



Rideau Lakes

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Portland Fire Station Update

Chantry, Ontario, January 5, 2022 – The Township provided an update at the regular Council meeting on January 4 regarding the fire at, and total loss of, the Portland Fire Station on Colborne Street in the village of Portland on Tuesday, December 21. The facility had served the community for over 50 years, and housed a pumper, a tanker, and a rescue vehicle. The station provided primary response to the area along the Highway 15 corridor from Young's Hill Road to Otter Lake Road.

The on-site fire investigation work is now complete. The local fire service as well as the Ontario Fire Marshal's Office were involved in the investigation.

Off-site forensic work continues and a probable cause cannot be provided at this time. Despite this, Fire Chief Scott Granahan of the Rideau Lakes Fire Department confirmed that "the Fire Marshal's Office has authorized me to disclose that the origin of the fire is not considered to be suspicious."

Chief Granahan, who happens to live in the village, noted "I understand that the fire and the loss of the station has been significant and has impacted residents throughout the community in many ways. I want to assure all residents that even before the fire was extinguished, secondary plans were developed and in place to ensure continuity of emergency response of the area."

The Township is encouraging any residents struggling with the impact of the fire on their well-being to contact the resource hotline 'Ontario 211' who can help connect them with the appropriate social and community services.

The site of the fire is currently fenced and will continue to be secured until the Fire Marshal's investigation is complete. Following that, the site will be remediated, and debris removed.

The Township is fully insured for the loss of the Station and equipment as well as costs associated to continuation of service while a new facility is constructed. Any damage to

neighbouring properties will be recovered from the Township's insurer through the homeowners' policies.

As a precautionary measure, and in consultation with the Ministry of the Environment, local wells are being tested for any impacts to drinking water.

Further details on next steps are expected to be released on Monday January 10 at the Township Municipal Services Committee meeting. It is likely that next steps will include the establishment of a temporary station facility in the sector.

Following the initial public update at the January 4 Council meeting, Mayor Hoogenboom reiterated his commitment to rebuilding the lost station, though likely not on the current site due to its inadequate land area for modern firefighting operations and locational limitations.

Hoogenboom noted, "My priorities are to consider all options with a view to provide a high-quality facility that best serves the interests of the whole community as we look toward the next 50 years."

-30-

CONTACT:

Arie Hoogenboom
Mayor
Township of Rideau Lakes
613-323-0901
mayor@rideaulakes.ca

Mike Dwyer
Chief Administrative Officer
Township of Rideau Lakes
1-613-928-2251 ext. 231
mdwyer@rideaulakes.ca