

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 17, 2021

Sedgewick, AB – The **Flagstaff Regional Emergency Services Society** (FRESS) is pleased to announce their formal ratification upon holding their Inaugural Meeting on June 15th, 2021.

At the meeting Mayor of the Village of Lougheed, Debra Smith and Division 6 Councillor of Flagstaff County, Erik Skoberg were confirmed as President and Vice-President, respectively.

On the ratification of FRESS, Debra Smith said, *"This is a proud moment for the Flagstaff region. It is the result of years of commitment and contribution by a number of people including elected officials, CAO's and Fire Chiefs"*.

Background - The Flagstaff region has a long history of working collaboratively in emergency services and the concept of an independent and collective emergency services governing entity has been discussed for some time. An Emergency Services Committee (ESC) was first established in 2005 to formally explore a regional fire services model. Later in 2018, after considerable consultations and analysis work, a final Flagstaff Regional Emergency Services Society Business Plan was developed and approved. The plan produced recommendations for the implementation of a regional fire service through a society-based model. In 2021 the Emergency Services Committee commenced work on a Master Agreement which will facilitate a staged transition to the Society assuming control of all fire services. In addition, the Committee proceeded with the recruitment of a Regional Manager as outlined in the Business Plan.

On June 15th, 2021, at its Inaugural Meeting, FRESS confirmed their selection of Mr. Derek Homme as the Regional Manager, Emergency Services. Mr. Homme possess 25+ years of progressive business management leadership experience in the private industrial emergency services sector combined with 15 years experience as a volunteer fire fighter. Mr. Homme will officially start on July 5th, 2021.

Debra continued, *"While this is indeed a significant milestone for the Flagstaff Regional Emergency Services Society and all residents of the region, there remains considerable work to be done with all invested partners to get to the final transition stage of a regional fires services structure"*.

The Flagstaff Regional Emergency Services Society is represented by and governs the fire services for nine municipalities: Flagstaff County, including the Hamlets of Strome and Galahad; the Towns of Hardisty, Sedgewick, Killam and Daysland; and the Villages of Forestburg, Alliance, Lougheed and Heisler.