



INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FIRE FIGHTERS

## NEWS RELEASE

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**For immediate release**  
**Thursday, February 1, 2024**

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***The following communication was sent to the Greater Napanee Council today from the International Association of Fire Fighters:***

Dear Mayor and Council,

I am writing to you on behalf of our Local affiliate, the Greater Napanee Professional Fire Fighters Association. We have been supportive of Fire Chief Hammond's proposal to hire an additional four full-time fire fighters. He presented this proposal to you last November and impressed upon you the need. It is our understanding that the Chief intends to move to a staffing model allowing for two career fire fighters to be scheduled on night shift.

Our call history shows that when we have full-time fire fighters on duty our trucks can respond immediately resulting in a 4–6-minute faster response time for the initial truck vs. during nights where currently there is no one staffing the fire hall. We all understand that time is critical in an emergency and for the fire service the first few minutes dictates the next few hours. This improvement to the level of service and corresponding increase to public and fire fighter safety is obvious.

We are aware that council must deal with budget pressures each year and make decisions in the best interest of our community. The initial cost for these four additional fire fighters is pennies a day for the tax households in our municipality. The one thing citizens expect from our decision makers is to keep our families and the community safe. We recognize it can be difficult at times to make those decisions but these fit squarely within your authority. The Ontario [Fire Protection and Prevention Act](#) states the responsibilities for the delivery of fire protection. Part II states as follows:

“Municipal responsibilities

2 (1) Every municipality shall,

(a) establish a program in the municipality which must include public education with respect to fire safety and certain components of fire prevention; and

(b) provide such other fire protection services as it determines may be necessary in accordance with its needs and circumstances.”

Also, the legislation states the Fire Chief as the one responsible to the council.

“Responsibility to council

(3) A fire chief is the person who is ultimately responsible to the council of a municipality that appointed him or her for the delivery of fire protection services.”

The Fire Chief has been clear on the need for additional fire fighters for two years now. As your first responders, we understand the positive impact this will have on our community. We ask that when you make your final decisions regarding this year’s budget that you discuss this issue in an open forum and ultimately support the Fire Chief.

Respectfully,  
Fred LeBlanc, 13<sup>th</sup> District Vice President  
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