



Dauphin
City Hall

PRESS RELEASE

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City Concerned with Sustainability of Existing Fire Services Agreement

The City of Dauphin and Rural Municipality of Dauphin entered into an agreement, dated April 20, 1992, which provides fire protection and prevention services to rural residents through the Dauphin Fire Department. This agreement sees the RM pay the wages of firefighters for calls within the RM of Dauphin, while also paying thirty-five percent of the annual operating and maintenance cost of the fire department. This percentage was derived based on the call volumes actually experienced in the two municipalities in the years preceding the agreement. The agreement also contains a complex formula for which the RM contributes an amount annually toward the replacement of fire trucks and large apparatus. This has averaged less than \$4,000 annually since the inception of the agreement.

“The overall concept of a fire protection and prevention services agreement is excellent”, said Mayor Alex Paul, “but given the agreement’s age and the rapidly increasing cost of providing quality fire fighting equipment for the local fire fighters it’s time to enter into a new, more modern arrangement”.

To this end, Mayor & Council of the City of Dauphin provided rural Council notice under the terms contained in the 1992 agreement so as to quickly facilitate a new, more sustainable municipal fire services agreement or a fee-for-service arrangement for fire protection service within the RM of Dauphin.

“The City really wants to continue the collaborative partnership in fire protection that has been working so well since 1992”, continue Mayor Paul, “but the amount contributed by the RM for replacement of fire trucks is simply unsustainable to the local taxpayer. I do, however, want to assure rural residents that they will not be without fire protection while this new arrangement is finalized, as any costs incurred during this time will be covered by a fee-for-service arrangement”.

Since the signing of the 1992 agreement, the cost of replacing fire trucks has grown exponentially to the point where it now costs in excess of \$325,000 to purchase a quality first-responding fire truck. The percentage of fire call hours spent in each municipality, however, has remained almost identical since the 1992 agreement was signed, at sixty-five percent (65%) in the City and thirty-five percent (35%) in the RM.

“City Council is pretty sure the RM Council recognizes the need to increase the amount of funding for the replacement of fire trucks”, commented Mayor Paul, “but the issue becomes whether it will be in a new municipal fire services agreement, or by way of a fee-for-service arrangement. The bottom line is, however, that more money is needed to ensure the Dauphin Fire Department can continue to provide quality fire service to both municipalities’ residents”.

The Office of the Fire Commissioner for the Province of Manitoba has developed a template for municipal fire service agreements that can be tailored to local situations, such as the one in Dauphin. This will be used as the basis for a new fire service agreement between the municipalities.