
Halifax Regional Council
July 2, 2002

TO: Mayor Kelly and Members of Halifax Regional Council

SUBMITTED BY:


George McLellan, Chief Administrative Officer

DATE: June 19, 2002

SUBJECT: Rural Fire Management Committee

ORIGIN

As a result of a Staff Report to Council on July 17, 2001, Council directed that Halifax Regional Fire and Emergency Service establish a Rural Fire Management Committee to replace the current Fire Advisory Committee.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that:

1. Council approve the establishment of the Rural Fire Service Management Committee based on the Terms of Reference established by Fire Services.
2. Council appoint a Member of Council to the Rural Fire Service Management Committee for a term to be selected by Council.

BACKGROUND

Fire Services has developed the Terms of Reference based on the principles outlined in the previous report to Council. The main points:

Establish the Rural Fire Management Committee to replace the current Fire Advisory Committee. The mandate of the Committee is to provide advice and comment on proposed policies, to discuss and make decisions on the implementation of policies within the rural districts, and to discuss and resolve issues within the rural fire service.

Terms of Reference and membership on the Committee will be developed in consultation with the rural departments.

Appoint the Deputy Chief Director Rural District as Chair of the Rural Fire Management Committee.

Voting rights on the Rural Fire Management Committee will be limited to representatives of the rural departments, however volunteers and the community will be invited to discuss issues from the floor.

All other rural district committees will report to the Rural Fire Management Committee.

DISCUSSION

The attached Terms of Reference have been developed by Fire Service Management in consultation with the existing Fire Advisory Committee and the Composite Chiefs Committee. They have been widely circulated for comment by all members of the organization on several occasions. Comments received were incorporated in the document and re-circulated for additional comment, leading to this recommendation. The current Fire Advisory Committee has been informally evolving towards the suggested format for Rural Management Committee. Upon approval by Council of the committee's Terms of Reference, and Council's appointment of a member to the committee, it will officially replace the Fire Advisory Committee.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

These changes will be accommodated within the approved budget for Fire and Emergency Services.

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.

Terms of Reference

Objectives

The objective of the Rural Fire Management Committee is to: (1) provide a forum for the discussion of issues of interest to the rural fire service; (2) initiate, research and review policy, implementation of policy, and other matters; (3) and advise the Chief Director of Fire & Emergency Services of Halifax Regional Fire and Emergency Service on issues in the Rural Fire Service

Meetings

1. The Committee shall meet on the third Monday of each month at 7:30 PM. The meetings may be held at different locations throughout the rural areas.
2. The Committee may schedule meetings at other times and places as it deems necessary.
3. The Committee may reschedule meetings to avoid holidays or other conflicting events.
4. Meetings shall not last beyond two hours without the consent of all members present.
5. Meetings shall be Chaired by the Deputy Chief Director, Rural District or alternate in the event of an unavoidable absence. The Chair does not vote unless there is a tie.

Rules of Order

1. Committee meetings are open to all members of the Fire Service, to Municipal Councillors and to HRM staff. Persons in the gallery may only speak at the invitation of the Committee.
2. Members shall speak in order as recognized by the Chair. No members shall speak more than once on an issue until all other speakers have had an opportunity to speak. The Chair may permit a speaker to speak out of turn for purposes of clarification.
3. Voting shall be by show of hands, with a simple majority required to pass a motion.
4. Each committee member shall be entitled to one vote on any issue.
5. Alternates shall not participate in deliberations of the Committee except when they are representing an absent member of the Committee.
6. Alternates representing an absent member and who intend to exercise the vote of that member shall identify themselves at the beginning of the meeting.

7. The Rural Fire Management Committee may appoint sub-committees to discuss specific issues and make recommendations to the Committee. It is not necessary to be a Rural Fire Management Committee Representative to be appointed to a sub-committee.

Rural Management Committee may select sub-committee members from the rural fire service at large to serve on committees as required. These committees may be but are not limited to clothing, PPE, apparatus, policy review etc.

Sub-committees shall table written copies of minutes and reports to the Rural Fire Management Committee

Committee Membership

1. The Deputy Chief Director shall appoint a selection committee who shall seek, at large, Eight (8) rural fire service representatives to serve on the Rural Management Committee.
2. Each committee member shall appoint an alternate.
3. Council may appoint a member of council to serve for a term selected by Council, on the committee.
4. The term of appointment for fire service representative shall be two years.
5. New appointees to the Committee shall be selected every second year, beginning in 2002.
6. In the event a fire service representative is unable to complete their term, another representative shall be appointed by the Deputy Chief Director
7. The Volunteer representative of the Halifax Regional Fire & Emergency Service to the NS Fire Officers Association shall be offered a seat on the Rural Management Committee.

Agenda

1. The agenda shall be distributed to all fire departments at least five days in advance of a meeting. Notes of the previous meeting shall be included with the agenda package.
2. Members wishing to add items to the agenda shall provide written notice of the item to be added to the agenda at least ten days prior to the meeting.
3. Emergency items may be added to the agenda with the consent of all members present.

4. The agenda format shall be as follows:

Approval of Agenda
Management Update
New Business
Minutes of Last Meeting
Updates and Reports of Sub-Committees
Item 1, 2, 3...
Adjournment

Conflict Resolution

Conflicts within the Rural Fire Service are to be handled as outlined in Policy P-806. This policy is to be managed by the Rural Fire Management Committee.



HALIFAX REGIONAL FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICE

P o l i c y M a n u a l

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Issued by:	Date of issue: 1998/03/16
Forms required:	Revision date: 2002
File information:	

PURPOSE: The purpose of this policy is to provide the Rural/Composite Fire Service with a defined process for dealing with major issues of concern to their departments.

POLICY: Step 1.1 Each department shall have a formal process to deal with resolution of disputes **between members of that department or members and officers of that department.**

Step 1.2 When the issue of concern involves **individuals in more than one department, in Management, in other HRM Business Units, or when the internal process has not resolved a conflict**, the person(s) or division involved in the dispute must be notified and the parties will meet with a representative of the next level of management to attempt to reach a win-win resolution. This meeting must be held within seven (7) days of the parties being notified.

Step 2 Should satisfaction not be obtained at Step 1 the parties shall request the appointment of a Conflict Resolution Sub-Committee of the Fire Advisory (Rural Management) Committee comprised of three members of the F.A.C.(RMC) This sub-committee will meet with the Deputy Chief Director of Halifax Regional Fire & Emergency Service in an attempt to resolve the issue. The Conflict Resolution Sub-Committee will report their findings to the next scheduled meeting of Fire Advisory (Rural Management) Committee. On the recommendation of the Conflict Resolution Sub-Committee, the Fire Advisory (Rural Management) Committee will either determine the issue resolved or move to the next step within five (5) days.

Step 3 The Conflict Resolution Sub-Committee will meet with the Chief Director (of HRF&ES) who will hold a hearing of the facts surrounding the issue giving rise to the conflict. Within seven (7) days of this hearing the Chief Director shall render his/her decision in writing.

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Step 4 If the third step does not result in a solution acceptable to the member(s), the grievance may be submitted to the Chief Administrative Officer within five (5) working days of the Chief Director's decision.

The Chief Administrative Officer will conduct a detailed investigation into the matter, review all previous reports, meet with all interested parties, make a final decision and advise the member in writing within ten (7) working days.

NOTE: The times for response to a grievance at any of the above steps may be adjusted by mutual consent.