



Brenda J Librecz
Commissioner, Community & Fire Services

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor and Members of Council
FROM: Brenda Librecz, Commissioner, Community & Fire Services
COPY TO: Andy Taylor, Chief Administrative Officer
DATE: March 10th, 2016
SUBJECT: Establishment of Council Committee for the Recruitment of Deputy Fire Chief

Recommendation:

That General Committee appoints a Committee comprised of Senior Staff and Council Members to undertake the recruitment of the Deputy Fire Chief and that Council appoint four members of Council to the Committee.

On February 16th 2016, Council appointed Deputy Chief Dave Decker to the position of Fire Chief. This appointment has resulted in a vacant Deputy Fire Chief position, leaving only two non-union managers in place to operate a Fire & Emergency Services Department that comprises 275 staff operating out of 9 fire stations. As the Fire Chief and the two Deputies are accountable under the *Fire Protection and Prevention Act* for the provision of protection services 24/7/365 the reduction of one Deputy Chief will place a significant burden on the Chief and the remaining Deputy to manage the complexities of the Fire Service in Markham.

Council Committee to Recruit the Deputy Fire Chief:

The City of Markham has in the past established a Recruitment Committee for recruitment of some senior positions. Accordingly, staff is recommending the establishment of a committee comprised of Council Members and senior staff to interview and recommend the new Deputy Fire Chief. Based on past experience the following representatives are being suggested:

Council :	Mayor Scarpitti
	Deputy Mayor
	Chair of Community Services
	Vice Chair of Community Services
Staff:	Fire Chief Decker
	Commissioner of Community & Fire Services
	Chief Administrative Officer
	Human Resources representative

Background:

The City of Markham Fire & Emergency Services has operated since 1999 with a Fire Chief and two Deputy Fire Chiefs. Each Deputy Chief is responsible for two platoons and a specialized area comprising 135/137 staff per chief. Each of the three senior officers rotates 24 hour coverage throughout the year. The Master Fire Plan approved by Council in 2012 recommended the creation of a third deputy based on the size and scope of the fire services operations. That appointment didn't occur and this memorandum is about filling the vacant position.

In benchmarking Markham to other municipalities across the region the following municipalities of similar or smaller size currently operate with two Deputies: *Richmond Hill, Vaughan, Oshawa, Cambridge, Pickering, Whitby, and St. Catharines*. There are others that operate with three Deputy Chiefs: *Oakville, Burlington, Barrie, Brampton and Central York*. (Examples only not complete list.)

Rationale for Commencing Recruitment

The rationale for proceeding now with the recruitment is to ensure the new Fire Chief has the support needed to be successful. Fire Services in Ontario are unique in that the number of managers (outside the Association) is restricted according to the *Fire Protection and Prevention Act*. Markham is permitted four (4) non-union management positions based on the number of fire fighters. We have 3 positions currently -- Fire Chief and two Deputies. (Additional management positions may be bargained.) This creates a working environment in which members of the bargaining unit are responsible to manage and supervise most of the business of the Fire & Emergency Services Department. The limited number of management representatives has a direct impact on day to day activities, risk management, human resource management and strategic and business planning. Managing the complexities of 275 staff comprises the largest component of time and attention and on that basis only there is the need for recruitment to commence expeditiously.

Further as our workforce demographic is dramatically changing with the baby boomers nearing the end of their careers the need for effective and proactive succession management is critical especially for our long service senior officers including the Deputy Chief. We are fortunate to have two experienced senior officers available to coach and support the new Deputy Chief for successful outcomes.

Interim Coverage/Support

The Fire Chief will be working with the Commissioner to temporarily appoint an Interim Deputy Chief to provide limited support to the Fire Chief and Deputy Alexander while the recruitment for a new Deputy Chief takes place.

Kindly advise if further clarification is required.