



Municipality of the District of Argyle

Item: Lake Vaughan Fire
Department request for funding to
purchase a Fire Truck

Date: May 11, 2023

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.

Request:

Council has received a request from the Lake Vaughan Volunteer Fire Department to assist in funding a 2023 Ford Mini Pumper with 1250 Hale Pump and 300 Imp. Gal water tank. The request is in the amount of \$25,000 for 5 years for a total of \$125,000. The total cost of the truck is \$427,500.

Background

Prior to 2018, Council did not provide funding to fire departments for equipment or trucks. Council's expectation prior to this was that the area rate would be used for that purpose. With the growing cost of fire trucks and the growing need to replace them, the smaller fire departments could not generate sufficient cash to buy these trucks without making it extremely cumbersome on the taxpayer.

We currently have a Fire Services Capital Grant Program Policy which would assist the Council in handling these funding request. The maximum limit level of funding for this policy is \$25,000 annually, with a maximum duration of 5 years per fire department, with all funding being disbursed in equal parts. It also states that the maximum annual cost of this program to the Municipality shall not exceed \$50,000 annually.

Currently, there are 2 fire departments receiving funding through the capital grants program for a total of \$40,000 in 2023-2024.

Quinan Department	\$25,000 annually being year 5 of 6 (before the policy was approved)
Kemptville Department	\$15,000 annually being year 5 of 5

In January 2022, Council also passed a motion approving funding through the Fire Capital Grant Program to the Islands & District Fire Department in the amount of \$40,000 with a grant of \$13,333 per year to begin in the 2024-2025 fiscal year for 3 years.

In summary, here are the available funds for the coming 5 years following Council’s current approvals assuming the policy is unchanged and the maximum funding of \$50,000 is utilized.

2023-24	\$ 10,000
2024-25	\$ 11,670
2025-26	\$ 36,667
2026-27	\$ 36,667
2027-28	\$ 50,000

Discussion with funding partners:

In discussing the issue with the Municipality of the District of Yarmouth, the following information was obtained. Lake Vaughn requested the maximum loan of \$250,000 from MODY for this transaction. In our funding application, they indicated that the loan would be \$185,000. The difference is \$65,000. Also, as part of the application, they indicated that Lake Vaughn Fire would contribute \$130,000 of its own funds towards the purchase. In our application, they indicated \$100,000. The difference is \$30,000.

Finance Department Recommendation:

First, no option is presented outside of the policy as written. We do not recommend a decision that overrides policy. If Council wishes a different result, it shall provide policy amendment to staff prior to a funding decision.

Option 1 – Maximum assistance

Based on our policy as written the maximum amount that Council may approve without amending policy is \$10,000 per year for 5 years. This is considerably less than the request, which is for a total of \$125,000. Based on new information from MODY, it is clear they have access to an additional \$65,000 towards the project from MODY, and possibly more if internal funds are used to the maximum effect. The \$50,000 recommendation would result in Lake Vaughn contributing an additional \$10,000 of their own funds.

Council has discussed this request already, and asked staff to obtain information on the proportion of residents that are in Argyle versus Yarmouth for this shared department. Our mapping technologist noted that about 9.2% of residents are Argyle. When taking only this stat into account, our proportion of the truck cost would be below the \$50,000 total. Resident percentage is **not** the only measure of the value of fire services from this department, so staff is comfortable recommending the maximum policy allows.

Option 2 – Deny Assistance:

The council may deny any assistance, which is not recommended in this instance, as there are many other funding partners ready to support the new truck. Also, the new truck will surely be used in a mutual aid call, which this department has been consistently supporting Argyle.

Any other option that exceeds the \$50,000 contribution in option one above would require a policy amendment prior to approval, and therefore is not recommended here. Council could, for instance, approve an additional funding at the end of the project, but would have to amend the policy to enable unequal annual payments.

Suggested motion:

Approve

Move that Council approve a \$50,000 contribution to the Lake Vaughan Fire Department, being \$10,000 per year for 5 years beginning in 2023-2024 and ending in 2027-2028.

Deny:

Move that Council reject the deny the request of \$25,000 for 5 years for a total of \$125,000.

Note that any other amount exceeding \$50,000 will first require policy amendment.