



## Staff Report

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**Report To: Council Meeting**

**From: Lee Gosnell, Manager of Operations & Community Services**

**Date: 2020-12-17**

**Subject: 2021 Blue Flag Beach Renewal**

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### **Recommendation:**

That West Elgin Council hereby receives the report from Lee Gosnell, Manager of Operations & Community Services re: 2021 Blue Flag Beach Renewal; and

That West Elgin Council direct staff to \_\_\_\_\_.

### **Purpose:**

The purpose of this report to seek Council's input on maintaining the Blue Flag Beach Status for the public beach at Port Glasgow Marina for 2021.

### **Background:**

In 2015, West Elgin first applied to have the public beach at the Port Glasgow Marina be part of the Blue Flag Beach Program. This is an international program to promote environmentally friendly beaches, boats and marinas, the Ontario chapter is run by Swim, Drink Fish Ontario. Blue Flag Beaches must meet 33 criteria across four categories: Environmental Education and Information, Water Quality, Environmental Management and Safety and Services.

Along with flying the Blue Flag, there are a number of things the Municipality must do to continue with the blue flag status, such as have a Blue Flag Beach Management Committee, host a minimum of five (5) environmental education programs, projects or activities at the beach each year, host three (3) events that promote the beach, provide weekly water sampling and post information about bathing quality at the beach, provide information on local ecosystems and environmental phenomena at the beach, a map of the beach must be displayed, code of conduct for the beach must be displayed and safety equipment must be available for use.

Due to the high-water levels in Lake Erie, the size of the beach has been severely reduced and there is very little beach to enjoy currently. Due to COVID-19, none of the above mentioned educational or event requirements were able to be met, the 2020 inspection by Swim, Drink, Fish was unable to be carried out and the Blue Flag Beach Management Committee is the Recreation Committee and they also have not met since August.

### **Financial Implications:**

There is a \$1,250 charge to apply for 2021 Blue Flag Beach Status and applications must be submitted by December 21, 2020.