

Report to Council

Report Title:	COVID-19 Municipal Response April 28, 2020 Update		
Prepared By:	Sarah Johnson, Jr. Deputy Clerk and Fiona Hamilton, Clerk		
Department:	Clerk's		
Date:	April 28, 2020		
Report Number:	CLK2020-13	File Number:	C11CL, P03CO
Attachments:	Information Bulletin April 22, 2020		

Recommendation:

That the Council of the Municipality of Brockton hereby receives Report Number CLK2020-13 – COVID-19 Municipal Response April 28, 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, 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 eleven (11) times, and have another virtual meeting scheduled for April 28, 2020.

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 seven Information Bulletins have been distributed (the most recent Information Bulletin that was issued on April 22, 2020 has been attached to this report), along with two 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 nine 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 nine videos is 1,068 views on YouTube and 16,351 views on Facebook. Businesses and residents appreciated the most current video which thanked Brockton's local businesses for their resilience, and patience during the COVID-19 pandemic.

As of April 7, 2020, staff broadcast the Special Council Meeting through Zoom Video Conferencing and livestreamed the meeting to YouTube. The [full recording of the April 7, 2020 Special Council Meeting](#) has received a total number of 112 views on YouTube.

Over the Easter Weekend (April 10-12, 2020) the Municipality encouraged the community to participate in Brockton's "Connecting Community Challenge". Residents were encouraged to celebrate front-line workers on April 11 at 7:00 p.m. by making joyous noise, reach out to family or friends by phone or social media, and decorate their homes. A [Facebook Event](#) and [COVID-19 Community Spirit Photos project](#) was created on the Municipality's community engagement website, [Build Your Brockton](#). A number of residents participated in the challenge, shared their photos, videos, and spirit in recognition and appreciation of our front-line workers.

The Municipality has also partnered with the [Grey Bruce Huron Strong App](#) to share existing resources available during the pandemic. The Grey Bruce Huron Strong App offers the latest, trusted health information, resources for people and businesses in need, a way for citizens to offer help to others, and things to do while at home.

On April 23, 2020, staff and Mayor Peabody submitted a "Best of Brockton" column entitled "Brockton Businesses Rise to Challenge of COVID-19" to the Hanover Post which will be included in their upcoming issue.

Departmental Responses

Administration:

At the March 19, 2020 Special Council Meeting, Council delegated authority to the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) to perform a number of duties while the COVID-19 pandemic continues. The Pandemic Delegation of Authority By-Law was amended at the April 7, 2020 Special Council Meeting.

Sonya Watson, CAO continues to maintain communication with Mayor Peabody, Bruce County CAO's, the Grey Bruce Health Unit, the OPP, 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.

Staff have also met with the South Bruce O.P.P. to discuss enforcement capacities. Enforcement matters continue to be dealt with by the Municipality's By-Law Enforcement Officer and Fire Prevention Officer.

Ms. Watson regularly meetings 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.

Brockton Child Care Centre:

The Brockton Child Care Centre remains closed until further notice. Staff continue to converse with the Ministry of Education, Bruce Grey Catholic District School Board, and Grey Bruce Health Unit to establish a recovery plan when the Centre reopens.

Building:

The Building Department continues to process building permits, and conduct inspections. Building permits will only be released for those projects identified on the Provincial Order as essential at this time.

Clerk's:

The Clerk's department continues to process and distribute all communication from the Municipality, and minute all MCEG meetings.

As previously noted, the Clerk's Department broadcast the April 7, 2020 Special Council Meeting through Zoom Video Conferencing and livestreamed the meeting to YouTube. Clerk's staff also schedule and administer various meetings for Department Heads through Zoom.

A filing structure for all COVID-19 pandemic records was established.

Brockton Committee and Board Meetings continue to be suspended until mid-May. Criteria was established and distributed to all committees regarding urgent matters requiring the Clerk's attention including financial expenditures, approval of direct measures to assist in response to COVID-19, and approval of contracts with a deadline prior to mid-May.

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

Economic Development:

A [Stay Home Shop Local page](#) was created on the Municipality's website listing local businesses that

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

Staff also launched a [COVID-19 Business Survey](#) on our community engagement website, [Build Your Brockton](#), which analyzed the impact of COVID-19 on our local businesses. The survey closed on April 7, 2020. A separate Council Report has been prepared which highlights the results of the survey.

Flags displaying kbdesign's "In It Together" logo have been ordered and will be displayed within the community of Brockton.



The CAO participates on the Bruce County Economic Task Force and works with the Community Development Coordinator to ensure ideas that support Brockton Businesses are relayed.

Finance:

Staff continue to review capital projects with all departments, identify budgetary impacts, and determine if any projects should be postponed until 2021 as a result of the pandemic. Staff also continue to track financial

implications as a result of COVID-19. A separate Council Report has been prepared on these budgetary impacts.

A separate Council Report has also been prepared including information on COVID-19 financial support resources.

Fire:

The fire ban issued on April 2, 2020 for agricultural and recreational fires remains in effect until further notice. This ban assists in limiting the exposure of COVID-19 to firefighters, and ensures their availability for other emergencies. All Fire Chief Officials in Bruce County issued a burn ban until further notice. A few response calls have been received in the Municipality of West Grey, so Brockton will work with West Grey to increase public education on burns.

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 electronically sign off to complete assessments and truck checks to maintain records. Firefighters are also required to complete a weekly report on the use of personal protective equipment (PPE), and EMS are investigating the potential of recycling PPE.

Any firefighters who feel they have been exposed or have symptoms of COVID-19 will be placed on the list for testing.

Human Resources:

A number of policies were adopted by Council on March 19 and April 7, 2020. Staff continue to assist employees regarding various matter related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Regular communications are essential and attending to matters in a timely manner is a priority for the CAO, CFO and Human Resource Generalist.

Interviews continue to be conducted electronically where applicable.

Operations:

Protocols were established to limit the number of vehicles accessing the Brant Landfill at one time to assist with physical distancing.

Cemetery operations are up and running. However, communications were distributed to remind residents to please refrain from using the Walkerton Cemetery as a gathering place apart from funerals. As per Provincial Order Funerals are only permitted to proceed with up to ten (10) people at one time. Dogs or other pets are also not allowed in the Walkerton Cemetery.

Regular operations continue for water and wastewater services.

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

Parks and Recreation:

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

Brockton greenspaces and trails remain open at this time for walk with the encouragement to maintain physical distancing requirements.

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. If residents witness damage, vandalism, or mischief while occurring, they are to call 911 or utilize the O.P.P.'s online reporting tool.

Staff continue to discuss community services, capital projects, and recreational programming while considering a recovery plan.

Staff have been prepping grounds equipment in order to transition into maintenance, and have begun work on the ice plant for fall preparedness.

As of April 22, 2020 the Municipality of Brockton made the difficult decision to cancel bookings and events for all municipal facilities and properties through to June 30, 2020. Extending our cancellation period provides the community with clarity and the ability to adjust plans accordingly, and aligns with the Grey Bruce Health Unit's planning cycle. While we are proud of our community events and festivals, the safety and well-being of our residents, visitors and staff must remain our first priority.

Staff are in the process of notifying all event/booking contacts and all will be provided opportunity to rebook subject to availability, should postponement be an option. As the situation surrounding the pandemic emergency evolves, the need to re-evaluate cancellations beyond June 30, 2020 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 conducted a Zoom meeting with all staff on April 9, 2020 providing an update on how the Municipality has reacted to the COVID-19 pandemic, to answer any inquiries, relay information personally and thank staff for their continued work in serving the community during this difficult time.

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. As mentioned previously, the Finance Department has prepared separate reports on the financial impact of COVID-19 on the 2020 budget. Report Number FIN2020-13 was presented on April 7, 2020 and a second report is on the April 28, 2020 Council Agenda.

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