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Staff Report FIRE2020-017

Title of Report: FIRE2020-017- Increase Cost of Dispatch
Department: Fire
Council Date: November 4, 2020

Recommendation:

Be it resolved that Council receive Staff Report FIRE2020-017 for information; and
That Council approve staff to sign the new fire dispatch agreement with the Owen Sound Police Service.

Background:

Currently Owen Sound Police Service provides fire dispatch for the majority of Grey and Bruce County fire services. Owen Sound Police Services is a Primary PSAP (Primary Public Access/Answering Point). This means any 911 call made in Grey County is answered by Owen Sound Police Services and sent to the appropriate dispatch agency.

Due to the old 911 system not being compatible with current technology the CRTC has requested all telephone companies to upgrade their systems to have IP based capabilities. This is referred to as next generation 911 (NG9-1-1). Dispatch agencies must upgrade their equipment as well to be compatible with the new system. NG 9-1-1 will give callers the abilities to communicate to dispatch agencies through text message, photos, videos and increase the ability for dispatch call centres to communicate with the visual and hearing impaired.

Staff Comments:

Due to dispatch agencies having to upgrade their systems to be compatible with NG 9-1-1 they have increased the cost for service to their customers. All dispatch agencies will be adding additional operating costs to their users to cover the capital cost of upgrading to the new system.

The cost to switch to a secondary PSAP agency will have no cost savings as the proper equipment would need to be installed at the fire hall before being able to receive page outs. The second downfall to switching to a secondary PSAP agency such as Tillsonburgh Fire Dispatch is being a secondary PSAP fire department page outs would be on average 30 seconds delayed. The reason for this is the Primary PSAP would answer the call take the callers information then send it downstream to the Secondary PSAP who would have to take the same information again then dispatch the proper fire department.

Financial Implications

The financial impact of signing the new dispatch agreement will be an increase of about \$5,000.00 to our dispatching services in the Fire operating budget starting in 2021.

Communications & Community Action Plan Impact:

This report has been written and presented to Council to communicate accurate information to the public.

Concluding Comments:

That Council receive staff report FIRE2020-017 as information and approve staff to sign the new fire dispatch agreement with Owen Sound Police.

Respectfully Submitted,

Dept. Head: *Original Signed By*
Derek Malynyk, Fire Chief Official

CAO Approval: *Original Signed By*
Dave Milliner, CAO

Attachment 1 – NG911 Information

Attachment 2 – Dispatch Agreement with Owen Sound Police