



Staff Report

Report Title: Ontario Fire College Closure

Prepared By: Chris Cleave, Fire Chief/CEMC

Department: Fire & Emergency Services

Date: Feb. 1, 2021

Report Number: FIRE-2021-02-4

File Number: C-11-FIR21

Attachments:

Recommendation:

That the Township of Huron-Kinloss Committee of the Whole hereby receives for information Report Number FIRE2021-02-4 prepared by Chris Cleave, Fire Chief/CEMC

Background:

On January 13, 2021 The Office of the Fire Marshal and Emergency Management announced that The Ontario Fire College in Gravenhurst will officially close its doors on March 31, 2021 after more than 70 years in operation

A statement by Fire Marshal Jon Pegg has indicated the reason for this is due to the college not meeting the growing need for fire service training across the province.

The intent of the province is to move towards a system of Regional Training Centres. In 2012, the OFC started piloting alternative training delivery models to increase capacity. Training began at the regional level through Regional Training Centres (RTCs), through online course availability and through blended options and learning contracts which could be delivered at the local level. This modernized approach has increased capacity for training and provides a more affordable, attainable and accessible training programs to fire departments.

Since moving to a regionalized model, the Office of the Fire Marshal (OFM) has worked with partners to increase the number of RTCs across the province. With 20 operational as of current, training is much easier to obtain by not having to travel to Gravenhurst.

Discussion:

The announced closure of the Fire College in Gravenhurst will not have any negative impacts on Firefighter Training in the Township of Huron-Kinloss.

In 2015 the Council of the Corporation of Huron-Kinloss recognized the need for and has unanimously and unequivocally supported the funding and delivery of fire training and NFPA certification at the local level both in house and through the use of third party service providers and subject matter experts.

The closure of the Ontario College only strengthens the Townships training programs development and operation of a local Fire Training Facility and greatly help's justify the investments made in our facility and training programs to date.

The use of a Regional Training Centre or the delivery of Fire Service Training locally in house will not likely have any significant financial impacts for the Township over and above what has already been invested and what is budgeted for through the annual operating budget estimates as approved by council.

An opportunity to partner with the Municipality of Brockton may present itself and is currently in discussion at the Fire Chiefs level. This opportunity would be to support the operation an OFM approved Regional Training Centre that is currently being developed by the Municipality of Brockton.

Further details and reports will be brought forward to council for consideration as information becomes available and before entering into any agreement to support such operations.

Financial Impacts:

Financial impacts will be associated with the annual operating budget estimates as approved by Council.

Strategic Alignment / Link:

We are an accessible community that offers opportunities for everyone by having services and amenities nearby.

Respectfully Submitted By:

Chris Cleave, Fire Chief/CEMC

Approved By:

Mary Rose Walden, Chief Administrative Officer