



## TOWN OF MINTO

**DATE:** May 19, 2017  
**REPORT TO:** Mayor and Council  
**FROM:** Chris Harrow, Fire Chief  
**SUBJECT:** Howick Fire Protection Agreement

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### STRATEGIC PLAN:

6.5 Make available the Town's Volunteer Fire Services to abutting municipalities at fees that cover the cost of developing and maintaining the service, and support joint initiatives to share the cost of fire prevention and inspection services.

### BACKGROUND:

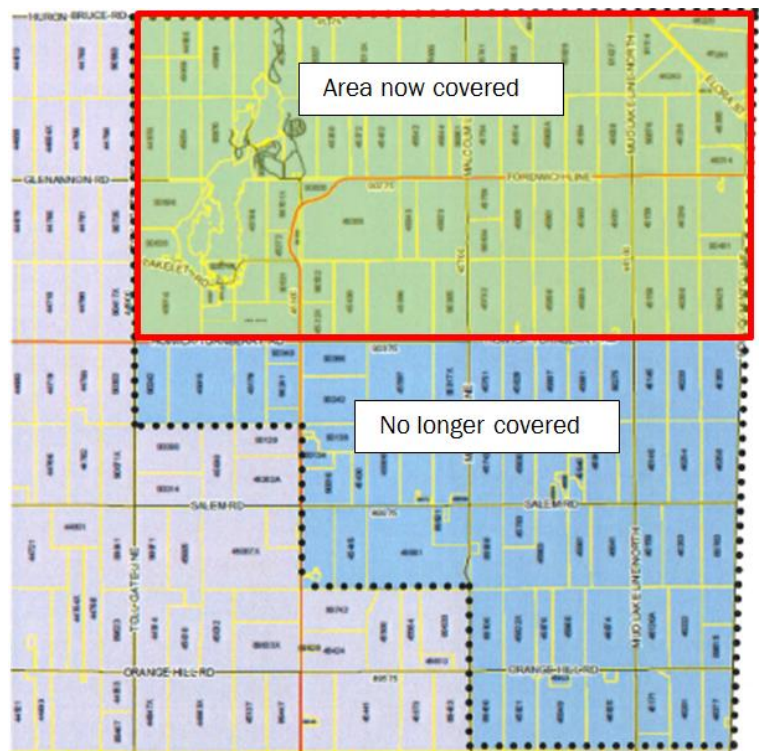
In 2015, Minto CAO/Clerk and Fire Chief worked with the Township of Howick, at their request, to renegotiate the existing Fire Protection Agreement. The original agreement has a base amount of \$18,000 increasing annually at cost of living. A new agreement was negotiated that would pay Minto a base amount of \$9,000 plus \$3000 per call for service in Howick's boundaries. The agreement was passed by both Councils and applied in 2016.

Last year Minto Fire responded to 13 calls for service within Howick for a total cost of \$39,000, which far surpassed the old fixed amount of approximately \$18,000. The number of incidents for 2016 was much higher than the historical rate. Howick is concerned about the amount of incidents and requested in early 2017 to renegotiate the agreement once again. Minto Fire Chief Harrow and Howick's Fire Chief agreed upon another framework to reduce the costs for Howick but increase the area they are responsible for sending fire-fighters. Howick Council passed the revised agreement in March 2017.

### COMMENTS:

The new agreement significantly cuts the area covered by Minto Fire in Howick Township (see adjacent map).

The basis used for the new proposal was a consistent response time by Howick's fire station to all areas of their municipality. The times were calculated by the Howick Fire Chief to all corners of their municipality ensuring a consistent level of service for their residents. Any residence outside of this time frame was considered excessive and a boundary line was drawn along the Howick Turnberry Road capturing the coverage area to be serviced by Minto.



Along with the smaller area, the amount paid to Minto decreased. The new agreement also reverts back to a fixed amount paid yearly. The new amount in the agreement is \$6500 per year which is fairly low. However, to offset the decrease in fees paid, Minto retains the ability to charge for motor vehicle collisions attended. The cost per incident is approximately \$1200 per hour, as per our fee schedule. Motor vehicle collisions account for approximately 20-40% of our responses into Howick, but can vary from year to year.

While the new agreement is significantly different than the previous, it is a service that should technically be provided to Howick based on the availability of Clifford firefighters to respond in Howick. How they offer fire protection to their residents is the sole decision of their Council. In the new agreement, the areas of Driftwood Beach and Camp Wyoka are still covered by Minto Fire. Both of these areas are well populated at different times of the year and the Howick Fire Chief and I both agree it is important to have the quickest response possible to these areas.

The Howick Fire Chief has been excellent to deal with during the entire process. Minto Fire will continue to work closely through Mutual Aid and training sessions. The Town appreciates that the calls in 2016 were excessing and the old agreement exposed Howick to a challenging financial situation if calls escalated. Had there been only a few calls Minto Fire would have been down revenue in 2016. However, Minto Fire has no issues recommending passing of this revised agreement agreement. The agreement will be reviewed frequently and ensure Minto does not suffer significant financial loss.

**FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS:**

This agreement will cover the last half of 2017, therefore significant decrease in projected revenue in the current budget is not expected. We will need to adjust revenue projections during the 2018 budget process.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

That the Council approve the new Township of Howick Fire Protection Agreement as outlined in the Fire Chiefs May 19 2017 report and pass the corresponding By-Law authorizing the CAO/Clerk and Mayor to sign the agreement.

Chris Harrow  
Fire Chief