

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.

A total of twelve (12) Information Bulletins have been distributed (the [most recent](#) issued June 25th), three (3) Press Releases (the [most recent](#) issued July 3rd), one (1) [Order prohibiting garage sales](#) (issued on May 8th and [rescinded on May 27th](#));, a [Tax/Utility Bill FAQ](#), a [Community Information Sheet](#), Special [COVID-19 Brockton Buzz](#) Issue, and several Brockton Business Newsletters.

Mayor Chris Peabody continues to provide regular COVID-19 Video Updates to the public – a total of thirteen (13) videos have been filmed to date. All of the videos are displayed on the [municipal website](#), and social media accounts, including the Municipality's [YouTube Channel](#). Totalled together the engagement of all 13 videos is 1,306 views on YouTube and 20,615 views on Facebook.

Staff have also broadcasted seven (7) Council Meetings through Zoom Video Conferencing and livestreamed the meeting to [YouTube](#). The full recordings of the April 7th, April 28th, May 12th, and May 26th, June 9th, June 16th, and June 23rd Council Meetings are all available on YouTube and have received a combined total of 798 views - Each meeting averages approximately 100 views.

Staff received numerous submissions to the Canada Day Community Video which was broadcast by Wightman Telecom on July 1, 2020. The virtual Canada Day celebrations received positive feedback, and the [Community Video](#) received a total of 1,724 views on Wightman's YouTube Channel.

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 O.P.P., and the County of Bruce on a weekly or more frequent basis. Ms. Watson continues to review Business Continuity Plans with Department Heads and ensure staffing levels and back up response.

Enforcement matters continue to be dealt with by the Municipality's By-Law Enforcement Officer and Fire Prevention Officer.

Ms. Watson continues to meet regularly with Department Heads and staff continue to establish opportunities to connect and increase staff morale during this time of uncertainty while ensuring key projects move forward.

The Recovery Sub-Committee continues to meet weekly to prepare and plan for the remaining facilities reopening. The Municipal Office remains closed to the public until physical barriers are in place which should be completed by the end of July. All essential services continue to be offered with the rotating staff shifts leaving all services attended to in a safe manner.

All staff have returned to the Municipal Office for their scheduled rotating shift. The ability to social distance, travel paths and safety protocols have been assessed with precautions being implemented to allow further staff to re-enter the office space in the coming weeks once physical barriers are in place. Department Heads continue to discuss the reopening plan for the Municipal Office with the Recovery Sub-Committee. The CAO is also consulting with Bruce and Grey Municipalities to consistency in reopening plans amongst our neighbours. Residents are currently being served by appointments as necessary for services with precaution.

Implementation of physical barriers has begun at the Municipal Office to accommodate COVID-19 precautions to ensure the safety of both staff and the public at the front counter. Face coverings have also been ordered and distributed to staff who require the PPE. On July 7, 2020 the Grey Bruce Health Unit gave their intent to order the mandatory wearing of face coverings in enclosed public spaces. Staff previously consulted with the Health Unit on the appropriateness of face coverings and will continue to follow direction from the Grey Bruce Health Unit in relation to the face mask order regarding the best practices for protection against the virus.

Brockton Child Care Centre:

The Provincial government allowed reopening of Child Care programs as of June 12, 2020. The Brockton Child Care Centre has re-opened as of July 6, 2020. Staff brought forward Report Number BCCC2020-04 and BCCC2020-05 on June 23rd discussing the reopening plan. A survey was distributed to both Child Care Centre and School-Age Program parents to gather their feedback and needs for child care. Results of the survey were discussed in Report Number BCCC2020-05.

Strict protocols from the Grey-Bruce Health Unit and the Ministry of Education will be followed. All the full-time staff were recalled along with the required part-time staff as of June 29th. Staff were trained on the use of PPE, new protocols, and assisted in preparing the Centre for reopening the week of June 29th to July 3rd. Staff are also ensuring that cohorts do not intermix.

The Child Care Centre Supervisor has instructed parents on the new drop-off procedure, and what items should be brought to the Centre or left at home. Staff continue to meet with the Grey Bruce Health Unit and County of Bruce to discuss protocols. Staff are also working with additional families to service child care needs while maintaining adherence with Provincial requirements.

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.

Clerk's:

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

As previously noted, the Clerk's Department continues to broadcast the electronic Council Meetings, and are developing a plan for future broadcasting of Council Meetings after the pandemic has concluded. Clerk's staff continue to administer various meetings for Department Heads and organize and monitor all Committees or Local Boards Meetings through Zoom. This requires a member of the Clerk's Department to attend all

committee meetings using the Zoom platform. Committee/Local Board Meetings are posted to the Municipal website's Community Calendar to allow public viewing and ensure accountability and transparency. The Clerk's Department are also developing a plan for Committee/Local Board Meetings following the pandemic. On July 8, 2020 staff received a letter from the Ministry of Municipal Affairs with updated information regarding the *COVID-19 Economic Recovery Act, 2020*. The letter has been included on the July 14th Council Agenda as Information. The letter notes that "This bill includes proposals that will enable municipal councils and local boards to meet electronically on a permanent basis and allow municipal councils to decide if they wish to have proxy voting for their members." Staff will continue to keep Council and Committees/Local Boards informed of the recovery plan. Staff will bring forward a report about broadcasting Council meetings and considerations for Committee meetings after the rules relating to electronic participation have been declared into force by the Province.

The Clerk's Department continues to receive numerous inquiries for marriage licenses and officiant bookings. With the gathering restrictions being extended to ten (10) people, and additional people being allowed to attend weddings, couples and Officiants have been reminded to follow provincial guidelines. A total of 46 marriage licenses have been issued to date (42 of those licenses were issued from March 13 to July 10, 2020 during COVID-19). As a comparison, in 2019, a total of 41 licenses were issued from January to July 10 (38 of those licenses were issued from March 13 to July 10, 2019). Marriage licensing, lottery licensing and commissioning services are available by appointment.

Staff received and approved applications for vendor permits, and reminded vendors of physical distancing and safety measures prior to them opening their services. Vendors had developed a process prior to bringing in their application, which assists in health and safety and allows a great service for residents to buy local produce.

The contract By-Law Enforcement Officer continues to respond to enforcement calls, and has been fully trained on their role. They are also working in several other municipalities as part of our shared services agreement.

Economic Development:

Staff continue to support and advocate for Brockton businesses. Business Recovery Toolkits have been distributed to the business community which includes We're Open posters, order forms for PPE, physical distancing decals, and an assistance pamphlet which includes municipal and grant information. Many grants, including the County of Bruce's business grants, and Spruce the Bruce grants have been applied for. The work in relation to handing out this information to each business can be related to a Business Retention initiative and staff have communicated first hand with a significant portion of the Brockton Business Community understanding their current needs and situation.

On July 3, 2020 the Durham Street Park in Walkerton was opened between Walker's Landing and ReMax for the convenience of shoppers and local businesses, particularly restaurants, dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic. The park is open from 9:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. daily, with physical distancing protocols in place. It offers a hand-washing station, portable toilet, and six picnic tables, appropriately distanced from each other. One table is wheelchair accessible. A [Media Release](#) was distributed on July 3rd, and an [introductory video](#)

featuring Mayor Peabody and Walkerton BIA Board President was released. The announcement received positive feedback from residents and businesses and the video has received 3,400 views on Facebook.

On June 23, 2020 Council approved bringing a By-Law forward to adopt the Sidewalk Patio Requirements and Application Process to assist businesses with the pandemic. Report Number CAO2020-12 provides further information on the project, and a new [Sidewalk Patio Application webpage](#) has been created at [Brockton.ca/SidewalkPatio](#) to assist businesses with the application process.

The Historic Village of Cargill and Margaret's Mercantile have both opened for the summer and are following physical distancing requirements and gathering restrictions.

Staff continue to release [Brockton Business Newsletters](#) focused on the COVID-19 pandemic to ease the burden on businesses, and provide support. The Community Development Coordinator continues to correspond with business owners on a regular basis regarding Provincial, County and local funding opportunities and assisting as required.

The CAO continues to participate on the Bruce County Economic Task Force working with the Community Development Coordinator to ensure ideas supporting Brockton Businesses are relayed. New programs are being released by the County and readily communicated by Municipal staff. Staff continue to investigate additional ideas and work with the Walkerton BIA to collaborate on local initiatives.

Finance:

Staff continue to review all department's capital projects, identify budgetary impacts, track financial implications and determine if projects should be postponed until 2021 both as a result of COVID-19. Staff continue to discuss recovery planning with the sub-committee.

Fire:

As of July 9, 2020 an Open Air Burn Ban has been issued until further notice due to the due to the extremely dry weather conditions, with the exception of small, contained and supervised recreational fires used for warmth or cooking that comply with the Municipality's Open Air Burn By-Law 2017-034.

The Fire Chief and Fire Prevention Officer/Health and Safety Coordinator continue to lead the Recovery Sub-Committee.

Firefighters continue to have virtual meetings, training, and conference calls through Zoom. Both Walkerton and Elmwood Fire Stations have begun training in small cohorts of less than five (5) people to resume truck checks and training of new recruits during the summer.

There have been an increase in calls for service for the Fire Department since the Provincial reopening process began.

Human Resources:

Staff continue to review and revise pandemic policies to ensure their consistency with the changing pandemic. Staff also continues to assist employees in various matters related to COVID-19, and maintain regular communications in a timely manner with a focus on employee wellness.

Staff assisted the Brockton Child Care Centre Supervisor in recalling staff at the Brockton Child Care Centre for the reopening and all summer students upon parks re-opening.

Operations:

A number of waste management updates were provided in the [June Brockton Buzz Newsletter](#) and [July Brockton Buzz Newsletter](#) to inform the public on COVID-19 updates regarding the Walkerton Recycling Depot, landfills, bag tags, and clothing donations.

Operations at the Brant Landfill, Walkerton Cemetery, and Water/Wastewater Services continue as normal.

The Greenock Landfill will be reopened as of Saturday, August 1, 2020 with regular hours of 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Saturdays. Staff appreciate the public's continued cooperation as the Greenock Landfill is prepared for this reopening. Residents are still encouraged to use curbside pickup whenever possible.

A number of road construction projects have begun involving both municipal and County staff. Road closures and service disruptions continue to be communicated to the public through the municipal website, and social media. Road closures were also included in the July Brockton Buzz Newsletter, and have been featured on several Council Agendas to ensure the public is notified of these disruptions.

Public Works staff continue to work on projects, vehicle maintenance, and implement capital projects.

Parks and Recreation:

Staff were busy organizing the virtual Canada Day Celebration in Brockton. The virtual celebrations received positive feedback as previously mentioned.

Staff also assisted the Economic Development Department in preparing the grounds of the Durham Street Park in Walkerton for its opening on July 3, 2020.

Reservations continue to fill up at Lobies Campground, and many residents are accessing the Walkerton Kinsmen Splash Pad with the recent warm weather.

The cancellation of Municipal Events and Bookings was extended to July 17, 2020. As the situation surrounding the pandemic and the Provincial reopening process evolves, the need to re-evaluate cancellations beyond July 17th may be required.

Staff have met with the volunteers and staff at the Cargill, Elmwood and Bradley Community Centres to develop a reopening plan for all community centre facilities. Staff will continue to assist and develop a robust plan to ensure the safety of all accessing the facilities, and ensure the reopening plan complies with any changes to the Provincial gathering restrictions.

Staff are starting to work with hockey organizations and conducting research related to hockey protocols for consideration and review.

On June 16, 2020 Council authorized the unfortunate cancellation of the Day Camp Program. Staff continue to look at opportunities to offer local youth in the community.

Staff continue to inspect municipal parks, properties, and facilities on a regular basis. Residents with concerns of damage, vandalism, or mischief occurring in Brockton's recreational facilities or amenities are still

encouraged to notify the Parks and Recreation Department, or the O.P.P. if they witness damage, vandalism, or mischief while occurring.

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.

Staff 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.

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:



Trish Serratore, Chief Financial Officer

Respectfully Submitted by:

Sarah Johnson

Sarah Johnson, Jr. Deputy Clerk

Reviewed By:

Sonya Watson

Sonya Watson, Chief Administrative Officer