

To: Administration & Finance Executive Committee
From: Tyler Moffitt, Fire Chief/CEMC
Date: July 26, 2018
Subject: Volunteer Firefighter Recruitment and Retention

Background

The history of retaining Volunteer Firefighters has been a challenge Canada wide, as well as within our community. Currently, we have 17 Volunteer Firefighters on our roster. Seven of them joined our fire and rescue service in 2017, and three this year.

In fact, out of the 5 Volunteer Firefighters hired this past April ... only two remain on the roster. We need to get back to 20 Volunteer Firefighters, which our 2018 Budget permits.

With the new training regulations in the province of Ontario ... anyone becoming a Volunteer Firefighter on/after January 1st, 2019 will have two years to become certified, which will be a **tremendous undertaking** and **challenge**.

Most recently, a representative with the OAFC (Ontario Association of Fire Chiefs) met with all the Rainy River District Fire Chiefs at a special district Fire Chiefs meeting.

The wise advice given was to hire as many Volunteer Firefighters before January 1st, 2019 ... even if it means putting them on an auxiliary reserve list. This would **save time** and **money** on the required certification time-line.

My recommendation is to increase the roster to 30 Volunteer Firefighters and put 10 of them on an auxiliary reserve list.

For 2018, they would all attend a 2-hour orientation session, which would be documented. The cost for these 10 members would be **\$351, which I will be able to absorb in the 2018 Budget**. As well, they would now be on our roster before 2019.

For 2019 (pending approval), and to maintain interest and engagement ... each Volunteer Firefighter on the auxiliary reserve list would attend eight 2-hour training sessions, which would be budgeted at \$2,808 for the 10 members. As well, we would evaluate the 10 members to determine who would be appointed to the next active Volunteer Firefighter position when one becomes available.

Going forward, we would have to complete an aggression recruitment campaign and have a handful of open houses with the aim of making all potential candidates realize the expectations, as well as the time commitment associated with being a Volunteer Firefighter with the Town of Fort Frances.

Recommendation

That the Administration & Finance Executive Committee approves this report and directs Council to bring forward the resolution to increase the roster to 30 Volunteer Firefighters and put 10 Volunteer Firefighters on an auxiliary reserve list.

Respectfully submitted,



Tyler Moffitt
Fire Chief/CEMC
Fort Frances Fire & Rescue Service