

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE, APRIL 10, 2001

VAUGHAN FIREFIGHTER COMBAT CHALLENGE TEAM 2001 BUDGET (BUDGET SUB-COMMITTEE MEETING OF MARCH 27, 2001)

Recommendation

The Budget Sub-Committee recommends:

That the recommendation contained in the following report of the Deputy City Manager and the Fire Chief, dated March 27, 2001, be approved.

Report of the Deputy City Manager and Fire Chief

The Deputy City Manager and Fire Chief, in consultation with the Director of Finance, recommend:

1. That the City of Vaughan Council approve the Vaughan Firefighter Combat Challenge Team Budget for Year 2001 set out in Attachment 1 to this Report;
2. That the City of Vaughan Council approve support for the Vaughan Firefighter's Combat Challenge Team in the sum of \$9,500.00 for the Year 2001, with the source of funding being the Operating Budget – Corporate Account; and
3. That in the event the application for financial support is approved, since Council will not consider this item prior to the first Firefighter Combat Challenge event, staff be authorized to provide any required financial support for the first event on April 7th, 2001, up to a maximum of \$2,462.50 (the total competition expenses projected for the first event).

Background

The Firefighter Combat Challenge tests skills each year in competitions involving fire departments. The Vaughan Fire and Rescue Service Firefighter Combat Challenge Team consists of a group of the City's professional firefighters who, in addition to their ongoing fire, rescue and first aid training, work to maintain top physical condition to better serve the community and to compete in the Challenge. The team travels throughout North America competing in events and attempting to qualify for the World Championship.

Last year, in the first year of competition for Vaughan, accomplishments included Vaughan's all women Firefighter Combat Challenge relay team's qualification for the World Championship and the three-member team's win and new world's record in the Women's Relay World Championship event. Vaughan's men's team also qualified four men for the World Championship as a wild card team, with one Vaughan firefighter finishing 21st in the world in his first year.

The competitions have resulted in significant media attention for Vaughan's Combat Challenge Firefighters. Interviews have been conducted by TSN, ESPN, Discovery, CBC, CityTV and CFTO, there has been competition city newspaper coverage and also articles have appeared in the Toronto Sun, The Liberal and the Vaughan Weekly. Further through the Combat Challenge events, the City of Vaughan has been introduced to thousands of people across North America. The Combat Challenge participation has shown what a strong city Vaughan is and how exceptional the protection is of its citizens and businesses. Further, the city is viewed to be progressive in having the first ever female firefighter team.

Comments

The costs of competing in the Combat Challenge events are substantial. While local sponsors provided assistance last year, and while local sponsors will provide some assistance this year, additional financial support from the City is required. The Combat Challenge Team Budget Request is included as Attachment 1 to this Report. The Request includes the Budget for the year 2001 and a breakdown of individual competition expenses, commencing with the first competition on April 7th, 2001 in Washington, four summer competitions through the months of July and August in Kanata, Windsor, North Bay and Burlington, the National Competition on September 15th and, finally, the Worlds on October 27th, 2001.

The estimated Combat Team expenses for the year 2001 are approximately \$19,000.00. The Vaughan Firefighter Combat Challenge Team advises that it will be able to raise at least half of this amount, but requires City of Vaughan financial support in the amount of \$9,500.00 for the year 2001.

The Combat Challenge Team is researching the possibility of producing an annual Co-ed Firefighter Calendar, which will include all of the Team's sponsors, targeted for production next Fall. The calendar will assist in raising the funds required to compete the following year, with the goal that the team will become 100% financially self-sufficient.

Conclusion

The record of the City's Firefighter Combat Challenge Team in its first year of competition last year was stellar. This participation further assists in ensuring firefighters maintain top physical condition to better serve both the Vaughan community and to compete in the challenge. The financial support from the City requested in the amount of \$9,500.00 is essential to the Team's participation in this year's Combat Challenge competitions, with the first event scheduled on April 7th, 2001.

Respectfully submitted,

Councillor Rosati
Chair
Budget Sub-Committee

Attachment