

To:	Warden McQueen and Members of Grey County Council
Committee Date:	June 11, 2020
Subject / Report No:	EDTC-CW-12-20
Title:	Grey Roots Outlook
Prepared by:	Savanna Myers, Director of Economic Development, Tourism & Culture Jill Paterson, Manager of Museum & Archives
Reviewed by:	Kim Wingrove, CAO
Lower Tier(s) Affected:	All
Status:	Recommendation adopted by Committee as presented; Endorsed by County Council June 25, 2020 per Resolution CC61-20;

Recommendation

1. That Report EDTC-CW-12-20 regarding Grey Roots Outlook be received for information.

Executive Summary

This report provides an overview of the state of affairs at Grey Roots Museum and Archives as it relates to recent changes in staff, closure and staff redeployment due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and update on strategies for the future including re-opening plans, safety procedures and alternative service delivery models.

Background and Discussion

Staffing Update

On April 15, Grey County welcomed Jill Paterson to the Grey Roots team as the new Manager of Museum and Archives. Jill brings with her a wonderful range of experience gained from her work with the City of Toronto's 10 historic house museums and Historica Canada.

Joan Hyslop has retired after being part of Grey Roots for over thirty years. Joan will be missed by everyone at Grey Roots – staff, visitors, and volunteers – for her amazing

wealth of knowledge and passion for history, but also for her kind smiles and quick sense of humour. We wish her all the best in this new and exciting chapter.

Actions to Date

To further help prevent the spread of COVID-19, the County of Grey has closed its buildings to the public as of March 16, 2020. This includes Grey Roots Museum & Archives.

Grey Roots cancelled the *Voice of Grey* exhibit launch planned for March 13th and has since cancelled summer KidsCamp and all our events and rentals through the month of August. At this time, we do not anticipate the Village will open for summer, though staff remain hopeful alternative methods may be found, and limited access may be granted once it is safe for the public to visit. The *Leonardo da Vinci: Machines in Motion* travelling exhibit has been postponed until we can safely reschedule.

Grey Roots staff, as part of Grey County's Economic Development, Tourism, and Culture Department, have been redeployed to other essential departments during this time. Many of our staff are working in long term care homes, providing additional support and screening. Others are redeployed to Paramedics to help organize donations and distributions of personal protective equipment; hard at work, keeping County buildings maintained and safe with Housing; or supporting Economic Development in sector recovery initiatives.

Looking Ahead

In conjunction with senior management team, staff are currently developing re-opening plans to outline the procedures, equipment, and new visitor experiences that will be established at Grey Roots Museum and Archives in order to adhere to public health guidelines and maintain the safety of staff, volunteers and visitors. We recognize that museum operations will not return to pre-COVID19 procedures for some time and that adaptation and flexibility will be required.

Grey Roots will establish a risk assessment/mitigation team to monitor re-opening and delivery of services in line with public health directives and County recommendations. Temporary volunteer guidelines will be developed to establish when and in what capacity volunteers will be able to return to the Grey Roots site. Staff truly value our volunteers and want to ensure their safety, understanding many are part of the vulnerable population. Staff have developed a communications strategy to stay in touch with volunteers and continue to recognize their valued service. A unique opportunity between Paramedics Services and Grey Roots also saw more than two dozen volunteers, create more than 350 PPE gowns, putting in over 700 volunteer hours to do so. These protective gowns have been provided to the County for distribution to frontline health care workers and long-term care homes.

Grey Roots has fast-tracked three capital projects to be completed while the museum is closed, including the resurfacing of the floor in the main building's foyer to reduce tripping hazards, phase one of the flat roof replacement, and replacing carpet in the archives, theatre and office space.

While we anticipate that large scale events at Grey Roots will be cancelled until 2021, we are exploring alternate service delivery models to safely engage residents and visitors, such as offering timed tickets for entry in order to control visitor numbers, a public call for COVID19 "artifacts" for the Grey Roots collection, online tours and lectures, virtual education programs, expanded digital tools to share the stories of Grey County and enhance visitation to the site in a way that adheres to requirements for physical distance.

Staff will continue to follow Public Health guidelines and regulations and refine re-opening plans and procedures to maintain the safety of staff, visitors and volunteers at Grey Roots Museum and Archives.

Legal and Legislated Requirements

There are no legal or legislated requirements relating to this report.

Financial and Resource Implications

Staff are working with finance to determine impact of budget. It is anticipated that lost revenues will be offset by reduced expenditures. Year-end projections will be included in the June 25th Committee report from the Finance Department.

Relevant Consultation

- Internal – Grey Roots Staff, Financial Analyst
- External – Grey-Bruce-Dufferin Museum Network, Living History Museum Network

Appendices and Attachments

None.