

**THE CORPORATION OF THE MUNICIPALITY OF NEEBING**

**MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF COUNCIL**

Held at the Municipal Office  
On Wednesday, June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016

**PRESENT:** Mayor Ziggy Polkowski  
Councillor Erwin Butikofer  
Councillor Bill Lankinen  
Councillor Roger Shott  
Councillor Brian Wright  
Councillor Mike McCooeye (arrived at 5:50 p.m.)

**REGRETS:** Councillor Curtis Coulson

Rosalie Evans, Solicitor-Clerk

Dale Ashbee, Fire Chief, Neebing Emergency Services  
Roger Van Ballegooie, Deputy Fire Chief, Neebing Emergency Services  
Beverly Mercer, Deputy Fire Chief, Neebing Emergency Services  
Jeff Lafontaine, District Fire Chief, Neebing Emergency Services

**1. PRELIMINARY MATTERS:**

- (a) **Call to Order:** Mayor Polkowski called the meeting to order at 5:07 p.m.
- (b) **Attendance:** Attendance was recorded.
- (c) **Declarations of Interest:** No declarations of interest were received.

**2. NEEBING EMERGENCY SERVICES STRATEGIC PLAN:**

**2.1 Presentation by Chief Ashbee and NES Officers**

Chief Ashbee handed out a copy of the power point slides he proposed to review with Council. The first slide shows the locations of all fire calls responded to between 2008 and 2012. The pattern distribution shows most calls to be from Blake and Scoble. This is reasonable, as these areas have the highest concentrations of population. There is also a concentration of calls along Highway 61. The pie chart on the 5<sup>th</sup> slide also supports this conclusion. Scoble and Blake together make up over 55 percent of the fire calls.

The call pattern, in part, lead to the conclusion that a new base hall should be built in reasonable proximity to Hall One's current location.

The next two slides show the distribution of the residences of volunteers in 2003 and currently (subject to some very recent changes). This pattern supports the location of the new base hall being in reasonable proximity to Hall One's current location.

The 6<sup>th</sup> slide shows the locations of the 6 "active" fire halls currently in operation, as well as 4 sites that were previously utilized, which are no longer in service. It is noted, however, that Hall

3, shown as “active” is only used for storage and is being phased out based on poor condition of the building. The four other previously used locations are: Pearson (on Lankinen Road); Crooks (at Cloud Bay); Crooks (at Little Pine Bay) and Blake (at Sturgeon Bay).

The 7<sup>th</sup> slide is one that has previously been discussed with Council. Should Council decide to reduce the number of active halls from 6 to 4, this slide shows the locations that would make the most sense, based on coverage. The outskirts of the municipality in Pearson, Pardee and along the shores of Crooks (from approximately Cottage Drive East, north to the Crooks/Blake boundary) and Blake (waterfront of Superior and most of the Loch Lomond watershed properties), would experience slower response times.

Deputy Chief Van Ballegooie, using a program called “Sketch Up”, walked Councillors through a conceptual floor plan for a new “base” fire hall. It would be approximately 88 feet by 80 feet, and would contain 4 vehicle bays, plus a mechanical repair bay and a vehicle washing bay. It would contain the Fire Headquarters’ offices (and related storage), gear storage areas, decontamination showers, training room (and related storage), as well as un-programmed space that could be configured to be an Emergency Operations Centre and/or might be used in future if 24 hour service for ambulance was ever realized.

The floor was opened to questions.

Mayor Polkowski opened the discussion by commenting that the tax base for the community, without significant commercial or industrial development, would not be able to support 4 fully equipped fire halls, and he believes one “base” hall and 3 other halls equipped to respond to structure fires is a workable and responsible solution. Mayor Polkowski commented that he had seen the volunteers at work on site at winter fires, in bitterly cold temperatures, and his goal is to provide the volunteers with an appropriate all-season working base fire hall to help ease some of the challenges that they face in extreme weather.

Councillor Shott raised the issue of the agreement that Neebing has with the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (“MNR”) for forest fire fighting. It involves a “trade off” whereby Neebing covers Provincial property and the Province covers Neebing property. With the removal of Pie and Flatland Islands, and the potential re-configuration of the fire hall coverage areas, this may need to be re-negotiated. Chief Ashbee was asked to analyze the agreement in this regard. Chief Ashbee commented that these agreements are typically “break even”, but Neebing’s is an anomaly where we have to pay an annual fee. Perhaps the fee can be reduced or even eliminated with analysis.

Chief Ashbee was asked whether he was personally comfortable with a reduction from 6 halls to 4. He indicated that he was, with the configurations shown in the concepts reviewed today, and the slides, however, “satellite” fire halls may be required for additional protection, storage, response times (subject to volunteer availability), etc.

It was noted that one area of concern is Sturgeon Bay, given the population density in summer months. Should recruitment of volunteers be successful in the area, it would be a primary spot for one of the “satellite” halls referred to.

There was a brief discussion with respect to recruitment, with ideas for generating interest.

Two of the halls are located on land that it leased from the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry. The Solicitor-Clerk was asked to review the leases to determine whether or not sub-leasing is permissible. Sub-leasing was also referenced as a possibility for the hall located (on municipal land) at Cloud Lake.

The 4<sup>th</sup> hall location on Slide # 7, marked "D", is somewhere along Highway 61 where the Municipality does not currently own land (between Cloud River Road and Larson Road). Property listings should be reviewed from time to time to see whether an acceptable property can be purchased in the future. This is not an "immediate" need, but would be more long-term.

With respect to building design, it was noted that "decontamination" as well as a vehicle wash bay, and the vehicle storage bays (i.e. snow melt run-off) would require some kind of run-off treatment similar to the oil separator used at the Municipal Garage. Building design was also discussed in terms of potential support structures for trusses, the need for metal "I" beams, and non-gender specific (single, lockable) washroom and shower/change areas. There was a brief discussion about potential funding sources for construction.

Mayor Polkowski indicated he wished to speak to a larger segment of the fire volunteer team prior to having much of the information discussed this evening more widely discussed in the community.

No resolutions were passed.

**3. ADJOURN THE MEETING:**

Mayor Polkowski adjourned the meeting at 6:07 p.m.

**SPECIAL MEETING OF COUNCIL**

  
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Ziggy Polkowski  
MAYOR

  
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Rosalie Evans  
SOLICITOR-CLÉRK