

REPORT

Fire and Police

To: Mayor Johnstone and Members of Council
Date: February 27, 2023

From: Erin Williams
Acting Fire Chief
File:

Dave Jansen
Chief of Police
Item #: 2023-131

Subject: E-Comm 911 Cost Increases: New West Fire & Police Services

RECOMMENDATION

THAT Council receive this report as part of the Budget deliberation process.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with information regarding E-Comm 911 cost increases.

SUMMARY

This report discusses the impact of E-Comm 911 annual cost increases. These increases are being passed to the local municipal entity such as the City of New Westminster Fire Rescue Service and New Westminster Police Service. The report discusses the increased costs from 2018 through 2022 for Fire and Police. Municipalities would benefit if E-Comm advocated for Provincial funding to help mitigate double digit increases to local municipalities.

Each year at the beginning of Q4, E-Comm 911 provides a financial outlook that includes cost increases that each service agreement holder will be expected to incur in the upcoming year's budget cycle. This includes increases in service levies as well as a base cost adjustment due to inflationary pressure. To date, there has been little to no

debate on finding other revenue sources or cost efficiencies to offset some of the inflationary or service enhancement needs.

BACKGROUND

E-Comm provides Computer Automated Dispatch (CAD) service and the use of radio communication systems to New Westminster Fire and New Westminster Police. In recent years, there has been more significant increases in the cost for this service that has impacted the operating budgets of both departments.

While in discussion with E-Comm, staff learned that the main driver for the E-Comm fees is similar to what municipalities are facing around staff salary increases (including projected collective bargaining and external compensation and classification review increases), WCB, and recruitment and retention costs.

Last year E-Comm highlighted the need to increase staffing levels. Increased staffing costs was the driver for the 2022 Budget. For 2023, E-Comm is continuing to implement its Transformation Plan in an effort to modernize its technological and corporate foundation, which will lead to improved system resilience and reliability.

ANALYSIS

New Westminster Fire Services – E-Comm Costs Analysis Year over Year

From 2018 to date, E-Comm 911 costs for NWFRS have increased by over 18%, or ~\$100K. The year over year breakdown of these increased service costs are reflected in the table below.

Annual Billing from Ecomm	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Total payment per GL	506,127.36	533,770.60	531,221.57	549,292.84	601,510.96
Quarterly payments	129,328.00	132,643.00	136,693.00	141,032.00	155,684.00
Quarterly payments x4	517,312.00	530,572.00	546,772.00	564,128.00	622,736.00
Difference-net refund for prior actual vs billings or charges	(11,184.64)	3,198.60	(15,550.43)	(14,835.16)	(21,225.04)
Quarterly Payments Year over Year changes (%)		2.6%	3.1%	3.2%	10.4%
Total Payments Year over Year changes (%)		5.5%	-0.5%	3.4%	9.5%

For 2023, E-Comm 911 estimates that further increases to service costs for NWFRS will result in another ~\$50K increase from 2022 levels. The breakdown of these increases are reflected in the chart below.

Breakdown of 2022 Billings	2022 Qtrly Breakdown	2022 Annual Billing	2023 Incr	Est'd 2023 Billing
Radio Levy	26,337.00	105,348.00	11.00%	116,936.28
User Equipment Levy	16,457.00	65,828.00	3.50%	68,131.98
Fire CAD Levy	27,340.00	109,360.00	5.80%	115,702.88
Fire RMS Levy	28,110.00	112,440.00	2.10%	114,801.24
Dispatch Levy	57,440.00	229,760.00	11.50%	256,182.40
	155,684.00	622,736.00		671,754.78
2023 Budget increase from Ecom				49,018.78

New Westminster Police Services – E-Comm Costs Analysis Year over Year

From 2018 to date, E-Comm 911 costs for NWPD have increased by over 32% or ~\$387K. The year over year breakdown of these increased service costs are reflected in the table below.

E-Comm: Police	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Total Levy	\$ 1,193,640.13	\$ 1,217,266.00	\$ 1,259,289.00	\$ 1,312,714.00	\$ 1,580,877.00
Annual Increase	\$ 11,066.45	\$ 23,625.87	\$ 42,023.00	\$ 53,425.00	\$ 268,163.00
Annual Increase as a % of prior year	0.94%	1.98%	3.45%	4.24%	20.43%
Increase since 2018					\$ 387,236.87
Increase since 2018 as a % of 2018					32%

For 2023, E-Comm 911 estimates that further increases to service costs for NWPD will result in another ~\$434,600 increase from 2022 levels. The breakdown of these increases are reflected in the chart below.

2023 Forecast vs 2022 Actual	2022 Actual	2023 Forecast	2023 Increase	2023 % Increase
Radio Levy	\$ 265,307.00	\$ 289,408.00	\$ 24,101.00	9.1%
User Equipment Levy	\$ 16,290.00	\$ 11,072.00	\$ (5,218.00)	-32.0%
Dispatch Levy	\$ 1,299,280.00	\$ 1,715,040.00	\$ 415,760.00	32.0%
Total	\$ 1,580,877.00	\$ 2,015,520.00	\$ 434,643.00	27.5%

OPTIONS

1. THAT Council receive this report as part of the Budget deliberation process.
2. THAT Council provide alternate direction.

Staff recommend option 1.

APPROVALS

This report was prepared by:
Erin Williams, Acting Fire Chief

This report was reviewed by:
Harji Varn, CFO/Director of Finance

This report was approved by:
Lisa Spitale, Chief Administrative Officer