

From: Mishayla Vandenheuvel [REDACTED] >
Sent: May 6, 2022 2:43 PM
To: General <general@lakecowichan.ca>
Subject: Loud siren complaint for mayor and council

Hello Mayor and council,

This is a formal complaint regarding the use of the loud speaker emergency siren. It is a nuisance to say the least. It has repeatedly awoken my son to the point that he has lacked in sleep which im sure you know is vital to development. He has also developed a fear of it from which he is inconsolable for upwards of 20 minutes or more every time. I was hoping he would grow out of it but unfortunately its gotten worse. I know at least 2 autistic children in this town whom experience breakdowns at this siren. This causes undue stress on child and parent alike.

I'm aware that a vote decided to keep it, I'm told that this was a few years ago and i opine that alot has changed since then. I was given the following reasons for keeping it:

- A) it's been here for a long time and most folks want to keep it
- B) it's so firefighting volunteers can be aware there is an emergency
- C) So townsfolk can be aware that emergency vehicles will be passing through
- D) so people can shut off their water if there is a fire.

To which I say:

A) Times have changed and this town needs to change with it. I posit that those who wish to keep the siren are largely the elderly, do not have young children or are those whom are stuck in their ways. Or that these people do not consider the feelings and needs of sick kids. Just because it has been around for a long time doesn't mean it works for everyone.

B) I reckon that volunteers need to be reached in some way to be told where the emergency is after the siren sounds. Whether this be through a phone or radio, I do not know but it occurs to me that an on-call emergency volunteer should be available to contact at all times without the use of a siren.

C) Sirens and lights on vehicles are more than enough for drivers and pedestrians to be aware of emergency vehicles. People learn this in licensing to drive. If they need a loudspeaker then there is a much larger issue.

D) How would regular people at home know whether this siren is for a fire or car accident? it does go off for things other than fire. Do people turn off their water every time it goes? I think not. I feel like this point borders on simply being argumentative.

I sincerely hope that you, the council, takes this into consideration and takes the steps to update the current policies. I know I am not the only person with an issue here. I, though, am undeterred by the matter of fact, too bad to be you attitude I've received insofar.

Please update me when this complaint is received. I would like to know if anything will be done and/or what my next steps might be. Unfortunately, moving away is not possible right now or else i would.

Thank you.

Sincerely,
Mishayla Vandenheuvel
[REDACTED]



Memo

TO: Chair, Finance and Administration Committee

SUBJECT: Update on Fire Siren

DATE: April 12, 2018

FROM: Chief Administrative Officer

BACKGROUND

The past and current Fire Chiefs have at various times wrestled with others over the topic of the continued use of the fire siren. Generally, the consensus from has been to maintain the use of it and its elimination has met with resistance. Other municipalities have had similar experiences.

Why do we have a fire siren?

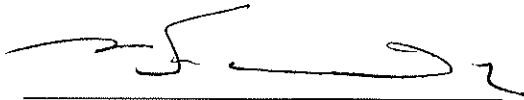
- To notify the fire department fire fighters and the public of the urgency of a public emergency.
- The citizens are notified willingly or unwittingly of a fire or other emergency in the community and are encouraged to comply with the needs of the emergency crew and equipment.
- The fire siren should be a way of warning residents to turn off their sprinkling systems if there is to be sufficient water for firefighting purposes.
- Drivers and the pedestrians, which include school children, should be sufficiently trained and warned to stay off roads when the fire siren sounds.
- Volunteers and firefighting equipment may make it quicker to the fire hall and emergency situations if the public can stay off streets, and the siren is intended to accomplish that.
- Access to the fire hall should be kept clear when the fire siren sounds.

The Fire Chief sees the need for the continued maintenance of the fire siren. Given that the foregoing requirements become more critical between the hours of 7 am and 10 pm each day, the Fire Chief is receptive to the idea of having the fire siren rewired to limit its use to just between 7 am and 10 pm each day.

The re-wiring of the siren can be accomplished when the municipal hall is renovated. However, the Fire Chief is willing to accept a reduction in the hours of operation of the siren on a trial basis, before it becomes permanently implemented.

Recommendation

Until a new timer system can be implemented, the current system of fire siren notification should remain in place. However, serious consideration should be given to eliminating the use of the siren between the hours of 10 pm each night and ending at 7 am the next morning by allocating budget dollars for that purpose. Additionally, the siren when used should only be used to sound for shorter durations.



Joseph A. Fernandez

that the committee recommend approval of the Grants-in-Aid to the following:

- Cowichan Lake Lady of the Lake \$ 500
 - 1st Cowichan Scouts 750
 - Lake Cowichan Dry Grad 2018 500
 - LCS Scholarships two at \$500 each 1,000
- for a total of \$2,750
CARRIED.

No. FA.0017/18 (e)



Moved: Councillor Day
Seconded: Councillor Austin
that until a new timer system for sirens can be implemented the current system of fire siren notification should remain in place;
and that serious consideration should be given at that time to eliminating the use of the siren between the hours of 10pm each night and 7 am the next morning, with the sirens when used should only be sounded for shorter durations.

CARRIED.

7. NEW BUSINESS

No. FA.0018/18 (a)

Motioned: Councillor Austin
Seconded: Councillor Vomacka
that Councillor McGonigle be excused from this meeting.

No. FA.0019/18 (b)

Motioned: Councillor Day
Seconded: Councillor Vomacka
that the 2018 Meeting Schedule be revised to reflect that future Finance and Administration Meeting are begin at 6:00pm.

CARRIED.

8. NOTICES OF MOTION

Councillor Day would like to present a resolution to UBCM to present to the Provincial government that a fund be created to surplus and unused schools be kept in good repair. Other UBCM resolutions can be considered.

9. PUBLIC RELATIONS ITEMS

- (a) 6 pm, April 1, 2018 Lake Cowichan School(LCS) - Alex van Tols to make a Mental Health Presentation;
- (b) LCS Health Fair is on April 12, 2018 from 10am to 1 pm.;
- (c) April 19, 2018 at 5:30 pm for a Shattering Myths Opioid Community Dialogue.
- (d) April 16, 2018 from 9am to 6pm - Summer Games Volunteer Appreciation at 540 Cairnsmore St., Duncan, BC

10. MEDIA/PUBLIC QUESTION PERIOD

11. ADJOURNMENT

No. FA.0020/18
Adjournment

Moved: Councillor Vomacka
Seconded: Councillor Day
that we adjourn (5:47 p.m.).

CARRIED.

Certified correct