

 COBOURG	THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWN OF COBOURG	
	STAFF REPORT	
TO:	Mayor John Henderson and Members of Council	
FROM:	Dean Hustwick, Director of Community Services	
DATE OF MEETING:	August 24, 2020	
TITLE / SUBJECT:	Status of Cobourg Beach after August 31, 2020	
REPORT DATE:	August 13, 2020	File #:

1.0 STRATEGIC PLAN
Not Applicable

2.0 PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT
Not Applicable

2.0 RECOMMENDATION
THAT Council receive the report from the Director of Community Services; and

FURTHER THAT Council endorses:

the extension of the closure of Cobourg Beach until Saturday, October 17, 2020 when the fencing will be removed and the Beach re-opened

OR

re-opening of Cobourg Beach beginning on Tuesday, September 01, 2020 from Mondays through Fridays only and the continued closure of the Beach on Saturdays and Sundays until Saturday, October 17, 2020 when the fencing will be removed and the Beach re-opened

OR

the extension of the closure of Cobourg Beach until after the Labour Day weekend when, on Tuesday, September 08, 2020, the fencing will be removed and the Beach will be re-opened

OR

Another option determined by Council

4.0 ORIGIN

On Monday June 1, 2020, Cobourg Council held a Special Meeting to discuss a May 11, 2020 Staff Report regarding the potential closure of Cobourg Beach due to COVID-19 related concerns. Council directed staff to close the Beach until August 31, 2020 utilizing metal fencing and increased enforcement. It also requested that staff provide Council at its June 22, 2020 Committee of the Whole Meeting with additional information regarding the possible re-opening of the Beach.

On June 04, 2020, municipal staff officially completed and executed Municipal Council's direction and closed Cobourg Beach to all public access.

At its regular meeting on June 29, 2020, Cobourg Council confirmed that the Beach would remain closed until August 31, 2020.

5.0 BACKGROUND

By Council resolution, Cobourg Beach was closed until August 31, 2020. The Town of Cobourg had the jurisdiction to take this action as the abutting riparian land own, as confirmed with legal counsel.

As August 31st is rapidly approaching a decision needs to be made on the status of the beach after that date.

6.0 ANALYSIS

There are a number of factors that relate to a decision on the beach.

Status of Pandemic

Although the Town of Cobourg is now in Stage 3 of the Government of Ontario's *Framework for Reopening Our Province*, restrictions and safety precautions remain in place and the community must remain vigilant in its efforts to combat the pandemic and to prevent a second wave.

Demand

This year, Labour Day falls on September 07, a full week after the end-date of the Cobourg Beach closure. Traditionally, the Labour Day weekend is not one of the busier weekends for Cobourg Beach, although the weather and temperature certainly influence the number of visitors. This year, with COVID-19 and the re-opening of schools on September 8th, there will likely be greater focus by families on the return-to-school process, potentially reducing the demand on Cobourg Beach during the first week of September.

Although we are about to enter the final month of summer, temperatures have remained high in September and October in recent years and overall demand for the Beach could remain strong during this period, although lower than the peak summer months. Furthermore, demand during the week is generally much lower than weekends and declines further throughout September and October.

Lifeguards

The Town's contract with the YMCA for lifeguarding services usually extends through the Labour Day long weekend. This year with the Beach closure, lifeguarding services were not initiated and it is not practical or financially viable to provide them for September even if Council chooses to re-open the Beach on September 1st.

Washrooms

The washroom building will remain closed for the season but the existing port-o-potties will be maintained.

To facilitate a decision by Council on the status of Cobourg Beach after August 31st, municipal staff have prepared the following three options for Council's consideration:

1. extend the closure of Cobourg Beach until Saturday, October 17, 2020 when the fencing will be removed and the Beach re-opened;
2. re-open Cobourg Beach beginning on Tuesday, September 01, 2020 from Mondays through Fridays only and continue the closure of the Beach on Saturdays and Sundays until Saturday, October 17, 2020 when the fencing will be removed and the Beach re-opened; and
3. extend the closure of Cobourg Beach until after the Labour Day weekend when, on Tuesday, September 08, 2020, the fencing will be removed and the Beach will be re-opened.

7.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS/BUDGET IMPACT

While there are certainly economic impacts of the beach closure on the local business and tourism sectors, the only direct expenses related to the continued closure is approximately \$1,400 a month for the fencing plus, depending on the option selected by Council, staff costs for opening and closing the fencing, although this latter expense will be absorbed through regular operations.

8.0 CONCLUSION

Council closed Cobourg Beach until August 31, 2020 and municipal staff are seeking Council direction on the status of the Beach after this date.

9.0 POLICIES AFFECTING THE PROPOSAL

Not Applicable

10.0 COMMUNICATION RESULTS

The Town's Communications and Marketing and Events Departments will promote the continued restrictions on Cobourg Beach based on Council's decision.

Title:	Signing Official:	Signature:	Date:
Director of Community Services	D. Hustwick	Electronic	August 12, 2020