

**April 18, 2011**

**Special Meeting**

**6:30 PM**

The Council for the Township of Killaloe, Hagarty and Richards met on the above date with Councillors John Jeffrey, Ernie Cybulski, Stanley Pecoskie, Carl Kuehl and Debbie Peplinskie present. Also in attendance were Acting Fire Chief Gerry Dombroski and members of the Killaloe, Hagarty and Richards Fire Department, and Tawnya Roberts, Fire Protection Adviser, Office of the Fire Marshal. Mayor Janice Visneskie chaired the meeting, which she opened and called to order.

**Pecuniary/Financial Interest:** None declared by any of the Council members present.

**Purpose of the Meeting:** To receive a presentation from the Fire Marshal's Office.

**Delegations:** Mayor Visneskie introduced Tawnya Roberts and turned the meeting over to her. Councillor O'Reilly arrived at this time.

Issues reviewed by Ms. Roberts:

- There have been recent changes to legislation that affect both the municipality and the fire department. Fire departments must train to the curriculum that has been established through legislation. Both fire departments and Councils need to be educated about what this means, as both carry responsibility and liability in this regard.
- Council sets the level of service through a risk assessment and risk management process. The fire department establishes a procedure to provide training so that their members can perform their duties to that level of service.
- The municipality, as your employer, has to be involved.
- There are huge recruitment and retention problems in all fire departments. You need to have a department that people want to become a part of, and work in concert with Council to achieve this. Council has consistently said that they support the department and want it to be the best it can be.

Councillor Kuehl arrived at this time.

- The Office of the Fire Marshal will assist by prioritizing things with Council. One of the things that has to be determined is what level of service you can provide. Both Council and the department can be held accountable under current legislation. We need to get the motivation and drive back into the department. There is a lot of legislation that has changed the way you do business, e.g. accessibility, Bill 168 Violence and Harassment in the Workplace. It is essential that there is a commitment to requirements such as policy development, training regimes and record keeping. You may find that this is not going to work for you, and in that case, then maybe this isn't the place for you.
- Think outside of your own boundaries. You may not be able to do some of your training in your own municipality, but you could tap into these opportunities in another municipality.

Ms. Roberts responded to the following questions:

What is the normal amount of training for a fire department?

You have to be trained to the level of service that your Council has established. Residents also have to be educated as to what level of service you provide. The more services that you provide, the more training you need. If you don't have the training, neither the township nor the fire department is covered. Do a risk assessment for the type of service that is required in your area and the possibility of something happening. There could be other measures in place to mitigate risks in your community other than having the fire department respond.

Once Council establishes the level of service, do we sit down with our Fire Chief and determine what the training and policies will have to be?

Fire Departments are very important, but you have to get on board. It is nice to see that there is a lot of support from Council for these changes.

Mayor Visneskie: We are going to be recruiting a new Fire Chief. Council has to do a risk assessment and you build the service level around that. We need input from the fire department as well but Council establishes the level of service. We are responsible, and so are

the fire fighters. We want to provide them with the training, tools and resources to do their job.

Mr. Roberts: A lot of firefighters don't know that there is responsibility set out in legislation, both for the employee and the employer. Once risks are established, then the department establishes and must follow, the protocol. Our office is the driving force behind holding Councils accountable. That is why they are making sure that there is a level of service and related training that protects the municipality and the fire department. We need to build on the strengths of the department and welcome input that is given in a respectful and constructive way.

If you do extrication, does the whole department need to be trained?

No, you can establish the level of service, e.g. what kind of extrication. You also want to be able to recover some of the costs that you incur to do this so you can enter into agreements for service with other municipalities, or you can perform this service inside of your own boundaries.

Is the cost of extrication on Provincial Highways recoverable?

Yes.

How can you not train everybody when we don't know how many people will be available to show up at a call out?

You work this out when you are setting up your training policy to ensure that you have the people there that you need to respond to calls.

As they had no further questions, Mayor Visneskie thanked the members of the fire department for attending, at which time, with the exception of Acting Fire Chief Gerry Dombroski, they left the meeting.

Ms. Roberts advised that she had forwarded information to the Acting Fire Chief to help him work towards a suitable training regime, and she again emphasized the importance of accurate training records and of having department members attend the sessions. Operational guidelines also have to be reviewed, and Council has to do a risk assessment which will assist them in determining a suitable service level. Ms. Roberts cautioned that if you don't have training that would allow your teams to perform a certain service, that this service be discontinued until such time as the training is completed.

Council discussed extrication services that are being provided to other municipalities at the expense of our municipal taxpayers. Currently there is no compensation for responses to these calls, other than those occurring on Provincial Highways, however if the call is cancelled before the responders arrive at the scene, there is no compensation paid. Further discussion on this issue was tabled until additional information is received.

**Adjournment:**

Moved by Debbie Peplinskie

Seconded by Isabel O'Reilly

That this meeting adjourn. Carried.

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Mayor

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CAO/Clerk-Treasurer