



Municipality of the District of Argyle

Item: Halifax Fire Safety –
opportunity for presentation

Date: February 8, 2019

VISION

We see Argyle as home to a healthy and thriving rural population. Our municipality promotes and supports economic and social opportunities for the region and engages in the active expression of our unique Acadian heritage. We are a place of choice for rural living and are widely recognized for our warm hospitality and joie de vivre. Surrounded by fresh air and cool ocean breezes, we work and play in the great outdoors. People choose to live in Argyle because of our commitment to each other, to our community and to our neighbors. Argyle is a place we are proud to call home.

Background:

Since the presentation from the FSANS, led by Paul Gould, staff has investigated the National standards as set by a National organization, but not actually established for Nova Scotia. These codes highlight training, fleet and equipment standards. Argyle follows the training standard through local and provincial training of level 1 and 2 fire. Furthermore, we have passed a resolution asking the Provincial Government to consider a province wide standard for dispatch services, to ensure a high level of service is achieved.

Our investigation led to contacts at HRM and some of the safety and fire personnel employed there. The standards can be complex, and often cross-refer from one document to another. Ms Canning is leading this initiative, along with CAO Muise.

The discussion identifies the need for set standards, inspection obligations for equipment, and many other issues. Our discussion with HRM personnel has also uncovered opportunities for bulk purchases, and procurement advantages currently not available to individual fire departments.

Our HRM colleagues are eager to come down and talk to volunteer fire departments, and our Council, to identify the growing need for safety and inspection standards for our volunteer base.

Why is it important:

First and foremost, it is a continuation of the work encouraged by FSANS to establish safety standards. Our volunteers are putting themselves at risk at every fire, and we have an obligation to ensure their equipment is safe, inspected and up to date. It is not enough to rely on the volunteer organizations to lead this. We must ensure it is done.

Second, the bulk purchasing and coordination of procurement would take a huge burden off volunteer organizations, allowing us to coordinate, tender, purchase on their behalf could save thousands of dollars overall. We would not own the assets, they would, so the end result would be the same, except further coordination and ensuring best practices for procurement.

Third, the discussion will be extremely informative to our Fire Chiefs, who serve and protect our community, along with the volunteers that also serve.

CAO's Conclusion:

That Council agree to invite HRM to present to Council and the Fire Chiefs of Argyle on their processes, and what are collective obligations are for equipment inspection and safety.

Subsequent to this information session, it is expected that MODA will undertake a fire services review, which would include an updated inventory of equipment and fleet, funding, potential collaboration amongst departments and capital funding for the coming years.

Suggested motion:

Extend invitation to HRM fire personnel to present to Council (s) , staff and Fire Chiefs on their processes, and opportunities for procurement.