

SATURNA ISLAND FIRE PROTECTION SOCIETY (“SIFPS”)

PRESIDENT’S REPORT

Presented at Annual General Meeting – June 18, 2011

Again this year, SIFPS has been very busy since our last Annual General Meeting, held in June 2010. A number of items that the Board has been working on for the last four years have now been completed, or are very close to completion.

At our last Annual General Meeting, the construction of the two new Emergency Services Buildings (ESBs) was underway. On behalf of the SIFPS Board, I am happy to announce that they were completed ‘on time and on budget’, with occupancy February 15, 2011.

The Official Opening of both ESBs was held today – the equipment and gear for the Saturna Island Volunteer Fire Department, Saturna Island Rescue, Parks Canada Wildfire resources, and Saturna Emergency Preparedness is all stowed and ready for use. In my last report, I said “We look forward to reporting to you at the next Annual General Meeting that the Building Project is finished, and that it was successful.” – with a few minor exceptions, it is finished, and it was successful!

At long last we have established the desired integrated approach to emergency services on Saturna – now comes the fine tuning. This major milestone was achieved while other parts of the SIFPS Board of Directors put their attention to other important issues including:

- finalizing the long-term mortgage financing, ensuring it allows for pre-payment
- renewing insurances at favourable rates
- obtaining the lease payment from Southern Gulf Islands Emergency Management Commission (CRD)
- finalizing the lease with Parks Canada and obtaining the payment
- selling the ‘old Fire Hall’
- preparing for the Official Opening of the ESBs
- ensuring current communications regarding the status of SIFPS

These were all in addition to the SIFPS’ regular function – to support and guide the Fire Department, and the SIR in the planning, and execution of their functions – in their provision of emergency services to Saturna.

As I said at this time last year, “It is important that we stop and think about that – the true reason we are here today, is not because of all of the excitement about constructing new buildings – it is that we have a lot of volunteers who live beside us and are ready to come and help us when we need it most – they spend many hours over the year training and preparing for that one short time when they can make all the difference in the world to us – it is important that we remember that is really why we are here.” – there is no change to this – this is ‘where the rubber hits the road’!

The workload of those who volunteer as SIFPS Board members has continued to increase substantially each year, for the last 4 years – frankly I am hoping and expecting that the workload will begin to lessen somewhat now. Over the last year, the SIFPS Board ‘Standing Committees’ – Operations, Building Project, Corporate & Administration, Finance (for the project), Financial Reporting, Current Hall – Sale,

Communications, and Nominations committees have continued to work very well for the society. Each Director is a member of one or more of these committees.

Each committee has a specific mandate and responsibilities and one of the committee members is the Head of the committee. This has given the Board clarity of direction – we all know what we are responsible for and who is part of it with us. The full Board usually only meets once each month for 3-4 hours, but the committees meet as frequently as required – over the last year the Building Project committee has met very frequently, and you have seen the results. Each committee reports back to the full Board at the monthly meeting, or earlier if necessary. A number of these committees will stand down after this meeting, as they have done their work (e.g. Building Project Committee, Financing Committee, Current Hall – Sale Committee), but will be replaced by some new committees (e.g. Asset Management Committee, Human Resources Committee) as the focus of the Board changes from the construction of buildings, establishment of financing and leases, etc, to ensuring the proper maintenance of the assets (e.g. buildings, vehicles, equipment), as well as providing support to the volunteers in the various areas of human resources (e.g. consistent training methods and standards).

I want to take this opportunity to thank all members of the Board of Directors for their countless hours, in meetings, and for the many other times when they are conducting their duties (e.g. seeking and interacting with contractors to arrange to get the work done, talking with the bank, arranging insurance renewals...) – there has been a lot of that again this year. Four of the Directors elected last year are not standing for re-election today:

Lorne Bolton – was on the SIFPS Board when it was first established in 1994 and then rejoined the Board as President in 2007, when after a period of retirement, he led a group of us to join the Board focused on the vision of establishing 2 new Emergency Services Buildings

Hugh Grasswick – was on the SIFPS Board when it was first established in 1994 and then rejoined the Board in 2007, as part of the group focused on the vision of establishing the 2 new Emergency Services Buildings; during this last time on the Board, Hugh was Head of the Operations Committee

Brian Haley – joined the SIFPS Board in 2009 and provided a strong focus on the planning for the construction of the new ESBs; Brian was the initial Head of the Building Committee and led it through the difficult period of getting the project started

Tom Koochin – joined the SIFPS Board in 2007 and brought his strong construction background to greatly assist in the construction project, especially in its initial planning Frankly, I find it difficult to express the full appreciation that is due to these people from the community – we thank you for your leadership, your time, and your unyielding commitment, to see this building project through to its completion!

Again this year, I also take this opportunity to thank you, the members of SIFPS and citizens of Saturna – we all contribute in our own way – each of us pay taxes to support all of this activity – without the tax monies, this would not be happening – that’s the bottom-line.

The Standing Committees’ Report will give a little more detail regarding the specific activities in their areas of responsibility.

John W. Savage, President - SIFPS