



# Township of Wainfleet

*"Wainfleet - find your country side!"*

## NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release – October 26, 2020

### **Wainfleet Town Hall ‘Scaling Back’ after Active COVID Cases**

WAINFLEET – The Township of Wainfleet is scaling back some activities after posting its first active cases of COVID-19 at Town Hall today.

Township officials said that two administrative employees in the Township’s Town Hall tested positive for the virus over the weekend. The staff members are undergoing mandatory self-isolation measures and the Township is working actively with Public Health officials to trace the source of the exposures. Current information has confirmed, however, that the cases were not transmitted within the workplace.

“We are taking no chances,” said Wainfleet CAO, William Kolasa. “We are sending a number of employees for testing, liaising with Public Health for contact tracing and ensuring that we remain vigilant with active screening measures, enhanced cleaning procedures, social distancing, mask use and hand hygiene protocols.”

Mr. Kolasa also said that some items of business will be directly affected by the appearance of these active cases. Open sessions of Council, with public attendance and Councillors in Council Chambers, will likely go back to being conducted virtually for the foreseeable future. As well, plans for a special meeting of Wainfleet Council planned for Tuesday, October 27<sup>th</sup>, to discuss the proposed Central Fire Hall project, will be postponed for the time being, with no alternative date set - pending the outcome of the current cases.

“The Township reacted immediately to the pandemic and has been quite responsive to the COVID-19 threat with its protocols and procedures to protect the public, staff and Council to ensure that the business of the Township can continue,” said Mayor Kevin Gibson. “We’ve been planning for a possible ‘second wave’ scenario and it has happened right here at home, despite our best efforts. We are taking steps to contain the situation and ensure the continuation of services to the public.”

Despite being in a state of emergency since March of 2020, staff in all areas of the municipality have been working to provide services in new ways: including using technology for electronic meetings, document handling and payments. Outside workers have also been working in new ways: staggering their start times and end times to minimize exposure to each other, while administrative staff have been working alternate shifts at Town Hall and also working remotely.

“We are very pleased that we have been able to continue to provide a very high level of service to residents in spite of the challenges,” said CAO Kolasa, adding that the structure and format of future meetings and Council business is ‘situation dependent’ and will have to be adjusted as the situation unfolds.

Niagara Region Public Health personnel conducted a site visit today to review the mitigation measures and procedures in place in the Township. Officials described the Township’s protocols both ‘reasonable and adequate’ to protect the public and staff at this time.

Residents are reminded to once again refrain from coming to Town Hall in person and are instead asked to call, email or use other electronic means of communication and payment wherever possible.

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