

POLITICS

‘It’s time’

PCs urge Liberals to legislate pay equity

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“Will the minister once and for all commit to bringing pay equity legislation to this House during this sitting?”

A pointed question from Opposition critic for women and gender equality Helen Conway-Ottenheimer went unanswered Tuesday, March 15, on the first day the House of Assembly reconvened for its spring sitting.

Pam Parsons, minister responsible for women and gender equality, called it an important issue. She said an interdepartmental committee has been struck to look at it, but she did not say whether she would bring the legislation forward this sitting.

After question period, The Telegram reiterated the same question to Parsons.

“I’m committed to doing everything that I can to advance every initiative that I’m mandated to do, and what I will say is this work is ongoing, it’s consistent,” she said.

“And when there’s an update, rest assured I will be happy to provide it.”

The Telegram again asked whether she believes that will occur this sitting.

“I’m going to continue working. This is a daily effort for me, so that’s what I can tell you,” Parsons said.

Newfoundland and Labrador is the only province in Atlantic Canada without pay equity legislation. Women in this province, on average, earn 76 cents for every dollar earned by men.

Prince Edward Island enacted its Pay Equity Act in 1988; New Brunswick and Nova Scotia enacted theirs in 1989.

On Aug. 31, 2021, the federal government passed the Pay Equity Act, giving employers with 10 or more employees three years to develop and implement proactive pay equity plans designed to ensure equal pay for work of equal value.

In the House of Assembly, Conway-Ottenheimer urged a debate on provincial pay equity legislation “once and for all.”

“The minister, in the past, has suggested that she doesn’t even have the authority to bring pay equity legislation to this House,” Conway-Ottenheimer said.

“I ask the premier: will he make pay equity legislation a priority and direct his minister to table the new legislation so women are no longer left behind?”

Premier Andrew Furey was absent. According to a news release, he was in Ottawa to attend the House of Commons where Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy was addressing Parliament virtually.

Parsons said the government is committed “to doing everything we can,” adding, “we have a fiscal reality to live in.”

Parsons said the funds the province receives every year from Ottawa for rate mitigation “would go a long way to help with issues such as pay equity”.

Conway-Ottenheimer called that response political rhetoric “being used as an excuse for an inexcusable delay in pay equity legislation.”



Opposition critic for women and gender equality Helen Conway-Ottenheimer speaks to reporters outside the House of Assembly Tuesday, March 15. **JUANITA MERCER • SALTWIRE NETWORK**



Pam Parsons, minister responsible for women and gender equality, told reporters she can’t speculate on how long it’s going to take to get pay equity legislation, adding it’s important to ensure best practices are in place instead of rushing something and then having to retract it. **JUANITA MERCER • SALTWIRE NETWORK**

**“We need to be acting on this. There should not be any more delays as far as this important issue is concerned.”**  
**Helen Conway-Ottenheimer**

She said the research has been done on pay equity, but the Opposition is still waiting for the government to come up with a policy response to that work.

“We’ve waited long enough. Let’s see what the review is. Show us. It’s time,” she said.

“We need to be acting on this. There should not be any more delays as far as this important issue is concerned. The pandemic has impacted women negatively — we all know that. That’s a fact. Pay equity legislation is a step towards pandemic recovery.”



The House of Assembly reconvened for its spring sitting on Tuesday, March 15. **JUANITA MERCER • SALTWIRE NETWORK**

Budget could bring more relief, Coady hints

FROM A1:  
LIBERALS’

“It’s clear this announcement was made today only because the Liberals started to feel the pressure from the citizens of this province, and were afraid to face this House without coming up with some solution that would benefit the people of this province.”

Brazil called the \$22.2-million announcement “a small pittance of what’s needed in this province to address the cost of living.”

Speaking with reporters after question period, Brazil suggested the province could also implement home-heating rebates, remove the five cents per litre charged on gasoline that was implemented when the Come By Chance refinery stopped producing, and delay implementing the carbon tax.

However, during the announcement, Coady said the focus is to help those who are most affected by the rising cost of living.

“We’re really focused right now on the most vulnerable, understanding the impacts are impacting all of us, but making sure the most vulnerable are addressed right now is where we focused. But the budget is three short weeks away,” she said, indicating there might be further help forthcoming.

NDP Interim Leader Jim Dinn said the support was welcome, but he said there remains a need for a long-term fix to ensure people don’t require these kinds of Band-Aid solutions.

He said the government should start with a committee to look at implementing a guaranteed basic income in the province, and also raise the minimum wage.

“We’ve got people who are working multiple jobs ... just to make ends meet. So, if we’re going to look at addressing the cost of living, it’s going to come down to paying people a living wage.”



NDP leader Jim Dinn called the province’s plan short-term, and stressed the need for a universal basic income. **JUANITA MERCER • SALTWIRE NETWORK**



Opposition leader David Brazil speaks to reporters after Question Period in the House of Assembly Tuesday, March 15. **JUANITA MERCER • SALTWIRE NETWORK**



The provincial government announced its plan to address the rising cost of living on Tuesday shortly before the House of Assembly reconvened for the spring sitting. **JUANITA MERCER • SALTWIRE NETWORK**

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# The Telegram

WEEKEND EDITION

ST. JOHN'S, NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR

NAVAL NUANCE



The Halifax-class frigate HMCS Fredericton sits tied up on the north side of St. John's during a visit to the capital city Friday, April 29.

KEITH GOSSE • THE TELEGRAM

POLITICS

## Pay equity legislation 'costly'

Parsons' briefing documents say legislation could involve 'significant legal battles'

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Briefing documents prepared for MHA Pam Parsons, the minister responsible for women and gender equality, provide some context to her blaming the high cost of the Muskrat Falls hydroelectric project for the province's lack of pay equity legislation.

The binder used by Parsons in the House of Assembly includes key messages on current topics — one-pagers with talking points on issues ranging from in-vitro fertilization to violence prevention.

The binder's contents are available on the province's access to information website.

One of the points included under the pay equity page reads: "Proactive pay equity legislation can be costly, operationally complex, involve significant legal battles and result in only minor and non-



MHA Pam Parsons, the minister responsible for women and gender equality, is pictured outside the House of Assembly.

SALTWIRE NETWORK  
FILE PHOTO

meaningful adjustments for a limited number of women."

Women's advocates in Newfoundland and Labrador have been calling for pay equity legislation for more than 30 years.

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UKRAINE

## A shimmer of light in the darkness

Central Newfoundland man is bringing humanitarian aid to Ukrainians

STEPHEN ROBERTS  
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Lorne Goudie wakes up around 6:30 a.m., joins the rest of the church in prayer, then departs for another day in a war-torn city in Ukraine.

In the parking lot, a vehicle is already stocked full of supplies for the central Newfoundland man and others to bring to another part of Kyiv or a town on its outskirts that's been bombed and suffering the ravages of war.

Sometimes, they spend up to four hours driving to the destination, where they deliver items like food, medical supplies, construction materials, generators, gasoline, hygiene kits, first aid kits, clothing and diapers to local churches, hospitals or town halls to distribute.

Together, they will read the gospel and hand out Bibles



Lorne Goudie has been in Ukraine since March 23 volunteering to provide humanitarian aid to Ukrainian civilians.

CONTRIBUTED

before returning to their base before the 10 p.m. curfew.

Three to four times each week, Goudie will go on one of these missions.

By April 28, when he spoke to SaltWire Network, the

Newfoundlander had not experienced any close encounters with the Russian military. But he has witnessed the devastation the war has wrought.

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RECONCILIATION

‘Difficult and heart-breaking journey’ ahead

Inquiry officially launched to examine treatment of Innu children and families in the province’s child protection system

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Children taken from their parents in Innu communities in Labrador in the past through the province’s child protection system and placed in foster care elsewhere in the province or country would later return to their communities speaking English — having lost their own language and their connections to the Innu culture, traditions and land.

And the devastating impact that has had on Innu people and their communities will be at the forefront of an inquiry officially launched on Friday.

The “Commission of Inquiry into the Treatment, Experiences and Outcomes of Innu in the Child Protection System” will examine the treatment, experiences and outcomes of Innu children, youth and families in the child protection system, and identify recommendations for change.

The inquiry will also investigate several individual cases of children and youth who lost their lives and were or had been involved in the system.

“The journey the commissioners are about to embark on will be a difficult and heart-breaking one,” Sheshatshiu Innu First Nation Chief Eugene Hart said.

“Today is an historic day for the Innu and the province



Innu Nation Deputy Grand Chief Mary Ann Nui called the launch of the inquiry Friday as very important for the older generations to share their stories, and for the current generations to learn so changes can be made. Nui called it a “new beginning.” **GLEN WHIFFEN ■ THE TELEGRAM**



Inquiry Chief Commissioner Judge James Igloliorte

itself. The inquiry is important for us.”

Innu Nation Deputy Grand Chief Mary Ann Nui said the inquiry is a new beginning for a new generation.

“The past trauma has to stop somewhere and the past trauma has to stop being passed on to other generations,” she said. “The new generations today don’t need to go through what we went through, what the older gen-



Premier Andrew Furey

erations went through.

“The new generation will have a better understanding of what happened in the past with the child welfare system and they need to understand that and in that way we can prevent that for the new generations.”

Testimony, documents and cases to be highlighted during the inquiry will be difficult on Innu communities, Nui noted. She said many families experienced a lot of pain.



Sheshatshiu Innu First Nation Chief Eugene Hart

“It’s going to be challenging for communities and because we are going to be dealing with a lot of past trauma,” Nui said. “A lot of children who were in the child welfare lost their languages, they lost spending time with their families, losing their traditions, their culture. Those are the kinds of things that were lost. They came back into the communities really lost.”

The provincial government allocated \$4 million in Budget 2022 to establish the inquiry.

Premier Andrew Furey said the path towards reconciliation is through listening, understanding and mutual respect.

“We acknowledge the wrongs of the past and focus our attention on matters that are important to Indigenous people,” Furey said. “Through this inquiry, we will acquire a better understanding of the treatment, experiences and care that Innu children have received in the current system, and more importantly, how we improve for the future.”

Commissioners of the inquiry are retired provincial court Judge James Igloliorte, who is chief commissioner, and Anastasia Qupee of Sheshatshiu,

former grand chief of the Innu Nation, and Mike Devine, retired associate professor of the School of Social Work at Memorial University.

Igloliorte said Friday the inquiry process is expected to take about 18 months to complete. There will be preparation work during the summer including the identifying and securing of documents, meetings with leaders in the Innu communities, and preparing the witness list.

Hearings will likely begin in the fall and be split between Labrador and St. John’s.

“The first aspect the lawyers for the commission will concentrate on is they go to the various departments and say release everything you have and we will decide what we use and how we use it to bring forward witnesses,” Igloliorte said.

“We are only part of a process following through on negotiations that have been done simply because the parties recognize there is a longstanding issue of not appreciating the impact on Innu families, on Innu culture, and our job is to help the Innu Nation as they move toward self governance in determining how they begin with child protection.”

The Innu Nation and Innu communities have long advocated for changes to reduce and prevent involvement with the province’s child protection system, including expressing the intention to exercise inherent jurisdiction over child welfare.

Igloliorte said they are eager to work with Innu leadership, elders and communities to ensure the inquiry is complementary to the reconciliation process, provides crucial information to support self-determination for the Innu, and create a culturally safe space for healing and reconciliation.

Move faster, suggest critics

FROM A1:  
PAY EQUITY

“To further deny or delay proactive legislation is to infringe on the human rights of many women and marginalized workers in Newfoundland and Labrador,” wrote Bridget Clarke, advocacy coordinator with the St. John’s Status of Women Council, in a guest column for SaltWire Network in March.

The provincial government has talked about such legislation since 1988, yet we remain the only Atlantic Canadian province without pay equity legislation. The others enacted legislation in the 1980s.

At the same time, this province has Canada’s largest gender pay gap, with women earning 66 cents for every dollar earned by a man.

In 2017, on International Women’s Day, the House of Assembly unanimously voted to introduce pay equity legislation, but five years later it’s still not introduced.

In 2018, an interdepartmental committee was formed to explore potential ways to achieve pay equity, and it researched related initiatives across Canada.

According to Parsons’ briefing notes, that research “is currently being reviewed with an eye to next steps.”

Another key message in the binder says: “The Provincial Government is taking the time necessary to learn best practices on pay equity from other provinces who have gone further down the road on this issue.”

FISCAL REALITIES

In March of this year, Parsons came under fire for blaming the Muskrat Falls hydroelectric project for the lack of progress on pay equity legislation.

“The half a billion dollars that we need, that we get from Ottawa every year to just mitigate our rate hikes would go a long way to help with issues such as pay equity,” she said during question period on March 15.

But that wasn’t the first time Parsons used that excuse.

During question period on June 8, 2021, she responded to a question from Progressive Conservative MHA Helen Conway Ottenheimer, who asked when the legislation will be brought forward, with the following response:

“Well, certainly, pay equity is a primary conversation since I’ve come into this department. I will say that extensive work has been done for years and years prior to this government taking office. It’s certainly not a new issue.

“That said, we’re committed to working collaboratively with departments such as the Department of Labour and all members to do what we can to make change happen as soon as we can within our fiscal reality.”

Conway Ottenheimer asked whether legislation would be brought forward in 2021.

“I would like to remind the honourable member, Mr. Speaker, that the Department of Women and Gender Equality doesn’t have the authoritative legislation to implement that in the House,” replied Parsons.

“It will take collaborative work among government. That said, we are certainly committed to doing everything that we can within our fiscal reality. I will remind the member, payments such as the \$600 million that we will need for rate mitigation, certainly could have gone a long way to help programs such as pay equity,” she said.

Later that week during a committee of the whole discussion, NDP MHA Jim Dinn asked what actions were being taken to advance pay equity.

Parsons read from her staff-prepared briefing notes, but then added: “What I can say, I guess in ad lib, is that it’s something that we certainly are committed to do within the fiscal reality of what we can do to implement ways on how we can advance this project.”

Dinn said government is going to have to move faster “because we talk about the fiscal envelope and the fiscal realities; I would just say that pay equity is a fiscal reality for those who live it.”



Women and Gender Equality Minister Pam Parsons has repeatedly used the costly Muskrat Falls hydroelectric project and rate mitigation as an excuse for the province’s lack of pay equity legislation. **SALTWIRE NETWORK FILE PHOTO**

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WEEKEND EDITION

ST. JOHN’S, NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR

PAY EQUITY

Five cases before Human Rights Commission

Complaints-based process long, emotional

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As the provincial government stalls on its 2017 commitment to introduce pay equity legislation, there are currently five pay equity cases going through the complaints process at the Human Rights Commission in Newfoundland and Labrador.

These cases are at various stages of the process, but all were brought to the commission within the last year, according to executive director Carey Majid.

She said the five people have to prove that their male colleagues were employed in the same establishment, under the same or similar working conditions, performing the same or similar work in jobs requiring the same or similar skill, effort and responsibility.

She said the process involves looking at everyone’s salaries, employment history, educational background, job duties and so on, in order for the adjudicator to make a decision about whether they faced gender-based discrimination.

To give an idea of how long the process could take, one recent case which was filed with the commission on April 11, 2018 reached a decision on March 30, 2022.

In the House of Assembly on Thursday, May 5, NDP Interim Leader Jim Dinn asked Premier Andrew Furey if he agreed that pay equity is a fundamental human right.

CONTINUED ON A3

HAPPY MOTHER’S DAY WEEKEND



It’s your very special day tomorrow moms as you celebrate Mother’s Day on Sunday, May 8. Celebrated on the second Sunday in May each year, moms are gifted with cards, flowers, chocolates and other special treats such as meals. Nine-year-old Payton Ward of the Goulds, a Grade 3 student at Gould’s Elementary school, wanted to make her mommy Kayla Ward some “special mommy cupcakes,” albeit with a little help from mom, who took care of the oven duties and some decorating. Payton said her dad Justin Ward can “have some too but mommy gets her cupcakes first.” The modern version of the holiday began in the United States in the early 20th century at the initiative of Anna Jarvis, who organized the first Mother’s Day service of worship and celebration at Andrews Methodist Episcopal Church in Grafton, West Virginia, which serves as the International Mother’s Day Shrine today. **JOE GIBBONS • THE TELEGRAM**

PEOPLE

‘She was tough and determined and independent’

Melba Rabinowitz adopted N.L. with a passion

BARB SWEET  
THE TELEGRAM

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🐦 @BarbSweetTweets

Speaking about his late wife Melba, Mike Rabinowitz repeatedly shifts the focus from their story as a couple to her achievements.

“She was an amazing woman. Yeah, she was tough and determined and independent,” Mike said. “She was certainly one of the most important Newfoundlanders.”

Melba died at age 81 on

Nov. 7, 2021, after a prolonged neuro-degenerative disease called progressive supranuclear palsy. A celebration of her life will be held on May 15.

“The last week she couldn’t swallow. I mean, the whole thing was so stressful,” he said of the five-year ordeal of her debilitating illness.

They met when he was in graduate school at the University of Iowa and she was a new faculty member in early childhood education.

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Melba Rabinowitz was influential in the field of early childhood education. **CONTRIBUTED**

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HOUSING

Off-campus accommodations immediately needed at MUN

Huge hike in number of international students arriving this month for spring/summer semester

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More than 400 international students are expected to arrive at Memorial University this month for the spring/summer semester — a huge bump in the numbers at this time of year compared to previous years.

And that has left the university scrambling to find enough affordable housing options for students off-campus because available on-campus accommodations are limited due to planned renovations of buildings this summer in preparation for the busy fall semester.

Bruce Belbin, director of student residences and ancillary operations at Memorial University, said because of the COVID-19 pandemic the normal flow of when students arrive has been altered. International students are worried that if they wait for the fall semester and the COVID landscape changes, they might not be able to come.

“They are wanting to get here sooner rather than later, because what COVID has done it has created disruptions in the cycle,” Belbin said. “What does fall 2022 look like if you are an international student? You want to get to where you are going sooner.”

Many of those international students would normally have been able to be accommodated at Burton’s Pond apartments — an area that consists of four apartment-style residences surrounding one side of Burton’s Pond on the St. John’s campus.

However, three of those buildings are closed for the summer to complete a planned and greatly needed renovation project.

“Normally, during the May to August period we would have probably 250 people to 300 living on campus in those apartments,” Belbin said.

“However, this year we have taken three of the buildings offline as we are completing a renovation project we started last year which is a living space improvement project.”

Belbin also noted that come mid-August and September, all residences on campus are



Burton’s Pond student accommodations at Memorial University. **KEITH GOSSE • THE TELEGRAM**



Bruce Belbin, director of student residences and ancillary operations at Memorial University **CONTRIBUTED**



Doug Pawson is the executive director of End Homelessness St. John’s. **CONTRIBUTED**

likely to be full — and with waiting lists.

To help fill the immediate need the university — as it has done at times in the past — is reaching out to the community to try to find prospective landlords who can be connected with international students.

The university’s Internationalization Office has identified students who are in need and is working to help them secure safe and affordable accommodations hopefully close to the university.

“If you or someone you know has available space

in the St. John’s area, ideally within walking distance, please consider offering the space,” a notice from the office reads.

Belbin said they are tracking vacancy rates in St. John’s each day. Those rates are not promising at this time.

“Vacancy rates are going lower and lower weekly,” he said. “The inventory is low and the demand is high.”

However, residents of St. John’s — particularly those living in areas close to the university — have in the past offered spaces to students for a short period of time which

has helped fill the gap. He’s hoping this will happen again.

“It’s important to let the community know we are looking because we’ve had a history in the St. John’s area of people who want to open their house, whether it’s a bed-setting room, extra rooms in the basement, to students,” Belbin said. “In the past it has filled a gap. But we are three years out of this loop now because of COVID and we need to get the message out again.”

Belbin said Memorial University is an attractive option for International students because of its academic programs and the social experience, but with housing there’s only so much they can do.

“We are cognizant of that, and we are working as much as we can... trying to figure out some partnerships with the outside community,” he said.

**HOUSING ISSUES NOT UNIQUE TO INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS**

Doug Pawson, executive director, End Homelessness St. John’s — an entity leading the development and implementation of the St. John’s community plan to end

homelessness — said the lack of housing and some of the conditions international students find themselves in can be pretty challenging.

Although End Homelessness St. John’s is not involved in arranging housing for students, they have dealt with situations where students find themselves facing such things as eviction, discrimination and homelessness.

“People usually reach out in those moments of crisis,” he said. “If somebody is dealing with a discriminatory landlord and has nowhere else to turn, we will often get a call or a request, and we will do what we can do support, where we can.”

“Some of the things that we’ve seen has been related to discrimination against radicalized individuals. Students who do not have a lot access to supports or services, those folks are especially vulnerable with the current housing market where we’ve seen a dramatic decrease in vacancy rates and far more competition for the housing that is available. This isn’t unique to International students but this is something that they do face, along with other folks who are leaving homelessness or living on the margins as it is.”

‘It does put a heavy burden on people’

FROM A1:  
FIVE

Women and Gender Equality Minister Pam Parsons responded.

“I think it’s safe to say that we’re all on the same page here when it comes to the matter of pay equity for legislation, both in public and private sector. It’s something, of course, that we all want to see happen,” she said, adding that anyone who feels they are being discriminated against because of their gender can go through the Human Rights Act and Labour Standards Act as a recourse.

On Tuesday, May 3, Opposition critic for women and gender equality, Helen Conway Ottenheimer, told the House of Assembly she’s heard from Eastern Health employees and an executive-level employee with a Crown corporation in the province who believe they are paid less than their male colleagues.

“I ask the minister: Why are you ignoring (the) concerns of these women?” said Conway Ottenheimer, who has been pressing government to table pay equity legislation in the House.

Parsons responded:

“Again, I will read this into the record, of course, for the



Women and Gender Equality Minister Pam Parsons. **SALTWIRE NETWORK FILE PHOTO**

honourable member: Newfoundland and Labrador has reactive pay equity legislation in place and it’s via the Labour Standards Act and the Human Rights Act.

“The Human Rights Act is complaints-based legislation that prohibits discrimination in employment, including pay rates and gender. So there certainly are recourses that can be taken here in this province.”

However, Majid told SaltWire Network that the complaints process is onerous on people.

“It does put a heavy burden on people — usually the most marginalized people who can’t afford lawyers — who are



Human Rights Commission executive director Carey Majid: “It does put a heavy burden on people — usually the most marginalized people who can’t afford lawyers — who are doing this on their own.” **SALTWIRE NETWORK FILE PHOTO**

doing this on their own,” she said.

“So, you know, it’s great to have a system where there is that sort of avenue for people to complain, and bring complaints, but we also have to recognize the burden that that places on people.”

Majid said the process is both long and emotional.

She said legislation could take that burden off the individual, and make it more of a collective responsibility.

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

**Order Respecting a Feasibility Study Pursuant to the Municipalities Act, 1999**

Under the authority of section 9 of the **Municipalities Act, 1999**, I make the following Order as delegated by the Minister of Municipal and Provincial Affairs:

1. This Order may be cited as the Feasibility Report Respecting the Local Service Districts of Dildo and South Dildo.
2. A feasibility report shall be prepared to consider the local governance options for the Local Service Districts of Dildo and South Dildo.
3. Pat Curran + Associates Inc. is appointed to prepare the feasibility report.
4. The feasibility report shall be prepared in accordance with the provisions of the **Municipalities Act, 1999**.

Ted Lomond  
Deputy Minister of Municipal and Provincial Affairs

This Order was published in the Gazette in accordance with the Statutes and Subordinate Legislation Act. It may also be accessed on the Office of Legislative Counsel website at [assembly.nl.ca/legislation/sr/consolidation](http://assembly.nl.ca/legislation/sr/consolidation)

gov.nl.ca

Newfoundland  
Labrador



PAY EQUITY

Large inequality in pay based on gender: Crown corporation director

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🐦 @juanitamercer\_

A woman who is a director with a Crown corporation in Newfoundland and Labrador said she is earning 43 per cent and 52 per cent less than two other directors who are men.

SaltWire Network filed an access to information (ATIPP) request with the Treasury Board Secretariat (TBS) for all emails sent or received by Finance Minister Siobhan Coady that mention pay equity. It was one of several ATIPs filed by SaltWire Network as it continues to report on the lack of pay equity legislation in Newfoundland and Labrador.

The TBS ATIPP package included an email sent by the director of the Crown corporation in which she detailed her situation.

The email was sent in July 2021 to Women and Gender Equality Minister Pam Parsons, and copied to Coady; Premier Andrew Furey; Industry, Energy and Technology Minister Andrew Parsons; and another person whose email and name were redacted.

The email had identifying information redacted, but the message was clear: the woman was concerned she wasn't being paid fairly because of her gender.

"While there are justifications to support some differences in compensation amongst peers at the same reporting level, the magnitude of the compensation gap in this case is substantial and unwarranted given the level of direction received, direction exercised, and responsibility/accountability," she wrote.

"The gender pay inequality that currently exists within (redacted) and has existed since (redacted) is not in line with the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador's ("Government") commitment to encourage, promote, support and retain women in leadership roles and ensure economic security of women in the area of pay equity," she wrote.

CONTINUED ON A3

PEOPLE

'She was the most loving mom and person'



Steve Sharpe and his daughter, Donica Lang, look at photo albums while sharing memories of Majella Sharpe, a St. John's woman who died in a car crash in Tennessee in May. **BARB SWEET • THE TELEGRAM**

Majella Sharpe, who died in U.S. car crash, was an artist and adventuress

BARB SWEET  
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Steve Sharpe is telling a story about the time he and his wife, Majella, were driving in France and he navigated through lanes of traffic after spotting an exit sign.

She asked where they were going and he said simply, "Baccarat."

"And she understood immediately. 'Yes, OK, let's go,'" he said of the town famous for crystal.

It wasn't on an itinerary. Discovering there was a rare sale on, they bought eight champagne flutes for special occasions.

But Majella — also known as Madge — wasn't big on souvenirs. Rather, she treasured the adventures, particularly the ones that took them somewhere unexpected.

They visited more than 60 countries together and were to celebrate their 45th anniversary in September.

"We were in Paris, for example ... we'd go down an alleyway or something and see what's down there," Sharpe said of their shared love of spontaneity and embracing culture.

As he described their life together, he reached for tissues with fingers barely visible outside his bandaged forearms, and his voice would crack. And then he'd find a funny or thrilling anecdote about their



Majella and Steve Sharpe at the Grand Ole Opry in Nashville, Tenn. **CONTRIBUTED**

travels, or her efforts with organizations such as Art Association NL and the Church by the Sea Heritage Group.

The love for his wife and the tremendous loss poured out story by story.

Sitting alongside him on the sofa, their daughter, Donica Lang, talked of the effortless way her mother conducted her life — from her parenting, to her artistry and the way she cooked every meal from scratch.

Not just for the family. She'd make complicated courses from recipes she'd never tried before for dinner

parties with no test run and perfect results.

"She was the most loving mom and person," Lang wrote in a tribute to her.

"We have lost the greatest, most loving woman on Earth. Now heaven has gained the greatest, most loving angel to look down and guide us all. Now she has her own wings."

Majella, 78, who died May 21 in a car accident in Tennessee, began her career as a flight attendant for Eastern Provincial Airways, becoming a supervisor, and then retired as a ticket agent with Air Canada. For awhile, she

ran her husband's tax offices, flawlessly and with no discord between them.

**THE ACCIDENT**

The Sharpes took trips with other Miata sports car drivers, storing their car around the U.S. between adventures.

They did hundreds of them. One time they were driving to Alaska when they encountered a herd of buffalo, but took their time and got past the massive animals without mishap.

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General store in Nain closes after 77 years in business **A4**

LOCAL

Beer store sign lands \$4,300 for foundation **A5**

OPINION

Federal government's gun stance is misguided **A9**

SPORTS

Jack Lee honoured by Hockey Canada **B1**



GETTING GRASS



Sheep graze in a pasture on the corner of the Back Line and Ruby Line in Goulds on Wednesday afternoon, June 8. JOE GIBBONS ■ THE TELEGRAM

'The women of the province are watching'

FROM A1:  
LARGE

“Without clear, affirmative actions taken to support Government’s stated commitment to gender equality, including directing its departments and agencies to address situations of inequality where they exist, the Government cannot and will not achieve its goal of encouraging, promoting and retaining women in leadership roles.”

Coady forwarded the email to deputy finance minister Michelle Jewer and secretary Jodi Penney with the note, “Please advise.”

Jewer responded, “TBS is working with the Office of Women and Gender Equality and Justice and Public Safety on a response to the attached correspondence.”

SaltWire Network requested an update on the woman’s situation from the Office of Women and Gender Equality (WGE). WGE said that in the interest of privacy protection, it is unable to discuss the details of individual circumstances.

GOVERNMENT'S  
'PILE OF MALARKEY'

Meanwhile, the provincial government continues to stall on enacting pay equity legislation.

Labour Minister Bernard Davis previously told reporters the government wants to get the legislation “correct,” adding, “I know that takes time, but I’m more focused on getting it right than getting it done quickly.”

Parsons previously told media an interdepartmental committee working on pay equity is trying to avoid the pitfalls of other jurisdictions.

SaltWire Network asked which specific pitfalls by which specific jurisdictions the government is trying to avoid.

An emailed response from WGE on May 26 reads: “All Canadian jurisdictions with pay equity legislation continue to have a persistent wage gap. Addressing the root causes of the gender wage gap and achieving pay equity for all remains a key focus for this government. Our government is reviewing all potential approaches, strategies and legislation to advance towards pay equity for women and gender diverse people in our province.”

One of the jurisdictions specifically singled out by the government is Ontario, because it still has a gender wage gap despite having pay equity legislation since 1988.

That’s something Jan Borowy, a lawyer and co-chair



Finance Minister Siobhan Coady and Labour Minister Bernard Davis speak with reporters about the province's lack of pay equity legislation.SALTWIRE NETWORK FILE PHOTO



Women and Gender Equality Minister Pam Parsons’ briefing notes say proactive pay equity legislation can be costly, and on several occasions she’s said rate mitigation funds would go a long way to help with pay equity.

**SALTWIRE NETWORK FILE PHOTO**

of the Equal Pay Coalition of Ontario, finds interesting because, she says, pay equity legislation has been “quite significant” for women in Ontario.

“What are the mistakes they want corrected?” Borowy said.

“And that can be done very quickly. That is no reason for a delay,” she said, adding that the Newfoundland and Labrador government is giving the province’s residents “a pile of malarkey.”

Borowy said pay equity legislation is a fundamental pillar to closing the gender pay gap.

On several occasions, Parsons has alluded to the Muskrat Falls debt as a reason the province doesn’t have pay equity legislation. Her briefing notes also say pay equity legislation can be costly.

As SaltWire Network was telling Borowy about those notes, she could be heard on the phone saying, “No, no.”

“Here’s the thing,” Borowy said, “What the Supreme Court says about that is that women cannot be the economy’s or-



Ontario lawyer Jan Borowy said Newfoundland and Labrador politicians are giving people “a pile of malarkey” when they say they’re taking their time with pay equity legislation in order to avoid the pitfalls of other jurisdictions.

**CAVALLUZZO LAW PHOTO**

ained shock absorbers. So, this notion that it’s costly? They better read the Supreme Court case on that.”

**A HISTORY OF WAITING**

The fight for pay equity in this province dates back decades.

In 1988, the Newfoundland and Labrador Association of Public and Private Employees (NAPE) negotiated a pay equity agreement with the provincial government for health-care workers.

A repayment process was established to pay back wages owed to women — a sum of money about \$24 million — but shortly after the agreement was established, the province faced a fiscal crisis and introduced the Public Sector Restraint Act in 1991.

That act froze public-sector wages at the time, and it also justified not paying out the \$24 million. NAPE filed a grievance that went to arbitration and eventually ended up in the Supreme Court of Canada, in 2004.



Gerry Rogers: “It feels like it’s going backwards.”  
**SALTWIRE NETWORK FILE PHOTO**



Jessica McCormick: “It’s really frustrating that at every turn we get a little bit of progress, and then that’s subverted, or it’s delayed, and now we’re here in 2022 and we’re still waiting for pay equity legislation.”

**TWITTER PHOTO**

The Supreme Court decided the legislation introduced by the province did amount to gender discrimination, but that the government was justified in not making the repayment because of the fiscal crisis.

In 2006, under then-premier Danny Williams, the government paid out the \$24-million settlement that was the subject of the 1988 agreement. The funds were distributed to about 20,000 women.

“That was not an easy battle,” Jessica McCormick, NAPE communications and research officer, said in a telephone interview with SaltWire.

“It’s really frustrating that at every turn we get a little bit of progress, and then that’s subverted, or it’s delayed, and now we’re here in 2022 and we’re still waiting for pay equity legislation.”

If the province was able to negotiate pay equity in collective agreements with unions in the 1980s, McCormick wonders why it can’t enact legislation today that would enshrine

pay equity for all women in the province.

“We have to ask: how long do women have to wait for this legislation when we’ve seen government debate around the clock in marathon sessions other pieces of legislation that affect other sectors in the province, but women and gender diverse people, our issues — and pay equity is one of those key issues — keep getting pushed to the backburner?”

**'WHAT THE HELL ARE THEY DOING?'**

It’s been five years since then-NDP MHA Gerry Rogers stood in the House of Assembly and put forward her private member’s resolution urging the government “to start the process to enact pay equity legislation in this province.”

“The Newfoundland economy can no longer thrive on the backs of women’s unpaid labour,” she said at the time.

Everyone unanimously agreed.

In a telephone interview on Wednesday, June 8, Rogers said she is shocked the legislation is still not a reality.

“I don’t know why this government is dragging their feet. ... I don’t know why this basic piece of legislation that has been proven to be beneficial across the country, why this government deems that the women of Newfoundland and Labrador do not deserve the same protection. It’s a mystery to me,” she said.

“What in God’s name are they doing? This is about governing. The role of government is to govern, to create legislation that empowers this province, that helps this province go forward, and ... it feels like it’s slip-sliding away. It feels like it’s going backwards.

“Maybe they feel that we’ve reached absolute equality and there’s nothing left to do, but the numbers don’t show that, and the research around women’s economic earnings and women’s economic situation in the province shows that we’re still dragging behind, and that is not because of individual women’s failures, it’s because of the lack of robust, fair, human rights legislation, because this is about human rights, and what the hell are they doing?”

“It’s obviously not a priority, and if they can’t figure it out, step aside, have an all-party committee on this, and let’s get it rolling.

“It’s the right thing to do. We can do it. Other jurisdictions have done it. And the women of the province are watching.”



ST. JOHN'S, NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR

A member of the SaltWire Network

PAY EQUITY

Meetings minimal

Government committee didn't meet in 2020, 2021

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A government committee struck to look at pay equity in Newfoundland and Labrador went almost three years without a single meeting.

It was March 2017 when then MHA Gerry Rogers' private member's motion urged the provincial government to "start the process to enact pay equity legislation," and the House of Assembly unanimously agreed.

An access request filed by SaltWire Network in May this year (and received on Monday) showed the committee struck to look at pay equity legislation didn't meet until more than a year later on April 25, 2018 for one hour. The Interdepartmental Pay Equity Committee then met three more times that year. In total, the committee met for 4.5 hours in 2018.

In 2019, the committee met on June 12 for one hour. It did not meet at all in 2020 or 2021.

It wasn't until the issue was raised by the Opposition this year in the House of Assembly and widely covered in local media that the committee met again on March 21 for one hour, and May 17 for one hour.

In an emailed statement Tuesday evening, the Office of Women and Gender Equality said Minister Pam Parsons was appointed minister responsible for Women and Gender Equality in April 2021, and since her appointment she reconvened the committee. Why it took almost a year later for the reconvened committee to meet was not explained in the statement.

As previously reported by SaltWire, it appears the committee is looking at any other option to address the gender wage gap except pay equity legislation.

Minutes for 2018 were provided to SaltWire in the form of highly redacted emails. However, the parts that weren't redacted indicate the committee was looking at other ways to address the gender wage gap except pay equity legislation. One line that's not redacted says, "How can we address the root causes in a different way?" and later in the emailed minutes it says the Women's Policy Office "will consider alternative ways to address the issue."

Minutes for 2019 were mostly redacted, however a section titled "Action Items" included a line that said, "Look into cost of commissions elsewhere." Another action item said to look at the impact of pay equity on private industry elsewhere.

CONTINUED ON A2

CANADA GAMES FLAG BEARER NAMED



St. John's athlete Jaida Lee has been introduced as the Team Newfoundland and Labrador flag bearer for the 2022 Canada Summer Games being held later this summer — August 6-21 — in the Niagara, Ontario region. Lee was named the flag bearer during a Team NL athletes rally at the Newfoundland and Labrador Sports Centre (PowerPlex) in St. John's on Tuesday, July 19. About 400 athletes, coaches, managers and mission staff will participate in the Canada Summer Games. Team NL will be represented by 22 teams, participating in 17 sports. **NICHOLAS MERCER • THE TELEGRAM**

JUSTICE

Group seeks 'transformative' change in the way policing works

Advocacy group, lawyer hope civilian oversight proposals would better accommodate women and Indigenous people

PETER JACKSON  
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A lawyer representing eight women in a civil case alleging sexual assault by Royal Newfoundland Constabulary officers is disappointed a workplace review released last week doesn't address issues external to the force.

But Lynn Moore said the report, conducted by Ontario lawyer Harriet Lewis, did contain one "bombshell" — that few in the force seemed surprised the allegations even arose.

"It appears that the safety of the public is not a concern in the report," said Moore, adding that it was not part of Lewis's mandate.

But Moore did note a stark contrast between questionnaire respondents when it came to lewd or inappropriate behaviour in the workplace.

Most found it harmless or immature at most, while 35 to 45 per cent had the exact opposite view, that it was a source of toxicity in the work environment.

Female officers make up about 30 per cent of the force. "The numbers that disagree



Lynn Moore. FILE

seem to reflect pretty evenly the number of women that there are," said Moore.

Moore was also disappointed that answers to a final question on the survey soliciting further concerns were not included.

"So. 77 people wanted her to know something about the workplace, and that hasn't been included in the report," she said.

RNC Chief Pat Roche, who was appointed in February, said Tuesday, July 19, he's aware of the complaints about inappropriate behaviour in the workplace and has zero tolerance for it.

"I think any inappropriate conduct, whether it's comments or actions identified

**"The numbers that disagree seem to reflect pretty evenly the number of women that there are."**  
Lawyer Lynn Moore

by whatever the percentage — whether it's our female members or male members or a combination thereof — is concerning and cannot be tolerated in any way, shape or form," he told The Telegram.

"Obviously the message is being missed by some."

Roche said his main focus has been on mental health among members, something the Lewis report also highlighted.

"The stigma surrounding mental health issues is slowly being torn down, and our members and our civilian staff ... are more comfortably in coming forward," he said.

**CIVILIAN OVERSIGHT**  
The report was one of two released within a few days of each other, and both portend major changes in the way policing is done in Newfound-

land and Labrador.

First Light, an urban Indigenous advocacy group based in St. John's, released a draft report on police relations Monday.

The report, called Building Trust, has as its central proposal the establishment of a civilian oversight board that would oversee policing by the RNC.

The establishment of arm's-length civilian oversight was an imperative called for by the National Inquiry on Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women and Girls.

Catharine Fagan, chair of the Building Trust working group, told reporters Tuesday she believes the Lewis report actually complements the findings of First Light's report in several ways, even though Lewis did not specifically endorse the idea of an independent police board.

"Whether it's racism, sexism, lack of transparency, little or no accountability, poor allocation of resources — these are problems that we have heard about as well and were taken into consideration for our report," she said, adding that the Indigenous community has been raising the concerns for years.

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**Today in history**  
**1906:** Finland becomes the first country in the world to guarantee an equal right to vote and also becomes the first in Europe to allow women to vote.  
**1969:** Lunar Module Eagle lands on the surface of the moon carrying American astronauts Buzz Aldrin and Neil Armstrong. Armstrong took his famous first steps on the lunar surface several hours later.  
**2005:** The Civil Marriage Act receives royal assent, legalizing same-sex marriage across Canada.  
**2015:** The U.S. and Cuba re-establish full diplomatic relations after more than 50 years.

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**Canada**  
The Local Journalism Initiative is funded by the government of Canada.

Opposition troubled by lack of meetings

FROM A1: MEETINGS

No minutes were provided for 2022.  
The department’s emailed statement said government is committed to reviewing all potential actions and legislation that can economically benefit the greatest number of women and gender diverse workers in the province.  
“While formal interdepartmental committee meetings were not held between June 2019 and March 2022, work on initiatives to close the gender wage gap and address pay inequity did continue on a departmental basis and through government during this timeframe,” the statement said.  
The email also noted government was dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 and 2021.  
“While work on important files such as pay equity certainly continued during that timeframe, all organizations can appreciate the impact that the pandemic had on adjusting timelines and workflow in the workplace,” it said.  
The current Interdepartmental Pay Equity Committee membership includes representation from the Office of Women and Gender Equality; Treasury Board Secretariat; Environment and Climate Change (Labour Division); Justice and Public Safety; and recently added were Industry, Energy and Technology; and Immigration, Population Growth and Skills.  
As part of SaltWire Network’s continuing coverage on pay equity legislation and



Torngat Mountains MHA Lela Evans. FILES



Harbour Main MHA Helen Conway Ottenheimer.

“What equally troubles me is this lack of transparency and openness. We were really given assurances that work was being done here, and at a minimum those assurances exaggerated the reality.”

Torngat Mountains MHA Lela Evans

what it could mean for this province (the only one in Atlantic Canada without legislation), SaltWire contacted the St. John’s Board of Trade on June 28 for the organization’s position on provincial pay equity legislation. Despite following up several times, SaltWire has not yet received that information.  
**OPPOSITION TROUBLED**  
Both the Progressive Conservative and NDP critics for women and gender equality, Helen Conway Ottenheimer and Lela Evans, respectively, said they are troubled by the lack of meetings.  
“It’s very frustrating what’s happening here, and I can’t

tell you how strongly I feel discouraged and disheartened by the lack of effort by this administration,” Ottenheimer told SaltWire in a telephone interview Tuesday.  
“I’m disappointed because it definitely represents that this issue is being neglected.. I think, therefore, they are neglecting the important issue of equality for women and gender diverse individuals in our province.  
“What equally troubles me is this lack of transparency and openness. We were really given assurances that work was being done here, and at a minimum those assurances exaggerated the reality.”  
She said she’s concerned the

first meeting in nearly three years occurred after she raised the issue during question period in March. She said it shows government is being reactive instead of proactive.  
“Is this just a lip service exercise for this administration?” she said.  
Ottenheimer said the ministers for all departments on this committee need to be held accountable.  
“Our province is the only Atlantic province that doesn’t have pay equity legislation, so the work has been done..they don’t need to reinvent the wheel here.”

**CHEAP CHILDCARE NO SUBSTITUTE**  
In a news release on Tuesday, Evans said if this issue was a priority for government, the committee should meet regularly.

The release said Pam Parsons, minister responsible for women and gender equality, previously pointed to other government initiatives that will help close the gender wage gap, such as \$10 a day childcare, but Evans said early childhood educators — most of whom are women — themselves do not earn a living wage.  
“The Minister is satisfied to say that the Liberal childcare program balances the income scale. We disagree. Pay equity legislation needs to be in place so all women and non-binary people in this province can be paid fairly, not just those with children,” Evans said.  
She said childcare is very important, but it is not a substitute for pay equity legislation.

Complaints process convoluted, says lawyer

FROM A1: GROUP

“We actually think (a board) would solve many of the problems that the Lewis report identified.”  
Fagan said a central deficiency in the system is that the chief acts as both the commanding officer of the force as well as the CEO of the RNC as a corporate entity.  
“This has led to an awkward relationship with government and really poor accountability to the public,” she said.  
The report’s draft proposals, which include streamlining the Public Complaints Commission and improving confidence in the province’s fledgling Serious Incident Response Team (SIRT), are supported by several other agencies, including the St. John’s Status of Women’s Council and the provincial Human Rights Commission.  
**‘CONVOLUTED’ PROCESS**  
Moore says lack of civilian oversight is part of the reason



Catherine Fagan. CONTRIBUTED

her clients have opted for a civil suit rather than criminal.  
Unfortunately, she said, the SIRT will not assist in a public complaint unless it’s investigated as criminal case.  
“It seems to me that a lot of people, women in particular, are turning away from the criminal justice system, finding that it is further traumatizing and not helpful,” she said.  
“I think that civilian oversight of the police is really lacking.”  
She called the complaints process “complicated and



Chief Pat Roche. PETER JACKSON PHOTO

convoluted.”  
First, the chief is the one who initially oversees a complaint, and then there may be public discipline proceedings that the chief presides over. The chief’s decision in the case can be appealed by the complainant or by the officer.  
“If there are problems with the investigation, they might very well be incurable at that stage,” said Moore.  
“We definitely need to rethink the way that we handle police misconduct. And I think the SIRT is just a

tinkering with the problem.”  
Fagan said distrust of police by the Indigenous community is a long-established problem.  
“The lack of confidence is real and it’s deep, particularly in Black-Indigenous communities,” she said.  
For his part, Roche said Tuesday the First Light report is a draft, and it would be inappropriate for him to comment on matters of civilian oversight.  
But Fagan says her group is inviting feedback from all interested parties over the next couple of months.  
They plan to release a final report in the fall, and would work closely with the provincial Justice department in the process.  
“Nothing that’s this historically grounded changes overnight,” she said, “but sometimes you need transformative change to do that, and we thing this is some of that.”

Peter Jackson is a Local Journalism Initiative Reporter covering Indigenous affairs for The Telegram.

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# The Telegram

ST. JOHN'S, NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR

A member of the SaltWire Network

PAY EQUITY

Committee has no terms of reference

Work guided by vague letter written in 2018

JUANITA MERCER  
THE TELEGRAM

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A committee struck in 2018 to look at pay equity in the province does not have any terms of reference guiding its work.

SaltWire Network asked the Office of Women and Gender Equality (WGE) for a copy of the Interdepartmental Pay Equity Committee's terms of reference, but was provided with a letter that was sent in February 2018 by then-deputy minister of the Women's Policy Office, Donna Ballard, to her colleagues in the Department of Justice and Public Safety and the Department of Advanced Education, Skills and Labour, and Human Resources Secretariat.

The letter sent to the Human Resources Secretariat reads in full:

"I am writing you today in my capacity as deputy minister for the Women's Policy Office. The Human Resource Secretariat has a role to play in fully exploring the potential of pay equity in Newfoundland and Labrador and I am requesting your assistance to further examine this issue on an interdepartmental committee.

"Staff at the Women's Policy Office have been collaborating with internal and external partners to explore various facets related to pay equity policies and legislation. Notably, this has included meetings with relevant stakeholders and the development of a jurisdictional scan on pay equity legislation in Canada by the Provincial Advisory Council on the Status of Women. However, at this time we feel that in order to best move forward we must bring together departmental staff to discuss the next steps for pay equity at this time.

"I request your assistance identifying relevant staff in your department to meet on this topic in the near future. Once those staff have been identified, the Women's Policy Office will work to co-ordinate a meeting of all involved. Thank you in advance for your assistance in this matter."

SaltWire Network confirmed with an Office of Women and Gender Equality spokesperson that there are no formal terms of reference guiding the committee's work; the letter is the only such document.

A terms of reference document typically outlines for a committee its purpose, scope of work, authority, meeting protocols, resources available, reports due and so on.

CONTINUED ON A3

NIEUW VIEW



A passenger onboard the cruise ship Nieuw Statendam looks out over Harbour Drive from his cabin balcony on Saturday, July 30, while the Holland America Line vessel paid a visit to St. John's. The 975-foot cruise ship can carry a crew of 1,053 and can accommodate 2,666 passengers. **JOE GIBBONS ■ THE TELEGRAM**

IN-DEPTH

## Does bloodline a Beothuk make?

Alberta expert says a frenzy for genetic testing threatens to undermine what Indigenous identity really means

Part 2 of a two-part series.

PETER JACKSON  
THE TELEGRAM

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When the Mi'kmaq of Conne River applied for federal Indigenous status in the 1970s, Brian Peckford did the unthinkable.

The then-Newfoundland and Labrador premier hired a researcher to counter their claim, and released a brief in 1982 that argued the group had no more right to the land than his own English ancestors.

"The reaction of all concerned was that of surprise and utter confusion," The Telegram reported at the time. "The Peckford government is the first of any of the provincial governments to act in such a manner. Newfoundland has to be the first and only province to intervene on native land claims, while the federal government is still reviewing the claims documentation."

Nonetheless, there was a prevailing view among many residents in those days that the Beothuk — believed to have died out in the early 1800s — were the only legitimately native tribe to have lived on the island.



"Portrait of Demasduit" was painted by Lady Hamilton in 1819. Demasduit was the aunt of Shanawdithit, the last known Beothuk. This miniature watercolour of Demasduit has remained the most ubiquitous face of the tribe since the 1800s. **CONTRIBUTED**

Not only was it believed the Mi'kmaq were brought to the island by the French, but that the French put a bounty on Beothuk heads, and their Mi'kmaw allies took them up on it.

In fact, it's widely accepted the Mi'kmaq had travelled to the southern shores of Newfoundland from Cape Breton to hunt and fish long before their presence was documented by European settlers.

And there's no evidence for the bounty story.

Until a new crop of researchers such as Ingeborg Marshall and the late Ralph Pastore came along, the prevailing belief in Canada was that white settlers had literally slaughtered the Beothuk into extinction. That was the premise of Harold Horwood's 1959 Maclean's magazine piece, "The People Who Were

Murdered for Fun."

While there are accounts of settlers seeking out and killing Beothuks, and of some retaliation in kind, it's now generally accepted that the history is far more complex.

Simplistic narratives have given way to a more nuanced understanding.

But the finger-pointing has left deep scars for many, especially today's Mi'kmaw people.

**ESTABLISHED NARRATIVE**

All early eyewitness accounts of the Beothuk come from Europeans — and more specifically, from literate ones, often those born into privilege. Many fishermen and woodsmen at the time could not read or write.

It is only natural to assume those accounts are coloured by their own culture and their

own value systems. Marshall, author of "A History and Ethnography of the Beothuk, has arguably gone further than any previous anthropologist in researching the history of the Beothuk. She tracked down archival records, including a previously unknown journal by John Guy, and has drawn extensively upon archeological findings.

But she says she knows why her views have met with some hostility in recent years by those who are trying to reshape the Beothuk narrative.

"Because it's considered colonial. It's a very easy explanation," she says.

And it doesn't fit with a growing belief that Beothuk descendants live on in the present day, a premise that denies the tribe ever really died out.

CONTINUED ON A2

MORE INSIDE

LOCAL

Parishioners shocked as church listed for sale

A3

LOCAL

Teen convicted of using bear spray during assault

A4

LOCAL

Summer season sees travellers boarding Marine Atlantic

A5

OPINION

Abortion services have improved in Atlantic Canada

A9

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SOCIETY

Group blindsided by church being put up for sale

Cape Broyle  
Catholic committee  
urging people to  
not bid on church,  
hopeful community  
can buy it

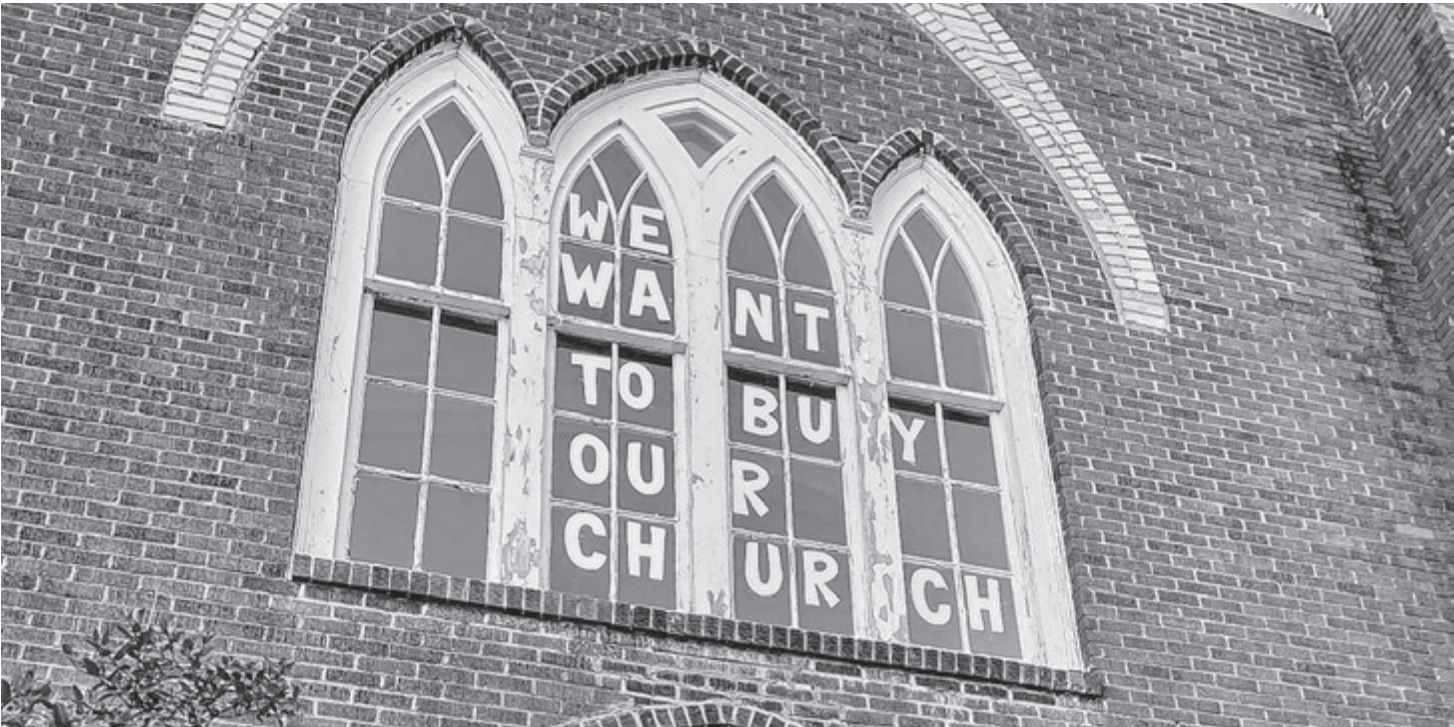
EVAN CAREEN  
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The Cape Broyle Church Committee had been trying to find out for months how they could keep community ownership of the Immaculate Conception Catholic Church in the community, so it was a big surprise to them late last week when they were informed by a real estate agent the building would be listed for sale on Monday, Aug. 1.

Paula Hawkins, chair of the committee, said they contacted the Roman Catholic Episcopal Corp. of St. John's in February to find a way for the community to obtain legal ownership of the church, and got a reply only a few weeks ago that it would have to be referred to the corporation's legal department. This was following a meeting with the archbishop that same month, where he told them all the church properties would be on the chopping block.

"We heard nothing after that and when the northeast Avalon (church properties) went up (for sale) and they had so many months to put in a bid, to see if they wanted to keep their churches. We had none of that. We got a call from a real estate agent our church would be up for sale in 72 hours."

Hawkins said they expected a tender process would happen for the church in Cape Broyle and approximately 70 other rural properties throughout the southern Avalon and Burin peninsulas owned by the corporation, and had no communication from the church that the properties would be sold in this fashion.



The church committee in Cape Broyle was surprised to find out last week their church would be up for sale Aug. 1 and are urging people to not submit bids. CONTRIBUTED



The church committee in Cape Broyle is urging people to not bid on the community church which went up for sale this week, in hopes the community can purchase it. CONTRIBUTED

On July 13, the Newfoundland and Labrador Supreme Court approved the sale of

those 70 properties through realtors, instead of the tender process used for the St. John's

**"We still don't quite understand how the (Catholic) Church can own something they put nothing towards building and didn't even pay the bills."**

Paula Hawkins  
Cape Broyle Church Committee

region properties, along with the unsold properties from the tender bids.

"We heard nothing at all," she said. "At the beginning, they sent out a few general bulletins and then there was the meeting in February, but we didn't know this was coming at all. We didn't have time to do anything, really."

The sales are part of the ongoing bankruptcy of the corporation following it being held vicariously liable for sexual abuse of children at the Mount Cashel Orphanage in St. John's by some members of the Congregation of Irish Christian Brothers from the 1940s to 1960s. The money raised from the sales will go toward compensating the victims of the abuse.

The committee has put out a call asking people to not put in offers on the church, hop-

ing the community can be the only prospective buyer, but Hawkins said they've already heard someone from outside the town is interested in the property.

It's part of the town's history, she said, and an integral part of community life in the town of about 500 people.

Donations from the community built the church, which is about 75 years old, Hawkins said, and the committee has been handling the upkeep and maintenance ever since.

"We still don't quite understand how the (Catholic) Church can own something they put nothing towards building and didn't even pay the bills," she said. "Just last week, we had to pay the light bill. Last year we put a new roof on it, and now it's up for sale."

MUNICIPAL

Tract, Stantec hired for northeast Avalon regional plan

Municipalities NL submits proposed regional approach to province

THE TELEGRAM  
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Work is underway to finish the on-again, off-again northeast Avalon regional plan (NEAR).

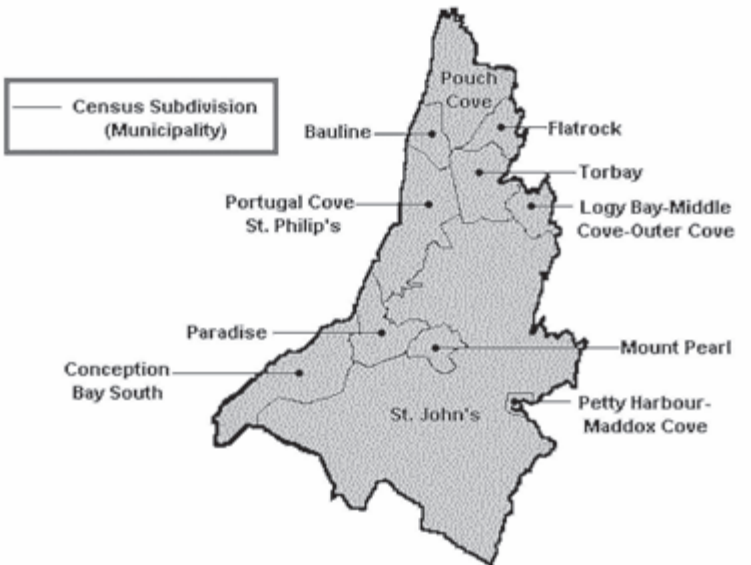
The overarching planning document would guide development, infrastructure and land use for 15 municipalities in the region, from larger urban areas such as St. John's and Mount Pearl to smaller communities such as Bauline.

It's been more than a decade in the making, and work on it stopped in recent years, but Municipal and Provincial Affairs (MAPA) Minister Krista-Lynn Howell is rebooting it.

Municipalities Newfoundland and Labrador (MNL) is co-ordinating the work of the northeast Avalon regional plan steering committee, chaired by Municipal and Provincial Affairs, with representatives from each of the municipalities.

"We are currently working with Tract Consulting (project manager) and Stantec (principal planner) on a plan to restart the process and conclude the work on the NEAR plan," an MNL spokesperson said in an emailed statement on Monday, Aug. 1.

"A proposed approach has



Boundaries of municipalities on the northeast Avalon. GOVERNMENT OF CANADA

been recently submitted to MAPA and we are waiting for their response. The steering committee will have to meet to discuss the work to date and the best path forward. No date for the meeting has been determined yet, but communications to the participating municipalities will be distributed shortly to start that process."

An emailed statement from a Municipal and Provincial Affairs spokesperson on July 15 said previous discussions on the development of a new plan suggested the plan would identify

common goals for the municipalities that reflect the demographic and economic future of the region.

"While a plan has yet to be developed, the department has indicated it is supportive of working with municipalities on completion of a plan if that is something they wish to pursue," the spokesperson said.

Meanwhile, the St. John's urban region regional plan is currently in force, and municipal plans prepared by municipalities within the region must conform to that plan.

Four years, seven-and-a-half hours of meetings

FROM A1:  
COMMITTEE

An access request filed by SaltWire in May showed the committee went almost three years without a single meeting. Since the committee was struck in 2018, it has met for a total of seven-and-a-half hours. There were four meetings in 2018, one in 2019 and two this year.

Newfoundland and Labrador is the only Atlantic Canadian province without pay equity legislation. The others enacted legislation in the late 1980s.

In a July 20 interview, Minister Responsible for Women and Gender Equality Pam Parsons said she is very serious about the issue of pay equity, but she did not give any indication of a timeline of when women and gender-diverse people in the province can expect legislation.

"Clearly, if this was something that can be done in the flick of a switch, (it) probably would have been done in the 1980s when it was first brought to the legislature here in the province," Parsons said.

Finance Minister Siobhan Coady and Environment and Climate Change Minister Bernard Davis have authority to table pay



Minister Responsible for Women and Gender Equality Pam Parsons. FILE

**"Clearly, if this was something that can be done in the flick of a switch, (it) probably would have been done in the 1980s when it was first brought to the legislature here in the province."**  
Pam Parsons

equity legislation in the public and private sector, respectively.

SaltWire requested interviews with both Coady and Davis for sometime this week to get an update on any progress on pay equity. An interview time is yet to be confirmed by department spokespeople.



PAY EQUITY

Legislation coming this fall: Furey

‘We ain’t holding our breath’: Gerry Rogers

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After years of the provincial government dragging its feet on pay equity legislation, Premier Andrew Furey said on Tuesday, Aug. 16, it will come this fall.

“There won’t be any further delay, we will be moving ahead in the fall,” Furey said in response to a question from SaltWire Network.

Furey was at Memorial University’s faculty of medicine to announce a doctor recruitment incentive Tuesday afternoon. SaltWire asked him about pay equity, because two of his ministers who can table the legislation have ducked SaltWire’s interview requests since July 21.

However, Furey called it a priority. He said this fall is as soon as the legislative calendar allows. The House of Assembly sits for the first day this fall on Monday, Oct. 3.

SaltWire asked for more details, but a communications official said they were running short on time and clewed up the premier’s discussion with reporters.

“Stay tuned,” Furey said, adding, “It’s an ongoing discussion. I told you it’s a priority — it is a priority, and we hope it’s a piece of progressive legislation that we can all be proud of.”

Meanwhile, advocates were skeptical about the news when SaltWire called them Tuesday afternoon.

“We are really interested to hear more from the premier,” said Bridget Clarke, advocacy co-ordinator with the St. John’s Status of Women Council (SJSWC), who on Monday released a report she wrote, titled “Proactive Pay Equity Legislation in Newfoundland and Labrador: Put Money Back in the Pockets of Women and Marginalized People.”

“We’re really intrigued to hear that movement will be happening as soon as this fall, and we look forward to hearing more about that because we have questions about what that movement can look



Premier Andrew Furey speaks with reporters at Memorial University’s faculty of medicine on Tuesday, Aug. 16, where he was announcing a measure to recruit more doctors.  
JUANITA MERCER ■ SALTWIRE NETWORK

like,” Clarke said.

“Obviously, the priorities for us, which are outlined in the report, are that this legislation include public- and private-sector employees in the province, and that there is funding and resources for a strong oversight body for this to be able to be really effective, and for employers, including the government, to have that kind of accountability.”

Clarke said the SJSWC is eager to be a part of the process in creating the legislation. She recommended that the government include advocates in meaningful consultation and engagement during the process.

“I hope that they can be more transparent about what (the details) look like than they have yet,” she said.

**‘INCREDIBLE OBFUSCATION’**

SaltWire also spoke with Gerry Rogers Tuesday afternoon, the former NDP MHA who put forward the private member’s resolution in 2017 urging the government “to start the process to enact pay equity legislation in this province,” to which the House of Assembly unanimously agreed.

“I’m not holding my breath,” Rogers said.

“My concern is the incredible obfuscation that has happened around this when media ... has asked what’s happening, and asking for an update, and only because of ATIPP do we see that, in fact,



Former NDP MHA Gerry Rogers: “Are the women of Newfoundland and Labrador an afterthought, or something that’s bothersome that we’ve just got to scramble to get proper, progressive legislation? I hope not, but that’s what it feels like. And I think that this government’s going to have to prove otherwise to the women of the province because we ain’t holding our breath.”  
SALTWIRE NETWORK FILE

nothing has happened with this file.

“There wasn’t a full, active, formalized committee that met, that kept notes, that had a mandate, and so the government has either purposely hidden that fact, or just biding its time, or looking for some way to justify to the women of Newfoundland and Labrador why they have been ignored, why this hasn’t been taken seriously, and why the minister who’s responsible for the status of women and gender has done really nothing — and I don’t know how they can explain this to the women



of the province.”

Rogers said the premier needs to commit to a formalized committee with a clear mandate.

“And I think he owes the province more than just, ‘Stay tuned.’ At this point, we need to know exactly what they’re doing, what direction they’re going in, and what we can expect. ... They’ve spent all their capital and all their goodwill — there’s none left on this issue.

“And they owe more of a plan, they owe more of an explanation of what concretely they’re going to do. In other words, fool me once, fool me twice, you know?”

Rogers said progressive legislation only happens with a progressive process.



Bridget Clarke, advocacy co-ordinator with the St. John’s Status of Women Council.  
SALTWIRE NETWORK FILE

She said the process so far has not been indicative of progressive politics.

“None of this would happen without the media calling this government to accountability on this issue, and it’s not rocket science. And it was only because media called government to accountability. And is this how we get progressive legislation?”

Rogers said despite having a lot of time to work on the issue, “everything is a scramble.”

“Are the women of Newfoundland and Labrador an afterthought, or something that’s bothersome that we’ve just got to scramble to get proper, progressive legislation? I hope not, but that’s what it feels like. And I think that this government’s going to have to prove otherwise to the women of the province, because we ain’t holding our breath.”

Progressive Conservative critic for women and gender equality Helen Conway Ottenheimer told SaltWire in an emailed statement that the government has stalled on pay equity legislation for far too long, leaving women and gender-diverse individuals behind.

“It is only because of the advocacy efforts of women, gender-diverse individuals and community organizations that the premier is finally feeling the political pressure to commit to pay equity legislation — something I have asked both the premier and his minister to bring to the House of Assembly repeatedly,” Conway Ottenheimer said.

“When this legislation is finally tabled in the House of Assembly, I will be making sure that it is responsive to the economic needs of women and gender-diverse individuals in this province.”

FROM A1 SHARK

“Once it got up far enough that it was visible, it was probably 10 feet away from the surface and he said there was a shark there,” said Jeremy.

“I kind of just thought he was joking.”

But Manuel could see it coming up through the water.

“Once it got above the water the shark jumped up and grabbed onto the cod,” said Jeremy.

As the showdown began, Jeremy pulled his cellphone out of this pocket and quickly snapped a picture.

“And it turned out I got it at a very good time.”

The image shows the codfish fully out of the water, with the shark’s head above the water, its mouth latched tightly onto the fish’s tail.

“It was cool,” said Jeremy, but the struggle didn’t last long.

“We didn’t end up getting the cod, so the shark won.”

Jeremy said the experience was kind of funny because before they went out, he asked his aunt, Janice Manuel, if there were any whales out there and she told him she’d seen some before.

“And then I asked her, are



Jeremy Lehr of St. John’s did catch a cod while cod fishing in the Bay of Islands on Aug. 13. CONTRIBUTED

there any sharks, kind of joking a little bit.”

His aunt said yes, but that she’d never seen one.

Jeremy’s father, Todd Lehr, has shared the picture of the shark on his Adventures with Todd YouTube channel and it’s gotten over 1,300 views.

Todd was a little disappointed not to have been in the boat that day, but the shark encounter was not the only west coast adventure for his family last week.

While hiking up around

Riverside Drive earlier in the week, Todd and Jeremy encountered a moose.

Todd grew up along the river in Riverside Drive and spent a lot of time in the woods. He said he hadn’t seen a moose in the area for going on 55 years.

They were going up Bear Head Trail and as they came around a tree there was a moose.

“And we came smack face into him, amazing. It was like he was just waiting for us.”

Todd had his GoPro in his



Terry Manuel, driving the boat, had an encounter with a shark while cod fishing in the Bay of Islands on Aug. 13. His nephew, Jeremy Lehr of St. John’s, captured a picture of the shark biting into a codfish Manuel had hooked. Also pictured is Manuel’s son, Kieran Manuel. CONTRIBUTED

hand and turned it on as he and Jeremy eased around the tree.

“He stared us down,” Todd said, adding he was a little concerned that the moose would make a run at them.

Instead, the moose turned and went off.

Todd also posted that video on YouTube. It’s gotten over 2,400 views.

He got his GoPro camera late last December and posted his first video on Jan. 1 with a shoutout to his then only subscriber, his mom, Jocelyn Lehr. Since then, his number of subscribers has grown to 322.

Posting videos of his adventures is something he’s really gotten into doing since retiring from his job with the City of St. John’s in May.

Todd said it was all about sharing things with his family and friends.

“And a few of them have taken off. I don’t know how that happened. I just stuck them up for a bit of fun.”

A video from a cross-Canada train trip has had about 46,500 views. Trains are special to Todd, as his dad, Lawrence Lehr, once worked with the railway.



# The Telegram

WEEKEND EDITION

ST. JOHN'S, NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR

POLITICS

Provincial government not pay equity compliant

Dated job classification system affects more than 1,300 public service workers

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SaltWire Network has learned the system used to determine pay for more than a thousand provincial government employees is not pay equity compliant.

It primarily affects those in executive and senior management positions of core government.

As of June this year, the number of public service workers whose jobs were evaluated under this system numbered 1,368 — 57 per cent of whom identified as women.

SaltWire Network asked the Treasury Board Secretariat for comment on Thursday, but it was unable to respond by press deadline.

The job evaluation system for these employees was implemented in the late 1980s. It's based on a methodology developed by the former Hay Group (now Korn Ferry). The current Korn Ferry methodology is pay equity compliant, but the provincial government is using a dated version for those 1,368 workers.

Government's version assesses employees' know-how, problem solving and accountability, according to a statement provided to SaltWire Network from the Treasury Board Secretariat in June.

CONTINUED ON A2

RIVER RELAXATION



Joshua Collins and his son Maxime, 6, cool off in the waters of the Manuels River in Manuels Friday afternoon, Aug. 26.  
KEITH GOSSE ▪ THE TELEGRAM

LABOUR

Number of issues resolved in two-month-long strike, but no end in sight

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With the municipal strike in Mount Pearl entering its eighth week, it appears progress has been made on many fronts, but one big issue is stalling negotiations.

According to CUPE 2099, the city is looking to discipline 13 workers for actions during the strike, which Local president Ken Turner, who is on the list, said is non-negotiable.

"Now they want to punish the strikers for going out on strike. Our members are not going to do that," Turner told SaltWire. "They will not go back to work with discipline on the table and letters on people's files. That's not going to happen. It's minor discipline in nature, there're no

**"There's nothing there that warrants letters on people's files when they go back. They're trying to punish these workers."**

**Ken Turner**  
President, CUPE local 2099

terminations or anything like that we're fighting about."

Turner said they've made their members aware of the terms of the city's latest offer, which includes a nine per cent wage increase over four years, 18 sick days for existing and new employees, two personal leave days, a \$1,000 signing bonus for every employee, and the withdrawal of two outstanding proposals, but they won't take any offer that includes discipline to the members.

Turner said they see it as workers being punished for normal striking activity, and there has been nothing so serious that the union would agree to disciplinary action.

"If there was something egregious, like physical violence, or, you know, damage or somebody destroyed a piece of equipment," he said. "We don't defend against criminal activity, obviously, but normal picketing activities, absolutely. There's nothing there that warrants letters on people's files when they go back. They're trying to punish

these workers."

Turner said they have made a lot of headway in negotiations in the last two weeks, and he feels they were close to coming to an agreement they could bring back to the members but they can't budge on this issue.

The City of Mount Pearl released the details of its latest offer on Aug. 25, holding a special meeting of the council to discuss it. They referenced the discipline, which was referred to as a serious health and safety issue.

SaltWire spoke with Mount Pearl Mayor Dave Aker on Friday, and he views the wage increase as the most important issue in the negotiations right now, but said the health and safety issue is also very important.

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**Today in history**  
**1883:** In one of the most violent volcanic events in recorded history, Krakatoa reaches the peak of its eruption, destroying the Indonesian island of the same name and much of the surrounding archipelago.  
**1955:** The first version of Guinness's book of records is published in the U.K.  
**1962:** NASA's Mariner 2 spacecraft is launched, bound for Venus.  
**2003:** Mars makes its closest approach to Earth in roughly 60,000 years.

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**Canada**  
The Local Journalism Initiative is funded by the government of Canada.

SAILING SENIOR



As part of their recreational program, residents from the Bishops Gardens Seniors Living complex in St. John's took to the waters of Quidi-Vidi Lake on Friday afternoon, Aug. 26, for an afternoon of sailing. The annual event through the Fort Amherst Healthcare properties is held in conjunction with the Able Sail Association of Newfoundland and Labrador, a non-profit organization based out of the Royal Newfoundland Yacht Club in Manuels, C.B.S., which is dedicated to providing sailing opportunities to people with all levels of ability. At the helm is complex resident Ed Sheppard along with Able Sail NL board member Marg (Muggs) Tibbo (rear). **JOE GIBBONS ■ THE TELEGRAM**

Government mum on details of legislation prep

FROM A1:  
N.L. GOVERNMENT

However, the current Korn Ferry methodology includes the assessment of a fourth factor: working conditions.  
Cynthia MacFarlane, principal at Mercer, a human resources consulting firm, spoke with SaltWire Network from Ottawa on Thursday. She said in order for a job classification system to be pay equity compliant, it must evaluate working conditions.  
The relevant piece of legislation in this province related to this is Sect. 16 of the provincial Human Rights Act which says an employer can't pay employees different wages if they are doing the same or similar work requiring the same or similar skill, effort and responsibility, and under the same or similar working conditions.

LEGISLATION  
'A PRIORITY'

Meanwhile, Premier Andrew Furey unexpectedly said on Aug. 16 that the province will be moving forward with proactive pay equity legislation this fall.  
Furey was at Memorial University that day to announce a measure to attract more doctors to the province.  
After trying to get interviews with two of his ministers about progress on pay equity legislation for nearly a month, SaltWire brought it up at the event when Furey took questions from reporters.  
SaltWire asked whether he agreed with a statement in the St. John's Status of Women Council's pay equity report, released Aug. 15, which said any further delay in enacting legislation is an infringement on the human rights of women and marginalized people.  
"It's a priority for us, and we are pushing forward with something in the fall," he replied.  
"That's no delay, that's as soon as the legislative agenda



A dated job evaluation system used for core provincial government employees in executive and senior management positions is not pay equity compliant. Pictured is Confederation Building in St. John's. **SALTWIRE NETWORK FILE PHOTO**



Premier Andrew Furey speaks with reporters at Memorial University's faculty of medicine on Tuesday, Aug. 16, where he was announcing a measure to recruit more doctors, and where he unexpectedly confirmed the province would be moving ahead with pay equity legislation this fall. **JUANITA MERCER ■ TELEGRAM FILE PHOTO**

allows."  
SaltWire said it's been five years (the provincial government agreed to start working on it back in 2017), and again asked Furey whether he thought the delay was an infringement on human rights.  
"Well, there won't be any further delay; we will be moving ahead in the fall," he said.  
SaltWire asked for details about the legislation.  
"Stay tuned," he said, while his communications director

said they didn't have time.  
Furey added: "It's an ongoing discussion. I told you it's a priority — it is a priority, and we hope it's a piece of progressive legislation that we can all be proud of."

NO DETAILS

Government has been mum on details ever since.  
Most recently, on Thursday, SaltWire asked the Premier's Office what work government is doing right now in preparation for tabling the legislation, whether it will cover both the public and private sectors, whether there will be an oversight body, and whether there will be public engagement.  
SaltWire received an emailed response from the Office of Women and Gender Equality.  
"As you can appreciate, there are steps involved in drafting legislation. Presently, we are working through that process, including looking at the legislation in other jurisdictions and exploring what's been effective, and what hasn't been effective. There are also ongoing conversations across government departments and with the wider community, which is consistent with the development of other pieces of legislation.

"What is important is that we draft legislation that achieves the desired outcomes and helps address the issue of pay equity for women and other marginalized people in our society," the email said.  
The office said upon second reading of the bill, which is when the legislative debate occurs, government will hold a technical briefing and news conference.  
For further context on the office's statement about looking at legislation in other jurisdictions, government has been doing that work since at least 2017, according to a statement made by Minister Gerry Byrne in the House of Assembly on March 8, 2017 — that's when the House unanimously agreed "to start the process to enact pay equity legislation".  
At that time, Byrne said government had already started looking at other jurisdictions.  
"As Minister of Labour, I have already begun a cross-jurisdictional research effort; it is critical that we understand what other provinces and comparable jurisdictions are doing, to take from that best practices. But at the end of the day, it is Newfoundland and Labrador which will decide its own destiny," Byrne said.

Mayor hopeful for resolution

FROM A1:  
NUMBER

"I won't say its non-negotiable but at the end of the day it's incumbent on the city to ensure all employees, whether they're on strike or not, in

the union or in management, have a safe environment," he said. "We just don't want to see anybody hurt. The way of dealing with that is to issue a letter to every employee to advise them that, during a strike or otherwise, an unsafe

condition for everybody was created."  
Aker said he couldn't go into any details on the disciplinary action, since it's a human resources issue.  
He also said he feels they're much closer to a deal than

they've been in the last two months, referencing the two-tier system for sick days the union had an issue with that is now off the table, and said he hopes both sides can get back to the table soon and hammer something out.



# The Telegram

ST. JOHN'S, NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR

A member of the SaltWire Network

Advocates,  
Opposition  
say pay equity  
legislation not  
good enough

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In a news conference at the Confederation Building on Monday, Oct. 17, government ministers called their proposed pay equity legislation progressive, but advocates and Opposition parties said it's not good enough.

"It's disappointing," said Lisa Faye, executive director with the St. John's Status of Women Council, an organization that this summer called for pay equity legislation for both the public and private sector, with well-resourced oversight bodies to ensure employer accountability.

The proposed legislation has two components: pay equity, and pay transparency. The pay equity component applies only to public-sector employers with 10 or more employees. It requires pay-equity-compliant compensation practices for the public sector, and a designated commissioner to act as pay-equity officer.

That part of the proposed legislation would come into force on April 1, 2023, for core government workers only — not for all other public bodies, such as Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro or Memorial University, which would come into force at a later date not specified in the legislation.

The second part of the proposed legislation pertains to pay transparency. It applies to both the public and private sector, requiring employers to state the expected pay for a job when it is publicly advertised, and not request pay history information from job applicants.

This part of the proposed legislation would not come into force until after consultations are completed with stakeholders, such as employers' organizations and equity-seeking organizations. The government offered no timeline on when it expects those consultations to be completed, but expects them to begin in the coming weeks.

"They're worried about the response from the business community, but as a woman, it makes me wonder if anyone cares if I'm able to make a salary that is equal to what a man in my position would make. It really makes me wonder if that matters to them," said Faye.

**'IT'S A STEP FORWARD': PARSONS**

Opposition critic for women and gender equality Helen Conway Ottenheimer said the government did not deliver pay equity to women on Monday.

"I say that because really what it amounts (to), from my perspective, is that it is reaffirming the status quo. It's reaffirming exactly what we have for the public service," Conway Ottenheimer said.

CONTINUED ON A2

TRUCK OVERTURNS



A St. John's Regional Fire Department firefighter crawls into an overturned pickup Monday afternoon, Oct. 17, after a single-vehicle crash in St. John's. The truck overturned in the westbound lane of Pitts Memorial Drive and struck a guardrail before coming to a stop on its side. Neither of the two male occupants of the truck had serious injuries or went to hospital.

KEITH GOSSE ■ THE TELEGRAM

TELY SAVES LIVES

## 'A really strong kid'

Community rallies around Paradise girl with cancer, donates blood

**TRISH SMITH**  
**SPECIAL TO**  
**SALTWIRE NETWORK**

When Laura Winnett's daughter, Natalie, was having leg pain, the Paradise woman was pretty sure her 10-year-old was experiencing growing pains.

The end of the school year was approaching, and as a teacher at Topsail Elementary School, Winnett was looking forward to summer holidays with her daughters, Natalie and Kate, and husband, Alan.

What happened shortly before the school year finished blindsided the entire family.

"Natalie's very boisterous, very outgoing. She has a huge personality," Winnett says. "She came home one day from school, and she just laid down on the couch, which is not Natalie."

Winnett was still thinking it was typical growing pains, but Natalie objected.

"She said, 'Mommy, it's not growing pains.'"

That night, Natalie woke up in pain, and the family planned to take her to the doctor the next day. Winnett went to school, leaving Alan home with Natalie, and by 9 a.m. she received a phone call.

"My husband called and said, 'Natalie can't get out of bed, she can't walk. She's in so much pain.'"

Winnett rushed home and took Natalie to the Janeway Children's Hospital, where things happened very quickly.

"We got there at 10 a.m., and by 2 p.m., the big 'C' word



Natalie Winnett in a hospital bed getting a blood transfusion. The 10-year-old was diagnosed with cancer just before school let out for the summer after experiencing leg pain. Transfusions of blood and platelets have helped Natalie feel much better. CONTRIBUTED

was floating around."

**'A REALLY STRONG KID'**

Natalie was diagnosed with acute lymphocytic leukemia and began to receive treatment immediately.

"We were admitted and

started treatment right away," Winnett says. "Natalie had multiple blood transfusions and then platelet transfusions."

Natalie is being treated with an aggressive chemotherapy regimen, and the family knows they are at the begin-

GIVING BLOOD

To support patients such as Natalie, book an appointment to donate blood at the donor centre in St. John's or a local community event. Donors can call 1-888-2-DONATE, visit [blood.ca](http://blood.ca) or download the GiveBlood app to book an appointment.

ning of a long journey. Even in the face of such tremendous challenges, Natalie remains positive.

"She's smiling the whole time," Winnett says. "She's a really strong kid. She goes to the hospital and receives 24 hours of chemotherapy, which knocks her completely out. And she gets very, very ill from that."

Natalie is no stranger to the Janeway, or to medical challenges. She was born with a condition that causes low muscle tone, delaying her ability to walk and develop other gross motor skills, although that isn't apparent now due to the progress she has made.

"We were at the Janeway three to five times a week until she was five years old," Winnett says.

The family is grateful to live close to the children's hospital and praises all the professionals they have seen over the years.

"I cannot say enough about the team at the Janeway. They are fantastic," Winnett says.

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Today in history

**1469:** Ferdinand of Aragon married Isabella of Castile. The marriage united all the dominions of Spain.

**1685:** King Louis XIV of France revoked the Edict of Nantes, which had established the legal toleration of the Protestant population.

**1767:** The Mason-Dixon line was agreed upon. It was the boundary between Maryland and Pennsylvania.

**1842:** Samuel Finley Breese Morse laid his first telegraph cable.

**1867:** The U.S. took formal possession of Alaska from Russia. The land was purchased for a total of \$7 million (two cents per acre).

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Canada

The Local Journalism Initiative is funded by the government of Canada.

COME BY CHANCE



The Come By Chance refinery. **KEITH GOSSE/THE TELEGRAM**

‘Our thoughts are with his family’

Braya Fuels announces worker injured in explosion last month has died

EVAN CAREEN  
THE TELEGRAM

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One of the workers injured in the explosion at the Come By Chance refinery more than a month ago has died.

Braya Renewable Fuels, which bought the facility in late 2021, issued a news release Sunday, Oct. 16, announcing that one of the eight workers injured in the Sept. 2 explosion has died.

While the worker’s name was not released, the company said he was a “well-known labourer with Braya and an integral part of the team working to convert the refinery.”

The release stated the company is “deeply saddened by this tragic loss and our

thoughts are with his family and loved ones.”

SaltWire Network contacted representatives of the United Steelworkers for the refinery for comment, but they declined, saying they are helping the family with the funeral arrangements and would not speak publicly until that has taken place.

The former oil refinery is being converted into a biofuels facility and at the time of the incident, over 600 people were working at the site.

Details of what exactly happened at the Placentia Bay project are still scarce and an Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) investigation is ongoing.

“Eight people were transported to hospital, some with serious injuries as a result of the blast,” the RCMP stated in

a news release issued the evening of the explosion.

Five of the injured were transported by helicopter from the Dr. G. B. Cross Memorial Hospital in Clarenville to the Health Sciences Centre in St. John’s.

The RCMP said at the time that the explosion caused a fire, but it was contained. They said there was no further danger at the worksite, and all employees were accounted for. RCMP spokesperson Cpl. Jolene Garland said police first got reports of the explosion from people who heard the blast just after 3:30 p.m.

The cause of the explosion has not been released. It was later announced that at least one worker had been released from hospital, but updates on the status of the other workers have not been

given.

Construction was halted after the incident and a stop-work order wasn’t lifted until Sept. 29, but the site was shut down Monday, Oct. 17 to give employees time to grieve.

“We are grieving with his extended family and our employees and we will continue to provide trauma counselling and supports to them during this difficult time,” the company stated in its Oct. 16 release.

A statement from Service NL, which oversees occupational health and safety in the province, said since the matter is still under investigation it would be inappropriate to comment, but the fatality does not change the course of the OHS investigation.

Braya says it will not comment further on the matter.

Not much accomplished in seven years: Rogers

FROM A1  
ADVOCATES

She acknowledged it’s a step in the right direction, but she wants it extended to the private sector.

Faye said the legislation is not progressive.

“This is not legislation that will help the people that I speak to on a daily basis, the people that called into our offices after we released our report and said that lack of equity in pay is affecting them today. And those were not people working in the public sector,” said Faye.

NDP critic for women and gender equality Lela Evans said the legislation is set up to fail.

Evans said she is concerned the government isn’t taking gender equality seriously, and that because the consultations have not yet begun, the legislation was rushed.

Minister responsible for labour Bernard Davis told reporters the end goal is to have both private and public sector pay equity legislation, but he would not commit to a date for the private sector.

“We’re starting in-house first with public sector,” said Minister responsible for women and gender equality Pam Parsons.

Finance Minister Siobhan Coady said the government can now bring this legislative framework to stakeholders in the private sector for consultation.

Davis said the government can build around the framework.

“Put, as they say, some more meat on the bone,” he said.

Parsons called the legislation historic.

“This is a positive step forward. It’s a step forward. Any step forward is certainly a step forward, and again, we’re all



Lisa Faye, executive director with the St. John’s Status of Women Council, spoke with reporters at Confederation Building on Monday, Oct. 17. **JUANITA MERCER ■ SALTWIRE NETWORK**

very eager and very passionate about this,” Parsons said.

‘SMARTEN UP, GOVERNMENT’

The St. John’s Board of Trade said in a statement on Monday it is pleased the government is taking steps to close the wage gap.

“We look forward to taking an active role in the consultations and welcome government to engage our members in a robust conversation about how we, as a province, can work together to implement a significant, cost-effective and impactful change,” the statement said in part.

SaltWire Network spoke on the phone with former NDP MHA Gerry Rogers shortly after the news conference. Rogers brought a private member’s resolution to the House of Assembly in 2017 encouraging movement on pay equity legislation, to which all members agreed.

SaltWire asked for Rogers’ reaction to the details of the proposed legislation.

“I was quite surprised be-



Progressive Conservative critic for women and gender equality, Helen Conway Ottenheimer. **JUANITA MERCER ■ SALTWIRE NETWORK**

cause there seemed to be so much fanfare about what has been accomplished by this government around this area, and it’s really, really not there,” she said.

“It’s so thin, particularly because there’s no timeline for implementation for what’s going to happen beyond just that little bit that they’re doing around core public-sector workers, and I’m surprised at what appears to be such a limited amount of in-depth, comprehensive work. So, basically saying, ‘Well, now we’re going to consult.’

“What in God’s name have they been doing? For seven years what have they been doing? And then it’s five and a half years since my private member’s motion where they all supported this and said, yes, this is so important, we’re going to do it. Five and a half years later, what have they done? And now they’re going to consult?”

Rogers said the focus of the legislation needs to be on workers.

“This is about people’s lives. This is about going to work every day and what you’re



Former NDP MHA Gerry Rogers. **SALTWIRE NETWORK FILE PHOTO**

able to bring home so that you can feed your family and house your family, and live a life where there’s a sense of fairness and equity in the work that you do, where it’s about valuing people.”

Rogers said she is very disappointed.

“I hope that this can be pulled together. I hope that they can get beyond smoke and mirrors and beyond just self-congratulatory press conferences, and really get down to the work that needs to be done so that it’s focusing on the lives of the people in our province.

“This is not rocket science. This is a basic human right, and that should be the guiding principle in all the work that’s done in the area of proactive pay equity. That has to be the basic driving force — that this is a basic human right, and come on, let’s get on with it in a meaningful, just way. Smarten up. Smarten up, government, smarten up.”

SaltWire requested comment from the Newfoundland and Labrador Employers’ Council, but a spokesperson said executive director Jaclyn Sullivan was unavailable to speak with the media on Monday.



ST. JOHN'S, NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR

A member of the SaltWire Network

Pet food bank may be forced to cut hours

Facility faces 'desperate' situation from lack of supplies

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Jessica Rendell's phone has been ringing off the hook these days, though not for the reason she wishes it would.

"I'm so sorry, just give me one second," Rendell says, pausing a conversation with SaltWire Network on one phone to answer another in her office.

Rendell is co-founder of Heavenly Creatures, a St. John's-based animal rescue organization dedicated to sheltering homeless animals, helping low-income pet owners with the costs of caring for their animals in difficult times, and raising awareness of animal welfare issues. Since the organization's establishment in 2001 it has helped thousands of animals mainly through the dedication of volunteers and donors, but this year has proven particularly challenging.

Just as humans are suffering the effects of the rising cost of living and financial struggles related to the COVID-19 pandemic, so too are their pets, Rendell says.

"We hear a lot about the need for supplies for human food banks. Our pet food bank is in the same situation," she explains.

Heavenly Creatures has long offered a pet food bank, open several days a week, and has been known to give away 300 tins of food in a single day to cat and dog owners looking for assistance. Operating with about half the food supply it typically has on hand this time of year, Rendall says the situation has gotten so dire, the organization will be forced to cut its food bank hours in half if it isn't able to increase its supplies within the next few days.

CONTINUED ON A2

CHAIN REACTION



Waves break on the shoreline near Chain Rock in The Narrows of St. John's harbour Tuesday afternoon, Dec. 20.

KEITH GOSSE • THE TELEGRAM

POLITICS

Pay equity consultations to begin in new year

Officer to monitor compliance not yet appointed

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Formal stakeholder consultations to inform regulations for the Pay Equity and Pay Transparency Act will begin early in the new year, according to a statement sent to The Telegram on Monday, Dec. 19 on behalf of the Office of Women and Gender Equality, the Department of Environment and Climate Change, and the Treasury Board Secretariat.

The statement said a news release will be shared to inform the public and media when the consultation process begins.

CONTINUED ON A2



Minister responsible for labour, Bernard Davis; Minister responsible for women and gender equality, Pam Parsons; and Finance Minister Siobhan Coady released details of the Pay Equity and Pay Transparency Act at Confederation Building on Monday, Oct. 17.

TELEGRAM FILE PHOTO

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Telegram staff share favourite holiday memories

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LOCAL

Bandit strikes coffee shop, steals cakes

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Zach Dean gets two assists in debut with Team Canada

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Government funding to help in hunt for critical minerals

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Today in history

**1620:** The “Mayflower” and its passengers, pilgrims from England, landed at Plymouth Rock, Mass.

**1849:** The first ice-skating club in the United States was formed in Philadelphia, Pa.

**1879:** Ibsen’s “A Doll’s House” was first performed in Copenhagen, Denmark, with a revised happy ending.

**1898:** Scientists Pierre and Marie Curie discovered the radioactive element radium.

**1925:** Eisenstein’s film “Battleship Potemkin” was first shown in Moscow.

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Canada

The Local Journalism Initiative is funded by the government of Canada.

Organization appeals to public for help

FROM A1  
PET FOOD

“We’re really desperate,” she said. “Every time the food bank is open, we have 15 or 20 people coming in. It’s really been an uphill battle.”

Normally the Christmas season brings Heavenly Creatures, which doesn’t receive government funding, a boost in donated supplies as well as money, usually with several businesses contributing significant amounts. This year that hasn’t really happened, Rendell says.

The organization is now seeing not only pet owners with low incomes, but some middle-income earners who are having trouble keeping up with the increased cost of their animals’ food and vet bills as well as their own expenses. There’s also been an increase in seniors looking for help for their pets.

“One guy who came here the other day was in his 80s and walked over here with his cane. He was struggling physically and financially,” Rendell says.

“People might say if someone can’t afford an animal they shouldn’t have one, but people are going to have pets for company and sometimes it’s the only company they have. Our motto is it’s better to help than to judge. We are here to help people over a hurdle. We can’t be their only source of help, but we see lots of people who have unexpected



Heavenly Creatures volunteer Ivan Morgan and Buck sit near the low stock of pet food at the organization's shelter in St. John's. **KEITH GOSSE ■ THE TELEGRAM**

edly fallen on hard times.”

Some pet owners have received help with pet supplies from online groups like Neighbours in Need St. John’s.

“God bless that group and groups like Heavenly Creatures,” one female pet owner told SaltWire. “Never did I think I would be in a situation where I couldn’t afford kitty litter. And as soon as I’m out of it, I’ll pay it forward.”

It costs about \$300,000 a year to keep Heavenly Creatures in operation, Rendell says, and the organization

pays a significant amount in veterinary care: about \$17,000 last month alone.

Heavenly Creatures often turns to social media and other public avenues with appeals for food and monetary donations, and Rendell is hoping animal lovers, businesses and other members of the public might help the charity out again now, allowing it to keep its food bank open.

“I hate to even ask because I know people are struggling,” Rendell says. “But we can’t do it alone.”

Heavenly Creatures is in need of wet food for cats and dogs, dry cat food, scoopable cat litter, and cardboard scratchers for cats. Supplies and monetary donations can be brought to the organization’s office at 292 Lemarchant Rd. Wednesday, Dec. 21, through Friday, Dec. 23, between noon and 9 p.m., and the office will open on Christmas Eve to receive donations if needed, Rendell says.

Monetary donations can also be made online by visiting [www.heavenlycreatures.ca](http://www.heavenlycreatures.ca).

Pros and cons listed for each option

FROM A1  
PAY

Much of the legislation, which received royal assent on Nov. 9, will not be enacted until sometime in the future after those consultations are completed.

The only part of the legislation that contained a defined start date is the pay equity section for core government workers, set to come into force on April 1, 2023. The legislation also requires that one of the commissioners appointed under the Public Service Commission Act will act as a pay equity officer, in addition to their usual duties.

They will monitor pay equity requirements for the public sector, and receive and prepare reports regarding compliance with the legislation.

That person has not yet been appointed.

‘HIGHLY LITIGIOUS LEGISLATION’

Meanwhile, a PowerPoint presentation emailed by a former manager of economic policy in the Office of Women and Gender Equality on May 12, 2021 provides some background to the con-

siderations being made within government prior to drafting the legislation.

The Telegram obtained the presentation through an access to information request.

Called Pay Equity in NL: An Overview and Next Steps, the PowerPoint presentation noted some challenges of implementing pay equity legislation in this province, one of which was that it is “highly litigious legislation.”

It said: “(The Supreme Court of Canada) has said in latest QC (Quebec) pay equity case, in future, legislated social benefits must be granted in a non-discriminatory way which may affect the retroactivity issue in NL pay equity.”

A slide titled “Potential Costs” said about \$48 million has been paid out since pay equity legislation was introduced in New Brunswick in 2010.

A slide titled “Benefits for NL” noted pay equity is a major factor in achieving gender equality, and increased gender equality is predicted to add \$1.3 billion to the province’s GDP by 2026.

POWERPOINT WEIGHED PAY EQUITY PROS, CONS

The next few slides considered the pros and cons of

various ways of implementing pay equity legislation in the province.

Implementing only public-sector legislation (called Option 1) had the following pros listed:

- It would allow the public sector to pilot and refine implementation before a private-sector rollout.

- It partially fulfills the government’s commitment made in the House of Assembly.

- It allows the private sector time to adjust and prepare.

The first con was redacted. The other cons for public-sector-only legislation were:

- It does not include the private sector.

- There’s “potential for public criticism that government has not fulfilled commitment within private sector.”

- “Potential for public backlash due to current fiscal climate and perception that public-sector workers are already over compensated.”

A slide called Option 2: Public and Private Sector Legislation noted the following advantages:

- Fulfills the government’s commitment made in the House of Assembly.

- Research indicates positive financial outcomes for

the province in the long term.

- It works toward ensuring all workers in the province receive equitable pay.

Most of the cons for this option were redacted, except one which said, “Does not allow time to evaluate implementation before involving private sector.”

A slide titled Option 3: Status Quo noted just one advantage: that “no financial risk will be taken,” but the cons included:

- Not fulfilling the commitment made in the House of Assembly.

- Continued gender inequality.

- “Public criticism due to government’s inaction on pay equity.”

The government ultimately decided on a modified version of the first option: pay equity legislation for the public sector, but also pay transparency legislation for both the public and private sector, pending consultations with employers’ organizations and equity-seeking groups.

The pay transparency legislation will require employers to state the expected pay for a job when it is publicly advertised, and not request pay history information from job applicants.

Sea captain ignored regulations, court rules

THE TELEGRAM

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A sea captain tasked with bringing a tugboat back to Newfoundland and Labrador from the Northwest Territories in August 2018 deliberately ignored safety regulations in an effort to make the voyage on time, a St. John’s judge ruled Tuesday, Dec. 20.

Provincial Court Judge Phyllis Harris found Capt. Bruce Davis and his employer RJG Construction Ltd. of St. John’s guilty of several liability offences related to the voyage, which saw Davis taking a crew to Tuktoyaktuk to

bring the company’s MV Jim Kilabuk, which also serves as a supply ship, home.

The offences are related to requirements for survival equipment, crew member numbers and documents as laid out in the Arctic Waters Pollution and Prevention Act and the Canada Shipping Act.

Harris found the ship had not been carrying enough life rafts, had been carrying expired pieces of equipment, and its four-person crew did not meet the minimum required number for the vessel. Required documents had not been obtained prior to the voyage, she found, and Davis had ignored a request from maritime officials for a diversion, feeling it was “ridicu-

lous” and would delay the trip due to inspections.

“There was little evidence of due diligence in relation to Captain Davis, and in fact Captain Davis seemed to be aware of the deficiencies and continued on the voyage, Harris said. “It was clear in his evidence that his goal was to get the vessel back to this province within the season and he was prepared to do that despite the requirements.”

Harris rejected the defence’s argument that Davis had acted reasonably in determining the vessel was seaworthy, given it had resulted in a safe voyage.

“This is not a situation where the captain or master

of the vessel gets to substitute his version of what is seaworthy or safe for the regulations or regulatory bodies, the judge said. “These regulations have been put in place for a reason and most of these are safety-related.

“The fact that the voyage was made safely and that the vessel arrived with the crew and vessel in tact does not excuse the regulatory breaches here.”

Harris described the violations as blatant and said neither Davis nor RJG Construction had offered any defence that would justify the actions taken on the voyage.

The matter will be called in court again May 10 for a sentencing hearing.