



PARTNERS in BUSINESS, PARTNERS in GROWTH

Annual Newsletter 2019



WWW.TRUROCOLCHESTERCHAMBER.COM

902-895-6328 ♦ ed@tcchamber.ca

605 Prince St., Truro. N.S., B2N 1G2



President's Message

It has been another exciting year for the Truro & Colchester Chamber of Commerce as we continue to act as the **“voice of business”** in our region. During the past year, we have continued to collaborate with government of all levels, local businesses and organizations, the Truro and Colchester Partnership for Economic Prosperity (TCPEP), and other Chambers in the region to ensure the voices of our members and businesses from the area are heard and their interests are protected as our region continues to grow and flourish.



Joanne McRae
President

As part of our continued commitment to local business we have been guided by our strategic plan and business plan to focus our efforts. Over the past year our Board of Directors, Committees and our dynamic staff have focused our efforts on membership engagement and youth in the region.

Our Membership Engagement Committee, led by our Vice-President Ron Smith, hosted numerous events to help educate our new members and businesses that aren't yet members, on the value of Chamber membership. This will ensure the continued viability of our local Chamber so that we can continue to act and protect the interest of businesses in our communities.

Our Youth Committee, led by Director Peter Thiessen, reached out to entrepreneurs and managers of local businesses to find out the challenges they face operating their businesses and to determine how the Chamber can assist them as they continue to grow. We have taken the knowledge we gained at those sessions to provide additional supports to our young entrepreneurs. We have also connected with our local high school students inviting them to attend Chamber events so they can see the amazing opportunities that exist in Truro and Colchester for their future and to help connect our young leaders with local businesses and municipal leaders.

We have continued our advocacy efforts, to bring the issues that affect business to the forefront. We were pleased to host roundtables on agriculture and cannabis to provide resources to local businesses to better understand issues that will affect their operations. Our agriculture roundtable highlighted key issues that the agriculture sector is facing which is an important piece of our local economic framework.

In May, we were pleased to host the Atlantic Chamber of Commerce Annual General Meeting in Truro, showcasing what our community has to offer to Chambers across the region. In September our Executive Director, Sherry Martell and Vice-President Ron Smith represented our Chamber at the Canadian Chamber of Commerce Annual General Meeting in Thunder Bay, Ont. This was an exciting week for our Chamber as Sherry was recognized for her outstanding performance in her role, receiving the Chamber Executive of the Year award for Chambers with less than 500 members, as well as becoming one of the first Canadian Chamber Executives to receive national accreditation. We were pleased that Sherry was recognized as she is a key piece of our local Chamber and works diligently to ensure business in our region is represented. During the AGM, our Chamber also presented our Mental Health for Entrepreneurs policy at the national policy meeting which was accepted by Chambers across the country. We also co-sponsored an important policy regarding the Isthmus of Chignecto and the important infrastructure that connects Nova Scotia to the rest of the country. Both of these policies are now included in the Canadian Chamber of Commerce policy book for the upcoming year.

Truro and Colchester is a vibrant place to live and work and we need to continue to share that message within and beyond our region. Over the next year, our dedicated Board of Directors, Committees and Staff will continue to focus on the items in our Business Plan as we prepare to update our strategic plan in 2019. We commit to continue to ensure our Chamber continues to represent our local businesses as decisions are made at all levels of government that will impact the businesses in our region. If you are interested in exploring opportunities on how to become more involved with your local chamber of commerce, we would be excited to hear from you.

Joanne McRae, CPA, CA
President 2018-2019

MISSION – To act in the best interest of business in Truro & Colchester on matters of economic, social and political impact; we are committed to business growth in our communities



Executive Director's Message



Sherry Martell

One of the foundational activities of a chamber of commerce is advocacy. Since 1890, the Truro & Colchester Chamber of Commerce has been the principle voice of business in this region acting in the best interest of its members on matters of economic, political and social importance. We are your "Voice," which allows anonymity if preferred, so businesses can focus on growing and thriving. Our Chamber is the largest in the province outside metro with 431 members at year end, representing several sectors.

We are continuously engaging with all levels of government and First Nations to voice the needs and concerns of our members. During the year we meet one-on-one with our members, host roundtable sessions on specific topics and new in 2018 was a series of 12@12 business meetings. We also survey members on advocacy issues throughout the year and seek input in an annual survey. We have active committees working on membership issues as well as a youth recruitment, retention and investment.

Information gained from these meetings, and other feedback from our members, guides us to develop policies in the best interest of business along with our strategic plan.

We are your partner in business and invite all members and future members to join in recognizing our vision the Colchester business community is collaborative, connected and thriving.

Sherry Martell
Executive Director

By the Numbers

- 430 + members, largest chamber outside Halifax region
- 88 % of member businesses employ 25 people or less
- 50 + networking opportunities in 2018

Member Testimonial

"I would like to acknowledge the interest the Chamber took and support they offered our business when the county was looking at implementing their kennel by law that would have impacted our dog daycare in a very negative way. Ms. Martell called me personally and we discussed what the concerns were, not just of our business but even those that were not Chamber members. Sherry was truly concerned for all of us which I thought was awesome, because it shows they support all businesses even those who aren't a chamber member." - **Marcel Marcotte, owner of Red Woof Inn Doggie Day Care.**

MEMBER BENEFITS

Join Us - Membership is an Investment in Your Business

Advocacy

- Lobby All Levels of Government
- Stakeholder and Member Engagement
- Roundtables
- Youth Retention and Tourism Committees
- Member of the Canadian Chamber of Commerce & Atlantic Canada Chamber of Commerce



Education

- Business Builders Breakfast Series
- Workplace Skills Training Partners
- Professional Development
- Collaborative Learning Presentations



Networking

- Monthly Lunch and Learns
- Business Breakfasts
- After-Hour Socials
- Signature Events
- Awards and Recognition Programs



Services

- Business Resources
- Online Member Directory
- Sponsorship Opportunities
- Newsletter Advertisements
- Member-to-Member Discounts
- Chamber Partner Discounts
- Tidal Bore Brochure
- Certificates of Origin
- Member Referrals
- Weekly E-newsletter
- Social Media Exposure



ASK ABOUT OUR MONTHLY MEMBERSHIP FEE OPTION

Office Hours: Mon to Thurs 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.,
Fri 9:00 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Two national policies passed in 2018



Executive Director Sherry Martell presents a national policy on Addressing Entrepreneur Mental Health at the Canadian Chamber of Commerce AGM in Thunder Bay, Ont. in September.

The Truro & Colchester Chamber of Commerce (TCCC) left its mark at the Canadian Chamber of Commerce AGM and policy debates with two policies sponsored by the chamber receiving national acceptance. Executive Director Sherry Martell presented the Chamber's resolution Addressing Entrepreneur and Employee Mental Health seeking federal action to support business. Chamber representatives present at the debate voted to support the policy recommendations (93.6 %) which has been sent to the federal government for consideration in the 2018 Canadian Chamber of Commerce Policy Book. TCCC also co-sponsored a second resolution, Protect Vital Trade Infrastructure on the Isthmus of Chignecto, presented by the Atlantic Chamber of Commerce which also received support from the national chambers.

Federal budget impacts on small business

Policy tax changes in 2018 had an impact on many businesses and the effects of this changes will be fully realized in 2019. In February, MNP hosted the annual federal budget luncheon to outline how these changes affected business.

The Chamber continues to support a national chamber #ProtectGrowth campaign lobbying for tax changes to promote business growth.

Kennel by-law concerns addressed by Chamber

The Chamber engaged with its members and municipal officials on a proposed kennel development by-law which resulted in the submission of several recommendations to the Municipality of the County of Colchester including a need to clearly outline how proposed new legislation would be enforced and the estimated cost to tax payers. Of particular concern to Chamber members was the lack of timeline associated with the proposed bylaw.

Access to broadband and cell service

The Chamber has continued to provide information to all levels of government about the impact lack of access to broadband and cell service is having on small business in rural communities. In 2018 the provincial government provided a mandate to Develop NS, a Crown corporation responsible for the development of strategic economic infrastructure to support economic growth in the province. Our Chamber has participated in four sessions hosted by the organization which is currently leading a project that would see 95 per cent of the province connected to high-speed internet in the next two to five years.

Immigration

A federal pilot program aiming to support employer's needs was showcased at a breakfast hosted by the Office of Immigration in April. Immigration minister Lena Metlege Diab spoke to our membership about the various programs available to support immigration. Lack of human resources is a major issue for our membership and the Chamber will continue to seek partners to assist in filling this void.

Government Relations:



▶ Cumberland-Colchester MP Bill Casey joined us for a lunch to update the membership on the progress of the federal government's mandate. He highlighted the need to protect vital trade infrastructure on the Isthmus of Chignecto prompting our chamber to engage in Atlantic efforts to table a national policy to address the issue.



▶ Federal Conservative Party Leader Andrew Scheer visited Colchester region in May. He spoke about his party's position on carbon taxation, taxes, legalization of cannabis and the need for more trade enabling infrastructure investments in the region.

▶ The Chamber continued its tradition hosting our three municipal mayors and Millbrook First Nation chief to join members for breakfast. Mayors Wendy Robinson, Christine Blair and Bill Mills, along with Chief Bob Gloade updated the audience on projects in their areas.

Advocacy



Physician recruitment efforts

Our members have shared concerns that the lack of access to family physicians is impacting their ability to recruit and retain staff. The Chamber is actively involved with the local Physician recruitment committee which includes municipal, business and health care professionals. The Chamber co-ordinated a basket campaign as a recruitment tool in September. Our region was present at a Dalhousie School of Medicine family physician retreat where we showcased this area as one of choice to live and work. We are working with the group, along with the Truro-Colchester Partnership for Prosperity (TCPEP), to establish a welcoming committee to engage with international physicians considering this region to set up a practice. The Chamber also welcomed new physicians to the area at its annual Fall Flavours Festival introducing them to the business community.



Attracting and retaining youth a priority

Early 2018, members of the Chamber's Youth Engagement, Retention, and Investment committee visited South Colchester Academy and Cobequid Educational Centre. They interviewed groups of students to understand factors impacting career choice decisions, job search experiences and to gain insight about their views of career opportunities in the area.



The committee also hosted two Young Entrepreneurs Sessions (YES) bringing together young business managers, owners and professionals to discuss issues impacting them. More of these sessions will be held in the new year.

The Chamber partnered with The TCPEP and the Department of Education to host a Youth/Business Symposium in November. More than 25 local employers participated with about 60 students from across Central Nova Scotia engaging in meaningful discussion on skills, education and training essentials for youth pursuing local career opportunities. In an effort to better connect students interested in professional careers with business people, the Chamber has invited students to attend several events.

Exports key to growth

Our Chamber welcomed President and CEO of Nova Scotia Business Inc., Laurel Broten in February 2018. She provided an overview of the province's current exports and highlighted opportunities for growth.

Keep Trade Free campaign

The Chamber joined the Canadian Chamber of Commerce to rally the business community through its Coalition to Keep Trade Free, inviting local business to participate. The coalition objectives are simple: advocating for freer trade within North America and around the world; and building the case for a modernized NAFTA that will grow our economies and make us globally competitive.

Agriculture Roundtable:



▶ Chamber hosted a roundtable in August seeking input on agriculture related issues. The roundtable featured guest speakers Foothills MP John Barlow, Conservative Shadow Minister for Agriculture and Agri-Food (Associate) and member of the Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agri-Food., and Bow River MP Martin Shield. The pair were touring to meet with local stakeholders to discuss federal agriculture policy, such as its effectiveness, issues that are faced by industry and how it could be improved. Our Chamber joined lobby efforts by the Canadian Chamber of Commerce and the Atlantic Chamber of Commerce against changes to front of label packaging that has the potential to negatively impact local business.

“ Member Testimonial ”

“As a young person, and as someone fresh to the entrepreneur scene The Truro and Colchester Chamber of Commerce have helped immensely establishing myself and business. I honestly couldn't say enough in regards to the assistance and benefits received from being a part of this community. Between the exposure, added credibility to my business, and informative panel discussions I would strongly recommend any business in becoming a member!” -**Mitchell Johnston, owner 360 Bin Cleaning & Mobile Wash**



Cannabis information session for employers

The Chamber of Commerce hosted a panel discussion for employers in December to offer an opportunity for them to ask questions to experts, and find out information they need to know when it comes to Cannabis in the workplace. Since Cannabis was legalized on Oct. 17, 2018, our office has received requests from employers for more information to ensure they are meeting regulatory requirements.

Automation changing business operations

The demand for higher productivity, improved quality, cost reduction and efficiency is driving the introduction of automation in all sectors, industries and markets. February, the Chamber hosted a six-person panel representing business and industry organizations who discussed how the implementation of technology is already having an impact on business and organizations, changing the way businesses engage with customers while evolving the workforce with many advances to be realized in the future.

Investing in tourism

Last year was the third year the Chamber has partnered with Tourism Nova Scotia to deliver funding to Visitor Information Centres in the Central Nova Scotia region. We are pleased to have been able to provide more than \$150,000 in support to community based organizations operating tourist information sites. The Chamber continues to invest in tourism by producing and distributing a tide times brochure and a series of four top 10 attraction cards for the area. The Chamber is also represented on a stakeholder committee that is exploring ways a new Destination Marketing organization could be established here.

Municipal charter amendments

The Chamber joined others from across the province to lobby against changes to the Municipal Government Act that would confer an exemption from long-standing regulations that prohibit municipalities from providing fiscal and real property incentives to private businesses uniquely for Cape Breton Regional Municipality.

“ Member Testimonial ”

“I have attended Chamber business education courses that have been beneficial in our business growth and development. I have attended many networking and collaborating events with other Chamber members. As a member of the rural Colchester business community, this allows you to see common challenges small business owners face. The Chamber provides many opportunities such as business over breakfast and lunch time sessions that make it convenient to fit into your day. We also use the Chamber group medical plan which is affordable for small business. We recently were nominated and awarded the Chamber’s Small Business Innovation Award, we wish to say THANK YOU [to the nominators] for the nomination. Not only do we view the award as a recognition of what we do as a business, but more importantly we view the nomination as a recognition by the Chamber of the importance of innovation and manufacturing to the economy and future of Colchester and surrounding area. To realize full potential from membership, you need to get involved, so I did!” – **Carole Fisher, Ditch Doctor**

Join Us!

**Membership is an investment in
your business.**

Click the “Join Us” button on our
website at

www.trurocolchesterchamber.com

or call 902-895-6328

Awards 2018



Gala

Business Excellence



Presented to Inglis Jewellers by sponsor Community Credit Union.

Business Person of the Year



Presented to Leo Rovers of L & R Construction by BDC. Award accepted on his behalf by his family.

Executive of the Year



TCCC Executive Director Sherry Martell was presented with an Executive of the Year Award in September by the Chamber of Commerce Executives of Canada.

Did you know, the Truro & Colchester Chamber of Commerce is an Accredited business organization?



Small Business Week



Small Business Achievement Award presented to Blenkhorn's Auto Salvage by PWC



New Small Business Award presented to Levels Game Loft by Community Credit Union



Business Growth Award presented to Coldstream Clear by BDC



Exporter of the Year Award presented to Pure Paint by NSBI



Agriculture/Agri Food Small Business of the Year Award presented to Searle's Garden and Floral by MNP



Excellence in Community Development Award presented to Aggregate Equipment Ltd., by the Town of Truro.



Legacy Award presented to Peaceful Places by the Truro & Colchester Chamber of Commerce and membership partners.



Small Business Innovation Award presented to Ditch Doctor by RBC

Networking

“ Member Testimonial ”

“Membership in the Truro and Colchester Chamber of Commerce has been the best thing for a small business owner like myself. The Chamber’s Group Health Insurance Plan is a great program. It allows a small business like Jean’s Flowers to be able to get health insurance for my family and my employees. Access to their educational programs is another bonus of belonging to the Chamber, they offer events ranging from local politics to social media!” -Robin Young, Jean’s Flowers and Gifts

Did you know... when a business is a member of the Chamber, all their employees are members too?

Join Us at more than 40 programs and events annually!



Value for your membership:
Members save on event admission and have access to exclusive members only events



Upcoming Events:

Annual General Meeting – March 13, Best Western Glengarry, 11 a.m., luncheon to follow at 12 p.m.

Awards Gala Dinner – April 25, Holiday Inn Truro, 6 p.m., social, 6:30 p.m. dinner

Lobster and Steak Kitchen Party – May 29, 5:30, Truro Golf Club

Golf Tournament – June 7, Mountain Golf Club, 9 a.m.

Fall Flavours Festival – Sept. 25, Truro Farmers Market, 6 p.m.

Small Business Week – Oct. 21 -25, Awards Luncheon Oct. 17, Holiday Inn.

Mix and Jingle – Dec. 4, Marigold Cultural Centre, 5 – 7 p.m.

Monthly Lunch and Learns and FREE Business Networking Breakfasts



Support local and your fellow Chamber members by joining the FREE M2M program



Partner Discounts

Chambers of Commerce Group Insurance Plan™



Join Truro & Colchester Chamber of Commerce for an adventure to...

Sept. 7 – Sept. 17 2019

CHINA

For 11-Day Trip Package

\$2,299*

BEIJING • SHANGHAI • SUZHOU • HANGZHOU



Your Trip Includes: • Roundtrip international airfare & Chinese domestic airfare & Tax
• 4-and 5-star hotel accommodations • 3 meals each day • Deluxe bus tours
• Fluent English-speaking tour guides • Entrance fees for attractions