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Halifax Regional Council
February 24, 2004

TO: Mayor Kelly and Members of Halifax Regional Council

SUBMITTED BY:

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mike Eddy".

Mike E. Eddy, Chief Director, Fire & Emergency Service

DATE: February 9, 2004

SUBJECT: Halifax Regional Firefighters Interpretation Centre

INFORMATION REPORT

ORIGIN

At the January 27, 2004, Regional Council Meeting, a presentation was made to Council requesting consideration of Fire Station #12, Windmill Road, once surplus, being turned over for use as an Interpretation Centre.

BACKGROUND

The Regional Firefighters Interpretation Centre is a voluntary association whose purpose is to ensure the preservation, enhancement, and continued awareness of the historic significance. This group has been looking for a home for the Interpretation Centre for the past four years and expressed an interest in acquiring Station 12 located at 560 Windmill Road.

DISCUSSION

The property at 560 Windmill Road, has already been declared surplus and the revenue from the sale of this property is to be used to offset the cost of the construction of the new fire stations in Highfield Park and Portland Street. Since 1998, repairs to this property have been minimal due to the fact that a new station was being built and this site would be declared surplus to our needs. Staff does not feel that this location would be an appropriate fit as the Halifax Regional Firefighters Interpretation

Centre does not have the financial means to make the necessary repairs to the building or pay for the day to day operating costs.

The Centre also expressed an interest in the King Street Fire Station. This station is still operating as a Fire Station and will continue to do so until the fire station is built on Portland Street. This property will then be declared surplus and sold with the funds from the sale to be used to offset the cost of the new station on Portland Street.

The concept of having an Interpretation Centre is a noble activity and there may be a means to incorporate the Police museum component into a combined Interpretation Centre. Both Chief Beazley and I support this initiative in principle; however, we presently do not have the capacity to contribute financially to this project without it being incorporated into the Budget/Business Planning process. In addition, we would require a Business Sustainability Plan from the Firefighters Interpretation Centre in order to determine the viability of this project. Staff from Fire Service will gladly provide assistance to the group in the development of their Sustainability Plan.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

If the Windmill Road property is not sold, then the municipality will encounter a budget shortfall as the anticipated revenue from the sale of this building was to be used to offset the cost of new fire station construction. In addition, the operating costs per month are approximately \$10,0000 which does not include, cleaning, snow clearing, grass cutting, etc. and no operating funds have been budgeted for beyond June of 2004.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT POLICIES / BUSINESS PLAN

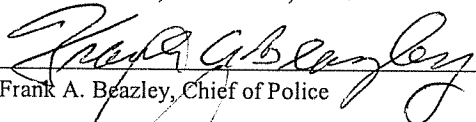
This report complies with the Municipality's Multi-Year Financial Strategy, the approved Operating, Capital and Reserve budgets, policies and procedures regarding withdrawals from the utilization of Capital and Operating reserves, as well as any relevant legislation.

ALTERNATIVES None.

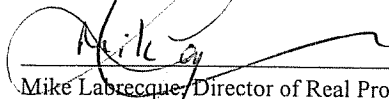
ATTACHMENTS None.

Additional copies of this report, and information on its status, can be obtained by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 490-4210, or Fax 490-4208.

Report Prepared by: Darlene G. Ellis, Coordinator, 490-5614



Frank A. Beazley, Chief of Police



Mike Labrecque, Director of Real Property & Asset Management