

STAFF REPORT

Department: Fire

Date: February 21, 2024

Item: Increased Cost of Replacement of Tanker/Pumper

Recommendation: Be It Resolved That: The Corporate Services Committee recommends that Council approve of the replacement of the the existing 32-year-old, 9120 Pumper/Tanker, to an upper limit of \$750,000.

Background: Council had given approval for the Fire Department to get specifications and order one Pumper/Tanker back in December of 2023. This was approved based on rough estimates of costs between \$450K to \$500K. After meeting with three different fire truck manufacturers and based on the 2 quotes already received from the manufacturers, and a verbal from another, the cost is significantly more than expected, and is coming in at \$675K to \$750K.

Analysis: The truck we have specked is very similar to the last one. The last truck cost us approximately \$400K, so prices have gone up by over 60% in five years. This increase is due mainly to meeting the new requirements for emissions that the federal government put into place. The changes we are looking at making are for safety reasons, and we have omitted a couple of other items to cut the cost down. There are still more increases coming in the next couple of years, which if left until then could put the cost of this truck close to a million dollars. The added funds required to proceed with this purchase would be added to the 2025 budget and would not change the budget submitted by the Fire Department for this year.

Existing Policy: N/A

Strategic Goal: Effective Municipal Governance and Operations

Financial Commitment: Approximately \$700K, which would add \$200K to the already approved \$500K.

Budgeted: Yes No

Implementation: Complete in 2025

Prepared By: Mike Pichor



Department Manager: Mike Pichor

CAO/Clerk: Joseph Burke

Approval of Recommendation: Yes **No**

Comments (CAO/Clerk): Given that Council has already approved the ordering of a replacement for the 9120 Pumper/Tanker truck to an upward limit of \$500,000 in December 2023, provision of additional information and options to explore for the provision of Fire Services in the context of this truck replacement should be directed to staff by the Corporate Services Committee or Council.

Our current complement of trucks enables us to deliver the standard of service for fire services that has been set by Council with past investments. In 2018, former Councillor Bill Foster provided a presentation to Council which outlined the benefits of keeping a fourth truck and having a four bay Firehall. Council at that time agreed to adding the fourth bay for the new Firehall and thereby established this standard of service. Foster's presentation to Council which led to this recommendation outlined the following as motivating factors: the ability to fight fires more quickly, moving away from being reliant on other municipalities for assistance for fighting fires, ensuring we have adequate protection if mutual aid is unavailable and giving the municipality the flexibility to further improve capabilities in fire service.

Best practice in the sector would recommend that a truck as old as 9120 should be replaced. Opting not to replace the truck would put the Department at risk of not being able to provide the standard of service set by Council if the truck were to fail. Considerations of other options such as a used truck are valid, but ultimately result in fewer years of future service for a vehicle, requiring the municipality to replace that vehicle at a higher cost in the future given the patterns of inflation. As we have another truck that is also in need of replacement in the future (9110 is 23 years old), the Corporation will have more flexibility to consider different options with the future replacement of that truck as we will have two fairly new pumper/tankers to work with if this purchase is approved.

As part of a discussion with the Management Team, there were questions raised that are important for the Corporate Services Committee and Council to consider. There were questions surrounding the impact on Fire Services with the current idling of Pulp and Paper operations at the Domtar Mill. The Fire Department does often respond to emergencies at the Mill which may or may not be impacted by the idling of operations. As part of this same discussion, questions were raised by managers regarding mutual aid from other municipalities and if adequate options have been explored in that respect. As mentioned previous, the direction set with decisions made by Council in September 2018 partly justified the addition of a fourth bay to the new Firehall as important to maintain a complement of four trucks to move away from reliance on other municipalities. Finally, ensuring adequate staggering of truck replacement was identified by managers as an important consideration with this purchase and future purchases. The Department has been planning for a 6-year stagger as per the December report to Council.