



THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWN OF AMHERSTBURG

OFFICE OF THE CAO

MISSION STATEMENT: *Committed to delivering cost-effective and efficient services for the residents of the Town of Amherstburg with a view to improve and enhance their quality of life.*

Author's Name: B. Montone	Report Date: March 29, 2021
Author's Phone: 519 730-6500 ext. 2241	Date to Council: April 12, 2021
Author's E-mail: bmontone@amherstburg.ca	Resolution #:

To: Mayor and Members of Town Council

Subject: Fire Safety Grant - Letter of Intent and Fire Safety Grant Transfer Payment Agreement

1. **RECOMMENDATION:**

It is recommended that:

1. That an over-expenditure not to exceed \$10,970 in the Fire budget centre, training and professional development expense **BE APPROVED** to be funded by \$10,000 from the Fire Safety Grant Funding and \$970 from taxation; and,
2. **By-law 2021-029** being a by-law authorizing the execution of the Agreement between the Town of Amherstburg and Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Ontario as represented by the Office of the Fire Marshall be taken as having been read three times, and finally passed and the Mayor and Clerk **BE AUTHORIZED** to sign same.

2. **BACKGROUND:**

On March 11, 2021 the Government of Ontario announced a one time \$5M grant to municipal fire services to assist in addressing challenges associated with training and virtual inspections due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The ability to train fire service members in a COVID-19 environment brought with it new restrictions and despite opportunities to train online and through other modes, not all training priorities have been met over the last year.

The grant is intended to provide fire departments with the flexibility to support two priority areas. First, this grant may be put towards ongoing training needs including registration, administrative programming, technology upgrades and associated costs for attending as

well for providing services. In addition, if code compliance and inspections continue to be challenging, addressing opportunities for an inspection program may include technology, capital costs and training to ensure that fire services are able to meet the demand of this need at the local level.

In order to receive funds, the Office of the Fire Marshal (OFM) required that an application (Letter of Intent) be submitted in a very short timeframe, which did not allow for prior notice to Council.

3. DISCUSSION:

Incident Management System and Command Safety Training (Blue Card Command):

The Letter of Intent from the Town outlining the proposed use of the funds is **attached** to this report and included the proposal to provide Blue Card Command training.

Blue Card Command is an ICS program based on NFPA 1561. This is the standard for Emergency Services Incident Management System and Command Safety which specifically addresses all of the above, and Council has approved in the past.

The COVID-19 Pandemic and the restrictions to keep staff healthy and safe has impacted the Amherstburg Fire department's (AFD) ability to provide training in normal delivery modes. This initiative will help to alleviate some of those effects, by ensuring the AFD is self-sufficient and has the ability to deliver Incident Management Training in-house.

By certifying in-house instructors and incident commanders, AFD can demonstrate compliance with the intent of MOL section 21 Firefighter Guidance Notes and best practices, ensuring due diligence and duty of care.

It will allow AFD in the future to be self-sufficient, to train on its own time schedule without the additional costs of outside instructors nor travel and accommodations costs.

This program is updated regularly and utilizes the newest science based information on modern fire behaviour and threats to fire fighter safety, and includes a fully supported record management system and ongoing curriculum for required training and ongoing continuing education.

All Blue Card Instructors are also invited to the Blue Card quarterly Instructors CE, FDIC Instructor dinner and Blue Card symposiums which are currently virtual events.

Other Officer Training:

The AFD recognizing the fiscal limitations during the 2021 Budget deliberations limited our pursuit of Officer training to Incident Command for 2021. With this timely grant from the Provincial Government to assist with offsetting the costs for Incident Command training, it is considered advisable to apply the one-time funds approved in the 2021 Budget to this ISO program as an important next step.

The AFD has promoted several Officers over the past 18 months and does anticipate a few more soon due to retirements. The role of Incident Safety Officer is best fulfilled by a qualified Officer. One of an Incident Safety officer's (ISO) most important duties at an emergency scene is forecasting unsafe acts, conditions and behaviors, before they happen.

The FDSOA program sponsored by the Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ), and individuals meeting the duties and requirements of a company Officer or ISO can apply and test for certification. Applicants once completed shall meet the requirements of NFPA 1021 Standard for Fire Officer Chapter 4 Section 4.1 and the job performance requirements (JPRs) defined in NFPA 1521-2015 Standard for Fire Department Safety Officer Chapter 5 Section 5.1.1.

The ISO is a senior member of the "Command Team". This person works directly under and with the Incident Commander (IC) to help manage the risks that AFD members take at emergencies.

Risk management is the on-going evaluation determining if the risks that AFD members take are worth the benefits that are gained (sometimes called risk versus benefit analysis).

The simplest way to express the risk management process is by using three statements of risk analysis. First, "we will risk a lot to save a lot"; this usually looks like saving lives. Next, "we will risk a little to save a little", generally applied to property concerns. Finally, "we will take no risk for what is already lost". Sometimes the opportunity to help has passed before we can arrive on location. The risk management plan must be carried out using standard operating procedures, proper training techniques and using the incident management system.

In simple terms, the IC and the ISO command team is a system of checks and balances designed to keep AFD members safe.

The ISO becomes another set of eyes and ears for the IC. The ISO pays close attention to many concerns and activities at an emergency. The ISO is checking for unsafe acts, unsafe conditions and unsafe behaviors that could cause injury or death to the operating crews. By being trained, educated and experienced in all phases of the operations being performed, the ISO can be an effective observer. This may sound simple, but the truth is that it is a formidable task.

The person that takes on the role of ISO must be a very capable person. Keep in mind, some incidents, because of size or complexity will require more than one ISO. Most departments establishes an ISO and then provides him/her with the required number of assistant ISO's that are necessary to properly handle the job. A hazardous materials alarm or a train derailment with injuries would be good examples when more than one ISO is needed.

4. RISK ANALYSIS:

Should Council not wish to proceed with the recommendation to enter into an agreement the municipality would be foregoing a grant funding opportunity. Should the

recommended officer training programs not be completed, the potential risk in the workplace and to employees may be greater.

5. **FINANCIAL MATTERS:**

On March 29, 2021, the Office of the Fire Marshal and Emergency Management notified the Town that it will be provided a total of \$10,000 in funding to support increased training opportunities (see attached letter and draft funding agreement).

Under the grant funding proposal, the AFD will be certifying (all figures are before HST):

1 - New In-House TtT Instructor = \$6,000

4 - Newly appointed Officers at \$385 US\$ each (\$520 CAN each) = \$2,080

1 – Annual Subscription for current TtT instructor = \$2,700⁽¹⁾

Total \$10,780

Note 1: The Town currently maintains an annual subscription for one TtT instructor and will continue to do so after 2021; the second annual subscription will not be required beyond 2021.

The 2021 Budget includes the training base budget of 26,800 and a one-time cost of \$10,000 with a total budget allocation of \$36,800.

Fire Budget Centre - Training and Professional Development expense	Budget	Actual (incl. net HST)	Variance (over)/under
Cost: ⁽¹⁾			
One Time operating:			
Blue Card Training	\$10,000	\$ 10,970	(\$ 970)
Officer Training	-	10,000	(10,000)
Total Project Cost	\$10,000	\$20,970	(\$10,970)
Funding:			
Taxation	\$10,000	\$10,970	\$ (970)
Ontario Grant Funding (OFM)	-	\$10,000	(\$10,000)
Total Project Funding	\$10,000	\$20,970	(\$10,970)

Note 1: The cost for staff time to participate in training will be accommodated within the approved 2021 Budget, as the pandemic has impacted the AFD's ability to undertake the level of training originally anticipated for the year.

6. **CONSULTATIONS:**

OFM Staff

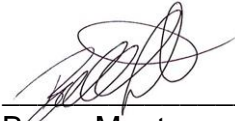
Treasurer – Justin Rousseau

Director of Corporate Services – Cheryl Horrobin

Municipal Clerk - Paula Parker

7. CONCLUSION:

The recommendations in this report would ensure the Municipality receives the allocated Grant Revenue and the AFD would also be able to achieve its Officer training goals in 2021, rather than waiting to a future budget year.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bruce Montone', is positioned above a horizontal line.

Bruce Montone
Fire Chief/CEMC

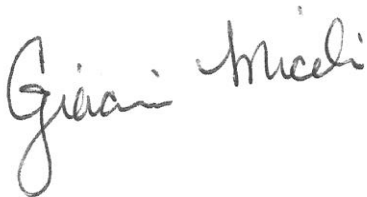
Report Approval Details

Document Title:	Fire Safety Grant - Letter of Intent and Fire Safety Grant Transfer Payment Agreement.docx
Attachments:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Transfer Payment Agreement - Amherstburg.docx- Amherstburg-Letter of Intent -Fire Safety Grant.pdf- Amherstburg_Fire_Safety_Grant_Application_Form (003).pdf
Final Approval Date:	Apr 6, 2021

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:



Cheryl Horrobin



John Miceli



Paula Parker