

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE DECEMBER 9, 2002

CENTRALIZED FIRE SERVICE COMMUNICATIONS CENTRE

Recommendation

The City Manager and Fire Chief, in consultation with the Vaughan Professional Fire Fighters Association, recommend that:

1. The Report of the City Manager and Fire Chief, BE RECEIVED;
2. The Report from the Region, BE RECEIVED; and
3. The Region BE ADVISED that the City of Vaughan endorses the next identified steps to:
 - i. Finalize the preliminary costs estimates;
 - ii. Address job security concerns.
 - iii. Commence discussions regarding the Governance.

Purpose

Council of the Regional Municipality of York, at its meeting on November 21, 2002 recommended that Report No. 4 of the Fire Services Committee be distributed to the area municipalities with a request that they provide input by January 15, 2003 so that a report can be forwarded to the February 2003 meeting of the Fire Service Committee.

Council of the City of Vaughan, at its meeting of February 25, 2002 directed staff to take various initiatives in regards to the Central Fire Dispatch, which will also be updated in this report.

Background - Analysis and Options

The following is the EXTRACT FROM COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 25, 2002 regarding CENTRALIZED FIRE SERVICE COMMUNICATIONS CENTRE Item 2, Report No. 13, of the Committee of the Whole (Closed Session), which was adopted without amendment by the Council of the City of Vaughan on February 25, 2002:

The Committee of the Whole (Closed Session) recommends:

- 1) *That Vaughan agrees in principle to consolidate fire communication services within the governance model of a Region operated fire dispatch centre with Vaughan's representation on an 'Advisory Group' similar in governance to the Joint Board of Management of the York Region Courts;*
- 2) *That the Deputy City Manager and Fire Chief be authorized to consult with the Regional CAO in the engagement of a project manager;*
- 3) *That the Deputy City Manager and/or Fire Chief may delegate appropriate staff to participate on working groups to identify issues and develop a work plan to implement a Region operated central fire dispatch;*
- 4) *That the Deputy City Manager, Director of Labour Relations and Fire Chief be authorized to commence formal discussions with the Vaughan Professional Fire Fighters Association regarding mutual concerns for the consolidation of fire communication services, including appropriate amendments to the Collective Agreement and report to Council; and*
- 5) *That the Centralized Fire Dispatch Working Group review all available financial information, including the impact of the initial over-staffing and harmonization of various labour relation issues, etc., stemming from the stakeholder consultations and collective agreement negotiations in preparation of final budget estimates for the centralized fire dispatch centre.*

The following information provides corresponding updates to the recommendations from February 25, 2002, noted above:

- 1) A preliminary governance discussion paper has been prepared by the Region, for review by a sub-committee (including representation from Vaughan), which is planned to take place in early December.
- 2) The Region subsequently appointed Maureen McCauley of McCauley-Nichols as the project manager.
- 3) Various staff have been active participants on the project committees:
 - a. City Manager, Fire Chief and Vaughan Professional Fire Fighters Association (VPFFA) President on the Project Steering Committee, with similar representation from other municipalities and as Chaired by the Region's CAO.
 - b. Director Labour Relations, Deputy Fire Chief-Operations and VPFFA Executive Member on the Labour Relations Sub-Committee with similar representation from other municipalities and as Chaired by the Region's Director of Human Resources.
 - c. Deputy Fire Chief-Support Services and VPFFA-appointed Communications Operator on the Operations Sub-Committee, with similar representation from other municipalities and as Chaired by the Regional Fire Coordinator (Central York Fire Chief).
- 4) Management staff continue to consult informally with the VPFFA in this regard, as formal negotiations cannot commence until the issues are more-clearly defined by the Labour Relations Sub-Committee and draft collective agreements/amendments are presented, etc. The significant issue under discussion at this time is job security for the affected employees.
- 5) The essence of the current report from the Region is to move the project deliberations into the next phase of detailed infrastructure technology considerations/costs for the computer aided dispatch and records management system and financial review vis-à-vis the 'business case' for centralization, etc.

Conclusion

Staff and Vaughan Professional Fire Fighters Association concur with the Region's conclusion that:

"Both the potential benefits identified for a centralized fire dispatch service and the potential for cost efficiencies and cost avoidance appear worthy of further pursuit. The work of the Operations Committee can now be expanded upon by other committees and/or Regional Staff. Specifically there is a need for the following next steps.

1. Finalize the preliminary costs estimates identified within this report by:
 - i. Scoping out the needs, description and costs of the required technology for all models.
 - ii. Refining the space needs and related costs for all models
 - iii. Capitalize one time expenses to be included as part of the comprehensive financial analysis.
 - iv. Determine annual maintenance costs for dispatch centre equipment and facilities within each model.
2. Work towards a plan to address job security concerns.
3. Commence discussions regarding the Governance options for a Centralized Fire Dispatch service."

Attachments

- 1) Report No. 4 Fire Services Committee, as considered by Council of the Region of York, November 21, 2002. (available in the Clerk's Department)

Report prepared by:

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Respectfully submitted,

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John B. Sutton
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cc Vaughan Professional Fire Fighters Association