Minutes – Executive Policy Committee – July 18, 2007

REPORTS

Minute No. 480 Additional Provincial Funding for the Winnipeg Fire Paramedic Service
File GF-5

EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

The Executive Policy Committee concurred in the administrative recommendation and recommends to Council:

1. That increases be approved to the Winnipeg Fire Paramedic Service staff establishment as funded by the additional $3.8 million Provincial conditional funding for public safety and other priorities as included in the City's 2007 Operating Budget.

2. That the Proper Officers of the City be authorized to do all things necessary to implement the intent of the foregoing.

DECISION MAKING HISTORY:

Moved by Councillor Steeves,

That the administrative recommendation be concurred in and forwarded to Council.

Carried

RE: Additional Provincial Funding for Winnipeg Fire Paramedic Service

FOR SUBMISSION TO: Executive Policy Committee

ORIGINAL REPORT SIGNED BY: J.R. (Jim) Brennan
Fire & Paramedic Chief

REPORT DATE: July 5, 2007

RECOMMENDATION: That Council approve increases to the Winnipeg Fire Paramedic Service (WFPS) staff establishment as funded by the additional $3.8 million Provincial conditional funding for public safety and other priorities as included in the City's 2007 Operating Budget.

Report Summary

Key Issues:

On April 19, 2007 the Provincial government announced $3.8 million in additional funding for the WFPS for public safety – to further support firefighters and paramedics.

Priority areas for allocation of these funds include: (1) enhancements to public safety (including response and service improvements) and (2) enhancements to training. These priorities were determined following the recent labour negotiations and settlement, and as part of the WFPS's continuous improvement efforts.

The following represents the initiatives to be undertaken by WFPS in each of these areas:

Enhancements to Public Safety
1. Two Additional Night Shift Ambulances
2. One Additional Rescue/Pumper
3. Leadership Alignment of District Medical Supervisors
4. Creation of Deputy Chief for Safety, Training and Communications (Temporary)
5. Increased Resources for Building Inspections
6. Investment in safety related equipment

Enhancements to Training
1. Additional Firefighting Staff to Support Critical Training Initiatives
2. Enhanced Educational and Dispatch Communication Network to Stations

Implications of the Recommendation(s):

General Implications

(X) None

( ) For the organization overall and/or for other departments

( ) For the community and/or organizations external to the City

( ) Involves a multi-year contract

Comment(s):

Policy Implications

(X) No

( ) Yes

Comment(s):

Regulatory Implications

(X) None

( ) Eliminates or reduces regulatory impact

( ) Proposes regulatory impact

Comment(s):

Environmental Implications

(X) No

( ) Yes

Comment(s):

Human Resources Implications

( ) No

(X) Yes

Comment(s): The recommendations contained in this report will result in hiring 12 additional Paramedics, 40 additional Firefighters (20 of these positions will be temporary), 4 additional Medical Supervisors and 1 additional Deputy Chief (temporary).

Financial Implications

(X) Within approved current and/or capital budget

( ) Current and/or capital budget adjustment required

Comment(s):

Report

REASON FOR THE REPORT:

Council has the authority to approve increases to the Winnipeg Fire Paramedic Service (WFPS) staff establishment.

HISTORY:

This spring the Provincial government announced $3.8 million in additional funding for the Winnipeg Fire Paramedic Service for public safety and other priorities. The City's 2007 operating budget reflects this commitment and this report provides information on the WFPS's priorities for investment.

DISCUSSION:

Priority areas for allocation of these funds include: (1) enhancements to public safety (including response and service improvements) and (2) enhancements to training**.** These priorities were determined following the recent labour negotiations and settlement, and as part of the WFPS's continuous improvement efforts.

Enhancements to Public Safety

The following initiatives will be implemented to:

- Address the shortfall of paramedic units and staff during the night shift.
- Maintain an effective ability to respond to EMS incidents.
- Establish an enhanced ability for firefighters to train while providing increased emergency response coverage in the south sector of the City.
- Upgrade safety equipment

1. **Two Additional Night Shift Ambulances**
   During the night shift the number of ambulance units provided drops to 13 emergency units. The addition of these ambulances will provide the necessary system capacity to improve service. Twelve additional paramedics will be required. It should be noted that the requirement for these additional ambulances is ongoing due to the increasing demand for emergency medical services.

2. **One Additional Rescue/Pumper**
   Locating an additional Rescue/Pumper at Station #23 at Pembina and Dalhousie affords the following benefits. It should be noted that the requirement for this pumper is ongoing due to the proposed Waverley West development.
   - Provides a satellite training location wherein staff would be rotated to practice Firefighter PCP skills maintenance. Classroom facilities already exist at this location.
   - Greatly improved response time and coverage in the areas without full city services including St. Germain, Vermette and St. Norbert.
   - Additional resource deployment to address simultaneous incidents occurring in the City.
   - Additional fire based PCP availability for EMS calls in the vicinity.
   - Improved primary response coverage for the new Waverley West Development, Phase I.
   - Primary water tank task force deployment.
   - Overall firefighter staffing complement would increase from 158 to 162 per shift.

3. **Leadership Alignment of District Medical Supervisors**
   Four additional medical supervisors are required to manage quality improvement and medical oversight for firefighters and paramedics and to align with the four fire districts. Currently, there are three medical supervisors available. Establishing a fourth medical supervisor per shift will provide coordination between EMS and Fire/Rescue, a district based response and a higher level of medical care at low volume high risk incidents.

4. **Creation of Deputy Chief For Safety, Training and Communications (Temporary)**
   WFPS believes that a greater focus on safety and safety management at emergency incidents will be necessary over the next three to five years to address obligations under the new Workplace Safety and Health legislation. In addition, increased training initiatives are required to achieve an all ALS service and address staff attrition rate concerns.

   The creation of a Deputy Chief for Safety, Training and Communications will provide the necessary critical link between operations and training, to ensure a more proactive and coordinated approach to incident management, workplace safety initiatives and additional training requirements.

   To further support this initiative a safety coordinator is required on each of the four platoons who will provide consistency and coordination. The safety coordinators will hold the rank of captain and be funded through the reclassification of the 5th firefighter position at Station #23. Safety and training is paramount to both paramedical and fire rescue operations and a safety officer has the right to immediately suspend incident operations if a risk to staff has been identified, regardless of whom is in command.

5. **Increased Resources for Building Inspections**
   WFPS has been apprised of recent changes to the Manitoba Fire Code, which may necessitate amendments to the building inspections program. Preliminary details of these changes suggest that no additional expense will be incurred by the City of Winnipeg. In the event that resources are required it is envisioned that they will be found within the overall funding envelope by reallocating a portion of the staff complement.

6. **Upgrades to Safety Equipment**
   Equipment and technology play a critically important role in efforts to enhance public safety. As funds allow, investments will be made in three areas: Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) Systems, Cardiac Monitor Defibrillators and Thermal Imaging Cameras.

Enhancements to Training

The following initiatives will be implemented to:

- Address additional safety and training needs. In particular, extensive incident management training is anticipated due to attrition of senior personnel over the next three to five years.
- Facilitate movement towards an integrated Fire/Emergency Medical Services (EMS) solution that will place Primary Care Paramedics (PCP) on fire apparatus and provide a full Advanced Life Support (ALS) ambulance response.
- Align Fire and EMS supervisory personnel for quality assurance purposes.
- Establish an enhanced ability for firefighters to train while providing increased emergency response coverage in the south sector of the City.

1. **Additional Firefighting Staff to Support Critical Training Initiatives**
   WFPS believes that critical training initiatives are required in the area of safety and incident management. These include: leadership and incident command development due to senior staff attrition rates, instruction for safety equipment upgrades, PCP training and continuing medical education, and skills maintenance. To achieve this, the staffing formula must increase from 1.30 to 1.33 necessitating the hiring of 20 additional Firefighter PCP positions to permit the required training without depleting response resources or paying overtime for call-ins. Key training initiatives will continue through to the end of 2009. The additional staff complement required to provide training support could then be reduced by 8 staff in 2010 and an additional 4 staff in 2011. The remaining 8 staff would be reduced in 2012.

2. **Enhance Educational And Dispatch Communication Network To Station Locations**

There is an ongoing requirement to enhance the information available at incidents (including information on building design, maps, floor plans, accountability systems, etc.). This will provide more comprehensive information for dispatch and greater information for on-scene personnel.

Interactive training capabilities will be placed in every WFPS location to expedite safety programs through on-line and audio visual learning technologies such as video conferencing and other educational program initiatives.

Financial Impact Statement

Date: July 4, 2007

Project Name:

Additional Provincial Funding for Winnipeg Fire Paramedic Service

First Year of Program 2007

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Capital					
Capital Expenditures Required	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -
Less: Existing Budgeted Costs	-	-	-	-	-
Additional Capital Budget Required	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -
Funding Sources:					
Debt - Internal	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -
Debt - External	-	-	-	-	-
Grants (Enter Description Here)	-	-	-	-	-
Reserves, Equity, Surplus	-	-	-	-	-
Other - Enter Description Here	-	-	-	-	-
Total Funding	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -
Total Additional Capital Budget Required	$ -				
Total Additional Debt Required	$ -				
Current Expenditures/Revenues					
Direct Costs	$ 3,836,000	$ 3,836,000	$ 3,836,000	$ 3,836,000	$ 3,836,000
Less: Incremental Revenue/Recovery	3,836,000	3,836,000	3,836,000	3,836,000	3,836,000
Net Cost/(Benefit)	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -
Less: Existing Budget Amounts	-	-	-	-	-
Net Budget Adjustment Required	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -

Additional Comments:

Original Signed by

Manager of Finance & Administration

IN PREPARING THIS REPORT THERE WAS:

Internal Consultation With and Concurrence By:

External Consultation With:

THIS REPORT SUBMITTED BY:

Department: Winnipeg Fire Paramedic Service
Division: Administration
Prepared by: Michelle Weimer, Executive Assistant
File No.

Approved:

Original Signed by

J.R. (Jim) Brennan
Fire & Paramedic Chief