

# Media Scan

Friday January 14, 2022

## [N.S. government accepts recommended minimum wage increase to \\$13.35 per hour](#)

The minimum wage in Nova Scotia will rise by 40 cents to \$13.35 per hour this spring, Premier Tim Houston said Thursday, adding that his government would take a few weeks to discuss further increases. Minimum wages are set to rise on April 1, following a recommendation from the Nova Scotia Minimum Wage Review Committee. That committee also recommended the minimum wage rise to \$13.60 in October and then to \$15 an hour by April 2024.

## [N.S. premier predicts full season for the CAT ferry service between Yarmouth, N.S. and Maine](#)

Nova Scotia Premier Tim Houston is predicting a full season for the CAT ferry service that runs between Yarmouth, N.S. and Maine. "We know that the operation hasn't had a full successful season by any real measurement that I can see in the past but my expectation is that this year, we'll have a full season," says Houston. According to the Nova Scotia government, on average, each passenger contributes \$2,200 in tourism revenue. However, the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has kept the ferry from operating since 2019. Yarmouth's mayor says she is looking forward to the ferry's return. "The fisheries are our mainstay but second to that is tourism. It's huge," says Yarmouth Mayor Pam Mood. "Everything from fixed roof accommodations to our restaurants, individual shops, gas stations, everything." The return of the international ferry will also provide an opportunity to test some new infrastructure.

## [Yacht Cater Poised for Waterfront Expansion](#)

Develop Nova Scotia is making room for a new tour boat operator on the Halifax Waterfront, where there's expectation an incumbent yacht charter firm will make a play for expansion. The Crown corporation has released a tender seeking an operator to work from a floating dock at a yet-to-be disclosed location on the waterfront. The contract would be for five seasons, starting in May and ending in October, with an option for another five seasons.

## [Competition Launched for Beer Garden Site.](#)

Two prime outdoor restaurant spaces on the Halifax Waterfront are up for grabs, but the successful applicants must agree to foot the build public washrooms on site. Develop Nova Scotia, the Crown corporation that oversees waterfront development, is looking to partner with operators of the beer garden, and possibly the wine and spirits bar, to build new, round accessible washrooms, which will be the responsibility of restaurant operators. Currently, both waterfront spaces are operated by Legendary Hospitality Group as the Stubborn Goat Beer Garden and Salt Yard Social a wine and spirits bar. The tender says the need for year-round washrooms is driven by an expected "increase in public visitation to the Halifax waterfront" driven by the return of cruise traffic, rising population density downtown and future expansions of Salt Yard.

## [Jonny Harris on the road again, as Still Standing visits Oxford, Middleton](#)

Comedian and actor Jonny Harris was happy to have Willie Nelson's On the Road Again return as an earworm when production for season seven of his award-winning series Still Standing got underway in 2021. The new season began airing on CBC on Jan. 5 with a ray of hope — or rather, a visit to discover why Hope, B.C. is more than just a roadside pee break between Kamloops and Vancouver — and continues with profiles of scrappy Canadian towns that have fought their way through adversity and kept their unique civic spirit. Harris has brought the show to his home turf on the East Coast on numerous occasions, and Nova Scotia-themed episodes from towns like Bear River, Mabou and Canso can be readily revisited on the CBC Gem app and website, along with the latest instalments. For this season, he and his crew spent a few weeks in the fall of 2021 in Middleton, for a show airing on Wednesday, Feb. 23 and, Oxford, which will be profiled on Wednesday, March 9.

## [COVID eating away at food industry in Pictou County](#)

What's it been like to be in the foodservice industry for the last two years? "I would say it was like a car that keeps stalling," says Greg Burrows, the owner of several Subway franchises in Pictou County, the New Glasgow Pizza Delight franchise and — until the end of the month when it closes permanently — the Goji's frozen yogurt franchise. With his hand in different areas of the food industry, Burrows said the impact has been mixed. "Subway was a bit different as we were not negatively impacted due to the fact we have drive-thrus," he said. Pizza Delight, which provides a mix of take out and dine in, was able to pivot to more take out and delivery but felt some of the blows of dining restrictions, lockdowns, labour shortages and most recently, the vaccine passport - something Burrows estimates has negatively impacted dine-in numbers by about 30 per cent.

## [COVID recovery is job one for HRM in 2022: Mayor Mike Savage](#)

Heading into his 10th year as mayor of Halifax Regional Municipality, Mike Savage has some pressing issues to deal with: pandemic recovery, a housing crisis, and a climate emergency are just a few of them. In this New Year's check in, Savage talks about what he thinks lies ahead for HRM in 2022. Spoiler alert: there are heaps of optimism by the end.

### [N.B. moves to strictest level of its COVID-19 Winter Plan, 104 in hospital Thursday](#)

New Brunswick will be moving into Level 3 of its COVID-19 Winter Plan effective 11:59 p.m. on Friday. Premier Blaine Higgs says the change is necessary with the current number of hospitalizations. "Moving to Level 3 was never something I wanted to do and I really hate to take this next step," said Higgs. "As a province, we need to get to the root of the problem and that is why we need to do this." Higgs says, as of Thursday, there are 10 additional people in hospital, bringing the total number of hospitalizations to 104. The move to Level 3 means the single-household bubble rule will be back in effect, meaning New Brunswickers can only gather with people who they live with. Also under Level 3, public gatherings are not permitted at any venue, and restaurants will be limited to drive-thru, takeout or delivery services only. Gyms, salons and entertainment centres will also be required to close under Level 3.

### [Canada drops vaccine mandate for its truckers](#)

Canada will allow unvaccinated Canadian truckers to cross in from the United States, reversing a decision requiring all truckers to be inoculated against the coronavirus, Canada's border agency said on Wednesday. Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau had faced pressure from the main opposition party and trucking lobby to drop the vaccine mandate for truckers, due to come into force on Saturday, saying it could result in driver shortages, disrupt trade and drive up inflation. The Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) said that unvaccinated, or partially vaccinated Canadian truck drivers arriving at the U.S.-Canada border will remain exempt from pre-arrival, arrival and post-arrival testing and quarantine requirements. However, truckers from the United States will still need to be vaccinated or they will be turned back at the border from Jan. 15, a CBSA spokesperson said.

### [Is it safe to eat on an outdoor patio that is tented and heated?](#)

Some restaurant owners in Ontario are doing what they can to make their patios a welcoming environment in sub-zero temperatures now that indoor dining has been banned by the government. But one expert warns that too much protection against the frigid temperatures may prove counterproductive when it comes to curbing the spread of COVID-19. Indoor dining has been banned until Jan. 26 under the province's modified Step 2 lockdown rules. Outdoor dining and takeout were permitted to remain in place. "This really hit them hard," said James Rilett, Vice President of Central Canada at Restaurants Canada. "We saw a lost holiday season, and now we're fully locked down. So it's just very hard on restaurants. And a lot of them, even from the mental health aspect are resigning themselves to deciding whether they want to continue or not." Rilett said that allowing outdoor dining in the summer is one thing, but as the temperature continues to plummet many restaurants just don't have the means to offer that service. "We're right in the middle of winter, and it'll continue to be cold for quite a while now. So I don't think patios are an option for most, some have tried it and some will continue to try it."