
City council prepares ready to move municipality to level orange

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Chief Administrative Officer for Kawartha Lakes, Ron Taylor, told council recently that while the city is looking forward to reopening on Feb. 16, citizens should expect continued restrictions as the city will likely be designated orange under the current provincial re-opening framework in the continuing battle to limit COVID-19 and its variants' spread.

The colour orange in the province's framework means enhanced measures are still in place, there are restrictions on the number of people who can gather at businesses (which get to open again) or in homes, and enforcement while avoiding any closures.

"It has been a couple of months since my last report," Taylor said, "and this report is in response to the provincial re-opening announcement made on Feb. 8."

Taylor warned council that while he expects the city to re-open at orange, "that data could shift one way or another and we could be at yellow or even red. We expect to get confirmation soon."

"The Emergency Operations Centre remains active," Taylor continued, "and the HKPR District Health Unit continues with daily updates on the COVID situation and they have been positively received by the public."

Assuming the city is able to re-open on Feb. 16 at orange, Taylor detailed what this might look like for employees and citizens

of Kawartha Lakes:

- Member attendance at council and committee meetings will begin again
- Some, if not all, of the 96 city staff laid off in January will gradually return to work
- Arenas will re-open with capacity restrictions in place and there will be no new rentals approved as the city for the remainder of the 2021 skating season
- Community halls will re-open with restrictions on capacity
- City service centres in Lindsay, Omemee and Coboconk will re-open
- Libraries in Lindsay, Fenelon Falls and Omemee will re-open for in-person use with all others available for curbside pickup
- On Feb. 22 pool and fitness centres will re-open with restrictions in place

"We have allocated \$23 million so far on the pandemic," Taylor reported, "and that includes monies for community and economic recovery priorities."

When the floor was opened up for discourse Councillor Emmett Yeo began the discussion by complimenting staff, the CAO and council for their hard work to ensure "the city is heading in the right direction."

Councillor Patrick O'Reilly wanted to know if the city might extend ice times at arenas beyond their traditional March 31 close dates to make up for days lost to the stay at home order.

Taylor began answering O'Reilly by saying that ice will be available in Lindsay only

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