

Report to Council

Report Title: Winter Interments in Walkerton and Starkvale Cemeteries
Prepared By: Cally Mann, Municipal Executive Coordinator
Department: Operations
Date: November 24, 2020
Report Number: PW2020-32 **File Number:** C11PW

Attachments:

Recommendation:

That the Council of the Municipality of Brockton hereby receives Report Number PW2020-32 – Winter Interments in Walkerton and Starkvale Cemeteries, prepared by Cally Mann, Municipal Executive Coordinator, for information purposes.

Report:

Background:

On October 9, 2020, the Bereavement Authority of Ontario (BAO) issued a Registrar's Directive that cemeteries are to continue interments as late into the season as safely possible due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The wording from the Directive is as follows:

Effective immediately –All cemeteries in Ontario are directed to conduct interments as late into the season as is possible – as long as ground conditions remain safe to do so.

This means staff and equipment must continue to be available to inter, including ground burials and crypts in a mausoleum. There is no need to change your cemetery bylaws. This directive does not apply to the interment of cremated remains.

This directive is ordered by the Registrar of the *Funeral, Burial and Cremation Services Act, 2002*.
Cemeteries are an Essential Workplace.

You can read the BAO Registrar's Directive here: [BAO Registrar's Directive](#).

As per the Registrar's Directive, By-law 2013-066, which states that no winter burials are to take place and that interments will continue in the spring at the discretion of the Caretaker, will not be affected by the directive. Once the directive is lifted, the interments will continue to follow the yearly schedule set out in the by-law. In past years, the Municipality of Brockton has stopped all interments as of October 31st.

Analysis:

As per the BAO Registrar's Directive, staff have begun to prepare to continue to provide full interments as long as it is safe to do so. Cremation interments are not affected by this directive. The directive is specific to ensure that the interments only occur as is safe to do so. Should the Director of Operations, Roads Supervisor or Cemetery Caretaker determine that safety is a concern, then interments will cease until it is determined that the interments can safely continue.

Staff have communicated with the surrounding municipalities of South Bruce, Arran-Elderslie and Kincardine. The Municipality of Kincardine does inter during the winter in the Kincardine Cemetery and has for many years, however does not inter within the Tiverton and Port Bruce Cemeteries. At the Kincardine Cemetery there is only 4-6 inches of top soil before they hit sand, as a result digging is much easier in the winter than it would be here. The Municipalities of South Bruce and Arran-Elderslie, in a normal year, stop interments the end of October. Like Brockton, they will abide by the BAO directive and continue interments until the Cemetery Caretaker decides that it is unsafe to do so.

Sacred Heart Catholic Church (Walkerton) was also consulted. The Catholic Cemetery, adjacent to the Walkerton Cemetery, stops interring once the ground is frozen, which varies each year due to the weather. Their equipment will not facilitate a winter interment and as such they will not be interring over the winter once they close.

Sustainability Checklist:

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

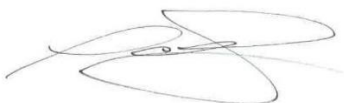
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|---|-----|
| • Do the recommendations help move the Municipality closer to its Vision? | N/A |
| • Do the recommendations contribute to achieving Cultural Vibrancy? | N/A |
| • Do the recommendations contribute to achieving Economic Prosperity? | N/A |
| • Do the recommendations contribute to Environmental Integrity? | N/A |
| • Do the recommendations contribute to the Social Equity? | N/A |

Financial Impacts/Source of Funding:

- Do the recommendations represent a sound financial investment from a sustainability perspective?
N/A

There may be some minimal staff and equipment costs, if needed, to continue with interments until it is unsafe to do so. Brockton's Cemetery Caretaker is on a "Call-In" only schedule. These costs will be sufficiently covered under the 2020 Operating budget unless the Covid-19 pandemic significantly impacts our community.

Reviewed By:



Trish Serratore, Chief Financial Officer

Respectfully Submitted by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Cally Mann', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Cally Mann, Municipal Executive Coordinator

Reviewed By:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Sonya Watson', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Sonya Watson, Chief Administrative Officer