

Here are the highlights from the regular and special Lanark County Council meetings held Wednesday, Aug. 26.

- **Future Options for County Meetings Assessed:** Council passed a motion opting to return to in-person committee and council meetings in the council chambers effective Sept. 9, as recommended in a report by Clerk/Deputy CAO Leslie Drynan. The report outlined options for safe, accessible, open and transparent meetings that adhere to public health guidelines. Drynan noted indoor gatherings are limited to a maximum of 50 people, and physical distancing of at least two metres is required between people who do not share a social circle. Individuals are encouraged to wear a face covering when physical distancing is a challenge. Barriers can be installed to help mitigate risk. Two options for in-person meetings were presented. The first was to use the council chambers in order to maintain use of the microphone system, while installing plexiglass barriers along desks and requiring face coverings when not seated behind the barrier. Councillors and only necessary county staff would be in attendance. The proceedings will be livestreamed to members of the public and media. Delegations may attend or appear virtually via Zoom. The second option was to use the large boardroom on the upper level of the public works building. The space would not require barriers due to its size, but was not recommended due to accessibility issues (stairs only), limited washroom facilities and there being no microphone or sound system in place. Council also proposed a procedural by-law amendment to include a permanent option for electronic meeting participation under certain circumstances pre-established by council, including declared emergencies, a pandemic or an adverse weather event. For more information, contact Leslie Drynan, Clerk/Deputy CAO, at 1-888-9-LANARK, ext. 1502.
  
- **“Road to Renewal” Report Accepted:** Council received the “Road to Renewal” report as information, which outlines the Lanark County Social Services phased departmental operating plan during the COVID-19 recovery. The report was presented by Director of Social Services Emily Hollington at the community services committee meeting earlier this month. “Lanark County Social Services plays an important role in supporting vulnerable people while helping the community recover,” she noted. “As we look ahead this will serve as the roadmap to our new way of operating.” The report highlights that those living in poverty are disproportionately affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. “Acknowledging these realities ensures our services are designed to remove barriers and best support the needs of the people we serve.” The report outlined the first phase of the response, which transitioned service to remote, with screening of clients and a focus on emergency services. Staff focused on closing high-risk services such as day cares, and spent time on emergency supports, such as safe temporary housing for those experiencing homelessness. The second phase, which is the current “gradual recovery” phase, focuses on transitioning to a new way of serving people and a reintroduction of programs and services that had been paused. It includes limited in-person services and the reopening of child care centres under strict guideline and with limited capacity. The third phase, beginning in September, focuses on full-service delivery in a safe and responsible manner while the virus remains a threat. This phase is expected to be lengthy, Remote or telephone service is a preferred option, with in-person service in a range of circumstances. The third phase is about creating a new reality, with a focus on implementing technologies to support the new way of doing business. “The pandemic hasn’t caused the underlying struggles for people living in poverty, but has highlighted some areas of significant concern” Hollington said, adding that as the response continues, attention must be given to services

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that support vulnerable populations. For more information, contact Emily Hollington, Director of Social Services, at 1-888-9-LANARK, ext. 2101.

- **Public Health Efforts Recognized and Supported:** Council passed a motion to recognize and support Medical Officer of Health Dr. Paula Stewart and the staff of the Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit in their continuous efforts since the onset of our fight against COVID-19. "With pride, we honour and thank these dedicated individuals for their crucial and tireless efforts in keeping our communities safe, healthy and educated," the motion states. Further, Warden Brian Campbell (Tay Valley Reeve) and Lanark County Council "encourage all residents to continue to adhere to public health guidelines, including the wearing of face coverings, adhering to proper social distancing and thorough hand hygiene, throughout the current COVID-19 recovery phase and beyond, for their own safety and well-being and to ensure that we continue to work together to minimize the risk of the virus spreading in our communities." The warden will send a letter of recognition to Dr. Stewart, with a copy to the Board of Health and local municipalities. For more information, contact Leslie Drynan, Clerk/Deputy CAO, at 1-888-9-LANARK, ext. 1502.
- **Upcoming Meetings: County Council, Wednesday, Sept. 9, 5 p.m.;** Community Services, Sept. 9 (following County Council); Corporate Services, Sept. 9 (following Community Services). **County Council, Wednesday, Sept. 23, 5 p.m.;** Public Works, Sept. 23 (following County Council); Economic Development, Sept. 23 (following Public Works). Watch for details about public access to meetings on agendas and through online notifications. For more information, contact 1-888-9-LANARK, ext. 1502. Like "LanarkCounty1" on Facebook and follow "@LanarkCounty1" on Twitter!