

COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS

Special Council Meeting – March 26, 2020

Town of BWG defers property tax payments by 60 days, give 90 days' grace on interest and penalties on both tax and water/wastewater bills

Council passed a recommendation to provide relief to property owners in BWG on both property tax and water/wastewater bills.

Mayor Keffer stated: "We do not know how long the local economy will be affected, so this likely will not be the last time we discuss support measures, but it's an important start to helping residents face the next few months with a little less financial uncertainty."

Property Taxes

Council supported a recommendation to defer due dates of property tax payments by 60 days for each bill in 2020.

Those who pay manually at the Town offices, the bank or online are not required to make those payments for an extra 60 days. No action or application is required to take advantage of this deferral, simply make the payment by the new due date:

Residential/farm properties:

- Second instalment: April 28 due date moved to June 26
- Third instalment: June 26 moved to August 25
- Fourth instalment: September 28 moved to November 27

Commercial/industrial properties:

- Second instalment: April 28 moved to June 26
- Third instalment: August 27 moved to October 26
- Fourth instalment: October 28 moved to December 27

For those who pay by a pre-authorized method (PAP or post-dated cheques), payments will not be deducted for an extra 60 days, starting with the March deduction coming out in May. No action or application is required to take advantage of this deferral.

Property owners who do NOT want to take advantage of the deferral may simply pay at the usual time if they pay by manual methods. Anyone on a pre-authorized payment system (PAP or post-dated cheques) who does not want the deferral will need to contact the Town to make their request. (905-775-5303 ext.6030 or finservices@townofbwg.com)

Additionally, property owners who wish to make a partial payment before the new due date can contact the Town to discuss a modified payment plan.

Under this new schedule, the second instalment is to be paid on June 26; however, the Town will also waive penalties and interest for an additional 30 days for those who need it. Residents on a pre-authorized payment method will have to contact the Town to ask to have their withdrawal deferred an additional 30 days; residents who pay manually simply need to make their payment by July 27 to pay no interest or penalties.

Water/Wastewater Utility Bills

Council approved a 90-day grace period on payment of water/wastewater utility bills with no penalties and interest. This means that late payments of the January-February bill (due April 17) and the March-April bill (due June 16) will not be subject to interest or penalties until after July 16. No action or application is required to take advantage of this deferral.

For those who pay by a pre-authorized method (PAP or post-dated cheques), payments of these two bills will not be deducted until July 16. If you prefer that your payment comes out at its usual time, you will need to contact the Town to let us know. (905-775-5303 ext.6030 or finservices@townofbwg.com)

Any relief beyond the periods stated above will be considered by Council at a future date if it is needed.

Council pledges money to support local businesses

Council has directed staff to develop options that will provide economic support programs for local businesses in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, to be funded up to \$250,000 from reserve funds.

A report is expected to come to the next Council meeting.

Measures implemented to allow the Town to conduct business during an emergency

The Province of Ontario recently amended the *Municipal Act* to permit members of municipal councils to participate in both open and closed meetings electronically and to be counted towards quorum when an emergency has been declared by either the Province or a municipality under the *Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act*.

For a municipality to take advantage of this, its own procedural by-law must allow for it; therefore, the Town of BWG passed amendments to Procedural By-law 2013-20 to permit electronic participation at meetings during the period of a declared emergency.

Council also passed an Emergency Delegation By-law, allowing the Town's Chief Administrative Officer the authority to take any action that may be required to ensure the continuity of municipal activity and operation, including the ability to approve expenditures and execute agreements. This is to ensure that even if a situation arises during an emergency where it is not possible for Council to act, matters requiring an immediate decision can be dealt with by the CAO. This by-law will be revisited once the World Health Organization declares an end to the global pandemic associated with COVID-19.