

The April 2020 Edition of The Council Corner

We are more than six weeks into our response to COVID-19 and the changes it has brought about can be witnessed throughout our community. On April 23rd the Province announced its plan for a methodical re-opening of Saskatchewan beginning with Phase I starting May 4th. This gradual re-opening, though welcome, will bring its own challenges.



As Spring sets in and we are outdoors more, it will become increasingly difficult to remember that we need to keep distancing and the safety of ourselves and others in mind. We will tend to become complacent, but I urge you to remain focused on our task.

Earlier in April the Saskatchewan Health Authority (SHA) outlined some sobering projections about the impact that COVID-19 could have on our province and the number of cases there could be. In looking at them, it is important to remember that these are projections and not predictions, done for the purpose of planning for the capacity of the Province's health care system.

It is also important not to get overwhelmed with numbers like this, but instead to be reminded about how much each of our actions matter in the efforts to reduce the ability of COVID-19 to spread in our community. The control is in our hands.

When taken together, our actions are already saving thousands of lives, and we are already stopping the "worst case" scenarios of those projections from having a chance.

As Dr. Theresa Tam, the Canada's chief public health officer, has said repeatedly, "We can't prevent every death, but we must prevent every death that we can."

By staying home, reducing contact with others, and practicing physical distancing when you do have to go out, you are saving lives. Together, we can give our healthcare system the best possible opportunity to deal with cases now and in the future.

Our ability to return to a more regular routines relies on every one of us doing our part, and it means some difficult decisions and some uncomfortable realities.

This also means it is not a time for children from different homes to get together to play. This is difficult but important, nonetheless.

This has been difficult. Many of people have lost jobs. Businesses have closed. Weddings, trips and celebrations have been cancelled. Parents are having to keep children busy at home. Many sacrifices have been made and are literally saving lives.

I hope that you are all with me on this. There is a terrific team at the Town of Nipawin doing everything possible to keep our Town running and to prioritize safety above all else. I am asking you all to do everything you can to protect those around you.

We are told that we cannot stop the COVID virus, but we **CAN** each do our part to slow it down so that our health system can keep up. As we work through this difficult time, my plea to each of you is to be kind, patient and respectful and to adhere to the physical distancing practices while you are in public and at home.

In the best interest of everyone, and for the health and safety of our communities and for the protection of our valued employees, the Town of Nipawin will continue to provide services while ensuring that precautionary measures are taken and in place. You can still do business with the Town of Nipawin but in a slightly different way.

Until now the Town Office has been closed to the public, but plans are underway for reopening, perhaps as early as May 4th or later during that week. Regular Council Meetings have continued using virtual meeting applications. The public can participate by contacting the Town office directly to obtain the call-in information necessary for each meeting (you will be asked to provide your name). The Town of Nipawin staff remains available by telephone at (306) 862 9866 from 8:30 to 4:30 Monday to Friday or by email, to answer your questions. A contact list is available on the Town of Nipawin website at www.nipawin.com.

The Town's essential services, such as water supply and emergency and protective services are critical to everyone's wellbeing, and the Town of Nipawin wants to assure you that these will go uninterrupted and that contingency plans are in place.

The Town has recently convened a Pandemic & Economic Community Oversight Committee (Interagency) to enhance and ensure communication and interaction between multiple organizations throughout the community. Weekly conference calls of about 20 representatives ensure that organizations such as the Chamber of Commerce, Housing Authority, Education, Health Care, and Protective Services are aware of what is happening in the community and can collectively share information with each other. This committee is currently evolving to become an Advisory committee to focus on Re-Opening our economic community once restrictions are lifted. The focus is **THINK SHOP BUY LOCAL**. I urge everyone to consider our local business community and to actively support local business which supports us all. Consider take out, delivery, shop online or by phone, **but do it locally**.

On behalf of the Council I would remind you to continue to protect yourself, family, friends, and others in our community by practicing physical distancing. Please follow the mandated and enforced 14-day self-isolation if you have been travelling and stay at home if you are experiencing symptoms. There is an online self-assessment tool to help you.

I welcome conversations with anyone who has an idea, concern or a bouquet. Please don't hesitate to arrange an opportunity for Mayor and Council to hear your ideas. Call (306) 862 9866 to arrange an appointment or by email to mayorharper@nipawin.com.

NOTE: Anonymous concerns, written or by phone, will not receive response so please sign your concern and provide contact information.

The Town of Nipawin's website at: www.nipawin.com has links to all the latest COVID-10 information including links to Provincial and Federal forms and updates.

Link to the **Provincial COVID-19 self assessment tool** and other valuable information including the Re-Open Saskatchewan plan, is available at: www.saskatchewan.ca/COVID19