

Cape Breton Regional Municipality

Council Meeting

ADDENDUM

TUESDAY, JULY 6TH, 2021

6:00 P.M.

VIA VIDEO CONFERENCE

Cape Breton Regional Municipal Council

Council Meeting

Tuesday, July 6th, 2021
6:00 p.m.

Via Video Conference

ADDENDUM ITEM

7. BUSINESS ARISING:

7.4 Fire & Emergency Services Committee Meeting – June 29, 2021:

- a) Cape Breton Regional Fire Chiefs' Association Report – “Specialty Services” Financial Support: Councillor Darren Bruckschwaiger (See page 3)

Cape Breton Regional Fire Chiefs Association Report – “Specialty Services” Financial Support

Motion:

Moved by Councillor Bruckschwaiger, seconded by Councillor Gordon MacDonald, that as a Committee we bring the issue to Council and ask the Director to try to find a way to accommodate the \$15,000 from the corporate budget for this year for the specialty emergency services provided by the volunteer fire fighters of CBRM.

Discussion:

During discussion, the CAO advised that there were many items in the budget that were removed and all items are important. However in this instance, further study is required by the Chief in terms of where it is needed and what do we currently have before allocating that amount in the budget to those equipment items.

Motion Carried.



Cape Breton Regional Fire Chiefs' Association

850 Grand Lake Rd Suite 12
Sydney, Nova Scotia
B1P 5T9



Cape Breton Regional Fire & Emergency Service (CBRFES)

CB Regional Fire & Emergency Service Committee

June 29 2021

Since the last meeting of the CB Regional Fire & Emergency Service Committee meeting of March 2020 we have had an Election,

Executive Is

Chair Jim Prince Chief Howie Centre
Vice Chair Lloyd Macintosh Chief North Sydney
John Chant Chief Glace Bay
Bill MacLeod Chief Coxheath
Steve MacLean Deputy Chief Sydney River

Due to COVID 19 there has been very little activity outside of our normal response to emergence.

We had 4 association meeting along with a number of executive meeting, plus constant contact with CBRM Fire and Emergency service.

On May 29, 2021, we made a special limited presentation to Marian Peach to wish her well in her retirement and to thank her for the years of service.

“Specialty Services” Financial Support

Since amalgamation in 1995, the Cape Breton Regional Municipality’s (CBRM) volunteer fire departments have been funded by the CBRM for **fire suppression activities only**, the following listed emergency services,

- Auto extrication / Jaws of Life
- High angle Rescue
- Water Rescue
- Ice Rescue

are not, nor have they ever been, supported financially by the CBRM.

These essential emergency services are being provided by fourteen (14) different CBRFES volunteer fire departments, twenty-eight times throughout the CBRM. An average number of



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calls for these services range from 70-90 inclusive annually. That is an estimated 2,000 to 2,500 emergency responses over the last 26 years with \$0 dollars in funding.

For the past twenty-six (26) years these departments, entirely sourced from their own funding, fundraising and or donations, have provided these services. CBRM volunteer fire departments have mitigated thousands of dollars in damages, minimized or reduced physical harm, and saved countless lives of our fellow CBRM's citizens.

In December 2020 Deputy Chief, Volunteer Coordinator, Chris March presented Fire Chief Michael Seth with an issue paper on CB Regional Fire and proposed annual Specialty Services funding for CBRFES volunteer fire departments who provide these services.

As a result, a budget request was proposed to Council in April of 2021 with an ask for half of the required funding that Deputy March's Issue Paper recommended. Half was anticipated through current fire service budget with some efficiencies being created.

It is with much disappointment and regret that I speak on the negative result of Council's decision to **not** approve the Specialty Services budget request.

Cape Breton Regional Fire & Emergency Service volunteer fire departments understand the financial situation we find ourselves in on an annual basis when it comes to creating a required CBRM balanced budget.

We do however feel that these services, as we all know that are essential in protecting the property and lives of our CBRM citizens, need to be financially supported by the CBRM. Not maintaining these services is not an option. Our volunteer stations have provided these emergency services for 26 years with no support. If no support from the CBRM is provided the quality and availability of these services will begin to suffer. Equipment is getting older; it is quite expensive to replace and even more costly to repair. Firefighter, training, skills maintenance, and necessary recertifications are also quite expensive.

With this report, the Cape Breton Regional Fire & Emergency Service's volunteer fire departments, through the Cape Breton Regional Fire Chiefs' Association, would like to convey that we eagerly & passionately hope, this budgetary request that should be put forth again for CB Regional Fire Service budget in 2022, is granted.

Thank you,

Jim

HCVFD Fire Chief, Jim Prince
Chair,
Cape Breton Regional Fire Chiefs' Association

