

STAFF REPORT

THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWN OF COBOURG



Report to:	Mayor and Council Members	Priority:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> Low
Submitted by:	Tracey Vaughan Chief Administrative Officer Office of the CAO tvaughan@cobourg.ca	Meeting Type:	Open Session <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Closed Session <input type="checkbox"/>
Meeting Date:	March 7, 2022		
Report No.:	Office of the CAO-013-22		
Submit comments to Council			

Subject/Title: Cobourg Fire Department - Recruitment

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT Council authorize the CAO to appoint an interim Fire Chief to step into the position temporarily in order to meet statutory obligations under the *Fire Protection and Prevention Act, 1997, S.O. 1997, c. 4*; as outlined by options 1 or 2 in this report for Council consideration; and

FURTHER THAT Council authorize the recruitment of a new Fire Chief for the Town of Cobourg prior to the recruitment of a Deputy Fire Chief; and

FURTHER THAT Council authorize the preparation of a by-law to amend By-law No.008-2019 Terms of Reference By-law to appointment the Director of Legislative Services as the Community Emergency Management Coordinator (CEMC), and the Emergency Planner as the CEMC Alternate.

1. STRATEGIC PLAN

N/A

2. PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

N/A

3. PURPOSE

The purpose of this Staff Report is to provide Council with options to address the upcoming vacancy of the Fire Chief and the Deputy Fire Chief positions within the

Town of Cobourg. Pursuant to the *Fire Protection and Prevention Act, 1997, S.O. 1997, c. 4*, the Town of Cobourg is required to have a Fire Chief appointed by by-law, and with the most recent retirement of the Fire Chief and the resignation of the Deputy Fire Chief (Acting Fire Chief), this will leave the both positions vacant as of March 16, 2022.

4. ORIGIN AND LEGISLATION

Pursuant to Section 6 (1) of the *Fire Protection and Prevention Act, 1997, S.O. 1997, c. 4*, the Town of Cobourg is required to have a Fire Chief appointed through by-law.

Section 6 (1)

6 (1) *If a fire department is established for the whole or a part of a municipality or for more than one municipality, the council of the municipality or the councils of the municipalities, as the case may be, shall appoint a fire chief for the fire department.*

The Following By-laws currently in place will need to be amended to maintain compliance with the Act and with adjustments with the administrative appointments in the Fire Department,

1. By-law No.068-2013 - Appointment of the Fire Chief - Attached
2. By-law No.069-2013 - Appointment of the Deputy Fire Chief - Attached
3. By-law 057-2012 – By-law to establish a Fire Department By-Law. - Attached

In addition, the Fire Chief role has traditionally been appointed the Community Emergency Management Coordinator for the Town of Cobourg. The Community Emergency Management Coordinator (CEMC) position is a requirement under the Emergency Management Regulation and ensures that the Town is legislatively compliant with all legislative requirements. Historically Cobourg's Fire Chief has been designated as the CEMC. The CEMC manages the Community Emergency Management Program and is assisted by the Deputy Fire Chief and Emergency Planner who are the Alternate CEMCs. During a community emergency, the CEMC and Emergency Planner advise the Community Control Group on procedural and technical matters.

The Organizational Review recommended that the Emergency Management Coordinator and function be moved over to Legislative Services as part of the establishment of the Legislative Services Division. This reflected best practices with respect to ensuring that legislative functions were contained and managed through the Legislative Services Department. Staff were in discussions about transitioning the CEMC role to the Director of Legislative Services to better reflect the nature of the role. With the departure of the Deputy Chief, staff are recommending that this transition happen upon Council approval of this recommendation to ensure consistency and compliance. This appointment will also need to be amended to reflect future changes within the organization.

4. By-law No.008-2019 Community Emergency Management Program Committee (CEMPC) — Terms of Reference RE: Community Emergency Management Coordinator (CEMC) Update.

5. BACKGROUND

The Fire Chief retired February 4th 2022, recruitment for the Chief was postponed to shift the start date for the replacement Chief until September 1st 2022 with the Deputy Chief serving as Acting Chief until the new permanent Chief was selected and appointed.

The Deputy Chief was put into the role of Acting Chief with the understanding that a recruitment process for the Fire Chief position would begin in June of 2022. Typically, a permanent Fire Chief recruitment process takes at least 3 months to successfully complete, so this timeframe allowed staff to plan for a start date of September 1st.

On March 2, 2022, the Chief Administrative Officer was informed that the current Acting Fire Chief (Deputy Fire Chief), will assume a Full-Time Fire Chief position with the Municipality of Brighton beginning on March 21st and that his last day with the Town of Cobourg would be March 16th.

Given the current circumstances, it is being requested that the recruitment of a temporary Fire Chief commence to ensure that we are legislatively compliant, and that we are able to manage the operations of the Cobourg Fire Department while ensuring continued service levels for our community

Staff are also requesting that we advance the hiring date for the permanent Fire Chief position prior to the recruitment of a new Deputy Fire Chief. Once the new Fire Chief commences employment, that individual will be able to prepare for and execute the recruitment of a Deputy Fire Chief.

6. ANALYSIS

As outlined above staff are requesting approval to recruit and appoint a replacement Fire Chief as soon as possible to ensure legislative compliance, service levels, and operational effectiveness. With the Deputy Chief's last day being March 16th the need to secure a temporary Fire Chief quickly is critical.

As a short-term emergency measure, the Chief Administrative Officer, or any other designate can fill in for a short period of time as an Acting Fire Chief while we recruit for a temporary Fire Chief. This would not be a sustainable solution for anything other than a stop gap measure while we work through the processes related to Option 1 or 2. Given the specialized nature of the role of Fire Chief it is critical to have someone with those skills and experience filling the role.

Given the critical nature of this position and our current situation, Staff are requesting to appoint an interim Fire Chief for the Cobourg Fire Department through one of two options:

1. An expedited open recruitment process as per the Town of Cobourg Recruitment Policy HR-AP-0001 with a shortened posting timeframe of one (1) week, with the goal of expediting the process to have the successful candidate for temporary Fire Chief in place within a one (1) month timeframe.

2. A recruitment process is available through the Ontario Association of Fire Chiefs (O AFC), which would take approximately two (2) weeks to conduct.

These options would allow an interim Fire Chief to step into this position and then allow for the recruitment for a permanent Fire Chief.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS/BUDGET IMPACTS

Interim Fire Chief Replacement

Option 1: Interim Fire Chief replacement through an internal expedited recruitment process:

Approximately \$80-\$100/hour
35 hours week
\$2,800 - \$3,500 per week
Approximately 6 months (26 weeks)
\$72,800-\$91,000 (for a 6 month period)

Option 2: Interim Fire Chief replacement through O AFC during the recruitment process as follows:

Approximately \$120-\$140 hour
35 hours week
\$4,200-\$4,900 week
Approximately 6 months (26 weeks)
\$109,200-127,400 (for a 6 month period)

Staff have worked to determine what funding sources may be available to offset the costs associated with the departure of the Deputy Chief and the expedited hiring of a temporary Fire Chief. The permanent Fire Chief role can still be targeted for a September 1st start date, and the hiring of the Deputy Chief could be postponed until the new Fire Chief is in place. This ensures that the new Chief can be part of the selection process for the Deputy Chief and can ensure that we recruit for and select the right mix of skills and attributes required for the future direction of Cobourg Fire. This would also ensure that we would have gapping dollars in the Deputy Chief position budget line through to at least November 1st, which would realize a budget savings of \$85,000 from salary and benefits.

Staff have also identified several positions across the corporation that have not yet or will not hit their anticipated start dates that are also resulting in salary and benefit savings of an additional \$20,000.

8. CONCLUSION

THAT Council approve the commencement of the recruitment and appointment of an interim Fire Chief, and the recruitment of a permanent Fire Chief prior to the recruitment of a Deputy Fire Chief.

THAT Council approve the appointment of the Director of Legislative Services as the CEMC.