



TOWN OF SOUTH BRUCE PENINSULA

August 9, 2022

Honourable Michael Kerzner
Solicitor General of Ontario
830 Sheppard Ave. W.,
Toronto ON M3H 2T1
Michael.Kerzner@pc.ola.org

Dear Solicitor General Kerzner:

Re: Mandatory Firefighter Certification

The Ontario Government has been making great improvements to the legislation which governs the manner in which municipalities conduct their business. One such piece of legislation is the *Fire Protection and Prevention Act, 1997* and particularly, the requirements for firefighter certification.

While the Town of South Bruce Peninsula supports, in principle, the updates to requirements for volunteer and full-time fire service professionals, we must provide our comments in order for the Province to understand the great burden that the regulations will place on municipalities. Council discussed this issue at their regular Council meeting held on August 2, 2022 and adopted resolution R-296-2022 directing that you are contacted for assistance.

Smaller municipalities such as ours, are not fortunate enough to have full-time firefighters. Our emergency personnel are all volunteers with the exception of our Fire Chief who is a full-time employee and our Deputy Fire Chief who is a part-time employee. It is difficult for our volunteers to dedicate the time to obtaining full certification in the manner legislated, as the fire service is not their primary employment. We have found that the average retention period for volunteers is three to five years meaning that once fully trained, most of our volunteers would leave the service or may even leave the service before they are fully trained and certified.

As you can imagine, this places a huge financial burden on our taxpayers as the certification is an additional cost which is funded wholly from the tax base. No grant funding or other financial assistance has been offered from the Province.

We are under the understanding that the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, many municipal governments and the Fire Chiefs across Ontario have raised concerns regarding the legislated requirements for certification. We are respectfully requesting that meaningful consultation and collaboration with the commenting parties takes place

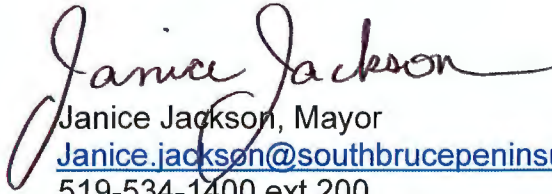


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quickly so that municipalities can better manage their finances and workforce where emergency service provision is concerned.

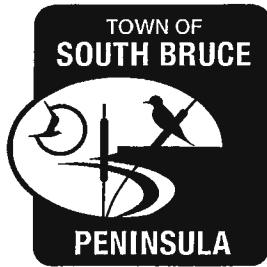
We look forward to hearing from you and to discussing our position on this important matter with you further.

Yours very truly,


Janice Jackson, Mayor
Janice.jackson@southbrucepeninsula.com
519-534-1400 ext 200

Enclosure (1)

cc: Premier Doug Ford, MPP Rick Byers, AMO, OSUM, All Ontario Municipalities,
Ministry of the Solicitor General (Ministry Office)



Excerpt from Council Meeting Minutes – August 2, 2022

41. Notice of Motion – Mayor Jackson - Mandatory Firefighter Certification

Manager of Emergency Services/Fire Chief Wilson explained that the regulation was passed and only slightly amended. The financial burden is quite large to municipalities. The average retention of a fire fighter is 3-5 years. In order to become fully trained, it would take 3 years.

R-296-2022

It was **Moved** by J. Jackson, **Seconded** by J. Kirkland and **Carried**

Whereas municipal governments provide essential services to the residents and businesses in their communities;

And whereas the introduction of new Provincial policies and programs has an impact on municipalities;

And whereas municipal governments are generally supportive of efforts to modernize and enhance the volunteer and full-time fire services that serve Ontario communities;

And whereas the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) believes in principle that the fire certification is a step in the right direction, however it has not endorsed the draft regulations regarding firefighter certification presented by the Province;

And whereas municipalities and AMO are concerned that the thirty-day consultation period was insufficient to fully understand the effects such regulations will have on municipal governments and their fire services;

And whereas Fire Chiefs have advised that the Ontario firefighter certification process will create additional training and new cost pressures on fire services;

And whereas the Ontario government has not provided any indication that they will offer some form of financial support to deliver this service;

And whereas AMO, on behalf of municipal governments, in a letter to Solicitor General Jones dated February 25, 2022, made numerous comments and requests to address the shortcomings in the draft regulations;