



AGENDA ITEM

Town of Eckville - Fire Services Agreement

December 12, 2019

BACKGROUND

As you are aware, the Town of Eckville is supportive of the last fire services proposal submitted by the County at our respective Intermunicipal Collaboration Framework committee meetings. The key elements of this proposal are as follows:

- Operating Items
 - Maintain current 75/25 cost share for fire department and fire hall operating costs

- Capital Items
 - 60/40 cost share for engine, SCBA and other capital items having a unit cost in excess of \$5,000 including repairs, improvements, etc. to the fire hall
 - County to assume ownership of all other fire apparatus (tender, rescue and rapid units) and associated equipment (i.e., extrication equipment) and fund 100% of operating costs (excluding firefighter compensation for Town responses) and future apparatus and equipment replacement costs

- Firefighter Compensation
 - Maintain existing arrangement whereby the Town and County are responsible for compensating firefighters for responses in their respective municipalities

- Training
 - Maintain current 75/25 cost share
 - Clause to be included in agreement stating that the Town and County agree to ensure that fire department member training levels meet the scope of practice and service level requirements

- Shared Fire Fund
 - Shared Fire Fund monies will be distributed to the Town and the County on a 50/50 basis



- Future revenue from the shared engine will accrue to the Shared Fire Fund
- Will continue to be used for the shared engine
- Dispatch Fees
 - Each municipality will continue to be responsible for their fire dispatch fees
- Existing Agreements
 - The current Lacombe County Fire Services agreement will remain in effect
 - All other existing fire agreements (excluding the Lacombe County Fire Services agreement) will be consolidated into one master fire services agreement with a January 1, 2020 commencement date

Action requested of Council is to approve the Fire Services Agreement as presented. The agreement is attached.

ANALYSIS

The operating and capital cost-sharing arrangements outlined in the agreement are reflective of most of the fire department responses being to incidents in Lacombe County. The agreement also recognizes that while the fire department is a partnership between the Town and the County, the Town retains discretion over how they will compensate volunteer firefighters for responses in their own communities.

Alternatives:

1. Approve the Fire Services Agreement as presented (staff recommendation).
2. Take other action as determined by Council.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

Provisions will be made in the County's 2020/future years' budgets and the County's Long-Range Fire Capital Equipment Replacement Plan to respond to the cost-sharing arrangements of the fire services agreement. The cost-sharing arrangements in the new agreement represents an approximate \$30,000 annual increase in costs to the County.

LEGISLATIVE RESPONSIBILITIES

Section 3 of the Municipal Government Act (MGA) states the purposes of a municipality are: 1) to provide good government, 2) to provide services, facilities or other things that, in the opinion of council, are necessary or desirable for all or part of the municipality, and 3) to develop and maintain safe and viable communities.



Section 180(1) of the MGA states that council may only act by resolution or bylaw.

Section 201(1) of the MGA states that a council is responsible for

- (a) developing and evaluating the policies and programs of the municipality, and
- (c) carrying out the powers, duties and functions expressly given to it under this or any other enactment.

STRATEGIC PLAN

The following elements of the County's Strategic Plan are relevant to this issue:

Our Mission:

"Building a safe and vibrant community through leadership, innovation and the development of healthy relationships".

Our Key Principles:

"Recognizing our history and solid foundation, we approach the role of providing the best possible level of municipal services for our citizens through a base of collaborative and supportive teamwork".

Growth Management Strategy Goal "D":

Maintain effective cooperation and collaboration with neighbouring urban municipalities.

Service Delivery Strategy Goal "C":

Establish regional partnerships to deliver services in an efficient and effective manner.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Lacombe County sees the value in engaging and informing the public/stakeholders through a variety of mediums as outlined in the *Policy AD(40): Public Participation Policy*. The appropriate level of engagement for each public participation opportunity is selected on a project-to-project basis.

For this item, the following engagement will take place:

- *Inform*: To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions



Highlights of all County Council meetings are published on the County Website and in the County News.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council approve the following resolution:

That the Fire Services Agreement between the Town of Eckville and Lacombe County be approved.

PREPARED BY: Tim Timmons, County Manager

REVIEWED BY: Tim Timmons, County Manager

Two square boxes, each containing a handwritten signature in blue ink, stacked vertically.