

## **Memorandum to the Council of Corporation of the Municipality of Temagami**

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**Subject:** Securing Emergency Readiness – MRFD Replacement of Aging Pumper 4

**Memo No:** 2025-M-097

**Date:** April 24, 2025

**Attachment:** None

**Prepared By:** Pete Christie – Marten River Fire Chief

### **Recommendation**

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Council receive Memo 2025-M-097 as presented;

AND FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED THAT Council authorize the Fire Chief to initiate the procurement process for a new fire pumper, including the development of detailed specifications and the issuance of a public tender, in accordance with the Municipality's Procurement Policy;

AND FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED THAT Council approve that this procurement process be permitted to proceed prior to the final adoption of the 2025 Municipal Budget, in recognition of the urgent operational requirements, extended manufacturer lead times, and the escalating financial implications associated with tariffs and global trade conditions;

AND FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED THAT any and all bids received through this process be brought forward to Council for consideration and final approval prior to the awarding of any contract.

## 1. Executive Summary

The Marten River Fire Department is seeking Council's support to replace Pumper 4 — a 32-year-old, twice-retired fire truck that no longer meets the operational needs of the department or the expectations of modern emergency response.

This request is both urgent and practical. Due to ongoing global supply chain disruptions and increased demand for emergency vehicles, lead times for custom-built pumpers now stretch 12–18 months. Delaying the decision further risks delivery being pushed into 2027 and significant cost escalation.

MRFD currently has sufficient reserve funds to cover the initial down payment. The remaining cost would fall into the 2026 fiscal year and can be incorporated into future capital planning.

A Canadian-built, rural-appropriate pumper would enhance reliability, support mutual aid, and improve overall public safety - making this not only a critical purchase but a smart, long-term investment.

## 2. Background

Approximately six years ago, the Marten River Fire Department retired its 46-year-old pumper. At the time, funds were not available to replace it with a new unit. The solution was to purchase a retired urban pumper from the North Bay Fire Department as an interim measure. The intent was to use this temporary solution while setting aside funds over five years to purchase a new truck.

The current pumper (Pumper 4) is now 32 years old and has been retired twice — first by the Department of National Defence and then by North Bay Fire. Although it has served MRFD longer than expected, it continues to show its age. In recent months, it has required air brake valve replacements, the transmission is running rough, and the vehicle lacks the performance and water capacity needed for rural and highway operations.

When the pump was last certified, the technician advised that pumpers over 30 years old are generally not certifiable under modern standards.

### **3. INFORMATION**

MRFD would like to initiate the process of acquiring a new pumper in 2025. Even with immediate action, the expected delivery timeline for a new custom-built pumper is late 2026 due to current lead times. However, placing the order this year would lock in pricing and avoid future increases.

The current pumper was never designed for MRFD's service needs. It is a city-style truck optimized for use in urban environments with hydrants and lacks the larger water tank needed for rural service. Its chassis and components are not built for harsh northern conditions or the highway speeds required in this service area.

### **4. Rationale**

In December 2024, Pumper 4 was certified for another year, but only after undergoing significant repairs. While at Freightliner North Bay, mechanical issues resulted in repair costs of \$8,845.11. A roof light bar had to be removed due to failure, and replacement parts are no longer available. Freightliner estimated an additional \$5,000 would be required to replace the light bar.

The truck was out of service for 13 days, largely due to delays sourcing parts. The Freightliner service manager confirmed that such delays will become more frequent as the vehicle continues to age. Upon pickup, the pumper failed again within 4 km, when its air lines froze and the compressor became inoperable, causing brake failure.

### **5. Why a New Pumper is Required**

Used pumpers currently available on GovDeals.ca are all city-style trucks that would suffer from the same limitations as our existing unit. Most would require substantial repairs to be serviceable, and none meet MRFD's needs for water volume, cold weather handling, or rural and highway operations.

Purchasing a new pumper would allow MRFD to develop specifications that fit our exact service model, ensuring the vehicle is reliable, durable, and appropriately equipped for long-term use.

## 6. Benefits of a New Pumper

- **Reliability:** Covered by manufacturer warranty, with new components and no history of service failures.
- **Latest Technology:** Improved pumps, controls, lighting, and communications systems enhance response and safety.
- **Customization:** MRFD can tailor water tank size, pump capacity, compartment layout, and cold-weather features.
- **Compliance:** Meets current NFPA, safety, and emissions standards.
- **Reduced Maintenance:** Fewer service calls and downtime in early years.
- **Performance:** Higher flow rates and engine power enhance firefighting capability.
- **Safety:** Safer handling, lighting, and equipment access for both firefighters and the public.
- **Longevity:** Expected to serve the department reliably for over 20 years.
- **Mutual Aid Support:** Improves reliability for assisting neighboring communities.
- **Alignment with Asset Management Plans:** Proactively replaces a high-risk asset as part of long-term capital planning.

## 7. Conclusion

The replacement of Pumper 4 is necessary, timely, and financially responsible. The current vehicle no longer provides dependable service, and the risk to life safety, infrastructure, and operational continuity is growing monthly.

This is not just a vehicle purchase — it is a commitment to readiness, safety, and efficient use of taxpayer resources.

MRFD has the reserves to begin the process without impacting the 2025 operating budget. With Council's support, we can act decisively, secure build capacity, and ensure delivery before further deterioration or cost escalation occurs.