

**FIRE SERVICES ADVISORY COMMITTEE**  
**Council Chambers, 181 Coldbrook Village Park Drive**  
**Thursday, November 23, 2023 at 7:00 pm**

**AGENDA**

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Amendments to the Agenda
4. Approval of the Agenda
5. Disclosure of Conflict of Interest Issues
6. Approval of Minutes
  - a. September 21 2023 2
7. Business Arising from the Minutes
8. New Business
  - a. Annual funding increase discussion
  - b. Update on policy development
9. Roundtable Discussion
10. Other Business
11. Date of Next Meeting - January 18, 2024
12. Adjournment

# FIRE SERVICES ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Thursday, September 21, 2023 at 7:00 pm

## Draft Minutes

**Meeting, Date and Time** A meeting of the Fire Services Advisory Committee (FSAC) was held on Thursday, September 21, 2023 at 7:00 pm in the Council Chambers at 181 Coldbrook Village Park Drive.

### Attending

#### FSAC Members

Watson Armstrong, Kingston Fire Chief (Chair)  
Jim Redmond, New Minas Fire Chief (Vice-Chair)  
Jason Ripley, Greenwich Fire Chief  
Jason Stevens, Port Williams Fire Chief  
Jeff Skaling, Canning Fire Chief  
Luke Redden, Berwick Fire Chief  
Scott Hamilton, Kentville Fire Chief  
Shawn Carey, Aylesford Fire Chief  
Todd Crowell, Wolfville Fire Chief  
Wayne Johnstone, Waterville Fire Chief  
Councillor June Granger - District 1  
Councillor Lexie Misner – District 2  
Councillor Tim Harding – District 5

#### Municipal Staff

Rob Frost - Deputy CAO  
Terry Brown - Manager of Inspection & Enforcement Division  
Laurie-Ann Clarke – Recording Secretary

#### Absent

David Watson, Halls Harbour Fire Chief  
Paul Maynard, Hantsport Acting Fire Chief  
Thomas Lowe, Springfield Fire Chief

#### Public

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- 1. Call to Order** The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm.
- 2. Roll Call** The Recording Secretary took meeting attendance.
- 3. Amendments to the Agenda** None.
- 4. Approval of the Agenda** **On motion of Chief Redmond and Chief Carey, that the Fire Services Advisory Committee approve the September 21, 2023 meeting agenda as circulated.**

**The question was called on the motion. Motion carried.**

**5. Disclosure of Conflict of Interest Issues**

There were no conflict of interest issues disclosed.

**6. Approval of Minutes**

**a. May 18, 2023**

**On motion of Chief Redmond and Councillor Misner, that the minutes of the Fire Services Advisory Committee meeting held on May 18, 2023 be approved as circulated.**

**The question was called on the motion. Motion carried.**

**7. Business Arising from the Minutes**

Chief Skaling asked for clarification on item [8a. Hydrant Usage](#) discussed at the May 18, 2023 meeting, wondering if Public Works had a specific recommendation regarding opening a hydrant. Terry Brown, Manager of Inspection & Enforcement Division, advised he would follow up with Public Works and provide the FSAC with an answer.

**8. New Business**

**a. 911 Fire and Emergency Dispatch/Afterhours Answering Service**

Mr. Brown shared that the previous contract for 911 Fire and Emergency Dispatch/Afterhours Answering Service expired on August 31, 2023. A Non-Binding Request for Proposal was issued in June 2023 and Municipal Council awarded Valley Communications a new five-year contract at their meeting on August 15, 2023.

**b. Notification of Change in Chief**

Mr. Brown welcomed Port Williams Chief Jason Stevens and Deputy Chief Adam Griffin to their first meeting of FSAC. He reminded the committee that per the FSAC Terms of Reference, changes in who holds the position of Fire Chief must be reported to the Municipal Clerk (or to Mr. Brown who will report to the Municipal Clerk on behalf of the fire department).

**c. Emergency Services Coordinator Position**

Deputy Chief Administrative Officer, Rob Frost, provided an overview of the draft Emergency Services Coordinator job description which was distributed to the committee via email on September 20, 2023. Chief Redmond asked for clarification on the funding for this position and the Deputy CAO advised that it will be funded by the Municipality and will have no affect on the department fire budgets. Chief Redmond expressed his concerns regarding the position but noted that he felt that the fire departments and the Municipality will benefit from having someone in the role.

**d. Policy Discussion**

Deputy CAO Frost provided an update on the FSAC Fire Policy discussion. He shared that since the Municipal Policy Analyst was on parental leave and the position was currently vacant, he would be working on drafting the policy. The Chair asked for a timeline on having a policy in place and the Deputy CAO stated it was difficult to specify a timeline however a meeting for the subcommittee would be scheduled for October or November of 2023. He noted that the next steps in the implementation of a policy were to:

- review items such as borrowing considerations, audited statements, surpluses and deficits and how they are addressed, procurement, registration, insurance and honorariums to decide if they should be included in a policy or contract with between the Municipality and individual fire departments
- review what the policy would entail
- meet with the subcommittee to refine each section
- present the draft to FSAC
- present policy to Council for adoption

**9. Roundtable Discussion**

Chief Ripley asked for clarification on the Fire and Recreation Area Rates Policy recently reviewed and approved by Municipal Council and how it would affect fire departments. The Deputy CAO advised that he thought it related mainly to the rates and would have no affect on fire departments and he would provide details to the committee via email on what specifically was approved.

Chief Ripley commented that it may be useful to investigate standardization of records management systems in order to provide statistics regarding attendance, attending apparatus, and other information on fire calls. Standardizing the system would simplify the collection of information and may allow for a combined service fee.

Chief Skaling shared that the fire chiefs had met with RCMP S/Sgt. Ed Nugent regarding nuisance burns and how to handle conflict with property owners in these scenarios. The chiefs expressed concern with having no option to have the Municipal By-law Enforcement Officer or a Conservation Officer outside of regular working hours and lack of availability of members of the RCMP to attend a scene unless the incident escalates. The RCMP indicated that they would work with the departments to provide support in these situations. S/Sgt Nugent and the chiefs also discussed the role of fire departments in providing long duration traffic control. Fire departments have had difficulty in securing staff from the RCMP or Nova Scotia Department of Public Works to take control of highway closures once the fire department's role had been met. The Chair asked about available funding to secure a public company to assume control over traffic. There was a discussion around

liability as well as which level of government is responsible for coverage. Chief Ripley asked if the fire department's role in traffic control could be included in the policy discussion.

Mr. Brown advised that finance forms would be emailed later this fall with a deadline to complete by mid January. He requested that any department encountering an unopened private hydrant contact him so the Municipality can inquire on having it opened. He also asked the committee to provide their contact phone number to the Recording Secretary before leaving Council Chambers following the meeting, noting that a security breach at the Municipality in July had resulted in loss of some information. Mr. Brown thanked all members for their work and specifically for coming together in times of wildfires and flooding experience in the province this spring and summer.

The Chair inquired about a Municipal by-law relating to civic numbering, sharing that Kingston has had issues locating an emergency scene when a civic number was not displayed. Mr. Brown referenced By-law #96 and asked the chiefs to forward any addresses who are not displaying a civic number correctly in order for the Municipality to follow up. Further discussion revealed that other departments had been having similar issues in their districts and there was a discussion on how to remedy the issue.

Chief Ripley shared that in responding to the flash flooding situation in summer 2023, a lack of mutual aid agreement with West Hants came to light and he indicated that there were some departments including Greenwich that had lost gear which had to be replaced out of pocket. Mr. Brown took this under advisement and indicated that he was in the process of reviewing the Mutual Aid agreement.

**10. Other Business**

None

**11. Date of Next Meeting**

There was a discussion around the December meeting date scheduled during the February 15, 2023 meeting ([item 9d](#)). Members of the FSAC indicated that they would prefer to meet in November or earlier in December. The meeting was rescheduled for Thursday, November 23, 2023 at 7pm in Council Chambers.

**12. Adjournment**

**On motion of Chief Redmond, there being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:03 pm.**

**Approved by:**

DRAFT