

Fifty-first Annual General Meeting of the
Salt Spring Fire Protection District
Chairperson Report for April 18, 2011
Michael Schubart, Chairperson

The primary initiatives of the board of trustees of the Fire Protection District remain the Training Facilities at Fulford Fire Hall and the replacement of Hall 1 in Ganges.

We were making progress on the Training Facilities: engineering and drainage studies were completed and construction drawings prepared in the expectation of installation of the works this past summer. We then had word from the Agricultural Land Commission that our permission for non-farm use of the rear portion of the property would expire in May 2011, three years after the permission was granted instead of three years of use, notwithstanding that we had obtain rezoning and do comprehensive engineering and drainage studies prior to installing the works. After having further discussions with staff at the ALC, the trustees determined that it would not be prudent to proceed with the construction. We have since decided to redesign the installation on the front portion of the site, adjacent to the existing fire hall. We are currently having revised drainage and engineering drawings prepared

We are still trying to finalize a site for a new Hall 1. We have had discussions with several property owners. We discussed the BC Hydro site, and, with the assistance of our MLA, Murray Choel, approached the minister of energy. Unfortunately, our approach was unsuccessful. We also approached several provincial agencies about the gravel storage yard near Central; again, we received no positive response. The Owners of Brinkworthy have generously offered to donate the approximately two acres along Lower Ganges Rd. between the Hydro lines and the vineyard. This property is within the ALR. We have started consultations with agricultural groups on the island seeking their support in getting permission from the Islands Trust and ALC for permission to use this site for a non-farm use.

As recommended in last year's Fire Underwriters Survey, the staff and volunteers have worked very hard to plan and execute a successful test of our "superior tanker shuttle" capacity. This will allow all the properties within 8km of a fire hall to receive the same insurance category as properties within 300m of a fire hydrant affording reduced insurance costs to the owners. This involves many hours of planning and practice. On behalf of the trustees and community let me thank all those who participated.

We recently taken delivery of our new compressed-air-foam truck from American LeFrance This truck was originally ordered in 2007, but has been delayed by the turmoil caused by the financial crisis in the US. We also replaced our command vehicle, and with taxpayer approval have contracted for the replacement of one of our retiring mini-pumpers.

During the year we promoted Travis Guedes to Lt./Inspector and hired Ken Akerman as a firefighter to replace Travis. We also hired Iris Beck to replace our departed administrative assistant. We have also retained the services of Scott Bradley to assist in financial reporting, cash management and budgeting.

Our first five-year contract with the local of the IAFF was due to expire at the end of 2010. I am happy to report that we have successfully negotiated and signed a new six-year agreement, ending Dec. 31 2016.

The board has also finalized the first revision of our ten-year plan, which was published early in 2010. Special thanks to Richard Hannah and Mary Gillies who did most of the work.

Other trustee initiatives: We completed a comprehensive inventory of our physical assets with the assistance of our auditor; We, mostly Grant Eckland, compiled an information disk containing Letters Patent, index of by-laws, various board policies and the like; we agreed with CRD that they will take over responsibility for street lighting; completed a complete review of staff insurance benefits and our various property coverages and agreed with the ministry of Forests and Range on a lease renewal and upgrade of their weather station at Hall 2.

I extend my thanks to the retiring trustee, Jay McCauley for his service over the last three years.

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome new trustee Mark Lucich and returning trustee Mary Gillies.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Schubart, Chair