

REQUEST FOR DECISION 038-2023

Title: Wolfville Fire – Pumper/Tanker Purchase

Date: 2023-06-06

Department: FIRE



SUMMARY

Fire Pumper/Tanker Purchase

Council had previously approved a budget of \$1.4 million to replace the current 1998 Pumper 11 truck as part of the capital replacement plan. The leadership of the Wolfville Fire Department now believes that replacing the Pumper with a combination Pumper/Tanker will place the department in a more favorable position for the future. The budget required for a Pumper/Tanker is \$1.7 million, therefore the department is requesting an additional \$300,000.

DRAFT MOTION:

That Council approve an additional \$300,000 towards the purpose of a Pumper Tanker, bringing the total budget approval up to \$1,700,000.

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1) CAO COMMENTS

The CAO supports the recommendations of the Fire Department Executive.

2) LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

Fire Services Agreement, 2005

MGA

3) FIRE DEPARTMENT EXECUTIVE RECOMMENDATION

The Executive recommends that the council approve the recommendation of the Fire Department and provide the Fire Department with an additional \$300,000 to replace the current Pumper with a Pumper/Tanker.

4) REFERENCES AND ATTACHMENTS

1. N/A

5) DISCUSSION

- It is challenging to attract, train and retain qualified drivers and operators with the appropriate skills and experience to operate pumpers and tankers safely. This purchase would eliminate the need for one driver as the tanker will not be replaced.
- A pumper carries approximately 600 gallons of water, requires one driver, one officer and 4 crew members. A pumper/tanker carries approximately 2,200 gallons of water, requires one driver, one officer and 4 crew members. This significant increase in water capacity with the initial response apparatus allows for a much safer and more impactful initial fire attack. This is meaningful in rural/remote locations with no hydrants (which will be expanding with merging of districts), for significant structures, including those with no automatic sprinklers or no town water supply nearby.
- If the merger continues as planned, the rural coverage areas will increase. By purchasing a Pumper/Tanker now, we will be able to put greater resources on scene with one apparatus.
- The current timeline for manufacturing and delivery of a Pumper/Tanker is 600+ days so it is important to procure this apparatus now.
- Currently our 2006 Tanker 21 is scheduled to be replaced in 2031, it is expected that replacement will cost \$1,000,000 in current dollars. If the decision to purchase a Pumper/Tanker is made we will not need to replace Tanker 21. Greenwich currently does not have a pumper/tanker either.

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- We will not be procuring with the Kentville Fire Department due to the timing of revisiting this decision.

Many Departments in Kings and West Hants are doing similar things when it comes to replacements of pumpers and tankers in general. There are many reasons for this, including cost savings and the availability of qualified drivers.

Other reasons than the ones already listed are the reduction of vehicles on the road for an alarm. Whether it be a mutual aid response, or a call in our own areas, by combining two units into one you will be, in most cases, only required to dispatch one piece of equipment rather than two. This will reduce wear and tear, fuel usage, etc.

6) FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The Town's Capital Investment Plan funding has a goal to utilize reserve funding for purchase of fire apparatus. Staff were aware that this approach was not possible for all purchases within the current ten year plan, with debt being the alternative to fund the aerial ladder truck in fiscal 2025/26. Depending on the delivery date for the proposed pumper/tanker it may require some level of debt to supplement reserves available when the vehicle arrives.

Basically, there is no immediate implication of the additional \$300,000 funding requested. Fire capital equipment reserves plus sales value of pumper being replaced should yield sufficient funds to pay for new truck.

The longer term outlook will have to be revisited during the 2024/25 budget process. As noted in the Discussion section above, if Council approves this change to a pumper/tanker apparatus, the 2031/32 replacement of the 2006 Tanker 21 can be removed as that tanker will not be required. In theory that is a savings of \$1,000,000 (amount noted in ten year CIP). That said, these "savings" will essentially be used up by ever escalating costs of fire apparatus.

7) REFERENCES TO COUNCIL STRATEGIC PLAN AND TOWN REPORTS

Reference the appropriate strategic directions from the 2021-2025 Strategic Plan:

- Community Wellness

8) COMMUNICATION REQUIREMENTS

N/A

9) ALTERNATIVES

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1. The department can continue with the current replacement of the Pumper truck as outlined in the capital plan at a cost of \$1.4 million.
2. The department could not replace the current truck and wait until the transition coordinator is in place and determines what trucks are required. However, it is felt that this purchase will be required and does not duplicate anything in the current fleet and will allow Wolfville's tanker to not be replaced in 2031, resulting in savings.
If these decisions are delayed it will also put some of our apparatus outside of the NFPA standard due to long manufacturing and supply timing.