

**SATURNA ISLAND FIRE PROTECTION SOCIETY (SIFPS)
DIRECTORS MEETING**

SEPTEMBER 20, 2014, 9:15 AM at ESB#1

Directors Present: Wayne Quinn, Deb Fry, John Hutchinson, Ron Hall, Ian Gaines, Priscilla Hagar, Eva Hage, Ron Lewis

Regrets: Jodi Gilmour

Chiefs: Fire Chief Brent Sohier, SIR Chief David Rees-Thomas

Guests: 13 SIFPS members/firefighters were present

Recording Secretary: Bev Lowsley

1. Call to Order

President Wayne Quinn called the meeting to order at 9:15 am

2. Approval of Agenda

Suggested to move Item 4.a Website Maintenance to item 15. New Business and Fundraising Request to 7.b.

Motion: John Hutchinson moved to approve agenda as amended. **Carried**

3. Approval of Minutes

3.a. Minutes of June 14, 2014 meeting prior to AGM

Motion: Deb Fry moved to approve the June 14, 2014 minutes. **Carried**

3.b. Minutes of SIFPS Board meeting July 20, 2014

Motion Eva Hage moved to approve the July 20, 2014 minutes. **Carried**

4. Business Arising From Minutes

4. a. Website maintenance will be discussed as item 15.b.

5. Welcome Guests

Wayne Quinn welcomed the guests and explained the process to be followed for this Board meeting. In view of the number of guests who are here for the discussion of a proposed Retention and Rewards Program options consideration may be given to moving the Human Resources Committee Report higher on the agenda.

6. Correspondence

6.a. Letter from John Wiznuk requesting funding support

Discussion of this issue will follow the President's report.

6.b. Letter from John Wiznuk re: ESB#1 monitor role

John Wiznuk issued a letter to the President advising that he no longer wanted to be the hall monitor for ESB#1

7. President's Report

Wayne Quinn has had a discussion with Diana Lokken from CRD regarding handling of the Saturna taxes prior to submission of the allocated monies to SIFPS. In the past there has been deduction of legal and handling fees from the SIFPS allocation which seemed excessive. It may be time to review the MOU between CRD and SIFPS.

Thank you letters were sent to past Board members for their service. Also, Wayne talked to Dwight Carson relating to his suggestion of a fundraiser for purchase of a newer fire truck for ESB#2 to service the East Point area. He was encouraged to pursue this with a group of neighbours as a community endeavour if he desires.

A letter was sent to Island Health through the Community Club regarding the retirement of our nurse and our community need to retain a nursing position on Saturna.

7.a Human Resources Report (by consensus this item was moved forward on the agenda as of primary interest to the volunteers and SIFPS members present)

Priscilla Hagar introduced the process followed in drafting the various options. Prior to moving ahead with the presentation, Eva Hage noted that a decision made by the previous Board on March 16, 2013 had to be addressed. That decision was made In-Camera, therefore Eva made the following motion:

Motion: to release the In-Camera minutes of March 16, 2013.

Discussion: John Hutchinson requested that the persons who were present on the Board for that decision leave the room during discussion of this motion. Three current Board members left the room and Deb Fry stepped in as chair for this discussion.

John then spoke against the motion: to bring information from an In-Camera meeting forward would be a conflict of interest in view of the fact that discussion and decisions at In-Camera meetings are to be kept confidential.

Priscilla Hagar responded that decisions made at that meeting have a direct bearing on this Board's ability to proceed with the issue under discussion today and would help move the discussion forward. Full transparency is important in relation to this discussion. Deb Fry commented, in camera minutes are important.

Tom Johnston, SIFPS member in attendance, made the following points: motions passed In Camera must be recorded and kept separate; such motions are binding on current and future boards; and members of the current board are eligible to review the In Camera motion to determine whether it is still relevant or, if once

passed, a motion impedes the current boards function, that motion must be rescinded.

Question was called on the motion to release the In Camera minutes of March 16, 2013. The vote by the 5 Board members remaining in the room was 3 in favour, 2 against. **Motion Carried**

John Hutchinson requested that his vote against the motion be recorded.

The remaining Board members returned and Wayne Quinn resumed as chair of the meeting. Eva Hage then noted, that the previous Board passed the following resolution on March 16, 2013: "that the discussion of medical and dental benefits for volunteers be deferred until the mortgages are paid off".

Motion: by Eva Hage, to reverse the decision made by the previous Board and proceed with examining various retention and reward programs for consultation with volunteers with the possibility to introduce such program before mortgages are paid off. Vote: Yes 6 No 2 **Carried**

John Hutchinson requested that his negative vote be recorded.

Eva proceeded with a PowerPoint presentation on the four benefit options the committee had researched, including comparisons with what other South Gulf Island volunteer fire departments provide. Next steps for the SIFPS Board will involve decisions regarding whether there are some options that they cannot live with, how to include SIR volunteers in this program, the upper cost limit that SIFPS can sustain over the years and when a selected program can start. Once this is done, SIFPS representatives will meet with the volunteers for input regarding their preferred program, eligibility and performance criteria they may want included as well as other items which might not have been covered. Eva invited anyone wishing a copy of the presentation to contact her and she will provide it.

Questions/Discussion:

David Rees-Thomas - with the Health Savings Account could one person who is very ill draw from the whole pot, would it be available to that person. Response: No, but categories can be established and all volunteers within that category must be treated the same. For example veteran volunteers may get x allowable benefits whereas newer volunteers may receive x minus a selected value of allowable benefits.

Hubertus Surm- Most important is to involve SIR in some way. Regarding the spending account, does it earn money and why is a third party manager needed? Response: There is an option for a member to have the account in various investment funds of his or her choosing or into a bank account collecting basic interest. Third party administration of accounts is for personal privacy of the individuals in the plan.

John Wiznuk - there is flexibility of the amount of money donated by SIFPS and also the Firefighters Association may chose to contribute to the fund. There was some confusion regarding when a volunteer leaves the program whether donations to the health savings account return to the donor (SIFPS or SIFA) or whether they stay with the plan administrator. Eva will check into this. She did note that all of this is tax free to the volunteers. Also, a Health Savings Account can cover member charges over and above those covered by another group policy plan which a member may have.

Brent Sohier asked about Health Savings Account, whether taxable after \$1500 and if so at what level. Eva will investigate what the maximum amount would be before a tax is applied.

John Wiznuk asked about the reimbursement aspect. Response: This is not considered a salary, rather reimbursement for costs related to volunteering or loss of wages if called away from work. The reimbursement program will be investigated further regarding CRA implications.

Bill Schermbrucker asked whether the other islands are covered by CRD AD&D insurance. Response: All the other departments are covered by CRD as they are CRD departments. Pender also has the Firefighters Accident and Sickness coverage.

Ilio Bertolami supported option 3 and suggested a plan of increasing amounts (eg. \$100 first year, \$200 second year, \$300 year, \$500 in fifth year then \$500 per year going forward). He offered to draw up a table for this suggestion and forward it to the Board as an added option.

Follow up - Eva Hage will take findings regarding outstanding items to the volunteers once available. She will liaise with Brent and David to determine a process for initial feedback and ongoing collaboration. It was noted that SIFPS is already collaborating with the Saturna Firefighters Association on this.

Ron Lewis will cost out the various options prior to the next meeting of this committee.

Board Discussion: to determine if there is any option they *do not* want to support; and to develop a long term budget to determine what is affordable.

Board discussed option 1 Group policy noting this generally applies to large corporations or government organizations, is not generally affordable for the small number of members and would not be affordable for SIFPS (not value for money). Ron Lewis estimated the cost of this would be between \$350 and \$500 (possibly

more) per volunteer per month. Kevin O'Hara asked for specific numbers before deleting any options. Eva will check further.

Tom Johnstone suggested that the overall budget should be taken to the firefighters so they are aware of the limits on tax dollars and other expenses faced by the Board.

Deb Fry also noted that it is important to include SIR whenever discussing benefit programs.

Motion - Ron Lewis moved to remove the comprehensive group option and consider options 2, 3 and 4. **Carried,** with one No vote.

Discussion Highlights: whatever program is selected there should be a performance aspect built in;

- consider various performance recognition approaches
- helpful to know how many volunteers already have alternate benefit plans
- it might be possible to combine elements of two options
- whatever is chosen, it must be equitable for both firefighters and SIR volunteers
- eligibility criteria may have to be developed separately for firefighters and SIR
- process for reimbursement of funds may be needed if a volunteer is consistently not attending practices or leaves the program

7.b Funding Request (item moved from 15.a)

John Wiznuk presented information regarding the Pender Island fundraising drive to proceed with construction of a fire training facility. Pender Island is the primary training centre for Saturna volunteers, with five members trained to the NFDA 101 standard. Funds raised, up to \$75,000 will be matched by the Conconi Foundation. This is stage two of their construction. Already completed is an auto extrication facility. This facility and training will be available to other firefighters in the region who currently have to travel to Otter Point, Nanaimo or Maple Ridge for comparable training.

Motion: John Hutchinson moved that SIFPS donate \$2500 to the Pender Fire Organization for their building campaign.

Discussion related to usage by our members and whether payment for usage may be more appropriate.

Deb supported making a donation, but not sure of the amount. Ron Lewis noted that this could conceivably come out of the training budget.

The **motion** that SIFPS donate \$2500 to the Pender Fire Department for their building campaign was **Carried**

8. Fire Chief's Report

Brent Sohler presented his report (attached). Dwight Carson and Keith Roger, both from East Point area, are regularly taking the truck at ESB#2 out for a run as they have class 1 licences. CRD and Parks Canada both have "no open fire" regulations during the summer, regardless of the fire rating. Usually there have been several calls for smoke or open fire sightings in parks which have been attended by our firefighters . So far none this year.

Peter Ensor, the new Manager, Electoral Area Fire & Emergency Programs for the CRD region is liaising with CRD regarding the replacement costs to comply with the new CREST radio system. This would be a major expense even though Saturna only has 7 radios needing replacement.

Work is still proceeding on development of a mutual aid agreement between the other South Gulf Islands. Eva will follow up on this. The AD&D insurance would cover individuals but damage or loss to equipment is not. In the interim if there is a major incident the Provincial Emergency Program would provide coverage.

9. SIR Chief's Report

David Rees-Thomas presented his report (attached). Another call review session will be done this Tuesday. One of the water taxi members has requested to come over to attend one of the SIR practices. Recently they have received a BC Ambulance radio. A problem with the overhead door spring in the ambulance bay will be looked at by Ian Gaines.

Guest John Gaines asked if stats on responses include whether responses are for local residents, tourists or those in Parks Canada. David responded that this is not done at this time.

10. Finance Committee Report

Ron Lewis reported that the CRD cheque for \$200,083 has been received which was slightly more than last year's allocation. Also received was the GST rebate. Details of the financial statements were presented and several adjustments made.

Ron L. will determine when the last annual prepayment on the mortgage was made and when it will be appropriate to make a payment for this year. There was also discussion of the method for tracking SIR income (including donations) and expenses.

In relation to discussion of fuel expenses, Brent suggested that each vehicle be equipped with a log book in which the date, amount of fuel, cost, odometer reading and driver's name are noted. This would enable closer tracking of fuel consumption and costs.

Guest Ilio Bertolami presented the issue of different tax rates for developed land compared to undeveloped land which is not equitable. Developed land with buildings are more likely to require fire responses than undeveloped land. Wayne indicated this was a matter for BC Assessment to consider and not likely something SIFPS could influence. Wayne will present this issue to CRD for comment.

Motion: John Hutchinson moved that the financial reports be accepted as amended. **Carried**

11. Operations Committee Report

Ian Gaines reported on issues related to identifying vehicles needing replacement. These discussions have included input from Chief Brent Sohier. John Hutchinson recommended that subsequent vehicles should be fire rated. Experience with past purchases of a chassis then conversion for specific use as a fire vehicle have not been very satisfactory and can be costly. Cost of replacing the rescue vehicle varies and acquisition processes whether domestic or from the US were discussed. Insurance issues relating to use of individual's vehicles, although not encouraged, are also being investigated. The two vehicles initially needing replacement are the rescue van and the Suburban. It was recommended that when planning purchases minimum specifications should be identified.

Motion: John Hutchinson moved that SIFPS allocate up to \$50,000 for replacement of the rescue van. **Carried**

12. Corporate and Administration Committee Report

Eva Hage reported that on Nov 3 the property and general liability insurance will expire and she has completed the documents for renewal. She recommends that for next year (2015-2016) tendering of the insurance contracts be considered.

13. Human Resources Committee Report

This was dealt with as item 7.a

14. Communications Committee Report

Deb Fry has started development of an item for the Scribbler which will be completed by the submission deadline including items from today's meeting. Her Scribbler articles will be focussing on sharing information as well as correcting any misinformation. She also requested that when sending emails to her we use the address dandmfry@gmail.com

In relation to thank you letters for SIR donations, Ron Hall noted that he has a program that prints thank you letters as well as tax receipts. He will take on this responsibility.

15. New Business.

15.a Vehicle Inspection

Brent noted that the two tenders (water tankers) which are rated as commercial vehicles require inspection by the end of October. They can be taken in to town for this or if all vehicles are being inspected the inspectors can come over here. It was agreed to have someone come over to do this. Ian Gaines will contact the company that does inspections on their business vehicles to find availability and potential costs.

15. b. The meeting was suspended and went In Camera at 12:42 pm

At 12:51 the general meeting resumed.

President Quinn reported that the Board passed a motion in camera to increase the Fire Chief's honourarium to \$12,000 per annum. This is to keep up with inflation as well as for merit in performance of his role. This adjustment will be retroactive to July 1, 2014.

15.c Website maintenance

Al Razutis has agreed to transfer the website to SIFPS on condition that SIFPS give recognition that he did original development and that he no longer is responsible for it. Having it registered to SIFPS will involve more paperwork than would be required for an individual however it was agreed to move forward with this. Ron Lewis will handle this and he also suggested that the host site be changed. Harvey Janzen has offered to maintain the website. Redesign of the site is tabled for the present time.

15.d Blinds for the Windows at both ESB's

This was planned earlier this year but with changes to the Board it was not completed. John Hutchinson will take on purchase of blinds.

16. Next Meeting Date – Saturday November 8, 2014, 9:15 am ESB#1

It was agreed to schedule of a longer meeting held every 2 months or at the call of the chair as needed. At the November meeting specific dates will be set for scheduled meetings.

17. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned 1:10pm

President, Wayne Quinn

Secretary, Eva Hage

Recording Secretary, Beverly Lowsley

REPORTS

**SIFPS Board Meeting
Sept. 20 2014
Fire Chiefs Report**

Operations:

There have been no issues with the trucks. The East Point trucks were used at the last practice at ESB2 and functioned very well. Bill Schermbrucker and John Wiznuck met with a group from East Point and ran through the hall and how to use the pumps. There have been no smoke sighting or illegal campfire calls this year which is a first. Wild land gear has arrived. Crest

portable radios will have to be replaced in 2017 as crest is updating the system which will cause the current version of radios to become useless. There is still a fight to determine who will pay for the radios. Cost of replacement of our radios would be around \$35,000

Financial:

There will be an invoice from Fire Fox for wild land gear.

Training:

Training has been based around wildfire. Next round of training will be based on MVI's. We are still trying to arrange for George Klem to come and do a weekend auto extrication and vehicle stabilization course.

Other Business:

Mutual aid agreement

Brent Sohler, Fire Chief

**Saturna Island Rescue
Summer 2014**

Incidents

Bit of a slow start: 3 calls in May, then 5 in June and *nine* in each of July and August. Counting two non-BCAS but significant first-aid jobs we have 37 incidents in the VIHA fiscal year and 42 in the calendar year, which was our total for all of 2013. The Lamb BBQ had about 15 incidents, mostly very minor in nature.

Training

Training over the summer was mostly concerned with debriefs of our calls, some of which were quite serious; we'll return to regular training in the fall. The September session will be led by Ron Monk.

Equipment

No issues. The two yellow (Paramedic) jackets with fleeces were received. Equipment was rearranged in the Rapid-1 jumpkit, and a BP cuff, stethoscope, and pulse oximeter were added to the kit.

Ambulance

No issues.

Station

No issues

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Crew

No issues. Kevin O'Hara has recertified as OFA3. Most of the drivers are up for recertification soon.

David Rees-Thomas
Unit Chief
Saturna Island Rescue