



Reeve's Third Address – Updates to COVID 19

I would like to provide the following updates to the situation in the Township of Montague related to COVID-19. As you know, your Council, staff and emergency operations team have been working hard to manage this crisis in our community. We thank all of the essential workers who go to work everyday to make sure we have food, shelter, and safety.

The Emergency Operations Centre has confirmed that the Township office and Rosedale Hall will be closed until further notice. Staff are still at the office or working remotely, so we ask residents to please call with their inquiries. It was also confirmed that Large Item Drop Off Day will be postponed until further notice as well. The EOC is meeting weekly, on Mondays, to discuss the operations of the Township during this time.

The Township has not declared an emergency. The primary reason a municipality would make an Emergency Declaration would be to allow the Head of Council to take immediate actions and make lawful orders in a timely fashion, and to provide the Head of Council and Clerk Administrator the ability to make expenditures to address the emergency. It is the EOC's opinion that this is not necessary at this time.

The Township staff will continue to provide essential services to our residents, including fire and emergency services, critical road maintenance, regular curbside pickup throughout the Township, bylaw enforcement, building/planning inquiries and certain building permit applications.

We would like to remind all builders, contractors and residents in the Township that while our building staff are available for inquiries and for permit applications, new residential construction that had not been issued a permit by April 4th, 2020 is currently prohibited by provincial order. Critical maintenance and repair activities to commercial, institutional, industrial and residential properties continue to be permitted and we will assist you in every way possible. Please find more information regarding this on the municipal webpage.

We are committed to keeping our staff and contractors safe and secure. I would like to remind residents not to approach our Public Works staff or garbage and recycling collectors.

Your Council is continuing to meet on a remote basis, with meetings available to the public through Facebook livestream. At the meeting of April 7th, 2020, your Council received information from the Fire Chief regarding the emergency operations centre meetings and from the Treasurer regarding the financial impacts of the COVID-19.



Council provided direction to our Municipal Law Enforcement Officer to enforce the provincial orders related to COVID-19, within reasonable circumstances.

Additionally, Council discussed supporting a community driven volunteer group to assist local at risk individuals. Council and staff will continue to work on this initiative. At its next meeting on April 21st, Council will be considering the deferment of interest payments for the June tax deadline along with deferment of interest for water billing for residents in Atironto and Rideau Street.

On a very serious note, our partners with the Ontario Provincial Police have been reporting increased levels of domestic violence calls across the detachment area. While sheltering at home can reduce exposure to COVID-19, it is a challenging circumstance for all people facing domestic violence. The Lanark County Interval House is still operating, and we will be posting some information on our website dedicated to resources for individuals facing domestic violence. Residents also play an important role as they are asked to be mindful of signs of abuse, and lend support whenever possible. This includes checking in with family, friends, and neighbours at a safe distance, and looking for signs that might indicate violence. Should a victim confide in you directly, arm yourself with resources and support services that are available within the community.

We recognize that this is a challenging time for everyone. Mental health is of utmost importance. This is why we have developed a list of services available to you, your spouse, your parents and your children on our website under the “COVID-19 Updates” page on the Township website. We are working every day to identify more resources available to you and provide information. We have 211, which is a helpline and online database of Ontario's community and social services – for all residents who are seeking services. We have the Children’s Helpline for all children that may be struggling.

Additionally, you can find Lanark County Mental Health hotline on our website as well. The current situation is fluid with new information developing daily. I want to assure the public I am taking input from my fellow Councillors, key stakeholders and staff under advisement. It is my position that the situation in the Township of Montague remains within the control of the community at this time. It is critical that all residents follow the advice from the Health officials in our community.

We are committed to providing you regular updates stemming from our EOC and Council meetings. We remind all residents that following the provincial and local orders related to social gatherings, social distancing and quarantine restrictions is essential to keep our communities healthy.



We need to have courage, not fear to get to the other side of this outbreak. We have no choice but to conquer this enemy. We will be successful; but we must adhere to social distancing, staying at home unless absolutely necessary to leave. However, it is just as important to connect with family, friends, and neighbours through technology, phone calls or letters. Try to focus on the positive human side of relationships. Listen to people's needs and offer help and hope for the future. Let's rise to the challenge but not complain. It is still too early to lift restrictions but when they do my advice would be better to be safe than sorry, don't rush into it, give yourself more time if possible and continue to be safe. Until our next update – stay safe.

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