



POSTPONED MOTIONS: ADMINISTRATIVE BACKGROUNDER

NUMBER: PM-19-030

REQUESTED BY:	Councillor Sheena Hughes
ORIGIN OF REQUEST:	City Council
DATE OF REQUEST:	November 14, 2018

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DEPARTMENT:	Emergency Services
DATE RESPONSE DUE:	November 19, 2018

MOTION:

That FIRE-030 Power Stretcher and Load System is initially funded from the capital reserve and that any unallocated funds in 2018 from the \$150,000 maximum allowable, as defined in the Safety Enhancement Reserve, be directed back to the capital reserve as part of the Year End transfer recommendations.

RESPONSE (one page max.):

Administration's Understanding of Intent Motion:

That FIRE-030 Power Stretcher and Load System is to be funded from the capital reserve for the 2019 budget and that any surplus that may exist in 2018 from the maximum allowable funding of \$150,000 in the Safety Enhancement Reserve be subsequently transferred back to the capital reserve.

Operational or Organizational Impacts if Motion is Approved:

This would provide Power Stretchers and Load Systems for the 2 frontline ambulances of St Albert Fire Services. The mechanical backup ambulances would retain manual stretchers. The Power Stretchers and Load Systems improve patient and staff safety for loading patients into the ambulance. Based on research the expectation is that staff back injuries reduction would offset the cost of implementation.

Financial Implications of Motions:

The \$100,000 budget is for implementation with the 2 frontline units. Transition to this style of stretcher has implications on ambulance replacement cost for the RMR plan. New ambulances would need Power Stretcher and Load System cost factored into vehicle lifecycle and replacement which will require an increase to the capital funding formula starting in 2020. Funding of this charter in 2019 will reduce the amount of capital dollars available in the future.

Another implication of the motion is that any portion of the maximum allowable use of the 2018 safety reserve that is not committed in 2018 will be transferred back to the capital reserve to offset this initial cost. The \$150,000 annual approval for safety related items is only available if the balance of the reserve fund can support it. The only source of funding for this reserve is annual rebates related to the WCB Partners in Injury Reduction Program and periodic surplus distribution dividends neither of which are guaranteed and are linked to our WCB claims history. There is risk that this reserve will eventually be depleted.

Administration does not support the use of the Safety Enhancement Reserve for funding any portion of the Power Stretcher and Load System for the following reasons:

- The Safety Enhancement Reserve is meant to fund emergent and unforeseen safety related needs. The funding for the power stretcher and load system is a planned and foreseen expense and does not meet this criteria.
- Administration has developed an Administrative Directive whereby a select group of City employees reviews and vets safety enhancement funding requests, promoting employee engagement and overall safety awareness. The motion does not follow this process.
- While the power stretcher and load system could be considered a “safety” related item, it is not an emergent and unforeseen need and should be funded through the capital budget process.

Stakeholder Consultations:

Internal stakeholder consultation has occurred with departmental staff recommending purchase of the Power Stretcher and Load System through the Joint Health and Safety Committee.

Background:

Powered Stretchers and Load Systems have become the new industry standard for loading patients. Powered systems are a significant upgrade over a manual stretcher. Powered Stretchers and Load Systems are an innovative patient moving technology designed to minimize loads on the musculature of staff while improving patient safety and comfort.

Power Stretchers mechanically lift and lower with the push of a button. Power load systems mechanically load the stretcher into the ambulance at the push of a button with minimal physical exertion required.

These systems provide an improved patient experience through smoother movement when raising, lowering and loading patients. Additionally, these Power Systems provide greater stability and support for bariatric patients. Ergonomic Studies have identified a reduction of workplace injuries associated with switching to powered systems.