



INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FIRE FIGHTERS

NEWS RELEASE

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Contact: Chris Tyner
613 532-1283

Additional Full-Time Firefighters Needed in Greater Napanee

The Greater Napanee Fire Department requires increased staffing to provide equal coverage at all hours and meet increasing service demands.

The Greater Napanee Professional Fire Fighters Association is urging the Mayor and Council of Greater Napanee to follow the recommendation of the Fire Chief and approve the hiring of four full-time firefighters in the 2024 budget. We are asking them to invest in community safety without further delay.

The Town of Greater Napanee continues to grow with new development, new businesses, and increasing population. This is good news for the local economy, but a warning flag for elected officials who must make critical decisions about public safety. As Napanee grows the fire department must keep up with the increased demand for service. Unfortunately, the fire department is understaffed compared to similar municipalities.

Full-time firefighters are on shift from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. daily, but it is time to expand coverage to all hours. The additional staff are required to increase the hours of full-time coverage, ease pressure on our volunteer firefighters, and provide a higher level of service to our residents.

“When there is a fire, seconds matter regarding protecting life and property. Having full-time firefighters on shift 24 hours a day will ensure a quick response at all hours, and this is what the public expects. Over the past year, our daytime crews responded swiftly and effectively to multiple fires. It takes 4-6 minutes for our volunteer firefighters to get to the station and assemble on the trucks. If these same fires had happened after 6 p.m. and had an additional 4-6 minutes to grow, the outcome would have been drastically different,” said Chris Tyner, President of the Greater Napanee Professional Fire Fighters Local 2822.

“We have a highly trained and dedicated group of volunteer firefighters who will always be a key part of our department, but recruitment and retention are significant issues in the fire service, and as we get busier, we are burning them out. We must reduce their pressures, so they are there when needed. This is not about replacing volunteer firefighters; this is about meeting the expectations of our growing community and providing the same level of service at all hours. We are struggling to do this right now. The additional firefighters will also make it safer for all of us, both career and volunteer,” Tyner said.

This week, the Council will continue budget deliberations; this includes fire department staffing. The Greater Napanee Professional Firefighters urge the mayor and council to approve the hiring and expansion to full-time coverage 24 hours a day. This modest investment, estimated to cost only pennies a day, will improve emergency response times and help the Greater Napanee Fire Department better serve its growing community. If we do not, we will risk Napanee’s public safety.

