

From the Council Chambers  
**SPECIAL COVID-19 BULLETIN**  
**May 4, 2020**  
by Mayor Blair Skinner

The world is changing every day and so it does not make sense to wait 3 months for further communication to the public regarding Council's work during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Your Council is continuing to spend time every day to keep fully informed on the COVID-19 pandemic from national and provincial governments and health teams. A reminder that for the latest information, go to [www.gov.mb.ca](http://www.gov.mb.ca) and click on the COVID-19 website. You will get all the latest information and have access to the daily news conference (sometimes 2). Typically these take place at either 11 am or 1 pm every day or sometimes both. These include lengthy conference call questions from the media who probably ask all the questions you may have. You can also access all past bulletins, all Public Health Orders, all past news conferences, and there are links to both the national and the world websites.

**Decision to Reopen some Public Buildings and Public Recreation Areas**

On April 1, at a Special Meeting of the Council of the Local Government District of Pinawa, Council unanimously passed a resolution to close the following:

All Public Buildings are closed to the public. This includes the LGD Administration Office, the Public Works Building, the Water Treatment Plant, the Pinawa Community Centre, the Pinawa Public Library, and the Vanier Centre.

In addition, the resolution included the closure of all trails including the Ironwood Trail, the Alice Chambers Trail and the Trans Canada Trail, the Suspension Bridge, the Channel Float, the Orville Acres Arena including the outdoor rink, the Pinawa Public Pool and Beach, Play structures in our playgrounds, the Picnic Pergola and all picnic tables in public areas.

Council is very encouraged by the generally strong support and compliance with the resolution. We received feedback from some people that did not necessarily agree with the decision but shared that they understood Council's difficult position and agreed to support us by following the restrictions. One of the great things about living in Pinawa is that By-Laws/Resolutions are followed by a huge majority of residents and that minimizes the need for heavy handed enforcement. This strong support by our residents has meant that our most vulnerable residents have remained protected from this nasty virus. Our residents should be made aware of that fact that even in the last week, we continue to receive opinions that range from "we should reopen the trails" to "we should block off the highway access to Pinawa".

Your Council has been following the direction of the Provincial Government throughout the pandemic. The Chief Medical Officer has acknowledged that the curve is being flattened in Manitoba and credits the public with stepping up and

following the directions from the Provincial Government and Manitoba Health. This has allowed the Provincial Government to begin to relax the restrictions by announcing “Restoring Safe Services” on April 29 and with Phase 1 effective on Monday, May 4. The full announcement for Phase 1 can be read by accessing the following link:

<https://www.gov.mb.ca/covid19/restoring/phase-one.html>

Accordingly, Council met for a Special Meeting on April 30 to discuss relaxing the restrictions that we announced on April 1. Effective Monday, May 4, the Local Government District of Pinawa Administration office will reopen with regular office hours. Council also approved the reopening of the Pinawa Public Library at the discretion of the Library Board and staff. This will not necessarily be on May 4 as the Library Board and staff are still working on how to comply with the continued restrictions for social distancing to ensure the safety of visitors and staff. The Landfill Site has also started on summer hours: Tuesday and Thursday 5 – 8 pm; Saturday 8 am – 1 pm and Sunday Noon – 5 pm.

Please note that the Community Centre, the Vanier Centre, the Water Treatment Plant, and the Public Works Building all remain closed to the public.

Council also made the decision to reopen the following recreation facilities:

- The Walking Trails
- The Suspension Bridge
- The Picnic Pergola
- Picnic Tables in the parks
- Playground Structures
- The Outdoor Rink

Please note that this is not a return to Business as Usual! Social Distancing must be adhered to at all of these facilities and users of the recreation facilities are responsible to ensure that they bring with them, their own hand sanitizer.

### **Marina, Boat Launches, Public Dock, and Private Docks**

The above decision means that the marina will be open effective May 4 including the boat launch. The rules for launching boats will be that only one boat may be launched at a time. If you are waiting to launch your boat you must remain in your vehicle until the people ahead of you have cleared the launch area, and that social distancing must be practiced at all times. The reopening of the trails means that people can also access the canoe docks, the public docks, and private docks. Social distancing restrictions apply to all of the public docks including the visitors dock, and private docks.

### **Pool and Beach**

The Province has deferred a decision on reopening public pools and beaches. In this regard, we have the advantage of time since our pool would not normally open until near the end of June. Staff have recruited lifeguards but have cautioned them that the pool may not open at the usual time, or perhaps not at

all. The challenge is determining how to maintain social distancing. Because of the uncertainty, we are delaying taking bookings for swimming lessons until the path forward is determined. Council and staff are requesting your understanding while we work through this difficult issue.

Similarly, the province has not made any decision with regards to public beaches. Council will follow the lead of the Province on this issue, as well.

### **Pinawa Birthday Weekend and Lund Mania**

It is with great sadness that Council acknowledges the decision to cancel the Pinawa Birthday Weekend activities. The Lund Mania committee decided first on April 15 to cancel this year's competition. This event is strongly dependent on sponsorship, and under the current circumstances, the committee can certainly understand the reluctance of sponsors to provide support when they are mainly focused on trying to stay in business. Shortly thereafter, the Pinawa Lions Club made the difficult decision to cancel all of the events that they organize for Birthday Weekend. It is obvious that almost every event would be impossible to run and maintain whatever social distancing rules are effect in July. The decision had to be made now because of the countless pre-event planning activities undertaken by the Lions Club that we all pretty much take for granted. On behalf of Council, staff, and residents, we thank the Pinawa Lions Club for all they do for our Community. We look forward to working with you to organize a spectacular 2021 Pinawa Birthday Weekend celebration.

### **Seasonal Campgrounds**

Council understands that this is a controversial topic. Council has not made any decision at any time regarding the Seasonal Campgrounds. Therefore, the Provincial Government decision to allow public and private campgrounds to open on May 4 is applicable. We note that the owners of our two seasonal campgrounds have made the decision to defer the opening of their operations to May 15. The owners have indicated that they plan to implement very strict guidelines to restrict traffic in and out of the campgrounds and to the rest of the community. The guidelines they are planning will exceed the Provincial Government restrictions. It is important to remember that the owners of the campgrounds also live in Pinawa and want to help ensure we minimize the risk of possible community transmission of the COVID-19 virus in our community. The owners will be communicating their plans with all residents directly. Please see the enclosed insert to this Special Bulletin for that information.

Your input into these or any other issues is always welcome. Please feel free to call me at (204)753-2199 or contact any of the Councillors, or Resident Administrator, Gisele Smith at (204)753-5105.

### **Private Campgrounds: Pioneer Bay Campground and Relax Ridge Seasonal Park**

Due to the Covid-19 crisis, many Pinawa residents are concerned about the tourism/camper influx in the Town of Pinawa. The Province of Manitoba is allowing private campgrounds to open on Monday, May 4<sup>th</sup>. The owners of Pioneer Bay and Relax Ridge have decided, as a precautionary measure, to extend the opening day by two weeks, with opening day on Friday, May 15. The residents of Pinawa are important and we want to ensure that residents feel comfortable and safe with the opening of these campgrounds.

Pioneer Bay and Relax Ridge are a huge economic benefit to our local businesses during the summer months. However, the Province of Manitoba has stated that they would like all campgrounds and cottagers not to utilize the amenities of small towns, and therefore we will request that all campground tenants ensure that all supplies are purchased prior to coming to their recreational second home. This will be a large financial loss for the Town of Pinawa, but safety is first.

As private owners of these campgrounds, we implement a high level of regulations and high degree of ability to monitor tenants. There will be strict rules in place for residents of both campgrounds as per Provincial guidelines, as well as added measures, including limiting access to the Parks to residents only.

The campground residents consider this their second home and therefore understand how important it is to follow the required Covid-19 rules (just as Pinawa residents have to follow required Provincial guidelines in all other communities across Manitoba).

Should any residents have any questions or concerns, or require factual information, please feel free to contact Rick Backer or Brent Henschell.