

Staff Report to Council

Financial Services

FILE: 05-1800-01/20

REPORT DATE: March 21, 2020 MEETING DATE: April 07, 2020
TO: Mayor and Council
FROM: Cheryl Harding, Director of Financial Services
SUBJECT: 2020 Metered Water Accounts Penalty Deferral Bylaw

CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER REVIEW/APPROVAL:



RECOMMENDATION(S): THAT Council:

- A. Grant First, Second and Third Readings to the 2020 Metered Water Accounts Penalty Deferral Bylaw No. 2852, 2020; AND
- B. As per the authority granted through Ministerial Order 083 [*local government meetings and bylaw process (covid-19) order*], adopt the 2020 Metered Water Accounts Penalty Deferral Bylaw No. 2852, 2020; OR
- C. Other.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to seek Council approval to defer the penalty deadline for the February 2020 metered water account bills which cover the July to December 2019 water consumption period.

☐ Information Report

☒ Decision Report

☐ Direction Report

DISCUSSION

Background:

On March 20, 2020, the City of Pitt Meadows enacted a state of local emergency following approval from the Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General, Mike Farnworth. Effective immediately, this enables Mayor Dingwall to take actions to support the Provincial Health Officer's verbal order to limit public gatherings and practice social distancing.

A measure that would alleviate some of the financial burden being faced by businesses during this time period would be to defer the penalty deadline for the 2020 metered water account bills.

Relevant Policy, Bylaw or Legislation:

The Waterworks Bylaw No. 2343 stipulates any metered water account not paid within 30 days following the date of the bill is subject to a penalty of five percent. A further five percent is charged on any outstanding amount after 60 days.

Metered quantities are the basis of the billings for:

- all business, commercial, industrial, institutional, and recreational properties;
- all lands zoned agricultural and all irrigation of crops;
- all lands zoned residential multi-family.

Council is provided the ability to establish the fees within the Waterworks Bylaw through the Community Charter Section 194. This includes the ability to establish the terms and conditions for payment of the fees, including discounts, interest and penalties.

In the interest of efficiency, staff are recommending maintaining the existing payment structure but to defer the first and second penalties as outlined in Table 1.

Analysis:

The February 28, 2020 metered water account bills are due March 31, 2020. In order to provide some financial relief to Pitt Meadows businesses during this unprecedented period of time with the spread of COVID-19, this bylaw proposes to defer the penalty deadline for the February 28, 2020 metered water account bills as follows:

Table 1

February 28, 2020 Bills	Current	Proposed
First 5% Penalty	After March 31, 2020	After May 31, 2020
Second 5% Penalty	After April 30, 2020	After June 30, 2020

Should utility charges remain outstanding at December 31, 2020, they will be added to tax arrears on January 1, 2021 in compliance with the *Community Charter*.

Staff continue to monitor the COVID-19 situation and actions being taken by other levels of government. Staff will provide regular updates to Council.

COUNCIL STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT

- ☒ Principled Governance ☐ Balanced Economic Prosperity ☐ Corporate Excellence
☐ Community Spirit & Wellbeing ☐ Transportation & Infrastructure Initiatives
☐ Not Applicable
-

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- ☐ None ☐ Budget Previously Approved ☐ Referral to Business Planning
☒ Other

The February 28, 2020 metered account billings total \$748,000 for approximately 550 customers. The City anticipates that extending the penalty deadline will result in approximately \$560,000 in metered water account payments being deferred until June 1, 2020. Assuming the City receives an annual short-term investment return of 2%, the financial impact of the penalty deferral will cost about \$2,000.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

- ☒ Inform ☐ Consult ☐ Involve ☐ Collaborate ☐ Empower
-

KATZIE FIRST NATION CONSIDERATIONS

- Referral ☐ Yes ☒ No
-

SIGN-OFFS

Written by:

Cheryl Harding, Director of Financial Services

ATTACHMENT(S):

A. Metered Water Accounts Penalty Deferral Bylaw No. 2852, 2020

CITY OF PITT MEADOWS
METERED WATER ACCOUNTS PENALTY DEFERRAL BYLAW
Bylaw No. 2852, 2020

A bylaw to amend late payment penalties for metered water accounts during the
COVID-19 pandemic.

The Council of the City of Pitt Meadows enacts as follows:

1. This Bylaw may be cited as the "Metered Water Accounts Penalty Deferral Bylaw No. 2852, 2020".
2. Despite section 9.4 of the amended City of Pitt Meadows Waterworks Bylaw No. 2343, 2008 [*Bill Procedure - Metered Accounts*]:
 - a) Consumers will pay their metered accounts for water use from July 2019 to December 2019 inclusive, on or before March 31, 2020;
 - b) A consumer who fails to pay this charge by May 31, 2020, in addition to the charge, will pay a penalty fee of five percent (5%) of the total amount due;
 - c) A consumer will pay a further five percent (5%) penalty fee on any portion outstanding after June 30, 2020;
 - d) Should charges remain outstanding at December 31, 2020, the Director of Financial Services will cause these charges to be added to tax arrears on January 1, 2021, in compliance with the *Community Charter*.

READ a FIRST, SECOND and THIRD time on [DATE].

ADOPTED on [DATE].

Bill Dingwall
Mayor

Kate Barchard
Corporate Officer