

New dates set for the tentative opening of Shelburne Town Hall

Written By PAULA BROWN

Shelburne council has new tentative dates for the reopening of Town Hall.

Shelburne council received a report during their meeting on Monday (July 13) from Denyse Morrissey, the Chief Administrative Officer (COA), giving tentative dates for reopening Town Hall for staff members and for the public. In the updated report the tentative dates for reopening for staff is Aug. 31 and the reopening for the public has been tentatively set for Sept. 8.

"This report summarizes that, again, taking a very precautionary approach we are recommending that we look at our staff returning to the office as an entire team on Aug. 31 and that we would open to the public the week later," said Morrissey to council members.

The report given at the council meeting was the second update for a schedule outlining dates to reopen Town Hall. A previous date was provided to council members on June 8 that looked to reopen Town Hall for staff members as of July 6. According to the report in late June, additional internal review and with the consultation of other municipalities the dates were revised to open for staff on July 27 and for the public on Aug. 4. The report on July 13 marks the second revision pushing the dates later into the year.

Earlier in the council meeting, Coun. Walter Benotto, who said he is not fond of the Zoom-based council meetings, asked when council members would be able to meet in person with the number of people allowed to gather increasing as the Province moves to Phase 3 on Friday July 17.

"It is 50 indoors as of Friday, still with physical distancing measures in place," said Mayor Wade Mills. "We'd have to create an environment where at least two metres between each person is doable. That would include council members, staff members as well as any members of public who may want to attend."

Mayor Mills, who sat in the council chambers by himself during the meeting, said that looking at the room with social distancing measures it would accommodate 2 or 3 additional people.

"We won't be meeting back in this room, where I am sitting, in the near future," said Mills.

If the new dates remain set for staff and public opening, Town Hall will look to be open three or four days of the week with a small number of staff on site, according to COA Morrissey.

Public access to Shelburne's Town Hall, the public works yard, and police station were closed back on March 17. At the time there was no estimated date for when in person council meetings would be reinstated. Council meetings have since been done via Zoom.

With the opening of more community facilities reopening with the move to Phase 3, Town council is looking at locations to conduct in person meetings.