



May 5, 2020

Statement from Mayor Ken Hewitt & Council

For the numbers today go to:

<https://hnhu.org/health-topic/coronavirus-covid-19/>

The feelings around the emergency operations centres that I am participating in are positive. Our numbers have slowly flattened out and our long term care homes seem to have this virus contained and under control.

That said, we must still be diligent. We must still be focused on practicing the safety protocols to protect ourselves and those around us. There is still an ongoing concern with the medical officers in Ontario that the risk still exists and more so the potential of a second wave.

This past weekend is an example of why we should not let our guard down. Going for a ride, getting a coffee or going for a walk is fine. But congregating in a parking lot, or at the park or hosting a party is nothing more than purely selfish. It is that behaviour that risk us all and with that behaviour the possibility of extending this pandemic exists and worse. This is what can contribute to businesses losing longer, or employees out of work longer. If the Province cannot open things up as a result of numbers changing, it will be those people that own the blame. Furthermore it is a direct slap in the face to everyone who has taken this seriously and have locked down for the past 2 months.

On a more positive note, the Ford government has announced that businesses should get ready: in particular, golf courses, marinas and retailers. Local golf courses can start maintaining their greens etc. and begin to work on a safety plan on how they will operate this summer. Marinas can begin to get boats ready and gear up for the upcoming season.

We are waiting for the signal from the Province that says private boat ramps can be opened for recreational use and once that occurs, the municipality will open the public ramps as well. Until then they remain closed.

I encourage each retailer to start building a safety plan. We want you to be ready, prepared and open when the time comes. Hopefully very soon.



I have been asked several times about the opening of trailer parks, and all I can say is that we are waiting for the Ford government to review the Provincial order and they will announce the changes with respect to trailer parks. At this time they remain effectively closed.

Our CMO has agreed to open the parks and trails for walk-through use only. We hope that people will not only enjoy themselves and get some exercise but will understand that the public playground equipment and other structures cannot be opened at this time, as they cannot be maintained.

Recently, our CMO issued a new order stating that cottage owners outside of our health district of H-N to not come to their secondary residence. This has caused some great debate and anger. I have several emails from residents supporting the order as much as I have emails against it. It is very polarizing.

First of all, this order does not come from the county, the mayors, the staff or council. It is a section 22 order under the Health Promotion and Protection Act issued from the public health unit. While there are many arguments on both sides of this, one in particular being financial, no matter where you look there is financial loss in every decision that has been made in this pandemic and none are any less or more important than the other.

There is a reason that these orders are temporary measures because you can shoot holes all through them in so many ways and they are not intended to make perfect sense but they are intended to minimize the health risk to the community.

While both Mayor Chopp and I can appreciate the intent and motives behind the public health unit, we do not support the order primarily because it creates an expectation of enforcement that we cannot meet. We have made those notions very clear and it is not uncommon for our positions to differ from the health unit or with other members of the emergency operations centre.

In this pandemic, decisions are not similar to those that are made when council convenes and votes are taken. In many cases we have seen examples of where what is medically driven contradicts what may be politically driven.

We all share one thing in common for certain and that is we want to open our economy and restore our daily lives as soon as possible.

“No matter what happened during our day, no matter how horrible it was, there were tiny victories and moments of positivity. “ — Humble the Poet

Stay Safe,

Mayor Ken Hewitt