

Cape Breton Regional Municipality

Fire & Emergency Services Committee

AGENDA

Wednesday, June 21, 2023

10:00 a.m.

**Council Chambers
2nd Floor, City Hall
320 Esplanade, Sydney, NS**

Committee Members: Deputy Mayor James Edwards, Chair
Councillor Gordon MacDonald
Councillor Glenn Paruch, Vice-Chair
Councillor Steve Parsons
Councillor Darren O'Quinn

Cape Breton Regional Municipality

Fire & Emergency Services Committee

Wednesday June 21, 2023

10:00 a.m.

AGENDA

Land Acknowledgment

Roll Call

1. Approval of Agenda: (Motion Required)

2. Approval of Minutes: March 8, 2023 (Previously Distributed)

3. REPORTS:
 - 3.1 Fire Chief/Director of Fire & Emergency Services Report: Michael Seth, Fire Chief, Director of Fire & Emergency Services (See page 3)

 - 3.2 Operations, Sydney Fire Department & Public Information Officer: Chris March, Deputy Fire Chief (See page 6)

 - 3.3 Volunteer Coordinator, Training, Prevention, & Fleet: Craig MacNeil, Deputy Fire Chief (See page 11)

 - 3.4 Manager of Emergency Management: Bruce MacDonald, Manager of Emergency Management (See page 13)

 - 3.5 Cape Breton Regional Fire Chiefs' Association Report: Rod Beresford, Volunteer Fire Chief (See page 18)

Adjournment



Cape Breton Regional Municipality

Michael Seth, BAppBus:ES
Fire Chief/Director
Fire & Emergency Services

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Fire Chief/Director of Fire & Emergency Services Report
Fire & Emergency Services Committee
June 21, 2023

PHASE II – COMMUNITY RISK ASSESSMENT/COMMUNITY RISK REDUCTION PLAN

Currently working with Planning/GIS to develop a comprehensive review of the community risks as it pertains to both fire protection and emergency management. This is being completed with the guiding document of the *NFPA 1300 – Standard on Community Risk Assessment and Community Risk Reduction Plan Development (2020)*.

Scope: establishes the process to identify and analyze community risks.

Purpose: to evaluate a community's risks prior to the development and implementation of a Community Risk Reduction (CRR) Plan.

Frequency: The CRA shall be conducted every 5 years or more frequently based on community need.

In addition, an annual review of the CRA shall be conducted to identify emerging trends that could impact the current CRR plan and risk reduction programs.

The CRA shall include, but not be limited to, the following profiles to describe the community:

- (1) Demographic
- (2) Geographic
- (3) Building stock
- (4) Public safety response agencies
- (5) Community service organizations
- (6) Hazards
- (7) Economic
- (8) Past loss/event history
- (9) Critical infrastructure systems

A list of identified stakeholders will be identified and through an inclusive process will be used to solicit input on the risks facing the community as a whole.¹

Stakeholders could include:

- (a) Representatives from the Cape Breton Regional Fire Chiefs Association;

¹ NFPA 1300 – Standard on Community Risk Assessment and Community Risk Reduction Plan Development (2020 Edition); Chapter 5

- (b) Representatives from the International Association of Firefighters, Local 2779;
- (c) Representatives from the Directors of CBRM – including the CAO and CFO;
- (d) Mayor and Council
- (e) Representatives from the public and local businesses – from urban, suburban, rural and remote communities;
- (f) Representatives from allied emergency response agencies – Cape Breton Regional Police Service, RCMP, EHS, Office of the Fire Marshal, Fire Services Association of Nova Scotia, etc.;

The process of how we will engage all these stakeholders still requires consideration and development. This list provided is not a final consideration as we could add others for this purpose as well.

PHASE III – DEVELOPMENT OF STANDARDS OF COVER

With the completion of the PHASE II data sets and associated information, the plan to establish appropriate staffing levels throughout the municipality using identified NFPA standards and provide a recommended standard of cover (SOC) to Mayor and Council.

Through this process, and evaluation of the revenue from current tax rates for the provision of fire protection services, and any funds in lieu of taxes that are earmarked for fire protection will be completed.

The development of a process that will envelop a plan that includes community a) growth, b) reduction, and c) status quo service delivery so that there will be options for Mayor and Council to consider. Through an evidence-based approach, Mayor and Council will be able to make an informed decision on the recommendations put forth.

This final report will contain items such as:

- Fire Services & Community Overview
- Planning & Stakeholders Survey Results
- Community Risk Assessment (CRA)
- Department Staffing & Programs
- Facilities, Apparatus, & Equipment
- Community Risk Reduction (CRR)/Emergency Management
- Mutual & Automatic Aid Agreements
- Finance, Budget & Capital Investment Plan

Ultimately, the final result of this plan will include the application of resources to address the risk, with the appropriate level of funding for the provision of services throughout the municipality. Through the development of funding to ensure that we are meeting the needs and standards, there will be discussion regarding the fire protection tax rate and development of a more standardized application, as there are various models available for consideration.

STRATEGIC PLANNING SESSION – JUNE 10, 2023

A session to determine some specific areas of common ground was conducted at the Sydney River Volunteer Fire Department. In attendance were approximately 20 VFD's represented, the IAFF, Fire Administration and the Cape Breton Regional Fire Chiefs Association. The discussion was very positive and the results are being tabulated by the Chair of the CBRFCA for future

review, discussion, and evaluation to determine some next steps for the fire service in a united perspective.

As these progresses, there will be additional information coming forth to committee.

RECORDS MANAGEMENT SOFTWARE (RMS)

This process has halted, and discussions are being done provincially to ensure that we develop the proper product at the best price.

FIRE OPS 101

IAFF Local 2779, in conjunction with the Cape Breton Regional Fire & Emergency Services are conducting a one-day fire ground operations orientation for civilians including elected public officials and representatives of the media. This event will be held September 11th, from 9:00am – 4:00pm at the Grand Lake Road Fire Department, Fire Training Center located at 850 Grand Lake Road, Sydney.

This program will include actually suiting up in fire fighter protective clothing, donning self-contained breathing apparatus and actually going inside a real fire to experience firsthand the environment in which fire fighters work. You will also have an opportunity to use the Jaws of Life during vehicle extrication, testing your ability to handle heights with a 100ft aerial device, and much more. Obviously, this will be a controlled situation fire fighters deal with on a daily basis. It promises to be a very exciting and informative day.

We are supportive of this initiative that is being hosted by the firefighters and hope that you are able to attend and participate.

This concludes my report.

Wela'lin,

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY,

Michael Seth (he/him/his)
Fire Chief/Director of Fire & Emergency Services

Chris March BBA, C.Mgr., ECFO, AIFireE
Deputy Fire Chief
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CAPE BRETON REGIONAL FIRE & EMERGENCY SERVICES COMMITTEE

DEPUTY FIRE CHIEF, OPERATIONS, SYDNEY FIRE DEPARTMENT

PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER

REPORT

To: Cape Breton Regional Fire & Emergency Services Committee

Date: June 14th, 2023

DEPUTY CHIEF, OPERATIONS

As of April 2023, I have occupied the role of retired Deputy Chief of Operations, Gilbert MacIntyre. On behalf of all in the Fire Service we would like to thank Deputy MacIntyre for his 33 years of dedicated and committed service.

We wish Gilbert many years of healthy, enjoyable retirement.

The goal for Sydney Fire Operations going forward is to work, inclusively, collaboratively, and pro-actively with our fire fighters, officers, the Executive and Union, as a team working toward a common goal, to protect residents of the Cape Breton Regional Municipality safely, efficiently, and effectively to the best of our abilities. Working together collectively with staff management will provide the resources needed to achieve the best possible outcomes.

As the new Deputy Chief of Operations, I held a meeting with our Platoon Chiefs in mid-April to collaborate and identify a Vision and Plan for our short-term future. We then held, for the first time ever, a Sydney Fire Department Officers' meeting. The meeting was a great success with many valuable ideas, suggestions, and commentary coming forward. It was decided that these meetings, for the benefit the fire department, would be held on a quarterly basis. We then proceeded to have a general members meeting, inviting all to attend including off duty personnel. The purpose was to ensure that our plans, visions, strategies, and tactics going forward were provided for all staff's knowledge and to provide an opportunity for all members

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to ask questions, make suggestions, or ad comments. There were twenty-two (22) members who attended. This represents 33% of our staff which is considered a successful turn out.

STAFFING

- There have been two (2) promotions for the Cape Breton Regional Fire & Emergency Service, Sydney Fire Department. Fire fighter Mark Bettens was successful in a Captain's Promotional Routine and will occupy the vacated Captain's position resulting from Captain Steve Pertus' retirement after 38 years of dedicated and committed service. Congratulations to Captain Mark Bettens. We also wish Steve all the best in his retirement.
- Sydney Fire Department Platoon Chief, Craig MacNeil, was successful in a Deputy Chief's promotional routine and is now the Cape Breton Regional Fire & Emergency Service's Deputy Fire Chief, Volunteer Support, Manager of Training, Prevention, and Fleet. We would like to congratulate Deputy MacNeil on his success.
- Sydney Fire has hired a fourth (4) new fire fighter from a recruitment process that began in June of 2022. Sydney Fire is currently short three (3) FTE firefighter positions. There are candidates still in the process completing further testing.

S.F.D. RESPONSES

March 1st - June 11th, Sydney Fire Department responses,

• Alarms Activated	100
• Electrical Fire	8
• Car Fires	11
• Structure Fire	18
• Motor Vehicle Collision	26
• Grass/Brush/Garbage Fire	119
• Misc. Assistance	<u>24</u>

Total 306 Emergency Responses

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TRAINING

- Last year the Sydney Fire Department responded to several water rescue calls, two separate responses resulted in four (4) youths being successfully rescued from probable serious and negative outcomes. During the summer months water rescue calls increase dramatically. As a result, ongoing training is, and has been, carried out for the safe and qualified operations for our rescue boat. Last year we had seven (7) qualified Rescue Craft Operators, by July end 2023 we will have an additional nine (9) trained Operators for a total of sixteen (16) Operators. Our staff has been conducting proactive rescue craft training since the boat was placed in the water at the commencement of the lobster fisheries season.
- Staff has completed their Medical First Responders (MFR) recertifications.
- Commencing in March of 2023, staff has increased their Pre-Fire Planning (familiarization) activities. This involves site visits in the Sydney Fire Department's response area, familiarizing and collecting relevant data for prioritized medium to high-risk sites.

STATIONS

- Additional fencing was required and installed for security purposes at the rear of S.F.D. Station #1.
- Security cameras (6) were installed on the exterior of S.F.D. Station #1, again to address security issues and concerns. Required security cameras will be installed at S.F.D. Station #2 at a later date.
- Flag poles have been ordered for S.F.D. Station #1. They will be installed summer 2023.

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FUNDING

The Nova Scotia *Emergency Services Provider Fund (ESPF)* offers financial help to fire departments and ground search and rescue organizations, including hazardous materials (HAZMAT) organizations. The funding is for equipment that's used directly in response to a fire or emergency. The Emergency Services Provider Fund may fund up to 75% of eligible costs to a maximum of \$20,000.

This possible funding assistance is available once (1) every three (3) years to the aforementioned organizations.

This year, for the first time, the Sydney Fire Department has applied for this funding to provide financial assistance for the purchase of required hose replacement totaling \$28,686.

Sydney Fire's ESPF application has been submitted as of Friday, June 9th, we are hoping for a favorable decision in the next 4-6 weeks.

Halifax Regional Municipality

Forrest Fire Assistance

On Sunday, March 28th, Cape Breton Regional Fire & Emergency Service's Fire Chief/Director, Mike Seth, offered any assistance that Cape Breton Regional Fire could provide to aid in the forest fire in the HRM.

On Thursday, June 2nd, Chief Seth received a call from HRM Fire Chief Ken Stubbing requesting a crew to assist with the ongoing extinguishment efforts. With assistance from our Fire Service's union executive, a mass text was sent to all membership (employees) requesting Sydney Fire fighters who were available and willing to travel to Halifax to provide assistance. Thirteen (13) Sydney fire fighters responded. Fire fighters Mike Ford, Chris Coady, Ben Tatlock, Captain Jody Wrathall, Platoon Chief Doug Huntington and I left for Halifax at 7:00 pm arriving in Halifax at 1:00 am. We were immediately dispatched to the Hammonds Plains area extinguishing hot spots until 7:00 am Friday, June 2nd. We returned on Friday, June 2nd 8:00 pm and extinguished hot spots throughout the Hammonds Plains and the Westwood Subdivision, the point origin, until 6:00 am Saturday, June 3rd. Sydney Fire returned on Saturday pm.

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The appreciation, thankfulness, and support by community members, businesses, fire departments and fire management shown to us was overwhelming.

We would like to thank all our firefighters for volunteering to attend. An additional thank you for those who attended. Their commitment to help our Provincial neighbors, citizens, and our brotherhood of fire fighters and all first responders was well displayed. The opportunity to assist was appreciated and our firefighters represented the CBRM proud.

This concludes the C.B. Regional Fire & Emergency Service, Deputy Chief's Operations, Sydney Fire Department Report to the C.B. Regional Fire & Emergency Services Committee.

DC C. March

Original signed by:

Chris March BBA, C.Mgr., ECFO, AIFireE
Deputy Fire Chief, Operations
Public Information Officer,
Cape Breton Regional Fire & Emergency Service
Cape Breton Regional Municipality

Cape Breton Regional Fire and Emergency Service

Deputy Fire Chief Craig MacNeil
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Fire and Emergency Service Committee meeting.

VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR

I am continuing to attend training nights with Fire Departments along with attending installation of officers to meet as many firefighters and officers as possible. I have attended ten departments so far and will continue until I am familiar with all departments.

On Saturday June 10, 2023, Fire administration team, along with the Cape Breton Regional Chiefs association and IAFF Local 2779, attended a round table discussion day, to move the fire service forward. This was a very productive and positive meeting.

On a personal note, I have been enjoying this new challenge in my career and love meeting all the new people who have told me with such pride about their department and equipment. I look forward to working with all in my role.

TRAINING

- The Training division provided radio communication refresher to East Bay, Big Pond and Northside East Bay.
- Laura King, Canadian NFPA national rep, was in CBRM and presented A Power storage seminar at Center 200 with 90 Volunteer firefighters present.
- The Training division is continuing the CBRFES FF Level I. the final skills weekend will take place on June 24-25, 2023, with the final written on July 1, 2023.
- The training division will be formulating a list in August of all Volunteer firefighters whose Level 1 training was interrupted by Covid and other events. We will be starting a plan to get all those affected in September before starting a new Level one course.

PREVENTION

- The fire prevention team is working on securing a Fire Smart app, to be available to all departments after a trial period. This is to aid homeowners in making their property safer in the event of wildfires.
- Kara McCurdy of Department of Natural resources and renewables was in CBRM and provided 1 week of training dealing with Fire Smart to the volunteer fire departments, fire prevention team and the public.
- Fire Prevention officer Bryce Kehoe was sworn in at Council on June 13, 2023, and is continually training.
- Fire Prevention officer Steve MacKenzie has attended fire prevention training in Halifax the week of June 12 – 16 to further aid the CBRM.

FLEET

- The Florence Commercial Pumper has been delivered to the department.
- We are in the process of acquiring /sourcing a used tanker for the Gabarus VFD.
- Frenchvale Commercial Pumper is progressing and is expected later this summer.
- A new 5-year plan will be presented before the new year arrives.

This concludes my report to the Fire and Emergency Committee June 13, 2023.

DC C. C. MacNeil
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Cape Breton Regional Municipality
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CAPE BRETON REGIONAL FIRE & EMERGENCY SERVICES COMMITTEE

Manager of Emergency Management

REPORT

To: **Cape Breton Regional Fire & Emergency Services Committee**

Date: June 2023

RECENT ACTIVITIES

Recent activities and progress on objectives since last report

1. Finalize the development of a Comfort Centre Standard Operating Guideline (SOG).
 - DRAFT Comfort Centre SOG will be updated to include learnings from Hurricane Fiona and the comfort centre issue paper.
 - DRAFT Memorandum of Agreement for use of a facility as a Comfort Centre has been circulated to members of the Emergency Preparedness Planning committee for review and approval.
2. Finalize an Emergency Management Training Plan for CBRM.
 - Resubmitted Plan appendix of recommended training for clarification of EMO training requirements for staff.
3. Public engagement.
 - Ongoing emergency and preparedness messaging is shared to the public on CBRM's social media sites.
 - Participated in interviews with CBC/ATV TV, and CBC radio to discuss the potential effect of Hurricane Fiona on wildfires and share information on other emergency preparedness topics.
 - Shared information for Emergency Preparedness Week 2023 through CBRM's Facebook page along with an EP Week contest with four 72-hour preparedness kits that were awarded for sharing our messaging and information.

- Continuing to add new information to the CBRM Emergency Preparedness webpage.
 - Recorded seven short length emergency preparedness focused videos and added to CBRM's YouTube channel.
 - Participated in the Open CBRM event to speak with the public regarding emergency management and demo CBRM's Mobile Command Post.
4. Development of a Joint Emergency Management volunteer program for CBRM.
- Met with HRM EMO regarding their JEM program.
 - Regularly meeting with community members in the Port Morien area who are interested in becoming a JEM group to offer support to their community during disasters.
 - With the support of the Port Morien community group, we are developing the structure and potential services that could be provided by CBRM JEM groups throughout the Municipality.
5. Post Hurricane Fiona Wildfire Potential – From the Community Risk Reduction Perspective
- Connected with Department with Natural Resources regarding potential impact on wildfires due to Hurricane Fiona.
 - With the support of the CBRM Hazmat Team, performed a drone survey of several areas in CBRM to gather information related to the extent of tree falls in wildland areas from Hurricane Fiona.
 - Worked with NS DNRR Fire Prevention Officer on information and training opportunities for Wildfire risk reduction through the FireSmart program.
 - Sharing Wildfire Community Risk Reduction information through social media and community presentations. Fire operations has additional wildfire initiatives underway as well.
 - Met with a group in the South Bar/New Victoria area to discuss preparedness should there be a wildfire that threatens farms and livestock. This will likely expand into its own topic as there are a significant number of small farms throughout CBRM.

6. Hosting discussions with Councilors and CBRM First responders in each CBRM division to discuss EMO topics at a local level.
7. Ongoing support for recovery activities within the community following Hurricane Fiona.

Liaison with External Partners

- Participated virtually in NSEMO Hurricane Fiona Lessons Learned follow-up session.
- Participate virtually in NSHA Public Health COVID 19 Lessons learned from the Municipal EMO perspective.
- Participated in the Salvation Army Disaster Services volunteer training session held at Holy Family Parish in Sydney Mines.
- Ongoing participation in the Nova Scotia RINSAC executive committee meetings and Nova Scotia FireSmart committee meetings.
- Participated in a dry run and emergency plan review for the new helipad at NSHA's CBRH site.
- Arranged and participated in tours of CBRH's new building construction.
- Met with Canadian Red Cross Emergency Management Coordinator regarding training opportunities for the public, including 72-hour personal preparedness session.
- Participating, along with Fire Operations, in ongoing discussions with Imperial Oil Limited regarding emergency planning and response to IOL's Sydney, George Street facility.
- Met with representatives of the Cape Breton Housing Authority to discuss planning for future emergencies and disasters.
- Met with representatives from the Nova Scotia Disaster Animal Response Team – DART to discuss support options for CBRM during a future disaster.

Training/Presentations

- ***Incident Command System 400 Instructor Certification***
 - Obtained ICS 400 instructor certification through NSEMO and ICS Canada.
- ***Community meetings***
 - Provided lectures on Personal Preparedness and Wildfire Community Risk Reduction through the FireSmart program in Louisbourg, Port Morien, Birch Grove, Donkin, and Albert Bridge.
 - Participated in a Dominion - Rock the Hill planning meeting to discuss EMO recommendations for the event.
- ***Other CBRM EMO facilitated training/presentations/information sessions:***
 - **ICS-300** weekend course scheduled for April 14th to 16th postponed due to low registration, will be reoffered in the fall 2023.
 - **ICS -400** – will now be held in September/October.
 - Delivered virtual presentations to EMC's in EMO Region 3, and to the CAO's group in Lunenburg county on the Emergency Management Coordinators experience during Hurricane Fiona.
- ***Exercise participation***
 - Assisting Cove Guest Home in Sydney with planning a Code Yellow, missing resident emergency response exercise that is scheduled to be held this month, June 2023.
 - Participated in the yearly tour/exercise at the Irving Propane facility in Sydney.
 - Participant in the monthly provincial TMR communications exercise - Exercise Handshake.

NEXT STEPS

Mid Term objectives

1. Update Mobile Command Post procedures.
2. Approval of CBRM Emergency Planning Committee Terms of Reference (Sept 2023 Emergency Planning Committee Meeting).

Long Term objectives

1. Develop evacuation routes.
2. Finalize a comprehensive Emergency Management Exercise Plan for CBRM.
3. Update of All Hazards Plan and on-going development required Hazard Specific plans.

This concludes the Manager of Emergency Management's report to the Cape Breton Regional Fire & Emergency Services Committee.

Bruce MacDonald

Original signed by:

Bruce MacDonald BTech (EM) CET ABCP
Manager of Emergency Management
Cape Breton Regional Fire and Emergency Service

To: CBRM Fire and Emergency Services Committee

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

Re: Report to committee

Date: June 14 2023

Dispatch Communication

At the April meeting of the CBRFCA a short presentation was given a short presentation from two individuals about their concerns at the 911 Dispatch Centre. After hearing concerns they brought forward, a letter was written to Mayor MacDougall, CBRM Councillors, and Marie Walsh (CAO) expressing concern on behalf the Fire Chiefs' Association. In the letter, it was raised that the situation as presented to the association was of concern and a reply to the letter was requested with respect to what measures/actions were in place to resolve the situation as it was described. A few weeks later three members of the Chiefs' Association executive met with Christa Dicks and John MacKinnon to discuss the letter and circumstances that prompted the letter. Based on that discussion, it was explained that not all of the information presented to the association was accurate and that a written response would be provided to the association. Ms. Dicks was invited to attend a Chiefs' Association meeting (June 22) to provide clarity on this and other matters. Further to that, it was agreed that it would make good sense for Ms. Dicks to attend a Chiefs' Association meeting on a more regular basis to ensure clear and accurate information is being shared with the association members.

Volunteer Fire Department Grant Cheque Delays

Several fire departments sent questions around grant cheque availability. While it is understood that the distribution of these funds is dependent on CBRM Council approving the annual budget, there was no formal communication to volunteer departments on this matter and it would have been helpful and respectful to have provided that communication in a timely manner.

Fire Service Planning and Priorities Workshop

On June 10 there was a planning and priorities type workshop hosted by the CBRFCA. Over 30 members were in attendance including volunteer fire departments, IAFF, and CBRM Fire Service administration. There is obvious agreement from all aspects of the fire service on areas where challenges and opportunities exist. A formal report from the meeting will be generated and distributed in the coming weeks. The four most areas of discussion were: (I) training, (II) truck replacement, (III) purchasing and procurement, and (IV) compensation and career opportunities for volunteer firefighters. It was agreed that members of the association will work with fire administration over the coming months to prepare documents related to these aspects of the fire service so they may be brought before council where appropriate.

