

Council Package

SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING

March 27, 2020





**AGENDA
TOWN OF LAMONT
SPECIAL MEETING OF COUNCIL
MARCH 27, 2020 – 10:30 a.m.**

**In accordance with section 199 of the MGA, this meeting will include Councillors attending the meeting via electronic means.*

1. CALL TO ORDER AND RELATED BUSINESS

1.1. CALL TO ORDER

1.2. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

2. NEW BUSINESS

2.1. Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic Update and Related Matters (Verbal)

2.2. Utility Billing

2.3. Refund Procedures

2.4. Property Tax

3. CLOSED SESSION

3.1. CAO Update, FOIP Section 24(1)(a), Advice from Officials (Advice, proposals, recommendations for or by a public body).

4. ADJOURNMENT



**TOWN OF LAMONT
COUNCIL AGENDA
REQUEST FOR DECISION**

AGENDA ITEM: 2.1

COUNCIL MEETING DATE: MARCH 27, 2020

ITEM DESCRIPTION OR TITLE

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic Update and Related Matters (Verbal update)

RECOMMENDATION

N/A

BACKGROUND

The purpose of this report is to provide Council on the actions and measures that have been taken by Administration to minimize and mitigate the risks of COVID-19.

Federal, Provincial and local governments have been taking steps to control the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Town has taken measures to protect the safety of residents and staff.

COMMUNICATIONS

The Town continues to post regular updates on the website as well as social media.

IMPLICATIONS OF DECISION

N/A

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

N/A

POLICY AND/OR LEGISLATIVE REFERENCES

N/A

ATTACHMENTS

N/A

Report Prepared By: Dreena Guptill

Approved by CAO:



TOWN OF LAMONT COUNCIL AGENDA REQUEST FOR DECISION

AGENDA ITEM: 2.2

COUNCIL MEETING DATE: MARCH 27, 2020

ITEM DESCRIPTION OR TITLE

Utility Billing Late Fees and Penalties

RECOMMENDATION

That Council direct Administration to waive any and all penalties and fees associated with the late payment of Town water, sewer, and waste collection utility bills for customers who request a deferral of their utility bill payment, for 90 days, ending on June 30, 2020 or such other date as subsequently amended.

BACKGROUND

The purpose of this report is to present Council with an update of the recommendation of the Province, as well as the actions of other municipalities in regards to penalties for late payments of municipal utility accounts.

Administration recommends that Council pass a resolution to support the waiver of any fees and penalties incurred for the late payment of City utility accounts from March 31, 2020 until June 30, 2020.

In an effort to support those financially impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Provincial Government announced on March 19, 2020 that residential customers can now defer their electricity and natural gas payments for 90 days, without incurring any of the associated fees and penalties. The Provincial Government also recommended that municipalities extend the same opportunity to municipal utility account holders (water, sewer, and waste collection).

The recommendation is that the Town waive penalties for late payment of municipal utility accounts (water, sewer and waste collection). Town utility bills will continue to be generated and mailed out during this period and customers are encouraged to keep their bills in good standing where possible. However, if financial challenges are being experienced, utility customers may request a deferral of their payment for up to 90 days without penalty and are encouraged to contact the Town office to discuss deferral options.

Various municipalities have announced or are considering similar actions, in order to support their residents and local stakeholders including, St. Albert, Edmonton/Epcor, Leduc, Medicine Hat, and Fort Saskatchewan.

Utility bills for the current billing cycle (cycle ending March 31) have been generated and sent to customers.



TOWN OF LAMONT COUNCIL AGENDA REQUEST FOR DECISION

This billing cycle will include late fees and penalties applied as of April 6, 2020 and to any prior outstanding balances. Administration will work with customers on payment options for prior billing periods as well.

COMMUNICATIONS

If Council approves the motion, communication will be made via social media, and all details posted to the Town's website.

IMPLICATIONS OF DECISION

Based on recommendations from the Province, the motion as presented gives the Town of Lamont residents and businesses some degree of relief in the face of the COVID-19 financial wake.

By offering residents and businesses the opportunity to defer their utility bill payments in such a financially trying time, the Town would be offering excellent customer service to the residents.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Administration is working to develop a complete financial analysis of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic to the Town. This will involve reductions in revenue in addition to challenges collecting future revenues required to ensure the ongoing operations of essential services.

POLICY AND/OR LEGISLATIVE REFERENCES

N/A

ATTACHMENTS

N/A

Report Prepared By: Dreena Guptill

Approved by CAO:



**TOWN OF LAMONT
COUNCIL AGENDA
REQUEST FOR DECISION**

AGENDA ITEM: 2.3

COUNCIL MEETING DATE: MARCH 27, 2020

ITEM DESCRIPTION OR TITLE

Refund Measures and Procedures

RECOMMENDATION

That Council grant to Administration the authority and discretion, despite any enacted Policy, Procedure, or budget, to refund any deposits or payments made or waive or defer payments scheduled to be made in relation to Town bookings or agreements as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, and that the CAO shall be permitted to state the term of any waiver, deferral, or refund.

BACKGROUND

With the recommendations from Federal and Provincial Health Authorities, the Town has taken steps to mitigate the risk to public health and safety in the wake of COVID-19. These steps involve the closure of public facilities and cancellations of bookings. These measures have affected recreation facility users, those with facility or programming bookings, as well as leaseholders on Town properties. The waiver, deferral, or refunding of payments affected by these closures or cancellations will allow the Town to further support residents and businesses affected by the continuing pandemic.

In order to further support residents and local businesses, Administration seeks Council approval to address refunds of deposits and payments in a manner appropriate for the situation that may be outside of approved Policies, Procedures or budgets.

Administration recommends that Council support Administration's refunding or waiver or deferral of payments made or scheduled to be made that are directly affected by the measures taken in relation of COVID-19.

COMMUNICATIONS

If Council makes the presented motion, Administration will reach out to those directly affected by the large waivers/refunds.

IMPLICATIONS OF DECISION

By demonstrating adaptability and flexibility in regards to refunding deposits or payments, the Town would be presenting a proactive and responsible government.



**TOWN OF LAMONT
COUNCIL AGENDA
REQUEST FOR DECISION**

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Administration is working to develop a complete financial analysis of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic to the Town. This will involve reductions in revenue in addition to challenges collecting future revenues required to ensure the ongoing operations of essential services.

POLICY AND/OR LEGISLATIVE REFERENCES

N/A

ATTACHMENTS

N/A

Report Prepared By: Dreena Guptill

Approved by CAO:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "D. Guptill", is written over a horizontal line.

CLOSED SESSION NOTICE

- **FOIP Section 24 (1)(a) – Advice from Officials (Advice, proposals, recommendations for or by a public body).**