

Communications to Date:

The Municipality continues to be diligent in maintaining transparent and timely communication to the public throughout the pandemic. A number of news items, and social media posts have been distributed to residents daily regarding operational decisions, which will be discussed further under the Departmental Responses portion of this report.

Staff continue to spread awareness on the importance of following COVID-19 protocol, advice from the Grey Bruce Health Unit, and the Provincial Government through social media and the [Municipality's COVID-19 Updates webpage](#). Additional visual/graphic communications have been launched on the Municipality's social media accounts on a regular basis, and will continue over the Christmas holidays.

On November 17, 2020, a new [Information Bulletin](#) was issued reminding residents to follow Grey Bruce Health Unit recommendations, and providing information about Council and Committee/Local Board Meetings, and Municipal Facilities.

On November 20, 2020 a new COVID-19 Update video from Mayor Peabody was filmed regarding the Provincial Government's COVID-19 Response Framework Levels, and Grey Bruce's move to the Yellow (Protect) Level. The video was viewed a total of 2,000 times on Facebook, and 45 times on YouTube.

Staff continue to broadcast twenty-one (21) Council, Court of Revision, and Committee of Adjustment Meetings through Zoom Video Conferencing and livestreamed the meetings to YouTube. The full recordings of the Council, Court of Revision, and Committee of Adjustment Meetings held in April, May, June, and July, August, September, October, and November are all available on YouTube and have received a combined total of 2,024 views - Each meeting averages approximately 100 views.

Departmental Responses:

Administration:

Sonya Watson, Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) continues to maintain communication with Mayor Peabody, Bruce County CAO's, the Grey Bruce Health Unit, South Bruce Grey Health Center, South Bruce O.P.P., and the County of Bruce on regular basis.

Enforcement matters continue to be dealt with by the Municipality's By-Law Enforcement Officer and Fire Prevention Officer. Staff have investigated additional ways to use the By-Law Enforcement Officer to monitor and encourage compliance with COVID-19 protocol and restrictions.

Ms. Watson continues to meet regularly with Department Heads and staff on remaining re-opening protocols and additional measures that need to be taken to ensure safety. The CAO further met with Department Heads to review the COVID-19 Response Framework, and develop staffing plans for each level based on public health measures. Department Heads are planning ahead for remote working arrangements to be re-instated in later stages of the response framework if required.

Staff continue to work at the Municipal Office and follow health and safety measures in place to protect staff and ensure residents are adhering to health and safety measures.

Brockton Child Care Centre:

The Brockton Child Care Centre continues to care for children, and monitor children's symptoms in compliance with direction from the Grey Bruce Health Unit and Ministry of Education, especially as cold and flu season has arrived.

Two additional classrooms opened in late November, and were officially blessed by the Bruce Grey Catholic District School Board on December 4, 2020. The Centre has hired additional staff and are managing the increased number of children due to the expansion.

Since cohorts cannot mix and the playground area has also been expanded, snow fencing will be used to separate the playground to ensure safety of the children and staff in the cohorts.

Building:

The Building Department continues to process building permits and conduct inspections following established protocols. Property owners who are issued building permits are reminded of their responsibility to ensure that all construction work must be done in compliance with Provincial Orders, COVID-19 protocols and guidelines. Property owners have been respectful in maintaining physical distance, or leaving the site for inspections by the Building Department.

Residents continue to submit or apply for building permits via email to the Chief Building Official and Building Inspector. Building permit applications and general inquiries continue to be accepted at the Municipal Office.

Clerk's:

The Clerk's department continues to process and distribute all communication from the Municipality, and minute all MCEG meetings. All COVID-19 pandemic Reports to Council have been distributed on [Municipality's COVID-19 Updates webpage](#) to keep the public informed.

As mentioned previously, communications have been increased on social media to remind residents through the use of visual graphics to follow COVID-19 protocol, especially since the increased number of COVID-19 cases in Grey and Bruce. Staff have prepared communications to be distributed over the Christmas break as well.

On November 24, 2020, Council approved continuing to broadcast Council meetings using Zoom Video Conferencing until April 2021 to further discuss the matter during 2021 Budget Deliberations.

Staff continue to administer various Department Head meetings and Committee/Local Board Meetings through Zoom. Committee and/or Local Board Meetings will also continue electronically through Zoom until a decision is made during 2021 Budget Deliberations. Alternate arrangements will be considered if the majority of members have difficulty assessing the technology. In that case, the Clerk's Department arranges an in-person meeting in a location that allows for physical distancing. All Committee/Local Board Meetings are posted to the Municipal website's Community Calendar to allow public viewing and ensure accountability and transparency.

Marriage licensing, lottery licensing and commissioning services continue to be offered by appointment. The Clerk's Department continue to receive inquiries for marriage licenses and officiant bookings and ensure couples and officiants follow Provincial guidelines.

The contract By-Law Enforcement Officer continues to respond to enforcement calls, and has received an increased volume of calls lately. Staff have further discussed alternate ways for the By-Law Enforcement Officer to remind residents of COVID-19 protocol, including the 3 W's: Wash your hands, Wear your face covering, and Watch your distance.

Economic Development:

Staff continue to support and advocate for Brockton businesses and support their inquiries on a regular basis, and work with the Walkerton BIA to collaborate on local initiatives.

Staff continue to advertise grant and loan opportunities to businesses, including new available programs and support for business tenants. The Community Development Coordinator continues to support individual businesses with inquiries related to COVID regularly.

Finance:

Staff have reviewed all departments capital projects, budgetary impacts, track financial implications and postponed certain projects to 2021 as a result of COVID-19.

Staff are finalizing year-end procedures, and the 2021 Municipal Budget. The 2021 Budget Meetings have been finalized for Tuesday, January 19, 2021 at 9:00 a.m., Wednesday, January 20, 2021 at 9:00 a.m. and Tuesday, February 9, 2021 at 1:00 p.m. The locations of the meetings have not yet been determined.

The Clerk's and Finance Department launched a [Budget Consultation 2021 Project](#) on the Municipality's community engagement website, [Build Your Brockton](#). The project features a Budget Survey, Q&A, and Ideas tool to allow the public to participate and share their opinions on the municipal budget. The Budget Meetings are also listed, as well as additional information on the budget process, where Brockton tax dollars are spent, and a video on how assessments are calculated. Once the budget document has been finalized, it will also be added to the project page.

Residents continue to pay bills through the Municipal Office, Pre-Authorized Payment Withdrawals, or Online/Telephone Banking.

Fire:

Firefighters continue to complete a COVID-19 Screening Survey before entering the Fire Halls or responding to calls. Firefighters work physically distanced and use face coverings when in the Fire Hall, and when responding to emergencies. The Fire Hall is not being rented out at this time, and is only used by employees and for training purposes.

Health and Safety investigations related to the Municipal HVAC systems, disinfectants used and PPE supplies are ongoing for the organization as a whole.

Human Resources:

Staff continue to review and revise pandemic policies to ensure their consistency with the changing pandemic. Staff also continue to assist employees in various matters related to COVID-19, and maintain regular communications in a timely manner with a focus on employee wellness. The Human Resources Department continues to be very busy with recruitment efforts. A focus on employee wellness and resiliency programs will occur in early January to support staff through the next half of the pandemic.

Operations:

Staff have begun snow removal services, and advertised winter/holiday hours at the Landfill Sites on the municipal website. Additional signage has been placed to remind residents to wear face coverings and physically distance when accessing the Landfill Sites to ensure everyone's health and safety.

Water/Wastewater Services continue as normal, and additional signage has been installed at the Walkerton Pollution Control Plant to assist with COVID-19 protocols.

Staff have prepared for winter burials at Municipally-owned cemeteries, as noted in the Winter Burials Report that was presented to Council on November 24, 2020.

Staff are finalizing capital projects and road constructions. Road closures and service disruptions continue to be communicated to the public through the municipal website, social media, Brockton Buzz Newsletter, and Council Agendas.

Parks and Recreation:

Staff continue to work with ice user groups to disinfect the facility, and uphold the safety of staff and residents. Staff continue to consult with Walkerton Minor Hockey regarding hockey games and ensure the health and safety of all involved, as well as monitoring the number of COVID-19 cases and Response Framework Levels when determining hockey games and the centres played.

Recreation programming has not yet resumed; however, staff are planning to potentially offer public skating and programming closer to Christmas. Although, staff are monitoring the number of COVID-19 cases and ensure compliance with advice from the Grey Bruce Health Unit and COVID-19 Response Framework Levels prior to offering programming.

Staff continue to advocate for compliance of Provincial regulations to ensure the safety of public and staff, including consultation and positive communication with user groups and organizations.

Staff winterized public washrooms within Walkerton's parks and trails which are now closed for the season.

Staff continue to consult with volunteers and staff at the Cargill, Elmwood, and Bradley Community Centres to finalize their reopening plans, which were approved by the Grey Bruce Health Unit. At this time, the three Community Centres have not reopened.

Internal Communications:

Regular internal communications remain a priority to ensure all staff are aware of changes as they occur. The health and safety of staff is a priority for the Municipality. Staff have been reminded about the importance of maintaining a healthy work-life balance throughout the stressors of the pandemic, and have been encouraged to utilize resources available on the Employee Family Assistance Program and take holidays as booked to ensure employee well-being.

The CAO has conducted several Zoom meetings with all staff providing updates on the Municipal response to the pandemic, answer inquiries, relay information personally, and thank staff for their continued work in serving the community during this difficult time.

The CAO and Clerk provide an update to all staff through Zoom following Council Meetings to keep everyone informed on decisions passed. Staff have also resumed Health and Safety tailgate meetings through Zoom meetings. Brockton staff have been attentive, cooperative and adapted well throughout this year but it has affected all staff in some manner.

Staff are requesting Council's ratification of the operational decisions that have been established in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Sustainability Checklist:

What aspect of the Brockton Sustainable Strategic Plan does the content/recommendations in this report help advance?

- Do the recommendations help move the Municipality closer to its Vision? Yes
- Do the recommendations contribute to achieving Cultural Vibrancy? Yes
- Do the recommendations contribute to achieving Economic Prosperity? Yes
- Do the recommendations contribute to Environmental Integrity? Yes
- Do the recommendations contribute to the Social Equity? Yes

Financial Impacts/Source of Funding:

- Do the recommendations represent a sound financial investment from a sustainability perspective? Yes

Staff continue to review the financial implications regarding the continued impact COVID-19 has had on the Municipality. Several COVID-19 financial impact reports have been presented to Council in the past few months, and have all been shared on the [Municipality's COVID-19 Updates webpage](#).

Reviewed By:



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Respectfully Submitted by:

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Reviewed By:

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