

Report to Committee of the Whole

Date: 3/10/2025
From: Brad Cole, Fire Chief
Re: In-Kind Costs – Fire Department

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Committee of the Whole receive for information the report outlining the detailed in-kind services provided by the Fire Department as requested by Council at the February 24th, 2025 Regular Council Meeting.

BACKGROUND

At the Regular Council Meeting on February 24, 2025, the following item was passed under the Staff Report, Finance Department:

10.3.1 2025 Community Grants

THAT the Council of the Corporation of Merrickville-Wolford allocate funds in the amount of \$12,000 funds and In-Kind requests in an estimated amount of \$8,075 for the Community Grant Program;

AND FURTHER THAT the Public Works Department and Emergency Services Department provide an accounting of the approximate staff time allocated to the functions supported by the grant to determine the true cost of the support provided by the Municipality;

AND FURTHER THAT Staff provide a revised structure and allocations policy prior to undertaking the 2026 budget.

This report outlines the request made by council at the February meeting by showing the absorbed costs by Fire Department personal.

ANALYSIS

The Fire Department is often asked to attend functions to provide public education or medical coverage along with Public Works to prepare the venues for the events. The Fire Department is comprised of one full-time Chief and one full-time administrative assistant. The Firefighters are volunteer positions with the exception of the two positions stated above, but all members are donating their time to help with these events throughout the year.

The events listed below are the ones that the Department participates in each year. The allocated times are associated with each event as well as a small synopsis of the duties required at each event.

The Snowflake Festival

The Department provides a touch-a-truck event for youth and the public to see and understand what the fire service offers the community. We also provide medical first response for the event while on scene to make sure all lives and property are protected. We normally have 3-4 trucks and 8 members available for roughly 4 hours, weather permitting due to the trucks carrying water and the potential for freeze up.

- 8 members x 4 hours
- Touch a Truck 4 trucks 4 hours
- Provide Medical coverage

Heritage Classic

The Department provides around 10 firefighters each year to look after traffic control during the event as there are street closures and detours. We set up a first aid tent behind the Community Centre that is manned by one member in case of medical emergencies at the start and finish of the event. The UTV is manned by 2 medical first responders to provide any medical attention needed on the racecourse by utilizing a mobile response vehicle if required.

- Volunteer information night – Chief – 1 hour
- Day of event -First Aid Medical Tent – 5 hours
- 10 firefighters – traffic control – 5 hours
- 2 First responders – UTV Medical – 5 hours
- 2 trucks 5 hours

Canada Day

All fire trucks are in the parade for Canada day. This takes 10-15 members and about 3 hours for both preparation and the time during the parade.

- Truck Preparation 2 hrs.
- All trucks in parade 9 trucks 1 hour
- 15 members – 3 hours

Musical Ride Heritage Stables (one-time event)

There was 5 first responders that worked at the event that raised money for the Rideau Community Health Services Food Cupboard in Merrickville. We provided medical coverage for both the RCMP riders as well as the public that attended the event.

- 5 First Responders – 4 hours
- Collection of food delivered to Health Center
- Medical coverage
- 2 trucks 4 hours

Merrickville Fair

We provide medical coverage during the fair as well as for the horse shows at the fair.

There is a touch-a-truck event for kids to look and climb inside of the fire trucks. We also provide fire prevention education.

We provide water for the dairy and beef show, so the participants are able to wash the cattle before the show. This is delivered throughout the weekend first thing in the morning and again throughout the day if needed. This all depends on the number of animals at the show.

- Medical for the weekend
- On-Scene Medical coverage for horse shows 6 hrs.
- Supply water to animals – 2 tankers = 5,000 gals of water \$164.00
- Touch a Truck event – 1 hour preparation of trucks 4 trucks 5 hours
- 8 members – 5 hours at event

Children's Halloween party

We provide over 400 hot dogs, chips and drinks as well as candy bags for children and adults at the Community Centre on Halloween night. This is paid for by the Merrickville Firefighters Association.

- Provide hot dogs, chips, drinks and treat bags
- Decorating hall for kids
- 12 members – 4 hours

Holiday Train

The Department provided medical coverage for the Holiday Train and collects food donations for the Rideau Community Health Centre.

In the last couple of years, we have also provided train security alongside CP Police to ensure the public's safety around the train.

- Train security
- Crowd control
- Medical coverage
- Food collection and delivery to Health Center
- 12 members – 4 hours
- 3 Trucks 4 hours

Christmas in Merrickville

Members spend time preparing the trucks for the parade and making sure the antique fire truck is operational to give Santa a ride along the parade route.

We also keep around 4 members on close call in the case of a medical emergency during the event.

The Chief provided traffic control for the tree lighting at the event for public safety.

- Truck preparation – 15 members – 2 hours
- 8 Trucks in Parade – 15 members – 1 hour
- Deliver Santa
- Medical coverage – 4 members – 7 hours
- Traffic control at tree lighting – Chief – 1 hour

The chart below represents the total events and total firefighters at each event. The total fire fighters for each event are multiplied by the hours spent participating to get the totals in the in-kind column.

Event type	Number of Firefighters	Total hours	In-kind staff cost
Snowflake festival	8	4	\$743.36
Heritage Classic	10	5	\$1,161.50
Canada Day	15	3	\$1,045.35
Musical Ride	5	5	\$580.75
Musical Ride	8	14	\$2,601.76
Halloween Party	12	4	\$1,115.00
Holiday Train	12	4	\$1,115.00
Christmas in Merrickville	15	3	\$1,045.35
Christmas in Merrickville	4	7	\$650.44
Total		49	\$10,058.51

The vehicle calculation is if the trucks were called out for service, but this also shows the cost to have the trucks out for events as per the cost within Schedule G to By-Law 44-2022 (Fees's and Charges By-law). The vehicles are sitting for most of the events, but it shows a representation of the potential cost.

Event type	Number of vehicles	Vehicle hours	Cost
Snowflake festival	4	4	\$5,600
Heritage Classic	2	5	\$3,500
Canada Day	8	1	\$2,800
Musical Ride	2	4	\$2,800
Halloween Party	0	0	0
Holiday Train	3	4	\$4,200
Christmas	8	1	\$2,800

in Merrickville			
Christmas in Merrickville tree lighting	1	1	\$350
Total			\$22,050

BUDGET/LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

The implications are the in-kind services that have been provided to the community by the members of the Fire Department. The cost of the vehicles would be absorbed within the operating budget.

CONCLUSION

This report is for information purposes so that Council may have an understanding of the amount of time that the firefighters give back to the community each year over and above their regular duties.

ATTACHMENTS

None.

Submitted by:

Brad Cole, Fire Chief

Approved by:

Darlene Plumley, CAO