

Report to Council

Report Title:	COVID-19 Municipal Response – May 26, 2020 Update		
Prepared By:	Sarah Johnson, Jr. Deputy Clerk and Fiona Hamilton, Clerk		
Department:	Clerk's		
Date:	May 26, 2020		
Report Number:	CLK2020-17	File Number:	C11CL, P03
Attachments:	Information Bulletin – May 21, 2020		

Recommendation:

That the Council of the Municipality of Brockton hereby receives Report Number CLK2020-17 – COVID-19 Municipal Response – May 26, 2020 Update, prepared by Sarah Johnson, Jr. Deputy Clerk and Fiona Hamilton, Clerk for information purposes and further confirms and ratifies all operational decisions, procedures, and cancellations put in place by staff, and the Municipal Emergency Control Group in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Report:

Background:

Staff brought forward Report Number CLK2020-09 – COVID-19 Municipal Response at the Special Council Meeting on March 19, 2020, and Report Number CLK2020-10 – COVID-19 Municipal Response - Update at the Special Council Meeting on April 7, 2020, Report Number CLK2020-13 – COVID-19 Municipal Response – April 28, 2020 Update at the Council Meeting on April 28, 2020 explaining the departmental responses and decisions taken by the Municipality as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Analysis:

The Municipal Emergency Control Group (MECG) continues to meet regularly to address each department's responsibilities, requirements, and proactive measures that have been taken in response to COVID-19. To date, the MECG has met fifteen (15) times, and have another virtual meeting scheduled for May 25, 2020. The Grey Bruce Health Unit and South Bruce O.P.P. now also participate in the MECG meetings to provide updates.

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 ten (10) Information Bulletins have been distributed (the most recent Information Bulletin that was issued on May 21, 2020 has been attached to this report), along with one (1) [Order prohibiting garage sales](#), two (2) Press Releases, 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 eleven (11) 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 11 videos is 1,201 views on YouTube and 18,592 views on Facebook.

Staff have also broadcasted three (3) Council Meetings through Zoom Video Conferencing and livestreamed the meeting to [YouTube](#). The full recordings of the April 7, 2020, April 28, 2020 and May 12, 2020 Council Meetings are all available on YouTube and have received a combined total of 311 views.

On May 20, 2020 the Municipality and Walkerton BIA hosted a Virtual Town Hall focused on COVID-19 Recovery Measures for Business, with Huron-Bruce MPP Lisa Thompson and guest Prabmeet Singh Sarkaria, Associate Minister of Small Business and Red Tape Reduction for the Ministry of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade. The Town Hall was moderated by Mayor Peabody. The provincial cabinet ministers gathered direct feedback from the business community to help the Ontario Jobs and Recovery Committee formulate future plans. The [full recording of the Town Hall](#) has been uploaded to YouTube.

As mentioned in previous COVID-19 Municipal Response reports, staff organized the “Connecting Community Challenge” on Facebook and [Build Your Brockton](#), partnered with the [Grey Bruce Huron Strong App](#), and submitted a “Brockton Businesses Rise to Challenge of COVID-19” column to the Hanover Post.

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 will continue to establish opportunities to connect and increase staff morale during this time of uncertainty while ensuring key projects move forward.

A Recovery Sub-Committee has been established to prepare and plan for the Municipality's reopening. The Municipality remains closed to the public until it is safe to reopen. All essential services continue to be offered with the rotating staff shifts leaving all services attended to in a safe manner.

Brockton Child Care Centre:

The Brockton Child Care Centre remains closed until further notice. Staff continue to converse with the Ministry of Education, County of Bruce, Bruce Grey Catholic District School Board, and Grey Bruce Health Unit to establish a recovery plan when the Centre reopens. This is a robust plan that will require added staff resources and cleaning measures to accommodate the safety measures that will be required.

Building:

The Building Department continues to process building permits and conduct inspections following established protocols. As of May 20th the Province formally lifted all restrictions in the Essential Business List related to construction. Building permits continue to be processed and property owners are reminded of their responsibility to ensure that all construction work must be done in compliance with Provincial Orders, COVID-19 protocols and guidelines. Staff continue to investigate updates and share information as changes continue to be announced.

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 through Zoom.

Brockton Committee and Board Meetings continue to be suspended until further notice. Committees and Local Boards with urgent matters such as financial expenditures, approval of direct measures to assist in response to COVID-19, and approval of contracts with a deadline prior to mid-May were directed to contact the Clerk. The Clerk has arranged for a few open Zoom webinars to allow public viewing and ensure accountability and transparency.

The By-Law Enforcement Officer continues to respond to enforcement calls.

Economic Development:

The Community Development Coordinator arranged and participated in the Brockton Business Town Hall on May 20, 2020 as previously mentioned. A follow up survey was sent to all attendees and information will be passed on to Provincial Ministries as received.

Staff continue to release [Brockton Business Newsletters](#) focused on the COVID-19 pandemic to ease the burden on businesses, and provide support.

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 this is readily communicated by Municipal staff. Staff will be investigating ideas and working with the BIA to collaborate on local initiatives. The BIA and the Heritage jointly decided that the Doors Open event planned for the fall of 2020 should be postponed until 2021.

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.

Fire:

The fire ban issued on April 2, 2020 for agricultural and recreational fires was lifted on May 14, 2020. Communications were distributed, including an Information Bulletin announcing the lifting of the ban. Residents wishing to obtain an agricultural burn permit were instructed to contact the Municipal Office. There were no reported fire response calls as a result of the burn ban being lifted.

Firefighters continue to have virtual meetings and conference calls through Zoom, and an online training platform is being developed and should be launched shortly.

Firefighters also continue to complete electronic assessments, truck checks, and weekly reports on the use of personal protective equipment (PPE).

Human Resources:

Staff continue to review pandemic policies to ensure their consistency with the ever-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.

Operations:

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

Public Works staff continue to work on projects, vehicle maintenance, and implement capital projects. Staff have begun replacing culverts, and line painting along roadways, Municipal Parking Lots, and certain Municipal facilities.

Parks and Recreation:

On May 19, 2020 the Province announced that Ontario was entering Stage 1 of the Framework for Reopening the Province, which permits the reopening of some outdoor recreational amenities, including outdoor sports facilities and multi-use fields, off-leash dog areas, and outdoor picnic sites, benches and shelters in parks and recreational areas. As a result, certain Brockton recreational amenities have been reopened for walkthrough access provided that with physical distancing restrictions are met. Trails and greenspaces continue to remain open with the same restrictions. Staff are developing a plan for reopening these amenities, signage will be updated to reflect this change, and communication will be distributed to the public.

The Parks and Recreation Office, community centres, recreational facilities and park amenities such as playgrounds, pools, and splash pads remain closed to the public until further notice.

On May 12, 2020 Council decided to regretfully close the Walkerton Centennial Pool due to the pandemic. Capital work must also be completed on the pool prior to its reopening. More information was presented in Report Number REC2020-02. Staff also presented Report Number REC2020-01 announcing the reopening of the Brockton Community Garden. The garden has reopened as of May 15, 2020 with physical distancing restrictions.

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

Staff have resumed the grounds maintenance/grass cutting of municipal properties with physical distancing requirements, and continue to discuss community services, capital projects, and recreational programming while considering a recovery plan. Staff are debating the future of the day camp program which would normally be offered in the summer months. With Municipal Recreation facilities still closed and the risk implications related to staff and children safety a thorough review of health and safety measures is required. A report will be presented at the first meeting in June with a recommendation to Council on how to proceed.

Bookings and events at all municipal facilities and properties continue to remain cancelled until June 30, 2020. As the situation surrounding the pandemic emergency evolves, the need to re-evaluate cancellations beyond June 30th may be required.

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 also participate in a bi-weekly 15 minute Zoom social meeting to boost morale and connect during the rotating shift separation. 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. The Finance Department has prepared several reports related to the COVID-19 financial impact which have been distributed on the Municipality's [COVID-19 Updates webpage](#).

Reviewed By:



Trish Serratore, Chief Financial Officer

Respectfully Submitted by:



Sarah Johnson, Jr. Deputy Clerk



Fiona Hamilton, Clerk

Reviewed By:



Sonya Watson, Chief Administrative Officer

For Immediate Release

Municipality of Brockton COVID-19 Update: Reopening of Municipal Recreational Amenities

Brockton, ON, May 21, 2020 – The Municipality of Brockton continues to remain vigilant in our response to the COVID-19 pandemic. While the numbers of reported COVID-19 cases in Grey and Bruce Counties are declining, residents are reminded to respect physical distancing requirements and avoid gatherings of more than five (5) people.

Reopening of Certain Municipal Recreational Amenities:

On May 19, 2020 the Province announced that Ontario was entering Stage 1 of the Framework for Reopening the Province, permitting the reopening of some outdoor recreational amenities, including outdoor sports facilities and multi-use fields, off-leash dog areas, and outdoor picnic sites, benches and shelters in parks and recreational areas.

As of May 22, 2020 in accordance with the Provincial Framework, the Municipality of Brockton has **reopened the following recreational amenities for walkthrough access provided that physical distancing restrictions are met:**

- Bruce Power Regional Soccer Park
- Cargill Baseball Diamonds
- Cargill Community Centre Park
- Elmwood Baseball Diamonds
- Elmwood Basketball Courts
- Elmwood Parks
- Elmwood Tennis Courts
- Glammis Park
- Walkerton Baseball Diamonds
- Walkerton Basketball Courts
- Walkerton Centennial Park
- Walkerton Central Park (Tot Lot)
- Walkerton Heritage Water Garden
- Walkerton Memory Lane Park
- Walkerton Riverbend Park
- Walkerton Rotary Park
- Walkerton Lobies Park
- Walkerton Lions Westwood Drive Park
- Walkerton Tennis Courts

Residents must **remain two (2) metres or six (6) feet apart** while using these amenities. The Provincial Order **restricting gatherings of more than five (5) people remains in effect**, unless they are members of the same household. Individuals should **wash their hands or use hand sanitizer** to clean their hands before and after using the pavilions, and stay home if ill.

Even though these amenities are reopened, **the play structures located at some of these parks (including the Splash Pad at Centennial Park) remain closed until further notice.** These amenities are **open for walkthrough access only.** **The washrooms and facilities at these locations remain closed at this time.**

Residents are reminded that trails and greenspaces continue to remain open with the same restrictions.

Rules for Ball Diamond, Soccer Field and Basketball Court Users:

- Individuals using ball diamonds, soccer fields or basketball courts are required to physical distance 2 metres with a maximum group size of 5 persons at one time, unless they are members of the same household.
- Avoid or limit touching commonly touched surfaces like sporting equipment
- Individuals should wash or use hand sanitizer to clean your hands and wash your hands before and after play, and stay home if ill
- **The washrooms and facilities at these locations remain closed.**

Rules for Tennis Court Users:

- Doubles play is only permitted if players on each team are from the same household, otherwise single play only.
- Individuals using the tennis courts are required to physical distance 2 metres with a maximum group size of 5 persons at one time, unless they are members of the same household.
- Players must wash their hands with a disinfectant soap and water or use a hand sanitizer if soap and water are not readily available, before going to the court.
- Players should use their racquet/foot to pick up balls and hit them to their opponent. Using hands to pick up the balls should be avoided.
- If a ball from another court comes to you, players should send it back with a kick or with their racquet.
- Each player should bring their own can of balls with a unique identifying mark (initials, symbol) and ideally from different companies for easy identification. Players should only touch their own tennis balls.
- No physical contact like high five's and handshakes is allowed.
- Players need to remain on the same side of the court at all times.
- Players should no longer sit on benches or use score cards.
- **The washrooms and facilities at these locations are all closed.**

The Parks and Recreation Office, Community Centres, play structures at the parks, and the splash pad remains closed to the public until further notice. The Walkerton Centennial Pool is unfortunately closed for the season.

Further Information:

The Municipality of Brockton will continue to obtain information and updates from the County of Bruce, The Grey Bruce Health Unit, the Province of Ontario and other health agencies and will provide new information to residents when available. The Municipality of Brockton will continue to take all steps necessary to maintain essential services for our residents and local businesses. Please visit [Brockton.ca/COVID19](https://www.brockton.ca/COVID19) for updated information for residents and [Brockton.ca/BusinessRecovery](https://www.brockton.ca/BusinessRecovery) for updated information about businesses, or call the municipal office at 519-881-2223.