



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

**For immediate release**

### **COUNCIL LOOKS TO THE FUTURE FOR WELLNESS CENTRE**

ANNAPOLIS CO. FEBRUARY 12, 2010 – Council has decided not to approve a request for \$40,000 to the Basin Wellness Society (BWS). This request for the emergency funding came from the Chair of the Board to cover the wellness centre’s payroll for the upcoming months.

Annapolis County Warden Peter Newton and CAO Brenda Orchard will be attending the BWS Board meeting on February 15<sup>th</sup> to discuss working together to provide a smooth transition to a new governance model for the wellness centre. On January 13<sup>th</sup>, Council unanimously agreed to negotiate a partnership with the YMCA as the new operator for the facility.

Prior to making this decision, Council asked that County Finance Director, Gerald Hackensmidt, visit Lifeplex to examine the finances of the facility. His findings told Council that the facility only had enough funds to maintain operations through to the end of February. The facility has operated at a deficit since its inception and has outstanding invoices with the Municipality of over \$250,000. In 2009, taxpayers in Annapolis County paid \$312,000 towards the mortgage and there are \$130,000 in outstanding utility bills from last year.

“This was an extremely difficult decision,” said Annapolis County Warden Peter Newton. “We (Council) understand the hard work and dedication the BWS Board, staff and volunteers have contributed to the facility. But, in the end, it was decided that Council could not justify the additional unbudgeted funding.”

The Board of Directors of the Wellness Society has endorsed the Municipality’s plan to explore a partnership with the YMCA to operate the facility. The YMCA is currently doing its diligence on the feasibility of such a plan.

“To ensure the viability of the centre, we will need to work together on a successful transition,” said Warden Newton.

The facility is owned by the County of Annapolis and the BWS has an operating agreement. As part of this agreement the Society is responsible for all operating costs.

The County has developed a website for residents to provide a single source of information that is accessible to everyone. Please visit [www.lifeplexinfo.ca](http://www.lifeplexinfo.ca) .

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