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The Corporation of the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake
Information Report to Council

SUBJECT: Fire Dispatch Service Agreement Renewal

DATE: 2022-12-13

REPORT #: FES-22-007

PREPARED BY: Jay Plato

DEPARTMENT: Fire & Emergency Services

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Niagara-on-the-Lake Fire & Emergency Services (NOTLFES) currently receives its dispatch services through the St. Catharines Fire Services Communications Division. This contract is set to expire on December 31, 2022.

As outlined within report FES-21-001 (**Appendix I**), The NOTLFES was to complete research to determine potential options for its dispatch services, ensuring that the NOTLFES continues to receive an effective dispatch service that provides a high level of safety for its firefighters while also ensuring fiscally responsible decision making. Since that report was approved, the NOTLFES has investigated what options exist. This included visiting other dispatch centres in southern Ontario to see what was available. As a result, informal proposals indicating costs and the service level the NOTLFES would receive if they entered into an agreement with different dispatch centres were received. These proposals were evaluated to determine the next best move for the NOTLFES.

The Fire Chief and the Deputy Fire Chief reviewed the service levels offered and the quotes presented. They agreed that remaining with the Town's current service provider, St. Catharines Fire Services, and utilizing our current analog infrastructure would ultimately provide the best service for the NOTLFES. It was also the most cost-effective option. NOTLFES reached out to St. Catharines Fire Services and advised them that the Town intended to enter into a renewed contract. A formal proposal outlining the details was requested to be submitted to NOTLFES.

In November 2022, the NOTLFES received this proposal as a contract renewal document. At this time, conditions within the contract are still being negotiated to ensure a fair and appropriate agreement for both parties. The NOTLFES is confident an agreement will be reached. However, due to the timing of when the contract was received, the timing of council meetings, and the ongoing discussion surrounding the particulars of the renewal, the contract will not be completed

before the end of the year. However, St. Catharines Fire Services has confirmed in writing that they will continue to dispatch for NOTLFES into the new year while the contract conditions are still negotiated.

NEXT STEP / CONCLUSION

The NOTLFES will continue negotiating a contract renewal on behalf of the Corporation of the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake. The objectives of contract renewal include ensuring a fair and appropriate contract, ensuring the safety of the Town's firefighters is at the forefront of all decision-making, the associated costs are reasonable for the Town, and the Town's current analog infrastructure can continue to be utilized.

When an agreement has been made in principle, the contract will be brought forward to Council for review and approval. It is anticipated to come before Council early in 2023.

ATTACHMENTS

- **Appendix I** – FES-21-001