

For Immediate Release

News Release

COVID-19 UPDATE – Temporary Layoffs and Staff Hours Adjustment (April 1st, 2020)

Edson, Alberta, April 1st, 2020 – As COVID-19 continues to cause havoc around the world, the Town of Edson is taking steps to ensure the community is in the best position to deal with the pandemic now and in the future. With this in mind, a number of difficult decisions were required to help remain fiscally responsible to our taxpayers.

“This crisis is taking a huge toll on our residents and businesses,” said Edson CAO Mike Derricott. “We understand the difficulties our community is facing, and we know it’s our responsibility to treat this pandemic, and the financial burdens it is creating, with the care and attention it deserves.”

At this time the Town of Edson has temporarily laid off 18 employees. This includes lifeguards and some full time and part time staff from recreation facilities and the ParentLink Centre. Vacant positions are also not being filled at this time.

On top of the layoffs, all remaining staff are moving to a 0.9 schedule moving forward. This temporary measure will mean a reduction in hours, reducing wage expenses by about 10%.

“We understand this move will have a very big impact on Town staff,” said Mayor Kevin Zahara. “Council thanks them for their continued dedication during these tough times. It’s our hope that by making these moves now, we’ll be able to pass on some savings to our taxpayers and reduce further staff impacts in the future.”

While these moves have been supported by Council, they still require approval through the budget process. It’s expected some of these measures will be implemented at the April 7th, 2020 meeting of Council., with the larger budget discussions happening April 14th, 2020.

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Derricott adds that Administration has been working very hard to come up with an emergency budget to bring forward. “Along with the savings in wages from the staffing adjustments, further operational cuts are anticipated to help reduce the tax burden at this time. This will have service level impacts and will be discussed at the Council level.”

“This isn’t a decision we take lightly,” concluded CAO Derricott. “We have made every effort to balance the needs of our organization, the taxpayers, and our staff. It’s hoped that these unprecedented moves will allow us the flexibility to assist our business community, keeping more people employed, and ensuring the Town of Edson remains viable into the future.”

For more news relating to the Town of Edson’s response to the COVID-19 pandemic, please visit our website at www.edson.ca/covid.

We also encourage our residents and staff to visit the Provincial and Federal websites to stay up to date on the current information and personal.business supports available.

Alberta – www.alberta.ca/covid19

Canada – www.canada.ca/covid19

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