

## Staff Report

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**Report To:** City Council  
**Report From:** Melissa Clancy, Human Resources Manager  
**Meeting Date:** November 1, 2021  
**Report Code:** CR-21-105  
**Subject:** Appointment of Fire Chief – Owen Sound Fire and  
Emergency Services

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### Recommendations:

THAT in consideration of Staff Report CR-21-105 respecting Appointment of Fire Chief – Owen Sound Fire and Emergency Services, City Council directs staff to bring forward a by-law to amend Appointed Officers By-law No. 2015-054 to remove Doug Barfoot as Fire Chief and appoint Phil Eagleson as Fire Chief.

### Highlights:

- Phil Eagleson will begin the role as Fire Chief with the City of Owen Sound on November 22, 2021
- The selection process for the position of Fire Chief has been thorough, open, fair and objective.

### Strategic Plan Alignment:

[Strategic Plan](#) Priority: Clear Direction - KR3 - Develop a Human Resources strategy that fosters a skilled, engaged, and diverse workforce that is grounded in the City's core values by September 2022

### Background:

The Fire Chief role is an important one for the City, as well as the Fire and Emergency Services Department and the community as a whole.

The *Fire Protection and Prevention Act, 1997, S.O. 1997, c.4* references the hiring of a municipal Fire Chief. It says in part,

*6(1) If a fire department is established for the whole or a part of a municipality or for more than one municipality, the council of the municipality or the councils of the municipalities, as the case may be, shall appoint a fire chief of the fire department.*

The City of Owen Sound has a fire department, and it acts solely for the City and no other municipality other than under mutual aid agreements. Accordingly, a search was undertaken to hire a new Fire Chief for the City. That individual must ultimately be appointed by Council by by-law in keeping with the legislative requirements and past practice.

## **Analysis:**

A comprehensive, Canadian-wide recruitment process was undertaken to identify interested and qualified candidates. The position was advertised both internally and in the specific internet sites for Canadian Association of Fire Chiefs, Ontario Association of Fire Chiefs, Indeed, Owen Sound Sun Times, City Website and Social Media platforms.

A selection committee consisting of Tim Simmonds, City Manager, Melissa Clancy, Human Resources Manager, and four Council appointed members: Mayor Boddy, Deputy Mayor O'Leary, Councillor Koepke, and Councillor Thomas. The Committee met to short-list candidates and conducted interviews with four candidates. The selection process for the position of Fire Chief has been thorough, open, fair and objective.

A predictive modeling Leadership Assessment utilizing Predictive Index Hiring was completed by the candidate, which indicated during the debrief that the candidate is a good fit for the position. Reference checks have been completed as well.

After consulting with the selection committee, the City Manager, and Human Resources Manager, presented and negotiated an offer to Phil Eagleson who has accepted the offer. Phil will begin his appointment as Fire Chief on November 22, 2021.

Interim Fire Chief, Will Plagenz, has indicated that he will remain with the City to assist in the transition of the duties to Chief Eagleson.

## **Financial Implications:**

There are no financial implications beyond what has already been approved in the current year's Owen Sound Fire and Emergency Services Operating Budget. No costs were associated with the recruitment process. Undertaking the Fire Chief Recruitment Process in-house has realized a cost-avoidance of \$20,000-\$40,000 as the alternative would have been to hire a professional recruitment service.

## **Communication Strategy:**

A public media release including the name and appointment of the new Fire Chief has been prepared and will be issued following Council.

## **Consultation:**

Tim Simmonds, City Manager

Selection Committee – Fire Chief.

## **Attachments:**

Appendix A - Media Release – City Appoints New Fire Chief

## **Recommended by:**

Melissa Clancy, Human Resources Manager

## **Reviewed by:**

Kate Allan, Director of Corporate Services

## **Submission approved by:**

Tim Simmonds, City Manager

For more information on this report, please contact Tim Simmonds, City Manager at [tsimmonds@owensound.ca](mailto:tsimmonds@owensound.ca).