

TOWN OF CANMORE

AGENDA

Special Meeting of Council

Council Chamber at the Canmore Civic Centre, 902 – 7 Avenue

Tuesday, March 24, 2020 at 9:00 a.m.

Times are estimates only.

A. CALL TO ORDER AND APPROVAL OF AGENDA

1. Agenda for the March 24, 2020 Special Meeting of Council

B. PUBLIC HEARINGS

None

C. DELEGATIONS

None

D. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

None

E. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

None

F. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None

G. BYLAW APPROVAL

None

H. NEW BUSINESS

9:00 – 9:30

1. Option to Defer for Tax and Utility Payments

Recommendations:

- (a) That Council direct Administration to provide an option for property owners to defer utility payments for the months of April, May and June 2020 without penalties or interest applied to the deferred amounts, with the deferred balance evenly applied over the payments for the remainder of the calendar year.
- (b) That Council direct Administration to provide an option for property owners on the Tax Installment Payment Plan (TI PP) to defer property tax payments for the months of April, May and June 2020 without penalties or interest applied to the deferred amounts, and with the deferred balance evenly applied over the remainder of the payments for the remainder of the calendar year.

9:30 – 10:15

2. Family Resource Network Services

Recommendations:

- (a) That Council authorize Administration to enter into a contract with the Province for the delivery of a Family Resource Network.
- (b) That Council transfer the \$56k of the Town of Canmore funded portion of Bow Valley Parent Link's 2020 approved budget to the

Agenda prepared by: Cheryl Hyde, Municipal Clerk

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new Family Resource Network department to fund 2020 operational expenses in excess of the provincial grant revenue.

I. CORRESPONDENCE/INFORMATION

None

J. REPORTS FROM ADMINISTRATION

None

K. NOTICES OF MOTION

None

L. IN CAMERA

During item
H-1

1. Family Resource Network (FRN) Services

Recommendation: That Council take the meeting in camera to protect information related to the Town's negotiating position in accordance with section 25(1)(c)(iii) of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.

10:15 – 10:45

2. Fire-Rescue Covid 19 Response

Recommendation: That Council take the meeting in camera to protect the personal information of a third party in accordance with section 17(4)(d)(g) of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.

10:45

M. ADJOURNMENT



Request for Decision

DATE OF MEETING: March 24, 2020 **Agenda #:** H-1

TO: Council

SUBJECT: Option to Defer for Tax and Utility Payments

SUBMITTED BY: Chelsey Richardson, Manager of Finance

RECOMMENDATION: That Council direct Administration to provide an option for property owners to defer utility payments for the months of April, May and June 2020 without penalties or interest applied to the deferred amounts, with the deferred balance evenly applied over the payments for the remainder of the calendar year.

That Council direct Administration to provide an option for property owners on the Tax Installment Payment Plan (TIPP) to defer property tax payments for the months of April, May and June 2020 without penalties or interest applied to the deferred amounts, and with the deferred balance evenly applied over the remainder of the payments for the remainder of the calendar year.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The emerging COVID-19 pandemic is having a significant impact around the world, and also here in our community. In response to this situation, Administration has considered different options to put in place regarding potential deferrals of tax and utility payments in order to provide immediate support to our residents and business owners during this challenging time.

Administration is proposing two recommendations to help alleviate stress for property owners regarding upcoming utility/property tax payments.

Administration recommends that Council approve an “option to defer” for property owners for utility payments. Upon application, property owners will have the option to delay their payments for three months, after which the deferred amount will be distributed over their utility bills for the remainder of the year. No penalties or interest will apply to the deferred payments.

Similarly, administration recommends that Council approve an “option to defer” for property owners currently enrolled in the TIPP program for property tax payments. Upon application, property owners will have the option to “hold” their account and suspend payment for three months, with the balance owing divided evenly over the remaining six months of the year. No penalties or interest will apply to the deferred amounts. As always, property owners will still also have the option to leave the program. Currently no payments are immediately pressing as the standard due date for property taxes is the last business day of June.

This deadline can also be re-visited at a future date, the current focus has been flexibility for payments due in the near term.

Additionally, Administration is proposing that all Non-Sufficient Fund charges be waived for 2020 on returned TIPP and Pre-Authorized Utility Payment Plan (PUPP) payments.

RELEVANT COUNCIL DIRECTION, POLICY, OR BYLAWS

The Tax Installment Payment Plan (TIPP) Bylaw 2019-27 addresses the specifics of this program. Section 347(1) of the Municipal Government Act covers cancellation, reduction, refund or deferral of taxes, if council considers it equitable to do so.

DISCUSSION

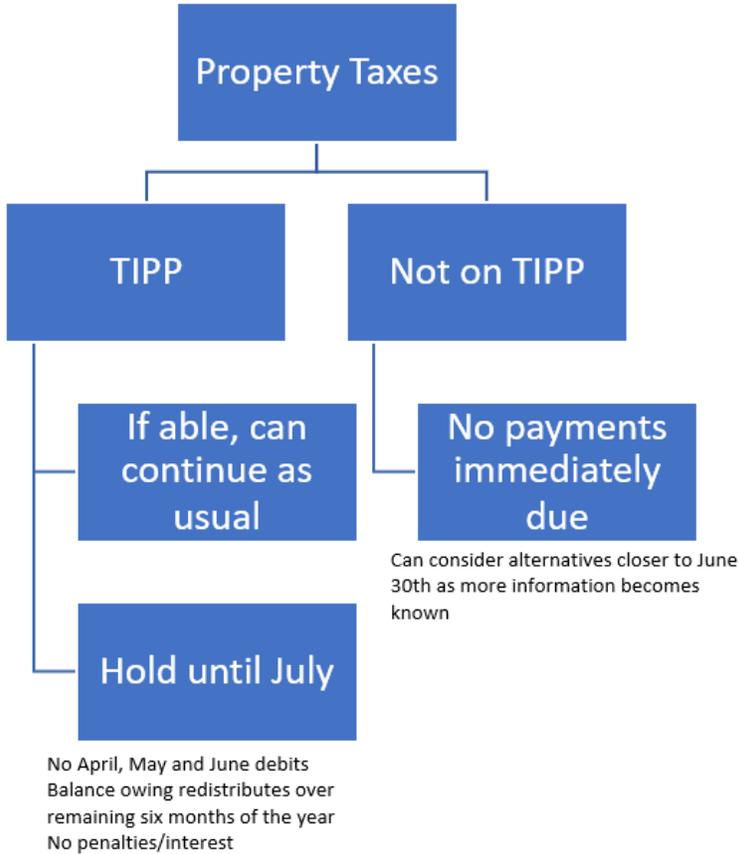
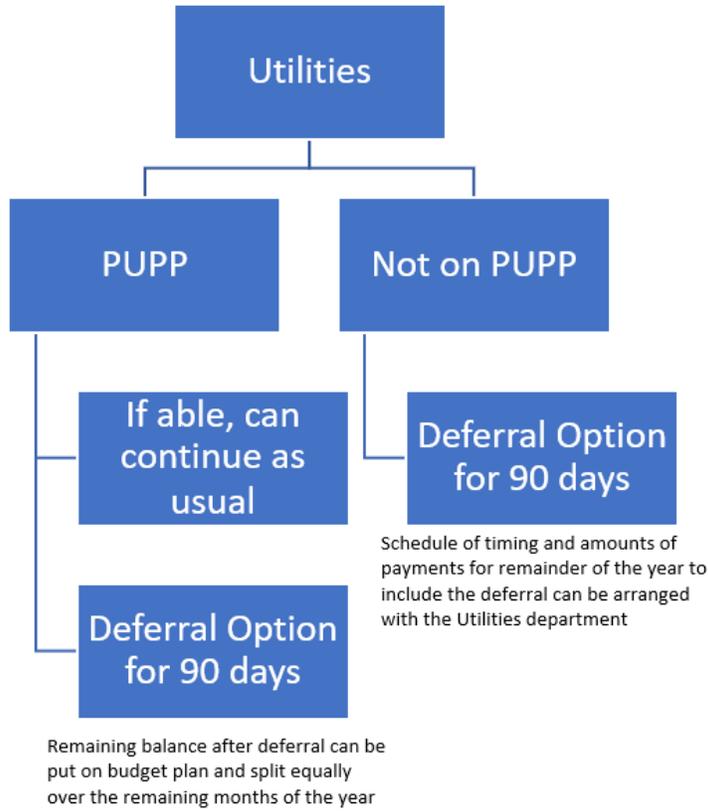
The current public health emergency has created a rapidly changing environment and created a high level of uncertainty for residents and business owners in our community. To address the potential economic/income uncertainties property owners may be facing, at this time, we are recommending measures to help provide flexibility with payments for the short-term. As new information becomes available, longer-term solutions may be explored.

For the foreseeable future, Administration intends to continue the TIPP and PUPP programs for those who are able to continue to make regular payments. This allows those who are able to maintain the consistent monthly amounts to continue to have those regularly scheduled and predictable payments, while still maintaining some level of cash flow for the Town to continue to provide services. Those who are anticipating difficulties will, as always, be able to leave the programs, but will also have the ability to temporarily “hold” these payments for 90 days, to alleviate immediate stress and uncertainty, with the deferred balance split equally over the remainder of payments for the calendar year to smooth those payments. No penalties or interest will be incurred on these deferred amounts. Additionally, all internal Non-Sufficient Fund (NSF) charges will be waived for 2020.

For property owners who are not on the PUPP program, they will also have the ability to defer payment of utility bills for 90 days without penalty. Following that 90 days, these property owners can work with our Utilities department to come to an agreement regarding scheduling and amounts for the remainder of the year, to split out that deferred balance over the remaining bill payments for the 2020 calendar year.

Regarding payments on property taxes for property owners not on TIPP, payments are not due until the last business day of June, so this deadline could be examined closer to that time, as more information becomes known.

At a high level, the currently proposed options would be as follows:



ANALYSIS OF ALTERNATIVES

Administration explored a significant number of alternatives to address this rapidly changing situation, trying to balance the continuing needs of the Town to maintain required operations, while providing flexibility to ratepayers who may be facing future economic/income insecurity.

Administration explored the possibility of suspending the TIPP/PUPP programs, but believes its more advantageous to continue to provide those options for ratepayers who are able to continue the regular payments and appreciate the consistency that program offers while additionally providing some cash flow support to Town operations and projects.

Administration also looked at pushing back deadlines, but upon further analysis believes its preferable to keep deadlines and schedules the same for now and to provide people that information for future planning and budgeting, while allowing those who are able to make regularly scheduled payments that option, and addressing the needs of people who are unable to, with deferral opportunities.

FINANCIAL IMPACTS

Administration has been working to understand the potential impacts of these deferrals, particularly from a cash flow perspective. Given the unprecedented nature of this situation, it is currently difficult to predict how many property owners may choose to exercise this “option to defer” and delay payments, but administration believes that through careful management, adequate cash flows can be maintained. Currently, on average \$2.5 million is collected monthly through the TIPP and PUPP programs combined, so depending on how many property owners choose to exercise the deferral option or are no longer able to make payments, there may be a significant impact on cash flows for the organization.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Administration has been in contact with several other communities to understand their approach to these shared issues and have been closely following the announcements for personal and business support made by the provincial and federal governments.

ATTACHMENTS

None.

AUTHORIZATION

Submitted by:	Chelsey Richardson Manager of Financial Services	Date: <u>March 20, 2020</u>
Approved by:	Therese Rogers GM of Corporate Services	Date: <u>March 20, 2020</u>
Approved by:	Lisa de Soto Chief Administrative Officer	Date: <u>March 20, 2020</u>



Request for Decision

DATE OF MEETING: March 24, 2020 **Agenda #:** H-2

TO: Council

SUBJECT: Family Resource Network Services

SUBMITTED BY: Lisa Brown, Manager of Community Social Development

RECOMMENDATION: That Council authorize Administration to enter into a contract with the Province for the delivery of a Family Resource Network.

That Council transfer the \$56k of the Town of Canmore funded portion of Bow Valley Parent Link's 2020 approved budget to the new Family Resource Network department to fund 2020 operational expenses in excess of the provincial grant revenue.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

For the last 17 years the Town of Canmore has received provincial contract funding for the provision of parent link services across the Bow Valley. In November 2019, the province announced a transformative model of care for children services and terminated all provincial parent link centre contracts. As part of the province's new funding model, an Expression of Interest was posted for Family Resource Network (FRN) services and organizations were invited to apply for funding to support community-based, early intervention children's services. In January 2020, Council directed administration to submit an application to the Expression of Interest. The Town requested funding for four Family Resource Network Services.

Administration is requesting Council's approval for operational expenditures as part of a Town of Canmore FRN department. In addition, administration is requesting that Council allocate the municipal portion of the former Bow Valley Parent Link program to Canmore's FRN department. This municipal funding will support a Social Connection Program which was not funded through the provincial grant.

RELEVANT COUNCIL DIRECTION, POLICY, OR BYLAWS

18-2020 Moved by Mayor that Council direct administration to apply for provincial funding for Family Resource Network Services

DISCUSSION

With the dissolution of provincial funding for the Bow Valley Parent Link program and in preparation for the Town's funding request for FRN services, administration completed a review of available children services within the Bow Valley. As a result of this review, administration noted that without the Bow Valley Parent Link, families would be lacking a safe place to connect with community services and other parents, there would be no key resource for early childhood development within the community, developmental screening opportunities would decrease, early intervention opportunities (such as early identification of post-partum

depression, sibling rivalry, parental anxiety) would decrease, and our ability for the Town to incorporate family perspectives into our community business plans would decrease.

Because the contract is not yet released, Administration cannot share any details at this time. However, in addition to provincial FRN funding, administration is recommending that Council transfer the \$56K of the Town of Canmore's funded portion of Bow Valley Parent Link's 2020 approved budget to the new Family Resource Network department. This funding will support a Canmore, Stay and Play/Social Connection Program. Although this program would be part of Canmore's FRN department, since it is entirely funded by the Town, the program would not need to meet provincial FRN outcomes and policies; the program would only need to meet municipal outcomes.

Town of Canmore's Family Resource Network Department

Administration is recommending that the Town of Canmore create a Family Resource Network department within the Community Social Development Service Area (CSD) that incorporates both provincial and municipal resources to meet our community needs. FRN staff will be placed on the Town's salary grid meaning that their compensation will not be tied only to provincial funding but instead will increase with Cost of Living Allowance (COLA) and the Town's performance increases. They will also be part of the Town's benefits program. This means that the Town's financial contribution to the FRN department will increase over time. Administration has calculated that the additional municipal funding that the Town may be asked to contribute in 2021 and 2022 to the new FRN department will be no more than \$10K annually. All Canmore FRN staff contracts will explicitly state that positions are tied to provincial funding, and without provincial funding may be terminated.

As part of the 2021/2022 municipal budget cycle, CSD will present Council with an annual report highlighting current operational service levels. To meet CSD and municipal business plans, and Council approved service-levels, Canmore's FRN department will leverage both provincial and municipal resources.

ANALYSIS OF ALTERNATIVES

Council can accept the Provincial Family Resource Network grants and not add additional funding for the Social Connection portion. The municipal portion of the Bow Valley Parent Link program (\$56K) would be considered surplus for the 2020 budget and be reallocated to the general municipal coffers.

Council can accept the Provincial Family Resource Network grant and request that administration contract out service delivery. FRN staff would be considered contract employees by the Town of Canmore and would not receive COLA or performance increases or benefits. Administration is not recommending this approach as it will make it difficult to retain quality staff due to Canmore's increasingly high cost of living. This approach will also limit opportunities to find efficiencies and use provincial dollars to advance larger municipal priorities.

FINANCIAL IMPACTS

Currently there is \$56k of municipal funding in the 2020 approved Parent Link budget. To date, this entire \$56K is available as due to the contract termination and some staff finding different work, it has not been utilized. In 2020, the full \$56k will be utilized. In subsequent years, additional funding will be required for the social connection program salary for a full year and to ensure staff adhere to Town of Canmore's staffing policies (benefit program and salary grid). Administration anticipates that the maximum additional municipal funding that will be needed will be no more than \$10K per year (for 2021 and 2022).

In addition to this municipal contribution, the Town will be providing in-kind support valued at \$50K of Facility support (Senior Association building space) and \$180K of corporate services support (HR, IT, Finance, Executive Office, Insurance). Initially the FRN will run out of the current Parent Link space. During 2020 Administration will review current Town owned spaces to determine the most effective and efficient location for the FRN going forward.

Administration has also recently submitted a grant proposal for additional funding. Dollars will be allocated to casual staff.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Administration held a Council workshop to understand Council perspective on municipal services that are funded through provincial grants. Administration recommended that Council set the community service-level and then leverage provincial and municipal resources to meet this service level as way to provide sustainable, cost-effective, and high-quality community services.

ATTACHMENTS

N/A

AUTHORIZATION

Submitted by:	Lisa Brown Manager of CSD	Date: <u>March 19, 2020</u>
Approved by:	Sally Caudill GM of Municipal Services	Date: <u>March 20, 2020</u>
Approved by:	Lisa de Soto Chief Administrative Officer	Date: <u>March 20, 2020</u>