

Minutes of the Sixty Fifth (65th) Annual General Meeting of the Salt Spring Island Fire Protection District

Date: April 14, 2025

Location: Training Room, Ganges Fire Hall
105 Lower Ganges Road, Salt Spring Island and
Electronic Meeting (Microsoft Teams)

Members Present: Rollie Cook, Chair
David Courtney, Trustee
Mary Lynn Hetherington, Trustee
Dennis Lucarelli, Trustee
Rob Oliver, Trustee
John Wakefield, Trustee
Robin Williams, Trustee

Staff Members Present Rodney Dieleman, Corporate Administrator and Financial Officer
Jamie Holmes, Fire Chief
Dale Lundy, Deputy Fire Chief
Mysha Dewar-McLelland, Salt Spring Island Fire Fighter's Association
Treasurer
Hans Hazenboom, Owner's Representative
Sarah Shugar, Recorder

Others Present: Gulf Islands Driftwood Reporter (Teams)
Approximately 10 members of the public (10 Electors)

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

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

1. WELCOME FROM CHAIR OF BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Chair Cook welcomed everyone in attendance and acknowledged the meeting is being held in the unceded and traditional territories of the Coast Salish Peoples. Introductions were carried out. Chair Cook advised the Annual General Meeting is a meeting of the ratepayers.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A proposed agenda was circulated prior to the meeting.

MOVED by Trustee Williams, SECONDED by Trustee Oliver,
That the agenda be approved.

CARRIED

3. APPOINT RECORDING SECRETARY AND PARLIAMENTARIAN

MOVED by Trustee Wakefield, SECONDED by Trustee Oliver,

that the Board of Trustees appoint Rodney Dieleman as Parliamentarian and Sarah Shugar as recording secretary.

CARRIED

4. REVIEW AND ACCEPT MINUTES OF THE SIXTY-FOURTH (64th) ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING – APRIL 29, 2024

The draft minutes of the Sixty-Fourth Annual General Meeting held April 24, 2024 were distributed prior to the meeting.

MOVED by Trustee Williams, SECONDED by Trustee Hetherington,

That the minutes of the Sixty-Fourth Annual General meeting held April 29, 2024 be approved.

CARRIED

5. 2024 AUDITED FINANCIAL REPORT

CAO Dieleman reported Certified Professional Accountant Fred Lizotte sends his regrets. CAO Dieleman presented the Annual Financial Statements for the fiscal year ending December 31, 2024.

MOVED by Trustee Wakefield, SECONDED by Trustee Hetherington,

That the Annual Financial Statements for the fiscal year ending December 31, 2024 be approved as presented.

CARRIED

MOVED by Trustee Wakefield, SECONDED by Trustee Hetherington,

To appoint McLean, Lizotte, Wheadon and Company to be the Auditor for the fiscal year ending December 31, 2025.

CARRIED

6. 2024 FIRE CHIEF'S REPORT

Chief Holmes presented the Fire Chief's 2024 Annual Report. Chief Holmes expressed appreciation to Trustees and all the members of Salt Spring Island Fire Rescue.

Comments and questions included:

- There was a question regarding the global medic pump unit. Chief Holmes reported global medic pump unit is a skid unit that includes a 200-gallon water tank, a portable pump and forestry fire hose that can also draft from a water source.
- Acknowledged the SSFR for providing the CPR training to Gulf Islands Secondary School students.
- There was a question regarding privately owned portable water pump and hose units and whether SSFR could use those units if needed. Chief Holmes reported there are

suppliers that sell water pump and hose units to private property and business owners although SSFR would not use residential fire equipment.

- There was a question regarding whether the bush truck has a water supply. Chief Holmes reported the bush truck has a 200-gallon water tank.
- Acknowledged Salt Spring Fire Rescue for their work with Penelakut Tribe.
- There was a question whether recruitment and retention has been impacted by the availability of housing. Chief Holmes reported in the last round of recruitment, SSIFR received three or four applications from applicants from off island that were not able to find housing.
- Chair Cook reported Chief Holmes led the Trustee tour of Halls 2 and 3 and the new fire hall site.
- Chair Cook acknowledged North Salt Spring Waterworks District for working with the District on hydrants and water supply.
- Chair Cook reported the Board has strategic planning priorities including planning for the secondary fire halls, water supply and planning for an aerial ladder truck. He noted the Drake Road Supported Housing project is a four-storey building and would require an aerial ladder truck for fire protection.

MOVED by Trustee Lucarelli, SECONDED by Trustee Williams,
That the Fire Chief 2024 Annual Report be received.
CARRIED

7. SALT SPRING ISLAND FIRE FIGHTER'S ASSOCIATION REPORT

SSIFFA Treasurer Mysha Dewer-McLelland presented the Salt Spring Island Fire Fighter's Association 2024 Annual Report.

MOVED by Elector H. Hazenboom, SECONDED by Elector L. Patrick,
To accept the Salt Spring Island Fire Fighter's Association 2024 Annual Report.
CARRIED

8. 2024 CHAIR OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES & COMMITTEE REPORTS

Chair Cook presented the Chair 2024 annual report. Committee Chair Williams presented the Communications and Marketing Committee 2024 annual report. Committee Chair Wakefield presented the Finance and Audit Committee 2024 annual report. Committee Chair Lucarelli presented the Strategic Planning and Policy Development Committee 2024 annual report. CAO Dieleman presented the Five-Year 2024-2029 Strategic Plan Update. Chief Holmes presented a New Fire Hall Project Steering Committee 2024 annual report.

There was a question regarding when the steel will be on the new fire hall site. H. Hazenboom reported the steel is expected to be on site in the next two weeks.

MOVED by Elector L. Patrick, SECONDED by Elector B. Moffatt,
That the Chair 2024 Annual Report and Committee 2024 Annual Reports be received.
CARRIED

9. CALL FOR A MOTION TO FIX THE REMUNERATION OF THE TRUSTEES FOR THE ENSUING YEAR

Chair Cook introduced the item and reported the current remuneration is \$330 per month for Trustees and \$385 per month and expressed support for the remuneration to not be increased.

MOVED by Elector L. Patrick, SECONDED by Elector J. McClean,

That Trustee remuneration continue at \$330 per month for Trustees and \$385 per month for the Chair for the ensuing year.

CARRIED

Trustee Oliver Opposed

10. ELECTION RESULTS

A Notice of Election by Acclamation prepared by Returning Officer Anthony Kennedy was presented. One nomination was received for two Trustee positions. Robin Williams stands elected to the Salt Spring Island Fire Protection District Board of Trustees by acclamation for a three-year term of office to commence at the end of the Annual General Meeting and terminate at the end of the Annual General meeting to be held in the year 2028. One additional Trustee position is to be filled through a nomination and election process at dates which will be announced.

Chair Cook acknowledged this is Trustee Wakefield's last meeting as a Trustee and thanked him for his service.

11. QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR

The Chair called for questions and comments from attendees.

Elector Myles Wilson commented as follows:

- Asked what are the plans for the Central Fire Hall if it is replaced by a new fire hall. Chair Cook reported the Local Government Act regulates the process for property disposition.
- His property is 8.2km from a fire hall and he was able to get insurance from an off-island provider that requires 13km from a fire hall that saved him \$3,500 less than a local insurance provider. Is there a way that the District can lobby the local insurance companies? Chief Holmes reported the BC Fire Chief's Association lobbies insurance companies. Insurance companies and Fire Underwriters Survey (FUS) could change the distance from a fire hall at any point in the future. The FUS rules are a standard that we can strive towards as financially responsible as possible.

Elector Diane Roberts commented as follows:

- Asked what is being considered for the Central Fire Hall and whether it is no longer going to be a fire hall and what is the timeframe. Chair Cook reported Central Fire Hall (Hall 3) is the only fire hall in the area and provides a very important service and until there is a replacement secondary fire hall, the District will maintain Hall 3. A Trustee has put an article on the SS Exchange regarding a new fire hall that does not represent the current plan of the Board. There are no plans to discontinue service of the Central Fire Hall. The

Strategic Planning and Policy Development Committee has identified that the Central Fire Hall will need to be replaced and the Fulford Fire Hall will need to be upgraded.

- Will there be a referendum regarding future planning or sale of Central Fire Hall? Chair Cook advised the Local Government Act regulates disposition of property. If the District decided to dispose of the Central Fire Hall it would be done through a process regulated by the Local Government Act. The District hosts a Town Hall meeting in the Fall 2025 regarding the 2026 budget and invited ratepayers to attend the Town Hall meeting to provide input regarding future planning.

Trustee Courtney stated with regards to the petition, there is a donor that has come forward to donate a property. CAO Dieleman advised this is confidential information and cannot be discussed at the meeting. Trustee Courtney advised there is a petition he has an email from a Southey Point area resident. CAO Dieleman reported a petition has not been submitted.

Elector Peter Retallack commented as follows:

- What the petition is for? Trustee Courtney stated the petition supports the Board accepting a donation of land, to sell Central Fire Hall and build a new fire hall to provide improved fire protection in the north end of the island.
- Stated the petition is not accessible and suggested Trustee Courtney follow procedure and bring it up through proper procedures.
- Stated the article on the SS Exchange suggests that the funds from selling Central Fire Hall would be enough to pay for a new fire hall given that the land would be donated. Is that a realistic expectation. Trustee Courtney stated yes, it is.
- Stated the SS Exchange article suggests a ballpark number of \$500,000 would be generated from the sale of Central Fire Hall. A 2,500 square foot building at a \$1000 per square foot is not unreasonable. Trustee Courtney stated it is not \$1000 per square foot and invited the elector to speak to him offline regarding quotes he has received.
- Stated, as a Southey Point area resident, he is concerned that there is a lack of fire protection in the northern part of the island and insurance protection is not as much of a concern. Recommended to prioritize better fire protection in the north end of the island above upgrading the Fulford Firehall.
- Stated there appears to be a breakdown/ dysfunction on the Board and he is opposed to the suggestion that individual groups of ratepayers should get together to fund services that they want. This is not the correct way to proceed. The petition has not been presented to the Board. The individual group of ratepayers and Trustee Courtney need to follow the proper process. Chair Cook reported Trustee Cook is not on any Committees and attacks the Board's decisions on social media.
- Trustee Oliver advised there is one dysfunctional member of the Board who uses social media. CAO Dieleman advised the Trustees represent all ratepayers projects are funded by all ratepayers.
- Stated opposition to the suggestion that a ratepayer group fund the new hall and asked whether Trustee Courtney presented the cost for a new fire hall to the Board. Chair Cook advised Trustee Courtney has not presented costs for a new fire hall to the Board or Committee. Chair Cook reported a post disaster new fire hall building would cost approximately 1 million dollars and would cost approximately \$25 per household per year.

Trustee Hetherington spoke to the importance of planning for replacement of apparatus.

Elector B. Moffatt commented as follows:

- Stated if Trustee Courtney has an interest he should present it to the Board, the Strategic Planning Committee or the New Fire Hall Project Steering Committee and asked Trustee Courtney if he has attended Committee meetings. Trustee Courtney advised he has not attended Committee meetings.
- Stated Trustee Courtney's social media post is ridiculous, that Trustee Courtney does not have the support of the community and Trustees must go through the proper process according to the Local Government Act.
- Trustee Courtney started to read an email he received from a member of the public. A point of order was called that this is the portion of the meeting for questions from the floor.
- Asked when Trustee Courtney will make a funding proposal to the Board. Trustee Courtney stated he can make the proposal now and that some communities have private funders with lease back funding model.

Chief Holmes reported the District has the equipment and personnel to respond to every property within the District. There has always and continues to be a strategic plan item to move the Central Hall further north and it makes more sense now that fire hall 1 will be moving to the new fire hall site. There are also areas that are outside of 8km from a fire hall in the south end of the island.

Trustee Williams advised that response times to the north end of the island will improve when hall 1 moves to the new fire hall site as career staff will be deployed from the new fire hall. Trustee Williams reported it has taken Windsor Plywood approximately 4.5 years to rebuild after their fire due to several factors including permitting process.

Chair Cook reported the Board is committed to working on priorities and will deliver a plan that provides good fire service to the island.

Elector J. McClean advised the Board appears to be similar to a family with problems and suggests that Trustees should not take issues personally.

12. OLD BUSINESS - none

13. NEW BUSINESS - none

14. ADJOURNMENT

MOVED by Elector B. Moffat, SECONDED by Elector P. Retallack,
That the meeting be adjourned.

CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at 8:28 p.m.

Roland Cook
Chair, Board of Trustees

Rodney Dieleman
Corporate Administrator

DRAFT