



To: Mayor Glover and Members of Council
From: Tarmo Uukkivi, Director of Operations and Protective Services
Date: 11 Jul 2023
Subject: Fire Services Governance - Committee Structure Options

Report Highlights

- Report seeking Council direction for the composition and structure of the Fire Services Governance Committee - a new committee for both the Town of Huntsville and Township of Lake of Bays.

Recommendation

WHEREAS the Council of the Corporation of the Township of Lake of Bays receives the staff report “Fire Services Governance - Committee Structure Options”, dated July 11, 2023.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Council accepts the staff recommended committee structure for the Fire Services Governance Committee of the Councils of the Town of Huntsville and Township of Lake of Bays as outlined in the report.

AND FURTHER THAT the initial Committee be comprised of the following members:

1. Two (2) members of the Township of Lake of Bays Council (Mayor Glover and Councillor Brooks)
2. Two (2) members of the Town of Huntsville Council (Mayor and Deputy Mayor)
3. Staff included in an advisory capacity reporting to the Committee shall initially include:
 - Township of Lake of Bays Chief Administrative Officer
 - Town of Huntsville Chief Administrative Officer
 - Town of Huntsville Director of Operations and Protective Services
 - Huntsville-Lake of Bays Fire Chief
 - Huntsville-Lake of Bays Deputy Fire Chief

AND FURTHER THAT the Huntsville -Lake of Bays Fire Services Governance Committee Terms of Reference attached as Schedule "A" be approved.

Origin

The Fire Services Master Plan was received as a reference document by both the Council of the Town of Huntsville and the Council of the Township of Lake of Bays. The Master Plan document has many recommendations that both Councils may wish to consider for implementation within each municipality.

The current Huntsville-Lake of Bays Fire Services operate with one administration overseeing two different operations. There is an opportunity for greater efficiency of service delivery by blending the operations of both municipal, front-line services into one fire service, matching the single administration overseeing both fire suppression operations. This was, in fact, one of the recommendations made in the Master Plan reference document.

A new governance and oversight committee, with representation from both Huntsville and Lake of Bays, is needed to effectively manage the needs and expectations of both municipalities in terms of fire services delivery.

Analysis

Efficiency of Operations

Operating efficiencies can be identified by further blending Huntsville and Lake of Bays Fire suppression operations into one, unified service to match the already unified administrative structure. The unified administrative structure includes Fire Services administrative leadership from the Chief and Deputy Chief, unified administrative support, unified fire prevention, public education, and enforcement activities, together with unified fleet and facilities management.

Further efficiencies may be realized with the unification of all fire services resources. A single fire service would require no mutual aid or automatic aid agreements and a fire services response and deployment plan could be developed for all stations within both municipalities to optimize responses in both municipalities, i.e., elimination of municipal boundaries for responses.

The unified service would use a unified set of equipment. In using the same equipment across both municipal operations, further cost savings are possible as there would be higher volume purchases, taking advantage of potential bulk purchasing opportunities. Training would also be more optimal as there are further opportunities to train as one fire service all using the same equipment. There are also greater opportunities for optimizing the life of capital assets, such as fire trucks, by rotating vehicles across higher and lower volume stations regularly.

Service Level

A single service level needs to be set for both municipalities to realize many opportunities for greater efficiency. Setting a single service level for both municipalities could be inefficient if staff needed to move back and forth between both municipal Councils on many occasions to try to align Council priorities.

Having a governance and oversight committee with key representatives from both municipalities, including elected Councillors as well as staff, to develop recommendations to both Councils offers a solution to the challenge of staff needing to go back and forth between Councils.

Once the Terms of Reference for the governance and oversight committee is adopted by both Councils, the committee's first priority would be to establish a single service level for the blended fire service. This level of service would be a recommendation of the governance and oversight committee to both municipal councils.

The existing Fire Services operations would then be evaluated against the newly established level of service. This review would allow the governance and oversight committee the opportunity to ensure that the existing services meet both Council's expectations regarding fire services delivery. The Treasurers from both Huntsville and Lake of Bays will also be resources to the Committee to provide input into the financial, asset management, risk management and insurance aspects of any agreements being proposed.

Once aligned with the established service level, the committee's work focus would be to evaluate each of the recommendations in the Fire Master Plan reference document to decide whether each recommendation aligns strategically with the established service level and whether to accept and implement the recommendation, including how.

Regular and Detailed Public Reporting on Fire Services Activities

Another important function of the fire services governance and oversight committee would be to guide the development of regular and routine reporting on important aspects of fire services delivery. The purpose of this reporting is to increase transparency and accountability and to provide Councils and the public with greater insight into fire services delivery.

To provide a detailed accounting of important aspects of fire services delivery at each of both the Councils' meetings, would be challenging, time consuming, and, ultimately, inefficient for staff. Staff can optimize their time, while providing detailed information, if they provide their detailed report to one committee. The elected Councillors would then identify what is important to highlight at their respective municipalities and the summary of the reporting would be publicly available through both the committee meeting agendas and minutes, as well as being part of regular Council agendas.

Committee Structure

Having the optimal committee structure is essential to making this work a success. Too many people would complicate discussion and slow the process down significantly. Too few people risks not having fair and balanced representation and discussions. Having a balance of administrative staff as well as fire service staff is essential to informing the discussion both strategically and technically.

Staff are recommending a committee of nine (9) members to start. The committee would have four (4) Councillor representatives - two from each municipality - and five (5) staff members.

Financial Implications

There are no capital financial implications associated with the implementation of this committee and there would be no immediate operational financial impacts.

Minor expenses could occur for mileage to meetings.

Alternatives

Option #1: (Recommended) Committee accept the staff recommended initial committee structure for the Fire Services Governance Committee of the Councils of the Town of Huntsville and Township of Lake of Bays to have a committee comprised of the following:

- Two (2) Council representatives from the Town of Huntsville (Mayor and Deputy Mayor).
- Two (2) Council representatives from the Township of Lake of Bays.
- The Chief Administrative Officer from Huntsville.
- The Chief Administrative Officer from Lake of Bays.
- The Director of Operations and Protective Services from the Town of Huntsville.
- The Huntsville-Lake of Bays Fire Services Chief and Deputy Chief.

And approve the Terms of Reference as attached.

Option #2: (Not Recommended) Committee accept the staff recommended initial committee structure for the Fire Services Governance Committee of the Councils of the Town of Huntsville and Township of Lake of Bays to have a committee comprised of the following:

- Three (3) residents - public members - not associated with the Fire Service - from the Town of Huntsville.
- Three (3) residents - public members - not associated with the Fire Service - from the Township of Lake of Bays.
- Two (2) Council representatives from the Town of Huntsville (Mayor and Deputy Mayor).
- Two (2) Council representatives from the Township of Lake of Bays.
- The Chief Administrative Officer from Huntsville.
- The Chief Administrative Officer from Lake of Bays.
- The Director of Operations and Protective Services from the Town of Huntsville.
- The Huntsville-Lake of Bays Fire Services Chief and Deputy Chief.

And approve the Terms of Reference as attached.

Option #3: (Not Recommended) Committee accept the staff recommended initial committee structure for the Fire Services Governance Committee of the Councils of the Town of Huntsville and Township of Lake of Bays to have a committee comprised of the following:

- Three (3) Council representatives from the Town of Huntsville (Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Councillor).

- Three (3) Council representatives from the Township of Lake of Bays.
- The Chief Administrative Officer from Huntsville.
- The Chief Administrative Officer from Lake of Bays.
- The Director of Operations and Protective Services from the Town of Huntsville.

And approve the Terms of Reference as attached.

Option #4: (Not Recommended) Council not approve the establishment of a Fire Services Governance Committee

Approved by:

Bryan Brown, Chief Administrative Officer

Approved - 11 Jun 2023

Attachments:

[Fire Services Governance Committee Terms of Reference - Schedule A](#)

Huntsville-Lake of Bays Fire Services Governance Committee

Terms of Reference

Approval Date: XXXXXX, 2023 (Huntsville) XXXXXXXX 2023 (Lake of Bays)
 Resolution No.: XX-XX (GCXX-XX) – Huntsville, XX-XX – Lake of Bays

Vision

To review, enhance, promote, and build upon existing fire protection and prevention programs by creating one, blended fire service, providing equitable access to fire services to all that live, work, and play in Huntsville and Lake of Bays.

Authority

The Huntsville-Lake of Bays Fire Services Governance Committee (FSGC) is a Joint Advisory Committee of the Councils of the Township of Lake of Bays and the Town of Huntsville and does not have any delegated authority. Voting Members shall abide by the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act and shall disclose any pecuniary interest and absent themselves from any meeting for the duration of the discussion and voting (if any) with respect to that matter.

Roles and Responsibilities

The purpose of the Committee is to provide governance and oversight of the blended Huntsville-Lake of Bays Fire Service including providing advice and making recommendations to both the Councils of the Township of Lake of Bays and the Town of Huntsville relating to fire services provision in each municipality.

Fire Services include fire suppression, approved rescue activities, fire prevention, and public education as defined by the *Fire Protection and Prevention Act, 1997, S.O. 1997, c.4*, the *Municipal Act, 2001, S.O. 2001, c.25*, and by municipal by-laws, including the defined service level for the Huntsville-Lake of Bays Fire Service.

Scope of Activities

The following represent the general activities of the Committee:

- Reviewing, updating, and establishing the fire protection and prevention agreement between the Township of Lake of Bays and the Town of Huntsville including governance and cost sharing agreements.
- Establishing the service level to be delivered by the blended Huntsville-Lake of Bays Fire Service.
- Establish the annual fire service operating budget for submission to each municipality's budget process.
- Reviewing the recommendations made in the Fire Services Master Plan and making recommendations for Councils to consider implementing recommendations in accordance with the established service level.

- Taking recommendations from joint Huntsville-Lake of Bays fire services hiring committees to make a final recommendation to both Councils for hiring Fire Chief and Deputy Fire Chief required through the appointing by-laws of both municipalities.

Composition

The Committee shall be comprised of two (2) Council representatives from each municipality, as appointed by their respective Council. All members will have the full authority to debate and vote.

The following municipal staff will attend the Committee in an advisory capacity to the members:

- Chief Administrative Officer, Town of Huntsville
- Chief Administrative Officer, Township of Lake of Bays
- Director of Operations and Protective Services, Town of Huntsville
- Fire Chief, Huntsville-Lake of Bays Fire Services
- Deputy Fire Chief, Huntsville-Lake of Bays Fire Services

Any compensation for mileage to be paid to voting members shall be as outlined in each municipality’s policies.

The Chair and Vice Chair positions shall be as follows for the 2022-2026 Term of Council:

	2023 – End of September 2024	October 2024 – End of September 2025	October 2025 – End of September 2026
Chair	Lake of Bays	Huntsville	Lake of Bays
Vice-Chair	Huntsville	Lake of Bays	Huntsville

The Vice-Chair shall fulfill the duties of the Chair whenever the Chair is absent or unable to attend a Committee meeting.

Term

Unless otherwise stated by resolution of both municipal Councils, the Committee shall begin after both Inaugural Council Meetings are held, and upon appointment of members by each municipality, and will expire at the end of September in the year of the municipal election.

Committee’s Terms of Reference shall be reviewed by each Council and adopted at the same time as the appointment of members.

Financial and Human Resources

Administration and resources will be a shared responsibility of the municipalities and staff will make all reasonable effort to share in the provision of this support balancing workloads and needs of both municipal Councils.

Any costs that may be necessary to reasonably conduct the business of the Committee will be the shared responsibility of both the Town of Huntsville and the Township of Lake of Bays.

In consultation with the Township of Lake of Bays Director of Finance/Treasurer, the Town of Huntsville Director of Financial Services/Treasurer will be responsible for creating the annual Huntsville-Lake of Bays Draft Operating Budget for Committee's discussion and recommendation.

Reporting

The Fire Chief or designate shall provide updates, and present Committee recommendations and advice for the consideration of each municipal Council as required.

Both Councils must pass resolutions accepting recommendations for a Committee recommendation to be implemented by the Fire Service.

The Fire Chief shall prepare an annual report in October, signed by all voting members, annually to both municipal Councils providing an overview of the progress of the work of the Committee for the year.

Committee Resources & Support

Staff Committee Lead	Fire Chief, Huntsville-Lake of Bays Fire Services
Committee Secretary	Huntsville-Lake of Bays Fire Services Administrative Assistant

The Huntsville-Lake of Bays Fire Services Administrative Assistant shall serve as the Secretary to the Committee and shall be present at all meetings. The Secretary to the Committee shall be responsible for maintaining proper custody of all records, draft minutes, agreements and any other documents associated with the Committee. Minutes shall be prepared by the Secretary to the Committee and provided to each Clerk for their respective Councils for adoption.

Meeting agendas shall be prepared by the Secretary to the Committee in consultation with the Chair, Fire Chief or their designate.

Municipal staff and other resources may from time to time attend as necessary to provide expertise or report on various matters.

In the absence of the Secretary of the Committee, the Township of Lake or Bays or the Town of Huntsville Clerk or designates, may provide administrative support for the meeting.

Procedures

Unless otherwise provided for herein, the Town of Huntsville Procedural By-law shall apply to the proceedings of Committee.

Meetings

Meetings will be held on a set day and time as may be determined by the Committee or at the call of the Chair.

Locations of meetings will be rotated in both municipalities, to be determined at the time of scheduling.

Notice of meetings shall be provided by circulating the agenda to each member not less than three (3) business days prior to the meeting.

All meetings will be held in-person only and will not be livestreamed. Electronic participation will not be available for either voting or non-voting Committee members.

Committee meetings shall be open to the public, subject to in-camera provisions prescribed by the Municipal Act, 2001, and public notice of meetings shall be by way of each municipality's website calendar and posting of agenda.

Quorum

Quorum shall be a majority of voting and non-voting members with the following exception:

- At least one (1) elected member appointed by each Council shall be present at all times during the meeting to forum a quorum.

Majority

All matters shall be decided by a majority vote by the voting members attending, each of whom shall have one (1) vote including the Chair.

Any decision or recommendation of the Committee shall require the following:

- a) The concurring vote of a majority of the voting members present; and,
- b) A concurring vote from at least one (1) voting member of each municipality.

A tie vote shall be considered a defeated vote.

Terms of Reference

Council may, at its discretion, change the Terms of Reference for this Committee at any time.

Policies, Plans and Studies

The following lists are not intended to be exhaustive:

- The *Municipal Act, 2001, S.O. 2001, c.25*
- The *Fire Protection and Prevention Act, 1997, S.O. 1997, c.4*
- 2016 Township of Lake of Bays Official Plan
- 2019 Town of Huntsville Official Plan
- 2022 Township of Lake of Bays and Town of Huntsville Fire Services Master Plan