

Appendix A

Emails and response received in the 30 day Consultation Period

1-

I am writing in my capacity as a seasonal (although we are at the cottage 12 months per year!) resident on Lakeshore Drive - it's my understanding the Township plans to close Station 5 and enter into a contract with a neighbouring Township to provide fire services on a pay per use model.

As I have some background in Municipal politics I understand that this may be necessary and that such agreements are common in other jurisdictions where call volumes don't merit having a full-time or even a volunteer station.

Would you be so kind as to provide me with the call volumes for the last five years?

A proposal that I anticipate coming forward would be that if the Township decides to proceed to enter into the voluntary service agreement, that some consideration be allotted towards White Lake residents and their safety, with the extension of 511 through to Lacourse Lane be completed to as to ensure that if residents on Lakeshore will no longer have the security of knowing there is a volunteer station nearby, at least emergency services vehicles can access the area more quickly, likely coming from a neighbouring Township.

Can you also please advise when this matter will be addressed by Lanark Town Council, and the protocol for registering as a delegation?

I am also copying my Ward Councillor - who also plows our new neighbour's driveway - with great appreciation from Mr. Soba!) on this.

Response from Staff

I will have the call volume information put together for you and the breakdown of the types of calls if they have that available. That information is also available starting on page 218 for the previous 3 years if you want it right away.

As a clarification, the Master Plan does contain a recommendation to close the White Lake station and the rationale that supports the consultant's decision to recommend this. However, there are 2 other options as well for council's consideration. Council has put the draft document out for a 30 day public review and comment period. You can find it on our website at; <https://www.lanarkhighlands.ca/lh-town-hall/plans-studies-reports/fire-master-plan>. The

document highlights the rationale for their recommendations. Further, the appendix is full of statistics on response times and other details as well. Council has not made any official decision yet, but it is assumed that a decision will be coming in due time.

This matter will come before Council on March 17th. Please find attached a delegation request application that is required to appear before Committee of the Whole or Council as a delegation.

2-

Hello all,

I have a few questions for the consultant that perhaps could be answered for Monday.

First let me freely admit I am not a statistician; my background is psychology.

As such though, I assume that I have read more statistical research than most people.

This report has many red flags for me that as a professional would cause me great concern that subject bias exists here.

The first is the population density map. It does not contain the appropriate numbers to demonstrate the seasonal population. It is noted that that seasonal residents were not included. As a seasonal resident I don't appreciate being mentioned as an after thought.

Response from EMT

The computer program used to map out population densities is called "maptitude". Within this program the data that is plotted, is acquired directly from Stats Canada and cannot be manipulated in any manner by outside sources as it is a secured program. Stats Canada's data is gathered from residents, based on their permanent residency. The program does not recognize seasonal residents, as those individuals would have been documented in the census based upon their permanent residence. If Stats Canada were to use data about seasonal residents, then the census for the entire country would be inaccurate due to counting some individuals twice. The same could be said regarding students, they live in temporary residences while attending school, but they are documented in the census, as living at their permanent residence.

What numbers were used in the risk assessment? How does this risk assessment compare to the one completed recently by Chief Bell? Where is that assessment?

Response from EMT

The data (numbers) were acquired from the Office of The Ontario Fire Marshal and Emergency Management, the Township of Lanark Highlands Treasurer's Office, the Lanark Highlands Fire Service's Dispatch Program, CriSys, which is linked to the fire communications dispatch in Smiths Falls.

The Simplified Risk Assessment that was completed in 2018, could have been based on the OFMEM's Public Fire Safety Guideline, PFSG 04-40A-03 dated January 2006. This document was made available to EMT for review during the development of the Fire Master Plan and the Community Risk Assessment. During the development of a 2020 CRA, the document is based on current data and may reference previous data if deemed necessary. Chief Bell's response data that was acquired from the OFMEM is the same data EMT received for that time period with the addition of 2018.

The SRA that Chief Bell completed was not required to review station staffing, chute (turn-out) times or types of apparatus currently operating in the stations.

The CRA that was completed by EMT is based on the requirements as established by the OFMEM, within The Province of Ontario Regulation 378/18.

Truthfully, we may have legal grounds here. As property owners we have rights and you as a township have responsibilities that seem to be ignored here.

Second obvious issue is the statement that over 300 camp ground trailers exist in the township.

Seriously?

There is 410 registered sites on White Lake alone. I hope the response I get won't be 410 is over 300, therefore the statement is true.

Response from EMT

EMT does not question there are more than 300 campground trailers in the township. The data in that regard is based on campsites that are registered within the Township of Lanark Highlands' property tax roll. Campsites found within campgrounds are not listed in the tax roll as they do not pay taxes to the township and therefore were not included in the data provided. It is the campground itself that is listed in the tax roll. This data came from the treasurer's office of the township.

In both the FMP and the CRA it is documented that there are over 300 trailers and 5,000 seasonal residents. The CRA's Worksheet 10 identifies methods that could be implemented to reduce these risks.

Can the consultant confirm for me how much time they even spent in the area? The mention of The California road as access from the township has many questioning if they were even here.

Response from EMT

EMT can confirm that they travelled the entire length of the California Road on Sept 6th, 2019 with Fire Chief Richardson during the visits to all the stations. The route was intentionally taken to identify the risks incurred when traveling on this road.

The last point (for now) is the miraculous drop in call volume. We appear to have dropped from 12 calls to 2 in just a few years.

How does the consultant account for such a drastic drop in call volume?

Response from EMT

Since 2013 when White Lake last attended to 12 calls in a year, the call volume has been constantly declining. To provide a definitive answer why the number of calls is declining is very difficult and could be related to a number, of factors, including that the residents in the area are taking the fire safety messaging seriously to prevent fires from occurring. Another reason is the fact that the residents, both permanent and seasonal, just have not had the necessity to call the fire service for assistance.

The drop in call volume is actual statistics provided by the OFMEM, which is based on the Standard Incident Report that is generated each time the LHFS responds to an incident. This data is based on actuality and cannot not manipulated in anyway. Between 2016 and 2018 the LHFS did not respond to any trailer fires in the township.

Let's be serious here. This cannot be accomplished without data manipulation. You have obviously stopped or adjusted scenarios where station 5 is paged.

Response from EMT

It must be noted that under no circumstances did EMT, manipulate any data that was provided to them during this fire service review.

2019 shows only 2 calls listed but for some strange reason the graph showing calls not recorded ends at 2018.

Response from EMT

The 2016 to 2018 is data that was acquired directly from the OFMEM and was the main basis for the report. In late 2019, when LHFS's year ends at the end of October, that data was forwarded to EMT for inclusion in the report. This information is based on information from the CriSys dispatch data for 2019 and does not include the in-depth information that is provided by the OFMEM. The OFMEM historically does not release data from the previous year until close to the end of the current year.

How many calls were not recorded in 2019?
Why are 2019 stats even listed under these circumstances?

Response from EMT

The 2019 data that was provided, included every event in which LHFS apparatus were dispatched to an incident. If a fire apparatus is dispatched to an incident by the Smiths Falls Fire Dispatch Centre, that event is automatically recorded in the Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) Program, and to remove or alter data regarding a call would be a serious offence.

These are basic guidelines for any statistical data collection. You simply cannot omit data that weakens a thesis or agenda.

The MFP states that a false sense of security may exist in the area because of the presence of the hall.

Response from EMT

Residents may believe because there is a fire station, there are adequate numbers of fire fighters to respond to an incident in that area. Currently there are 7 fire fighters on the roster at the White Lake station which below what is required on scene of a structure fire to begin an offensive attack on the fire. The number of firefighters attending training is often 2 or less, creating a concern over how many would actually be available during a call. With so few firefighters, the availability of the firefighters to respond is unknown and unreliable at any time of the day. It is documented that on many occasions, over the past number of years, it was on average, close to 14 minutes before a fire apparatus left the station, and in some situations over thirty minutes, which was excluded from the data as an anomaly.

There could also be a false sense of security in thinking that trained personnel are responding when the data provided, questioned the level of training these members have received. Records show that on average between 0 – 2 members of that station attended training sessions. This is a significant safety issue, under the Health & Safety Act of Ontario.

It seems to me they are attempting to do the same thing by downplaying the risk in the area with manipulated data.

Again I would ask how this compares to former chief Bell's risk assessment?

I must say I am shocked by the discrepancies I have found so far.
How can the township make decisions this important based on such qu

Response from EMT

If you were to compare the information found within Chief Bell's SRA document and the CRA that EMT authored, you would find many similarities

3-

I have had some time to review the draft and was able to attend the information session given by Emergency management and training Inc. After reading the draft report I have found several areas of concern that I believe should be brought to the attention of Council , CAO and Fire Chief before any decisions are made for the future of the L.H.F.S .

I will start near the beginning in Section 1 Figure. 2 Population density maps provided by Emergency management training. Which clearly illustrates that area surrounding White lake is not only Considered High density but also appears to be the largest and most dense as far as population goes. (2016 census) . It must also be noted that these populations statistics do NOT include seasonal dwellings which is one of the guidelines that The Ontario Fire Marshall's Office outlines in their Guidelines under worksheet 4 A : Demographic profile (see link below).

"Demographic profile characteristics to consider include: age, culture, education, socio-economics, transient populations or other unique population characteristics in your community."

<https://www.mcscs.jus.gov.on.ca/english/OfficeFireMarshal/LegislationDirectivesandTechnicalGuidelines/TechnicalGuidelinesandReports/TG022019CommunityRiskAssessmentGuideline.html#Toc14102219>

As I'm sure you are all aware , from April - October the population in White Lake significantly increases .Which puts Station 5 almost directly in the middle of one of the largest and dense communities in the entire township.

see diagram below :



“In the summer months, the population could increase by 5,000 to 7,000 seasonal residents who take residence at any of the 10 campgrounds with over 300 trailers and 1,049 seasonal dwellings both on, and off, the water.” I do not believe this is an accurate number .as I was able to find some figures just from cedar cove alone Via cedar cove Website :”The resort now offers 264 seasonal campsites, 8 short-term campsites, 6 seasonal rental cottages, 3 seasonal rental RV's, 138 dock slips, and a brand new lodge (rebuilt in 2011 as a result of a fire) that houses the Store and The Lakeside Grill.” The adjacent park , 3-mile bay tent and trailer have at minimum 50 sites, as well as the snowbird summer haven resort on Peneshula road that houses another 30 R.V. sites .**To say that there are only 300 trailers within the WHOLE township is highly misleading.**

1. Education – Fire safety education is the key to mitigating the fire and life hazards before they start. With the growth of the community, how will the municipality continue to meet the fire safety educational needs of the community?

2. **Inspections and Enforcement** – If the public education program does not prove effective, then the next step is for the fire department to enforce fire safety requirements through inspections leading to possible charges under the Act.

3. **Emergency Response** – If the first two lines of defense fail for whatever reason, the community, through its fire department, should be prepared to respond in an efficient and effective manner to put the fire out and/or mitigate the emergency itself. By evaluating the effectiveness of the fire stations, staff, and equipment, this report will be able to make recommendations for related efficiency.

Moving on to Section 2.1 where we include the importance of our Fire education , inspections , and emergency response. Please ask yourself what happens to our top 3 lines of defense when we eliminate all 3 from the white lake area?

What happens to call volumes when public education is eliminated or significantly reduced ?

You will hear the topic of “Mutual Aid “ and “Automatic aid “ mentioned but these 3 lines of defense are **NOT** covered by any Mutual aid or automatic aid agreements to my knowledge.

Section 2.4.3

2.4.3 Opportunities

- Lanark Highlands Fire Service has a region-wide mutual aid and fire services agreement in place in which it can call on neighboring fire departments for assistance whenever resources are exhausted and/ or there is an inability to handle the situation in an efficient and effective manner. ○ This type of resource is not meant to supplement LHFS resources on a regular basis. Mutual aid is to be used when no other options are available, such as automatic aid and fire services agreements. I think when we speak about mutual aid and automatic aid we need to clarify because there is a vast difference in the two. And I think without a proper audit on the stations we plan on utilizing for mutual aid and or automatic aid I think it would be in the best interests of the residents to have statistics from those respective departments to ensure that in fact we are not relying on another service that is not adequately equipped for the types of response within the white lake area . **Those detailed statistics are NOT found inside the Lanark Highlands Master fire Plan.**

Section 2.6.2 External Surveys

Input from the community is vital as it gives the Fire Department an accurate indication of how the public perceives the Department and suggests areas for improvement from those with first-hand interaction with the Department.

The following input was received:

- Most respondents see the LHFS as a dedicated and professional service
- The top five priorities noted by external respondents are:
 - That the Fire Department responds in a timely manner
 - **The Fire Department is able to recruit additional firefighters.**
 - the presence of the Fire Department within the community in relation to public education and related safety training.

- o Provide training so the firefighters are able to perform their expected duties.
- o the cost of the fire service.

The report includes some data from an external (as well as internal) survey and second on the list of concerns to residents was the ability to recruit additional firefighters. This has been an ongoing issue for station 5 for some time. For the past 6 months we have been Given a "wait and see" approach with no attempts at recruitment until this very report has been released.

It was not very long ago that station 5 had an active 15-member station. Council made a decision

to cut this number from 15 back to 8 members with changes to the E.R bylaw. It should be no surprise that the station is under staffed.

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TABLE 6: Attendance at Training Sessions Station	Average Number of Firefighters at Training Sessions	Number of Firefighters Assigned to that Station
Station 1 – Lanark Village	8 to 10	16
Station 2 - Middleville	10 to 12	17
Station 3 – McDonald Corners	12 to 14	18
Station 4 - Tatlock	8 to 10	13
Station 5 – White Lake	0 to 2	8

When looking at table 6 it would appear to show station 5 members with an extremely low attendance record during training sessions. This is where it gets extremely questionable and makes me question the validity of the report given.

If you would take a moment and go to **page 215** buried deeply near the end of the report there is more information on this subject and its data that is lumped in with charts concerning the building at station 5 .I have copied and pasted here :

gency Management & Training Inc. Township of Lanark Highlands Fire Master Plan 2 0 5

sewer check valve	X
post disaster construction	X
smoke and CO alarms	X
clothes washer/ dryer	X
bunker gear washer/ dryer	x
signs of mold	X
garbage storage	X

flammable liquid storage
condition of exterior walls

X
X

Other comments

Consider closing this station and make an EMS response station for first responders? Station hasn't responded to a call since Nov 2018 and this date was Sept 6th 19 (to be confirmed). Enter into paid fire agreement for coverage from Mississippi Mills FD. Most residents are seasonal. Only seven members to this station. Station on dead end road, no secondary means of egress. Need for accessible dry hydrant in the area. Tanker is a 2006 model with 4,000 km on it. Move it to another station. Mini pumper is overweight and overloaded. Items on top not secured properly. Equipment should be removed from the truck and weighed. Mini has studded tires which are illegal in Ontario. **Need to check stats on this station X 3 yrs. How many attended, who does attend calls? Incomplete training records or no records at all.**

My question is WHY would we publish an average attendance of 0-2 firefighters in the table when it clearly states on page 215 that records were incomplete or no records at all. What is the time frame for these statistics from table 6 ?

In fact when you review the section on building audits it actually shows Station 5 as one of the top stations as far as the condition of the station goes.

Section 4 page 72 .Department staffing

In this report There are 11 recommendations geared towards the ongoing issue of recruitment. I have copied and pasted below these recommendations

- **Placing ads in local media such as newspapers, rate-payers association newsletters and websites along with working with local radio stations to provide public service announcements about the recruitment.**
- **Posting notices on social media such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and the Township's website including increasing the fire department profile by posting pictures of the firefighters in action and statistics on social media outlets.**
- **Develop a recruitment video and use local students to help develop and film the video as part of their required community service time.**

- Start to recruit new members when they are young by starting a Junior Fire Fighter Club. This has been very successful in the United States and is beginning to grow in Canada as a means of gaining interest in the fire service at an early age. The Lanark Youth Centre would be a great asset in seeing this to fruition. Make sure those that join the Club feel that they are important and welcomed to the department and are valued members of the fire service family.
- Promote and conduct an information night at a couple of the stations for potential new members to drop by to see what being a firefighter is all about. Encourage attendees to bring the entire family and have activities for children to promote that the fire service is a family unit.
- During the information sessions, members of the department could provide tours of the stations and apparatus. Administration would outline the expectations of members of the department such as the number of fire calls and training sessions they must attend; the honorarium that is paid; satisfaction gained knowing that you're helping your neighbor on the worst day of their lives; describe the lifelong friendships that are started; understand what true teamwork is like and the bond that is garnered between firefighters
- Diversity can only thrive in a welcoming, inclusive environment. This will require a plan on making new members feel accepted and welcomed. There needs to be a change in attitudes and overall fire department culture. Involve some of the female firefighters in the recruitment process. Include a focus on visible minorities that live in the community.
- Fire departments tend to recruit in a one-dimensional fashion which is not always successful. Departments need to adapt the recruitment strategies to better suit the individuals in the community and recruit those that believe in the department's Mission and Values.
- Focus on Millennials; this generation can be a very caring, passionate, and driven generation. As they are social media savvy, a great way to reach out to this demographic is through social media.
- Establish a recruitment committee comprising of both male and female firefighters of the LHFS.
- The building of new fire stations may pique a potential new recruit's interest and could be the turning factor for some to wish to join the department.

Listed below are what the report identifies as what L.H.F.S is using **currently** as recruitment tools.

"The LHFS has had an ongoing recruitment program, which consists of signs being posted at the entrances to the Township and a notice placed on the Township's website. Members of the department have also been "spreading the word" that the fire department is looking for new members. For the most part these efforts have not been very successful, thus far."

I would certainly NOT consider this as a valid attempt at recruitment. It was agreed upon in a one on one discussion with a member Of Emergency Management staff after the presentation that it would only make sense to exhaust all attempts at recruitment before closing the doors.

This is a very important section as It is my opinion that most of the Problems shown in the report with station 5 reflects staffing , retention and availability. These are the foundations of any Fire department and the Lack of attention to this matter has resulted in the possible closure of this station Not by any fault of the dedicated men and women who serve this station.

I sincerely hope with the interests of residents in mind (seasonal as well as permanent) the appropriate people review these concerns I have raised and bring them forward for discussion before any permanent decisions are made.

As with anything , it would not be fair to criticize without offering viable solutions . I would be more than happy to meet with you to discuss some other alternatives and/or ideas that would benefit all.

Sincerely

[Fire Chief reached out to have the Consultants EMT Inc answer the above questions](#)

[Answers to the questions and concerns from the consultants](#)

Response from EMT

Thank you for your recent email regarding the Fire Master Plan. Rather than align our answers into one overall answer, I would like to address each point you have raised individually.

May we start by saying that it is very evident that you are very interested in the operation of the LHFS and your resolve to see Station 5 remain active.

Please note the following:

Re: Population Density / Demographics

The population density in the White Lake area. It should be noted that using the legend will give an approximate size for the area you are referencing as having 184 or greater residents. Its land mass is approximately 62 square kilometers which less than 3 residents per square kilometer. Having a population of 184 or greater in that size of area, is not considered as being densely populated. While that area may have higher number of residents than in other areas of the community, it is not high at all, and has not created a significant demand in fire calls as seen in the very low number of calls that Station 5 responds to.

The OFMEM's Community Risk Assessment (CRA), Worksheet 4b that has been completed, does identify that there are 5,000 to 7,000 seasonal residents throughout the Township and Worksheet 10 identifies means in which the fire service can prevent fires from occurring in these areas through public education. Throughout the CRA the seasonal population is mentioned in one form or another.

Re: Number of Trailers

Regarding the number of trailers in the township the FMP states there are over 300 trailers in the township, not that there are only 300. There are in the neighbourhood of 300 that are registered in the township's tax roll as paying taxes. Those that are in private campgrounds are not documented as they do not pay taxes, it's the property owner that the trailers are situated on, that is registered with the township. There is no doubt that there are over 300 trailers in Lanark Highlands, but a definitive number of them is not available.

Re: 3 Lines of Defence

In response to the 3 lines of defence, public education and Fire Code enforcement does not end if the station closes. It is to be an ongoing initiative as promoted by the OFMEM. One of the ways EMT believes that this may become a proactive initiative is by the Township acquiring a Fire Prevention/Public Fire Life Safety Educator. At present the Fire Chief acts as the Fire Prevention Officer and with his workload he is only able to respond to complaints and requests for inspections only. The new position will assist in establishing a very effective fire prevention and public education program and help prevent fires, throughout the township.

The CRA that was completed identifies means of public education not only for certain areas of the township. The document is all encompassing of the entire township, no matter which fire service provides fire protection for that area.

The third line of defence, Emergency Response is not being eliminated either. EMT is confident that the township will ensure that there is fire protection for the residents of White Lake whether they choose to leave the station open or close it and initiate an automatic aid agreement with a surrounding municipality. EMT does not believe the station would be closed without fire protection being in place.

Re: Automatic vs Mutual Aid

The first 2 lines of defence are handled by the home municipality, the third line of defence may be handled by the home municipality by having its own fire service or it may contract out the service through automatic aid agreements. Mutual Aid is not a part of the 3 lines of defence, that takes place after the initial emergency response and it is found that the resources on scene are not adequate to handle the situation. It should not be considered as an inclusion within the 3 lines of defence.

Re: FD Resources

Before any automatic aid agreement is put in place, EMT is confident that the Township Council and the FC would ensure that the responding fire service is able handle any responses in that area. If they don't have a specific resource and Lanark Township does, then LHFS could respond to support the initial responding FD. If neither fire department does, and another fire service does, that department could respond under the Mutual Aid Plan.

At present Lanark Highlands does not have the proper fire apparatus responding out of either the White Lake or Tatlock Stations to properly handle a structure fire. The outside fire services bordering Lanark Township, are currently responding with the proper apparatus to handle any structure fire.

The Fire Master Plan is not developed to examine the resources of other fire services, it is a document to make recommendations on how the Township of Lanark could better provide fire protection to the residents, now and in the future.

Re: Recruitments

In response to your comment on the lack of new recruits being assigned to Station 5. Council chose to change the number of fire fighters assigned to the Station 5 to 8 personnel. EMT is not privy as to why that number was chosen. Since 2013 the Station 5 has responded to 12 or less fire calls each year. In 2019 there was only 2, the call volume is very low for that station, and the lack of calls may be one of the reasons Council chose to make this change in the level of service. As you mentioned the staffing change is within the Establishing and Regulating By-Law which was passed a few years ago and is now due to be updated. Neither the present CAO/Clerk or the Fire Chief were involved the last time the E & R By-Law was updated.

If Council chooses to increase the staffing of the stations to 19, a section in the FMP was dedicated on firefighter recruitments and retention. EMT is confident that when the township implements some of the recruitment suggestions, there should be an increase in applicant interest within the Township, however, the local area of Station 5 may not have adequate able bodied and interested persons to apply.

Re: Station 5 Training

EMT did check the stats as noted in the Station review and that is how the 0 to 2, present at training came from. If there were more, then the proper training reports were not entered into the system and these stats are based on attendance since the computer system was implemented for training documentation. Prior to that time, the hard copy training records in the station were reviewed and many files as mentioned, lacked proper training documentation.

As you are aware, training is a very important requirement of the fire service. At the same time, it is also important to be able to maintain the skill sets required to perform those tasks when called upon. If a station responds to as few fire calls as White Lake is, then this skill set diminishes and when called upon to use it, there is a high possibility that the fire fighter may not be able to perform it properly or to the level they were first trained to. This could lead to injuries if not to the fire fighter doing the task, others on the fire ground.

The Ministry of Labour is very specific on training and the need for documentation. It is this documentation that will be one of the first requests from investigators if a fire fighter is injured. Charges could be laid if it is found that the Municipality, a supervisor or the fire fighter were negligent when it pertains to training.

Re: Station 5 Condition

Yes, Station 5 is in good condition, but that does not change the fact there are very few fire calls in the area, there is a lack of firefighters, improper fire fighting apparatus in service for structure fires and there is a lack of training documentation. Although the building is in good condition, it's location at the end of a dead end road is not the most appropriate, and it does require renovation to ensure it meets

standards to provide decontamination showers, appropriate washroom facilities for men and women, proper storage of bunker gear, etc.

Re: Exhausting a Recruitment Drive

EMT has identified the means of initiating an aggressive recruitment drive and it is Council's decision in the route they would like to see taken. Demographics of the community show an aging population, which are usually less likely to become engaged in a physically demanding role as a firefighter.

Station 5's issues go further than just staffing. Council will look at the entire picture of the station including staffing, the need to purchase a proper fire apparatus, training, recruitment successes, fire fighter retention, number of fire calls, costs of operating the station, condition of the station, condition of the apparatus, the availability of entering into an automatic aid agreement vs remaining status quo etc.

At one time there were 8 fire stations in the township and through a thorough analysis, council chose to close 3 of them. Once again, council are presented with going through the same process.

EMT understands your passion to see Station 5 remain a viable fire station, however, in our independent analysis, this station is no longer viable. We have presented Council with the data and facts that were used for analysis and review. Council with the assistance of the CAO/Clerk and the Fire Chief will sift through the information and make decisions they believe are in the best interest of the citizens of the township, be they permanent or seasonal.

Kind regards

4-

I spent some time yesterday speaking to some White Lake residents.

I spoke to a family who called 911 for a suspected heart attack for their father a few years ago. They said they waited close to an hour for an ambulance. Apparently no page to station 5 was issued.

I'm also hearing more recent stories about medical and MVA calls where assistance from station 5 was not paged. In these cases our residents were expecting response from Station 5 personnel. They are aware that equipment such as defibrillators exist locally, in some cases only minutes away.

Is it factual that these emergencies are no longer being paged out to Station 5? If so why? Were there no fire fighters available at the time? Were they all reported as out of the area? Surely their response time would have been quicker than close to an hour.

These incidents highlight my biggest concern. We are spending far too much time focusing on fire and not enough on medical and accidents. As a former fire fighter I can only recall a few full structure fires.

One of these was Cedar Cove where quick scene assessment and staging strategy may have kept the fire from quickly spreading out of control.

That said I couldn't begin to guess how many accidents or medical calls I attended or was aware of. I have attended many medical calls that required only a few fire fighters to make a difference.

Two fire fighters can operate a defibrillator and handle CPR until ambulance arrival. Those few moments are, as we all know, vital in survival statistics. Why are we not examining those issues.

Hoping you can verify or confirm the circumstances surrounding these reports.

Response from Staff

Apologies, I'm just getting back in to this as I have been away for a few days. I did just want to clarify that although you have possibly not heard back from other staff or the chief, I assure you that I have been consulting with them on all of these issues in my responses to you. It just saves duplication of effort.

I did ask the Chief about this matter and there are a few variables. On some occasions, station 5 is not paged out if it is an ambulance responding in the area or from Renfrew. The ambulance service is not municipal-municipal or county-county. It is a provincial service and the closest unit responds. In some cases where the call may come in from Renfrew County etc where a service does not provide medical, we would not be paged out. I guess what I'm trying to highlight here is that if the station is not paged, we cannot attend. That is up to the emergency operators to engage our services. I am really speculating on this particular item, so you would have to engage the party responsible for contacting the emergency services in respect to this matter. What I can confirm is that if our stations were/are paged out, we would have a response.

I some of your points below surrounding medical are valid. The Chief actually has some ideas and strategies surrounding medical services for the area. If I can be candid for a bit, I believe that everyone is focused on the plan and what it says or doesn't say. However, staff has not had the opportunity to provide any input on the recommendations yet. I can tell you that the Chief has been a big proponent of the concept of providing medical services in your area if in-house fire services can not be provided for various reasons. He also commented to me that it may attract more volunteers in that regard as well. This is currently a consideration, but the Chief needs the opportunity to present some of his ideas to council.

While the consultant's report is independent, the Chief will get his say as well. I think that those are 2 perspectives that are required. One is a very matter of fact point of view and the other is based on his interactions with the public, firefighters and others.

We do strive to provide the best possible services to everyone in the Township and there are always opportunities and avenues to explore. With or without station closures.

Thank you!

5-

I think the point of this thread is there is no fire plan for the folks of White LakeGod, and only god, help us since Lanark Highlands has abandoned us and abdicated their critical fire protection and first response duties to the mercy of other townships ...

See you on the 7th.

Received as comment

6-

My support is for Option 1 Comments:

Re White Lake & other: Provide more incentives to become a firefighter

- 1 Encourage firefighters with increased honorariums
- 2 Make training less cumbersome - Advise Fire Marshalls Office that programs need to be different for small rural municipalities where volunteers are relied upon
- 3 Let firefighters speak out without reprimand

Re: Option 3

This plan is made for the city of Ottawa – families are having difficulty to survive now. This will be a tax burden for us and our children and children’s children. Where do you think these resources are coming from? This option is typical of government spending.

-As a property owner since 1992 on Lakeshore Road, I’m greatly concerned regarding the potential closure of the fire station on Snye Road. This is a potentially dangerous situation.

Response from Staff

I apologize for not responding earlier been a busy few days here at the office. However Thanks so much for the comments. The Cost of the Master Fire Plan was \$ 46,584 and was approved by Council on Aug 27 2019.If you have any further questions please do not hesitate to reach out.

7-

We are worried about the draft fireplan. Closing the fire station on Snye Road clearly leaves the residents in this part of the township vulnerable.

We are summer residents but, as you know, we pay property taxes too, all year. Whatever the time of year, the services are scant, but the firehall on Snye is one service we can point to. Closing the station would not serve residents well. The summer resident population more than doubles the winter population, and we need to be taken into consideration. I do not think that asking Renfrew to provide fire services to our part of the Highlands is tenable.

As you know, Tatlock is a good 45 minutes from Three Mile Bay, and that using California Rd which is almost unusable. I imagine a fire truck would have to go the long way, using Bellamy, so the trip would take much longer.

Some of our neighbours talk about seceding from the township (and county) and joining Renfrew, but we know that is more easily said than done. We are just now getting used to the municipal reorganization implemented by the Province in 2000. Nevertheless, closing the Snye Road firehall is a hot topic and such talk about secession highlights the strong feelings of the electorate.

It is important that in developing a plan, any plan, the needs of all of the township be considered. At this point we do not think that has been done. We are very concerned. Please reconsider.

Received as comment

8-

I am writing to you regarding the potential closure of our fire hall on Snye road.

At the moment I am a seasonal resident but soon to be a permanent resident on Lakeshore Rd.

I do not believe it is in the best interest, safety or well being of our community for the fire hall to be closed. We as taxpayers are entitled to have our current emergency and fire services maintained by the municipality.

A key responsibility of our municipality for our fires and emergency services is to provide an improved recruiting platform and to provide training programs to encourage increased staffing of this facility. The White Lake community represents a very large portion of the tax base in Lanark Highlands. It's time for you to recognize and respect this.

Received as comment

9-

Good day, just to add our name to the list...we are not pleased that this plan seems to be pushing ahead without the seasonal residents active.

I am not sure how you will follow your KPI policy if this happens even with your margin of 20%

Received as comment

10-

It was brought to our attention that there is discussion of closing down Snye Rd Fire Hall.

We purchased our cottage on Snye Rd in 2013 with the comfort of knowing there was an emergency response team just down the road.

Our oldest son was born with multiple medical complexities. Some of these complexities that my son deals with daily are a tracheostomy tube, feeding tube, kidney complications, heart complications, developmental/growth delays, and he is deaf blind. With the combination of these complex medical needs, this means that he is at a much higher risk of having a medical emergency. Although we are usually seasonal residents, we are concerned without this firehall, the emergency time, if one were to arise, would be significantly longer being dispatched to another firehall.

We wanted to voice our concern regarding this possible closure since this would not only affect our son but also the many local residents in White Lake.

Response from Staff

Thank you for reaching out and contacting our Fire Chief. Let me start by reassuring you that he and I both genuinely care about the White Lake residents and so does Council.

Your email hit the Chief and I pretty hard. We have kids or grandkids etc. as well and certainly not with the challenges that you face. Your email is a text book example about one of the consultant's comments. "Currently, people of White Lake have a false sense of security as simply having a fire hall does not guarantee service." Currently, there is a roster of 8 individuals. The report found that on average 0-2 firefighters were attending training or meetings. Of the roster, there are only about 4 active firefighters and the Fire Underwriters Survey requires a minimum of 15.

Let me break down those 4 firefighters for you. One is in Florida throughout the winter and is of a senior maturity and is limited in his capacity to perform certain emergency duties. Another lives in North Gower and is a career firefighter in Ottawa. He is available for response on some weekends and anytime he might be at the cottage. The third lives in McNabb Braeside (as I understand it). The fourth is the lone firefighter that is permanently available. He understands this and I know he cares a lot about

the residents of White Lake. He is also your councillor and is really working hard to do what's best for your community.

With all of the above, just because there is a building, we have not in a long time had an adequate service for you. This is why the consultant is suggesting an agreement with other municipalities (13 minutes away and 20 minutes away) to provide emergency services with a host of adequate personnel.

I could not begin to understand the challenges that you have with your son. If called upon, we want to ensure that we are sending as many firefighters as possible to help you with your child. In all honesty and being entirely genuine, given the current situation and staffing levels.....Having a building staffed with a handful of firefighters that may or may not be able to attend would prevent me from sleeping at night.

Unfortunately, there is prevailing commentary in the public that may or may not adequately identify the issues that we currently have in your area. This is unfortunate because the focus becomes on the building itself and not the service.

I would love to chat with you or meet with you at some point. I would happily make my way out one day to discuss and walk you through some of the details of the options presented if you would have me.

I apologize for the long winded email. From the bottom of my heart, I really would like to extend that we have the best interests of the residents of White Lake in mind. I would recommend that you review the draft plan and familiarize yourself with the statistics and rationale contained therein. We asked the consultants that if they were to recommend anything, that a lay person could review the rationale and arrive at a similar conclusion.

11-

I am writing to OPPOSE the closure of our firehall on Snye Road. And I oppose the serious neglect of our neighbourhood by the township in **finding an effective way to provide prompt emergency fire and medical services**. The many permanent and summer residents here deserve the protection, within **good standard response times**, that is available to other residents of our township. Fire services and

emergency medical response are an important responsibility of our municipal government. The options considered to date appear to be quite limited. I am certainly not the person to figure out the resources required to meet those needs. — **This is the job of Lanark Highlands Council.** Surely there are other ways to provide EFFECTIVE and TIMELY response to fire and medical emergencies.

It is NOT APPROPRIATE to ABANDON residents (and taxpayers!) because the problem is difficult. Yes, it may cost money. Yes, it might require new ideas. But it has to be done.

What about NOT approaching fire and emergency services the way they have always been done? What about:

- recruiting residents from a variety of backgrounds (medical, nursing, police, military etc.), ages and abilities to create a team of mixed skills to handle different elements of volunteer services?
- paying to provide training closer to home for several years in a row to establish the needed base of volunteers?
- a recruitment letter to all residents with information about needed volunteer services?
- recruitment sessions at the Community Centre?

- a recruitment letter to all residents that outlines the support and incentives for volunteers?

- paving California Road to bring us closer to the Tatlock Station?
- adding helicopter response for those residents of the Township who are made remote by the road system?

I strongly encourage my Township Council to proceed with the necessary innovative thinking, planning and service delivery to protect White Lake - Lanark Township residents.

Received as comment

The Council of Lanark Highlands Township is very close to closing the firehall just up the road from here, leaving me, my 200+ neighbours and also the many 600+ summer residents of our neighbourhood without appropriate fire protection and emergency services response.

The recommended action in the Draft Fire Master Plan is to build a new station that is **one hour driving time away from our community.**

From the current firehall on Snye Road all residents of south shore of White Lake can be reached in 14-15 minutes, which, according to the Fire Master Plan, is the appropriate standard.

But the authors of the recommendations seem to think it is appropriate to replace my firehall with a firehall an hour away!

It seems that the reason to replace my local firehall with one that is an hour away is that it is hard to recruit volunteer firefighters for our station. But I have seen no exploration of new ways to attract volunteer firefighters, provide the training locally etc. They have simply put up a sign and waited for people to sign up.

I have written to my Council members to strongly encourage them in the necessary innovative thinking, planning and service delivery to protect White Lake - Lanark Township residents.

Can you help support our local firehall? What do you recommend?

This email was sent to the local MPP from the same individual as previous email

No Comment from Staff as it was addressed to the MPP

12-

I am most concerned with the closure of our firehall and the safety and protection of our property? As you know we are very far from any other firehall and the response time is of great concern to us. Also we pay an excessive amount of taxes with little in return for it! So if you go ahead with it's closure then we expect a substantial decrease in our municipal taxes to compensate for an increase in our house insurance.

Knowing you will decide accordingly, I appreciate your time and devotion to a proper solution taking all of our suggestions into consideration.

Received as comment

13-

My husband and I are very concerned about the proposal to close the fire hall on Snye Road. We feel that it is very short sighted and urge the Township to reconsider.

Received as comment

14-

As a property owner since 1992 on Lakeshore Road, I'm greatly concerned regarding the potential closure of the fire station on Snye Road. This is a potentially dangerous situation.

Received as comment

15-

I feel compelled to write to you about your plan to close our fire station on Snye Road.

I have been resident at that end of White Lake for 20 ish years. I have seen the services of the fire hall used several times as first responders and as fire fighters.

Have the implications of closing this fire station really be analyzed?

We are quite a remote area at that end of the lake. In addition to the residents, there is a dense population within the two trailer parks that exist in Three Mile Bay which in my opinion creates additional, very high risk of accidents and of fire.

In addition, we are land-locked at that part of the lake. Saving a property is one concern but more so is the risk of fire spread. As you know, the environmental changes that are taking place these days create very dry dangerous conditions for forest fire. By closing this fire hall you are putting us residents at great risk of not being able to escape a very dangerous situation.

I do not support the closure of the fire station and I strongly suggest you consider these important points I make to you. Us residents in that area provide a large sum of property tax dollars to Lanark and we receive very little services in return.

Received as comment

16-

-a short note to inform you that, I a resident of Tatlock, am totally against

the closing of our fire Hall. for a great number of reasons.

Where money comes from to build a new Hall to the dedication and professionalism of the tatlock fire department cannot be matched.

this in short is my opinion.

Received as comment

17-

I've had a chance to review the new Master Fire Plan and I have a few concerns. The consultants recommendation to close several Fire Stations (option 3, 9.1.2.3) and build a new Station on HWY 511 at the French line will only increase response times for Middleville and Tatlock Fire Stations. I think an upgrade at the Tatlock Station makes more sense than building a remote Fire Station on HWY 511 that would cost in the millions. Does the township own property near this location ? Does the township have funds for something this expensive ? I didn't see anything in the report about utilizing the existing

Municipal garage on the Galbraith Road near Middleville. Could the Middleville Fire Station not take over a portion of this building ? Perhaps money could be spent to expand and upgrade this facility ? Have you looked at where volunteers live in relation to the Fire Stations ? It wouldn't be all volunteers, but I think you would find that they are clustered around the current locations or within a few kms.

With option 3 and having a new remote Fire Station on HWY 511 the consultants are recommending that sections of the township be covered by "automatic aid agreements". This is not shown very clearly on figure 17. In the eastern part of township there is a fairly large population around Clayton Lake, Taylor Lake and the Galbraith Road areas. I do not see a cost for this agreement from Mississippi Mills to cover this area. If the automatic aid agreement is similar to the "Apparatus Fee Structure" (page 145) it would be very expensive every time the Mississippi Mills Fire department is paged out with Lanark Highlands in this area (5K annual stand by fee, \$465./hr/truck plus Firefighters wages). The same question regarding cost for the "automatic aid agreements" with North Fontenac in the West and McNab Braeside in the north east part of the township (White Lake). I assume we have standard mutual aid agreements with the Fire Departments from these Municipalities now for extra support when needed. Are these townships prepared to be outside of their own coverage areas when responding to events in Lanark Highlands ? Are there any response times available for these outside Fire Departments that would support this recommendation?

The consultants also recommend a part time Deputy Fire Chief. Would it not be more beneficial to have someone full time who is able to support and cover for the Fire Chief at all times rather than just 24 hours per week ? I suspect that if you did go ahead with a part time position, that person would end up working more than the 24 hours as suggested.

Lastly I do not see the need for an aerial apparatus in our township at this time. I think it should be status quo with support from Mississippi Mills. We do not need an expensive unit like this in our fleet.

Received as comment

18-

It does clarify a few things.

Your last paragraph really gets to the heart of the matter for us. This is not the time for council to hear from residents because so many of the residents who will be impacted are unaware of what is happening.

With our three campgrounds alone we have over 1,500 people that we cannot reach right now as those campgrounds are closed for winter. Are those people not entitled to be heard?

Many of our seasonal cottagers are not part of any community associations and we cannot contact them. The township has contact information for all residents. Have you sent out an update to all stakeholders?

Surely something this important should demand all efforts on the township's part to communicate your message. We certainly get our tax bills on time. Why not send an explanation of the proposed changes to all residents? A document filed on the website isn't sufficient. Realistically how many people monitor the township website.

I genuinely appreciate your efforts and communication Ryan. You are the only one who is showing our community the simple courtesy of responding.

Received as comment

19-

I was reading over part of the Fire Plan, in particularly the section about recruitment and retention. I used to be a firefighter and ambulance attendant in another rural community until shortly after I had my first child.

I joined that department because I was recruited. The fire chief knew I had a background in health, rescue, and first aid and was a first aid instructor and trained lifeguards. He asked me on several occasions to consider joining. I was invited to the station to see the place and made to feel welcome. That is a key factor of recruitment! Here I have heard of people being interested in joining the department and told "download the form, it's online". If you want a great team you also need to actively recruit people that have some of the skills or have the aptitude to become great fire fighters. Woo them, don't expect them all to come to you because they saw an ad. I think that active recruitment of individuals needs to be added to the recruitment plan,

I like the platoon idea. Our ambulance roster worked on that basis and it worked well. It was easier to commit because you had a defined time to be on call, and time you knew you had a break and could commit to other things.

I also like the emergency medical response idea. I won't ever fire fight again, I am not interested. But, after 30 years working on and off in health and emergency response I would be interested in only doing only medical first response once my youngest is in school. It is a good idea because it helps link people to what they are interested in, which increases you pool of staff.

Some people only want to fire fight, some only want to do medical response, some want to do both. Some of the retention ideas are great, but the suggestion to have treatment for PTSD should be implemented immediately.

As a property owner since 1992 on Lakeshore Road, I'm greatly concerned regarding the potential closure of the fire station on Snye Road. This is a potentially dangerous situation. Please advise on the plans.

Thank you,

Received as comment

20-

White Lake Property Owners Association Visit our website at www.wlol.ca

March 6th, 2020

To: Reeve McLaren, and the Township of Lanark Highlands Council

Subject: Lanark Highlands Draft Fire Master Plan

Dear Reeve and Council,

The White Lake Property Owners Association Board of Directors wishes to express their concern regarding the contents of the draft Fire Master Plan (FMP) completed by Emergency Management Training Inc. specifically regarding the references to the White Lake Station 5 and its valued members. It is incumbent upon the Township of Lanark Highlands Council to review all relevant evidence and information to make informed decisions regarding the legislated provision of critical services to residents based on the needs and circumstances of our community.

While the objectives of the plan, as stated, were to “guide council and the fire department in making decisions that best meet the needs of the community,” the plan does not provide additional relevant information to assist Council in “evaluating all aspects” in determining the most effective types and levels of fire emergency services required for our community.

The FMP acknowledges the following key points:

- • Lanark Highlands has a sound financial base from which to draw.
- • Lanark Highlands Fire Service is unable to meet staffing requirements on a consistent basis.
- • Many of our fire halls are aging and do not meet industry standards.
- • *A more proactive approach is needed to recruit new members.*

The FMP fails to accurately identify and take into consideration:

- The geographic locations and significant assessed value of residential properties. The FMP does acknowledge ability of our current tax base to provide a sound financial base for our emergency services.
- The fire risks commonly associated with a wildland/urban interface. This impacts a large portion of the municipality.
- That Mississippi Mills Pakenham Fire Station is 30 minutes from the White Lake area. This response time exceeds what can be achieved through local resources.
- The “increased risk” associated with large increases in seasonal residents and visitors. Most of the significant influx of seasonal residents and guests noted as ranging between 5000-7000 persons is located within the White Lake catchment area; White Lake hosts 2/5ths of all campgrounds located within Lanark Highlands. One of these hosts approximately 1200 – 1500 persons during the summer months.

Page 2 of 3

- The significant financial impacts on both residential and commercial insurance policy holders related to potential fire hall closures.
- Estimates for costs involving renovations or upgrades of the present fire halls compared to the estimated millions in expense required for brand new fire halls.

There are issues related to inadequate volunteer fire fighter staffing levels in the fire halls as noted throughout the document. However, there is an emphasis on and repeated references to an “inflated” sense of emergency services protection available for the White Lake Area.

Since 2011, the White Lake area has witnessed a steady decrease in the emergency service resources available to our community. This began with the removal of the marine vessel that provided timely emergency response to Lanark Highlands residents, visitors and neighboring municipalities who access White Lake.

On April 13, 2012, a letter to White Lake area residents from Mayor McLaren stated that priorities for the area would include:

- Ensuring emergency response through a volunteer fire fighter recruitment and retention program.
- Installation of dry hydrants throughout the White Lake area to ensure year-round water supply.
- Fire protection agreements with neighboring municipalities to enhance emergency services.

As of the date of this letter:

- The provision of reliable dry hydrants to ensure year-round water supply throughout the White Lake district has not been achieved.
- There was never a formal volunteer firefighter recruitment and retention program effectively developed and implemented for the area. Many of our previous community volunteer applicants were not responded to by the municipal administration.
- **The current fire protection agreement with McNab Braeside is limited to fire suppression services only. It does not reflect addressing vehicle accidents or medical response.**

The Plan acknowledges that the Township of Lanark Highlands is not unique in the challenges we are facing related to achieving a sustainable fire services in rural Ontario. However, we are unique in not fully exploring our options or those successfully implemented by other communities.

The FMP provides council with *options* for their consideration which includes the closure of various community Fire Stations and the costly construction of new fire halls. This will result in an uneven level of emergency services being provided throughout the municipality. It adds a significant burden to rate payers who will face longer wait times for much needed help during a crisis while being financially penalized by insurance companies. At the same time other areas of the township will receive timely responses by trained emergency responders and receive financial relief from high insurance premiums.

The rationale provided emphasizes a lack of sufficient staffing levels as well as the financial savings that could be achieved by reducing maintenance costs, moving equipment to other halls and extending the life of serviceable apparatus. Page 3 of 3

It is incumbent upon the municipal council members to review all relevant information and options before making important decisions such as that of the provision of vital emergency services to area residents. The FMP acknowledges that the provision of adequate numbers of fire fighters in each station directly contributes to effective and safe fire ground operations and that the existing recruitment and retention activities within our fire service have not been formalized nor successful. Council's complete review should include a look at the current type and level of emergency services provided noting that there is the option to establish suppression services that would only require certification at NFPA Level 1. This option could reduce the cost associated with training and equipment and would address recruitment concerns.

Before council determines that the closure of community fire halls is the only solution available we would respectfully request that due consideration first be given to a risk treatment plan that includes investing in our people and utilizing the suggestions provided by Emergency Management Training Inc. for the development and implementation of a formal fire fighter recruitment program to enhance our current staffing levels and the continued provision of vital and timely emergency services to residents.

Regards,

Claire Martel, President White Lake Property Owners Association
Copy to WLPOA Board of Directors

Received as comment