

**MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF BIGHORN NO. 8
EMERGENCY SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING**

**July 9, 2020 – 1:30 P.M.
Virtual Meeting**

IN ATTENDANCE:

Robert Ellis	C.A.O. and Chair
Paul Clark	Council representative
Norm Dreger	Member-at-Large
Kevin Hebb	Member-at-Large
Rick Lyster	Exshaw District Chief
Tom McFadden	Ghost River Fire Dept. District Fire Chief
Stew Walkinshaw	Montane Forest Management
Lana Hill	Facilitator
Leslie Rea	Executive Assistant/Facilitator
Lynda Gale	Recording Secretary
Regrets	
Wayne Dick	Jamieson Road Fire Dept. District Fire Chief

CALL TO ORDER

The Chair called the meeting to order at 1:40 p.m.

1. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Moved by P. Clark to approve the agenda as presented.

CARRIED

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Moved by K. Hebb that the minutes of the May 22, 2020 EMS Committee meeting be adopted as presented.

CARRIED

3. DELEGATIONS

There were no delegations.

4. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

There was no business arising from the minutes.

5. UPDATE FROM DISTRICTS

Chief Lyster said there have been approximately 100 calls for all 3 departments, which is about thirty percent less than 2019. He said that it is due to Alberta Health Services (AHS) restricting fire response to medical calls in only the most serious cases. He said there are fewer motor vehicle incidents due to less people travelling.

Chief Lyster said all three departments are starting to resume training. He said when crews are working in the halls and in trucks, they are wearing protective masks and personal protective equipment (PPE).

Chief Lyster said the three departments are well stocked with PPE from the Provincial Operations Centre (POC) in Edmonton as well as from regular suppliers. He said he has a stock of N-95 masks.

He told the Committee that all three halls have received calls where they have not had enough fire fighters to respond. He said there was a barn fire recently where all three departments responded.

Chief Lyster gave a brief update as the Director of Emergency Management.

He said though a State of Local Emergency (SOLE) was not declared, the MD used a significant amount of resources to help residents in east Exshaw. He said the groundwater is going down now. He said Team Rubicon had used Exshaw Firehall as a staging area for the Rubicon volunteers and are helping residents remove and replace wallboard and to help mitigate mould in basements.

K. Hebb said he understood that Graymont gave pumps to help residents and the MD.

The C.A.O. said Devcon and the Alberta Emergency Management Agency (AEMA) all provided supplies and equipment and said all help has been appreciated.

Chief McFadden gave an update on the Ghost River Fire Hall (GRFD). He said it has been quiet, which is surprising considering the volume of cars on the road. He said he spoke with the Conservation Officers (CO) who said they feel that there are several thousand people living semi-permanently in the area. The CO's also have a high presence in the area. Chief McFadden said there are prescribed burns near Camp Chamisall and Camp Hummingbird, but he is not always updated on prescribed burning.

Chief McFadden told the Committee he has been working with Chief Kevin Miller from the Cremona and District Fire Department. He said they have looked at the map and response boundaries and have redrawn the boundaries. He told the Committee Cremona can get to Highway 40 and Stud Creek Road and the same time as GRFD and anything to the east, Cremona can respond faster. As a result of that meeting, the map has been resubmitted. He said it will need to go through normal procedures to get ratified.

Chief Lyster said Cremona should be tasked with responding south of the Red Deer River, as they can respond faster than Sundre.

Chief McFadden said the boundary has been changed within the forestry area near Benjamin Creek Road, which is gated approximately 10km from Highway 40. He said the MD would be responsible for Benjamin Creek Road to the gate and Cremona would come in from the east to access the other side of the gate.

Chief McFadden said the point on Herald Creek Road approximately 5 – 10km east of Highway 40 would remain with Station 167. He shared several incidents that have occurred on that road.

Chief McFadden said Chief Miller has been working with Chief Lyster to change over to the Alberta First Responders Radio Communication System (AFRRCS).

Chief McFadden said station practices have been outside to maintain physical distancing. He told the Committee that a practice day with Cremona has been scheduled for August 8, 2020. He said they are working on protocols for physical distancing with new teams. He said they would be working on low-slope rescues.

He finished by telling the Committee that several projects have been put on hold for the past few months and he is hoping to get back to a regular schedule.

Chief Lyster gave an update for Chief Dick. Chief Lyster said the Jamieson Road Fire Department (JRFD) is excited to order the new truck and said they had a virtual meeting with people at the factory where the truck is being built.

Chief McFadden said GRFD assisted at the Two River's Ranch with apparatus and large crew. He said it was advantageous because of the lack of on-site water. He said the building was mostly gone, so the work was on-site containment.

Chief McFadden said a lesson was learned at the Two River's Ranch fire about water supply. He said there were issues because 167 Rescue, 167 Engine and 168 Engine could only hold 1000 gallons of water each. He said they had difficulty getting the Tender from Exshaw and were forced to have multiple trucks going back and forth from the site to Morley for water. He said it is important for the MD to continue with the vehicle acquisition, as a Tender in GRFD will be important and said 1000 gallons does not last very long on a fire. He told the Committee that there were times when there was no water and they had to manage the scene very carefully, as they always had to have water on-site. Chief McFadden said the trucks were always going to or from Morley and fire fighting operations had to stop to maintain the site.

The C.A.O. said he would have to look at the MD's Capital Plan to find out what year a new Tender is planned.

Chief McFadden said a fire in a rural residential area would have been a very different situation and another fire department would have to be called to help. He said he is not sure why the Tender from Exshaw could not respond. He said the trucks that were on-site could be compared to carrying pails of water compared to a new Tender.

Chief Lyster said the Exshaw Tender did not respond because there was not a qualified operator available to drive it. He agreed that it would have been a big benefit. He said the new Tender would hold 1500 – 2000 gallons and added that access to water in rural areas is always a problem.

N. Dreger asked how many Exshaw Fire Fighters were licensed to operate the Tender. Chief Lyster said he has a total of 18 volunteers on his roster, but many are unavailable during the week.

P. Clark asked if there was any way to fit the existing truck with foam apparatus. Chief McFadden said he has foam tanks on-board. P. Clark asked if foam was used. Chief McFadden said a bit, but 168 did not have any. P. Clark asked if the foam helped. Chief McFadden said the foam increased the capacity to absorb heat and helps suppress the fire.

The C.A.O. asked Chief McFadden about the mapping discussion and said there is a fire agreement between the MD and Mountain View County (MVC). He asked if Cremona was working with MVC. Chief McFadden said they are, and the map would still have to come the MD Council.

The C.A.O. asked Chief Lyster if the maps were ever replaced in the agreement with MVC. Chief Lyster said the agreement has been signed, but the maps were not available at the time, so they will be replaced. Chief Lyster said he is working with dispatch centres in Red Deer and the City of Calgary to update response areas. He said it takes time for the response areas to be updated with the Red Deer dispatch, but the City of Calgary has already been updated.

Chief Lyster said there would be no financial impact from the map update.

P. Clark asked Chief McFadden about the Two River's fire and if the Ghost River is closer than Morley to fill the trucks. Chief McFadden told the Committee that it is not easy to get water from the river and said it was easier to go to Morley to use the pressurized pumps, which can fill the truck in a fraction of the time it would take to draft from the lake. Chief McFadden said drafting from the lake would require one of the trucks to act as the hydrant.

K. Hebb asked about the safety of the volunteers and gave information about doctors in Europe reporting that people taking high levels of Vitamin D seemed to have higher protection from COVID-19 and that there is no downside to taking it. He said the recommendation is 8,000 – 10,000 units/day. He asked if volunteers should start taking the vitamin as protection from the virus.

P. Clark said before instructing volunteers to take the vitamin, AHS would have to approve.

Chief Lyster said he takes his lead from AHS and Medical First Responders and he must be very careful with recommendations.

K. Hebb said thank you.

6. **NEW BUSINESS**

a) Montane Forest Management, S. Walkinshaw

Mr. Walkinshaw presented the Project Work Plan, Municipal District of Bighorn No. 8 – Municipal Emergency Plan Review and Update to the Committee. He focused on the timeline on Page 3 of the Work Plan.

K. Hebb said he appreciated that the original submission was presented in a step-by-step fashion, as requested.

P. Clark asked the C.A.O. if information would be passed to Council in time for budget preparations if there was a financial implication with the project. The C.A.O. said the proposal came in under budget and referred to page 3 of the plan where it said that Step 3 would include a presentation to Council and should be in time for budget discussions.

The C.A.O. asked Mr. Walkinshaw if part of the risk analysis included time to review for evacuation plans. Mr. Walkinshaw said that was included in Step 2, where existing documents are reviewed, and recommendations are made.

P. Clark mentioned several natural disasters and asked how broad the risk assessment would be. Mr. Walkinshaw said he would be sitting down with people from the MD to go through the process of discussing hazards that may exist such as derailments, fire and flooding etc. He said the group would rank the probability and consequence of each hazard. He said the result would give a good idea of which to spend time on.

K. Hebb if there was somewhere Mr. Walkinshaw would be getting the statistics on probability and ranking. Mr. Walkinshaw said the probability and consequences are numbered on a scale of 1 – 5 and the numbers are chosen by the people in the room who know emergency management very well.

N. Dreger said historical statistics are not the best indicator, as the climate is changing. He asked what the appropriate way to inform residents that the review and update is happening. The C.A.O. said it could be included in the next MD newsletter.

P. Clark told Mr. Walkinshaw that he lives on Jamieson Road near Waiparous and said that is the highest risk area for wildfire and said there is a large amount of fuel build-up. P. Clark added that he has been speaking with the C.A.O. and Council and has been trying to get plans from Alberta Forestry regarding their plans for that area. P. Clark asked Mr. Walkinshaw if he was connected with Alberta Forestry and if he understood their tactics for this problem.

Mr. Walkinshaw said he was not connected with Alberta Forestry. He told the Committee the hazard and risk assessment would identify wildfire as a threat in the MD. That would result in a section in the Municipal Emergency Response Plan (MERP) that the MD can follow in the event of an emergency. That section in the MERP would identify that Alberta Forestry is responsible for certain areas. Mr. Walkinshaw told the Committee he could not go to Alberta Forestry to ask what their plan was and asked if that answered Mr. Clark's question.

P. Clark said it did answer his question, but it was not the response he wanted to hear. He said he attended presentations where dire predictions were given and that a wildfire is not a question of if, but when. P. Clark told Mr. Walkinshaw that he understood what he was saying but would like some suggested ways to deal with the problem.

Mr. Walkinshaw said there will be ways to deal with the response to wildfire in the MD's MERP, but that plan would not deal with prevention, only the response. He told the Committee the FireSmart program deals with prevention.

P. Clark said that was a good point and said that at all the presentations he has been to, experts have said that if a wildfire starts, it would be impossible to extinguish.

Moved by P. Clark to receive the Project Work Plan as information satisfactory for the purposes of the Emergency Services Committee.

CARRIED

7. **INFORMATION**

There were no items to discuss.

8. **INCAMERA**

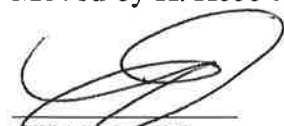
There were no items to discuss.

9. **NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting date will be at the call of the Chair, but will be scheduled the week of August 10, 2020 and will be held at 1:30 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

Moved by K. Hebb to adjourn the meeting at 2:46 p.m.



CHAIRMAN