

Kingston Professional Fire Fighters Association Survey

1. Firefighters are recognized within their community as being advocates for many causes, providing support and educational value to those we serve. Provided that operational needs are not affected, do you support allowing on duty personnel to attend public events and fundraisers within our community (for example Remembrance Day ceremonies public events, Muscular Dystrophy Fundraisers)?

Why, or why not?

I deeply believe that the health of our community is based on our ability to connect with each other day by day. Fundraising events, public activities and ceremonies are important ways in which we foster this connection and bring attention to issues. I respect the leadership within Kingston Fire and Rescue to make decisions on where and when their staff attends events, though I will always encourage community engagement.

2. The adverse effects of having a poor Labour - Management relationship can result in financial costs as the parties require mediation and arbitration processes to resolve issues. Do you see the benefits of having a Labour - Management committee that addresses ongoing concerns within the fire department. *How do you see the role you would play in this as a member of council?*

I see the potential benefit of a Labour – Management committee. Ideally it would allow for opportunities to build rapport and respect across the organization and provide space to foster solutions to emerging challenges between staff and administration.

Ultimately, I believe that clear communication, a shared understanding of the organization's purpose and visions and a collective commitment to serve one's clients effectively allows for many issues to be resolved.

As Student Affairs professional (in post-secondary institutions), one of the universities I worked at did not have a union but a staff association which facilitated annual staff-administration negotiations that realized successful resolutions to pay increases and working conditions. This is a model worth exploring in good faith.

3. Negotiations require a working relationship between the parties in order to make best efforts to resolve contractual issues locally. Do you support this being conducted by City of Kingston Human Resources Staff. Are you familiar with the process that is currently in place with respect to fire negotiations?

After consulting with a local fire captain on this issue and reading the introduction and section 51 of FPPA, my understanding is basic. I support City staff conducting these negotiations with 3 important qualifications:

- 1) negotiations are done in good-faith and remain impartial
- 2) staff are qualified to do so
- 3) there is a mechanism for parties to request a different negotiator if necessary

I will stay in contact with the Commissioner of Transportation, Facilities and Emergency Services to ensure I am up-to-date on any issues that arise.

4. The Fire Prevention and Protection Act governs the Negotiation process within the fire services, including the arbitration process. Are you familiar with this process and do you believe that it is a fair resolve to negotiations that could not be resolved locally?

I am familiar in reading the legislation and the have the mentioned consultation but not in seeing it first-hand. I require additional conversations with staff, the union, management and case studies to discern whether or not I think it is fair in practice.

5. What is your current understanding of the role that the city's full-time fire fighters currently play in the delivery of Emergency Medical Services?

The role is a vital one. I acknowledge that our fire fighters are called to put their personal safety at very real risk to save members of our community who are in danger. All of our Emergency Medical Service providers are part of a network of personnel working together with a goal to protect and sustain life. Our Fire fighters are an indispensable part of this network; and due to the "on-the-scene" nature of position in a variety of different scenarios their role is naturally one of assessment and provision of care.

6. Knowing that our city's fire fighters have existing medical skills, are strategically positioned throughout the city and often arrive on the scene of medical emergencies before ambulance-based paramedics, do you support:

I am always open to research and evidence based policy. Our capacity as a City to assist in saving lives is imperative and it takes a number of people to play a role. Accordingly, I would like to

- √ study how the expanded use of existing on-duty fire fighters could improve response times and improve patient care in a cost-efficient manner
- √ obtain additional information

7. Who do you think city council should consult on issues that involve fire protection, fire department capabilities and overall public safety? (Check all that apply). Why?

- √ Fire Chief
- √ Ontario Fire Marshal's Office
- √ Fire fighters (association)
- √ The public
- √ Insurance grading organization

I believe that we need to resource to the experts in the field. I believe in investing in the leadership of those who are aware of City's needs as well as provincial requirements and on the ground realities.

The Fire Chief, Ontario Fire Marshal's Office and Fire fighters Association, help bring together policy and the practice. The public are the ones that will communicate what they feel is needed for further education and compliance. And the insurance industry can help set standards.

As Mayor I would want to ensure any the gap between the groups in question is addressed and mitigated before the problems arise.

8. What changes, if any, do you think need to be made to the city's fire service?

I would suggest two things additions (not changes in and of themselves).

2) A recommitment to work diligently and strategically regarding fire safety inspections and by-law enforcement. While this is a city wide concern, the student district and basement apartments are especially salient.

3) An increased training program in techniques and technology for fighting toxic chemical spills from railcar derailments or truck accidents would be a prudent investment given the potential high community impact of these kinds of accidents.

9. What are your priorities for the city and its residents if elected?

This is my vision for our city: A city I want to lead. A city for us to build together. With this vision I believe that we can become a vibrant hub of individual and collective well-being. In addition to the information below, for particularly policy, please visit my website: www.brendaslomka.ca

A City with a culture of compassion and co-operation.

A culture that unites us to realize our untapped potential - allowing our community organizations, our businesses, our institutions, and our families to flourish in all districts.

A culture that values the voices of all residents, regardless of their age, ability, occupation, or when they arrived - counting them as important members of our community.

A City with creative and respectful development.

Development that says "no" to exploitative and regressive projects like a casino; and "yes" to strengthening our social fabric and promoting the real entrepreneurship that produces true economic prosperity.

Development that designs neighbourhoods to enhance quality-of-life; where local food, safe schools, open stores, accessible parks and waterfronts are a brief walk, wheel, bike or bus ride away.

A City of courageous and caring social services.

Services that expand our understanding and practice of how we care for one another - especially the most vulnerable - and how we all benefit from doing so.

Services that deepen an abiding commitment to meet the needs of our loved ones - our neighbours - on time and on budget.

A City of successful and meaningful sustainability.

Sustainability that moves us from word to deed in doing the heavy lifting to become Canada's most sustainable municipality.

Sustainability that inspires all sectors and all citizens to see the connection between individual responsibility and societal conservation practices.

A City of innovative and cost-effective municipal governance.

A City that excels in the responsible management of tax revenues by acting on internal efficiencies identified by staff - reversing the perverse pattern of decreased services and increased taxation.

A City that fosters high quality, community-minded, servant leaders and civil servants to encourage truly democratic public participation in neighbourhood plans, visioning exercises, and (re)development projects - significantly reducing cost of external consultants.

This City should not remain a vision. It can be our City. It can be Kingston.

I believe that we can be *the* place where creativity meets industry; where innovation honours history; where modern infrastructure lessens environmental burdens; where Kingstonians collaborate with each other and with their representatives to spur thoughtful forward-looking policy and caring present-day action.

10. What in your view are the qualities that make you a worthy member of council?

Experience budgeting, building teams and bolstering well-being evidenced in 15 years as a Student Affairs professional in post-secondary institutions.

Capacity for strategic thinking seen in my work as a community organizer and my academic pursuits (e.g. Master's in Business and Leadership, Professional Master's of Public Administration - underway).

Integrity in connecting the work that I am doing to what I believe: in other words, leadership inspires value-based action.

Work-ethic such that I will be a full-time Mayor and to serve everyone with equal care.

In short, the intersection of my professional experience, my personal journey and my community leadership.