



COURT OF APPEAL USING WEBCASTING TO EXPAND PUBLIC ACCESS DURING PANDEMIC

Thursday, March 18, 2021

The Nova Scotia Court of Appeal will increase its use of webcasting this spring as a way to safely expand public access to appeal proceedings during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Physical access to courthouses in Nova Scotia continues to be limited to those who work in the building, who are directly involved in a court proceeding, or who have an appointment and have passed the mandatory health screening questions. This measure follows public health directives regarding physical distancing but has created challenges when it comes to maintaining the open courts principle.

With that in mind, the Justices of the Court of Appeal have agreed to livestream more appeal hearings in the March/April and May/June terms, where it is appropriate to do so. The presiding Panels will have discretion on what matters will be webcast. Matters where a publication ban is in effect will not be considered.

“Having open courts is a hallmark of our justice system,” said The Hon. Michael Wood, Chief Justice of the Nova Scotia Court of Appeal. “It is important that the public be able to see court proceedings and have confidence that matters are not being decided behind closed doors. Appeal hearings lend themselves well to the livestreaming format and we hope to be able to expand this option as more resources and technology become available.”

The Nova Scotia Court of Appeal was the first in Canada to webcast its proceedings, starting in 2008. Since then, the Court has livestreamed dozens of appeal hearings and the initiative has expanded to include certain types of proceedings in the Supreme Court of Nova Scotia.

The first matter that will be broadcast this term is scheduled to begin at 10 a.m. AST on Tuesday, March 23, 2021:

CA 499116 – Heritage Trust of Nova Scotia v. AMK Barrett Investments Inc.
(formerly Brunswick Street Developments Ltd.), Halifax Regional Municipality,
Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board, Attorney General of Nova Scotia, Ezra
Edelstein, and Joanne MacRae

Members of the public can watch the proceedings live on the Courts of Nova Scotia website at https://www.courts.ns.ca/Webcasts/webcasts_live.htm. Details of upcoming webcasts from the Court of Appeal will be posted on the same page.

As per the Nova Scotia Courts' [copyright policy](#), webcasts of court proceedings may not be broadcast or re-broadcast by embedding them in another website or by any other means. However, members of the media are permitted to re-broadcast portions of the webcasts (audio and video) as part of conventional news coverage. Hyperlinks to the live webcast page and the page of archived videos on the Courts of Nova Scotia website are permitted.

-30-

Media Contact:

Jennifer Stairs
Nova Scotia Judiciary
Communications Director
902-221-5257
stairsjl@courts.ns.ca