



MEDIA RELEASE

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COUNTY ASSISTS WHARVES ASSOCIATION WITH PLANS FOR LOCAL WHARVES

ANNAPOLIS CO. –The Municipality of the County of Annapolis is pleased to announce the newly formed Annapolis County Wharves Association has taken the first step in working towards a strategic, long-term plan for local wharves; a goal that seemed almost unreachable just one year ago.

Since 2007, the Annapolis County Finance Committee has worked with local wharves/harbours representatives, as well as provincial and federal representatives, to explore opportunities for cooperation in resolving funding challenges for local wharves. During these discussions the idea of a united association was introduced. In just over a year, working closely with the County, members from the individual wharf organizations joined together and formed the Annapolis County Wharves Association (ACWA).

“I feel this may be one of the most sustainable economic development packages we have ever been involved with,” remarked Tom Vitiello, Councillor for District 5 and Finance Committee Chair. “Our (Council) investment has been mainly time and in-kind. The financial contribution has been quite modest if you think about the potential this has over the next 10-15 years for leveraging very significant project funding into the County for these facilities.”

Council’s approval of a \$10,000 start up grant has allowed the Association to launch their first joint project by arranging an engineering assessment for each site as the first phase in creating a priority action list. This will indicate which wharves need the most immediate repair. With the funds allotted by the Municipality, engineer Mr. Francis Doucet, was hired and started his first assessment on April 29th at Harbour Authority of Battery Point in Victoria Beach.

“Today is a perfect example of the benefits we’re seeing by working as a team (referring to the engineering assessment being done),” said Jeffrey Gregory ACWA President. “ACWA members have already sat down with different levels of government, and the feedback has been very positive. The Municipality provided us the assistance we needed to develop a united front. It was obvious that competing against one another for funding was not working. As a group we have created a stronger voice and a support group for one another.”

Presently, there are seven wharves within Annapolis County, four of which are operated by authorities that qualify for federal Small Crafts and Harbours funding. The remaining divested wharves are owned by community, non-profit societies which must seek funding through alternative programs. The ACWA works on behalf of all wharves to explore funding opportunities appropriate for the individual wharf organizations. In turn, the County provides two types of grants: (1) “seed money” to leverage Federal and/or Provincial grants for large capital projects; and (2) assistance for small projects that address ongoing capital maintenance.

“The formation of the Annapolis Wharves Association is a good thing,” notes Annapolis County Warden Peter Newton. “The Municipality has assisted this dedicated group of men and women in forming an organization to foster sustainability and self-sufficiency for wharves for commercial fishing, recreational activities and tourism.”

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Contact: Warden Peter Newton
532-3137