



Committee Report

To: Warden Mitch Twolan
Members of the Corporate Services Committee

From: Edward Henley
Director of Corporate Services

Date: July 2, 2020

Re: Pandemic (COVID-19) Emergency Response Update 3

Staff Recommendation:

The Pandemic (COVID-10) Emergency Response Update #3 report is for information.

Background:

Information provided in this Report is accurate as of Monday, June 15, 2020. Circumstances may have changed since the creation of this Report. This is not a comprehensive list of all actions and initiatives that have been undertaken.

County of Bruce Declaration of Emergency:

- a) County of Bruce declared a health emergency on 2020-03-25.

County of Bruce Emergency Response Level:

- a) County of Bruce Pandemic Plan (2009) has been activated (current level 'Orange Alert').
- b) County of Bruce Emergency Response Plan (2004) has been activated (current Partial Activation Level 1).
- c) County Municipal Emergency Control Group (MECG) remain activated.
- d) MECG meetings scheduled at call of the Chief Administrative Officer.
- e) County Emergency Operations Centre is closed. MECG members operate remotely.

Pandemic Alert Chart

County remains at 'Orange Alert'. A change in Alert Level, up or down, is not warranted at this time to address the Pandemic.

County Responses:

- a) County Warden, County CAO, local Mayors, local CAO's and senior County staff continue to meet once weekly (virtually) with Dr. Ian Arra, Grey Bruce Medical Officer of Health (MOH). The intent of this meeting has been to receive updates on the

regional situation, ask questions of the MOH, and to discuss recommendations regarding actions/orders that the municipalities, the County or the MOH may specifically wish to take.

- b) Closure of all County facilities to the public on 2020-03-16. All County facilities remain closed to the public.
- c) County Emergency Information Officer provides a daily update to all County staff on current situation.
- d) PPE (fit tested N95 masks, impermeable gowns, face shields, googles) supplies for use by LTC Homes and Paramedic Services are adequate at this time. County has not put the recently purchased Clean Works Healthcare Mini face mask disinfection machine into operation.
- e) Face coverings have been procured and distributed to those Departments requiring them to meet operational directives provided by either the Province or local Medical Officer of Health. A face covering will be provided to all County staff once sufficient supply is received.
- f) Plexiglass/physical barrier needs have been determined for all County facilities where a 2 metre separation between patrons and staff cannot be met/ensured. Plexiglass has been ordered. Awaiting delivery and installation.
- g) Physical Distancing (2 metre) floor stickers have been purchased and installed where required.
- h) Human Services partnership with various agencies to distribute funds typically spent to fund student nutrition meals. Partnership involved the mailing of grocery store gift cards as well as the delivery of food hampers to over 220 families that live in “food deserts” (i.e. no local grocery chains).
- i) Director of Planning & Economic Development (County Economic Recovery Coordinator) and staff have presented to Council a comprehensive economic recovery program.
- j) Director of Museum & Cultural Centre (County Organization Recovery Coordinator) will lead the newly created in-house ‘Bruce County Reopen & Rediscover Team’ as tasked by the County CAO.
- k) All County trails/parks/canoe/river access points have reopened to the public.
- l) Library has begun contactless ‘Curbside Pick-Up’ of books that can be ordered via phone or via the Library website. Library has prepared a Reopening Plan for when approval is granted by Province to do so.
- m) Human Services are engaging with child care providers re: Provincial approval to reopen child care centres in accordance with directives provided. In-Home Emergency Child Care Services for health care and other eligible frontline workers will transition

- to child care at the regular child care centres across the County as they reopen.
- n) Museum and Cultural Services has prepared a Reopening Plan in accordance with Provincial directive.
 - o) WES provided revised Self Screening Assessment Tool for use by County staff.
 - p) Draft internal procedures for Physical Distancing, Environmental Cleaning, Face Coverings have been prepared and are in process of review, approval and dissemination to staff.
 - q) COVID-19 web page on County web site continues to provide up-to-date information on how to continue to receive service from County Departments.
 - r) Significant complement of County staff continue to work from home for those staff able to do so.
 - s) Approval for purchase of 4 mobile construction signs for COVID-19 messaging to residents and visitors. Four purchased mobile signs will be part of T&ES equipment inventory. Rental of other mobile construction signs continues. Messaging on signs has been modified as Province/region moves from Phase 1 to Phase 2 reopening. Decision regarding when to halt rentals will be evaluated by MEG & T&ES.
 - t) Tax deferral policy with local treasurers has been approved.
 - u) Internal renovation contracts at various County facilities have commenced.
 - v) Tendering and tender awards for major capital projects well underway or completed.

County Facility - Reopening Date to the Public

A firm date for the reopening of Administration Hubs has not been set. County has been in discussion with Grey County regarding a potential to reopen at similar times.

Museum & Cultural Centre is approved for reopening by the Province under the Phase 2 guidelines however a firm date for physical reopening has not been determined at this time. Director of Museum & Cultural Centre is working with staff on reopening and operating procedures.

Reopening date of library branches is contingent upon approval by Province. Reopening & operating procedures for when libraries can fully reopen have been prepared by Director of Library Services.

Financial/Staffing/Legal/IT Considerations:

As of the time of writing the following expenditures had been incurred by the County of Bruce in relation to the pandemic response. Figures in the table are as of June 15, 2020.

Department	General Expenses YTD	Salaries & Benefits YTD	Total Spending YTD
Corporate			
General Supplies	68,367.81	0	68,367.81
Clean Works Mini	85,265.60	0	85,265.60
Electronic Road Signs	107,255.04	0	107,255.04
Paramedic Services	29,112.53	0	29,112.53
Brucelea Haven (funded)	53,308.47	99,019.17	152,327.64
Gateway Haven (funded)	36,878.78	66,500.99	103,379.77
Human Services - Social Housing (funded)	285,834.68	0	285,834.68
Total	666,022.91	165,520.16	831,543.07
Total Excluding Funded Programs	290,000.98	0	290,000.98

At this time emergency funding has been received by Long Term Care and Social Housing from their respective ministries to address increased costs and community needs. Brucelea Haven has received \$229,600 and Gateway Haven \$182,000 to address increased costs. At this time the funding received exceeds the expenditures incurred related to Covid-19. Cashflow of funding has been inconsistent from month to month and thus it is difficult to project if the funding will continue to cover the expenses for the remainder of the year. Human Services Social Housing Division is to receive \$893,600 in provincial funding from the Social Services Relief Fund to help protect the health and safety of our most vulnerable community members. The department has worked to develop a plan for utilization of this funding and it is expected to be spent within the year. Paramedic Services has not received any funding to date but information requests on current and projected spending have been received as the ministry determines how to allocate funds, and thus there may be some future funding.

The above expenditure and funding discussion does not include any amounts related to the Pandemic Pay promised to front-line workers by the Province of Ontario. We expect to start receiving these funds in June and amounts will be distributed to front line staff. Direction from the province suggests that the funding will also cover the required benefits costs in addition to the four dollar per hour, which should ultimately result in a net zero impact to the county financials.

To date the County of Bruce has spent \$290,000.98 on unbudgeted and unfunded expenditures related to Covid-19. The County's management team continues to monitor the situation for potential funding to cover any and all eligible expenses. If no further funding becomes available the County will need to look to current reserves to cover these expenditures or consider reductions in spending on other previously approved initiatives to help reduce the projected deficit impact. As reported on June 4th, 2020 to the Corporate Services Committee the projected balances at 2020 year end for the Tax Stabilization Reserve and Working Capital Reserve are \$548,464 and \$735,509 respectively.

The annual budget has been relying on a \$375,000 subsidy from the Tax Stabilization Reserve which is reliant on prior year surpluses. After reducing the Tax Stabilization Reserve by \$375,000 for the 2021 budget year, only \$173,464 will be remaining which is not enough to fund the \$290,000 Pandemic expense so far. It would require a minimum surplus in 2020 of

\$117,000 to fund it assuming no further Pandemic expenses. However, the Tax Stabilization Reserve will be depleted and future budget year subsidization would become an issue and may require tax increases or cuts.

Further commitments from the Working Capital Reserve for the 2021 budget have already been made in relation to the Support the Bruce: Business Sustainability Fund and would further reduce the available funds by \$534,000. Finally, consideration could be given to utilizing the Traffic Control Reserve which has a projected 2020 year end balance of \$331,852.10 to fund the purchase of the Electronic Road Signs for \$107,255.04 .

Staffing and IT considerations are addressed by the Workplace Engagement Services and Information Technology Services Department respectively.

Interdepartmental Consultation:

Information for this Report was sourced from, but not reviewed by, various Departments.

Link to Strategic Goals and Elements:

Not applicable.

Written by: David Smith, Community Emergency Management Coordinator
Lynn Hatten, Deputy Treasurer

Approved by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sandra Datars Bere". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Sandra" being the most prominent part.

Sandra Datars Bere
Chief Administrative Officer