



## Municipality of the District of Argyle

Item: Post disaster designation – exemption request – Eel Brook Fire

Date: September 5, 2020

### 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:**

As the planning or the construction of the Eel Brook and area Volunteer Fire Department takes shape, one issue has risen from the planning. Specifically, the requirement to designate this property as a post-disaster facility, or not.

It is clear that should the designation remain, the result will be a more expensive construction, with the potential of restricting what kind of materials shall be used in the construction of the facility. It was made clear by the volunteers that they preferred materials that would maximize the useful life of the building, and insulated concrete forms seemed to be their strong preference to achieve this. The designation of post-disaster may result in using wood instead of the ICF material, which is contrary to their objectives.

The regulations surrounding post-disaster standards are clear. For fire stations, they would automatically fall into the Post-disaster category. Furthermore, that designation may be exempted by a decision from Council.

Excerpts from the National Building Code are as follows:

**Post-disaster building means a building that is essential to the provision of services in the event of a disaster, and includes: ... (did not include all examples) hospitals, power generating stations, public water treatment facilities, sewage treatment facilities...**

**Buildings of the following types, unless exempted from this designation by the authority having jurisdiction (which in our view is Council):**

- Emergency response facilities, fire rescue and police stations, and housing for vehicles, aircraft and boats used for such purposes...

### **Council considerations:**

In determining whether the post-disaster designation should be exempted or not, below is information collected from the fire department and our REMO coordinator.

Building use – both the REMO coordinator and the Fire Department confirm that in the case of a disaster, this facility would be used for a comfort center only. It does not have the size or

capacity to accept a long-term evacuation or overnight options for our residents. In the case of a full evacuation or the need to accommodate residents over a longer period of time, the Mariners Center, the Pubnico Fire Department and the Wedgeport Fire Department would be better equipped, and would have more space to provide this type of service.

If the building was going to be used for some form of long term post-disaster use, then it would make sense to retain the post-disaster construction protocol. that is not going to be its use – its use is primarily to house the volunteers, equipment and trucks used to respond to fire.

**CAO's Recommendation:**

---

Recommend that Council exempt this facility from post-disaster designation, thereby allowing the construction to meet 'normal' construction standards. This will free up the volunteers and their advisors to offer alternate building material and reduce the overall cost of construction. The post-disaster designation code requirements are excessive for the purpose of this building.

**Suggested motion:**

---

Move that the Eel Brook and Area Volunteer Fire Department be exempted from following the post-disaster code requirements of the National Building Code.