

Media Release
March 24, 2020

Town of Essex Declares State of Emergency

Council hosted an emergency meeting on Monday, March 23 to discuss the Town's ongoing response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Council supported the following:

- Changes to the delegation of authority by-law to provide greater administrative flexibility on financial decision-making, extension to payment deadlines, legal agreements, facility closures, and more. The changes to the delegation of authority only apply for as long as the state of emergency is in place. All decisions made by administration under the authority of the by-law would be subject to future confirmation by Council.
- Changes to the procedural by-law to allow for electronic participation in Council meetings during local emergencies. Going forward, Council members be able to attend via electronic means, such as phone or teleconferencing. The new ability will reduce in-person meetings and ensure public transparency of Council's decision-making throughout the state of emergency.
- Waiving penalties and interest for property tax payments up to and including April 30, 2020. Property tax accounts set up on pre-authorized payment plans will continue automatic withdrawals. Property owners requesting to end automatic payments must contact the Town's Finance division at 519-776-7336 ext 3050.
- Sending a letter to the Ontario Energy Board, the Premier of Ontario, and the local Member of Provincial Parliament, to consider the elimination of time of use billing for hydro rates throughout the Province.

"Council and I continue to deal with the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic," said Mayor Larry Snively. "While some of these changes are dramatic, we can assure you they are in the best interests of our community and the continued health and safety of our citizens and staff."

Mayor Snively continued to urge residents to follow the stay-at-home recommendations of public health officials

"It is everyone's responsibility to do what they can to limit the spread of the virus," Snively added. "Wash your hands, maintain appropriate distance from each other, but remain calm and remember we are in this together."

For guidance on what individuals can do to reduce their risk of contracting the virus, or what to do if they display symptoms, please visit the Ontario Ministry of Health's COVID-19 resource page. For local updates, please visit Windsor Essex County Health Unit's Novel Coronavirus page.

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