

September 30, 2015

JOINT HUMAN RESOURCES/FIRE SERVICES INFORMATION REPORT #2015-13

TO: Joint Council Committee

COPY: Mayor T. Van Bynen
Mayor G. Dawe
R. N. Shelton – CAO, Newmarket
P. Moyle – CAO, Aurora

SUBJECT: Labour Relations

ORIGIN: Human Resources/Fire Services

COMMENTS

As you are all aware, based on a September 29th email, we received an Arbitration Award from Arbitrator Raymond relative to the Fire Services collective agreement. Before stepping into the highlights of this award it is important to remember that we also received an interim award in November 2014 which included the following:

- Adjustments in wages for the period 2013 – 2015
- Updates to some language issues in the collective agreement
- Updated promotional and shift exchange language
- Commitment to the officer development program
- Referral of specific issues back to the parties to resolve – Chief Training Officer, benefit changes and issues related to the 24 hour shift trial

As you are aware the management team, with the support of our legal strategist Ross Dunsmore, worked diligently to affect a change in the approach to achieving a renewal agreement. Significant efforts were undertaken to incorporate a higher degree of collaborative bargaining into the process often times with the support of the respective nominees in order to achieve a better end result. It is important to remember that bargaining and arbitration awards were evolving around us at the time and impacting our level of achievement. However, we are pleased to say that given the approach that was undertaken we were successful at achieving a process that could stand us in good stead as we move forward. In terms of the most recent award of Sept. 25, 2015, some of the key results are as follows:

- A 4 year 24 hour shift trial (2016-2019) with various conditions and commitments. Of significance are the following:
 - ✓ No additional cost to the Town
 - ✓ Must not negatively affect the level of service delivered to the public
 - ✓ Must have no negative consequence to firefighter health and safety
 - ✓ Ability to measure various factors as identified in the award and also the ability of the Chief to study other matters of concern relative to the 24 hour shift and present them to the Association resulting in a high level of transparency and accountability

- Establishment of an effective process by which to determine the true results of the trial on an ongoing basis culminating in a decision in year 4
- Realignment of vacation credits to a 48 hour work week versus 56
- Greater clarity around the calculation of sick time
- Improvements to benefits – vision care, LTD maximum, hearing aids for employees, physiotherapy

While it became evident during the months of negotiation and then mediation/arbitration that the awarding of the 24 hour shift trial could occur, we believe the approach taken has resulted in enhancements to the protocols and improvements to the relationship, such as evidenced by the creation of the Joint 24 hour Committee. The Joint 24 hour Committee will provide the parties with an opportunity to address and resolve matters as they arise during the trial given its focus is to resolve issues together. Decision points regarding the trial are already built into the 4th year of the trial thus providing the opportunity for a more fluid transition once decisions are made. It is this same approach that we have endeavoured to build on and establish a process by which we can continue bargaining to achieve an agreement commencing January 1, 2016. The protocol attached to the award provides for additional utilization of the mediation-arbitration process with the parties, which has been instrumental in the achievement of this award.

We believe discussions to date will serve us well as we transition now to negotiating a collective agreement for 2016 forward.

BUSINESS PLAN AND STRATEGIC PLAN LINKAGES

Well-equipped & Managed - giving consideration to both fiscal responsibility and leadership excellence

CONSULTATION

Thanks to both JCC and the CAO's for their support during this lengthy process.

HUMAN RESOURCE CONSIDERATIONS

Given the nature of the changes in this Award it is evident that a change management plan will be required to assist with the transition to a 24 hour shift trial and there may be some hurdles along the way but the establishment of a Committee to address issues as they arise should go a long way to making this a smooth transition.

BUDGET IMPACT

It is expected the improvements to Fire Service benefits will be in the neighborhood of .01% of the total cost of the group benefit package for Central York Fire Services.

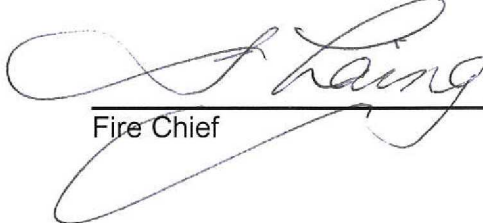
CONTACT

For more information on this report, contact the Fire Chief or Director, Human Resources.



Director, Human Resources

KLG



Fire Chief