

Southwest New Brunswick Service Commission

Annual Report & Financial Statements 2017



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# Joint Message from the Chair and the Executive Director

Dear Southwest New Brunswick Service Commission Stakeholders:

On behalf of the Board of Directors and the staff of the Southwest New Brunswick Service Commission, we are pleased to present the Annual Report for 2017.

The Board worked diligently and took a coordinated and strategic approach to lay some important groundwork in many areas in 2017. As a result, this past year saw continued change and progress for the Commission and the region. With previous foundational work completed on the bylaws governing the Commission, 2017 saw the formation of two new committees, both with important mandates and big challenges. They immediately began their respective work in the areas of recreation and recycling.

On the recycling front, the Board took a progressive and forward thinking approach in 2017. Thanks to the hard work of the Recycling Committee and its presentations to the Board, it was decided that we were at an opportune time to make notable and beneficial changes to our recycling capacity. Instead of making the significant capital expenditures that would have been required to maintain the existing, but aging and limited, community bin program, the Board wisely chose to advance the Region and start down the path of implementing an expanded curbside recycling program. This new recycling program is based on tried and true practices from other regions across Canada, while avoiding some of the pitfalls that have occurred elsewhere.

While the new system is not expected to save a significant amount of money in its first few years of existence, it is projected to reduce the Commission's recycling costs year over year. It also helped to avoid the minimum increases to the per-ton tipping fee that would have been required over the next three years to maintain the current community bin program. More importantly, the new program will divert more recyclables from the landfill. Diversion rates will increase because participation is more convenient when recyclables are picked up curbside, and because the new program will allow collection of a greater variety of recyclables.

The new system is also more flexible, and will easily adapt to future changes in the volatile recycling market. In the end, the new program will provide a better, more convenient service to our residents, will divert more tonnage from the landfill, will be a more cost-effective program of the Commission, and will set up the Southwest region for more success in the future of recycling.

With the hard work of the Recreation Committee, in 2017 the Planning department started work on the creation of the Regional Recreation Master Plan, an important piece of overall planning for the region, that should soon be presented to the Board with recommendations. The Planning department also laid the groundwork for the "Coastal Link Trail", an exciting new project connecting The Great Trail to the USA, something that will elevate our status in tourism and provide a world-class experience to our residents.

The Planning department continued its growth as it started important work in climate change planning and began providing expanded services to our member municipalities, enabling them to save money through the efficiencies

that are naturally gained by economies of scale. The Commission is now well positioned to be able to provide professional, comprehensive planning and inspection services to our member communities.

The landfill operation stayed steady in 2017 with a small increase in revenue from tipping fees overall. There was a slight decline in ICI (Industrial, Commercial, Institutional) waste, which was offset by slight increases in other categories. The new recycling program being brought in during the 2018 fiscal year will affect total tonnage if diversion rates change as predicted, but we are expecting that new foreign sources of waste will likely make up the difference.

2017 brought some significant changes in personnel, which meant saying goodbye to some key people, including Solid Waste & Planning Director Dan Harrington and Executive Director Frank Tenhave. The loss of seasoned people has been felt on a personal level by many of the staff and Board members; however, the Human Resource committee had the foresight to embark on an Organizational Study in the fall of 2017 which resulted in significant gains in efficiency through organizational changes, resulting in a leaner and more nimble organizational structure. The organization is also realizing further human resource efficiencies as attrition affords us opportunities to restructure internally, making better use of tax dollars.

In closing, we extend a sincere and well-earned “Thank You” to the members of the Board of Directors and the committees, knowing that many hours of work happen behind your keyboards and on your phones outside of the walls of an actual Board or Committee meeting. Your dedication to the region is commendable and inspiring.

The Commission, like all organizations, needs hard working and dedicated staff on the ground every day, ensuring that operations run smoothly and efficiently. As a direct result of the hard work and dedication of the staff, the Southwest New Brunswick Service Commission can continue to evolve and grow in positive directions. As such, we extend the same sincere thanks to all of the staff for your engagement, commitment, and support. We appreciate you.

Because of the passion and commitment of the SNBSC, this region is becoming an even better place to call “home” for all residents.

Sincerely,

Joyce Wright

Chair, Board of Directors

Hollis Bartlett

Executive Director

## Values and Priorities

The Southwest New Brunswick Regional Service Commission continues to operate in accordance with the guiding principals outlined in the 2013 document “Report to the Southwest New Brunswick Service Commission: Priority Setting Workshop Outcome and Findings – Part I and II”, which was unanimously endorsed by the Board of the day.

The Key Values of the commission as identified in that document are:

*Honest, trustworthy;*

*Accountable, responsible, open, transparent;*

*Integrity;*

*Risk-taking, innovative, visionary;*

*Making a difference, Leadership*

Similarly, the priorities identified in that document continued to form part of the focus of the commission’s work. Those priorities are:

1. *Maintain an affordable, balanced budget*
2. *Review and determine asset amalgamation and other cost-sharing opportunities within Emergency Services (Police, Fire and Emergency, such as off-road rescue)*
3. *Increase regional lobbying efforts and work toward improved rapport with the Region’s MPs and MLAs*
4. *Seek ways to expand existing partnerships to improve the region’s Tourism marketing*
5. *Continue discussions focused on regional transportation, economic development and land-use planning*

2017 saw the Commission pursue these priorities, in particular with transportation and land-use planning, and laid the groundwork for economic development as well.

# Governance

As prescribed by a formula in the legislation that created the Regional Service Commissions, the Southwest New Brunswick Service Commission has a 17 member Board of Directors which cumulatively speaks for the entire region and all its residents. Irrespective of the location they come from, Board members are duty bound to come to the Board table to work in the best interest of the region as a whole.

## 2017 Board of Directors

Carla Brown	LSD Advisory Committee Chair, St David
Dennis Green	Mayor, Village of Grand Manan
Ken Stannix	Mayor, Village of McAdam
James Tubbs	LSD Advisory Committee Chair, Dumbarton
Garry Christie	LSD Advisory Committee Chair, St. Patrick
Allen MacEachern	Mayor, Town of St. Stephen
Doug Rowlands	LSD Advisory Committee Chair, Lepreau
Crystal Cook	Mayor, Town of St. George
Doug Naish	Mayor, Town of St. Andrews
Stephen Smart	Mayor, Rural Community of Campobello Island
Heather Hatt	LSD Advisory Committee Chair, Fundy Bay
Terry James	Mayor, Village of Blacks Harbour
Joyce Wright	LSD Advisory Committee Chair, Dennis Weston
Wade Greenlaw	LSD Advisory Committee Chair, Dufferin
Winston Gamblin	Mayor, Village of Harvey
Dennis Blair	LSD Advisory Committee Chair, McAdam
Annette Townes	LSD Advisory Committee Chair, St. James

In order to ensure that all jurisdictions can have consistent representation at Board meetings, the provincial government has stipulated that all Deputy Mayors can act as an Alternate for their mayor at meetings of the Board. They were:

David Mahar	Deputy Mayor, Blacks Harbour
Robert Moses	Deputy Mayor, Grand Manan
Taylor Gallant	Deputy Mayor, McAdam
Faith Avery	Deputy Mayor, St. George
Richard Corey	Deputy Mayor, Harvey
Edie Bishop	Deputy Mayor, St. Andrews
Jason Carr	Deputy Mayor, St. Stephen
Kevin Sawtelle	Deputy Mayor, Rural Community of Campobello Island

Two additional LSD Advisory Committee Chairs were designated to act as Alternates for any LSD member on the Board that is not able to attend. They were:

Kathy Curtis	LSD Advisory Committee Chair, Manners Sutton
Wayne MacQuarrie	LSD Advisory Committee Chair, Pennfield

# Committees

The Commission is required to form Standing Committees and may have a variety of other Optional Committees as it deems necessary. All of these committees are growing in importance in getting the Commission's business completed in a timely fashion. The following is the 2017 list of committees for this Commission:

- Finance and Audit
- Human Resource
- Community Policing
- Planning Management
- Technical Advisory
- Executive
- EMO Planning Partnership
- Building Inspection
- Ad Hoc Recycling
- Ad Hoc Recreation

These committees met as often as the business they were tasked with required, with some meeting monthly or more frequently, and others only a few times as needed. All committees have the mandate to make recommendations to the Board but it is only the full Board that has the power to approve and enact the recommended actions coming from committees.

## PRAC (Planning Review and Adjustment Committee)

Unlike all the other committees that are under the normal control of the Board, this Board has only administrative responsibility for this committee. It operated under its own set of procedural bylaws as prescribed by the Province. The administrative responsibility of the Commission is to:

1. ensure that this committee is in place, it has its positions filled, and it is carrying out its duties;
2. perform the accounting and financial management required for such a committee to operate;
3. be the mechanism through which the PRAC can adjust its bylaws in order to better fulfil its mandate.

This is a totally independent committee that is tasked with providing arm's length review and decision making on land-use planning issues within our region, with this commission having no influence on those decisions. Currently our PRAC provides such services to municipalities that subscribe to its services and all the unincorporated areas (LSDs).



# Mandates and Progress

The Regional Service Commission structure was put in place with a clearly defined mandate set out by the Provincial government, specifically the Department of Environment and Local Government. It should be noted that beyond the pre-existing planning and solid waste services that were absorbed into the new commission structures, the commissions have no authority from the Province enabling them to force any fundamental changes or additional services within their regions. Currently any such initiatives require the voluntary participation and approval of the Board. The following, taken directly from documentation prepared by the Department of Environment and Local Government describes what the commissions are responsible for delivering followed by a commentary regarding where this commission is relative to it.

## Regional Planning

The Regional Service Commissions are responsible for the development of a Regional Plan, the aim of which is better coordinated and managed development and land use within each of the 12 regions.

The Southwest New Brunswick Service Commission continues to consider the creation of a regional plan to be a critically important component for enabling this commission to be much more effective. However, for a fourth year this item which was formerly a priority with the Province when the commission were set up remains in limbo.

Without any clear direction from the Province nothing further can be done on this mandated service. This impacts the ability of the commission to make progress on a number of other fronts.

## Local Planning Services

The Regional Service Commissions provide land use planning services to all Local Service Districts. The Southwest New Brunswick Service Commission continues to provide building inspection and development services to unincorporated areas. In addition, our Commission has started delivering these services to incorporated municipalities starting with the town of St. Andrews and will be in a position to expand this service offering.

The part time planner position hired in 2016 grew to a full time position in 2017, and the department continues to grow in service offerings and planning services. This has enabled this Commission to start to participate in more comprehensive regional collaborative planning services including recreation and transportation.

## Solid Waste Management

The Regional Service Commissions provide solid waste disposal services to the municipalities, rural communities and local service districts within their respective regions, a role previously performed by the Solid Waste Commissions.

The Southwest New Brunswick Service Commission continues to provide solid waste services to our region via the Hemlock Knoll Solid Waste Facility. The facility provides services to customers in the Saint John River Valley (RSC

12) as well as to our customers in eastern Maine. Tonnage from these customers located outside our region plays a critical role in maintaining the cost structure of operating this capital intensive business.

Expansion of this business to outside areas has resulted in a continued increase in revenue in 2017. Given the situation in Maine, our landfill remains a viable option for our USA customers and we don't anticipate any change in that situation and our tonnage from Maine should continue to increase.

As in previous years, the funding model for Hemlock Knoll remains under stress due to several reasons. That said, actions taken by the board in 2017 should result in positive changes, including a new recycling program that should alleviate the cost burden of recycling in forthcoming years somewhat.

## Regional Policing Collaboration

The Regional Service Commissions serve as a forum through which the effectiveness and efficiency of policing services is reviewed and evaluated on a regional basis.

The Southwest New Brunswick Service Commission has had a Community Policing Committee in place since very early in its existence. It is modelled after a structure that was in place in the greater Fredericton area for many years prior to the creation of the RSCs. This committee has been very effective in identifying issues of concern within the region and providing input to the region's police force (RCMP).

The speed sign purchased by the CPC was used with success in 2017 at various locations, with data gathered and submitted to the RCMP. We anticipate that 2018 will see similar success with this program.

## Regional Emergency Measures Planning

The Regional Service Commissions serve as a vehicle through which municipalities, rural communities and local service districts can plan, coordinate and pool resources on a regional basis in order to enable effective responses to emergencies.

The EMO Planning Partnership Committee addressed several topics in 2017 including preventative tree trimming for power line protection, rabid animals, communications and more.

## Regional Sport, Recreational and Cultural Infrastructure Planning

The Regional Service Commissions are responsible for facilitating the planning and cost sharing of major sport, recreational and cultural facilities within each of their respective regions.

The Southwest New Brunswick Service Commission has historically looked at these services in previous years but did not reach any agreement on what role it would play. In 2017, there was movement in this area with the creation of an Ad Hoc Recreation Committee, and work began on creating the Recreation Master Plan along with facilitating a study for the proposed Coastal Link Trail.

## Additional Services

The Regional Service Commissions can also provide other services as supported by their member communities on either a regional (all commission members) or sub-regional (one or more interested members) basis.

The Southwest New Brunswick Service Commission Transportation Committee had concluded it's work, resulting in the formation of the South West New Brunswick Transportation Authority Inc., a separate entity that was successful in obtaining public bus service for the region which started in September 2017. The SWNBTAI continues in existence with the SNBSC maintaining a seat on the board as well as facilitating and participating in the Transportation Advisory Committee.

No other collaborative projects were pursued in 2017.

## Service Arrangements

The Southwest New Brunswick Service Commission continues to explore potential cost savings opportunities and agreements with our communities for cost sharing on services and infrastructure.

As villages and towns become more financially challenged, their cost reduction needs become more pressing. The Commission may be able to provide some lower cost services to them than they can provide themselves. Some examples might include accounting services, payroll services, legal services and so on. However, it should be noted that these possibilities have been explored more than once by this Commission. There is difficulty in finding a critical base of demand for such services upon which to justify hiring of additional staff. Similarly, there has been discussions with other commissions about possible shared services as a means to provide service to our region at a lower cost, however there has not been any progress on this front.

Our expertise in the specialized services we provide, namely planning, development work and building inspection has proven to be where we can assist members and save them money by economy of scale.

## Collaboration on Regional Issues

One of the most important roles of the Southwest New Brunswick Regional Service Commission is to collaborate on regional issues and service decisions. The bulk of collaborative work in 2017 went towards the starting of the recreation master plan, as well as the Coastal Link Trail initiative. Other issues that arose during the year include responding to the federal government on the legalization of cannabis.

## 2017 Meeting Attendance

<i>Community</i>	<i>Representative</i>	<i>Attendance</i>
Town of St. Andrews	Doug Naish	11 of 11
Town of St. George	Crystal Cook	10 of 11
Town of St. Stephen	Allen MacEachern	10 of 11
Village of Blacks Harbour	Terry James	10 of 11
Village of Grand Manan	Robert Moses	2 of 11
Village of Harvey	Winston Gamblin	11 of 11
Village of McAdam	Ken Stannix	11 of 11
Campobello Island Rural Community	Stephen Smart	0 of 11
LSD St. James	Annette Townes	11 of 11
LSD St. David	Carla Brown	10 of 11
LSD Pennfield	David Szemerda	4 of 11
LSD McAdam / St. Croix	Dennis Blair	11 of 11
LSD Lepreau	Doug Rowlands	5 of 11
LSD St. Patrick	Garry Christie	11 of 11
LSD Fundy Bay	Heather Hatt	11 of 11
LSD Dumbarton	James Tubbs	11 of 11
LSD Dennis Weston	Joyce Wright	11 of 11
LSD Dufferin	Wade Greenlaw	10 of 11

## 2017 Board Member Expenses

<i>Board Member</i>	<i>Representing</i>	<i>Per Diems</i>	<i>Expenses</i>	<i>Total</i>
Allen MacEachern	Town of St. Stephen	\$1300.00	\$291.46	\$1591.46
Annette Townes	LSD St. James	\$2600.00	\$123.60	\$2723.60
Carla Brown	LSD St. David	\$1400.00	\$337.57	\$1737.57
Crystal Cook	Town of St. George	\$1400.00	\$430.89	\$1830.89
Dennis Blair	LSD McAdam	\$3775.00	\$1446.30	\$5221.30
Doug Naish	Town of St. Andrews	\$1000.00	\$260.26	\$1260.26
Doug Rowlands	LSD Lepreau	\$1750.00	\$1095.30	\$2845.30
Winston Gamblin	Village of Harvey	\$2450.00	\$698.95	\$3148.95
Garry Christie	LSD St. Patrick	\$2450.00	\$815.92	\$3265.92
Heather Hatt	LSD Fundy Bay	\$2050.00	\$745.06	\$2795.06
James Tubbs	LSD Dumbarton	\$2200.00	\$413.92	\$2613.92
Joyce Wright	LSD Dennis Weston	\$3937.50	\$736.16	\$4673.66
Ken Stannix	Village of McAdam	\$2400.00	\$96.62	\$2496.62
Robert Moses	Village of Grand Manan		\$38.33	\$38.33
Terry James	Village of Blacks Harbour	\$2450.00	\$1172.30	\$3622.30
Wade Greenlaw	LSD Dufferin	\$1475.00	\$261.71	\$1736.71