

# **SATURNA ISLAND FIRE PROTECTION SOCIETY**

**Monday 22 November, 2021 4:00 pm at ESB #1**

**PRESENT:** Eva Hage, Stephen Hardy, Ron Monk, Tony Marchigiano, John Wiznuk, Peter Stolting, Ian Gaines, Peter Clark, Vanessa Verbitsky

**ABSENT:** Doug Hayward, Deb Simpson, Melanie Watson

**GUESTS:** Jonathan Reimer, Manager, Electoral Area Fire and Emergency Programs (via Zoom)  
John Hutchinson, Lions

1. Eva Hage called the meeting to order @ **4:07 pm**.

2. **Moved** by Stephen to approve the agenda. **Carried**.

3. **Moved** by Stephen to approve the minutes from Sept 20, 2021. **Carried**.

#### **4. Welcome to guests:**

Jonathan Reimer, Manager, Electoral Area Fire and Emergency Programs discussed insurance availability and other resources such as pro-active support for volunteers, and a 24/7 counseling line for first responders. Jonathan also mentioned there are Fire Services and FireSmart coordinators available for consultation.

John Hutchison, on behalf of the Saturna Lions, discussed the Harvey Janszen Memorial Fund to assist with PTSD and stress counseling for both residents and first responders and asked for suggestions on ways to implement.

#### **5. Business Arising From Minutes**

a. Metrics: **Tabled**.

b. Eva discussed benchmarking with other fire departments for comparison.

c. The CRD grant for solar at ESB #2 has been approved and money received. Clearance has been given by the CRD. **Moved** by Eva to use Viridian. **Carried**.

d. Replacement of side mirror is now complete.

e. Fire training containers have been purchased; Ian Gaines to follow up with delivery and placement.

f. Eva reported from Sept 20/21 In-Camera meeting that the Board passed a motion to buy four Option 2 jackets.

#### **6. Correspondence.**

a. **Moved** that Tyler Battle is now a member of SIFPS. **Carried**.

b. A \$1,000 donation toward Car 2 was made.

#### **7. Fire Chief's report:** Peter Clark submitted his report.

a. **Moved** to hire a qualified technician to annually service the breathing air compressor. **Carried**.

b. Peter will compile a list of areas where the fire department is not in full compliance for the Board's consideration.

**8. SIR Chief's report:** Vanessa submitted her report. **Moved** by John Wiznuk that Cars 1 & 2 be winterized. **Carried**.

**9. Operations/Asset Management Committee**

- a. Eva thanked the committee for preparing a first draft business case for replacement of Tender 1 - ongoing.
- b. Repair of ESB #1 garage door will take 8 - 10 weeks for repair said Peter Stolting.

**10. Finance Committee**

- a. Stephen Hardy submitted his Actual to Budget Jan - Oct 2021. **Moved** to accept report. **Carried.**
- b. Eva suggested travel and training reimbursement policies be synchronized. **Ongoing.**

**11. Corporate/Administration Committee**

- a. CGL and Property insurance submitted by Melanie Watson.
- b. Renewal of contracts: The wording for the cleaner's contract will be amended to include additional events and clarification on vaccination status.
- c. Mutual Aid agreement to be renewed without changes.

**12. Communications Committee Website Renewal. Tabled.**

**13. Human Resources Committee**

- a. Job descriptions for Fire and SIR Chiefs. **Ongoing.**
- b. HR strategy: Action plan required. **Ongoing.**
- c. **Moved** to accept SIFPS Vaccination Policy as circulated. **Carried.**
- d. Health Spending Account up to date by Tony Marchigiano.
- e. Occupational, Health and Safety Committee report was submitted by Tony Marchigiano. Firefighters require 'fit testing' to be compliant, which Peter Clark will organize. **Moved** by Tony to spend a minimum of approx \$1,500 for annual fit testing and investigate whether the same company can doo fit test for SIR first responders as well. **Carried.** Tony discussed vehicle exhaust concerns and Peter Clark will consult with a mechanical engineer about installing exhaust fans at the ceiling.

**14. New Business**

- a. Peter Clark provided cost details for an AED for Command 1 and John Hutchinson offered the possible assistance from the Lions. **Moved** that SIFPS purchase an AED for Command 1 and that SIFPS approach the Lions club for assistance. **Carried.**

15. Next Meeting: Jan 17 2022 @ ESB #1 @4pm

**16. In-Camera.**

**17. Moved to Adjourn. Adjourned at. 6:24 pm.**

President: Eva Hage \_\_\_\_\_

Corporate Secretary: Melanie Watson \_\_\_\_\_

Recorded by: Sandy Nelson \_\_\_\_\_



## Fire Chief's Report

**TO: Saturna Island Fire Protection Society**

**November 17, 2021**

Since September 13, 2021, SIVFD has had x calls: 1 structure fire, and 1 burn complaint, 2 smoke sightings, 1 missing person/water rescue, 1 hydro line incident, and 5 medical assists. SIVFD has responded to 32 incidents thus far in 2021, and we are thus likely headed for a record year.

We have had a busy training fall schedule, with recruit training and an auto extrication course. 1 firefighter did rope rescue training in Shawnigan lake, and another firefighter is due to do Class 3 training in December. Unfortunately we had to delay some training to early 2022.

In 2022 we have planned an OFA1 course, Emergency scene traffic control, a water delivery exercise, a structural collapse course, an air brake course, and a rope rescue updating course. We are also hoping to schedule some officer training. We will not be doing another recruit course until 2023.

Our grant-funded sprinkler trailer has been built, and is awaiting pickup.

The transition to our new dispatcher will happen on December 7. There has been quite a bit of work coordinating details with the consulting company who has been hired to manage the transition.

John Wiznuk and I have done some basic work on the topic of the Tender 1 replacement. I look forward to meeting again with the Asset Management Committee to discuss it.

The topic of the Worksafe compliancy of our vehicle bay exhaust system is a concern to me. I have contacted an HVAC engineering firm to ask for their opinions on how we can establish this. I will report when I know more, and before any expenses are incurred.

Michel Chiasson, Captain of ESB2, in addition to his regular duties taking care of the crew, hall, and equipment at ESB2, has taken on a couple of special projects. For one, he has taken on the project of developing additional water supplies, first at East Point, and then the

rest of the island. For another, he has developed a program to bring on auxiliary tender drivers for T2 at East Point. This has started with 2 recently retired firefighters, David Osborne and Bruce Rhodes, but will continue with some new recruits who will receive a minor amount of fire training in 2022, as well as air brake training and driving practice. I intend to expand the model to include 1 or more auxiliary class 3 drivers for T1 at ESB1 (experienced drivers who already have their class 3 or greater).

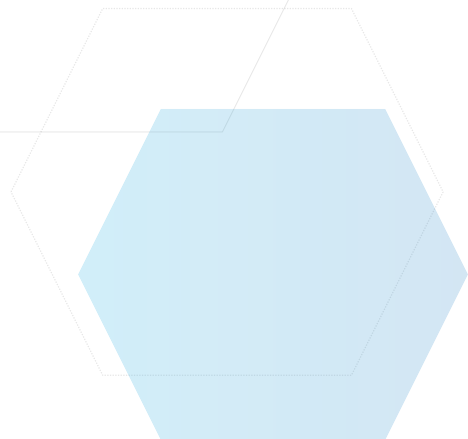
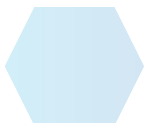
The breathing air compressor at ESB1 was serviced in October, and an air sample was taken. There are some minor repairs that should be done but they can wait (a leaking valve and a broken gauge). We are required by Worksafe to take an air sample yearly, and each time that is done, some minor maintenance should be done, which is a semi-technical task. I would prefer us to pay the qualified technician to do that than to do that work ourselves, however it currently has not been budgeted for 2022.

I am looking in to scheduling a technician from Guillevin International to come perform SCBA fit testing on our firefighters. This is a hole in our compliancy. It will likely cost about \$1000-\$1500.

I would like to thank Eva for her investigative work on the topic of nearby FDs and their compensation for volunteers and employees, as well as tax rates. This is a complicated discussion, and it can only be grounded by some facts. One of the reasons I have spurred this discussion is because there are some tasks that are not being completed to keep this department up to compliance with provincial regulations. I intend to complete a report to the board soon that details many of these issues. Some of these may expose the officers and directors to liability, and the only solution to that is for more work to be done.

Thank you for your time.

**Peter Clark**  
CHIEF, SIVFD



Saturna Island Rescue  
Report for SIFPS  
November 2021

### **Training**

We just completed our November training and again spent the time talking and did not have time for our planned training. It is far more important for us to talk about the calls attended: what went wrong and what went right, how the equipment behaved and what I need to research. I am working on ways to work around this for 2022.

Mike Billingham will be here December 11<sup>th</sup> for a course on pediatrics. This is pertinent as Saturna has two new babies with another on the way.

Columbia Medical was the company we asked to train us for our CPR tickets in the spring and had to delay the timing as they changed their offered courses. As of November 30<sup>th</sup> they will begin to offer this course and so we will not be booking them until early into 2022. They anticipate offering updated skills training at some point in the future and I hope to have there here at that time.

### **Calls**

So far this year we have responded to 51 calls.

We had some rather large calls this month, including one cardiac arrest. An unusual aspect was that they all happened within a three day period, one of those days had 3 calls in one day. Of those, one was directly after the aforementioned cardiac arrest, with the ambulance leaving literally as I finished cleaning and stocking it.

Statistics: a comparison over 5 years.

Attached is data SIFPS asked for : a comparison of previous years data. 2015-2016 is data from former Chief Rees-Thomas, 2017-2018 from former Chief Vigneault, and 2019 to present being my own. Each Chief has changed what data was collected and how it was presented.

I note that the Lamb BBQ some years have had a large impact on call volume and often those calls are for mild hyperthermia and simple traumas such as mild sunburns or sprained ankle-type injuries. In 2020 and 2021 Saturna had no lamb BBQ.

One thing to also know is that both former Chiefs Rees-Thomas and Vigneault would hold "blood pressure clinics" when they felt crew needed higher patient contact numbers in order to maintain EMALB licenses. These are no longer allowed by licensing. I believe this is why there are high numbers of "first aid no page" some years.

One way I can convey the feeling that this year is different in terms of call volume is that we have one member of our crew who is not taking shifts for several weeks in December/January. They are citing the need for a mental health break and directly attribute that to having more calls as well as mentally harder calls.

We had no ambulance during the large weather event Saturna experienced November 15<sup>th</sup>, but made quick plans regarding changing scheduling due to road inaccessibility. KI believe we still have one crew member unable to have their vehicle out of their driveway. Having Car2 at ESB2 was a great relief for crew members on the east side of the island, as well as the public I am sure. I am now going through our winter protocols and reminding crew of those as well as winterizing our assets.

### **Supplies**

I feel a large part of my work with SIR in 2021 has been dealing with procuring supplies, issues with equipment and medications. We have our second shipment of a display stand which just arrived damaged but Ive decided not to return it yet again because the item is out of stock and no guarantees of when it will be in stock.

The new mirror, the 3rd version we have received, is now on car1. It has a longer arm than the previous ones and the crew have been reminded to take their time and check while moving the ambulance into and out of the car bay as it it now even a tighter squeeze.

As I have written to a few members of SIFPS I have been having issues procuring the rain jackets as the type SIFPS chose has been out of stock through every vendor I have found. One member did by one for himself, at both the wrong colour and most likely wrong size as well as only able to do so as he had a US shipping address and will physically pick it up himself in the USA. I am working on this.

## Drivers License

SIR currently has 5 members with their class 4 drivers licenses. Of those two are retired and have a dedication to SIR, one of those is ex-army who also has a dedication, one of those took his test as Rees-Thomas offered a reward at the time (and of the whole crew he was the only one to take the offer) and the fifth member was offered training to do so as well as provided a vehicle to learn on (which was the Lions bus and now van).

In 2020 I went to the board and brought up the fact all SIR members absolutely had to have their ICBC class 4 license (or class 1) to drive the ambulance and that I was concerned about this. I asked for funding be provided for training and to help with this task and was denied. I went to each member and explained they needed their class 4, I sent out what they needed to do, provided the book, offered my own car if needed. I reminded crew about this several times, brought it up each time we met and provided encouragement. I offered an award of my own money and Paul Brent offered to double that. I also came back to the board asking for any help or advice on how to encourage members to take on this task on their own time and received no advice.

Just recently I have asked crew members again if they are working towards this (I know three of us have struggled to do this all year) as well as ask for their advice on how to encourage them. With out resources to help them with this task, I don't see how else I can encourage them. I am no longer willing to provide my own money and the reward is off the table.

My suggestions for the board is that you have asked members to take on this task on their own time and two members did that, and we may get one or two more members, but to ask for 20 or 30 hours of a volunteers time while providing no help on how to do that is simply not going to get 100% success. And that is what is needed. I suggest funding for training, whether that be an outside professional training, such as Fire provides for their ICBC licenses. A bonus with this is that insurance may come down with this training. Or pay for a local resident who is willing to schedule weekly sessions for studying and helping with driving practice and vehicle checks. I suggest providing a reward for a contest because that way it gives members something to strive for as well as provides a set date for accomplishing the work, which can be a great motivator.

As of summer 2020 we have followed BCEHS' lead and would require this license before a new member was able to take shifts. Please note that in addition to the ICBC license BCEHS provides a full course for all their new members on driving emergency vehicles and that is something SIFPS may want to consider providing in terms of perhaps decreasing some liability.

## Crew

SIR has no changes in crew members and are still at 13. The member who I mentioned in my last report had to take a break from SIR is now back and taking shifts. We have a different member who will now be taking at least a three week break citing mental health care being needed directly because of their work with SIR and Fire. I encourage this and have checked in with this member and will continue to do so.

I submit this for your consideration

Thank you

Vanessa Verbitsky

Unit Chief, Saturna Island Rescue