



PORT COLBORNE

Mayor's Report

June 14, 2021 Council Meeting

COVID-19

The Province of Ontario began its reopening plan on Friday. This means we can now dine at outdoor patios and shop in person with limitations. It was great to see so many people out on our patios on this weekend. Check out our Facebook page contest and tell us what your favourite local business is and what makes them so special.

As a part of the City's safe and gradual reopening, we have opened our beaches, marina, boat ramp, playgrounds, Discovery Spray Pad, trails and parks. Some outdoor fitness programs are also being offered.

If you have not yet received your vaccine, go to the Ontario.ca website to book an appointment or call 1-888-999-6488.

Niagara Region Public Health has announced vaccination clinics tailored for youth and their families, beginning today. These clinics are available now for booking through the provincial booking system, for those 12-17 years old and their families. They will be in Port Colborne June 16-20.

If you have questions in regards to City Hall services or would like to report a concern, you can contact a Customer Service representative Monday – Friday 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. by calling 905-835-2900 or via email CustomerService@portcolborne.ca.

Alternatively, you can visit our website www.portcolborne.ca and submit a service request or inquiry by clicking on the "Request A Service" tab, located on the top right corner of our website page.

Whether you are a citizen, business owner or city councillor, we are here to assist you and provide Customer Service excellence through all service channels, internally and externally.

In-person appointments will be scheduled for essential and time sensitive services. Where possible, services will be provided through remote means.

Residential Schools

On May 28th, Regional Chair Jim Bradley and Niagara's 12 mayors offered the following joint statement concerning residential schools:

On behalf of the people of Niagara, we have asked that flags be lowered at municipal facilities across the region in honour of the 215 children who were recently found in a mass grave at a former residential school in Kamloops. The flags will remain at half-mast for one hour for each of the lives that were taken.

Starting Monday, May 31, flags will be flown at half-mast until June 8.

The discovery of this mass grave is a stark reminder of the devastating legacy that the Canadian residential school system continues to have on Indigenous people across our country. As Canadians, we must never forget that residential schools forcefully removed Indigenous children from their families, robbed them of their culture, and exposed many of them to physical, mental and sexual abuse.

This particular residential school was operational until 1969, and in the mass unmarked grave, bodies belonging to children as young as three were discovered. Leaders in the Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc First Nations community have rightfully pointed out that the individuals found in this mass grave would have been elders in their community by now. The discovery of this grave site represents more than just a loss of life; it is also an unmeasurable loss of culture, tradition, customs and society.

As Niagara's municipal leaders, we recognize that reconciliation starts with a sincere acknowledgement of the injustices and harms experienced by Indigenous people in Canada. While this discovery is exceptionally tragic, we must also recognize it as an opportunity to learn the truth about the horrors of the residential school system, and the lasting intergenerational trauma it has had for Indigenous people across Canada.

While the flag lowering is symbolic, we are also committed to action. We continue to find ways to work more closely with local Indigenous leaders to address specific items of concern to those living in Niagara. We strive to foster productive relationships based on trust and respect.

We are also joining many communities and organizations across the country who are calling on the federal government to declare a national day of mourning to recognize the tragedies of residential schools in Canada. While nothing will erase the painful impact that residential schools had on First Nations, Inuit and Metis people, we believe we must better acknowledge, and learn from, one of the darkest chapters of our history.

For those looking for support, the Indian Residential School Crisis Line is available for former residential school students and others by calling 1-866-925-4419.

June Celebrations

Pride Niagara

On June 1st we raised the Pride Flag at City Hall in celebration of Pride Month, to show our dedication as a City to inclusiveness and equality of the LGBTQ+ community in Port Colborne and beyond.

After raising the Pride flag, we immediately brought it back to half-mast to continue the acknowledgement and to honour our indigenous brothers and sisters. Our community stands together, hand in hand. Not only in times of celebration but times of struggle, and grief. We stand together in support and unity.

Senior's Month

The City of Port Colborne Senior Advisory Council also raised the Niagara Age-Friendly Flag at City Hall to celebrate June being Seniors Month.

Each June the Government of Ontario proclaims that June is Senior Month to celebrate our seniors and to recognize the contribution they continue to make in the communities across Ontario including the City of Port Colborne.

This year's theme is Stay safe, active and connected. Seniors are encouraged to focus on programs and services that enable them to remain safe, healthy, engaged and live life to the fullest during the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond.

Parks and Recreation Month

The City is also celebrating Parks and Recreation month in June. Follow us on facebook as we profile the many parks available in our community.

If you visit H.H. Knoll Lakeview Park this summer, you will find a new selection of food trucks available in our redesigned parkette.

Pathstone Mental Health

Pathstone Mental Health has seen an unprecedented number of individuals as a direct result of the pandemic. If you or your child are in need of mental health counselling, please call the 24 crisis and support line at Pathstone at 1-800-263-4944.

More information about how to access their services can be found at www.pathstonementalhealth.ca.