



Meeting Date: March 24, 2021

Submitted by: Colin Toth, Director of Emergency Services – Fire Chief

Report No: FS-02-2021

Subject: Fire Safety Grant Opportunity

Recommendation:

THAT Report FS-02-2021 regarding a Fire Safety Grant Opportunity be received for information.

Purpose:

The purpose of this report is to provide Council the information with respect to a Fire Safety Grant announced through the Office of the Fire Marshal, (OFM) on March 11th, 2021. This announcement affords the opportunity for all Fire Departments in Ontario to apply.

Background:

Since the start of the pandemic, Ontario's fire services have faced unprecedented challenges and have voiced their concerns, specifically related to training, through proper channels. The ability to train fire service members in a COVID environment has brought with it new restrictions and despite opportunities to train online and through other modes, not all training priorities have been met over the last year. In addition, concerns around fire code enforcement and public education top Middlesex Centre Fire Services', (MCFS) list of 2020 outstanding areas of focus.

The Municipality received correspondence on March 11, 2021 from the Ministry of Solicitor General advising that Middlesex Centre Fire Services is eligible for a grant in the amount of \$8,800 towards training.

More specifically, this grant is intended to provide fire departments with the flexibility to support two priority areas. First, this grant may be put towards ongoing training needs including registration, administrative programming, technology upgrades and associated costs for attending as well for providing services. In addition, if code compliance and inspections continue to be challenging, addressing opportunities for an inspection

program may include technology, capital costs and training to ensure that fire services are able to meet the demand of this need at the local level.

Analysis:

The requirement to receive these funds involves the initial submission of an application to the OFM for review and documentation. As decisions regarding the grant may not have time to proceed to Municipal Council for approval within the timeframes identified below, the OFM is providing latitude with the Fire Chief accepting the grant in principle on behalf of the Municipality, pending formal approval from Council. Once the grant application is approved, a letter of intent from the OFM contingent upon Council's deliberations will be received. In order to allocate funds before March 31, 2021, all applications must be submitted and received by the OFM no later than March 19, 2021. Due to these stringent timelines, the Fire Chief submitted the signed application on March 15, 2021 to be eligible for the grant funds.

Subsequently, all funds received must be disbursed by August 1, 2021, and a report provided to the OFM NLT September 1, 2021, outlining how the monies were utilized at the department level.

To summarize, although MCFS has competent training, education and prevention programs in place that have been sustained temporarily within our current environment, there are many areas of function that can and have been explored and, will prove to be an effective course of action moving forward. This grant will provide us a springboard in which to initiate and develop these new ideas to support MCFS in our new way of life. Various new tools and processes will not only benefit staff but that of our residents and two fire prevention-supported Municipalities.

Financial Implications:

As the Province is providing Middlesex Centre the opportunity to apply for a grant in the amount up to \$8,800, there will not be additional financial implications from a current budgetary perspective.

Strategic Plan:

This matter aligns with following strategic priorities:

- Responsive Municipal Government

Attachments:

Middlesex Centre Fire Safety Grant Memorandum – March 11th, 2021