

Greater Sudbury Fire Services - 2021 Volunteer Firefighter Recruitment Overview

Presented To:	Emergency Services Committee
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Meeting Date:	December 8, 2021
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Type:	Presentations
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Report Summary

This report and presentation provides an overview of the Greater Sudbury Fire Services' 2021 volunteer firefighter recruitment.

Relationship to the Strategic Plan, Health Impact Assessment and Community Energy & Emissions Plan (CEEP)

This report refers to operational matters and has no direct connection to the Community Energy and Emissions Plan.

Financial Implications

There are no financial implications associated with this report

Background

This report identifies the new and ongoing initiatives that were utilized during the recruitment including volunteer firefighter participation in the process, media and advanced promotion, and revisions which occurred. It will further identify new ideas that are being considered for implementation into the 2022 recruitment process.

Fire Services Volunteer Firefighter Recruitment Committee

The Volunteer Firefighter Recruitment Committee is a group comprised of both current volunteer firefighters and fire administration staff who met on three different occasions, the first two of which were prior to the recruitment to review new initiatives and enhancements. The recruitment committee provided many ideas for implementation into the 2021 recruitment. A third meeting once the recruitment had completed, provided an overview of the 2021 process, and identified any concerns that could be addressed in future recruitments.

Advertising Strategy

To support the 2021 recruitment process and engage the community on the importance of volunteer firefighters, the following items were implemented:

- **Posters and Post Cards**

Over 1000 posters and post cards were provided to the volunteer firefighters to distribute throughout their community.

- **Banners**

16 Banners were purchased and affixed to the exterior of volunteer fire stations to advertise the recruitment. The banners were 12'X 4' and are reusable for future recruitments. Additional banners will be purchased for the 2022 recruitment as required.

- **Digital Signage Boards**

The following City of Greater Sudbury electronic digital boards were used to promote the recruitment at:

- Bell Park
- City of Greater Sudbury Libraries
- Walden Arena
- Corner of Lasalle and Notre Dame

- **Radio Ads**

Volunteer firefighter recruitment campaign spots were aired on local radio stations at various times throughout the day for the duration of the recruitment campaign.

- **Social Media Campaign**

Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram were used to promote the recruitment with targeted advertising and pop-up notifications across all platforms.

- **Public Service Announcements**

Chief Nicholls completed a public service announcement campaign promoting the recruitment. This was posted to the City's public facing website and social media platforms.

Advertisement Considerations for the 2022 Recruitment:

- Placing the banners at highly visible areas in the community (example: grocery stores)
- Town Hall meetings in stations – returning to open houses in fire stations, specifically those in communities with low applications.

Orientation Sessions

Groups of approximately 25 recruits were invited to attend an orientation session the evening prior to their mandatory training. There were two presentations provided to the recruits. The first presentation provided an overview of the Fire Service, what it entails to be a volunteer firefighter, and the rules and regulations pertaining to the Fire Service and City of Greater Sudbury. The second presentation provided the applicants a glimpse into some of the situations they may experience as a first responder. The presentation informed them of the programs that are available to support them in the event they are affected by an incident they respond to, specifically the Peer Support Team and Employee Assistance Program.

Physical Testing

The physical testing was divided into four groups and took place over a period of two days. Eight active volunteer firefighters were invited to attend each of the four sessions to aid with physical testing stages and to provide information and guidance to recruits who have inquiries about being a firefighter. Blood Pressure (160/100) and Heart Rate (110ppm) readings were adjusted to be in accordance with the NFPA requirements. A new video was filmed identifying current volunteer firefighters completing each component of the physical testing. The video allows for new recruits to be prepared for the physical testing component. Individual stages of the physical test were timed independently and evaluated by both Fire Services staff and Human Resources to gauge the success of each candidate.

Physical Testing Considerations for the 2022 Recruitment:

- Allow the applicants to attend the fire training grounds on an evening or weekend and observe volunteer firefighters completing the physical testing component of the recruitment.

Interviews

Two current volunteer captains were chosen to attend and assist with the interview process. The captains were not scoring the individual but did provide valuable feedback and opinions on the applicant and their experience. Interviews occurred online through MS Teams and were approximately 20 minutes in duration in order to respect social distancing and the schedule of the candidate.

Interview Considerations for the 2022 Recruitment:

- Recruitment committee to provide administration with a short list of 6-8 current volunteer firefighters who would be willing to participate in the interview process.
- Those chosen to participate will attend a training session on how to conduct an interview to ensure the interview process is consistent.
- The consensus of the recruitment committee was that the interviews occur “in person” if possible.

Mandatory Training

Over 70 recruits attended the 40 hour mandatory training. This training occurred over the course of two weekends and the applicants were divided into three separate groups to accommodate the large number of recruits. Volunteer station captains were invited to the final day of training to meet the new recruits assigned to their station, provide direction, and answer any questions from the recruits.

Training Considerations for the 2022 Recruitment:

- The classes sizes shall be capped at 16 individuals per training class. This will allow for a 4:1 recruit to trainer ratio which will provide a more personal and engaging experience.

Items for Additional Consideration:

- Contacting the recruits who did not attend for physical testing and see if they are interested in applying for the 2022 recruitment.
- Consistent annual recruitment start dates and timelines.
- Creation of an Operating Procedure specific to the volunteer recruitment process.

Summary

The 2021 volunteer firefighter recruitment was one of the largest single recruitments in the history of the current Fire Service with a total of 64 applicants being hired and successfully completing the 40 hours of mandatory training. The improvements and new initiatives implemented to the 2021 recruitment proved to be beneficial through the large number of applicants and new recruits. Continued collaboration between the volunteer recruitment committee and administration will ensure the success for future recruitments.

Overview of Final Stats

Summary 2021 Volunteer Firefighter Recruitment		
Total Applications	213	
Not in Response Area	49	
Disqualified	17	
PA Testing	147	
Did not Participate in PA Testing	44	
Eliminated after PA Testing	1	
No Show at PA Testing	7	
Withdrew from PA Testing	5	
Interviewed	90	
Eliminated after Interview	17	
Withdrew from Interview	1	
Training	72	
Withdrew from Training	5	
Could not Complete Training	2	
Accepted ADC Position	1	
Hiring	64	
	Hiring	Applied
Copper Cliff	2	5
Waters	7	13
Lively	7	9
Whitefish	3	5
Beaver Lake	1	1
Azilda	5	12
Chelmsford	5	13
Dowling	1	5
Levack	1	1
Val Caron	3	15
Val Therese	11	19
Hanmer	2	18
Capreol	0	3
Garson	8	21
Falconbridge	3	9
Skead	2	3
Coniston	1	6
Wahnapitae	2	6