



MAYOR'S REPORT – APRIL 27, 2020

Good evening and thank you for joining us for our first virtual council meeting.

As you can see, the council chambers is very empty.

I am here with our CAO Scott Luey, City Clerk Amber LaPointe and Deputy Clerk Charlotte Madden along with our camera crew from Wee Stream.

I would like to welcome our eight city councilors and various city directors who are each attending from home.

We hope to all be back together in the council chambers soon, but for the time being, we will be conducting our meetings in this manner and I ask for your understanding if we have a few missteps this evening.

I would like to start this evening with a moment of silence as we remember the victims of last week's shooting in Nova Scotia including R.C.M.P. Constable Heidi Stevenson, a 23 year veteran of the force and also the loss of our fellow councillor from Pelham, Mike Ciolfi, who grew up in Port Colborne.

(moment of silence)

Our thoughts are with the family and friends of all of the victims of this criminal act and as well, all who have succumbed to COVID-19.

I would like to extend our appreciation to all of the essential workers in our community who are maintaining our emergency, medical, long term care and city services and all the staff and owners who are keeping businesses open during this unprecedented time in our history.

I ask that you check in with your neighbours, friends and family, especially those who are more vulnerable, to ensure their well-being.

Over the past three weeks, the city has worked with Community Support Services Niagara and our local grocery stores to establish a grocery delivery service for individuals over the age of 65 or adults with a disability.

My thanks go out to Sobey's, Bodner's Market and No Frills for participating and helping put this essential service together.

If you need this service or know of someone who does, please contact Community Support Services Niagara at 905-682-3800 Ext 706.

Also, if you would like to become a volunteer in the community to help with the grocery delivery program, you can call the same number, again, 905-682-3800 Ext 706.

I would really like to thank Carolyn Askeland, Executive Director of Community Support Services Niagara for working with my office, city staff and the grocery stores to bring this service to Port Colborne.

Last Friday, Community Support Services Niagara also announced their Volunteer Phone Chat and Safety Reassurance Call program. Arrangements can be made to call seniors who are lonely or isolated on a daily or weekly basis. To access this program, call 905-682-3800, Ext 0.

The Mayors and CAOs in the region have been holding weekly teleconferences to discuss issues related to COVID-19 in our communities and how we are dealing with them.

MP Badawey has also been holding weekly meetings with myself and the Mayors of Welland and Thorold keeping us apprised of developments and assistance offered by the federal government.

This week I and CAO Scott Luey will be meeting via conference call with MPP Burch.

Our economic development officer, Julian Douglas-Kameka has been meeting with her colleagues in the region and in consultation with our area Chambers of Commerce and Business Improvement Areas, as well as businesses in Port Colborne are developing a Regional Economic Recovery Plan. If you are a business owner, I urge you to go to our COVID-19 webpage for valuable resources and information.

Every business in our community has been affected by this pandemic, but together we can work to recover and reopen businesses and services and we ask for your continued support and diligence in keeping yourself and your family safe.

As this pandemic evolves, the information provided also evolves and changes. To stay informed about COVID-19 updates in Port Colborne and Niagara, visit our designated webpage, www.portcolborne.ca/page/covid-19, or follow us on social media. Our Customer Service Representatives are also here to answer your City related questions, Monday-Friday, 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. by calling City Hall at 905-835-2900.

Your ward councilors continue to be available through email and telephone to look after any concerns or inquiries during this pandemic. Please continue to reach out and I thank council for their dedication and understanding.

Last week was National Volunteer Week and I would like to give a shout out to all of the wonderful volunteers who help the city with their programs and services and also help our many non-profit organizations.

None of us would be able to maintain these programs and services without the help of our dedicated volunteers. We do thank you.

On a final note, I want to thank all of you for your continued efforts in helping Niagara beat this pandemic. I know it is tough on all of us not being able to gather with friends, family or neighbours, use our sports facilities, library, museum and not being able to fully support those businesses that are closed.

But in the words of Winston Churchill *“Success is never found. Failure is never fatal. Courage is the only thing. Victory at all costs, victory in spite of all terror, victory however long and hard the road may be; for without victory, there is no survival.”*

Council, staff and citizens, we will persevere and recover. Please stay safe and I thank you.