

STAFF REPORT: The Blue Mountains Fire Department

REPORT TO: Committee of the Whole
MEETING DATE: May 16, 2016
REPORT NO.: FAF.16.55
SUBJECT: Automatic Aid - Meaford
PREPARED BY: Rob Collins, Fire Chief

A. Recommendations

THAT Council receive Staff Report FAF.16.55 “Automatic Aid – Meaford”;

AND THAT Council authorize Staff to enter into an Automatic Aid Agreement with the Municipality of Meaford, for the purpose of providing enhanced fire protection to residents;

AND THAT Council authorize the Fire Chief to execute the Automatic Aid Agreement with the Municipality of Meaford on behalf of the Town of The Blue Mountains.

B. Background

Fire Chief Mike Molloy of the Meaford Fire Department, on behalf of the Municipality of Meaford, has proposed an Automatic Aid Agreement between Meaford and The Blue Mountains. This agreement would be an enhancement to the existing Grey County Mutual Aid Agreement which the two towns already participate in.

The proposed agreement would cover a specific area of Meaford. This area includes a portion of the first concession of Meaford from the Georgian Bay shoreline to the Euphrasia-St.Vincent Townline Rd. This area represents approximately 55 properties. First responders from Blue Mountains Fire Station # 1 are able to respond to this area significantly more quickly than responders from Meaford Fire Station due to topography and traffic conditions.

The proposed Automatic Aid Agreement differs from Mutual Aid in a number of ways. Mutual Aid allows a fire department to request assistance from neighboring fire departments on an as-needed basis. The “host” department receives the initial 911 call, attends the incident, and calls for assistance as required. Mutual Aid is provided on a reciprocal basis, so there is typically no charge for this kind of assistance. Under an Automatic Aid agreement, the “assisting” department receives the initial 911 call and is the first-responding agency. This assistance is provided under a user-pay arrangement, and the “host” municipality pays the assisting department, either on an annual or a per-use basis.

The Automatic Aid agreement we are proposing with Meaford would be a pay-per-use agreement. The charges for service would be based on the MTO rates, the rates the

Ministry of Transportation pays for fire service on Provincial highways. These rates are generally used as standard response rates by fire departments across the Province. Currently, MTO rates are \$450 per hour for each responding fire truck. The Blue Mountains Fire Department would provide the initial response to an incident, and would stay on scene until Meaford Fire attended and took over operations. Blue Mountains crews would then be released from the scene. In addition to the hourly response fees charged under this agreement, Meaford will pay any premiums for additional dispatch fees charged by Barrie Fire Service.

This agreement will cover responses for fire emergencies only, and will specifically exclude medical assist calls. The agreement covers emergency responses only, and does not include any fire prevention or public education activities. Historically, this area has accounted for only about one fire emergency call per year, so we do not expect the agreement to generate a large additional call volume. It is hoped that this arrangement will decrease the on-scene times for emergency calls in the coverage area.

C. The Blue Mountains' Strategic Plan

This project addresses the Town's Strategic Plan Goal No. 2, "Engage Our Communities and Partners".

D. Environmental Impacts

None

E. Financial Impact

There will be no financial impact to the Town of The Blue Mountains, as all applicable costs will be billed to the Municipality of Meaford.

F. In Consultation With

N/A

G. Attached

None

Respectfully submitted,

Rob Collins
Fire Chief