



The Corporation of the Municipality of Tweed Staff Report

Date: June 27, 2023 Council Meeting
Report to: Council
Report from: Fire Chief
Department: Fire
Title: New Fire Dispatching Service

PURPOSE:

To recommend that Council support and approve the single-source procurement of Fire Dispatch Services to the Corporation of the City of St. Catharines for dispatching services for the Municipality of Tweed Fire Department.

BACKGROUND:

Radio communications are controlled by the Federal Government through the CRTC (Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunication Commission). The Commission has mandated that all Public Safety Answering Points (PSAP) be compliant to the Next Generation 9-1-1 (NG911) by no later than March 4, 2025.

Today's 9-1-1 system can only allow the public to make voice calls and teletype calls for the hearing impaired. The Current 911 system also only allows minimal data to be transferred to the Dispatcher.

The new NG911 environment that is replacing the current system will allow the public to be able to make voice, text, or video emergency calls from any communication device via Internet Protocol Based networks. The PSAP will be able to receive data from personal safety devices such as Advanced Automatic Collision Systems, Medical Alerts Systems, and sensors of various types. The new Network will support national internetworking of 9-1-1 as well as the transfer of emergency calls to other PSAP's including any data that was collected during the call. The system will also be able to issue emergency alerts to wireless devices in an area via voice or text message.

OPTIONS:

1. Approve the tender from the Corporation of the City of St. Catharines
2. Decline the tender from the Corporation of the City of St. Catharines

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

The City of Belleville has provided a letter (copy attached) indicating the cost for the year 2023 of \$29,247.00 for dispatch service. This pricing does not include any of the updated equipment and staff that would be required for Belleville to meet NG911 or the capital charges that have been added for the last few years to help out with the costs of implementing the new NG 911 System.

Based on St. Catharine's price index provided for our Department, as shown below, our cost for dispatching with them is a much better option. Also, their pricing includes the cost of upgrading and maintaining the equipment for NG911 and they are installing a new CAD system that will allow us much more flexibility with our dispatching and making it customized to suit our department's needs.

Tweed Proposed CAD Partner Allocation 15 Year (2023-2037)				
Year # (Contract)	Year	Contract Target Increase YoY - Proposed	Proposed CAD Partner Contract Amount	Per Capita (6,067 population base)
1	2023		22,861	\$ 3.7681
2	2024	4.00%	23,775	\$ 3.9188
3	2025	4.00%	24,726	\$ 4.0756
4	2026	3.50%	25,592	\$ 4.2182
5	2027	3.50%	26,488	\$ 4.3659
6	2028	3.00%	27,282	\$ 4.4968
7	2029	3.00%	28,101	\$ 4.6317
8	2030	2.50%	28,803	\$ 4.7475
9	2031	2.50%	29,523	\$ 4.8662
10	2032	2.50%	30,261	\$ 4.9879
11	2033	2.50%	31,018	\$ 5.1126
12	2034	2.50%	31,793	\$ 5.2404
13	2035	2.50%	32,588	\$ 5.3714
14	2036	2.50%	33,403	\$ 5.5057
15	2037	2.50%	34,238	\$ 5.6433
Total Tweed Year Contract (2023-2037)			\$ 430,454	

Choosing their currently offered 15-year contract can offer a host of benefits. First and foremost, a longer contract term provides stability and predictability in our financial planning. With a 15-year contract, payments will be locked in for the duration of the agreement, with no further adjustments based on population or call volume increases.

Further, with a 5-year contract it's important to recognize that the contract fees could/will be revaluated and could potentially go up in the future. This uncertainty can add an element of risk to our financial planning and may ultimately end up costing more money over time.

IMPACT:

Municipality of Tweed Fire Department staff have been investigating various dispatching options for the past 6 months with our Mutual Aid partners with several determining factors.

1. The ability to provide a better level of service to our community and firefighters.
2. Cost of providing the service.
3. Equipment cost.
4. Level of training that the communicators must meet for NG911.
5. The ability to take on our Mutual Aid Partners to allow for rapid and better record management at fire events.
6. The ability to integrate the PSAP's system into our Fire Pro RMS.

During the investigation, it was found that numerous PSAP in our area were still working on a business plan to upgrade their system to meet the requirements or were unable to take us on and our mutual aid partners. Because Municipality of Tweed Fire Department shares a radio frequency it is best practice for all five departments to move to the same dispatching service. All five Fire Departments that work on our frequency are actively looking at moving to the same dispatching service.

Belleville Fire Department announced that they will be withdrawing from the dispatching service by December 31, 2023. It makes sense that our fire department starts the changeover to a new dispatching service as soon as possible. This whole process can take up to and around 6 months to complete the changeover due to equipment that will be required to be installed to communicate with our towers, our GIS information will have to be transferred from Hastings County which means working with Centre Hastings and Tyendinaga that border us as well working with all of our Mutual Aid Partners. The Department information will need to be set up with the new service and Bell Canada requires notification to change the 911 routing information.

St. Catharine's Fire Service is the only dispatch provider that has currently provided our department with a 15-year plan for pricing and is able to take on any/all of Hastings County Fire Departments. Their Communicators already meet the requirement under the NFPA 1061 Communicator Program, and the dispatching system will integrate into our current Fire Pro system that will save time for administration staff.

St. Catharine's Fire Service will install and maintain all the equipment required to communicate with our current tower located on Oak Hills and will have other redundancies in place for backups.

The City of Quinte West has already entered into an agreement with St. Catharines to provide them with dispatching services starting as early as the end of June. Prince Edward County just awarded their tender for services as well as Centre Hastings FD and Tyendinaga Township FD.

We recommend that Council approve the single-source procurement of Fire Dispatch Services to the Corporation of the City of St. Catharines in order to expedite the transition

to a new dispatch service for interoperability purposes, efficiencies and effectiveness for the Tweed Fire Department to use the same services as those municipalities sharing the same frequency and the rest of our mutual aid partners.

RECOMMENDATION:

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Council receive the New Fire Dispatching Service Report as presented;

AND FURTHER, that Council approve the tender from the Corporation of the City of St. Catharines for dispatching services as listed in the 15-year contract proposal;

AND FURTHER, that the Mayor and CAO/Treasurer be authorized to execute an agreement with the Corporation of the City of St. Catharines based on the contract proposal.

Report Approval Details

Document Title:	New Fire Dispatching Services.docx
Attachments:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- New Dispatching Services City of Belleville Letter.docx- City of Belleville Quote.pdf- New Dispatching Services St. Catharines Agmt.docx
Final Approval Date:	Jun 22, 2023

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

No Signature - Task assigned to Derrick Little was completed by workflow administrator Karen LaVallee

Derrick Little - Jun 22, 2023 - 2:57 PM

Gloria Raybone - Jun 22, 2023 - 4:05 PM