

## **COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MAY 2, 2005**

### **VAUGHAN FIRE COMMUNICATIONS SERVICE**

#### **Recommendation**

The Fire Chief in consultation with the City Manager, the Director of Human Resources and the Director of Capital Reserves and Investments, recommends:

1. That staff undertake to assess the feasibility of various options for the provision of fire communication services;
2. That appropriate external assistance as necessary be retained; not to exceed \$75,000 as provided from the Fire Reserve Fund;
3. That staff proceed with the required notification for an amendment to the 2005 Capital Budget with respect to the \$75,000 cost of retention of consulting services addressing the fire communications service solution;
4. That the Vaughan Professional Fire Fighters Association be advised of these undertakings and further advised that they will be consulted at the appropriate times and;
5. That the Region of York be advised accordingly.

#### **Economic Impact**

The consolidated fire communications project was intended to avoid the future cost increases anticipated in the continued operation of a stand-alone Vaughan Fire Communications Centre. All of the study costs had been absorbed by the Region, with implementation costs proposed to be 'front-ended' by the Region and amortized to the users over future years. Now that consolidation will not be pursued any further at this time, Vaughan will have to front its own costs of determining the best business case and technology solution for Vaughan's fire communication services.

#### **Purpose**

The Special Committee of the Whole on April 11, 2005 recommended that staff "...provide a report...respecting the status, options and recommendations, for a City of Vaughan fire dispatch."

#### **Background - Analysis and Options**

Council had previously directed staff to investigate the possibility of consolidating fire communication services with several other municipalities in conjunction with the Region of York. During that process it was determined that an amendment to the *Fire Protection and Prevention Act, 1997* (FPPA) would be required. Subsequently the Government of Ontario advised that "the government does not view this as a general legislative priority, nor does it view it as appropriate to make a general change to this legislation to accommodate a single situation."

It is understood that staff of the Region of York will be advising Regional Council accordingly and that it is anticipated that the Region of York will not pursue the consolidation of fire communications any further at this time.

The City Manager has been advised by the respective CAOs of Richmond Hill and Markham, that they are open to discussions regarding the provision of fire communication services to any of the seven municipalities previously engaged in the proposed Regional Fire Communications project.

It has been suggested to staff to discuss possibilities with Richmond Hill and Markham fire departments and the Fire Chief thinks there are three options that may be considered:

1. Investigate the feasibility of acquiring complete fire communication services from the Town of Richmond Hill Fire Department;
2. Investigate the feasibility of acquiring complete fire communication services from the Town of Markham Fire Department;
3. Investigate the feasibility of acquiring computer-aided dispatch (CAD) technology services from the Town of Markham Fire Department, while continuing the operation of the Vaughan Fire Communications Centre and employ of our current staff.

To assist in this endeavour, it is also recommended that internal resources be assigned where available and that funding not to exceed \$75,000 for external consulting resources be provided as funded from the Fire Reserve Fund as an amendment to the 2005 Capital Budget, such:

1. That McCauley-Nichols (the consultant engaged by the Region to develop the 7-member business case) be retained by the City of Vaughan to modify the business case to reflect the new options for the City of Vaughan.
2. That a technical consultant be engaged as necessary to assist City of Vaughan Information Technology Management Department staff, as determined by the Chief Information Officer, in the determination of specific hardware/ software/ communication links, etc., to achieve the various options.
3. That internal legal and human resource services and external service, as determined by the Commissioner of Legal and Administrative Services, be provided to assist with the governance and labour relations aspects of the options.

### **Relationship to Vaughan Vision 2007**

This report recommends a change from the priorities previously set by Council and the necessary resources have not been allocated.

### **Conclusion**

Given the Government of Ontario will not amend the FPPA and the Region of York therefore will no longer pursue or fund the consolidation of fire communication services for the interested municipalities, the City of Vaughan must now consider its options and refine its own business cases to determine the preferred solution and implementation of fire communication services, including significant technological solutions for the future.

Finance has advised that should Council concur with staff recommendations, then this would be considered as an amendment to the Capital Budget. Pursuant to the Municipal Act Sec 291 (1) before amending a budget, a municipality shall give notice of its intention to amend a budget at a Council meeting. In accordance with By-Law #394-2002, notice of an intention to adopt an amendment at least fourteen (14) days prior to the date of the Council meeting at which this proposed amendment is to be considered. Therefore, if Council increases the expenditures to the Capital Budget, staff is directed to provide notice of an intention to adopt an amendment to the Capital Budget pursuant to By-Law #394-2002.

### **Attachments**

1. Letter from Michael Fenn, Deputy Minister of Community Safety
2. Letter from C. D. Weldon, CAO, Town of Richmond Hill

**Report prepared by:**

Glenn Duncan, Deputy Fire Chief, extension 8206  
John Sutton, Fire Chief, extension 8205

Respectfully submitted,

John B. Sutton  
Fire Chief

Ministry of Community Safety  
and Correctional Services

Ministère de la Sécurité communautaire  
et des Services correctionnels



Office of the  
Deputy Minister  
Community Safety

Bureau du  
sous-ministre  
Sécurité communautaire

25 Grosvenor Street  
11<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Toronto ON M7A 1Y6  
Tel: 416-326-5060  
Fax: 416-327-0469

25, rue Grosvenor  
11<sup>e</sup> étage  
Toronto ON M7A 1Y6  
Tél.: 416-326-5060  
Téléc.: 416-327-0469

DM04-00338

Mr. Michael Garrett  
Chief Administrative Officer  
The Regional Municipality of York  
17250 Yonge Street  
Newmarket ON L3Y 6Z1

Dear Mr. Garrett:

Thank you for your letter in which you request a change to the definition of municipality in the *Fire Protection and Prevention Act, 1997 (FPPA)* to enable York Region to assume responsibility for fire department emergency dispatch services with collective bargaining under the FPPA. I apologize for the lengthy delay in responding.

We have concluded that the only way to effect the proposed change is to amend legislation, for a one-off, municipality-specific request. Given other competing legislative priorities, the government does not view this as a general legislative priority, nor does it view it as appropriate to make a general change to this legislation to accommodate a single situation.

I regret that we cannot be more accommodating with your request at this time. You may wish to further explore options available in the existing legislative environment with your legal counsel.

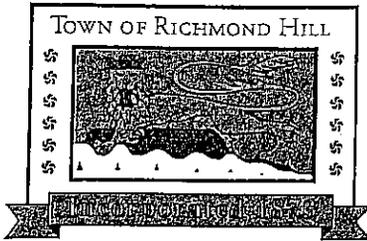
Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "W. Michael Fenn".

W. Michael Fenn  
Deputy Minister of Community Safety

c: Neil McKerrell  
A/Commissioner of Emergency Management

Mr. Bernard Moyle  
Fire Marshal of Ontario



Town of Richmond Hill

P.O. Box 300  
225 East Beaver Creek Road  
Richmond Hill, Ontario  
Canada L4C 4Y5  
(905) 771-8800  
www.richmondhill.ca

*Celebrating 130 Years*

*Office of the Chief Administrative Officer*

*Fax (905) 771-2406*

March 22, 2005

Michael DeAngelis, City Manager  
City of Vaughan  
2141 Major Mackenzie Drive  
Vaughan, Ontario  
L6A 1T1

Dear Mr. DeAngelis:

Re: **Richmond Hill Fire Dispatch**

The Town of Richmond Hill is beginning a review of the dispatch systems that we utilize for our Fire Department. In that regard, we have contacted all of the municipalities for whom we currently provide dispatch services to determine if they are interested in longer term contracts with us as we move forward toward the design and development of a state of the art dispatch system.

Though your Fire Department is currently not dispatched by the Richmond Hill Dispatch Centre, we would be prepared to include you in the discussions that we have initiated with our current clients to see if we can meet your longer term dispatch needs.

I would appreciate it if you could let me know by mid April whether or not you are interested in exploring the possibility of having your fire services dispatched from the Richmond Hill Dispatch Centre.

  
C. D. Weldon,  
Chief Administrative Officer

CDW/sdw

cc John Sutton, Fire Chief, City of Vaughan  
John Livey, CAO, Town of Markham

**RECEIVED**

**MAR 24 2005**

**VAUGHAN FIRE  
& RESCUE SERVICE**



*Proud Communities in Bloom Participant*