

ITEM 15

MANAGER'S REPORT NO. 1

COUNCIL MEETING Jan. 12/76

Re: FIRE DEPARTMENT MANPOWER PLANNING - 1976

Following is a report from the Personnel Director and Deputy Fire Chief regarding the current year's manpower planning requirements for the Fire Department.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. THAT the Corporation approve an increase in the Firefighting Division manpower strength from 175 to 181 men, or an increase of 6 men.
2. THAT 5 of these 6 additional men be obtained by the release of firefighters from the Dispatch Room to be replaced by Radio Dispatchers - Emergency Services as soon as possible in 1976.
3. THAT the short-fall of 1 man under Recommendations 1 and 2, plus an additional 2 men to replace the 2 retirees, for a total of 3 additional men, be recruited and added to the firefighting strength as soon as possible.
4. THAT the Corporation's negotiating representatives attempt to achieve greater flexibility for the Fire Department in the methods of allowing time off or compensating for time off in cash so that costly manpower surpluses, as well as overtime, are minimized, and platoon "on duty" strength is maintained.

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TO: Municipal Manager

DATE: January 8, 1976

FROM: Personnel Director

RE: FIRE DEPARTMENT MANPOWER PLANNING - 1976

1. Firefighting Division Manpower Requirements

The 1975 Agreement between the Corporation and the Burnaby Firefighters' Association provides for additional vacation time and time off in lieu of Statutory Holidays amounting to 5 shifts per man per year. The Agreement provides that, for the year 1975 only, such extra time off will be compensated by a cash lump sum.

The firefighting manpower authorized by Municipal Council is presently maintained at a minimum level of 37 men per shift. The number of "on duty" shifts required to provide 37 men on each shift for 2 shifts per day, 365 days per year, is 27,010 "on duty" shifts per year.

The present firefighter complement of 175 men will provide for 26,095 "on duty" shifts in 1976.

The "shortfall" from the required 27,010 "on duty" shifts required to maintain the present 37 man platoon strength at all times throughout the year is calculated as follows:

Required:	27,010 shifts
Available:	<u>26,095 shifts</u>
Shortfall:	<u>915 shifts</u>

An additional 6 men will be required for 1976 to make up the shortfall because of the additional vacation and Statutory Holiday time negotiated.

2. Summary of Anticipated Time Loss - 1976

The total time loss of paid shifts during 1976 can be summarized as follows:

Vacation and Sabbaticals	2,732 shifts
Public Holiday Compensation	1,925 shifts
First-Aid Compensation	136 shifts
Sickness and Related	<u>1,050 shifts</u>
Total of Paid Shifts Lost	<u>5,843</u>

The number of lost shifts per man for 1976 for the present strength will be 33.4 shifts per man or 18% of 182.5 paid shifts.

The vacation allowances and time off for Public Holidays, as provided under the new Agreement, will permit absence periods for vacation of approximately two months off for each man in the Firefighting Division with part of this scheduled during the winter and the remainder scheduled during the summer months. Since vacation schedules for this time off have already been posted for the Fire Department staff for 1976, it would be desirable to hire additional relief men to avoid calling men in on an overtime basis to maintain the 37 man platoon strength.

3. Alternatives

There are a number of alternative plans that can be considered for negotiation, adoption and implementation before 1977 that will relieve the anticipated future shortfalls:

- (a) The maintenance of one position in the Alarm Room requires 5 firefighters at an estimated 1976 cost of over \$100,000. Five Radio Dispatchers (similar to the R.C.M.P. arrangement) could be utilized for this function, operating on three 8-hour shifts, at a 1976 cost of approximately \$70,000. per year. The addition to staff of 5 Radio Dispatchers would relieve the 5 firefighters required to man the Alarm Room for firefighting duties.

The Regional Classification Officer, Mr. D. Dick, has discussed the proposal with Chief Buckley. It is their conclusion that the operation can be handled by non-firefighting personnel, working on three 8-hour shifts per day. These positions would be classified as "Radio Dispatcher - Emergency Services" (class specification attached). The specification is a generalization of the old R.C.M.P. specification for Dispatcher Clerk since these positions would function in much the same manner as those in the R.C.M.P. Communications Control office. The R.C.M.P. use seven positions to give them double coverage in high traffic periods but this would not be necessary in the Fire Alarm Room. Therefore, five positions would be sufficient.

The Alarm Room positions would also have to work a full 8-hour shift inclusive of lunch. This would require a permit from the Labour Relations Board but the lower traffic volume should make this feasible.

Inasmuch as it may be necessary to have firefighters from Hall No. 1 relieve for short periods of time, it would probably be desirable to negotiate the rates of pay for these positions with and include them in the firefighters' bargaining unit.

The average cost per hour "on duty" by the Radio Dispatchers at the R.C.M.P. office at the present time is \$7.60 per hour. This compares with the cost per hour "on duty" of a firefighter of \$11.08 per hour.

- (b) The staff of 10 Fire Wardens in the Fire Prevention Division is somewhat above the comparative size of such divisions in other Fire Departments. However, Fire Prevention inspection is a very important function of the Fire Department. A possible utilization of the Firefighting Division Fire Companies to do inspections of buildings up to three stories has been instituted by the Fire Chief earlier this year to relieve the work load for the Fire Warden's Division and to increase the experience awareness of firefighters with respect to the buildings and fire hazards of buildings within their District. At the present time the firefighters are spending approximately 10% of their "on duty" time for fire inspections. A greater utilization of firefighter companies and an improvement in the quality and amount of their inspections would be possible if a few of the Fire Warden Officers were transferred to the Firefighting Division to assist the fire inspections performed by the Fire Companies. If two of the Fire Wardens were transferred to the Firefighting Division, it would reduce the cost of the Fire Prevention Division by \$40,000. per year and would help achieve increased quality and quantity of inspections by Fire Companies. In addition it would reduce the firefighting manpower requirements because such employees have been trained as firefighters and could help maintain the required firefighter strength.


The Deputy Fire Chief does not wish to interfere with the strength of the Fire Prevention Division.

- (c) The Corporation's negotiating representatives will be attempting to negotiate more flexible Union Agreement provisions and regulations with respect to time off in lieu of Public Holidays, and other time off, in order to reduce the number of occasions when platoon strengths have a surplus of manpower. The surpluses occur due to the present difficulties in scheduling time off (to date 1975 there have been occasions of surplus manpower, over and above the 37 man minimum per platoon, amounting to 543 man-shifts). This surplus of manpower in 1976 would result in an unnecessary cost to the Corporation of approximately \$80,000.
4. Two firefighters will reach maximum retirement age in May and June of 1976. The replacement of these men will have to be planned for, preferably in advance, in order to maintain the manpower requirements for the remainder of 1976.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

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DFH:mg
Attach.


D. F. Hicks
PERSONNEL DIRECTOR


L. H. Buckley
DEPUTY FIRE CHIEF