



# Labour Market Monitor

Southern



October 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 education minister announced in mid-October that the province's 10,000 **public school teachers accepted a new two-year agreement** with the province. The agreement will see the teachers receive a one percent salary increase in each of the two years. (Shelburne County Coastguard - 11 October)

## LABOUR MARKET NEWS BY INDUSTRY

### Construction

Dexter Construction was awarded the **\$3.7 million contract to replace the Tuskent Bridge** in Yarmouth County. The bridge gave way last November after several days of heavy rainfall and is expected to be back in place by May 2012. (Yarmouth County Vanguard - 11 October)

The Town of Yarmouth and Municipality of Yarmouth agreed to contribute \$200,000 each towards a **\$2 million upgrade and expansion of the Mariners Centre**. The bulk of the funding will come from the federal and provincial governments. A component of the project is to enhance the facility's ability to host larger scale conferences and conventions. The largest amount of funding, \$900,000, will go towards an expansion of the facility for additional storage space. (Yarmouth County Vanguard - 18 October)

The Lunenburg **County Lifestyle Centre project has been scaled back by 15 percent** to remain within budget after tenders came in higher than anticipated. Notable alterations to the \$33 million project include a smaller library space, less glass, lower ceilings, elimination of an entrance canopy, and removal of a slide for the pool. The reduction means that new tenders are being called and construction timelines have been pushed back. Instead of this fall, construction is now expected to begin next March, with a completion date of March 2013. (Lunenburg County Progress Bulletin - 26 October)

## Manufacturing

**Shelburne Ship Repair won two tenders** worth \$2.4 million to refit two vessels for the Canadian navy and Coast Guard. It is expected that all 52 unionized workers will be needed and the work is expected to take up to 10 weeks to complete. The contract covers mechanical, hull, electrical, operations work, sand blasting and painting. (Shelburne County Coastguard - 11 October)

**Nova Scotia won the federal shipbuilding contract** in mid-October with the announcement that Irving Shipbuilding's bid for \$25-billion in anticipated navy combat ship projects over the next 30 years had been chosen. The opportunity has the potential to secure and sustain up to 11,500 jobs in peak employment for people across the province. The combat package includes building eight Arctic Offshore Patrol ships to build between 2012 and 2021, up to 15 Canadian Surface Combatants from 2017 to 2035 and in-service support from 2020 to 2042. Although the majority of jobs will be focused on the Halifax Shipyard, the Irving owned Shelburne Ship Repair is a part of the plan and company officials have said the local facility will have "tremendous ship repair opportunities." (Shelburne County Coastguard - 19 October)

The **rebuild cost of the Bluenose II has risen to \$15.9 million**. The original estimate for the project, which included the price of constructing a new marine railway at the Lunenburg shipyard, was \$14.2 million, a figure that jumped to \$14.7 million by August 2010. The cost increases included reinforced steel in the floor, necessary for international certification. The ship is now estimated to be ready to sail during the summer of 2012. (Lunenburg County Progress Bulletin - 26 October)

## Retail Trade

**Target** indicated that it is **not interested in transforming their Bridgewater Zellers** store. They stated that the location will operate as a Zellers into 2012 but there is no guarantee beyond that point. (Lunenburg County Progress Bulletin - 4 October)

## Administrative and Support, Waste Management and Remediation Services

The Yarmouth Visitor Information Centre (VIC) **added a year-round call centre** with the provincial government transferring the work from Halifax to Yarmouth. Seven seasonal jobs at the VIC have become year-round positions and four additional seasonal employees will be added for the summer season. The call centre will handle reservation and travel counselling calls. (Yarmouth County Vanguard - 11 October)

## Health Care and Social Assistance

**South Shore Health** indicated that it must **find another \$4 million in savings** to meet their budget allocation from the provincial Health Department for the coming year. That is on top of the \$5 million it cut to meet last year's funding reduction. Health authorities across the province have been instructed to trim their budgets by three percent and absorb salary increases and inflation, translating to a 5.3 percent funding cut. The CEO for South Shore Health indicated that all options are being looked at and that staff cuts can not be dismissed at this time. (Chronicle Herald - 21 October)

The **Hebron Residential Centre closed in early November** and is expected to reopen as a community residential home for adults with disabilities. A spokesperson for the Department of Community Services (DCS) stated that the facility can no longer meet the needs of the children in their care, with no space for therapeutic and clinical services. The centre employed 20 people, eleven full-time and nine casual. DCS is working with the full-time staff to discuss their options. (Yarmouth County Vanguard - 25 October)

## Arts, Entertainment and Recreation

American-based cable network **Syfy announced it had picked up a third season of the television series, “Haven.”** The drama is filmed in Chester and other locations around the South Shore and according to a producer injects millions of dollars into the local economy. Season three is expected to get underway in early spring and continue through to late summer. (Lunenburg County Progress Bulletin - 19 October)

## Accommodation and Food Services

**White Point Resort will receive a \$1 million renovation project**, cost-shared by the resort and the provincial government via its Industrial Expansion Fund. The renovations will include wiring, well, kitchen, and pool operating system projects, as well as improvement to guest rooms, reception, dining room, pool and games rooms. The work is scheduled for January and February, the quietest months at the resort. The regular compliment of 85 to 90 staff will be temporarily laid off during the renovations. (Chronicle Herald - 18 October)

## Public Administration

The provincial government announced **the establishment of a \$10 million fund** that will give companies involved in the **aerospace industry** a competitive edge in the global market, allowing them access to capital to retool production facilities for specific part production. The announcement was made at Composites Atlantic, established in 1989 and currently employing around 330 workers. It is one of a number of provincially-based firms which will have the opportunity to apply to access the funding. (Lunenburg County Progress Bulletin - 19 October)

***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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