



TOWN OF KENTVILLE POLICY STATEMENT G13 FIRE AREA RATE

1.0 PURPOSE

Fire services have been provided in the Town of Kentville, substantially through the efforts of volunteers, both in the direct provision of the service, and in fund-raising activities undertaken to finance these endeavors. The demands of modern living have made it more difficult for volunteers to undertake all of the work necessary to provide these services, particularly the fund-raising aspect.

2.0 DEFINITIONS

Municipalities have a broad range of area rate powers. Section 75 of the Municipal Government Act provides that area rates may be used to finance all or part of the cost of any municipal service or facility that council deems to be of benefit to an area.

3.0 SCOPE

4.0 PROCEDURES

1. Council

The Council shall consider the establishment of an area rate upon receipt of an application submitted in accordance with the terms of this policy.

2. Applicant

An application for the establishment or continuation of a fire area rate shall be submitted to the town, having as its objective, the provision of fire services, respectively, and referred to in this policy as the “applicant.”

3. Ratepayer

“Ratepayer” means a person residing within the Town and rated on the current assessment roll of the Town ***and the spouse of such person as defined in the Matrimonial Property Act.***

4. Area to which the rate applies

An application for the establishment of an area rate shall define the area to which the rate is to apply, with sufficient clarity to allow for proper implementation of the rate for billing purposes. The area shall be defined by resolution of the Council at the time of the setting of the area rate.

5. Multiple Jurisdictions

If the area to be served by the area fire rate includes more than one municipal unit, or partly includes the area of an existing fire commission, the provisions of subsection 46(5) of the Rural Fire District Act will be applied to apportion the amounts raised in each jurisdiction.

6. Administration Fee

An administration fee of 4% will be charged by the Town to offset the costs involved in billing, collecting and forwarding the area rate funds. Applicants should include this fee in their budget calculations and area rate submissions.

7. Public Participation

Prior to the submission of an application for an area rate, an applicant shall call a public meeting. Notice of the meeting shall be given by two advertisements in a newspaper, having circulation in the area to which the rate will apply.

The first such notice shall be published not less than 14 days prior to the date of the meeting and the second notice not less than 7 days prior to the date of the meeting. In addition to the newspaper notice, the applicant shall post the notice of the meeting in 5 conspicuous places in the area to which the rate is to be applied, not less than 14 days prior to the date of the meeting. The notice shall contain the date, time and place of the public meeting; the name of the applicant; the amount of the area rate to be requested in the application; the area to which the rate will apply; what ratepayers will be entitled to vote; and the method of voting.

8. Extent of Public Support

The public meeting shall be conducted by the Applicant. The applicant shall have a register in which those ratepayers attending the meeting may place their names and addresses. Prior to a vote being called, the applicant shall make a presentation to the meeting, setting out the reasons and proposed purposes for use of the area rate funds and the amount of the rate. The support for the proposed area rate shall be determined by majority vote of the ratepayers present and voting at the meeting.

9. Application

An application shall set out evidence of the organization's incorporation and good standing under the Societies Act, and shall include a budget in support of the proposed area rate; a definition of the area to which the rate shall apply; a declaration setting out the fulfillment of the public notice and public meeting process required by this policy.

10. Timing of Area Rate Submissions

Area rate applications will be considered by Council only during the Town's budget process. Applications must be submitted by March 1 in each year. However, in the year 2000, applications will be received until April 30.

11. Annual Applications and Accountability

An area rate does not continue automatically from year to year. An application must be submitted each year for the continuation of an area rate. In each year following the setting of an area rate, an applicant shall submit to Council, audited financial

statements covering the preceding year, and a statement of activities carried on in that year. A public meeting, as required in section 7, must be held at which the audited financial statements and a statement of activities of the preceding year are presented, in addition to a budget and the amount of the proposed rate for the coming year. Support for the proposed area rate shall be determined by majority vote of the ratepayers present and voting at the meeting. **Any portion of a proposed rate that was approved at the prior year's meeting related to repayment of debt shall be considered to be approved in each subsequent year to the extent as disclosed in the audited financial statements.**

12. Application of the Area Rate

An area rate for fire services established under this policy, shall be applied to the taxable property assessment for the area defined by the resolution of the Council.

13. Town Staff

Town staff shall provide mapping and assessment data to applicants and such advice to Council, as Council requires.

5.0 ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

6.0 POLICY REVISION HISTORY

Date Created: April 12, 2000
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CAO Mark Phillips