

Staff Report to Council

Fire & Rescue Services

FILE: 14-7200-01/21

REPORT DATE: November 24, 2021 **MEETING DATE:** November 30, 2021
TO: Mayor and Council
FROM: Mike Larsson, Director of Fire Services
SUBJECT: Flood Water Rescue Equipment Funding Request

CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER REVIEW/APPROVAL:



RECOMMENDATION(S):

THAT Council:

- A. Approve a one time budget of \$45,000, funded by the Future Capital Reserve, for the purchase of flood water rescue equipment and related training, including the purchase of one (1) inflatable rescue boat and personal protective equipment, for use by Fire & Rescue Services to perform citizen rescues during major flooding events; OR
- B. Other.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to secure additional funding for equipment and training opportunities for Pitt Meadows Fire and Rescue Services in order to deliver urgent support to the community in the event of severe flooding as experienced November 13 – 15, 2021.

☐ Information Report ☒ Decision Report ☐ Direction Report

DISCUSSION

Background:

This report identifies areas for improvement and recommended actions following the November 13 – 15, 2021 Province-wide flooding event resulting from the atmospheric river

conditions that occurred in the region. In addition, there are two further atmospheric river events forecasted for the region in the coming week. “Experts have warned that extreme weather events like the ones B.C. has experienced this year are likely to become more common – and more destructive – as global temperatures rise as a result of human-caused climate change.”¹¹

The landscape of Pitt Meadows has created many areas of the City which, in the event of a major flooding event, would become inaccessible by traditional fire department apparatus. This would potentially leave many residents stranded with no way for fire department crews to effect a rescue of these individuals.

It is evident, therefore, that additional resources are required in order to prepare for future flooding events and avoid a gap in service which would otherwise result. The procurement of an inflatable rescue boat and drysuits would permit a safe rescue of isolated residents and allow them to be moved to dry land. Demand on this type of equipment is high and would expect procurement and training to be completed in Q1 of 2022.

Relevant Policy, Bylaw or Legislation:

N/A

Analysis:

The department currently does not own a boat of any kind, nor any suitable drysuits for use in flooding events. The hip waders that are currently in use for water rescue would not be suitable for a major flooding event due to their propensity to fill with water. An inflatable rescue boat can be transported and then inflated within a few minutes using an air pack cylinder.

COUNCIL STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT

- ☐ Principled Governance ☐ Balanced Economic Prosperity ☐ Corporate Excellence
☒ Community Spirit & Wellbeing ☐ Transportation & Infrastructure Initiatives

¹¹ British Columbia. 2021. *'Parade of storms' heading for B.C., including 2 more atmospheric rivers: Environment Canada*. [online] Available at: <<https://bc.ctvnews.ca/parade-of-storms-heading-for-b-c-including-2-more-atmospheric-rivers-environment-canada-1.5675977>> [Accessed 24 November 2021].

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- ☐ None ☐ Budget Previously Approved ☐ Referral to Business Planning
☒ Other

A one-time capital cost of \$45,000, funded by the Future Capital Reserve, would allow for the purchase of personal protective equipment, one (1) inflatable rescue boat, and training. It is expected that the personal protective equipment would require replacement after approximately six (6) years while the boat would have a lifespan of about 10 years.

Going forward, annual provisions will be set aside in the City's Equipment Replacement Reserve to save for the eventual replacement of the equipment at the end of their useful lives.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

- ☒ Inform ☐ Consult ☐ Involve ☐ Collaborate ☐ Empower

KATZIE FIRST NATION CONSIDERATIONS

- Referral ☐ Yes ☒ No

SIGN-OFFS

Written by:

Bryan Vinje,
Deputy Fire Chief - Operations

Reviewed by:

Mike Larsson,
Fire Chief

ATTACHMENT(S):

None.