

MUNICIPALITY OF THE DISTRICT OF LUNENBURG  
Minutes of a Meeting of  
**FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES COMMITTEE**  
Held in Council Chambers, 210 Aberdeen Road, Bridgewater, NS  
**Monday, September 9th, 2019 – 7:00 p.m.**

**ATTENDANCE**

Brian Keizer, District 1 & 2 Fire Commission, Chair  
Mayor Carolyn Bolivar-Getson  
Councillor Reid Whynot, Vice Chair  
Councillor Martin Bell  
Councillor Wade Carver  
Deputy Chief Steve Patterson, Cornwall Fire Department  
Deputy Chief Dean Schmeisser, Dayspring & District Volunteer Fire Department  
David Fancy, Member-At-Large  
Herbert Seymour, Member-At-Large

Regrets: Councillor John Veinot  
Chief Tom Lockwood, Indian Point Fire Department

Staff: Alex Dumaresq, Acting Chief Administrative Officer  
Chris Kennedy, Fire Services Coordinator  
Sandra Challis, Administrative Assistant

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Brian Keizer called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

**2. INTRODUCTION OF REMO COORDINATOR**

Ms. Henhoeffler was not able to attend the meeting following the impact of Hurricane Dorian and would try to attend the next regular meeting.

**3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**Moved by Councillor Whynot seconded by Deputy Chief Schmeisser that the agenda be approved as circulated. Carried unanimously.**

**4. Approval of Minutes of July 08, 2019 Meeting**

**Moved by Deputy Chief Schmeisser, seconded by Deputy Chief Patterson that the Minutes of the Fire and Emergency Services Committee meeting of July 08, 2019 be approved as circulated.**

**Carried unanimously.**

## **5. Approval of Minutes of August 15, 2019 Special Meeting**

**Moved by Deputy Chief Patterson, seconded by Herbert Fraser that the Minutes of the Fire and Emergency Services Committee Special Meeting of August 15, 2019 be approved as circulated. Carried unanimously.**

## **6. Business Arising from Minutes and Unfinished Business**

### **6.1 Fire Department General/Liability Insurance**

Mr. Dumaresq provided an overview on what had taken place to date, with negotiations on the Fire Department General / Liability Insurance proposals that were received when the six municipal units went to market for insurance services. A special meeting had been held with representatives of the Fire Departments and they had been unanimously agreed on the recommendation provided by the FESC.

**Moved by Deputy Chief Schmeisser, seconded by Deputy Chief Patterson that the Fire and Emergency Services Committee recommend to Council that Municipal Council approve BFL Canada as the New Insurance Provider for the Group Fire Department General / Liability Insurance Program as outlined in Option 2 of their proposal; and further the Municipal Council adopt the revised insurance grant distribution so that no department pays more in net premiums in this fiscal year (2019/2020). Carried unanimously.**

### **6.2 Firefighter Personnel Insurance – Update**

A verbal update from the Insurance Sub-Committee was provided to advise that the RFP for Broker Services was to be awarded to AJ Gallagher. The Committee was provided with a memo explaining the evaluation process and the results. The next steps will be for AJ Gallagher to meet with the Insurance Sub-Committee and gather specific information from the to create the schedule of coverage for what is required in order to seek quotations. It was noted that many of the Departments are already working with AJ Gallagher.

### **6.3 Recruitment & Retention – Strategy**

Mr. Kennedy circulated documents that had been created by the summer co-op student, Aliyah Myers-Stein, including Fire Service News, and two “Answer the Call” flyers. The Answer the Call website is a national strategy for interested volunteers to get more information and obtain contact information for their local fire department.

The intent is to send this information out to residents and for Mr. Kennedy to attend local events, Farmers Markets for example, to talk to people about becoming volunteers.

It was suggested that it would be good to include a condensed version of this information in the Municipal Matters. It was reported that two departments represented on the Committee had seen recent increases in new members.

The Committee was asked to provide feedback on the literature as soon as possible, before its general release.

#### **6.4 Terms of Reference – Nomination Process Review**

The revised Terms of Reference were presented to the Committee. No further amendments were requested.

**Moved by Deputy Chief Patterson, seconded by Councillor Bell that the Fire & Emergency Services Committee recommend to Council that Municipal Council accept the proposed changes to Section 6 of the Terms of Reference as presented. Carried unanimously.**

#### **6.5 Pump Test Pit**

Councillor Whynot declared a conflict of interest for this subject and removed himself to the gallery for the discussion.

Mr. Kennedy presented his memo which explained what pump testing is, and the current status of pump testing among the departments. The memo also highlighted the problems with Wiles Lake Depot which was used by several Departments and outlined the cistern project being proposed by the Town of Bridgewater and Bridgewater Fire Department.

A motion was received from Lunenburg Regional Fire & Emergency Services requesting that MODL cost-share in the proposed cistern project. At the LRFES meeting 66% of those in attendance agreed that they would likely use a facility if it were available and a general discussion had been held regarding pump testing and the possible cost savings to Departments in consolidated use of a testing technician.

Mr. Dumaresq noted that staff suggested there be an addition to the LRFES motion that from June 2021 it would be mandatory for Departments to carry out annual pump testing as part of the Municipal registration process. He added that submitting the LRFES motion to Council would not guarantee all Departments to carry out testing, and Council may not be comfortable in approving something that does not promote equity in either the safety of firefighters or the standards of service to the homeowner.

#### **DISCUSSION**

- Some departments do not have the finances to carry out pump-testing, however it is very important that testing is carried out, the onus should be on departments to ensure this is being done

- If Council co-funds the pump test pit, there would be no cost to municipal departments to use it, only the cost of hiring the technician to carry out testing
- The Town of Bridgewater has agreed to fund maintenance of the pump test pit
- Setting a future date when testing would become mandatory allows Departments time to reconsider their budget, and, if unaffordable, to make this know to the Municipality. There would be time to look at different grant opportunities
- Safety of firefighters is paramount, and residents should expect the same level of service, regardless of which department is providing service
- Strongly agree that pump testing should be mandatory, but uncomfortable without agreement from LRFES
- Delaying decision making could jeopardize project being completed this year
- The question should not be about if pump testing should be made mandatory, rather do we want safety for the volunteer firefighters and being able to offer expected service levels to residents
- The Municipality should be responsible to ensure departments are meeting the relatively basic minimum standards
- Pump testing is a good thing, but it does not guarantee against equipment failure
- LRFES had requested MODL to be part of the project, but had not requested mandatory testing
- Pump testing has been discussed for a several years with no action being taken to make it happen
- When on Mutual Aid calls the firefighter should have faith in the equipment he is using, regardless of which department it belongs to

**Moved by Mayor Bolivar-Getson seconded by Herbert Seymour that the Fire & Emergency Services Committee (FESC) recommends to Council that Municipal Council provide capital funding of \$25,000.00 to the Town of Bridgewater for the fire apparatus test cistern, and further that the committee recommend that Municipal Council require proof of annual pump testing of fire apparatus as part of MODL's annual Fire and Emergency Services Provider Registration process, beginning in June of 2021, subject to Lunenburg Regional Fire & Emergency Services (LRFES) endorsing mandatory pump testing as part of MODL's annual registration process. Carried unanimously.**

## **7. NEW BUSINESS**

### **7.1 Fire Services Coordinator Annual Update**

Mr. Kennedy presented his annual update to the Committee. His report covered service awards, training offered, visits to Departments, accountability tags and the work carried out by the Insurance Sub-Committee. The presentation included data collected during the registration process – calls had increased, the number of active firefighters had decreased, slight increase in fund-raising total. The type of calls was broken down with the largest number being medical calls. He explained the equipment list is almost finalized and would be uploaded when complete. He also attended the Canadian Volunteer Fire Services Associational Annual Conference and was

present when Councillor Bell received his Lifetime Achievement Award. The type of callouts was broken down with the largest number shown as being medical, followed by mutual aid and MVCs. Mr. Kennedy noted that clarity is being sought from dispatch regarding how mutual aid calls are reported in order to improve accuracy.

**8. IN CAMERA (Nil)**

**9. NEXT MEETING – Monday November 18<sup>th</sup>, 2019 at 7:00 p.m.**

**Note: Follow-up Workshop – Monday, October 21<sup>st</sup>, 2019 at 5:00 p.m.**

**10. ADJOURNMENT**

**There being no further business at 8:45 p.m., it was moved by Deputy Chief Schmeisser and seconded by David Fancy that the meeting adjourn. Carried unanimously.**