

January 27, 2021

Dr. J. Chirico, Medical Officer of Health
North Bay Parry Sound District Health Unit
345 Oak Street West,
North Bay, ON P1B 2T2

Dear Dr. Chirico:

RE: Closure of Outdoor Public Skating Rinks, Tobogganing Hills, and Snowmobile Trails in the Health Unit

On behalf of the Council of the Municipality of Callander, I am writing to you to express our disappointment with your decision to close the ice rinks, tobogganing hills, and snowmobile trails in our Health Unit. I understand and appreciate your concern for the health of the people of this area. Our Council has repeatedly urged our residents to take health precautions to stay safe, including wearing masks, ensuring social distancing, hand washing, etc. We have been pleased to see the majority of our residents strictly adhering to these measures, which has surely contributed to the fact that we have a low number of cases in our area.

We also recognize that as this pandemic continues to take a toll on our residents and that safe and socially distanced recreational activities are important to their overall well-being.

Our Municipality's Emergency Management Plan's Community Control Group has been meeting regularly to monitor the pandemic situation and make recommendations to Council on the appropriate measures to take to protect our residents and businesses. These recommendations have been made taking into consideration the science and expertise of medical professionals at the local, provincial, and federal level, yourself included. Council has made decisions for our Municipality based upon these.

Council does not, however, agree with the stringent measures recently imposed upon our health unit with respect to the closure of ice rinks, tobogganing hills, and snowmobile trails for use by our residents. Our low case numbers do not validate this level of restrictions. Our case numbers are clear evidence that our residents are following the provincial guidelines and the restrictions for this area should reflect the efforts taken by our community and also reflect that the small increase in travelers from outside are not increasing our numbers. While we support the intent to deter people from high-risk areas from travelling here and potentially spreading the virus, surely this can be achieved by stopping the travel from high-risk areas into our district and not penalizing our residents who have done well in keeping our numbers low by following the guidelines.

We therefore respectfully request that you reconsider your decisions to restrict these outdoor activities.

Yours truly



Mayor Robb Noon

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