



MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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RE: Flag raised to honour, thank First Responders

AMHERST, Nova Scotia – Citizens should never take the First Responders who serve the Town of Amherst for granted, Mayor David Kogon said on Monday, April 8.

“We as a town, we as a council want show our deepest appreciation to four key organizations – the Amherst Police Department, Amherst Fire Department, Cumberland RCMP and local EHS paramedics – who are vital to the safety of this community,” Kogon said during a flag raising ceremony held to honour and thank the members of those organizations for their services.

“It is so important to show our gratitude for what you people do.”

Just how important and dangerous the role of a First Responder is was demonstrated in Moncton in 2014 in the deaths of RCMP constables Doug Larche, Fabrice Gevaudan and Dave Ross, the death of Const. Frank Deschenes in 2017, the shootings last summer of two police



Representatives of the Amherst Fire Department, Amherst Police Department, Cumberland RCMP and Emergency Health Services joined members of the Amherst town council in raising a flag on April 8 that recognizes the services first responders provide this community. (Tom McCoag / Town of Amherst)



officers and two citizens in Fredericton and the recent death of Truro Firefighter Skyler Blackie.

The Moncton incident hit especially close to home because as a member of the Moncton Hospital's management team he was present when a Code Orange was called and surgical teams were mobilized, the mayor said.

"You never knew what you were going to receive in terms of medical needs of the patients," Kogon recalled. "It further hit home because one of the officers, his wife was a pediatric nurse with whom I worked and one of the officers was the son-in-law of one of my colleagues."

The families of First Responders must also be thanked, the mayor said.

"As a service provider, you choose the role, but spouses and families didn't necessarily choose that vocation, yet they sacrifice as well," he said.

"Whenever you're involved with a service that requires 24/7, 365 involvement, families have to make adaptations. I can relate to that as a physician. So, we appreciate the sacrifices made by not only the members of the First Responder groups, but by the family members as well."

Kogon then read a proclamation declaring April 8 to April 14 as First Responders Week in the Town of Amherst before presenting copies of the proclamation and a coin marking the occasion to the representatives of the four organizations – Amherst Police Chief Dwayne Pike, Amherst Fire Department Chief Greg Jones, Sgt. Dave Lilly and Cpl. Dave Baldwin of Cumberland RCMP and EHS Paramedic Jamie MacKinnon.

The coin will also be given to every member of the four First Responder groups.

The mayor was then joined by the First Responder representatives and members of council in raising a flag that commemorates their service and sacrifices.

First Responders Week also includes an open house at the Amherst firehall on Thursday, April 11, from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. featuring displays from all four groups. There will also be a parade and church service on Sunday, April 14, beginning at 1:30 p.m. The public is encouraged to attend both events.



This commemorative coin is being presented to all First Responders who serve the Town of Amherst during First Responders Week. (Tom McCoag / Town of Amherst)

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