

Hello Protection Islanders.

For the health and safety of our community and volunteers, and using an abundance of caution, the Protection Island Lions Club is suspending events at Beacon House immediately and until further notice. This affects both the main hall and the library.

The City of Nanaimo and the Protection Island Lions Club are taking direction from the provincial health authority and the BC Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC). The City has advised that the decision to close Beacon House should be made locally by the Lions Club, who manage the facility. We are in a better position than City officials to assess the unique character of our island, the specific needs of our community, and the risks associated with the events we host. We appreciate the City giving us local autonomy in this area.

We considered many factors, including: the demographics of our community, the number of residents who have (or are about to) return home from international travel, the volunteer needs and operational aspects of the various events and programs offered at Beacon House, the number of events that have already been cancelled or postponed by their organizers, our inability to ensure appropriate “social distancing” at our venue to prevent spreading the virus, and the growing number of other activities in our community and across the country that are being modified or suspended to help slow the progress of COVID-19.

Evidence suggests that most people will not experience serious or lasting impacts if infected with COVID-19. However, a small proportion will experience life-threatening illness. Each member of the Lions Club would be heartbroken if an event at Beacon House became the source for one or more of our neighbours becoming seriously ill – this is a risk we are not willing to take.

Our community always bands together to face challenges and has a long history of supporting each other during difficult times. Neighbours are already offering support to those who are self-isolating. We will keep monitoring the situation and will let you know in the weeks ahead about any changes in the status of Beacon House. In the meantime, the Lions Club will continue to offer support to individuals and groups within our community as the need arises. Thank-you for your support and understanding.

Jim Menzies
Treasurer, PI Lions Club