

Fire Protection Society March Meeting Highlights – by Debbie Fry

The March Board meeting of the Saturna Island Fire Protection Society featured a busy agenda with a number of items up for discussion and decision. As an introduction, President Wayne Quinn highlighted a number of significant accomplishments achieved by the Board in its current term of office. Accomplishments include:

- The securing of a \$500 increase to the annual VIHA grant to Saturna Island Rescue. The annual grant is now \$10,500 and this is the first grant increase in 8 years. Discussions to commence shortly with Emergency Health Services Commission to secure additional funding for SIR.
- A \$25,000 reduction in the tax request from Saturna taxpayers for the 2015-16 budget period and a further \$25,000 reduction in 2016 -17 budget. Taxpayer funding was ramped up by a community supported referendum during the building construction period and with the mortgage close to being paid off this Board is honouring the commitment of a previous Board to give back money to the taxpayers.
- Delivered and put into service a new rescue/equipment vehicle to replace the 35 year old equipment van. The old van will be auctioned.
- Committed \$250,000 over the next 9 years for vehicle replacement.
- Implemented and made operational the health benefits plan for volunteer fire fighters, and SIR rescue volunteers and their respective family members.
- Implemented an email list serve allowing meeting agendas to be emailed to SIFPS members. Those members wishing to receive meeting agendas and who did not receive one prior to the March meeting; please send a current e mail address to Debbie Fry at dandmfry@gmail.com
- Board agreement to cost share the cost of a new washer and dryer for use by the volunteers.
- Undertook a comprehensive review and developed a response to allegations by Mr Al Razutis that members of the SIFPS Board acted in a reckless fashion regarding the SIFPS website and domain registration during transfer from his tenure as webmaster for SIFPS.

The meeting also included the tabling of comprehensive financial reports including an income and expense report for 2014 and January-February 2015, the 2015 budget, and the profit and loss statements from September 2014 to February 2015 inclusive. Treasurer Ron Lewis presented these reports by an audio computer link up from Florida (lucky him) and the Board received these reports with a commitment to review and consider for decision at a meeting on April 11th when Ron will be available to present.

The Board also considered motions from Director John Hutchinson regarding policy and procedures. These motions were referred to the Corporate and Administration Committee for review and future reporting.

Fire Chief Brent Sohier reported that there was a very good turnout for the two day auto extraction course early in March. The crew were able to work with the new rescue vehicle and Chief Sohier advised that the volunteers were very happy to be supported by this vehicle and its ability to carry a full range of rescue tools and equipment. A thank you is offered to Barry Crooks for making his property available to conduct the exercise. A Wild Land Fire Training course will be scheduled in the near future. SIR Crew Chief David Reese Thomas reported a busy year and the crew fielded 58 calls since April 2014. The SIR crew attended a recent Pediatrics for Paramedics course and David reported this course presented some valuable learning for the crew given the increasing number of young children in the community. The Board would like to recognize the effort of Brent and David to arrange comprehensive training for their respective volunteers. Our community can feel assured by having quality emergency services available when needed.

Finally, the Board wishes to confirm an open invitation for community members to contact executive members Wayne Quinn, Ron Hall, Ron Lewis or Eva Hage if they have any questions about policies or procedures of the Board or any of the decision items referenced in this article.