

Region of Queens Municipality Fire Services Committee

Tuesday, July 15th, 2025

7:00 p.m.

Present:

Councillor Jack Fancy, Chair
Councillor Wanda Carver
Willa Thorpe, Chief Administrative Officer
Joanne Veinotte, Director of Finance
Fire Chief Wayne Trimm
Fire Chief Kendall Farmer
Fire Chief Trevor Munroe
Fire Chief Moyal Conrad
Deputy Chief Jonathan Roach
Steve Moulton
Brian Conrad

Absent:

Agenda

1.0 Call to Order and Land Acknowledgement

Jack Fancy, Chair, called the meeting to order

2.0 Approval of Agenda

Moved by Trevor Munroe, seconded by Kendall Farmer;

THAT the Fire Services Committee approve the agenda for the July 15th, 2025 Committee Meeting, as amended to include Insurance as Item 7, Update on Hydrants as Item 8

MOTION CARRIED.

3.0 Approval of Minutes

4.1 June 24th 2025, Regular Council Meeting Minutes

It was moved by Trevor Munroe and seconded by Kendall Farmer;

THAT the minutes of the Fire Services Committee meeting held March 11th, 2025 be approved as presented.

MOTION CARRIED.

4.0 Emergency Health Services

Deputy Chief Jonathan Roach noted that there has been an improvement in the fire service response to paged calls. However, response times remain inconsistent, largely depending on staffing levels during each shift. He confirmed that another public meeting is scheduled for September in North Queens. It was also observed that some fire trucks are still not arriving on scene with lights and sirens on, which was concerning.

Clarification was provided regarding 911 call procedures: if someone calls from a private residence and wants the fire department to respond, they must clearly request it. Simply placing a 911 call no longer guarantees a fire response unless there is an imminent threat.

5.0 National Fire Chief of the Year Award

The National Fire Chief of the Year Award was discussed, including its criteria and eligibility requirements. The award is open to nominees from across Canada.

6.0 Truck scheduling in advance

The group discussed long-term concerns around the cost and scheduling of fire services, especially in light of steadily declining volunteerism. A suggestion was made to consider a new study to explore sustainable solutions; however, members noted that a similar \$35,000 study conducted in 2014 resulted in few implemented recommendations, aside from the Truck Replacement Plan. This raised concerns about repeating past inefficiencies, and members emphasized that any future review must include clear, actionable steps and accountability.

The discussion highlighted ongoing recruitment challenges, particularly due to an aging volunteer base and a lack of younger residents, driven largely by

housing affordability. Many people no longer have the time or financial flexibility to volunteer, especially given the demands of fire service. Some suggested exploring school programs where students could earn credits for involvement in fire departments, though such initiatives would require significant coordination. It was recommended to look into how other regions are running similar programs.

Given the current trends, members acknowledged the likely future need for a paid fire crew. However, the current volunteer budget would not support wages for even four full-time firefighters. Additionally, daytime response remains a challenge, as many volunteers cannot leave their regular jobs. These growing gaps in service underline the need for discussions with the Provincial government regarding long-term support and policy changes.

It was also noted that the Region of Queens Municipality has a currently unfilled position for a Protective Services Coordinator, an essential role that could help lead strategic planning and address some of these ongoing challenges.

6.0 Insurance

An incident involving a fire truck rolling into the water raised concerns about insurance coverage and financial risk. Smaller utility trucks are only covered for 36 months on a pro-rated basis, and the insurance payout did not reflect the full replacement value. As a result, the department is likely responsible for significant out-of-pocket costs.

Concerns were expressed about the current insurance provider, and there was discussion about seeking alternative coverage. Given the financial impact, the idea of requesting an interest-free loan from the Region was raised. Such a request would need to go through Council, as was done in the past via the Municipal Clerk. It was suggested that the Chief consider bringing a formal request forward if no other funding options are available.

An update was provided on two additional fire trucks currently undergoing work.

7.0 Hydrants

Reports will be submitted to Adam Grant. One hydrant near the fire hall has been repaired, and additional repairs have been requested. A total of \$40,000 was approved during the budget process for hydrant upgrades and repairs. It

was noted that the hydrant in Hillview has been out of service for seven years and has yet to be fixed.

Permits are required for new hydrant installations, and applications are currently in progress. However, permits are not expected until September, meaning installation work cannot proceed this year. There was discussion about whether the Region of Queens Municipality could hire or contract permit processing to speed up future installations. This would fall under the responsibilities of the Protective Services & Safety Coordinator.

A list of required work will be compiled and sent to CAO Thorpe, who will follow up with staff accordingly.

8.0 General Discussion

It was noted that in a previous meeting, there had been discussion about acquiring a fit test machine and potentially sharing the cost with the Region. However, the lack of certified personnel to operate or service the machine has made it a lower priority for the time being.

CAO Thorpe will follow up with the Safety Inspector regarding an inspection that began in October 2024 but was never completed or formally followed up on. It was suggested that they come back to a Fire Service Committee meeting.

It was suggested that the Region of Queens submit a grant application to the Emergency Services Provider Fund for \$200,000 to support the development of a HAZMAT team in Queens County. Concerns regarding the formation and operation of the HAZMAT team were also discussed.

Fire District Signage was discussed, with a need to follow up with Mike regarding updates. The current signage may no longer reflect the revised coverage area, and changes may be required to ensure accuracy.

9.0 Adjournment

A motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:27 p.m was moved by Kendall Farmer and seconded by Trevor Munroe.