

# A note to the Membership of the VCA

## From Councillor Stuart McCormack

### April 3, 2020

I had been invited by Mona Babin to speak to the VCA members at your April 2020 annual meeting. Since that cannot occur due to the pandemic, I would like to, instead, send you this message on behalf of the Niagara-on-the-Lake Council.

First of all, I hope you are all following both the example of our Prime Minister, the Premier and the advice of public health officials by STAYING AT HOME. All of council wants you to come out of this pandemic emergency healthy, and to do so requires the commitment that we all STAY HOME, only go out for essential reasons, and be vigilant about maintaining physical distancing of two metres apart at all times.

What has your Niagara-on-the-Lake Council been doing?

It has been a trying time for Council and let me give you a little history in that regard. On March 17, 2020 Council held a special meeting and delegated all authority of Council to the Lord Mayor and the CAO during the COVID 19 pandemic:

<https://cotw.notl.org/sites/notl/NOTLCOTW.nsf/BF5BF13826D2CAA28525783E006E878E/7320850504C25E1E8525852E00666DF4>

Councillor Cameron and I were self-isolating in early March at the time for precautionary purposes only, and could only participate by phone and therefore were not counted for calculating quorum due to the provisions of the Municipal Act.

The Province, on March 19, changed the Municipal Act so all meetings (public and closed sessions) could be held by electronic means, and participants would count for a quorum. Our first such meeting was held March 30. We had technical issues so that means the new way to conduct meetings is still a work in process. We nonetheless got through the agenda and you can watch / listen to the process online <https://livestream.com/notl/events/9065044>

I would encourage you to listen at least to the first part of that meeting as the Lord Mayor gives an update on what has been happening in Town regarding COVID-19.

The Town is going to face some very significant challenges going forward as we will have a very significant drop in revenue with the almost complete disappearance of tourists in Town. Our big challenge will be reorienting our budget, a process which will again be somewhat hampered by our inability to meet in person.

I would like to give you an insight into our path forward as a Council and as a Town, but to do so would be presumptuous. Our landscape is changing daily, if not hourly, and I can only hope that when I meet you all and address you in person I am able to offer some insight in that regard.

Until then BE WELL, BE SAFE, and thank you for STAYING AT HOME

Stuart McCormack  
Niagara-on-the-Lake Councillor  
2018-2022