

**Cape Breton Regional Municipality**

**Fire & Emergency Services Committee**

**AGENDA**

**Wednesday, January 18, 2023**

**10:00 a.m.**

**Council Chambers  
2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, City Hall  
320 Esplanade, Sydney, NS**

**Committee Members:**

Deputy Mayor James Edwards, Chair  
Councillor Gordon MacDonald  
Councillor Glenn Paruch  
Councillor Steve Parsons  
Councillor Darren O'Quinn

# Cape Breton Regional Municipality

## Fire & Emergency Services Committee

Wednesday January 18, 2023

10:00 a.m.

### **AGENDA**

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#### Land Acknowledgment

#### Roll Call

1. Approval of Agenda: (Motion Required)
2. Approval of Minutes: November 10, 2021 (Previously Distributed)
3. Election/Selection of Vice-Chair: Deputy Mayor James Edwards
4. REPORTS:
  - 4.1 Fire Chief/Director of Fire & Emergency Services Report: Michael Seth, Fire Chief, Director of Fire & Emergency Services (See page 3)
  - 4.2 Cape Breton Regional Fire Chiefs' Association Report: Rod Beresford, Volunteer Fire Chief (See page 5)

#### Adjournment



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**Fire Chief/Director of Fire & Emergency Services Report  
Fire & Emergency Services Committee  
November 10, 2021**

**Phase 1 – Sustainability of the Fire Services in Cape Breton Regional Municipality  
Action Plan**

**MOTION:** Moved by **Deputy Mayor MacMullin**, seconded by **Councillor Paruch**, to provide authority and approval to begin the process that includes the need for regulation for the fire services, revenue generation.

**A new format for the regulation and accountability of the fire service(s) within CBRM has been drafted with the intent of formalizing a final draft that will be presented to:**

1. Fire Services Leadership Team
2. Directors
3. Cape Breton Regional Fire Chiefs Association

This will be completed prior to formal presentation to Committee; to ensure that all the items that are being recommended have been vetted to all those they will be involving and be able to provide a wholesome perspective on the steps moving forward.

**MOTION:** Moved by **Councillor Gordon MacDonald**, seconded by **Councillor Gillespie**, to provide authority and approval to begin the process that includes the identification of need to enhance fire prevention and training activities for the entire CBRM.

**Fire Prevention** – conduct a review of what our regulatory responsibility would be, and how we are unable to meet that. Do comparison of cost from the Fire Marshal office to conduct the inspections versus us doing them. This will allow for an operational and financial impacts moving forward.

**Training** – develop a business plan that will outline the process of formalization and improvement to our training regime that will benefit the career and volunteer members of the fire service. This will be inclusive of development of a professional development matrix for both career and volunteers, establish a consistent training program and examine what resources will be needed for long-term planning.

Issue paper has been drafted to address this but has to be vetted with:

1. Fire Services Leadership Team
2. Directors
3. Cape Breton Regional Fire Chiefs Association

**MOTION:** Moved by **Deputy Mayor MacMullin**, seconded by **Councillor Paruch**, to provide direction for all volunteer departments to work under the direction of the Chief/Director

as it pertains to this initiative. Also, to provide opportunity for a consultation process to obtain all data necessary. The Director/Chief will provide regular reports to Council on progress of data collection and participation.

The discussion will be around the development of a communicate process that would be available to all members of the Cape Breton fire services. This would be accessible to the public in some forums as well.

This is still an ongoing initiative. As this develops there will be regular reporting provided to the committee. Some of this is contingent upon the implementation and acceptance of the records management system.

**MOTION:** Moved by **Councillor Paruch**, seconded by **Councillor Parsons**, that in the 2021/22 budget deliberations, consideration be given for the updating of comprehensive records management systems (RMS) and business intelligence software suite that all departments within CBRM must, as a requirement of their registration, ensure information is maintained, available for access by Fire Administration.

Request for Proposals has been completed, the submissions still have to be evaluated and determine next steps. This will be updated once this is completed.

### **Recruitment**

We are planning a potentially larger recruitment of career personnel to fill possible retirements. There are many that can retire in the coming months; actions are in place to begin the process of filling vacancies with Human Resources.

A discussion and planning session with the Cape Breton Regional Fire Chiefs Association regarding the development of CBRM-wide recruitment and retention strategies for volunteer firefighters will be occurring in the coming months.

### **Emergency Management**

Significant impacts coming from the response to:

1. COVID-19 and associated impacts to services
2. Imperial Oil response – lessons learned being drafted and will be coming to committee when its available
3. Hurricane Fiona – recently held a lessons-learned session with various stakeholders, Mayor and Council and final reporting should be available in the coming months.

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

Committee/Council discussion; accept as information.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Seth  
Fire Chief/Director of Fire & Emergency Services  
Fire & Emergency Services  
Cape Breton Regional Municipality

To: CBRM Fire and Emergency Services Committee

From: Rod Beresford, Cape Breton Regional Fire Chiefs' Association

Re: Report to committee

Date: January 11 2023

A new executive was elected in early 2022. The new executive includes Rod Beresford (Chairperson), Lawrence Briand (Vice-chairperson), Steve Binder (East Division), Donald Graham (Central Division), Lloyd MacIntosh (North Division), and Craig Watson (Treasurer)

The association executive met with Chief Seth and Deputy Chief Chris March in early September to discuss ways for more open communication and cooperation which we anticipate will be easier with COVID restrictions lifting. It was a positive discussion and everyone present felt there are common objectives among stakeholders of the fire service and there was general agreement to initiate a planning/priorities type workshop in early 2023.

The association executive met with members of the Emergency Services Committee in December and had a similar discussion with members of the committee. It would appear there is an overall atmosphere of progress and cooperation moving forward. As with the discussion with Chief Seth and Deputy Chief March, there is an overarching discussion around viewing the agency as a fire service and not a series of individual departments.

In general, there are open lines of communication functioning (again, largely due to availability because of COVID restrictions lifting) and we are in the early stages of planning a workshop focused short-term and long-term priorities for the fire service as a whole to help provide useful input to council around their planning, budgeting, and other matters.