

# Minutes of the Meeting of the Salt Spring Island Fire Protection District Fire Hall Advisory Committee

- Meeting held:** August 15, 2019  
Training Room, Ganges Fire Hall  
105 Lower Ganges Road, Salt Spring Island
- Members Present:** Dave Ferguson, FireWise Consulting Ltd. (Chair)  
Tony Beck, Community Member at Large  
Wynona Cook, Community Member at Large  
Gary Holman, Capital Regional District (CRD) Salt Spring Island Electoral Area Director  
Ron Lindstrom, Trustee & Strategic Planning & Priorities Committee Chair  
Robert Mackie, Community Member at Large
- Staff Members Present:** Arjuna George, Fire Chief
- Regrets:** Andrew Peat, Corporate Administrator and Financial Officer  
Per Svendsen, Trustee & Facilities and Physical Plant Committee Chair  
Neil MacConnell, Community Member at Large  
Dennis Maguire, Community Member at Large  
Martin Ogilvie, Community Member at Large
- Others Present:** Rollie Cook, Trustee  
Mary Lynn Hetherington, Trustee  
Jan Enns, Consultant (via web conferencing)  
Ernie Polsom (via web conferencing)  
Glen Sanders, FireWise Consulting Ltd.

These minutes follow the order of the agenda although the sequence may have varied.

Chair Ferguson called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

## 1. WELCOME

Chair Ferguson welcomed everyone to the second meeting of the Committee.

## 2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

**Motion** to accept the agenda moved by Member Holman, seconded by Member Lindstrom.

**CARRIED**

### 3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF JULY 24, 2019 MEETING

The following item was presented for consideration:

- Replace “Brian Bagdanovich” with “Brian Bogdanovich”

**Motion** that the Committee adopt the minutes of the July 24, 2019 Meeting moved by Member Cook, seconded by Member Holman.

**CARRIED**

### 4. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

#### 4.1 Update from CAO Regarding Action Items

Chair Ferguson reported CAO Peat is not in attendance and the following action items identified at the July 24, 2019 meeting are still in process:

- The Committee agreed to request CAO Peat to forward comments regarding the name of the Committee and Committee membership to Communications Consultant Jan Enns for consideration at the next meeting.
- The Committee agreed CAO Peat would circulate the “Due Diligence Summary for the Brinkworthy Fire Hall Site” and “SSI Fire District Fire Hall Deliberations” document to Committee members.
- The Committee agreed to request staff to begin the process to provide a summary of Driftwood newspaper articles related to prior fire hall referendums. Chief George reported Driftwood articles related to prior fire hall referendums have been scanned and will be provided to Jan Enns.
- The Committee agreed to request staff to consider the process for engaging consultants for work such as a space needs assessment, update of the technical analysis of the Ganges Fire Hall building, confirm the capability of the Brinkworthy site; quantify costs; prepare a critical path/timeline document for the process, and the business plan. CAO Peat will present a staff report with draft Request for Proposals (RFP) template at the next meeting.

#### 4.2 Suggested Name Change for Advisory Group

Chair Ferguson reported the Committee agreed to discuss the name of the Committee that would better reflect the purpose of the group. The following names have been suggested: the Fire Services Advisory Committee; the Community Safety Advisory Committee; the Community Security Advisory Committee and the Fire Protection Advisory Committee. In discussion the following comments were noted:

- Support was expressed for “Community Safety Advisory Committee” to broaden the scope and for a more inclusive message to the community. It was noted other regions have community safety buildings that include emergency operations.
- Support was expressed for “Community Security Advisory Committee”.

- Support was expressed to not include “building” in the name of the Committee as it is not a building committee.
- It was noted public security usually relates to police services and public safety usually relates to fire services.

**By general consent**, the Committee agreed Chair Ferguson would circulate the short list of Committee names (Fire Services Advisory Committee; Community Safety Advisory Committee; Community Security Advisory Committee and Fire Protection Advisory Committee) to Committee members for comment.

#### **4.3 Suggested Amendments to Terms of Reference**

**By general consent**, the Committee agreed to table this item.

#### **4.4 Approval of Suggested Changes to SSIFPD Policy AG-4109-01**

**By general consent**, the Committee agreed to table this item.

### **5. INTRODUCTION AND PRESENTATION BY ERNIE POLSOM**

Mr. Ernie Polsom spoke to the Town of Creston’s 2018 Fire Hall referendum process. Mr. Polsom spoke to the importance of a needs assessment and community engagement. He noted several of the Salt Spring Fire Protection District’s studies and assessments are dated and that it will be important to have current studies and assessments for the success of the referendum process. In discussion the following comments were noted:

- There was a question regarding whether the Town of Creston’s referendum process was successful and who led the community engagement process. The Town of Creston had a failed 2017 referendum and the 2018 referendum was successful. The Town of Creston is currently in the process of planning the new fire hall. FireWise Consulting was a lead consultant in the referendum process and Jan Enns was the communications consultant. The Town of Creston had a similar Advisory Committee to work through the process.
- There was a question regarding the borrowing request for the Town of Creston’s fire hall referendum. The Town of Creston’s 2017 Fire Hall referendum for \$6.1 million was not successful. The 2018 referendum asked the Town of Creston taxpayers to approve total borrowing of \$4.5 million. Grants and other cost savings will reduce the actual amount borrowed.
- There was a question regarding other examples of communities that have had a successful referendum following a failed referendum. No other communities were noted.
- There was a question regarding whether BC Ambulance is a partner in the Town of Creston’s new fire hall. BC Ambulance is a committed partner in the plan for the Town of Creston’s new fire hall.

## **6. INTRODUCTION AND PRESENTATION BY JAN ENNS**

Ms. Jan Enns spoke to the community engagement process and spoke to the different levels of public engagement. It will be important to communicate the legislated requirements that must be provided such building safety standards, sleeping quarters etc. and have a public engagement plan for the options that can be informed by the public such as location. Ms. Enns will send examples of the Creston Advisory Committee's public communications. She highlighted the following questions for consideration:

- What are the goals?
- What is the project identity?
- Who is the audience?
- What is the message?

Ms. Enns spoke to the analysis of the existing fire halls and that this information will be critical to communicate to the community. It was noted that some of the analysis has been completed although it will need to be updated.

## **7. INTERACTIVE DISCUSSION WITH PRESENTERS**

Discussion ensued and the following comments were noted:

- There was a question regarding whether the Town of Creston's taxpayers were asked to consider whether to rebuild on the existing fire hall site. Creston's existing fire hall site was not suitable to build the new fire hall.
- There was a question regarding the process that the Town of Creston undertook regarding consideration of alternate sites for the new fire hall. Creston's initial assessment identified 14 potential sites and those sites were evaluated in terms of response time, size etc. and four sites met the requirements. A matrix was used to evaluate the sites, Council made the final decision regarding the selected site and the evaluation was part of the public communications plan.
- It was noted the Town of Creston is a Municipality and the Salt Spring Island Fire Protection District is an Improvement District. There was a question regarding whether there are any differences to the referendum process for a municipality and an improvement district. The process is the same.
- It was noted Salt Spring Island has three fire halls and there was a question regarding whether the process would include consideration of whether all three halls are necessary. An analysis of the fire hall network (the main hall and satellite halls) would be part of the needs assessment.
- There was a question regarding whether climate change and wild fire risk was a factor in the Town of Creston's referendum process. Climate change was not a factor during the referendum process although it is part of the design process. There was community support for the new fire hall to be resilient in terms of wildfire and climate change.
- There was a question regarding when Jan Enns would meet the Committee to discuss the communications plan.
- It was noted that it is important that the Board of Trustees approves the public communications. There was a question regarding the protocol for the relationship

between Creston's Advisory Committee and Council. The Advisory Committee made recommendations to Council for consideration and Council approved all communications prior to release to the public.

**8. REVIEW OF LIST PROVIDED BY NEIL MCCONNELL**

A document entitled "SSIFPD Suggestions Moving Forward" was circulated prior to the meeting. In discussion the following comments were noted:

- It was noted the list is not sequential.
- There was a question regarding whether there is a budget allocated for the consultant work that is identified in the document. It was noted that funds have been allocated for consultant work.
- Support was expressed for public engagement to take place early in the process.
- Support was expressed for the analysis of the existing fire hall to be the first step in the process.
- Support was expressed for identifying partnerships early in the process.
- It was noted that the space needs assessment is intended to study all three-fire halls and include all potential occupants.
- There was a question regarding whether Salt Spring Fire Protection District owns the Central Fire hall property and whether that location has been considered for building a larger fire hall. Chief George reported the property is not suitable to accommodate a larger building due to a number of factors including the location of the septic field. The option to purchase adjacent properties was considered and determined to be cost prohibitive.

**9. DISCUSSION ON NEXT STEPS - None**

**10. IN CAMERA SESSION (IF REQUESTED) - None**

**11. DATES AND TIMES FOR FUTURE MEETING**

Chair Ferguson reported the next meeting would likely be scheduled in three weeks.

**By general consent**, the Committee agreed Chair Ferguson would email Committee members regarding the next meeting date.

**12. CLOSING REMARKS**

Chair Ferguson thanked everyone for attending.

**13. ADJOURNMENT**

**By general consent**, the meeting adjourned at 8:17 p.m.



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Dave Ferguson  
Committee Chair

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Andrew Peat  
Corporate Administrator