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MEDIA RELEASE

Municipalities Request Better Communication from the North Bay Parry Sound District Health Unit Medical Officer of Health

(Parry Sound ON – March 4, 2021)

At its Tuesday March 2 meeting, Town of Parry Sound Council passed a resolution requesting greater community outreach and communication from the Medical Officer of Health for the North Bay Parry Sound District Health Unit.

The Health Unit was in the green zone under the Provincial COVID-19 response framework prior to the December 26th province-wide lockdown announced by the Premier. After the lockdown was lifted in mid-February, there was to be a gradual reinstatement of the colour-coded response framework. However, the local Medical Officer of Health has continued the lockdown across the North Bay Parry Sound District Health Unit until at least March 8th, despite the majority of other health units being moved into the colour-coded response framework.

In addition to keeping the health region in lockdown, the Medical Officer of Health went further by introducing restrictions, ordering all public ice rinks, tobogganing hills, skating trails and the Ontario Federation of Snowmobile Club (OFSC) trails and trails utilizing Crown Land in the health region to be closed. Last week these restrictions were lifted.

“The continued lockdown has serious, social, emotional and financial implications for the residents and businesses across the region,” said Mayor McGarvey. “Residents deserve a clear explanation for the sacrifices they are being asked to make. Greater community understanding generates greater community support towards achieving the objectives of the healthcare directives. To get that understanding and support we need greater communication and dialogue with our District Health Unit.”

As the Health Unit has not responded to a previous request, Town Council is now requesting that the Medical Officer of Health establish a bi-weekly information exchange meeting with the Mayors of West Parry Sound.

Mayors of the other six municipalities in West Parry Sound Area have endorsed the Town of Parry Sound’s message, including the Townships of The Archipelago, Carling, McKellar and Seguin, and the Municipalities of McDougall and Whitestone.

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