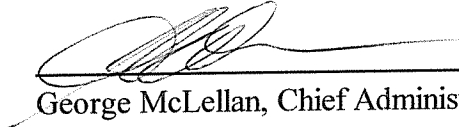


10.2.16

Halifax Regional Council  
May 21, 2002

TO: Mayor Kelly and Members of Halifax Regional Council

SUBMITTED BY:

  
George McLellan, Chief Administrative Officer

DATE: May 15, 2002

SUBJECT: New Area Rate for Mineville Community Association

### ORIGIN

Interim Area Rate Guidelines were adopted by Council in January 2000 to create a process to assist communities establish new area rates, ensure that all taxpayers have an opportunity to participate in setting a rate and ensure that rates are set only for valid municipal purposes and not for services already covered by the general rate.

The purpose of this report is to determine if the Interim Area Rate Guidelines have been satisfied thus far with regard to a proposed new area rate to increase and develop parkland and other recreational amenities within the community of Mineville.

### RECOMMENDATION

**It is recommended that :**

**A flat rate of \$20.00 per household be approved to be applied against the properties within the mapped area depicted in Appendix A effective with the 2002/03 fiscal year for the purpose of enabling the Mineville Community Association to increase and develop parkland and other recreational amenities within the community of Mineville.**

## BACKGROUND

The Mineville Community Association was formed in November 1999 with the purpose of "protecting and developing community parkland, building community pride and spirit, and working with government representatives on behalf of the community." The Association is registered under the Societies Act with the Registry of Joint Stock Companies. Since its formation, the Association has been very active in the community of Mineville fund raising and planning for recreational amenities and activities for the residents. The Association President's letter of January 25, 2002 (Appendix B) provides a list of accomplishments. In the letter, Association President Grant MacDonald proposes that a flat annual rate of \$20.00 per household be added to the property tax billings of community property owners in order to increase and develop parkland in Mineville including the following:

- a) putting a playground at Werner Park (in the Two River area);
- b) building a bridge between the two Candy Mountain Islands (Middle Park);
- c) develop a plan for developing parkland for the new development behind Candy Mountain Road;
- d) for park maintenance and additions (trail resurfacing, court resurfacing, etc.)

## DISCUSSION

The current status of this proposed new area rate in terms of the Interim Area Rate Guidelines is as follows:

- 1. Area rates can only be used for the provision of services within the municipal mandate; services traditionally provided by the municipality.**

Section 65 (ag) of the Municipal Government Act states that "Council may expend money required by the municipality for playgrounds, trails, bicycle paths, swimming pools, ice arenas and other recreational facilities." The Halifax Regional Municipality and its predecessor municipal units have traditionally funded, either entirely or partially through partnerships, the construction and on-going operating costs of recreation facilities.

- 2. Area rates are not to be used to provide different levels of a municipal service within urban and suburban areas where said service is covered by the general tax rate.**

The community to which the area rate would be applied is entirely outside the urban and suburban areas of HRM. Further, the Association is not duplicating any services currently provided directly by the Municipality to the community of Mineville.

- 3. In order for a proposed new area rate to move to the process as outlined in #4 below, it must have the support of the area's Councillor(s).**

The catchment area for the proposed area rate falls entirely within District 3. The Councillor for the district, Keith Colwell, conducted a poll of all community households in February 2002 to determine if there was support from a majority of the community for the area rate. The results of the poll are indicated below. Having determined that sufficient support existed, he requested staff prepare a report in compliance with Step 5 of the Interim Area Rate Guidelines for consideration at the next meeting of the Marine Drive, Valley, and Canal Community Council.

- 4. *Proposals for new area rates must be advertised publicly, clearly identifying affected areas, the purpose for the rate, rate information and the duration the rate is expected to be charged. A public meeting will be held and those attending the meeting will be informed of the rationale for the rate and consulted on its appropriateness.***

A public meeting was held on November 15, 2001 to discuss the proposed area rate and to gauge whether there was sufficient interest to proceed with a poll of all households within the community. The date, time, location, and purpose of the meeting was advertised in the Association's newsletter of October 29, 2001 (Appendix C) which is delivered to every household in Mineville. The newsletter is also available through the Association's web site.

In response to the interest shown at the meeting, Councillor Colwell sent ballots to every household in Mineville in February 2002 (Appendix D). The Association President's letter of January 25, 2002 (Appendix B) was included with each ballot to provide an explanation of the purpose of the new area rate. 55% of the residents responded, with 71% of respondents in favour of the flat annual rate of \$20.00 per household. The details of the poll are as follows:

	<b>Ballots</b>	<b>Percentage of Total</b>
<b>Ballots Distributed</b>	<b>353</b>	
<b>Ballots Returned Undelivered or Late</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>3% of Ballots Distributed</b>
<b>Ballots Returned by Households</b>	<b>186</b>	<b>55% of Ballots Distributed and Not Returned Undelivered or Late</b>
<b>Ballots Marked YES (in favour)</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>71% of Ballots Returned by Households</b>
<b>Ballots Marked NO (not in favour)</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>20% of Ballots Returned by Households</b>
<b>Spoiled Ballots</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>8% of Ballots Returned by Households</b>

- 5. *With the concurrence of the Councillor, the request is forwarded to the Community Council for review and a recommendation to Halifax Regional Council. Where a Community Council does not exist, the request will go directly to Halifax Regional Council.***

At a special session on May 7, 2002, the Marine Drive, Valley, and Canal Community Council

approved forwarding to Halifax Regional Council the recommendation contained in this report. A copy of the recommendation signed by the Community Council Chair is attached as Appendix E.

6. *Any proposed new area rates recommended by a Community Council (or, in the absence of a Community Council, the Councillor for the area) will be submitted to Halifax Regional Council through a staff report with a recommendation from the Chief Administrative Officer. The staff report will identify the implications to the Municipality along with the results of any public meeting.*
7. *Halifax Regional Council is responsible for approving all area rates.*

The purpose of this report submitted by the Chief Administrative Officer is to provide Council with the necessary information required to consider the recommendation forwarded from the Marine Drive, Valley, and Canal Community Council for a new area rate. The results of the public meeting and poll were outlined previously in this report, and the implications to the Municipality are identified under the Budget Implications section which follows.

### **BUDGET IMPLICATIONS**

There are no budget implications. The Municipality is simply collecting this amount from each property owner in Mineville on behalf of the Mineville Community Association. There are currently 414 properties within the proposed catchment area which would generate \$8,280 in revenue from the new rate.

### **FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT POLICIES / BUSINESS PLAN**

This report complies with the Municipality's Multi-Year Financial Strategy, the approved Operating, Capital and Reserve budgets, policies and procedures regarding withdrawals from the utilization of Capital and Operating reserves, as well as any relevant legislation.

### **ALTERNATIVES**

Council may decide not to approve this new area rate, in which case the Mineville Community Association would continue to engage in fund raising activities to generate the funds it requires.

### **ATTACHMENTS**

Appendix A: Map of Catchment Area for Proposed Area Rate

Appendix B: Letter of January 25, 2002 from Mineville Community Association President Grant MacDonald

**New Area Rate for Mineville Community Association  
Council Report**


- 5 -

**May 21, 2002**

- Appendix C: Excerpt from Mineville Community Association Newsletter (October 29, 2001)  
Appendix D: Ballot used for vote on proposed new area rate  
Appendix E: Recommendation signed by Community Council Chair

Additional copies of this report, and information on its status, can be obtained by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 490-4210, or Fax 490-4208.

Report Prepared by: Gordon Roussel, Budget Coordinator, Financial Planning 490-5534  
Veronica Roche, Administrative Support Assistance, Financial Planning 490-6498

Report Approved by:   
Dale MacLennan, Director, Financial Services 490-6308

**Region View**






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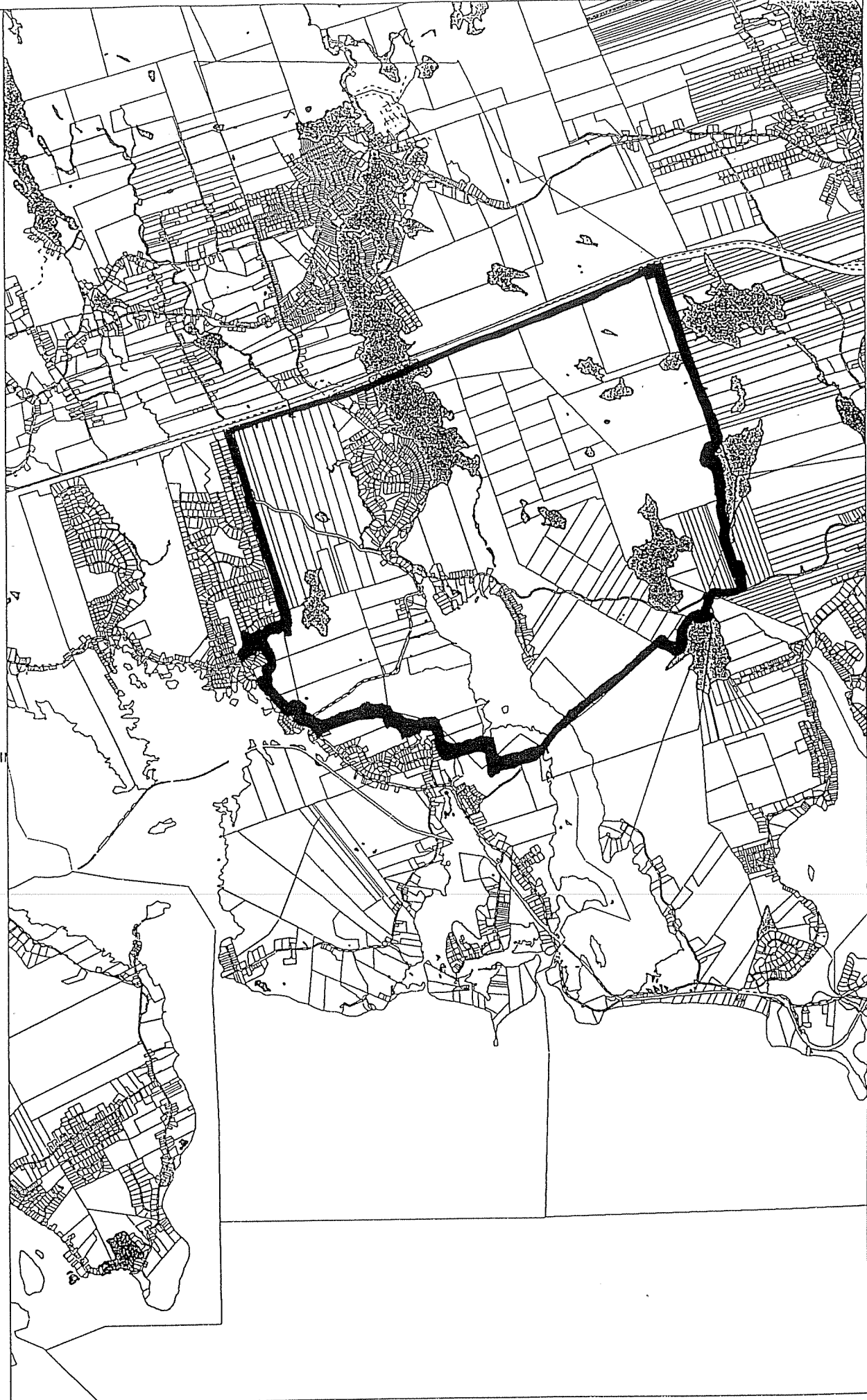
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Scale 1:65817

**Legend:**

-  STREET CENTER LINE
-  STREET NAMES
-  PARCELS
-  LAKES
-  COMMUNITY



## Appendix B



55 Dempster Crescent  
Mineville, Nova Scotia  
B2Z 1J6

January 25, 2002

Dear Fellow Mineville Resident:

The *Mineville Community Association* ("MCA") is a registered non-profit group dedicated to representing the residents of Mineville. In 2 years we have accomplished the following:

1. Arranged for the purchase of the Candy Mountain Islands (Middle Park; 7 acres.) This was a \$50,000 purchase on our behalf.
2. We were awarded over \$80,000-worth of funding from a number of different funding and grant programs for the development of Bennett Park. Bennett Park includes a small community building, a basketball court, a trail, a 1-acre grassy field and 4 fitness stations.
3. Environment Projects: Installed 132 bird and bat nesting boxes and platforms in the various parks in the community and installed surveillance cameras at the entrance of Frog Lake Road to prevent further illegal dumping (approximately \$45,000 worth of funding.)
4. Created 11 summer jobs for local youth. The focus of these jobs was on the environment (N.S. Youth Conservation Corps) and park development.
5. Established 4 annual community events (Easter Egg Hunt, Decorate for Christmas contest, Halloween Party and the summer fair.)
6. We've established an agreement with the Department of Transportation and Public Works to keep both Frog Lake Road and the Old Mineville Road as trails (providing we continue to maintain them.)
7. Formed a 1000 KM Walking Club. Residents who walk and/or jog 1000 KM's are awarded with a free T-shirt recognizing the accomplishment.
8. Received 4000 trees and another \$2000 to purchase trees & shrubs from Tree Canada.
9. Put up the *Welcome to Mineville* signs, the park signs and manage the message board.
10. Arranged for the bulk discount of oil (5 cents per litre), water testing and septic pumping.
11. Working with the Department of Natural Resources to get the crown land on the other side of Lake Echo reclassified as protected.
12. Established a community web site that contains pictures from all of our events, history, area maps, important links, etc. (<http://www.chebucto.ns.ca/CommunitySupport/Mineville>.)

Through the efforts of the MCA over \$200,000 worth of funding and grant programs have been brought into the Mineville area. Without the MCA, Mineville would have received nothing.

The MCA has received recognition from the accomplishments above by winning 2 awards in the past year (from N.S. Sport & Recreation and the Halifax Regional Development Agency.) To receive funding for many of these projects the MCA was required to raise a percentage of the project cost. Through fundraising projects and events, much of the required funds were raised. Although successful in the past, fundraising is a lot of work by a few people. In order to ensure the on going benefits the MCA is bringing to our community and help provide a stable financial base, the MCA is asking for the support of the community in its bid to have an area rate implemented for the Mineville area.

The rate proposed is a flat rate amount of \$20 per year (\$1.66 per month) and is applied to our property tax bills. Please remember that unlike your property taxes this money is **not a tax** and stays within our community to be utilized in our community. Also, this rate cannot be increased without another public consultation. Every resident of Mineville has equal opportunity to enjoy the benefits created through the efforts of the MCA.

Future projects that the MCA is working towards:

1. Putting a playground at Werner Park (in the Two Rivers area.)
2. Building a bridge between the 2 Candy Mountain Islands (Middle Park.)
3. We will be receiving a 1 acre parcel of land with the new development behind Candy Mountain Road.
4. We will be receiving another 10 acres of parkland with the new development behind Candy Mountain Road. When this and the 1 acre parcel of land become available, a committee will need to be formed to plan what should be done with them.
5. Park maintenance and additions (trail resurfacing, court resurfacing, etc.)

The area rate being requested (approximately \$8000 per year total) is not enough to cover the full costs of the above projects. This money will be used to apply to government and corporate funding programs which often match the applicants' contribution. Parkland that isn't utilized can be declared surplus and disposed of by the municipality. A few years ago, Bennett Park was being considered for a gas station and Wadlow Park (near Dempster Crescent) was being considered for a house lot. The MCA wants to ensure that we not only utilize our parkland, but that we increase the amount it (ie. if possible, we would like to see the gold mining area become a park someday.)

The projects that have been completed in the past 2 years have made Mineville a better place to live and have increased our property value. With the implementation of an area rate we can ensure the future success of the MCA and the benefits that it brings to each and every one of us.

**Please remember: This is not a tax! Every penny comes back into the community and is used to bring our *tax dollars* back into the community!**

If you have any questions in regards to the above I can be contacted at 430-6854 (cell) or via e-mail at [grant.macdonald@compaa.com](mailto:grant.macdonald@compaa.com).

Sincerely,



Grant MacDonald  
President – Mineville Community Association

P.S. To be added to the MCA e-mail distribution list, please send an e-mail to the above address.



*Appendix C*

**Next General Meeting--November 15th**

Our next general meeting will be held on November 15th at the Lake Echo Fellowship Baptist Church (Peter Court across from Bennett Park.) Doors will open at 7:00 and the meeting will start at 7:30. There will be a Neighbourhood Watch update, a MCA year in review and area rate discussions. **The vote to put in**

**an area rate will not be that night.** This meeting will be used to get a feel for whether the MCA should proceed with this or not. The process to put in an area rate will also be explained. This is an opportunity for you to voice your opinion. (Note for Survivor fans: we'll have you out by 9:00.)



Deadline for return: March 1, 2002

Dear Residents:

In response to the interest shown at the recent community meeting about the Mineville Community Association, I am asking you to complete the following Ballot and return it to me at the earliest possible date. The Ballot results will be used to determine if a flat rate of \$20.00 per municipal tax bill will be applied to residents in your community.

I will advise the outcome of the poll as soon as possible, but at the latest by March 31, 2002

Check One Box Only:

- |   |
|---|
| <p><input type="checkbox"/> YES, I am in favour of paying \$20.00 flat rate per annum in support of the Mineville Community Association</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> NO, I am not in favour of paying \$20.00 flat rate per annum in support of the Mineville Community Association.</p> |
|---|

Please Sign Here:

\_\_\_\_\_

Date:

\_\_\_\_\_

Please return via FAX to 490-4122, FAX to my office at 827-5228 or mail to my office in the attached envelope. On March 5, I will count all the votes for and against the area rate, and will honour the wishes of the majority, as democracy dictates. This is your opportunity to voice your opinion.

Yours sincerely,

Keith Colwell  
Councillor, District 3

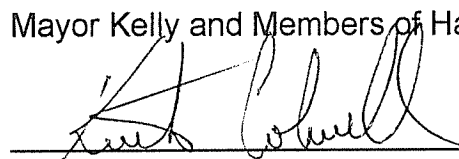


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Halifax Regional Council  
May 7, 2002

**TO:** Mayor Kelly and Members of Halifax Regional Council

**SUBMITTED BY:**

  
Councillor Keith Colwell, Chair  
Marine Drive, Valley and Canal Community Council

**DATE:** May 7, 2002

**SUBJECT:** New Area Rate Proposed for Mineville Community Association

**ORIGIN**

Marine Drive Valley and Canal Community Council, May 7, 2002.

**RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that Halifax Regional Council approve a flat rate of \$20.00 per household be applied against the properties within the mapped area depicted in Appendix A of the staff report dated April 23, 2002, effective with the 2002/03 fiscal year for the purpose of enabling the Mineville Community Association to increase and develop parkland and other recreational amenities within the community of Mineville.

**ATTACHMENTS**

1. Staff report dated April 23, 2002

For additional copies or for information on the status of the report, please contact the Office of the Municipal Clerk, at 490-4210 (TEL) or 490-4208 (FAX).