

**In-camera**  
**AGENDA ITEM SHEET (AIS)**

Attachment: **Yes**      No

**Complete ALL Sections**

**NAME OF COMMITTEE:    Committee of the Whole In-camera**  
**(no longer Sub-committee In-camera meetings)**

- HIGHLIGHT ONE:**
- DELEGATION COMING TO MEETING;
    - Estimated time for the delegation/presentation:
    - Name of person making presentation:
    - Have you confirmed the meeting date and time with the delegation?  
Yes      or      No
  - **REQUIRES DIRECTION OF COMMITTEE;**
- or,
- FOR THE INFORMATION OF COMMITTEE;

**REASON / REASONS FOR IN-CAMERA:**    Highlight all applicable reasons:

- Security of municipal property of the municipality or local board (section 239.(2)(a));
- Personal matters about an identifiable individual(s) including municipal employees or local board employees (section 239.(2)(b));
- Proposed or pending acquisition or disposal of land by the municipality or local board (section 239.(2)(c)) (includes municipal property leased for more than 21 years;
- Labour relations or employee negotiations (section 239.(2)(d));
- Litigation or potential litigation, including matters before administrative tribunals affecting the municipality or local board (section 239.(2)(e));
- Advice that is subject to solicitor-client privilege including communications necessary for that purpose (section 239.(2)(f));
- A matter in respect of which a council, board, committee or other body may hold a closed meeting under another Act (section 239.(2)(g));
- Information explicitly supplied in confidence to the municipality or local board by Canada, a province or territory or a Crown agency of any of them (section 239.(2)(h));
- A trade secret or scientific, technical, commercial, financial or labour relations information, supplied in confidence to the municipality or local board, which, if disclosed, could reasonably be expected to prejudice significantly the competitive position or interfere significantly with the contractual or other negotiations of a person, group of persons or organization (section 239.(2)(i));
- A trade secret or scientific, technical, commercial or financial information that belongs to the municipality or local board and has monetary value or potential monetary value (section 239.(2)(j));or

- A position, plan, procedure, criteria or instruction to be applied to any negotiations carried on or to be carried on by or on behalf of the municipality or local board (section 239.(2)(k));
- A subject matter that relates to the consideration of:
  - a request under the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* if the council, board, commission or other body is the head of an institution for the purposes of that Act; or
  - an ongoing investigation respecting the municipality, a local board or a municipally-controlled corporation by the Ombudsman appointed under the *Ombudsman Act*, an Ombudsman referred to in subsection 223.13(1) of the *Municipal Act*, or the investigator referred to in subsection 239.2(1) (section 239.(3));
- For educating or training Council members, provided that no Council member discusses or otherwise deals with any matter in a way that materially advances the business or decision-making of the Council, local board or committee (section 239.(3.1)).

#### COMPLETE ALL SECTIONS BELOW

**Title:** COVID-19 Financial Relief Measures

**Objective:** To provide recommendations on relief requests.

**Background:** The COVID-19 virus has had a significant impact on our community and City operations. Many functions of the City have been impacted and most of them have financial implications to the City's budget.

This is the first time we have experienced a complete pause on City operations and mass job losses in the community leading to immediate and widespread financial hardship among our residents.

At the April 1, 2020 Council meeting the following resolution was passed:

THAT the following be approved to provide for the immediate relief and flexibility of residents and businesses in the City of Stratford:

- Waive penalty and interest related to the April 9<sup>th</sup> property tax installment due date and stop all aggressive collection activities until August 30, 2020
- Waive penalties, interest, late payment charges and other fees related to water and sewer billing and suspend all progressive collection activities until August 30, 2020
- Suspend any water meter disconnections until August 30, 2020
- Suspend the transfer of overdue water accounts to the property tax account to assist landlords
- Provide free parking until May 31, 2020 or the commencement of the Festival Theatre season
- Waive interest on any general invoices for the City until May 31, 2020

- Suspend the non-sufficient fund administration fee for returned payments until May 31, 2020
- Provide credits or refunds on cancelled city-run community programs and services
- Provide free transit until August 30, 2020
- Continue with the requirement for paid bag tags for curbside collection

## **Analysis:**

Since the April 1, 2020 report the City has received requests for additional relief. The following initiatives could be implemented to provide continued support to those impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

1. Refund of Bed and Breakfast Licenses – The City has collected \$27,730 in license fees from Bed and Breakfast businesses. Since the announcement of the Stratford Festival cancelling its season we have received numerous requests to refund these license fees as reservations are being cancelled. Part of the license fee includes a City inspection which would no longer be required. If a business chooses to continue to operate a license fee would not be refunded.
2. Refund of Patio Licenses – The City has collected \$5,150 in patio license fees. With social distancing in effect it will be difficult to keep these patios open and the City has received requests for refunds of these license fees. A business can choose to have a patio open and those license fees will not be refunded.
3. Rent reduction – The Stratford Festival leases the Normal School, the current lease expires December 31, 2021. The 2020 lease amount is \$95,000. The Stratford Festival is requesting a 75% reduction in their 2020 lease payment amounting to a reduction of \$71,250. After operating expenses a significant portion of the lease revenue is transferred to a reserve fund for capital projects on this facility. This request will cover the operating expenses but will result in a reduction to the contribution to the reserve fund. This reserve fund is budgeted to cover the HVAC replacement this year at a cost of \$25,000. For this reason, staff are recommending a 50% reduction in rent amounting to \$47,500.
4. Lease Waiver – The Stratford Festival leases the Queen Street Parking lot, the current lease expires November 28, 2020. There are 2 parts to the lease payment, a rental payment of \$17,910 and a resurfacing cost of \$7,130. The resurfacing portion is transferred to the Parking reserve fund for capital maintenance of the parking lot. This request would be a reduction in revenue as well as a reduction in the contribution to the reserve fund. If the Stratford Festival does not rent the parking lot for 2020, this will give the City the opportunity to use the parking lot if necessary.
5. Lease Waiver – Crazy Dogz leases the Memorial Gardens space. The lease is a 5 year lease expiring in 2023. The 2020 lease amount is \$3,060. Crazy Dogz is requesting the contract be placed on hold for 2020. The lease agreement provides that the contract can be terminated but does not contain a clause for placing it on hold. This lost revenue would also result in lost revenue for a business license in the amount of \$502.

This has been a difficult space to lease and staff recommend waiving the 2020 rent rather than a cancellation of the 5 year contract. Crazy Dogz will not operate in this space in 2020.

6. Lease Waiver – Art in the Park has a multi year rental agreement that ends Fall of 2021. They will not be holding this event in 2020 and have requested the City waive the 2020 rental fee of \$10,000.

**Financial impact:** As noted above. The total financial impact could be as high as \$118,982 depending on the number of licenses refunded. If approved, the City will have to find additional cost savings to offset this lost revenue. There is the potential to achieve this through reduced contributions to reserve funds in 2020. However, these reserve funds are needed to fund future capital projects.

### **Alignment with Strategic Priorities:**

**Strengthening our Plans, Strategies and Partnerships:** Sound fiscal governance and adherence to regulations supports all Strategic Priorities of the City.

**Staff Recommendation:** THAT direction be given to the City Clerk to list the following recommendations be approved to provide for the immediate relief of businesses in the City of Stratford on the next available Council Agenda:

- **Bed and Breakfast licenses be refunded for those businesses not operating in 2020**
- **Patio licenses be refunded for those businesses not opening a patio in 2020**
- **The Normal School rent be reduced by 50% for 2020**
- **The Queen St Parking lot lease payment be waived for 2020**
- **The Memorial Gardens lease payment be waived for 2020**
- **The Art in the Park lease payment be waived for 2020.**

Run the Accessibility Checker on your completed AIS but only from Title to the last line of your staff recommendation.

Is there a departmental report or supporting material to accompany this AIS item?

(Highlight one)

**No** or Yes If YES, **forward one (1) copy of the report** or material to Joan Thomson, Clerk's Office, for distribution with the In-camera agenda. The exception is if there is a spiral-bound, report such as a consultant's report etc. Then forward 20 copies to Joan Thomson

Date: May 14, 2020 ← (insert date this AIS was completed)

Author: Janice Beirness, Acting Director of Corporate Services ← (Author to insert his/her name and title)

Director:                    ⇐ (Director to insert his/her initials to indicate his/her approval of this AIS)

CAO: J Thomson —                    ⇐ (CAO to insert his initials once he has approved this AIS)

After you complete this AIS and it has been reviewed by your Director, if applicable, email it to the CAO or Acting CAO with a cc to Joan Thomson prior to the agenda deadline.