

Public Statement

COVID-19 and its impact on Summer 2020's Recreation Programs and Services

April 29, 2020

For immediate release

The response to COVID-19 has interrupted many aspects of our lives. As we all work together to support public health measures that prevent the spread of the virus, the municipal government must consider the impacts on the upcoming summer's recreation programs and services, and adjust its operations accordingly. In this context, for the summer of 2020, please note the following:

- (1) The Fallsview Municipal Park will remain closed for camping. Currently, the Park is not permitted to open as per an order under the *Public Health Protection and Promotion Act*.
- (2) The Fallsview Municipal Park will open on May 25, 2020, to provide access to the Exploits River for recreational salmon angling, which typically begins on June 1.
- (3) The summer recreation program is cancelled.
- (4) The Community Garden will open on May 25, 2020, under physical distancing restrictions. Only two (2) people will be permitted in the garden at any time, and they must respect the physical distancing restrictions (i.e. 2 meters apart). The Town will also assign the planter boxes to a maximum of 15 people. More details regarding the Community Garden will be released in the coming days.
- (5) RiverFest is cancelled. Bishop's Falls Day, however, will still be observed on July 13, 2020.
- (6) The Riverside Drive boardwalk will reopen on April 30, 2020, under physical distancing restrictions. Residents will only be permitted to walk in one direction, from west to east, and they must respect the physical distancing restrictions (i.e. 2 meters apart). Signage will be placed along the boardwalk, indicating the correct path.

If the Town receives reports that residents are not respecting these rules, the boardwalk will be closed for public access.

- (7) Playgrounds and other recreation spaces remain closed.

Mayor King added, "I want first to say that we are disappointed to make these announcements, and the decisions were not reached easily. We wish things were different; however, we feel these measures are necessary and responsible as we continue to support the public health measures relating to COVID-19."

Mayor King concluded by saying, "We waited to announce these decisions because we held hope for a different reality. Unfortunately, we have reached a point where prolonging the inevitable is no longer possible. While we may see some restrictions relaxed over the coming weeks and months, the fight against COVID-19 is, as Minister Haggie stated, more like a marathon than a sprint. It's clear we have a few miles to run yet, and we have to adapt to the new normal created by the public health measures. Our primary concern is the safety of residents and our employees, and tough decisions were necessary. We look forward to the time when we can resume our typical summer recreational activities. Be safe."

The Town Council will continue to monitor the situation surrounding COVID-19 and will adjust its response where possible and as required.