

Steve Scannell, *Antigonish*

Any good councillor would be poorly suited to govern if they ignored the interests of the people they represent, but I argue they would also be poorly suited for the task if the will of the public was the only factor that influenced their decision. Community input is always one of many factors that must be weighed – it is rarely the only one. Politics, even at the local level, is complex and messy.

I think it is worth taking a moment to catch our breath and reflect on the recent decision of the Municipal Councils of the Town and County of Antigonish to consolidate. Lost in the drama at the respective meetings of October 20th when the final decision was made is an understanding of what it means to exercise political leadership in this context.

The leadership discussion has been overshadowed by the argument that the failure to hold a plebiscite on the issue stifled the voice of the residents and undermined democratic ideals. This is simply a matter of perspective. I, for one, disagree that this decision and the process leading up to it was anti-democratic; in fact, it is the essence of democracy in action executed through strong political leadership by our local officials.

The position supporting a plebiscite assumes that the residents are willing and able to determine what is best for the future of the community. It would be unfair for me to doubt the wisdom of the public or entrench myself on either side of the public debate respecting the future of the community. There are very good positions that support either side of the discussion, and where you fall ultimately is shaped by your interpretation of the evidence and your wishes for what you want your community to look like in the future.

Residents are certainly able to determine what is best for Antigonish and should have a voice in the process, but a vote is a very crude way of assessing how people feel about such a difficult issue. A vote simply gauges citizen opinions in black or white terms; it cannot ask *why*. Consolidation is not a black or white issue. It is a topic that requires comprehending and balancing a range of complex and competing needs and interests. A vote that boils the whole issue down to a binary 'yes' or 'no' is simply insufficient for this purpose – understanding the *why* matters.

Apart from being a blunt tool to gauge collective interests, voter turnout is notoriously low in municipal elections and special votes. Referendums and plebiscites – regardless of their perceived or real potential community impact – do not draw people to the polls in droves as community-minded people may hope for or expect. Pictou County has been among the latest communities to experience a vote on a municipal merger, and only 38% of their community showed up to lend their voice to the issue. This, despite a very detailed analysis that took over five years to complete, and which came after a recommendation from the Utility and Review Board recommended the amalgamation as holding “significant positive implications” – social and financial – for the community.

What is also overlooked in the discussion on a plebiscite is that in this context it is non-binding. In the end, the respective Councils would be tasked with making the final decision. Given that a vote is a very imprecise tool that fails to adequately capture the complexity of the issue or how one may feel about it to inform a final decision for Council, preference ought to be given to public consultation to collect this information from residents for an issue of such significance.

The process, and principles governing the process, were agreed to unanimously by each Council and endorsed by provincial officials who already carried out a similar exercise in other areas of the province. It was so agreed to because it allowed greater flexibility for each Council as they explore and negotiate their options – more so than the rigidity of the process outlined of the *Municipal Government Act*. The information gathering from residents proceeded as an extensive series of consultations and public meetings, included a range of ways to provide input (such as email and telephone), and made all information freely available to all residents in the community, as explained in the subsequent reports.

No recent project in our community has embraced such consultative zeal, and credit ought to be given to all Councillors and staff who committed their time outside of regular working hours to organize and attend these events and meet with citizens face to face to talk about such a contentious issue. They worked tirelessly to consider resident concerns and positions and have tried to understand all dimensions of the issue – to understand the *why*.

In this context, not holding a plebiscite is *far* from being anti-democratic. This level of engagement is precisely what we ought to expect from our municipal councillors on a regular basis in their quest to understand our

interests and shape our respective communities. Regardless of whether you support the outcome of the decision, it is difficult for me to see how this has failed to provide a voice to all interested residents on the issue. It is important at this stage to ask what we expect from our elected officials. How do we gauge whether we have been well represented?

I think it comes down to how you view the role of political representation, generally. There are two predominate models at play in representative democracies: the delegate model and the trustee model. An elected official operating as a 'delegate' is expected to be a mirror reflecting the wishes and demands of their constituents. Such a perspective suggests our leaders ought to make no independent decisions for themselves; they are simply expected to do as the people command. Conversely, an elected official operating as a 'trustee' acts on behalf of their constituents interests, but also uses their knowledge, experience, available evidence, and integrity to make the best possible decision. This is the truer expression of how our representative system works.

The reality is local government largely operates on a trustee model. We elect local officials because we trust them to make good decisions on our behalf; we vote them out if they don't. Councillors are tasked on a regular basis to make decisions that have many competing positions on what ought to be done and they must weigh a variety of competing interests – which is further complicated by the fact that these competing interests are coming directly from our friends and neighbors. Oftentimes, these decisions may be made with imperfect information available, and like any decision in life they can never be made with 100% certainty.

Any good councillor would be poorly suited to govern if they ignored the interests of the people they represent, but I argue they would also be poorly suited for the task if the will of the public was the only factor that influenced their decision. Community input is always one of many factors that must be weighed – it is rarely the only one. Politics, even at the local level, is complex and messy.

The information for the Antigonish consolidation decision was informed, not only by community input, but by past experiences from communities who have gone through this process before, such as Windsor/West Hants. It is worth noting, too, that in their own assessments ([Link](#)) – they emerged on the other side better for it in the long-term despite similar concerns raised at the time of the decision ([Link](#)). It is very fair to say that our councillors worked intelligently with the research, case studies, and general

information they had – and it is as well-sourced as you can possess on this issue. If it seemed that the information skewed positive, it is because there is a lot of evidence that supports positive outcomes when municipalities merge – specifically, I should add, when two municipalities come as strong partners to the table and can negotiate a better way of delivering service.

With all of this under consideration, I believe that the drama that unfolded obscured an appreciation and understanding of what a good councillor ought to do when faced with the question of consolidation. My perspective is that a push for a vote as the *sole* determinant of the outcome gives elected officials space to abdicate their representative responsibilities and shy away from the expectation we place on them to be capable of demonstrating decisive, informed leadership when confronted with challenging issues. I support residents having a voice in the process. I feel that all councillors – regardless of how they voted – heard those voices.

The decision was always going to be highly emotional and controversial, and that is precisely why it makes good sense to trust our councillors to make the final call. They have, by virtue of their positions, the passion for the job, knowledge of the inner workings of the municipality as an administrative entity as well as its broader community dynamics, and (perhaps much more importantly) the understanding of what lies on the horizon. The issue itself requires a careful balancing of the emotional aspects that accompany such a question with the technical aspects of understanding how communities are governed and managed to achieve long-term sustainability. Whether you are comfortable admitting it, that is a role that a councillor is best positioned to satisfy. That is what we elect them to do. And because it is not black and white, it is an unenviable – and at times thankless – job. It is the job of residents to share their input with their councillors to ensure it factors into their calculus. I feel that has been accomplished.

The current councillors around the table were placed in these roles by the residents because we trusted their disposition, their knowledge, their experience, their civic mindedness, as well as their passion for ensuring our community remains a vibrant place to live, work, and raise a family. They have delivered. The past eight-plus years have seen increased cooperation between our Councils, increased community investments completed through partnership and cost-sharing, and a growing list of shared services that serve more practical, cost-effective purposes.

It has been a period of positivity and success for our community because the respective Councils applied a community-wide lens to their decision-making – not a Town versus County mindset. It all boils down to leadership, and such a period of prosperity and good will should not be taken for granted that it can be easily repeated.

What evidence do we now have to accuse our councillors of renouncing this perspective? I suggest that there is no reason or evidence at all to assume that all councillors have suddenly given up on our community. Our *councillors have been consistent in their principles and approach and are who they have always been before the vote – people who, together, make up a collective body trying to make decisions with the best long-term interests of the community in mind.*

Again, politics is complex and messy. Those that voted in favor of the decision care just as much about the community as those who voted against; all weighed the information and made a decision they felt was best for the community. Moreover, the process has exhibited the essence of what we want from our democratic institutions: the ability to meet face to face with our leaders to tell them exactly what we think and then entrust them to make the best possible decision they can with all the information and inputs available to them. That is how the system is supposed to work; that is how it has worked for this decision regardless of whether you like the outcome.

All councillors were placed in challenging and uncomfortable positions throughout this process, and on October 20th they were asked to make a very hard decision about the future of the community they represent. To even address such a controversial question forces them to place community interests about their own. That is exactly what they all did. What more could be asked of our leaders?

I'll close by saying that it is heartening to see our Councils rise to the occasion, and again – as they have in the past, and regardless of how they voted – demonstrate forward-thinking leadership that focuses on the long-term best interests of the Antigonish community.

As the dust settles, Antigonish is bracing for a new future as a single municipal unit to better reflect what we have always known to be true: that we are one community. Rather than quibbling over outcomes, embrace the outcome and be focused on building for the future.

Let us give our respective Councils the benefit of doubt based on their recent pattern of actions, the positive outcomes they achieved, and the

commitment they have demonstrated to always place the greater community good at the core of their decisions. I, for one, have full confidence that Antigonish is – and will always be – well-served by their leadership and I'm excited about our future.

Op-Ed: Antigonish Consolidation: A historic opportunity

Jun 7, 2023 | News

"Why can't the Town and County just get along?"

We can't tell you how many times we had to answer that question as Mayor and Warden of the Town and County of Antigonish.

When we were first elected, the relationship between the Town and County of Antigonish couldn't have been further apart. Every decision was made in silos and there was next to no collaboration. It resulted in delayed infrastructure projects and programming, along with an overall disconnect in priorities for Antigonish residents.

It was frustrating. Not only that: it was unnecessary. Take the Antigonish Skatepark, for example. The fruition of the project took over 25 years, all due to the division between the Town and the County. It took a partnership with St. FX for things to actually come together. And in the months that followed, look at what we were able to accomplish when we worked as one cohesive unit.

Rather than duplication, we should focus on collaboration. We've learned this through authentic experiences of both municipalities joining forces for a greater goal.

Just look at the Antigonish Town & County Library. This project is a huge success story for our community. But there is a councillor from each municipality on the board and a member from each administration overseeing the facilities and attending meetings. This is unnecessary duplication. Also, when issues came up during construction it meant having to share all information twice, getting consensus from two councils instead of one. Inevitably, the process was jeopardized and slowed.

In Antigonish, we're one community that collectively holds the same values. County residents work in the Town. Town residents work in the County. We all use the same sidewalks, same parking lots, and same roads. How many County residents do you know who come to town from, say, St. Andrews Street? Or Hawthorne Street? Or James Street? County residents come to

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town for banking, for their appointments, and to eat at restaurants. Town residents go to the County for school, groceries, beaches and more. We all want our community to be great and prosper.

We have said it before and will say it again: Antigonish is one community of people that live together with shared cultures, work together in diverse industries, and rely on each other for our social and economic well-being. The current political boundaries between the Town and County don't affect our sense of belonging to the greater Antigonish community.

As a community, we have progressed despite this artificial boundary, not because of it.

Times are becoming more challenging for everyone, and municipalities are no different. With increased demands on municipalities, we need to work together. Town and County Councils seem to get that. We're no longer seeing the Town-County division. Instead, we're seeing proactive collaboration.

A lot of time has been spent repairing our relationship. When we served as Mayor and Warden, there were no joint council meetings. Our councils were working independently. Now, they happen quarterly, allowing our councillors to be in the same room, hear the same presentation and information, and have open conversations. But it's still 17 elected officials in the same room, the same number as Halifax with a population of 420,000 (21 times larger than Antigonish Town and County combined).

Our recent success shouldn't go unappreciated. It's easy to debate why consolidation is important when both councils get along and are trying to make decisions together. We need to be taking politics out of it and thinking about what is best for our children and our community, today and in the future.

Today, the foresight of Town and County Councils has presented our community with a distinctive opportunity for generations to come.

It is an opportunity we are not likely to get again.

And it's why we feel consolidation is an obvious choice.

Herb Delorey

Municipality of the County of Antigonish Warden: 1994- 2012

Carl Chisholm

Town of Antigonish Mayor: 2008-2016

Adicia Vindz

1 of 6

(B)

Good afternoon. Thank you Mr Chairman for the opportunity to present arguments here today for suggested amendments to Bill No 407: The Antigonish Consolidation Act.

Three litigants, of whom I am one, described in court documents as "public interest litigants" argued in the Nova Scotia Supreme Court to have the October 20, 2022 motion of County Council quashed. The issue before the Courts was of such significance that it was described by the presiding Supreme Court Justice, as an issue "that had relatively few comparators in Nova Scotia, or nationwide". Furthermore Justice Gabriel stated the lawsuit qualified as "a serious justiciable issue" continuing "that although they were unsuccessful in their Application, their views were shared by a portion of the affected population, and apparently not a trivial portion, either."

On January 29, 2024 an appeal of the decision of Justice Gabriel's December 5, 2023 decision was filed with the Nova Scotia Court of Appeal. Citing several errors in law, the appellants are requesting the decision of December 5, 2024 be reversed. As we sit here today a date has not yet been set for the Appeal hearing but apparent court processes and timelines ensure that the outcome of this matter will be determined before the October 19, 2024 municipal election date.

I respectfully ask this committee that any decision of the passage of this Bill be delayed until the Court processes are complete.

Although often presented as an argument about consolidation, the opposing views on this matter have never been about consolidation. The opposition has always been about the process used to try and consolidate the communities and the lack of information shared.

Despite Council assertions that the engagement process was open and inclusive, the vast majority of the community disagree.

In September of 2021 both Councils voted to explore consolidation and chose to obtain community input through a series of "Engagement Sessions" held throughout the residential and business communities. In an October 11, 2022 CBC Mainstreet interview Mayor Boucher stated that the purpose of engagement sessions was to find out "if there was something we were missing". When asked how many people participated in these sessions, Mayor Boucher responded "a conservative estimate would be about 1200 people." When pressed further by the interviewer "What % of the voting population would that be?" the Mayor responded "well I don't know the exact voting population but all total it's about 20,000 so that would be about 6%". While admitting that this was not a very high number Mayor Boucher concluded with "I see that as people agreeing with what we said or not being engaged".

There is significant evidence to contradict her conclusion. It is clear when 900 people who attended citizen arranged community town hall meetings that people were engaged with the issue. Over 4200 signatures of residents on a petition opposed the

process and demanded a vote. This petition that will be tabled in the Legislature during this session. Also, not one but two surveys conducted by a nationally recognized polling firm indicated overwhelming support for a vote on this issue. The concluding remarks of Justice Gabriel "their views were shared by a portion of the affected population, and apparently not a trivial portion, either" also show that the Mayor erred in her assumption of non-engagement. This makes it clear that Mayor Boucher arrived at a completely unfounded and erroneous conclusion. The people of the communities were certainly engaged and not in agreement as stated.

Despite Mayor Boucher's conclusion being unfounded and erroneous, it became the foundational argument of Councils that the process used not only engaged the residents of our communities, but had the support of the people of the communities.

In a second CBC interview, on October 31, 2022, when asked about the process used by Councils to evaluate the proposed consolidation and the subsequent community objection to that process, Mayor Boucher stated "Yeah, so we did discuss this and both councils agreed on the process that was chosen. Of course, if I could go back and change things, I'm sure the Warden and I would do that".

There have been two votes by Council to request introduction of this special legislation. It is significant to note that the latest vote on January 20, 2024 was decided by only one vote by both councils. In the County Councils vote, a county councillor abstained due to an untested conflict of interest. That councillor would have voted against the motion, thus defeating the motion. t

There have also been two polls conducted by a nationally recognized polling and research company MainStreet Research that provide support that the majority of residents are very strongly opposed to any type of merger going ahead without a vote. The results of the March 2023 poll conducted demonstrated that 70.4% of residents wanted a vote, directly contradicting the position of the mayor and warden of Antigonish. In early February 2024 a second poll not only confirmed that demand but demonstrated a stronger demand for a vote with 75.8% demanding a vote before any decision on consolidation was reached. Additionally the 2024 poll indicated that only 22% of residents felt they had received sufficient information on the issue or that they felt heard by the Mayor and Warden. These numbers question the assertions of the Mayor and Warden as to the level of support and engagement for this process, assertions that were presented as the foundational support for moving forwards with the processor consolidation outside of the MGA.

You may hear from others presenting today, that residents responded emotionally, indeed referred to as "the drama that unfolded" by one former town employee speaking in support of the process. This testimonial, on the antigonish.ca website, the site used by the Consolidation Steering Committee to share information related to the topic at hand, goes on to say that the "decision (of consolidation) was always going to be highly emotional and controversial" further attempting to reflect the opposition to the process as opposition to consolidation. To further promote the discussion on consolidation,

OP-EDs were written by several councillors. These articles, including the joint opinion piece by a former mayor and warden, introduced to the House by Minister Lohr on the 2nd reading of the Bill, provided opinion but failed to provide any factual information on any studies or research that may have been done describing the potential risks and rewards of consolidation specific to Antigonish Town and County. None of these testimonials and Op-Ed's addressed the fundament objection of the people - PROCESS NOT CONSOLIDATION.

There is no doubt that at times emotions ran high. When voices are not heard, acknowledged for the truth of their messages and then twisted into a position of opposition of content rather than of process, emotions can run high. I would suggest that many communities in this province, indeed this country would like to have their residents as engaged in their community as the residents of Antigonish have demonstrated in their effort to be part of this decision.

Given that the residents of Antigonish have not felt heard, that they clearly stated in the 2024 survey that they have not received sufficient information, given that the *What We Heard Report*, the very engagement summary report commissioned by the Councils of both Town and County and paid for through funding received from the Department of Municipal Affairs and Housing, a report stating that "In general, we heard that there was an underlying lack of confidence in the overall process, the municipal leaders and the relationship between the Town and County", given the disparity between resident and Council reported support and engagement, **I respectfully ask** this committee to require a study and plebiscite before any merger of communities is considered.

It is never too late to change things. **I respectfully ask** this committee to listen again to those October 31, 2022 words of Mayor Boucher, "if I could go back and change things, I'm sure the Warden and I would do that." Do not accept that the engagement sessions attended by the 6% of the population described by Mayor Boucher provide sufficient evidence of support for the process.

Given all that I have shared , it is my ask that the government will reconsider and withdraw this legislation. Failing complete withdrawal, it is my ask that adoption of the proposed legislation be delayed until such time as the legal appeal is resolved.

In addition to my ask that if the legislation moves forward, it move forward with the addition of a study and plebiscite, I ask that you consider the following amendments to the legislation.

Bill No. 407 Antigonish Consolidation Act: Amendments

Section 6 (1) states a Transition Committee is established consisting of the Coordinator, the Mayor and Deputy Mayor of the Town and the Warden and Deputy Warden of the County.

As noted above in the *What We Heard Report*, the residents of Antigonish have an "underlying lack of confidence in the overall process, the municipal leaders and the relationship between the Town and County". With this lack of confidence and trust in present municipal leaders, **I respectfully ask** this committee to delay the designation of transition team members until after a municipal election is held to enable residents of Antigonish to elect Councils they have confidence in. With the support of the people, these newly elected councils can move forward with the transition to one consolidated municipality. An early election, with an extension of terms, would allow for the assignment of resident -supported persons on the transition team. This would provide residents with a voice in the transition to consolidation, a voice they have not felt was heard during the process.

If an early election is not forthcoming allowing for an elected transition team, if the design of the transition team continues as designated in Bill No. 407, **I respectfully ask** that persons on the transition team not be allowed to offer their names as candidates in the October 2024 Municipal Election. It is an absolute conflict of interest to have any individual involved in the design of a new governance structure, a structure they intend to campaign for a position in, a position such as the mayor. In a local radio interview, one individual who has been designated to serve on the transition committee has already announced that he will be offering his name for the position of Mayor.

Section 6 (3) states each municipal unit shall designate, by motion of council, an alternative member of council to attend meetings of the Transition Committee in place of a member of the Committee from that municipal unit who is unable to attend. With both Town and County Councils demonstrating a propensity to vote as a block on the consolidation issue, **I respectfully ask** this committee to include within the legislation that the members of Council previously identified as members of the Transition team not be permitted to participate in the nominations and election by vote of alternative members.

Section 7 (1) states the meetings of the Transition Committee must be held in accordance with the procedures required for a municipal council by the Municipal Government Act except as provided by this Act. Given that the MGA does not outline many procedures for meetings, limiting itself to stating regular meetings are open to the public, **I respectfully ask** this committee that the legislation state that the Transition Team is to publicly post all scheduled meetings, that such meetings be open to the public and that minutes of all meetings be recorded and posted in a timely manner.

Section 12 (1) Prior to April 26, 2024, the Coordinator shall apply to the Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board for a determination of, and the Board shall determine, the number of councillors and the boundaries of the polling districts in the Consolidated Municipality. The limitations of time should not restrict or remove the participation of residents in the NSUARB process of determination of municipal boundaries. **I respectfully ask** this committee to amend the legislation to include that the boundary recommendations be subject to the usual practice of public review and consultation.

With a heightened interest in the 2024 municipal election, the number and designation of boundaries has a profound effect on prospective councillors. To allow for a thoughtful consideration of candidacy, there is an immediacy to the designation of such boundaries. **I respectfully ask** this committee to designate a timely and immediate date for completion of UARB recommendations

Section 12 (2)

Before the Coordinator applies to the Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board pursuant to subsection (1), the Transition Committee may determine that a Mayor is to be elected at the first election for the Consolidated Municipality on October 19, 2024, notwithstanding the minimum time required by subsection 12(8) of the Municipal Government Act.

and

Section 12 (3) At the time of the application to the Board under subsection (1), the Coordinator shall advise whether the Transition Committee has decided that a Mayor is to be elected.

The original consolidation presentations to the public were a model for Regional Consolidation clearly requiring the position of an elected mayor. All engagement sessions spoke clearly to this being fact. Regionalization was thwarted by the financial implication of RCMP funding formulas. With the introduction of the fact that Regional Consolidation would change the existing RCMP Service contract from one of a 70-30% Municipal-Federal cost sharing to one of a 90-10% Municipal - Federal cost sharing, resulting in an additional cost of approximately \$1,000,000.00 to the Municipality with no change in service, a decision was made, outside of Council Chambers, that the model of regionalization would change to the present proposal whereby the Town of Antigonish will dissolve and on dissolution day, all former residents of the Town would become residents of the Municipality. With this announcement, it was repeatedly emphasized that all other parameters of the proposed Regionalization would remain the same, including the election of councillors by the ward system and the election of a future mayor by a vote of the people.

Returning to the previous argument that a blatant conflict of interest exists when a declared candidate for the mayoral position serves on the very transition team that will be vested with the responsibility of determining the method of election of said position, **I respectfully ask this Committee** to clearly state in the Act that the position of Mayor will be an elected position and not one to be determined by the Transition Committee.

In conclusion, I want to stress to this Committee that I am not opposed to consolidation. In the spring of 2022, shortly after the Engagement Sessions were initiated, in an interview with Aaron Beswick of The Halifax Herald, I was very clear that I have no position consolidation because there was very limited information available on the rewards and risks of such a change in governance structure. I stand by that position today.

I believe that any decision on consolidation can only be made after a thorough study of the risks and benefits are conducted. The potential ramifications of the decision to consolidate will impact generations to come. This should not and cannot be a decision of Councils alone. The voice of the people, my voice, needs to be heard either through a plebiscite or as a platform issue in the October 2024 municipal election.

Respectfully I ask again that Bill No.407: Antigonish Consolidation Act be delayed until the Court process has concluded, and failing that, that a study and a plebiscite ,alone or in conjunction with the 2024 Municipal election, be incorporated into the Act and that the provisions of the Act not be implemented until such time that such a study and plebiscite occur.

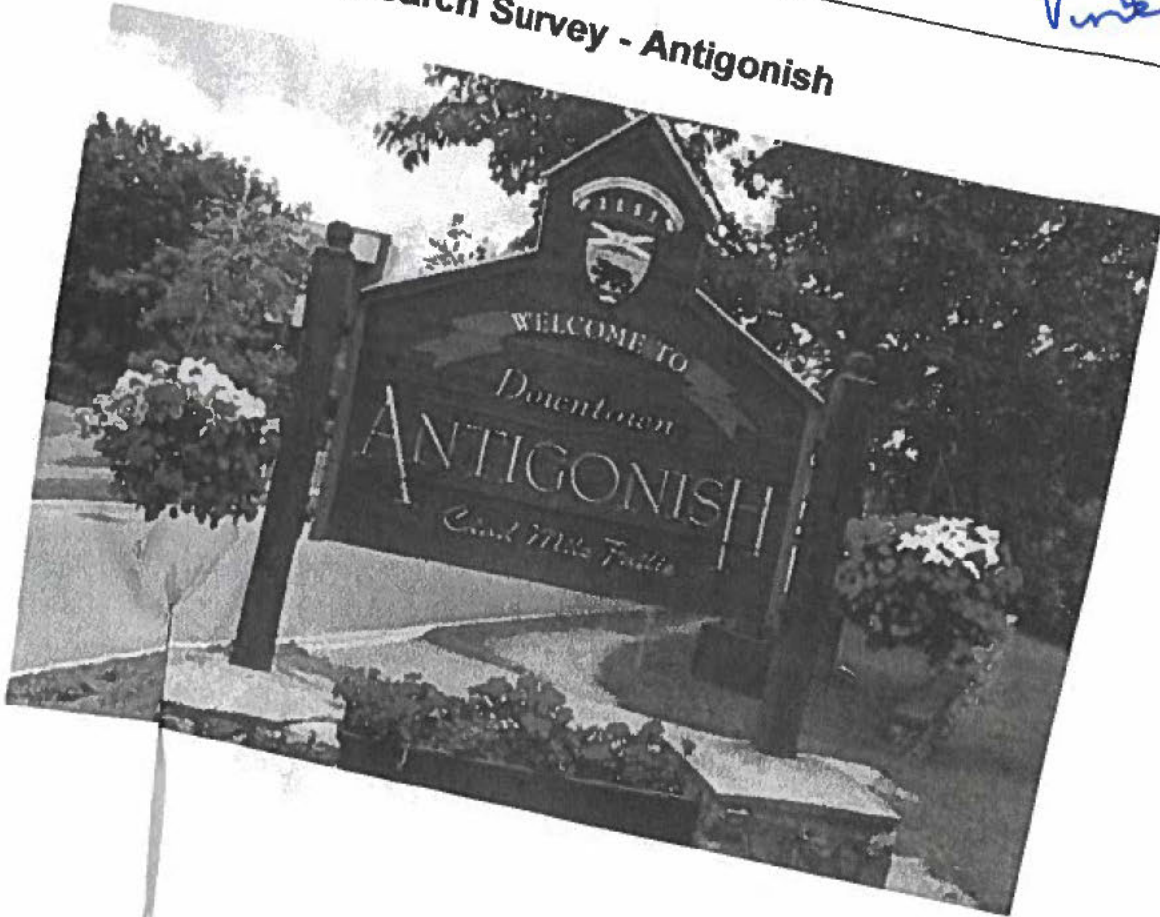
Respectfully
Terry Penny

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Lakevale, NS, B2G 2L2

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Mainstreet Research Survey - Antigonish





About Mainstreet

Founded in 2010, Mainstreet Research is recognized as one of Canada's top public opinion and market research firms. Since our founding, we have been providing actionable and data-driven insights to our clients to help them make their most important evidence-based strategic decisions.

Mainstreet has an impressive track record in accurately forecasting election results in Canada and the United States and has become a trusted source for comprehensive market research, analysis and advice. Our insights are found in major media outlets across the country.

Our diverse team has decades of experience in conducting both quantitative and qualitative research, ranging from broad national surveys, to focus groups, to membership surveys, and all points in between.

Mainstreet Research is a proud corporate member of CRIC and exceeds all Canadian and international standards for market research and public opinion research.

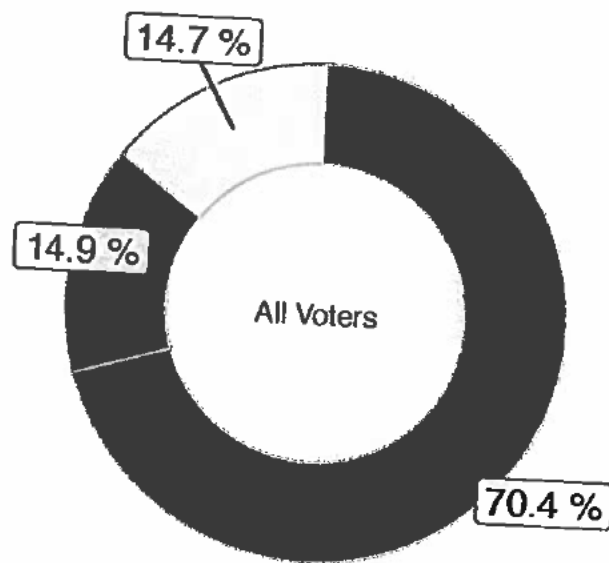
Methodology

The analysis in this report is based on results of a survey conducted from Sunday, March 12th to Monday, March 13th, 2023, among a sample of 344 adults, 18 years of age or older, living in Antigonish. The survey was conducted using automated telephone interviews (Smart IVR). Respondents were interviewed on landlines and cellular phones. The survey is intended to represent the population in Antigonish by weighing by gender, age and educational attainment from the 2021 census.

The margin of error for the poll is +/- 5.3% at the 95% confidence level. Margins of error are higher in each subsample.

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Should the residents of the Town and County of Antigonish be given a vote on consolidation before a merger is considered? (all voters, Antigonish)



Response

■	Yes	■	No
■	Don't know		

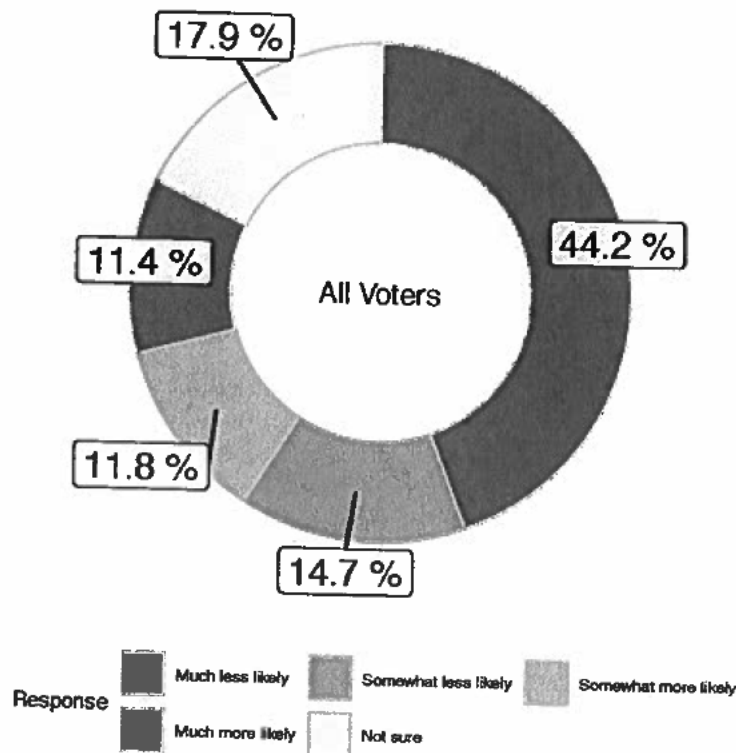
broken out by age, gender

	Total	Gender			Age		
		Male	Female	Non-Binary	18-49	50-64	65+
Yes	70.4%	71.3%	69.3%	78.9%	58%	78.1%	78.1%
No	14.9%	13%	17%	0%	20.1%	11.1%	12.1%
Don't know	14.7%	15.7%	13.7%	21.1%	21.9%	10.8%	9.8%
Unweighted Frequency	344	130	195	19	52	100	192
Weighted Frequency	344	161	177	6	132	100	112

broken out by education, income

	Total	Education			Region		
		HS or less	College/Trade School	University	Town	County	Fringe
Yes	70.4%	80.6%	70.5%	57.4%	62.7%	74.4%	71.1%
No	14.9%	10.2%	12.5%	23.6%	14.3%	14.8%	17.1%
Don't know	14.7%	9.3%	17%	19%	23.1%	10.8%	11.8%
Unweighted Frequency	344	80	134	130	102	214	28
Weighted Frequency	344	126	118	100	108	200	36

How likely would you be to vote for your MLA, or the Premier, in the next Provincial election if a consolidation took place without a public vote? (all voters, Antigonish)



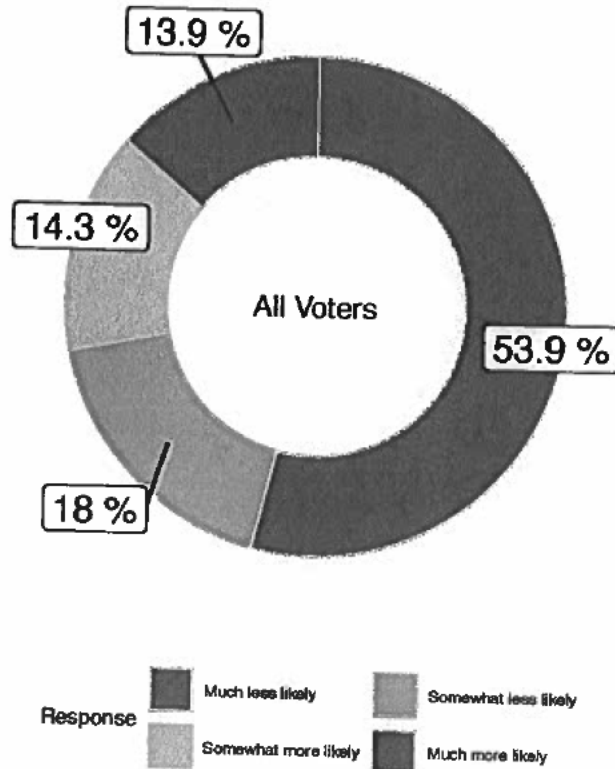
broken out by age, gender

	Total	Gender			Age		
		Male	Female	Non-Binary	18-49	50-64	65+
Much less likely	44.2%	49.2%	39.1%	63.2%	39%	46.3%	48.5%
Somewhat less likely	14.7%	14.4%	15.6%	0%	13.2%	15.5%	15.8%
Somewhat more likely	11.8%	11.2%	12.5%	5.3%	18%	10.9%	5.1%
Much more likely	11.4%	9.1%	13.8%	0%	13%	11.1%	9.8%
Not sure	17.9%	16.1%	19.1%	31.6%	16.7%	16.2%	20.8%
Unweighted Frequency	344	130	195	19	52	100	192
Weighted Frequency	344	161	177	6	132	100	112

broken out by education, income

	Total	Education			Region		
		HS or less	College/Trade School	University	Town	County	Fringe
Much less likely	44.2%	49.3%	43.2%	39.1%	31%	51.6%	42.6%
Somewhat less likely	14.7%	16.9%	14.6%	12.1%	13%	17.9%	2.3%
Somewhat more likely	11.8%	7.7%	18.3%	9.2%	25.1%	5.4%	7.2%
Much more likely	11.4%	10.3%	8.9%	15.6%	12.5%	8.4%	24.5%
Not sure	17.9%	15.7%	15.1%	24%	18.4%	16.7%	23.3%
Unweighted Frequency	344	80	134	130	102	214	28
Weighted Frequency	344	126	118	100	108	200	36

How likely would you be to vote for your MLA, or the Premier, in the next Provincial election if a consolidation took place without a public vote? (all voters, note sure removed Antigonish)





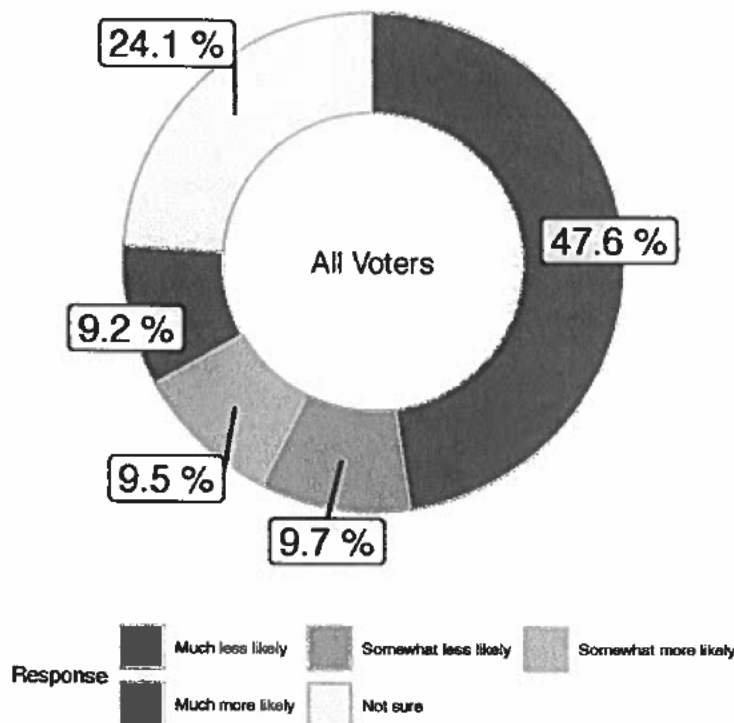
broken out by age, gender

	Total	Gender			Age		
		Male	Female	Non-Binary	18-49	50-64	65+
Much less likely	53.9%	58.6%	48.3%	92.3%	46.9%	55.2%	61.2%
Somewhat less likely	18%	17.1%	19.2%	0%	15.9%	18.5%	20%
Somewhat more likely	14.3%	13.3%	15.4%	7.7%	21.7%	13%	6.5%
Much more likely	13.9%	10.9%	17%	0%	15.6%	13.2%	12.4%
Unweighted Frequency	276	106	157	13	43	81	152
Weighted Frequency	276	135	143	4	110	84	89

broken out by education, income

	Total	Education			Region		
		HS or less	College/Trade School	University	Town	County	Fringe
Much less likely	53.9%	58.5%	50.8%	51.4%	38%	62%	55.6%
Somewhat less likely	18%	20.1%	17.2%	16%	15.9%	21.5%	3%
Somewhat more likely	14.3%	9.2%	21.5%	12%	30.8%	6.4%	9.4%
Much more likely	13.9%	12.3%	10.5%	20.5%	15.3%	10.1%	32%
Unweighted Frequency	276	66	108	102	85	170	21
Weighted Frequency	276	106	100	76	88	167	27

How likely are you to vote for the Mayor, Warden and councillors who voted to push the Provincial Government to pass legislation to dissolve the Town and consolidate it with the County of Antigonish? (all voters, Antigonish)



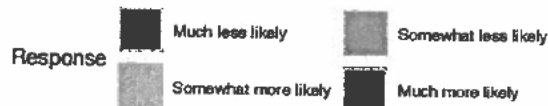
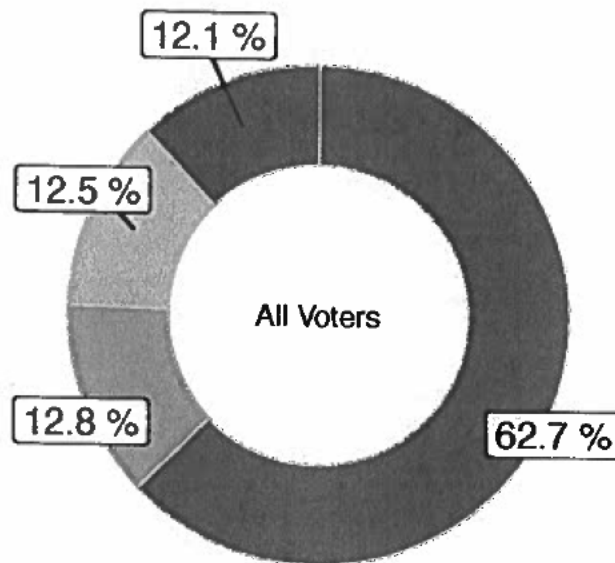
broken out by age, gender

	Total	Gender			Age		
		Male	Female	Non-Binary	18-49	50-64	65+
Much less likely	47.6%	48.4%	46.6%	57.9%	31.7%	53.8%	60.8%
Somewhat less likely	9.7%	11.1%	8.4%	10.5%	15.5%	1.6%	10.1%
Somewhat more likely	9.5%	7%	11.9%	5.3%	11.2%	12.6%	4.7%
Much more likely	9.2%	7.9%	10.6%	0%	4.6%	12.9%	11.1%
Not sure	24.1%	25.7%	22.5%	26.3%	37%	19.1%	13.3%
Unweighted Frequency	344	130	195	19	52	100	192
Weighted Frequency	344	161	177	6	132	100	112

broken out by education, income

	Total	Education			Region		
		HS or less	College/Trade School	University	Town	County	Fringe
Much less likely	47.6%	44.5%	49.7%	49.1%	35.2%	54.8%	44.3%
Somewhat less likely	9.7%	9.3%	11.8%	7.7%	15.2%	8.5%	0%
Somewhat more likely	9.5%	12.2%	6.9%	9.1%	15.2%	5.9%	12.2%
Much more likely	9.2%	7.3%	7.5%	13.4%	13.2%	8.6%	0%
Not sure	24.1%	26.7%	24.1%	20.7%	21.2%	22.2%	43.5%
Unweighted Frequency	344	80	134	130	102	214	28
Weighted Frequency	344	126	118	100	108	200	36

How likely are you to vote for the Mayor, Warden and councillors who voted to push the Provincial Government to pass legislation to dissolve the Town and consolidate it with the County of Antigonish? (all voters, not sure removed Antigonish)



broken out by age, gender

	Total	Gender			Age		
		Male	Female	Non-Binary	18-49	50-64	65+
Much less likely	62.7%	65.1%	60.1%	78.6%	50.3%	66.5%	70.1%
Somewhat less likely	12.8%	14.9%	10.8%	14.3%	24.6%	2%	11.7%
Somewhat more likely	12.5%	9.4%	15.4%	7.1%	17.7%	15.6%	5.4%
Much more likely	12.1%	10.6%	13.7%	0%	7.4%	16%	12.8%
Unweighted Frequency	281	106	161	14	35	81	165
Weighted Frequency	281	120	137	4	83	81	97

broken out by education, income

	Total	Education			Region		
		HS or less	College/Trade School	University	Town	County	Fringe
Much less likely	62.7%	60.6%	65.4%	61.9%	44.7%	70.4%	78.3%
Somewhat less likely	12.8%	12.7%	15.6%	9.7%	19.3%	10.9%	0%
Somewhat more likely	12.5%	16.7%	9.1%	11.4%	19.3%	7.6%	21.7%
Much more likely	12.1%	10%	9.9%	16.9%	16.8%	11%	0%
Unweighted Frequency	281	65	108	108	83	179	19
Weighted Frequency	281	93	89	79	85	156	20