-2525



**Andy
Thompson**
902-754-0101

District 6



Robert Parker
902-925-2240



Erinn Wright
902-754-2690

District 10



**Donna
MacGregor**
902-616-6795



Randy Palmer
902-922-2277

District 12



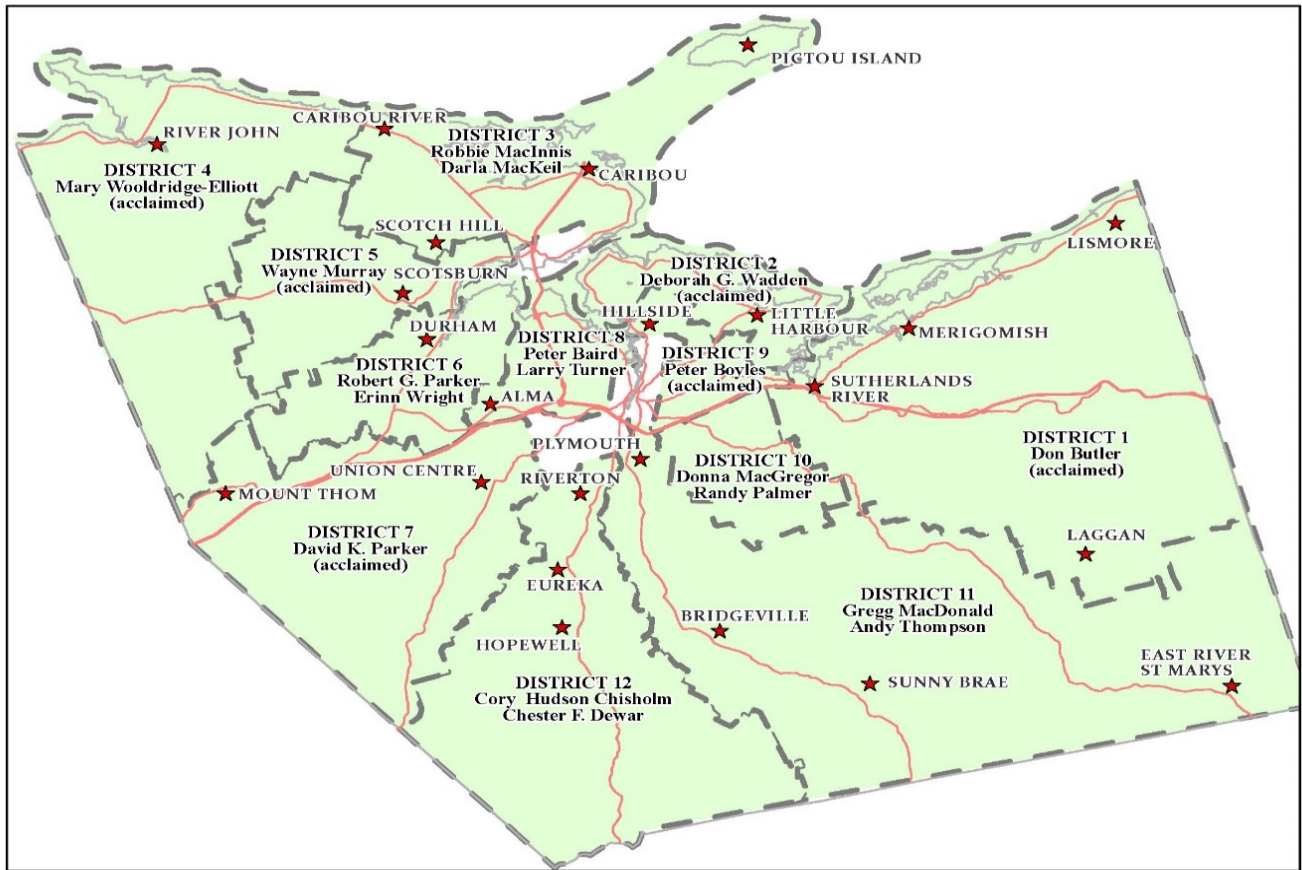
**Cory Hudson
Chisholm**
902-759-0229



**Chester
Dewar**
902-923-2931

For updates on candidate and voter information check
www.electionspictoucounty.ca

Do you know which district you are voting in?



Check out the link on our website, www.county.pictou.ca, that will take you to the candidate's contact information, social media pages and websites, if available, when you click on a district.

Internet and telephone voting only this municipal election

Does electronic voting make your nervous? Are you unsure about casting your vote on the internet or over the phone? Voting for the upcoming Municipal Elections will take place from October 5 to October 17. You will receive information in the mail regarding telephone and internet voting that will also give you a pin number that will allow you to cast your vote. If you did not receive voter information, contact the Returning Office at 902-485-2248.

A help desk phone number will also be available so election workers can guide you through the process over the phone. It can be reached from Monday to Saturday (beginning October 5) from 8:30 a.m. to 8:30 p.m. at 1-833-901-1990.

If you are still unsure about how to cast your vote electronically, you can visit your appointed kiosk on October 17 where election officers will be able to assist you in person.

Kiosks are open only on Saturday, October 17, 2020. From 8 a.m. to 7p.m., they are to be used only for people needing assistance. If you have your voter's letter, please bring it with you to the kiosk at the Pictou County Wellness Centre if you need in person assistance with electronic voting.

2020 VOLUNTEER AWARDS

The Municipality of Pictou County normally honours its volunteers in April during Volunteer Week, but because of COVID-19 we had to postpone our celebration and improvise in the fall with brief presentations outside of our office.



Pictou County Scouting (Youth Group of the Year)

Pictou County Scouting has been serving Pictou County for 93 years. Scouting hosts many activities for boys and girls including first aid, winter safety activities, camp outs, fun nights, field trips and cub car races. Last season, the club hosted 18 cubs and 14 scouts and hopes to be operating again this fall. The group can be contacted through the Scouting Canada website. Accepting the award are Leader Dennis Raniowski and Secretary Shane Ranahan.



Pictou County Challenger Baseball (Sports Group of the Year)

Pictou County Challenger Baseball is a program for persons with physical and or cognitive disabilities. Every year it sees a lot of athletes gain skills in baseball from running to hitting and everything in between. Its organizers say the most important thing is that they make lifelong friends and create lasting memories. In 2019, 18 athletes from Pictou County went to Toronto to participate in the Challenger Baseball National Jamboree and in total with families and friends, there was a group of 97. It also hosted a provincial jamboree in August 2019 and finished its season off with an awards banquet. More information can be found on its Facebook page Pictou County Challenger Baseball. Accepting the award are Craig Murray and Trevor Kearley.



Scotsburn 55+ Club (Volunteer Group of the Year – no facility)

Scotsburn 55 Plus Club has 50 plus members which take part in exercise classes as well as biking and kayaking sessions during the summer months and hiking and snow shoeing in the winter. It also hosts craft groups and pickleball. It continues with its biking and kayaking sessions this summer while obeying restrictions under social distancing. It is also planning on resuming exercise classes in the fall with a limited number of spaces available. Accepting the award are Club President Joan Clark and Club Treasurer Ann Robley.

**Thank You to All Volunteers.
You make us stronger, healthier and
happier every day!**

2020 VOLUNTEER AWARDS



Merigomish Area Recreation and Social Association – (Volunteer Group of the Year with a Facility)

Merigomish Area Recreation and Social Association hosts a variety of activities each year out of the Merigomish Schoolhouse. In 2019, it hosted a Sunday Market and Café joining the Farmers Markets of Nova Scotia. It also offers yoga classes year-round, monthly trivia and pub nights, drop in darts and ukulele classes. Since opening, it has hosted an annual Robbie Burns night, a St. Patrick's Day Party with Evans and Doherty, a Mother's Day Tea and summer Funfest. Its concerts are sold out and featured Dave Gunning, Matt Minglewood, John Gracie, and Gabrielle Papillon. Here, from the left, District One Coun. Don Butler presents board members Doris MacKenzie, George Vlanich, Dave Hillier, and Debbie Ratcliffe with the club's award.



Betty Lou Scott – (MOPC and Provincial Volunteer of the Year)

Betty Lou Scott is a long-time volunteer with the Salt Springs 4H club as well as being involved on county and provincial level. Scott is described as the general leader and driving force behind the Salt Springs 4-H Club for over 40 years and without her leadership, it would not be a vibrant club that it is today. Born on a family farm in Upper Mt. Thom, she received her education in a one-room schoolhouse in the area. After her education was completed, she became a teacher, married and lived Musquodoboit for a while before she returned to the family homestead when her children were young, and she resumed teaching in the county as well as working on the farm.

As she raised her family in rural Pictou County, she knew the importance for them to have access to clubs or organizations in their community which motivated her to start the Salt Springs 4-H Club over 40 years ago. She also served as club secretary, vice-president, and president at the Pictou County level and has been a voting delegate at the provincial 4-H level. She has received travel awards to the 4-H National Leaders' Conference.

Community Health Boards Now Accepting Applications for Wellness Funds

Each year, Community Health Boards across the province provide grants to community-based organizations for projects that promote health and wellness. This year, Wellness Funds are intended to support new and innovative projects that:

- Advance CHB priorities
- Use a population health approach in addressing the social determinants of health
- Address issues arising from COVID-19

Visit www.communityhealthboards.ns.ca/wellness-funds *Deadline is October 15, 2020.*

For more information, contact:

Lynn Langille, CHB Coordinator, Pictou West Community Health Board, Central & East Pictou Community Health Board: lynn.langille2@nshealth.ca - 902-324-0621

RURAL NEWS AND VIEWS

**Don't
Forget!**



Municipal Property Taxes are Due October 15, 2020

Taxes can be paid several ways:

Cheques can be mailed, paid through online banking or in person at our administration building. There is also a drop-off box at the front of the Administration Building. Social distancing restrictions in place and masks must be worn inside our building. **For more information, contact our finance staff at 902-485-4311.**

Landfill Vouchers



Available from June to November 2020 at our Administration Building at 46 Municipal Drive, Pictou.

Save yourself a visit and have them mailed to you. Call 902-485-4311 for more information.

St. Andrews Society of Pictou County Seeking New Members

If you have Scottish ancestry or have an interest in the Scottish culture, then the St. Andrews Society of Pictou County might be the group for you to join. The Society was first formed in 1921 before the 150th Anniversary of the Ship Hector's landing, to provide leadership for the event and focus on the county's Scottish heritage. This Society has evolved from male only to welcoming women as members and leaders. We are celebrating the Society's 100th anniversary in 2021 and are now planning our celebrations and we would like to invite new members to join us. We have two main social events during the year, plus we support Pictou County Celtic culture through assisting with the New Glasgow Festival of Tartans; supporting East Pictou's Workshops in Music and Gaelic; as well as the Pictou Co. Highland Dance Association which holds a Provincial championship each year in the town of Pictou. By supporting these events, the St. Andrew's Society members want to expose our youth and citizens to various aspects of the Celtic Culture and encourage a future for the culture. Mailing Contact: 174 Archimedes Street, Unit B, Box 107, New Glasgow NS, B2H 2T6, or call Doug Ross 902-752-8079

HELPING YOU WEATHER THE STORM

REMO

Regional Emergency
Management Organization

Pictou County

DON'T GET CAUGHT IN THE DARK.

BE PREPARED THIS HURRICANE SEASON.



VISIT WWW.REMOPICTOUCOUNTY.CA
FOR AN EMERGENCY CHECKLIST AND
OTHER HELPFUL TIPS TO PREPARE
YOU FOR AN EMERGENCY.

@REMOPICTOUCOUNTY 902-759-1797

@REMOPICTOUCO COORDINATOR@REMOPC.CA

Pictou County Arenas Look at Re-Opening Plans in the Fall



Pictou County Wellness Centre

The Pictou County Wellness Centre has entered into Phase 3 of its re-opening plan. It is continuing to adhere to the provincial COVID-19 guidelines. Its conference rooms are now available for bookings and it is offering adult, senior and tot/parent skates which will follow current COVID-19 policies.

Continue to watch its website, www.pcwellnesscentre.ca

Financial assistance is available for youths in sports and recreational activities. Contact our recreation department at 902-485-8528 for more information or visit these websites:

<https://kidsportcanada.ca/nova-scotia/provincial-fund/>
<https://iumpstart.canadiantire.ca/>



Ivor MacDonald Memorial Arena – Thorburn

Ivor MacDonald staff and volunteers are currently working on a re-opening plan. It expects to open the last week of October/ first of November.



Hector Arena – Pictou

The Hector Arena plans on putting in its ice after the Thanksgiving weekend. It expects it will be hosting activities by late-October.

Facebook: Hector Arena and Canteen



Do you need a building permit?

The Building Inspection Division of Public Works and Development is mandated to administer and enforce the Nova Scotia Provincial Building Code Regulations which the Municipality of Pictou County has adopted as required by law. This department is responsible for all new construction, alterations to buildings, relocations, and demolitions.

Provincial regulations mandate the Municipality to use and administer the current adopted additions of the National Building Code of Canada for any new construction, additions, alterations, or changes of occupancy. **For inquiries on building relating matters please contact the building officials at: (902) 485-4588 or email buildingpermits@munpict.ca.**

Do you need help from our bylaw department?



Complaints about dogs running at large, mammals on beaches and animals at large can be taken over the phone or by filling out a form on our website and returning it to our office. It can also be dropped into the building's mail slot or regular mail.

Complaints of dangerous and unsightly properties must be made by filling out the form and returning it to our office in person, by email or regular mailed. The form can be found on our website. **IT MUST BE SIGNED. NO ANOYMOUS COMPLAINTS WILL BE DEALT WITH BY OUR BYLAW DEPARTMENT.**

EMAIL: anne.maccarthy@munpict.ca /PHONE: 902-485-8640

Website: <https://county.pictou.ns.ca/departments-and-services/by-law-enforcement/>

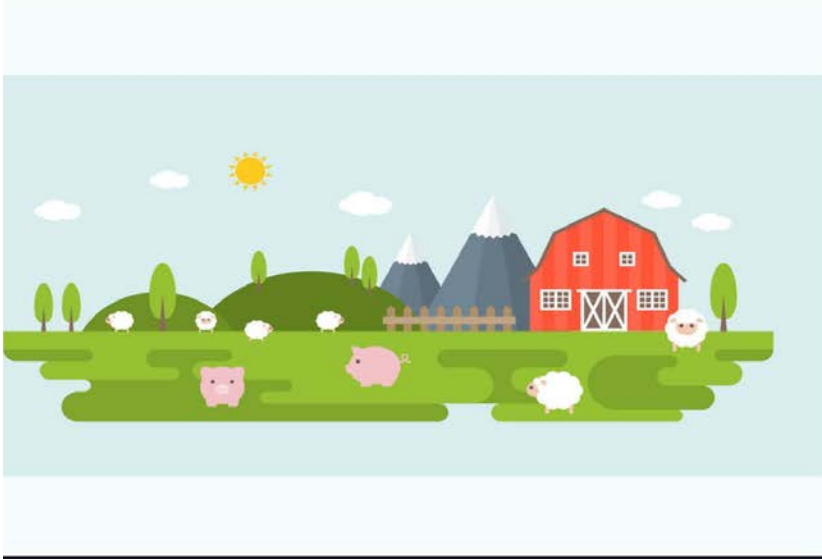
Who Do You Call?

TIR OPERATIONS CONTACT CENTRE: Since the majority of roads are provincially owned, one avenue of contact is through your local MLA's office, but you can also contact the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal's Operations Contact Centre which is open 24 hours, seven days a week. The Operations Contact Centre can be reached locally at 902-755-7060 or toll-free at 1-844-696-7737. Emails can be sent to tir-occ@novascotia.ca.

MOPC PUBLIC WORKS: If emergency assistance is required in rural Pictou County for issues regarding water, wastewater or municipal roads, please call:

PUBLIC WORKS – 902-485-4085 between 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. Monday to Friday. If there is not a Public Works staff member in the office to immediately answer your call, it will be transferred to voicemail and a second number will be available for emergency calls. It is 902-301-1825 and this phone is carried by a Public Works staff member 24/7.

To report a problem with a streetlight please call (902) 485-1201 or email outages@munpict.ca



Our Local Producers Guide is up and running. Click on the link <https://pictou-county-farms-pictoucounty.hub.arcgis.com/> and find contact information for local producers. We are continuing to accept information from producers, so if you are interested in having your name added to the link, please contact sueann.musick@munpict.ca