CITY OF IQALUIT
EMERGENCY SERVICES MASTER PLAN
COUNCIL WORKSHOP
AUGUST 24, 2022 at 6:00 p.m.
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS

PRESENT FROM COUNCIL
Mayor Kenny Bell, Chair
Deputy Mayor Solomon Awa
Councillor Ookalik Curley
Councillor Simon Nattaq
Councillor Kimberly Smith
Councillor Romeyn Stevenson

ABSENT
Councillor Paul Quassa
Councillor Kyle Sheppard

PRESENT FROM ADMINISTRATION
Amy Elgersma, Chief Administrative Officer
Katrina Sarmiento, Executive Assistant/Acting City Clerk
Geoffrey Byrne, Economic Development Officer/Acting Communications and Customer Service Manager
Steve McGean, Acting Fire Chief
Solomon Tagak, Acting Assistant Fire Chief

PRESENT FROM EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT GROUP
Lyle Quan, Vice President
Rick Monkman, Fire Services Consultant – via visual conference

Mayor Bell called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and welcomed the representatives from Emergency Management Group.

Lyle Quan, Vice President, Emergency Management Group, introduced Rick Monkman, Risk Assessment Internal Specialist.

Mr. Quan presented an overview of the Iqaluit Emergency Services Master Plan and Risk Assessment. The following are the highlights:

- Fire station review was not an engineering review, but a general overview from a fire perspective of how the fire station is meeting the needs of the fire service
- Recommendations are areas for improvement and majority are operational, which can be addressed by the Fire Chief without any incurred costs, however, some recommendations will incur costs
- Benefits of Master Plan
    - Guide to look at the future

  - Clearer vision of future needs based on population, industrial and residential growth
  - Provides options and budgetary estimates for implementation
  - Prioritize each project with suggested timelines
  - Ability to communicate the future goals to the community
- General Scope of Work includes governance, staffing, facilities, equipment, training, public education and recommendations
- Process is a community driven plan, which includes information from both staff and community
- Standards – based on various national, territorial and municipal standards and regulations
- Municipal and community responsibilities that must be adhered to under a specific act or legislation
- Fire protection model includes:
  - Fire safety education
  - Code enforcement through inspections
  - Emergency response capabilities
  - Emergency management
- Depending on the structure, getting to the scene in eight minutes or less is critical to contain the fire to the origin
- Based on 2020 call type data, the fire service provides a lot of Emergency Medical Services (EMS) calls
- Fire station review was a visual walk-through to determine if the needs of the department, staff and equipment storage was met
  - Firefighting equipment is stored on the apparatus floor, which is exposed to diesel exhaust fumes
    - Station has a diesel exhaust system, but this could fail and contaminate the firefighting equipment
    - Firefighting equipment should be stored in its own room away from the apparatus floor
  - Apparatus floor is cramped with vehicles
    - Rubber is placed on the back wall so the fire truck does not cause damage to the cement wall
  - Limited space throughout the fire station
  - Some of the vehicles have exceeded the life span
- General fire station concerns
  - Storage of firefighting gear, equipment and department records
    - Many records are on paper, which could be lost if there was a problem at the station
  - Insufficient room for apparatus
  - Lack of office, workspaces, proper shower and decontamination facilities
  - Station does not meet accessibility requirements
- Location of fire station and response zone
  - New fire station location would have a larger response zone
  - Possibility of a substation in Apex – this could be a volunteer station

- Hazard Risk and Vulnerability Analysis (HRVA)
  - Avoid the risk - through public education
  - Mitigate the risk – deal with fire or emergency
  - Accept the risk – motor vehicle accident
  - Transfer the risk – Iqaluit has Search and Rescue and Coast Guard for water rescue that can be utilized
- HRVA recommendations
  - Safety and education throughout the community – water safety and rescue operations
  - Lack of fire protection equipment at the fuel tank farm – if equipment is not available, determine what needs to be done to reduce the risk
  - More public awareness for fire safety education
  - Fire safety education at campgrounds – include fire safety, what to do in inclement weather, what to do if lost
  - Assume all fire prevention and/or public education responsibilities in the community
  - Review of technical rescue abilities and available resources
  - Inspection of illegal second unit in residences – educate what is needed in the event of a fire
  - Staffing – only three on duty at any given time
  - Fire station does not meet the needs of emergency services

Mr. Quan reviewed the Emergency Services Master Plan recommendations as follows:

- Governance and Planning
  - By-law needs to be updated
    - Present at the beginning of Council term to provide awareness of expectations
  - High turnover of staff – options for retention
  - Complete Fire Underwriters Survey to assess functions of the department – engineering review includes water availability and pumping capacity
- Fire Prevention and Public Education
  - Form partnership with other community groups to promote fire safety education
  - There is no full-time Fire Prevention Officer – public education and fire prevention is very important and the focus of the position
    - Fire Marshal does fire prevention inspections
  - Work with developers to make home sprinkler systems a priority for fire prevention
  - Enhance inspection program
    - Officers should be trained and certified to National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) Fire Inspector and NFPA Fire and Life Safety Educator
- Fire Station and Response
  - New fire station is needed to meet growing needs
    - All vehicles and equipment should be housed in one facility

        - A substation to house one truck and firefighting equipment will increase response time and meet the needs of the area in Apex
            - Use volunteers
    - Records Management System for response data
    - Utilize full-time and volunteer firefighters
- Staff
    - Increase the number of staff per shift
    - Succession planning will promote retention
    - Promote recruitment and retention for volunteers
        - Consider stipend or benefit
    - Review staffing goals and expectations for all divisions
        - Fire suppression/ambulance
        - Communications/dispatching
        - Training
        - Fire prevention
        - Administration
- Training Program
    - Define training goals and expectations based on the services being offered
        - Ensure the training and the goals are met
    - Conduct a needs assessment to identify if additional training props are required to ensure firefighters meet training requirements
        - Live fire training to practice skills
- Emergency Operations
    - Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) is located at City Hall with no emergency power capability
    - Location of second EOC is second floor of the fire station
        - This should be located in a different facility further away that has backup power
    - Emergency Plan needs to be exercised
        - Tabletop exercise annually
        - Full exercise every five years based on a mock scenario
- Communications and Dispatch Office
    - Establish a backup communications centre
    - Purchase and install a computerized records management system for retention of dispatch and response information
- Budget and Finance
    - Ensure funding is in place for:
        - Vehicle replacement
            - Front line trucks should be replaced every 15 years
            - Can be utilized as a backup truck for an additional five years
        - Fire station upkeep and replacement
        - Other equipment
            - Bunker gear is recommended to be replaced every 10 years

- Overall assessment
  - Emergency Services is endeavouring to meet the needs of the community based on present staffing, station location and equipment
  - Incorporating the recommendations will help meet future goals and expectations for a growing community
  - There is a dedicated group of firefighters that care and serve the community
- Next Steps
  - Review recommendations and create a plan to move forward
  - Document the implementation of recommendations
  - Track the level of improvements based on response time, staffing and fire prevention education

Amy Elgersma, Chief Administrative Officer, thanked Mr. Quan and the team for developing the Emergency Services Master Plan. She also thanked Steve McGean, Acting Fire Chief, and Solomon Tagak, Acting Assistant Fire Chief, for all their work in the process.

The following are questions and/or comments made by councillors, which were answered by Mr. Quan:

- What was considered to determine the location of the new fire station?
  - There are national standards for career fire departments, which recommend a four-minute travel time.
  - GPS equipment was used to determine the greatest coverage area in the community based on a four-minute travel time.
  - The substation was based on the coverage area in Apex.
- A substation in Apex would be very beneficial, especially during winter blizzards.
- Expressed concern that some public housing units only have one exit door and the heat creates moisture that freezes and makes it hard to open. Having an alternate exit will help if there is an emergency.
- Counselling is also an important part of emergency services.
- Due to 90 percent of the calls being medical, has there been any consideration to separating fire and ambulance with dedicated Emergency Medical Technicians (EMT) staff?
  - It is worthwhile to separate the two due to the skill level for both emergency services being unique.
  - Based on staffing and resources in Iqaluit, the process of having cross-trained staff is the most beneficial at this time.
- Is the current fire equipment adequate?
  - The recent addition of the aerial truck was a good investment.
  - In general, the fire department is well equipped.
  - The age of the equipment is reaching the end of the useful life and plans should be made to replace some of the equipment.
- What is the plan for prioritizing and implementing the recommendations?

  - Ms. Elgersma explained that Council will discuss the recommendations and implementation.
  - Mayor Bell indicated that an Emergency Services Centre is needed and will cost a considerable amount of money that will have to be borrowed.
  - Ms. Elgersma noted that part of the 2022 Capital Spending Plan included funds to design a new Emergency Services Centre to include fire, ambulance, dispatch and EOC. She noted that work is underway and part of the project includes financial modelling to determine how to pay for the new facility.
- When calling dispatch, will there be someone who can speak and understand Inuktitut?
  - Steve McGean, Acting Fire Chief, advised that there is a job posting for dispatchers who can communicate in Inuktitut.
- Is there any language service that can be accessed by dispatchers?
  - Mr. McGean explained that dispatch has the option to use a language service to bridge the gap in communication. He noted that more that 60 percent of the staff took part in the Inuktitut language classes, which included three dispatchers.
- Status of 911 system?
  - Mayor Bell advised that there are discussions with the Government of Nunavut and RCMP regarding the 911 system. He felt that locating the 911 Communication Centre at the new Emergency Services Centre would be the best location. He hoped that there would be funding available for the 911 Communication Centre.

Mr. Quan thanked Council for the opportunity to develop and present the Emergency Services Master Plan.

Mayor Bell thanked Mr. Quan and Mr. Monkman for the presentation.

There being no further questions, Mayor Bell adjourned the meeting at 7:13 p.m.

Solomon Awa

Deputy Kenny Bell
Mayor

A/CITY CLERK

Tammy Ernst-Doiron
City Clerk

Approved by City Council on the 13th day of September 2022.