

City Staff Report

Report Date: May 28, 2018

Meeting Date: May 29, 2018

To: Mayor & Council
From: City Manager Byron Johnson
Subject: City Funding for SWPI Grants

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to discuss the community funding element of the Strategic Wildfire Prevention Initiative (SWPI), Fuel Management Prescription Program.

Summary

To summarize where we are at today:

- Fraser Basin Council completed the Community Wildfire Protection Plan on behalf of the City, with funding allocated from CCBAC and UBCM to fund the plan preparation and submission to the Province.
- The CWPP has been approved by UBCM.
- The next step is to prepare specific treatment prescriptions based on the specific fuel treatment units.
- The grant funding to complete these prescriptions has been approved by UBCM, with the first two grant applications awaiting final sign off by the City.
- The City's funding share is 25% of the total, this may be made up of in-kind or cash funding. The numbers outlining the City's share is as follows:
 - Total project spending (FTU 15 & 29) \$136,735
 - Total Community contribution @ 25% \$ 34,184
 - In-kind contribution by City of Quesnel \$ 26,430
 - Incremental funding required \$ 7,754

There are several reasons that this is coming forward to Council, even though the amount of incremental funding needed is minimal.

First, as has been discussed previously by the Mayor and Council, the City is not the landowner or land manager for the FTU's being worked on, FTU 15 is made up of 326 ha on Marsh Road, and FTU 29 is 341 ha in the Hangman Pit and Nazko Highway. The City is also not a license holder. Again the principle of why City taxpayer funding should be spent funding crown land activities should be questioned. This is an important principle, because once fuel treatments commence, the community funding will become more onerous to achieve.

Finally, the funding is not in our current budget allocation, so staff is asking for permission to either provide more in-kind support, or provide cash funding for the incremental required funding.

The City sent a letter to Minister Donaldson on February 19th regarding this specific topic, copying both UBCM and NCLGA. We have not received a response to this issue at this point in time. The question for Council is whether the City goes ahead and funds the shortfall as per the grant parameters, or refuses to put taxpayer funded dollars into this initiative.



Recommendation

THAT Staff be directed to send a letter to the Minister of FLNRORD asking for a response to the issue of Municipal taxpayers funding forestry work well outside the Municipal boundaries;

AND THAT Council agrees to fund the shortfall of \$7,754, in the interest of public protection, with funding to come from either an increased in-kind contribution or cash as needed.

Financial Implications

The current request is for approval to provide in-kind / cash contributions totaling \$34,184 for these two prescription grants. The future implications of this are much larger as the initiative moves into a fuel treatment mode.

Attachments

Letter to Minister Donaldson dated February 19, 2018

Concurrence

Options