

REQUEST FOR DECISION

DATE: June 29, 2022

Report No. FIRE-22-003

TO: Laurie Hurst, Chief Administrative Officer

FROM: Steve Serbic, Fire Chief

SUBJECT:

Update on Fire Department Strategic Planning Process

RECOMMENDATION:

That Mayor and Council receive Staff Report FIRE-22-003 for information.

RELEVANT POLICY:

The strategic priorities, objectives and operational strategies will be used to report progress to Council on a regular basis once finalized.

STRATEGIC RELEVANCE:

This Request for Decision supports the strategic priority entitled “Excellence in Public Service”.

BACKGROUND:

This project, with endorsement from Mayor and Council, was initiated by the development of terms of reference (TOR) with Stacey Holloway as the facilitator. The TOR were finalized and signed off in July 2021. The next step in the process was to establish an internal working group. This occurred mid-July with the group being comprised of the IAFF Local 4264 Union Executive, 2 firefighters chosen by the membership, a Captain endorsed by the membership, the Fire Chief, both Assistant Chiefs, the Director of Corporate services and HR and the CAO.

During August and September 2021 work occurred with the facilitator to develop an internal survey, community survey and stakeholder engagement strategy. The working group had a kick-off meeting in September in addition to a strategic planning refresher session led by the facilitator. Additional working sessions and discussions occurred in October and November to finalize the public survey questions and stakeholder engagement strategy. The public survey was launched on December 1st and closed on December 21st. Stakeholder engagement also occurred within this timeframe.

The facilitator, Stacey Holloway, facilitated Strength, Weakness, Opportunity, and Threat (SWOT) analysis directly with the membership (via zoom due to COVID restrictions) in mid-January 2022. This was followed by two full day sessions with the working group in February to start pulling together all the feedback gathered so far into

the beginnings of a strategic plan. Further working group sessions occurred in April and May with the results brought back to the membership and input incorporated.

While the timeline for this process may seem lengthy, the working group is diverse, is subject to the fire department shift schedules and subject to the availability of the facilitator with a busy schedule. The process was also briefly paused to accommodate changes that occurred in fire department leadership.

This is the first time in the history of the fire department that a strategic plan has been developed. There is an emphasis in the process to ensure that significant engagement and consultation is conducted with the membership on all information generated by the working group and wherever possible input and feedback is brought back for incorporation into the plan. This is intended to be a very collaborative activity and it is the process of planning that is important, not the publication of the plan itself. Most importantly, this strategic planning process is an opportunity to unify the leadership, membership, and other stakeholders through a common understanding of where the department is going, how everyone involved can work to that common purpose, and how progression and success will be measured.

While the strategic plan document has not yet been finalized, there has been significant progress made including the following accomplishments:

Mission statement:

We make a difference in the lives of others by providing exceptional Fire and Rescue Services, Prevention and Education to our local community and regional partners. We are committed to the protection and wellbeing of our community, the environment and one another.

Vision statement:

Our Vision is to be a proud, passionate and dynamic organization, recognized for our exceptional service and highly skilled, innovative and dedicated workforce. We are leaders in public safety and Firefighter well-being.

Vivid description

We are a responsive and progressive part of the community we serve and are constantly adapting to changing needs.

We embrace new technologies and techniques focusing on training and education to provide the highest level of service and satisfaction.

We value the support we receive from the community we serve which views us with pride, respect, and confidence.

As Esquimalt Fire and Rescue Services, we are committed to developing exceptional Leaders.

We attract the best to work with us and provide them an exceptional workplace environment where everyone feels valued and can achieve their full potential.

Core values

Excellence

We exceed expectations. We are proud, professional, accountable, and have integrity.

Innovation

We inspire creative thinking, encourage new ideas and support a willingness to try.

Wellbeing

We make wellbeing a priority by supporting physical, and emotional health to achieve our full potential.

Diversity, Inclusion and Respect

We value people, honour differences, and treat everyone with dignity and fairness.

Compassion

We are empathetic and kind. We genuinely care for each other and those we serve.

Strategic Priorities and Goals

Exceptional Customer Service

- Ensure exceptional, comprehensive, effectively integrated and sustainable customer service
- Growth and resource planning
- Equipment and technology
- Enhance hazard response capabilities

Strengthen, Develop and Expand Partnerships

- Enhance commitment to regional cooperation
- Build and expand community relationships
- Promote career/life education
- Community engagement/life safety

Enhance Culture

- Support a diverse and inclusive workplace
- Enhance staff attraction and retention
- Ensure staff engagement
- Establish an ideal working environment
- Enhance internal and external communication and feedback strategies

Training and Professional Development

- Expand career development planning
- Support employee-initiated training and development
- Ensure leadership development
- Promote performance evaluation

Support Personal Health and Wellness

- Build relationship and connection
- Prioritize physical, emotional and mental health and wellness
- Enhance wellbeing resource awareness and utilization
- Promote and enhance workplace safety
- Promote a healthy lifestyle

Still outstanding to complete are refinements to the draft strategic goals, development of operational strategies for each strategic goal and to format the document in a similar manner as the Council strategic priorities document and annual report. The session for strategic goals and operational strategies was scheduled to occur in June but had to be cancelled due to some scheduling conflicts and we have yet to confirm alternate dates at this time. It is expected that the final draft document will be presented to Council early in the third period.

To date this has been a successful process with many layers of collaboration and consultation that has resulted in improved communication within the department that has strengthened respectful relationships amongst the membership, management and the union.

ISSUES:

1. Rationale for Selected Option
This report is for Council's information.
2. Organizational Implications
There are no organizational implications.
3. Financial Implications
This project has been previously approved and is included in the budget. There are no further financial implications.
4. Sustainability & Environmental Implications
There are no sustainability or environmental implications.
5. Communication & Engagement
The completed strategic plan will be posted to the Township's website and will be announced through social media platforms.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. That Mayor and Council receive Staff Report FIRE-22-003 for information.
2. That Council provide alternative direction to staff.