

**Municipality of the District of Lunenburg**  
**Minutes of a Fire & Emergency Services Committee Meeting**  
Held in Council Chambers, 10 Allée Champlain Drive, Cookville, NS  
**Monday, 11 January 2021 – 7:00 p.m.**

**Attendance:**

Brian Keizer, District 1 & 2 Fire Commission, Chair  
Councillor Reid Whynot, District 9, Vice Chair  
Councillor Cathy Moore, District 5  
Councillor Pam Hubley, District 4  
Councillor Michelle Greek, District 7  
Chief Tom Lockwood, Indian Point Fire Department  
Retired Chief Steve Patterson, Cornwall Fire Department  
Deputy Chief Dean Schmeisser, Dayspring & District Volunteer Fire Department  
Herbert Seymour, Member-At-Large  
Mayor Carolyn Bolivar-Getson, Ex-Officio

**Staff:**

Sarah Kucharski, Communications Officer  
Chris Kennedy, Fire Services Coordinator  
Sandra Challis, Administrative Assistant

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

**2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**Moved by Councillor Whynot, seconded by Mr. Seymour that the agenda be approved as circulated. Carried Unanimously.**

**3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – November 16, 2020**

**Moved by Retired Chief Patterson, seconded by Chief Lockwood that the minutes of the November 16, 2020 Fire & Emergency Services Committee meeting be approved as circulated. Carried unanimously.**

**4. BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES**

**4.1 Member at Large**

The Committee was informed that Mr. Seymour had been reappointed as a member-at large to the FESC for a 3-year term. It was noted that despite re-advertising of the other member-at-

large vacancy, no applications had been received. The Committee was asked to look for possible candidates in their communities, and the position would be readvertised. As per section 5.4.2 of the Terms of Reference, at-large members may not be a member of, or the spouse of a member of Council, a fire department, commission or auxiliary.

#### **4.2 Fire Scene Security**

Mr. Kennedy reported that the Municipality of Chester had a standing offer in place for site security, and he was working on this document to see if MODL could implement something similar. It would need to be reviewed by the solicitor and finance department before it could be brought before the Committee.

#### **4.3 Mutual Aid Agreement Revisions**

Mr. Kennedy reported the revisions were currently with the solicitor pending his review. It was requested that if nothing was ready for the next meeting, that a timeline be provided.

#### **4.4 Nova Scotia Power – failure to provide essential service**

Council had accepted the recommendation from the FESC to write a letter to Nova Scotia Power, Eastlink and Bell on behalf of the FESC, expressing concern regarding outages of power and critical telecommunications systems, but did not send the letter yet as staff wanted to consult with FESC as to its content. Following discussion, it was agreed to request representatives from Nova Scotia Power, Eastlink and Bell to be present at a meeting of the FESC to have an open discussion, answer questions and provide information on their plans to mitigate communication issues for fire departments and communities during extended power outages. It was suggested that FSANS be included in the communication, to be aware of the issue from a provincial perspective.

#### **4.5 Changes to Policy MDL-36**

Mr. Kennedy reported that the revised document, incorporating changes relating to mandatory pump testing and some minor amendments, was being sent to the solicitor this week and should be ready for presentation at the March FESC meeting.

### **5. L.R.F.E.S. Report**

The next meeting of LRFES is scheduled for January 21st, a report would be provided at the March FESC meeting.

## 6. NEW BUSINESS

### 6.1 Recruitment & Retention

Ms. Kucharski presented an update on the Recruitment and Retention Strategy and reviewed her Request for Decision memo (circulated with the agenda). The recommendations in the report were discussed:

- **Maintaining the Investment in the Marketing Campaign - \$10,000**

It was agreed the newsletter had been a great success and should continue and the radio ads were impactful. It was noted that the volunteer status of fire departments be highlighted to the recent influx of newcomers to the region.

- **Investing in an enhanced Member & Family Assistance Program - \$12,500**

The FESC had always intended to implement an assistance program of this nature. The new personnel insurance policy did include a light version, but only referred members to phone consultations or web-based programs. Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) was intended to be used as a short-term psychological helping-process, focusing solely on an immediate and identifiable problem; a dedicated MFAP would be more robust and would offer one-to-one extended counselling. It was noted this figure was a budget estimate only.

- **Investing in application-based grant for leadership courses for executives and officers - \$5,000**

The intent of this grant would not be for technical fire department training, but more for team building, leadership or communication training. It was suggested this amount be increased to \$7,500.

- **Establishing an application-based grant for annual recognition event per station - \$15 per firefighter/volunteer – total annual budget \$10,000**

Originally, it was intended that MODL would host an annual recognition event for firefighters, however, due to current Covid restrictions, and potentially having a large

number of volunteers unavailable for service at one time, it was suggested that departments could host their own event. It was discussed to increase the annual budget to \$15,000, increasing the amount to \$25 per firefighter to allow for partners.

**Moved by Chief Lockwood, seconded by Councillor Whynot that the FESC recommend that Municipal Council accept the Fire Recruitment and Retention Strategy, as discussed, for the 2021/2022 fiscal year:**

- 1. Maintain the investment in the marketing campaign - \$10,000 annually;**
- 2. Invest in an enhanced Member and Family Assistance Program for active firefighters - \$12,500 annually (budgeted figure);**
- 3. Invest in an application-based grant for leadership courses for executives and officers - \$7,500 annually;**
- 4. Establish a simple, application-based grant of \$25 per firefighter/volunteer to hold an annual recognition event per station - \$15,000 annual budget.**

**Carried unanimously.**

## **6.2 Fire Department Final Payouts**

The Fire Department final payouts spreadsheet was circulated. It was noted that participation in the Firefighters 50/50 should be recorded as fundraising in the department reports for consideration of the MODL matching grant.

## **6.3 Officer & Directors Liability Insurance for Fire Commissions**

Mr. Keizer informed the Committee that the current insurance policy does not include Fire Commissions for the Officer and Directors Liability Insurance coverage, due to the powers of taxation. Each commission would need to procure their own coverage and costs are dependent on numerous factors. It was agreed to invite the insurance representative to a future FESC meeting to talk to this matter, so that the Commissions could be informed and take necessary action, if required.

**Moved by Councillor Moore, seconded by Councillor Hubley that the proposed 2021/2022 Budget be added to the agenda.**

**Carried Unanimously.**

## **6.4 Proposed Budget 2021/2022 (added item)**

A memo regarding Municipal Grants Increase was circulated and following discussion, it was agreed to request a 2% increase for the 2021/2022 fiscal year.

**It was moved by Councillor Moore, seconded by Retired Chief Patterson, that FESC recommend that Municipal Council approve a 2% increase (which totals \$3,670) over the 2020/2021 grant amounts with the 2021/2022 fiscal year grants being:**

<b>Matching Grant</b>	<b>\$ 43,250.00</b>
<b>Municipal Grant</b>	<b>\$ 65,390.00</b>
<b>Training Grant</b>	<b>\$ 11,120.00</b>
<b>Insurance Grant</b>	<b>\$ 55,190.00</b>
<b>Personnel Insurance Grant</b>	<b><u>\$ 11,120.00</u></b>
<b>Total Grants</b>	<b>\$186,070.00</b>

**Carried Unanimously**

#### **7. IN CAMERA (If Required)**

#### **8. NEXT MEETING – Monday, March 8, 2021**

**Proposed Annual General Meeting – Weds, April 14, 2021 7:00 p.m. LOCATION T.B.A.**

It was discussed that due to Covid restrictions, it may not be possible to hold an in-person AGM and considerations should be made regarding alternate opportunities. The following was suggested:

- Reduce attendance to one representative per department.
- Contact departments to check their comfort level with an in-person meeting.
- Check departments' accessibility to technology to attend a virtual meeting.
- Explain ways that voting could take place electronically.
- Investigate alternate venue opportunities - Best Western.

#### **9. ADJOURNMENT**

**There being no further business at 8:31 p.m., it was moved by Deputy Chief Schmeisser, seconded by Councillor Whynot that the meeting adjourn. Carried Unanimously.**