

CITY OF LANGFORD
SPECIAL MEETING OF COUNCIL
Thursday, March 19th, 2020 @ 5:30 p.m.
Upper Back Parking Lot, 877 Goldstream Avenue

AGENDA

	Page
1. <u>CALL TO ORDER</u>	
2. <u>APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA</u>	
3. <u>PRESENTATION</u>	
a) Chris Aubrey, Fire Chief <u>RE: City's Response to COVID-19</u>	
b) Mike Forbes <u>RE: COVID-19 Proposal</u>	
4. <u>PUBLIC PARTICIPATION</u>	
5. <u>REPORTS</u>	
a) Open Burning and COVID-19 - Staff Report (Fire)	2
b) Closure of City Hall - Staff Report (Administration)	4
6. <u>ADJOURNMENT</u>	



City of Langford

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Staff Report to Council

Date: March 19, 2020
Department: Fire Rescue
Subject: Open Burning and COVID-19

Background

The City of Langford's Bylaw 1532 to Regulate Burning, Prevent and Suppress Fires and Regulate People at Fires in the City of Langford allows for a spring burning period from March 15 to April 15 annually. With many residents at home self-isolating due to COVID-19 as well as direction from the Ministry of Health to go outside into parks and trails for recreation, the current burn period poses a challenge for residents with respiratory issues and being exposed to the smoke from open fires.

Commentary

The current policy was initiated in 2014 with the purpose to improve air quality in the community. The changes were effective in reducing the amount of smoke on "burn weekends" by spreading open fires over a month period, as well as limiting permits to a half acre lot or greater. This reduced the amount of complaints we receive from residents about open burning.

As we are in unprecedented territory with the COVID-19 pandemic, overall health and well being are on the minds of all residents. We are currently only 4 days into the spring burning period and there have been 6 complaints from residents regarding smoke from the open fires and health concerns that are posed with the current policy. Typically, we would receive less than this for the entire burn period and therefore equates for a significant increase in complaints.

There is also a concern on the staff time for both Bylaw and Fire Department staff to manage the open burning process, to deal with complaints and manage the permitting system. With the quickly changing developments of the pandemic as well as restriction of staff to essential services to ensure delivery of emergency response, time is better spent on responding to the pandemic rather than maintaining the open burning policy.

Council may consider also a suspension of the campfire regulation for the same reasons. There would be a concern that some residents who were unable to get an open burning permit would obtain a campfire permit to burn their yard waste instead as this does occur regularly. Campfires however, can also be a good social activity for families during the pandemic as it can maintain social distancing, so this needs to be balanced with the negative effects of the smoke produced.

Financial Implications

There are no financial implication anticipated.

Legal Implications

There are no legal implications.

Options

That Council:

1. Suspend the current open burning policy for the spring burn period, rescind all open burning permits and enact a campfire ban;

OR

2. Suspend the current open burning policy for the spring burn period, but continue to allow campfires;

OR

3. Make no changes to the open burning policy at this time.

Respectfully submitted,

Submitted by:	Chris Aubrey, Fire Chief
Concurrence:	Adriana Proton, Manager of Legislative Services
Concurrence:	Lorne Fletcher, Manager of Community Safety and Municipal Enforcement
Concurrence:	Braden Hutchins, Director of Corporate Services
Concurrence:	Darren Kiedyk, Chief Administrative Officer

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Staff Report to Council

Date: March 19, 2020
Department: Administration
Subject: Closure of City Hall

Background and Commentary

Due to the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic, public health officials have closed schools, bars, and clubs; and imposed social distancing restrictions on public gatherings and gathering places. In this vein, senior staff have concluded that it is prudent to close City Hall to the public to protect staff and to encourage the public to stay home.

Staff will be asked to reschedule meetings with external parties as virtual or phone meetings. Business that cannot be conducted by phone or online will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

Financial Implications

None. Staff anticipate that most City Hall business with external parties can be done by phone or online.

Legal Implications

None.

Options

1. THAT Council indefinitely suspend public access to City Hall to the public starting Friday, March 20 at 4:30 pm.

OR

2. THAT Council keep City Hall open to the public.

Respectfully submitted,

Submitted by:	Adriana Proton, Manager of Legislative Services
Concurrence:	Braden Hutchins, Director of Corporate Services
Concurrence:	Darren Kiedyk, Chief Administrative Officer