



# Labour Market Monitor

Southern



September 2011

*The Labour Market Monitor is a monthly report providing a summary of labour market news events for the Southern Region.*

*The Southern Region includes Digby, Yarmouth, Shelburne, Queens and Lunenburg Counties.*

## GENERAL EVENTS

The **minimum wage in Nova Scotia increased** to \$10 per hour on October 1<sup>st</sup>. The rate increased 3.6 percent from its previous level of \$9.65 per hour. (Yarmouth County Vanguard - 29 September)

## LABOUR MARKET NEWS BY INDUSTRY

### Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting

A **Cooke's Aquaculture** spokesperson stated that new **salmon cages** in Saint Mary's Bay are about half full and could be running at about 90 percent in the near future. The Grande Passage site has seven of eight cages, or 600,000 fish, filled. The other site, about 1.5 km farther offshore, has two out of eight cages stocked. The company has hired 16 workers for the two sites. (Digby County Courier - 1 September)

The **Lobster Council of Canada** is seeking support, through a series of meetings with licence holders and harvesters in southwest Nova Scotia, for their **lobster penny proposal**. The proposal is asking for a half cent per pound from the harvesters and a half cent from the buyers to help market and promote their industry. The one-cent levy would generate \$1 million in funding for the council with one-quarter being used for administration and hiring staff. (Yarmouth County Vanguard - 15 September)

### Construction

The South Shore Regional School Board announced that Lunenburg's new **Bluenose Academy School** will not open before March, at least two months behind schedule. Heavy rains in the fall of 2011 caused delays in completing site work and construction of concrete footings and slabs. The approximately 75,000-square-foot facility had an original price tag of \$21.5 million. (Lunenburg County Progress Bulletin - 6 September)

**Queens Place recreational centre**, in Liverpool, continues to stay on track for a December opening. Their fundraising effort has raised close to \$1.2 million, with 101 seats sold in the arena. The Region of Queens has hired three people in preparation of the opening of the facility, an operations manager, an operations attendant and program coordinator. (Queens County Advance - 13 September)

### **Manufacturing**

The installation of the last, or whiskey, plank on the **Bluenose II** marked the halfway point in its completion in mid-September. Making an occasion out of laying the whiskey plank is a long-standing wooden ship-building tradition, where about 11,000 spikes were used in the construction of the ship's hull. (Lunenburg County Progress Bulletin - 13 September)

The Irving-owned **Shelburne Shipyard was restored and reopened** in mid-September. The \$25.4 million refurbishment included an \$8.8 million loan through the provincial government's Industrial Expansion Fund. The slip, called a marine railway, can haul vessels weighing up to 4,000 tonnes, and more than 122 metres long, out of the water and can even take two vessels at once. A spokesperson for the company stated that 38 people are employed at the yard but they are bidding on a number of tenders that could easily double the workforce. (Shelburne County Coastguard - 20 September)

### **Real Estate and Rental and Leasing**

Statistics from the **Nova Scotia Association of Realtors (NSAR)** for the Yarmouth area has shown that it is taking longer to sell a house in the area, 142 days compared to 104 days the previous year. Additionally, there were 110 sales to the end of July 2011, compared to 84 last year. Local real estate agents indicated that there are a lot of houses on the market and more incidents of distress sales, where owners can no longer make their payments. The NSAR also reported the average sale price increased by a little over \$4,000 to \$116,435 in 2011. (Yarmouth County Vanguard - 6 September)

### **Health Care and Social Assistance**

**Bayside Home**, located in Shelburne County, officially opened in late-September. The facility tripled in size to 62 beds, added the capacity to care for elderly residents and created 40 new jobs. (Shelburne County Coastguard - 27 September)

### **Arts, Entertainment and Recreation**

A **feature film, *The Disappeared***, began filming around Lunenburg in mid-September. Filming of the story of six men fighting for their lives in two dories on the North Atlantic was expected to finish by the end of September. (Lunenburg County Progress Bulletin - 13 September)

### **Accommodation and Food Services**

After almost 40 years in business at the same location, Liverpool's **Kentucky Fried Chicken** outlet **closed** in mid-September. The closure put seven people out of work and was one of four store locations in Nova Scotia that closed. (Queens County Advance - 20 September)

### **Public Administration**

The Utilities and Review Board gave their final **approval to reduce the size of the Region of Queens Council** in late-September. The move would reduce the number of councillors by two, leaving seven councillors and a mayor. The move is because of shifting demographics and population decline in the county. (Queens County Advance - 27 September)

**Note:** In preparing this document, the authors have taken care to provide clients with labour market information from reliable sources that is timely and accurate at the time of publication. Since labour market conditions are dynamic, some of the information presented here may have changed since this document was published. Users are encouraged to also refer to other sources for additional information on the local economy and labour market. Information contained in this document does not necessarily reflect official policies of the department.

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