

**Meeting Date:** September 3, 2019  
**Department:** Fire and Emergency Services  
**Prepared By:** Brian George, Director of Fire Services/Fire Chief  
**Reviewed By:** Greg McClinchey, Chief Administrative Officer  
**Subject:** Request for Deputy Fire Chief Position

---

## **RECOMMENDATION:**

That Council approve the creation of a full-time Deputy Chief of Fire Prevention and Training position commencing in January 2020.

## **BACKGROUND:**

The County of Middlesex has provided Fire Prevention and Investigations to the eight different municipalities throughout the County of Middlesex for approximately twenty years. In May of this year, County staff proposed to upload a considerable portion of the legislative authority typically vested with a lower-tier fire chief. When this upload did not occur as planned, the County immediately served notice to all lower-tier municipalities that fire inspection and prevention services would be discontinued. As a result, each lower-tier municipality is now operationally responsible for their own Fire Inspection delivery and Fire Investigation services.

Strathroy-Caradoc has approved a temporary hiring from July 2, 2019 through December 31, 2019. This was approved to ensure that the department covers its legislated requirements of completing all "Requests and Complaints" and ensuring our "Vulnerable Occupancies" have had their annual inspections and their annual fire drills completed. Currently the department is covering all of these obligations however few other occupancies have been inspected. Those other occupancies include our High Risk Industrials, medium risk occupancies and our multi-residential occupancies.

## **COMMENTS:**

The County statistics have shown that they had provided 381 inspections to Strathroy-Caradoc, however after further review of the available documentation, it appears as though there was actually 270 inspections completed in 2018. The remainder of their numbers were recalls to occupancies that had been previously inspected and had minor deficiencies under the Fire Code. These "recalls" consist of returning to the occupancy to ensure the owner or tenant had completed any repairs that had been inspected and were now compliant with the Fire Code.

Fire Services staff conducted a review of the total building stock within the municipality to determine the exact nature and needs of inspection services would be required in the future. The review was undertaken with the assistance of the Tax Collector using the Assessment Listings for the

municipality. After a review of the information provided through the taxation office, it has been determined that we currently have 586 occupancies that would require Fire Prevention Inspections;

General Type of Occupancy	Number of Occupancies	Frequency of Inspection
Industrial	126	Annual
Institutional	22	Annual
Vulnerable Occupancies	7	Annual
Commercial	237	Annual and Biennial
Residential	133	Annual and Biennial
Special Purpose	55	Biennial
Government	6	Biennial
<b>Totals</b>	<b>586</b>	

These totals will give the Inspector a full year if done properly. These totals do not include and *Requests for Inspections or Complaints*. We are legislated to conduct inspections in all cases of requests and complaints. Complaints could include such issues as hoarding, complaints from tenants, the police service requiring assistance, Canadian Mental Health Association calls, other Mental Health organizations requests, or a relative with concerns about conditions that may create a “Life Safety Issue” for a family member. These demands are not included in these numbers cited above.

Fire Prevention Inspectors, as part of their work, also provide Public Education learning with our schools, industry and commercial partners within the municipality. These would include training for fire safety education for both elementary and secondary school aged pupils, workplaces that necessitate Occupational Health and Safety requirements on the use of fire extinguishers, and fire safety education with some of our community groups that are comprised of seniors or service groups. The majority of these calls are actioned by the Fire Chief and/or the Administrative Assistant to the Fire Chief but the County Fire Inspectors were also conducting some as part of their regular duties in the past.

All this to say, the inspection demands of the municipality warrant the hiring of additional resources. This coupled with the already growing training and coordination demands of the fire service, necessitates the addition of one extra full-time fire official within the municipality.

For clarity, this position would be specialized and would be part of the longer-term planning strategy required for a department that increasing in complexity to effectively serve and secure a municipality that is experiencing unprecedented growth in terms of both residential and industrial applications.

The Job Description includes certification in the areas of Fire Prevention Inspector (NFPA 1031 Level 1&2), Fire Training Instructor (NFPA 1041), and Public Fire & Life Safety Educator (NFPA 1035). This will give the municipality the ability to provide all aspects of Fire Prevention. Fire Investigator (NFPA 1033) would also be required. This would also give the municipality the ability to conduct our own fire cause determination investigations for fires within our own jurisdiction.

The training component of the position would be in the organization of the entire fire department’s schedule for each year. In the past, each station determined their own needs and schedules. It is more imperative now to have a coordinated approach to training so that the department as a whole is at the same level of proficiency. The previous mandate did not meet the needs of the modern fire department and the ad hoc nature of the regime prevented the department from taking advantage of costs savings that might be realized with better coordination of both internal and off-site training.

The current volunteer Deputy Chief's role was originally intended to develop the training modules for firefighters and officers, and to evaluate those persons as well. This position has functioned well but increasing regulatory and training demands of the department broadly, coupled with the need for adequate succession planning and increased training and specialization mandates require more than can reasonably be undertaken by any one officer.

We are now transitioning from our own municipal standard to follow the internationally accredited standards of the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA). This is giving our fire fighters and Officers the most up to date training available. We are currently requiring all recruits to complete the NFPA 1001, Levels 1 & 2 and HazMat Awareness and Operations levels as part of the new curriculum. Our Captains are now required to complete the NFPA Company Officer Level 1 (NFPA 1021) and NFPA Training Instructor Level 1 (NFPA 1041) in order to receive certification as Company Officers. Our Chief Officers are now required to complete Incident Safety Officers (NFPA 1521). The previous government had established a regulation for training for all positions in place however, once the current government was in place, they rescinded that regulation to study it further. There was discontent amongst smaller municipalities stemming from the cost to train fire fighters to this level. The provincial committee is currently working on a new regulation and this will be using the NFPA standards as a baseline. By conducting this training, we are maintaining a pool of knowledgeable, competent persons that will allow for the department's future succession planning.

This new Deputy Chief position will be responsible for the scheduling of training courses, the documentation of these courses and the in station training throughout the year. The evaluation of these courses based on the needs of the department will be part of this position. The documentation of all training is required by the Ministry of Labour through the Fire Service - Section 21 Committee. The maintenance of the skills will be completed throughout the year as we follow the training modules of International Fire Service Training Association (IFSTA) which is based on the NFPA Standards.

The current volunteer Deputy Chief Currently is responsible for this work now, however the position was derived from working on training programs for our firefighters meeting our on internal standards. With the onset of adherence to NFPA standards this work is being however this being completed by the Fire Chief with the assistance Administrative Assistant. The reality of this work being completed dependent on a Volunteer Deputy Chief is no longer realistic. The amount of time and resources required to maintain these components does not fit well with being in a volunteer position and trying to effectively maintain full-time employment.

This position will also allow the individual to take on some administrative tasks such as assisting the Fire Chief with the development and monitoring the policies of the department, Standard Operating Guidelines, and compliance of Legislation and Regulatory requirements for firefighting. This position will also assume overall responsibilities of the department in the absence of the Fire Chief.

The current position of Deputy Fire Chief would take on a new role, with the training aspects removed from the Job Description. The new position would become the Deputy Chief of Volunteer Operations. This would encompass all aspects of a fire ground officer and including Incident Command if required, Incident Safety Officer, and Logistics Officer for any other resources at a scene. They will be required to continue their training course as well to include maintenance of their skill-sets.

Currently the Fire Chief and the Administrative Assistant are the only full-time members of the department. The Fire Chief is responsible for the day to day operations of the department's three stations. This includes the appropriate facilities, apparatus, equipment and resources based on local

needs and circumstances as determined by Council directives. The requirement to recruit, manage and retain properly trained and motivated firefighters who are available to competently respond at any time of the day or night, 365 days of the year also falls within the Chief's purview. Secondary to this is the Fire Chief is currently responsible to conduct Public Education sessions for our citizens, whether they be for schools or places of businesses. These sessions amount to approximately 80 instances per year.

The Fire Chief is responsible to attend after hours meetings in the evening hours to meet with the of Chief Officers, Company Officers, Council, Joint Health and Safety Committee meetings, emergency incident alarms, bi-monthly County Chiefs meetings, bi-monthly Mutual Aid meetings and bi-monthly County Training Association meetings and attend training sessions throughout the municipality. These meetings are conducted in the evening in order assure that members are available to meet after their regular work hours. These additional meetings, plus incident response add to the difficulty to maintaining a reasonable work/life balance.

### **GENERAL OUTCOMES AND EXPECTATIONS:**

This new position will ensure that our requirements and obligations for Fire Prevention and Inspections are met and that we are in compliance with all Provincial legislation. Fire prevention inspections ensure that the Fire Code is complied with as a protection for our residents and the protection of our volunteer firefighters. The addition of this fulltime position will provide the assistance to the Fire Chief to be able to complete the required tasks. The acquiring of a properly trained, certified person will mitigate the risk factors and reduce the liabilities of the Municipality by proactively identifying issues of compliance to the Fire Code. With the addition of personnel to the management structure of the department, it will allow the Fire Chief to concentrate on the department's longer-term challenges, administration of operations, service delivery of the fire department, the delivery of service, recruitment and retention and the safety levels for our volunteer firefighters and residents.

The potential outcome of maintaining the "status quo" may result in the restructuring of operational and administrative priorities, this may result in gaps to the delivery to the municipality. These gaps may include but are not limited to:

- Reduction of public education programs (increasing the liability on the Fire Chief and Council due to workload and operational priority shifting);
- Slowing down or lack of updating SOG's;
- The required records management processes required by the Ministry of Labour and Ministry of Community Safety;
- Delay of statistical reporting to the Ontario Fire Marshals Office;
- Training programs to meet a minimum standard instead of attempting to bring in a higher level of training and a lack of succession planning for future officers;
- Slower adaptation to new and required equipment; and/or
- Potential burnout of the administrative staff

All of the above can lead to a "trickle down" effect on the firefighters and impact morale and dedication of volunteers which could lead to future staffing issues.

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:**

The projected annual salary of Deputy Chief would be placed on the C Grid. Benefits, vacation time, sick time, and other related costs would be in line with the expectations of any employee operating at

this level. There would be some additional startup costs such as full personal protective equipment, pagers, cell phone and uniform. This would be an additional cost of approximately \$5,000.00.

Service 15 would be utilized during the day for the purposes of Inspection. This would be dual purpose vehicle in order save the costs of an additional vehicle in the immediate term.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

- Job Description for Deputy Chief of Fire Inspection and Training



## **JOB DESCRIPTION**

**Position:** Deputy Chief of Fire Prevention and Training  
**Department:** Fire Services  
**Reports to:** Fire Chief

### **Position Summary:**

Under the authority of the Fire Chief, the Deputy Chief of Fire Prevention and Training will be responsible for day to day operational management/administration of any required Fire Inspections across the Municipality of Strathroy-Caradoc. This position is responsible for enforcing the Fire Code of Ontario and Regulations under Fire Protection and Prevention Act by conducting both public fire safety education and fire prevention inspections of all classes of buildings and occupancies. As the Deputy Chief they shall be responsible for Coordination and oversight of all NFPA standardized curriculums as prescribed by the Province for Fire Service Personnel. As Deputy Chief may assume the roles and responsibilities of the Fire Chief in his/her absence.

### **Goal Statement:**

As a member of the Municipal team, each employee is responsible for serving the citizens of Strathroy-Caradoc by meeting the ratepayers' needs and expectations, as articulated by Council, by striving to be the best in everything we do through attitude, training and creativity, and for representing the Municipality as a strong, integrated organization dedicated to quality, sustainable and viable services.

### **Duties and Responsibilities:**

- 1. Fire Prevention and Inspection: 50%**
  - Act as an assistant to the Fire Marshal under the provisions of the Fire Protection Act and all other related legislation;
  - Conduct inspections according to the Ontario Fire Marshall Directives and procedures in all classes of buildings and occupancies;
  - Document findings, issue orders and lay charges to improve fire safety in buildings and premises based upon Municipal by-laws, Provincial Fire Code, Statues and Regulations, etc;
  - Participate in prosecutions for non-compliance as needed;
  - Prepare and maintain detailed reports, records, statistics and correspondence related to fire safety and prevention, inspections, etc;
  - Ability to work independently and possess excellent interpersonal skills and problem solving abilities;
  - Conduct fire cause investigations as directed



## **2. Training: 40%**

- Responsible for the development, coordination, scheduling of all Training, including the delivery of NFPA Standardized Curriculum Courses.
- Development of individualized annual Training plans for each station to be delivered at local training nights by qualified Instructors.
- Monitors and evaluates the impact of training to ensure training meets standards and is consistent with department core services as prescribed within the Establishing and Regulating By-Law.
- Evaluate the training programs to ensure that the training continues to be effective, efficient and progressive.
- Managing and monitoring department participation in NFPA.
- Maintains accurate training records on all fire department personnel in a secure manner.
- Meets regularly with Fire Chief.

## **3. General Administration and Oversight: 10%**

- In the absence of the Fire Chief, the Deputy Chief/Training Officer may assume overall responsibilities of the Department.
- Assist the Fire Chief with the overall organization, coordination, and operational direction of the department.
- Assist the Fire Chief with developing and monitoring departmental policies, Standard Operating Procedures/Guidelines and standards that guide and direct the activities within the Department, and ensure full compliance with legislative and regulatory requirements to reduce corporate liabilities and mitigate risk.

## **Duties and Responsibilities:**

- Inspects properties including those that store, handle, and use hazardous materials to ensure compliance with laws, codes, ordinances, regulations and standards;
- Makes field determinations of compliance with fire codes, laws, ordinances, regulations and standards;
- Writes detailed reports of fire code violations observed in each inspected occupancy;
- Conducts fire code compliance follow-ups to ensure corrective action has been taken;
- Assists citizens and other agency personnel with code interpretations and information;
- Investigates and interviews persons with complaints and assists in the resolutions of citizen complaints regarding fire code violations;
- Documents efforts to bring property owners into compliance with fire codes;
- Performs plan reviews as provided by the Municipality of Strathroy-Caradoc Building Department;
- Prepares case file for prosecution of fire code violations, including swearing of information, completion of summons and prosecution briefs;



- Provides court testimony regarding fire code violations;
- Assists in the development of fire safety plans;
- Performs fire scene investigations to determine origin and cause, including collection of evidence, taking and logging scene photographs and writing detail investigation reports;
- Act as Assistant to the Fire Marshall and work in compliance with the Fire Protection and Prevention Act, 1997;
- Achieve and maintain authority having Jurisdiction status with Natural Resources Canada for Fireworks and Pyrotechnics;
- Willing to enrol in and successfully complete the Ontario Fire Marshal's Fire Prevention Officer Certification program and other courses as deemed necessary by the Fire Chief;
- Provides reports of activities to the Fire Chief for record keeping;

**This position may be exposed to outdoor weather conditions and diverse environments as well as unfavorable conditions such as noise, dirt, odours, physical hazards and/or Health and Safety risks.**

### **Qualifications:**

#### **Minimum Qualifications:**

- NFPA 1031 Fire Inspector I or equivalent (Able to attain Level II)
- NFPA 1035 Public Fire & Life Safety Education I or equivalent (Able to attain Level II)
- NFPA 1021 Fire Officer I or equivalent (Able to attain Level IV)
- NFPA 1041 Fire Instructor I or equivalent (Able to attain Level II)
- Able to attain Fire Investigator NFPA 1033
- Thorough knowledge of all Codes, Acts, By-laws and Legislation pertaining to Fire Prevention
- 5 year's progressive related experience in the fire service
- Excellent interpersonal, public relations, communications and teamwork skills are essential
- Must possess and maintain a valid Class "DZ" driver's licence (or be able to attain in a reasonable period of time), with an acceptable driving record
- Provide and maintain a satisfactory Criminal Records Check prior to starting employment



- Must possess current First Aid/CPR certification
- Knowledge of computers and relevant software (MS Office, FirePro2, etc)

**Asset:**

- Post-Secondary Diploma in Fire Protection
- Qualifications as an Inspector for Fire Protection, through the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, (CFEI) – Canadian Fire Explosives Investigator
- Fire scene investigation experience is an asset (CFEI, NFPA or equivalent)
- Knowledge of conducting property inspections, reading blueprints, installation guides, construction plans and specifications

**PREPARED BY:** Doug Payne                      Human Resources Manager

**APPROVED BY:** Greg McClinchey            Chief Administrative Officer

**UPDATED:**    May 2019                              **SUPERSEDES DATE:** NA