

Town of Whitby

Staff Report

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Report Title: Whitby Firefighters – Fallen Firefighters Memorial

Report to: Committee of the Whole

Date of meeting: June 12, 2023

Report Number: FES 03-23

Department(s) Responsible:

Fire and Emergency Services

Submitted by:

Fire Chief Michael Hickey

**Acknowledged by M. Gaskell, Chief
Administrative Officer**

For additional information, contact:

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1. Recommendation:

1. That Council actively partners with the Whitby Professional Firefighters Association IAFF Local 2036 (“Local 2036”) on the design and construction of a memorial to fallen firefighters to be located at Whitby Civic Park adjacent to Town Hall;
2. That the Town of Whitby match Local 2036’s contribution to a maximum of \$35,000, funded from Whitby Fire and Emergency Services Operating Budget account 12105-54030, for the design and construction of the memorial;
3. That a new capital project in the amount of \$250,000 be established for the Whitby Memorial to Fallen FireFighters, funded from Local 2036 (\$35,000), the Town of Whitby (\$35,000), and external fundraising (\$180,000);
4. That the Town of Whitby actively partners with Local 2036 to source additional public and/or private sources of funding and/or sponsorship opportunities towards the memorial;
5. That construction for the memorial only proceeds once the \$180,000 fund raising goal has been achieved; and,

6. That Staff follow the process outlined in report FES 03-23 for the issuance of Official Donation Receipts for income tax purposes related to the external fundraising efforts for this Town of Whitby project.

2. Highlights:

- Whitby Fire and Emergency Services (WFES) and Local 2036 have unfortunately suffered five (5) Line of Duty Deaths (LODD) since it's inception.
- The Town of Whitby would be the first municipality to construct a Fallen Firefighters Memorial in Durham Region.
- Local 2036 has raised \$35,000 in funding to contribute to the project and funding from the employer would provide an opportunity to collaborate on this important initiative.
- The WFES estimates the cost of the memorial to be \$250,000. Subject to Council approval of this report, a new 2023 capital project will be established for \$250,000 funded from Local 2036 (\$35,000), Town of Whitby (\$35,000), and external fundraising (\$180,000)

3. Background:

The purpose of this report is to propose a Fallen Firefighter Memorial be erected in the Town of Whitby at Whitby Civic Centre Park. This memorial would allow for the families of LODDs, the fire service, and the citizens of Whitby, a chance to celebrate, remember and honour those lost protecting our community.

It is also important to recognize that the Town of Whitby has committed to commemorating our LODDs by naming streets after them in an upcoming Brooklin development. However, through this proposal the hope is to share with Council the importance of a space to reflect on and recognize the Whitby Firefighters who have lost their lives while serving our community.

The loss of these WFES employees takes a heavy toll on their families, as well as the members of WFES and Local 2036. These harsh realities act as strong reminders of the potential devastation the fire fighting profession can take on the firefighters and their families.

4. Discussion:

Throughout Ontario, councils, fire services and firefighter associations have all come together to erect memorials to honour LODDs. These memorials showcase and legitimize the strong bond communities share with their fire service.

The Regional Municipality of Durham is unique in Ontario, as none of its cities and/or towns currently have a memorial for fallen firefighters. However, our region has suffered the loss of many LODDs and a place of dedicated to remembrance is required. Should approval be sought for this important initiative, Whitby would have the exclusive opportunity to be a leader in the region, as the first town to honour the sacrifice of these brave firefighters.

Prior to constructing a memorial, there were many details to consider such as:

Location:

- The right location of a fallen firefighter memorial is crucial to ensure LODDs are honoured as they deserve. A memorial of this kind should be in a secluded location, to allow for solemn and peaceful contemplation of those lost. Ideally, the memorial would be located on Town owned land which would assist in keeping costs at a minimum.
- Civic Centre Park adjacent to Town Hall would be make an ideal location. Civic Centre Park offers the opportunity for solitude within the large green space of the park behind Town Hall. Town Hall also provides accessible access and ample parking. With Council's recent investments in the site, as well as the ongoing and planned renovations and expansions, it emphasizes the importance to remain at this location. In turn, this location would then guarantee there would not be a need to move the memorial once constructed.
- Finally, this property offers room for growth of the memorial, security in the form of security cameras at both Town Hall and the Civic Centre, and at a property which is already maintained by Operations staff.

Design:

- The design of the memorial influences its effectiveness. To build this memorial, the hope is to work with a designer or artist, as well as a local monument company.
- The scale of the design will be subject to budgetary constraints. However, the goal is to erect a memorial that could grow should the unfortunate need arise in the future.

5. Financial Considerations:

The WFES estimates the cost to design and construct the memorial at Civic Centre Park to be \$250,000 and recommends a new 2023 capital project be established to support this initiative. With a \$35,000 contribution from Local 2036, Town staff recommend a matching \$35,000 contribution towards the project, funded via a transfer from WFES' annual operating budget, account 12105-54030 – Transfer to Capital Fund. The proposed transfer is not budgeted for and will result in a 2023 operating budget pressure which may be offset by operating budget savings in other accounts and other departments across the Town.

It is recommended that the \$180,000 (= \$250,000 - \$35,000 - \$35,000) balance for the memorial be funded from external fundraising efforts co-ordinated by the Town. The Town of Whitby is a qualified donee under the Income Tax Act and may issue Official Donation Receipts for income tax purposes ("**Donation Receipts**") in accordance with Canada Revenue Agency ("**CRA**") guidelines and regulations. Organizations not complying with CRA regulations regarding the issuance, record keeping and administration of charitable gifts/Donation Receipts, may have their qualified donee designation revoked by CRA. Accordingly, the following guidelines are recommended for the Town's fundraising efforts for the memorial project:

- a) All cheques must be made payable to the Town of Whitby;
- b) If donations are collected by external parties, such as Local 2036, the collections and a summary of the donors, amounts, addresses must be provided to the Town's Financial Services department directly. The collection shall be counted and reconciled with the external party present;
- c) Donation Receipts may be provided for donations of \$20 or greater:
 - For corporate donors, an option will be provided to select recognition (e.g., advertisements or banners) by the Town in lieu of a Donation Receipt;
 - Donors that received a benefit or consideration related to the donation (e.g., gala dinner or gift) may not be issued a Donation Receipt;
 - Donation Receipts may not be issued if the name, address is ineligible; and
 - Donation Receipts shall not be issued for the prior year after February 28th of any year.

It is recommended that the construction of the memorial proceed only when the fundraising goal (currently \$180,000) has been met – e.g., when the capital project is fully funded.

6. Communication and Public Engagement:

Not applicable.

7. Input from Departments/Sources:

The Town's Legal Services Department was consulted on any agreements related to this project. The Operations Department would be involved in the general maintenance of the landscaped areas associated with the memorial.

8. Strategic Priorities:

The recommendations contained in this report are consistent with the Town of Whitby Corporate Strategic Plan:

Strategic Priority 1: People

We will foster an inclusive environment where employees can experience job satisfaction and rewarding careers.

- 1.1 Recognize and celebrate successes
- 1.3 Empower staff
- 1.4 Attract and retain top talent
- 1.5 Become the organization that people want to join

In addition, the recommendations are consistent with the Town of Whitby's Mission, Vision, and Core Value statement: WE CARE.

9. Attachments:

Attachment 1 – Whitby Fallen Firefighters Memorial Proposal