

## Caledon Council bans events following rise of COVID-19 cases in Peel

Written By ALYSSA PARKHILL

### LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

Caledon Council chatted about upcoming events and the safety of the community on Tuesday (Sept. 29), ultimately decided to cancel any planned gathering until further notice due to the steady rise of COVID-19 cases in the region.

Peel Public Health Medical Officer of Health Dr. Lawrence Loh joined council members during this week's meeting, providing an update on the latest COVID-19 status within Peel.

Loh explains to council that, though Premier Doug Ford has declared Ontario is basically entering a second wave of the coronavirus pandemic, Peel Region has done a good job flattening the curve, and numbers have been steady and consistent, not putting Peel into a second wave.

"Despite the Premier's recent announcement that Ontario is entering a second wave, in the Region of Peel, our data suggest that we're not quite in a second wave just yet. Our cases have stayed roughly in the 60 to 90 range over the last month, which means that we're essentially seeing linear growth and to some extent staying in a rough plateau over the course of four weeks," he stated.

As upcoming festivities slowly get closer including Thanksgiving, Halloween, and Christmas to name a few, council members shared their concerns on whether these events, or any upcoming events, are safe for the community to participate in.

"I don't think it's the right time to be encouraging gatherings," said Ward 3 and 4 Regional Coun. Jennifer Innis.

Coun. Innis brought forward a motion to cancel all upcoming events unless approved by council, to keep the community and residents safe from the spread of COVID-19.

"These are all holidays that we are actively looking at, at Peel Public Health. The Province is actively looking at Thanksgiving and Halloween, so we're waiting for further guidance from them," said Dr. Loh.

Staff at the Town of Caledon are also looking at organizing a report to bring forward to council regarding the upcoming holidays, which has been difficult as they understand and appreciate the importance of these events to the community and members of council.

All members of council, with the exception of Ward 5 Regional Coun. Annette Groves, approved the motion that besides the events that had already been approved, that no further events take place unless approved by council.

"I'm going to have a difficult time explaining why I'm not encouraging events in my ward," said Innis. "During budget pressures and safety measures, I don't think that it's the appropriate time."

Further information will be coming forward from the Town of Caledon regarding upcoming holidays such as Halloween, as well as further discussions from Peel Public Health.