

Minutes The Blue Mountains Special Meeting of Council



MEETING DATE: February 8, 2012
LOCATION: Fire Hall No. 1, Thornbury
PREPARED BY: Corrina Giles, Town Clerk

A. Call to Order

- Mayor Anderson called the meeting to order with all members in attendance.

Also in attendance were CAO Troy Speck, Director of Recreation Shawn Everitt, Communications & Economic Development Coordinator Lisa Kidd, Capital Accountant Darcy Chapman, Fire Chief Ron Doherty, Deputy Fire Chief AJ Lake, District Chief / CEMC - Station 2 Steve Conn, Training Officer Scott Wright, Manager of Human Resources Tracey McKenna, Volunteer Firefighter Scott Marritt and Chief Fire Prevention Officer Duncan Rydall

- Approval of Agenda:

Moved by: R.J. Gamble

Seconded by: John McKean

THAT the Agenda of February 8, 2012 be adopted as circulated, including any revisions to be made, Carried.

- No member declared a pecuniary interest with any matter as listed on the Agenda

B. Presentation

**B.1 Ron Doherty, Fire Chief
Re: Fire Department Core Services**

Fire Chief Ron Doherty spoke regarding the core services of the Fire Department. Ron noted the Fire Master Plan is complete and that the Establishing and Regulating By-law should be updated in accordance with the Fire Master Plan. Ron confirmed this update is stemming from a recent workshop held in Meaford that was attended by many members of Council that identified the responsibilities of Council and the Fire Department.

Ron noted that the purpose of this Special Meeting of Council is to provide direction to the Fire Department to assist in being able to move forward with the Establishing and Regulating By-law.

Ron noted many municipalities are making decisions on the parameters of the core services of the Fire Department and then spoke regarding benchmarks.

Ron then circulated the Fire Department Operating Guidelines document, Mayor Anderson questioning if these documents are specific to The Blue Mountains Fire Department, Ron replying yes. Ron then noted that anything that has to do with operations of the Fire Department is dealt with in the Guidelines and confirmed the document is constantly being revised and updated.

Ron then spoke regarding volunteer firefighters noting that competent, consistent people must be hired to assist with the operations of the Fire Department, further noting that one Fire Hall provides backup for the other Fire Hall.

Ron then spoke regarding the municipality's responsibility for fire protection and prevention, core services, and fire suppression.

CAO Troy Speck then spoke questioning if Council has an option of not providing interior suppression and rescue, Ron replying yes, noting interior suppression should not be attempted without ten firefighters on site.

Councillor Gamble spoke regarding Fire Suppression and noted he does not support the use of the words "to prevent further dollar loss" as currently included in "Offensive Operations".

Ron then questioned if Council are comfortable with the three core services included in Fire Suppression, being Offensive Operations, Defensive Operations and Interior Suppression and Rescue.

Deputy Mayor McKinlay then spoke noting that officers should be trained to perform rescues but noted the Town is restrained by budgets, Ron then spoke in response to Deputy Mayor McKinlay and noted much depends on fire staffing, the availability of water and the time of arrival on site.

Councillor Ardiel then spoke questioning the Town's legal obligations, Ron replying that the core levels of service as determined by Council will be advertised to the residents of The Blue Mountains.

Councillor McKean then spoke referencing the Town's volunteer firefighter team and noted buildings can be fully engulfed in four to five minutes.

Councillor Halos then spoke noting the Fire Department should attempt to perform rescues if the firefighters are appropriately trained, but noted residents should have insurance on their properties to ensure coverage, Ron replying that firefighters are not to perform rescues if it is deemed unsafe to do so.

Deputy Mayor McKinlay then spoke questioning if smoke alarms provide enough notice of fire, Ron replying that smoke alarms provide approximately two minutes notice, Deputy Fire Chief AJ Lake replying the smoke is the most serious issue in a fire.

Councillor Martin then spoke noting an extensive education piece will have to be rolled out, particularly in the urban area identifying the limitations of the Fire Department, further noting that more money should be spent on the education of residents as residents may be of the opinion that all fire services are available to them and many may not be aware of the risks.

Mayor Anderson then questioned if the Fire Department has been in a situation where an occupant was not rescued from a fire, Ron replying yes, because of timing.

Mayor Anderson then questioned if Council would like to continue with Fire Suppression operations that include Offensive, Defensive and Interior Suppression and Rescue, AJ spoke in response to Mayor Anderson noting that the fire officer on duty at a fire event is constantly reassessing and calculating the situation and will not place the Fire Department volunteers at risk.

Chief Fire Prevention Officer Duncan Rydall spoke noting that public education and fire suppression efforts go hand-in-hand and is making it possible for offensive operations to occur.

Deputy Mayor McKinlay then spoke noting Council needs to be comfortable with their choice and levels of service.

Moved by: Gail Ardiel

Seconded by: Joe Halos

THAT Council directs that the Fire Department Fire Suppression efforts will include Offensive Operations (interior fire suppression), Defensive Operations, Interior Suppression and Rescue, dependent upon the availability of on-scene staffing, their level of experience, and the availability of equipment and water supply at the time of the incident, shall be included in the draft Fire Department Establishing and Regulating By-law.

In speaking to the Motion, Deputy Mayor McKinlay questioned if the services identified will be included in a draft by-law for further consideration by Council, Mayor Anderson replying yes.

Council then voted on the Motion, Carried.

Ron then spoke regarding the Factors Affecting the Effectiveness and Response to Fire Suppression Operations, including areas without municipal water supply and noted these areas do not meet Superior Tanker Shuttle accreditation. To meet Superior Tanker Shuttle Accreditation, the Fire Department must be able to pump 200 gallons of water per minute for two hours without interruption for residential accreditation and 400 gallons per minute uninterrupted for two hours for commercial accreditation.

Ron noted that the Fire Department will apply for accreditation if another tanker is purchased. Councillor Halos then questioned if there are other fire fighting options available, other than water, Ron replying the Aqueous Film-Forming Foam ("Foam") is not accredited for Superior Tanker Shuttle Accreditation, further noting an accreditation can lower insurance rates, and noted he believes accreditation standards should include Aqueous Film-Forming Foam. Ron noted the Foam will not allow burned matter to reignite.

Ron then spoke regarding TSPA handheld fire extinguishers noting these extinguishers shut down a fire immediately for 90 to 120 seconds, and the cost per unit is \$1200. Ron noted the TSPA handheld fire extinguishers have proven very effective and the costs for the extinguishers are reimbursable by insurance companies through the supplier.

Mayor Anderson then questioned what organization would provide the accreditation of the Aqueous Film-Forming Foam, Ron replying Underwriters Laboratories of Canada.

Moved by: John McKean

Seconded by: Gail Ardiel

WHEREAS Council of the Town of The Blue Mountains recognizes the benefits of Aqueous Film-Forming Foam for the purposes of fire suppression;

AND WHEREAS Aqueous Film-Forming Foam is not accredited by the Underwriters Laboratories of Canada for the purposes of fire suppression for Superior Tanker Shuttle Accreditation;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Town of The Blue Mountains requests that the Province, work with the Underwriters Laboratories of Canada to review the accreditation of Aqueous Film-Forming Foam for the purposes of fire suppression for Superior Tanker Shuttle Accreditation;

AND FURTHER THAT the Clerk forward copies of this resolution to the County of Grey, Simcoe-Grey Member of Provincial Parliament Jim Wilson and the Association of Municipalities of Ontario for their consideration.

