

ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Section of Manual <p style="text-align: center;">-I-</p>	Effective Date <p style="text-align: center;">August 28, 2014</p>
Subject <p style="text-align: center;">INCENTIVE PROGRAM - Community volunteer firefighters</p>	
Department <p style="text-align: center;">Volunteer Firefighters</p>	Resolution No. 14-332 <p style="text-align: center;">By-law No.</p>

<p>Purpose: To attract and retain good reliable volunteer firefighters.</p> <p>Policy: An employee is entitled to be absent from his or her hired employment/regular duties without wage loss for the time that the employee is engaged in a firefighters activity, including reasonable travelling time associated with training, and reasonable rest time immediately following an emergency call.</p> <p>See attached Council report and resolution.</p>

Council Report

From: Shelley B. Casey, CAO-Clerk

Date: July 16, 2014

Subject: Community volunteer firefighters – Incentive program

Purpose: To attract and retain good reliable volunteer firefighters

Recommendation: To put in place an incentive program amongst employers within the community

Analysis: Attracting and retaining good reliable volunteer firefighters is one of the most critical problems facing fire departments today. Volunteers are one of the most cost-effective solutions to the ever-increasing cost of providing quality fire protection to communities. Effective community fire protection depends on the ability of fire departments to recruit, train and keep these key individuals motivated.

Advances in technology, legislative requirements and legal implications require today's firefighters to devote far more time and effort to training than ever before. When one of these well-trained volunteers leaves the department, the loss of knowledge, capability, as well as the cost of training a replacement even to minimal levels can have a significant financial impact on a town's budget. At the same time, economic conditions force many people to work longer hours or two or more jobs, leaving far less time to take part in volunteer duties. This factor alone multiplies the value of a person who is willing to devote the time to being a volunteer firefighter. It is no surprise that fire chiefs are finding it more and more difficult to attract and retain good volunteer members for their departments.

Trained firefighters must be available to insure the safety and well-being of the community. You cannot fight fire without well-trained available firefighters. Our Dubreuilville reality as of now is that most of our volunteer firefighters work at the mine on shiftwork so they are not always readily available and close by. The Fire department in having a minimum amount of firefighters on call and available depending on the shift would not prove adequate in an actual emergency. This compromises community protection, endangering both life and property.

Therefore, it becomes imperative to search for new and innovative ways to recruit and retain this key individual – the volunteer. A blend of solutions, custom tailored for our community, will aid and possibly insure that an adequate pool of volunteers is always available to handle emergencies as they occur within the jurisdiction of our municipality.

A potential idea and answer to this dilemma could be putting in place a program amongst employers within the community. This incentive wouldn't have to be an expensive one; it could be as simple as being permitted to leave work if there is a fire call and not being penalized by a loss of wages during their absence. One other component could be that when there is a need for training, the employee could be able to take part in the training and still get his/her wages for the time away from work if it's on a regular working day. The employer can also be open to make arrangements for shift changes to accommodate training requirements. It may be slightly more expensive at first if it's a new firefighter, as the training requirements are greater; however, at the end it will be an investment that will benefit everyone in the community.

The first step would be to set this incentive within the Township. It could read as follows:

“An employee is entitled to be absent from his or her hired employment / regular duties without wage loss for the time that the employee is engaged in a firefighters activity, including reasonable travelling time associated with training, and reasonable rest time immediately following an emergency call.”

Think about it... When the current volunteer firefighter’s capabilities are not adequate to handle the emergency, will that be a defense in court? Will that restore lives lost or property destroyed? Council members must answer these questions before disregarding the need for the establishment of an incentive program for the township employee. This is a first step in understanding the importance of our fire department and trying new initiatives to attract recruits.

In summary, volunteer firefighters are a very valuable resource. The cost of recruiting and training a new volunteer is the most expensive component of their longevity that needs to be appreciated. A fire department really cannot afford to lose a highly skilled volunteer. Volunteer incentive programs are an investment, not an expense.

Financial Impact: This is very hard to measure at this time, it all depends if employees take advantage and require training, fire practices, fire calls, etc...

Shelley B. Casey
CAO-Clerk

Suzanne Lord
Fire-Chief



COUNCIL RESOLUTION



Moved By: Councillor Nantel

DATE: August 28, 2014

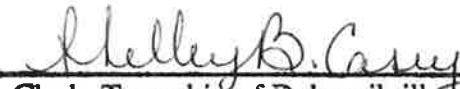
Seconded By: Councillor Poliquin

Resolution No. 14-332

Whereas that the attached Council Report dated July 16, 2014 from the CAO-Clerk with regards to a Community volunteer firefighters - incentive program be received and approved accordingly; and

Whereas that employers be approached to participate within this incentive program.

CERTIFIED COPY


Clerk, Township of Dubreuilville


_____ **Carried**

_____ **Defeated**

_____ **Deferred**

RECORDED VOTE:

YES

NO

Councillor Beverly Nantel

Councillor Roger Lord

Councillor Luc Lévesque

Councillor Mike Poliquin

Mayor Louise Perrier

Declaration of Pecuniary Interest and General Nature Thereof: