

# **Municipality of East Ferris**

## **Report to Council**

Report No.: CEMC-2020-01

Date: June 23, 2020

Originator: Frank Loeffen, Fire Chief/CEMC

Subject: Information for Council from the Municipal Emergency Control Group (MECG)

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### **RECOMMENDATION**

1. That the Council for the Municipality of East Ferris receives and accepts the information report from the Community Emergency Management Co-ordinator.

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### **BACKGROUND**

The province declared a state of emergency on March 17<sup>th</sup>, 2020 and it is currently in effect until June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2020. The Province will be tabling a motion next week to extend this date to July 15<sup>th</sup>, 2020 as they continue to respond to the coronavirus pandemic. Since the date of the declaration, many orders have been put in place by the Province to deal with the pandemic and the orders have been modified on an on-going basis as the Province opens up the economy and relaxes restrictions.

Since the pandemic was declared, our municipality as well as the area covered by the Nipissing Parry Sound District Health Unit have been successful in keeping cases to a minimum by following the guidelines and recommendations provided by the health unit.

The Municipal Emergency Control Group (MECG) has been meeting Monday afternoons, since the province declared a state of emergency due to the Covid-19 pandemic, to monitor and discuss the local impact and concerns caused by the pandemic as well as the welfare of businesses and residents. The MECG had determined East Ferris was not in a state of emergency and did not declare to the province.

Due to Provincial orders, at the most critical time, all municipal facilities, parks, playgrounds, boat launches, beaches, and recreational amenities were closed to the public. The group decided to close the municipal office to reduce/eliminate the spread of covid-19 and protect the health and safety of staff and residents.

The MECG has discussed plans for business continuity and programs that would be cancelled for 2020. Due to the evolving dynamics of the pandemic and compliance with provincial orders and recommendations, the following decisions were made by the MECG:

1. The youth soccer and swimming programs were cancelled for summer 2020.
2. The annual East Ferris tradeshow scheduled for May 2020 was cancelled.
3. Canada Day festivities have been cancelled including the July 1<sup>st</sup> fireworks display. Fireworks will be rescheduled at a later date to coincide with another event or holiday.
4. The landfill was operated on winter hours throughout the pandemic up till the end of May 2020 but resumed normal operations the first week of June.
5. Tax installment due dates for the interim tax bills were extended and interest/penalties on taxes were waived up until May 19<sup>th</sup>, 2020.

The group also released 4 bulletins which included a variety of information for residents and businesses. A final bulletin will be released the week of June 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2020.

A section on the municipal website was created to house covid-19 related information.

At our last meeting, the MECG discussed opening the municipal office to the public. The group reviewed options and discussed measures for maintaining social distancing when the office opens. The office is scheduled to open on June 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2020.

At this time, all municipal facilities, parks, playgrounds, boat launches, beaches, and recreational amenities are open to the public with the exception of the playground in Vrebosch Park, the Community Centre, and the Corbeil Park Hall. We are awaiting further direction from the province for when indoor recreational facilities and playgrounds can open.

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## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

Due to the closure of businesses and residents remaining at home, our municipal revenues collected from services, user fees and programs have been affected.

We estimate a loss of revenues due to cancelled recreational programs and hall rentals at approximately \$20,000. Deferring tax payments including waiving interest/penalty fees has caused a loss of approximately \$8,000.

We made a donation to the Callander Food Bank in the amount of \$2,500. Under normal circumstances, we do not donate to the food bank.

Building permit revenues and planning application fees were affected at the beginning of the pandemic, but as the province opened up construction, the Building and Planning Departments saw a surge in applications and we expect that revenues will not be affected overall.

These losses have been partially offset by savings from other items such as the cancellation of the tradeshow and swimming program which we normally operate at a loss.

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## **RECOMMENDED OPTION**

This report was for information purposes only; therefore, the recommendation is to receive and accept the information report provided by the CEMC on behalf of the MECG.

Respectfully Submitted,

I concur with this report and recommendation.

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Frank Loeffen, Fire Chief

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Jason Trottier, CAO/Treasurer