

ITEM 1  
MANAGER'S REPORT NO. 31  
COUNCIL MEETING 1982 05 10

Re: REVIEW OF FIRE DEPARTMENT ORGANIZATION

MUNICIPAL MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. *THAT the Municipal Manager be authorized to select a process consultant to work with himself, the Fire Department staff and the union to develop terms of reference and a budget for an organizational review of the Fire Department as outlined in this report; and*
2. *THAT the Municipal Manager report to the Municipal Council as quickly as possible in this respect, prior to proceeding with any aspect of the actual review; and*
3. *THAT funding for this work be provided from the General Contingency Account pending the submission of the Recast Budget.*

REPORT

The Municipal Manager has been discussing the Fire Department's organizational structure for some time with the Director - Fire Services, Chief - Fire Operations and the Executive of the Burnaby Firefighters' Association, Local 323.

The Manager feels that the following factors give rise to the need for a review of our Departmental organization at this time:

1. The Director will be retiring in approximately 3 years and this raises the question of whether or not we are appropriately structured for succession planning at that and other levels in the Department.
2. We have recently created the position of Assistant Chief - Administration on a temporary basis, pending the results of a Departmental organizational study. We must ensure that this position must relate to the other senior positions, so we should look at the entire hierarchy with an eye to the future.
3. We presently have a one on one organizational relationship at the top of the Department, and that is not one that is recommended by organizational consultants, because of the fact that the middle position tends to cause a blockage in the line of succession, and it is not normally considered to be an efficient use of manpower.
4. The role of the Assistant Chiefs has been discussed on several occasions, and perhaps an overall review of the entire organizational structure might cause us to find an even better organizational form than we presently have.
5. The need for an officer on the rescue vehicle has been studied, and perhaps an organizational review may give us some additional thoughts in this respect that could not be considered when we looked at that subject in a relatively isolated way.
6. The G.V.R.D. has reported that there is a difficult problem with salary compression in the senior management area of the Fire Department between the two exempt positions and the Union pay scales. Such salary compression usually indicates the need for a review of the organizational form and the relationship of one position to another.

ITEM	1
MANAGER'S REPORT NO.	31
COUNCIL MEETING	1982 05 10

7. We have not had a review of our organizational form in the last 10 years, and it is necessary in any organization to take the time on a periodic basis to check on the performance of the form of organization.

This review would look solely at organizational form and not consider personalities or how effective people are in the organization.

Attached you will find a copy of a letter dated 1982 February 22 from the Municipal Manager addressed to Mr. Bill Copeland, President, Burnaby Firefighters' Association which outlines the above and sets forth a proposal for using a process consultant in such a review. Mr. Copeland has approved of the reproduction of this letter.

The union has agreed in principle to this proposal, and would like to participate in it. They do not necessarily agree with some of the reasons the Manager has outlined above for the need for the review, but they are prepared to move ahead along the lines of the Terms of Reference and the process as outlined in the letter dated 1982 February 22.

The Municipal Manager would now like to receive authority to proceed with this organizational review, and the next step would be to select a consultant to work with us on this work. Once he has been selected, a recommendation would be made in a report to the Municipal Council outlining the precise terms of reference of the review and the consulting fees involved. The Manager sees the magnitude of the cost for the consultant to be in the vicinity of \$10,000, and this would be funded from our Contingency Account until the Recast Budget is passed, when the cost would be reflected in the Fire Department Budget.

The Municipal Manager and the Director Administrative and Community Services would both be involved in this work which should be concluded by 1982 December.

Authority to proceed with the review does not carry with it authority to implement the results of the review. That is a separate aspect, and it would require a separate report after the review has been completed. Experience has taught us that if any changes are recommended, they normally should be implemented carefully over time.

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ITEM	1
MANAGER'S REPORT NO.	31
COUNCIL MEETING	1982 05 10

1982 February 22.

Our File: 8-2-20-2.

Mr. W. Copeland, President,  
Burnaby Firefighters' Association,  
Local 323,  
2011 Cliff Avenue,  
Burnaby, B. C.,  
V5A 2K9.

Dear Mr. Copeland:

Re: REVIEW OF ORGANIZATION OF FIRE DEPARTMENT

Further to the meeting held with you and your Executive, Director Naim and Chief of Operations, Brown on February 13 regarding the above, I would like to outline the points that I raised at the time.

NEED FOR REVIEW

I believe that the following factors give rise to the need for a review of our organization at this time:

1. The Director will be retiring in approximately three years, and this raises the question of whether or not we are appropriately structured for succession planning at that and other levels in the Fire Department.
2. There has been a request for a pre-planning/administration fire officer position, and we should ensure that we are considering such a position in relation to the other senior positions in the department. I am aware of the study that was undertaken by the Board of Administration, and its recommendations. I am not suggesting that I have a problem with the Board's recommendation. The very request for a new position suggests that we should look at the entire hierarchy to ensure that we are not missing something, and to ensure that the new position fits with an eye to the future.
3. A one on one organizational relationship is not one that is recommended by organizational consultants, because of the fact that the middle position tends to cause a blockage in the line of succession, and it is not normally considered to be an efficient use of manpower.
4. We have discussed the role of the assistant chiefs on many occasions, and perhaps an overall review of the entire departmental organizational structure might cause us to find an even better organizational form than we presently have.

/2

ITEM 1  
MANAGER'S REPORT NO. 31  
COUNCIL MEETING 1982 05 10

104

-2-

5. The need for an officer on the rescue vehicle was studied, and perhaps an organizational review may give us some additional thoughts in this respect that could not be considered when we looked at that subject in a relatively isolated way.
6. The G.V.R.D. has reported that there is a difficult problem with salary compression in the senior management area of the Fire Department between the two exempt positions and the Union pay scales. Such salary compression usually indicates the need for a review of the organizational form and the relationship of one position to another.
7. We have not had a review of our organizational form in the last 10 years, and it is necessary in any organization to take the time on a periodic basis to check on the performance of the form of organization.

As I outlined in the meeting, I have no fixed ideas with respect to the outcome of this review. However, because of the above factors, this may be an appropriate occasion to review our organizational needs and the form of organization.

#### USE OF CONSULTANT

I proposed to you that we use a Process Consultant, as opposed to an expert consultant, so that we could have somebody work with us to help us solve any problems we may have. This consultant would provide a resource to us on organizational structure and processes, and facilitate the group's review process. He would not be responsible to professionally recommend a solution.

#### TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE REVIEW

Before I introduce the subject of such a study to the Municipal Council, it would be most desirable to have an agreement and commitment on the terms of reference for it. The terms of reference should, in my view, consider at least the following subjects:

1. The purpose of the study is to look at the organizational form, and not to consider personalities or how effective people are in the organization.
2. Administrative and operational needs must be in proper balance, so the study would have to look at both aspects.
3. The Union would be involved in the study, and although the Union need not be committed at this time to accepting the results of the study, it naturally follows that it would be most desirable to have a level of ownership and commitment by the Union in it before we proceed.
4. The staff and management of the department also would have to be deeply involved, and a task force of appropriate representation would have to be established with which the Process Consultant would work.

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-3-

5. We would want to structure a process for involvement and commitment of:
- a) Manager's Office
  - b) Fire Department management/Fire Department Board of Administration
  - c) Union
6. The terms of reference should ideally be approved by all parties concerned before proceeding with the review.
7. The results of the fire defences study presently underway would need to be considered; i.e. what will the impact of greater fire prevention thrust, station location, etcetera be on the organizational form.
8. The Process Consultant would be interviewed by appropriate staff, and would meet with the task force prior to commencing any work so that everyone could be satisfied with the credentials of the consultant.
9. The study could look at the question of maintaining people in the training and pre-planning/administration fire officer positions on a longer term basis, although this question may be answered depending upon the results of the job evaluation reviews presently being undertaken.
10. The review would look at several alternative forms of organization.
11. There would be a need to spell out the criteria that would be used in determining what we all want in the way of a good organization, and the several alternatives would be compared against this ideal criteria.
12. The review could look at all levels in the organization, if that is what it is decided that we need.
13. How and when the results of the review would be implemented would not be part of the work of the task force, and consequently not part of the study. That would be considered separately.

#### PHASES IN THE REVIEW

I see the review taking place in the following phases:

- a) Establish the terms of reference of the study.
- b) Develop the criteria for the "ideal" organizational form to meet all our needs, against which the alternatives studied can be compared.
- c) Develop the alternatives to be considered and evaluated in the study.

The Process Consultant should ideally be engaged first and brought in to assist us with the establishment of the terms of reference. He would then continue on with the other two phases of the work.

/4

ITEM	1
MANAGER'S REPORT NO.	31
COUNCIL MEETING	1982 05 10

SUMMARY

What we both want is a succession process to ensure that we get the best candidate in the department for such senior positions, and that that candidate has indeed taken or received the appropriate training to fulfill the needs of the exempt positions. In short, forgetting the present people for the moment, what is the best form of organization to accomplish this.

Would you please give me your views with respect to the above, as I am anxious to conclude this matter as quickly as I can. My goal would be to have only the organizational form, if a change is necessary, established by the end of this year. I will then address the question of implementation.

By making this overture to you, I am not conceding the Municipality's rights as the employer to establish the organizational form of the Fire Department, but I am prepared to have the Union's participation on a without prejudice basis in this process.

Yours truly,

Melvin J. Shelley,  
MUNICIPAL MANAGER.

MJS:bp

c.c. Director Naftm