

Agenda
Salt Spring Island Fire Protection District
Board of Trustees Regular Meeting

Meeting will be held as follows:

Date: February 23, 2026

Time: 7:00 p.m.

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

1. CALL TO ORDER

We would like to begin this meeting by acknowledging that we live and work in the territory of the Coast Salish First Nations. This meeting is an official forum for the Salt Spring Island Fire Protection District Board to conduct its business. This is a place of employment, and our staff have the right to a safe and respectful workplace.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

3. BOARD MINUTES

3.1 Minutes of the Regular Trustee meeting held January 19, 2026 – For Approval

That the draft minutes of the Regular Trustee meeting held January 19, 2026 be adopted.

3.2 Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held April 14, 2025 – For Approval

That the draft minutes of the Annual General Meeting held April 14, 2025 be adopted.

4. PETITIONS AND DELEGATIONS

5. TOWN HALL SESSION

Members of the public can address questions or comments, and we request that you direct comments to the Board and not other members of the public, speak to the issues and not individuals and be clear, concise and respectful.

6. STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

6.1 Communications & Marketing Committee

6.1.1 Minutes of the February 3, 2026 meeting – For Information

6.2 Finance & Audit Committee - None

6.3 Joint Occupational Health & Wellness Safety Committee

6.3.1 Minutes of the January 21, 2026 meeting – For Information

6.4 Strategic Planning & Policy Development Committee

6.4.1 Minutes of the February 3, 2026 meeting – For Information

7. CORRESPONDENCE

8. REPORTS

8.1 Fire Chief’s Report – January 2026

8.2 Salt Spring Island Fire Fighters’ Association Report – January 2026

8.3 CAO Reports

8.3.1 Budget Report to December 31, 2025

8.3.2 Driftwood Articles dated January 28, 2026 Re: Trustee Election and Fulford Pond

8.3.3 Driftwood Articles dated January 28, 2026 Re: EV Charging Stations

8.3.4 Driftwood Article dated February 4, 2026 Re: Old Fire Hall

8.3.5 Driftwood Editorial dated February 4, 2026 Re: Old Fire Hall

8.3.6 Driftwood Notice dated February 11, 2026 Re: Notice of Call for Nominations

8.3.7 Driftwood Article dated February 11, 2026 Re: Emergency Services

9. OLD BUSINESS

9.1 New Fire Hall Project

9.1.1 New Fire Hall Project Update to January 31, 2026

9.2 2026 Annual General Meeting & Trustee Election

9.2.1 April 13, 2026 AGM – Draft Agenda

9.2.2 Notice of Call for Nominations for Election of Three Trustees

10. NEW BUSINESS

10.1 2026 Trustee Governance and Strategic Planning Workshop – May 21, 2026

11. BYLAWS

12. IN-CAMERA MEETING

13. NEXT MEETING

The next Regular Meeting will be held on March 16, 2026 at the Fire Hall No. 1 Apparatus Bay as the Training Room will be used as a storage area in preparation for moving to the New Fire Hall.

14. ADJOURNMENT

Minutes of the Regular Trustee Meeting of the Salt Spring Island Fire Protection District

- Date:** January 19, 2026
- 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
Ronald Lindstrom, Trustee
Dennis Lucarelli, Trustee
Rob Oliver, Trustee
Robin Williams, Trustee
- Staff Members Present:** Rodney Dieleman, Corporate Administrator and Financial Officer
Jamie Holmes, Fire Chief
Hans Hazenboom, New Fire Hall Project Owner’s Representative
Mysha Dewar-McClelland, Salt Spring Island Fire Fighters’ Association Treasurer
Sarah Shugar, Recorder
- Others Present:** Gulf Islands Driftwood Reporter (Teams)
Approximately 1 member of the public

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

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Cook called the meeting to order 7:00 p.m. and acknowledged that the meeting is being held in the territory of the Coast Salish First Nations.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

By general consent, the agenda was adopted.

3. BOARD MINUTES

3.1 Minutes of the Regular Trustee Meeting held November 17, 2025 – For Approval

The draft minutes of the Regular Trustee meeting held November 17, 2025 were presented.

2026-001

MOVED by Trustee Hetherington, SECONDED by Trustee Lucarelli,

that the draft minutes of the Regular Trustee meeting held November 17, 2025 were adopted.

CARRIED

3.2 Minutes of the Special General Meeting held November 17, 2025 – For Approval

The draft minutes of the Special General meeting held November 17, 2025 were presented.

2026-002

MOVED by Trustee Hetherington, SECONDED by Trustee Lucarelli,

that the draft minutes of the Special General Meeting held November 17, 2025 were adopted.

CARRIED

4. PETITIONS & DELEGATIONS - None

5. TOWN HALL SESSION

Chair Cook opened the town hall at 7:02 p.m. and invited members of the public to address the Board of Trustees with questions and comments. There were no speakers during the town hall.

6. STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

6.1 Communications & Marketing Committee

6.1.1 Minutes of the December 2, 2025 meeting – For Information

The draft minutes of the Communications and Marketing Committee meeting held on December 2, 2025 were presented.

By general consent, the minutes were received for information.

6.2 Finance & Audit Committee – None

6.3 Joint Occupational Health & Wellness Committee

6.3.1 Minutes of the November 26, 2025 meeting – For Information

The draft minutes of the Joint Occupational Health & Wellness Committee meeting held on November 26, 2025 were presented.

By general consent, the minutes were received for information.

6.4 Strategic Planning & Policy Development Committee

6.4.1 Minutes of the December 2, 2025 meeting – For Information

The draft minutes of the Strategic Planning and Policy Development Committee meeting held on December 2, 2025 were presented.

By general consent, the minutes were received for information.

6.4.2 Minutes of the January 13, 2026 meeting – For Information

The draft minutes of the Strategic Planning and Policy Development Committee meeting held on January 13, 2026 were presented.

By general consent, the minutes were received for information.

7. CORRESPONDENCE

7.1 Email dated 2025-12-17 Re: Request for Unified Support Regarding the Office of the Fire Commissioner’s exclusion of Improvement Districts in the New Fire Safety Act

Chief Holmes presented a letter received from Thetis Island Fire Chief, Shawnigan Lake Fire Chief, Cowichan Bay Fire Chief, Mill Bay Fire Chief and Quadra Island Fire Chief dated December 17, 2025 regarding a request for Unified Support Regarding the Office of the Fire Commissioner’s exclusion of Improvement Districts in the New Fire Safety Act.

2026-003

MOVED by Trustee Williams, SECONDED by Trustee Hetherington,

That the Board of Trustees support forming a collective group to address the role of Improvement Districts with the Office of the Fire Commissioner.

CARRIED

8. REPORTS

8.1 Fire Chief’s Report – November & December 2025

Chief Holmes presented the Fire Chief’s Report for November and December 2025.

By general consent, the Fire Chief’s Report for November and December 2025 was received for information.

8.2 Salt Spring Island Fire Fighters’ Association Report – December 2025

Salt Spring Island Fire Fighters’ Association Treasurer Dewar-McClelland presented the Association report for December 2025 and thanked the Board of Trustees for approving a wage increase for Paid on Call firefighters in 2026.

By general consent, the Salt Spring Island Fire Fighters’ Association report for December 2025 was received for information.

8.3 CAO Reports

8.3.1 Budget Report to October 31, 2025

CAO Dieleman presented the budget report to October 31, 2025.

By general consent, the budget report to October 31, 2025 was received for information.

8.3.2 Budget Report to November 30, 2025

CAO Dieleman presented the budget report to November 30, 2025.

By general consent, the budget report to November 30, 2025 was received for information.

8.3.3 Driftwood Article dated December 10, 2025 Re: New Fire Hall Opening Event

8.3.4 Driftwood Notice dated December 31, 2025 Re: 2026 Regular Meeting Schedule

8.3.5 Driftwood Article dated January 14, 2026 Re: 2025 Calls

By general consent, the Driftwood Articles were received for information.

9. OLD BUSINESS

9.1 New Fire Hall Project

9.1.1 New Fire Hall Project Update to November 30, 2025

Owner's Representative Hans Hazenboom presented the New Fire Hall Project Update to November 30, 2025.

By general consent, the New Fire Hall Project Update to November 30, 2025 was received for information.

9.1.2 New Fire Hall Project Update to December 31, 2025

Owner's Representative Hans Hazenboom presented the New Fire Hall Project Update to December 31, 2025.

By general consent, the New Fire Hall Project Update to December 31, 2025 was received for information.

Chair Cook acknowledged Owners Representative Hans Hazenboom and Fire Chief Holmes for their diligence on the new fire hall project.

9.1.3 New Fire Hall Opening Event

Trustee Williams reported the Communications and Marketing Committee recommended that the New Fire Hall opening event be scheduled for May 3, 2025. It was further reported that Return on Insight has prepared a preliminary event plan, and the Committee recommended engaging Return on Insight to plan and coordinate the New Fire Hall opening event. Trustee Williams also reported that \$8,000 has been allocated in the budget for the event.

2026-004

MOVED by Trustee Williams, SECONDED by Trustee Hetherington,

That the Board of Trustees accept the recommendation of the Communications and Marketing Committee to engage Return on Insight to plan the New Fire Hall opening event.

CARRIED

2026-005

MOVED by Trustee Williams, SECONDED by Trustee Hetherington,

That the Board of Trustees accept the recommendation of the Communications and Marketing Committee and the New Fire Hall Project Steering Committee to plan the New Fire Hall Opening Event on May 3, 2026.

CARRIED

10. NEW BUSINESS

10.1 2026 Annual General Meeting & Trustee Election

A staff report regarding the 2026 Annual General Meeting & Trustee Election was presented.

2026-006

MOVED by Trustee Williams, SECONDED by Trustee Hetherington,

That the Board of Trustees request staff to schedule the 2026 Annual General Meeting on Monday, April 13, 2026.

CARRIED

2026-007

MOVED by Trustee Lucarelli, SECONDED by Trustee Oliver,

That the Board of Trustees appoint Anthony Kennedy as Returning Elections Officer for the 2026 Trustee Election.

CARRIED

11. BYLAWS

11.1 Bylaw No. 159 cited as the "Meeting Procedures Bylaw 2025 Approved & Registered – For information

Bylaw No. 159 cited as the "Meeting Procedures Bylaw 2025 Approved & Registered was presented for information.

By general consent, Bylaw No. 159 cited as the "Meeting Procedures Bylaw 2025 Approved & Registered was received for information.

12. IN-CAMERA MEETING

12.1 Motion to Close the Meeting

2026-008

MOVED by Trustee Oliver, SECONDED by Trustee Hetherington,

That the Board of Trustees close this meeting to the public subject to Community Charter Section 90 (1): (a) personal information about an identifiable individual who holds or is being considered for a position as an officer, employee or agent of the municipality or another position appointed by the municipality; and (c) labour relations or other employee relations; and that staff be invited to remain.

CARRIED

The items of business to be considered in the in-camera meeting are in camera minutes, Committee Appointments and a labour-relations matter.

The meeting moved in camera at 7:46 p.m.

12.2 Motion to Re-open the Meeting

2026-009

MOVED by Trustee Oliver, SECONDED by Trustee Hetherington,

That the Board of Trustees re-opened this meeting to a public session.

CARRIED

The meeting reconvened at 8:05 p.m.

12.3 Arise and Report

2026-010

MOVED by Trustee Lucarelli, SECONDED by Trustee Hetherington,

That the Board of Trustees arise and report Trustee Hetherington has resigned from the Strategic Planning and Policy Development Committee and Trustee Ron Lindstrom has been appointed to the Strategic Planning and Policy Development Committee.

CARRIED

The CAO acknowledged Trustee Hetherington for her work on the Strategic Planning and Policy Development Committee and thanked her for making the accommodation to allow recently elected Trustee Lindstrom to be appointed to the Strategic Planning and Policy Development Committee.

13. NEXT MEETING

The next Regular Meeting will be held on February 23, 2026 at the Fire Hall No. 1 Apparatus Bay as the Training Room will be used as a storage area in preparation for moving to the New Fire Hall.

14. ADJOURNMENT

By general consent, the meeting adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

Rollie Cook
Chair, Board of Trustees

Rodney Dieleman
Corporate Administrator

DRAFT

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 Dewer-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.

Minutes of the Salt Spring Island Fire Protection District Communications & Marketing Committee Special Meeting

- Meeting held:** February 3, 2026
Training Room, Ganges Fire Hall
105 Lower Ganges Road, Salt Spring Island
- Members Present:** Robin Williams, Committee Chair
Mary Lynn Hetherington, Trustee
Rollie Cook, Board of Trustees Chair and ex-officio member
Jenny McClean, Public Member
- Staff Member Present:** Rodney Dieleman, Corporate Administrator and Financial Officer
Jamie Holmes, Fire Chief
Sarah Shugar, Recorder
- Others present:** Bruce Cameron, Return on Insight (Teams)

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

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Williams called the meeting to order at 11:00 a.m. and acknowledged that we live and work in the territory of the Coast Salish First Nations.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

By general consent, the agenda was approved.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

3.1 Minutes of the Meeting held December 2, 2025

By general consent, the draft minutes of the Communications and Marketing Committee meeting held December 2, 2025 were adopted.

4. OLD BUSINESS

4.1 New Fire Hall Opening

Bruce Cameron presented an update regarding the Official New Fire Hall Opening Event.

In discussion the following items were noted:

- Chief Holmes will provide a list of invitations and contacts to Bruce Cameron.
- The national anthem will be first on the agenda with official flag raising and the Swing Shift Band may be available to play the national anthem and perform.
- The SSI Firefighters Association President David Demner is the staff contact for the BBQ.
- There was a suggestion to invite a First Nations drummer.
- Special seating area for supporters – Chamber of Commerce, Farmer's Institute etc. and have name tags prepared to acknowledge the officials and supporters.
- The set up will be weather dependent with the ribbon cutting at front of apparatus bay. There was a question whether the sign be unveiled at the same time as the ribbon cutting.
- The antique apparatus will be parked on the future museum site with information on the fundraising and timeline. There was a suggestion to launch the museum fundraising the week before the opening event.
- Chief Holmes will invite the project management and the architect.
- Chief Holmes is having plaques installed on the cornerstones that will recognize former Fire Chief's.
- Sponsorship should include BMO, Island Savings and CIBC.
- Estimated number of attendees would be 100-200.
- Return on Insight will contact Thrifty's and Country Grocer for food sponsorship.
- Need to consider parking, there could be a shuttle from Country Grocer parking lot or the Legion. There was a suggestion to ask the neighbour Community Services property if parking could be there.
- The key message of the event will acknowledge the community and legacy.
- There could be a time capsule as part of the event.
- Return on Insight will send formal invitations, media and Driftwood advertisement.
- Media could include Chek 6 news.
- Fire hall tours will be ground floor only and led by firefighters.
- Draft event timeline: 11:30 a.m. start of truck parade, noon arrival, ceremony and event would end at 3:00 p.m.
- Return on Insight will provide a timeline for the event planning.

By general consent, the Communications and Marketing Committee agreed Return on Insight Bruce Cameron will be the master of ceremonies for the new fire hall opening event.

R. Cook left the meeting at 11:45 a.m.

4.2 Aerial Apparatus (Ladder Truck)

Chief Holmes contacted Worksafe BC regarding a variance for elevated device standards. Staff are preparing an application to Worksafe BC for a variance of elevated device standards.

By general consent, the Communications and Marketing Committee agreed that staff continue to pursue grant opportunities including funding for an aerial apparatus.

5. NEXT MEETING

The next Special meeting of the Communications and Marketing Committee will be held on February 24, 2026 at 10:00 a.m. to continue planning the new fire hall opening event.

6. ADJOURNMENT

By general consent, the meeting adjourned at 12:10 p.m.

Robin Williams
Chair, Communications and Marketing Committee

Rodney Dieleman
Corporate Administrator

**Minutes of the
Salt Spring Island Fire Protection District
Joint Occupational Health and Wellness Safety Committee
Regular Meeting**

Date: January 21, 2026
Time: 6:00 p.m.
Location: Fire Hall No. 3
110 Vesuvius Bay Road, Salt Spring Island

Members Present: Jamie Holmes, Co-Chair, Fire Chief (Employer Rep)
Nancy Pursell, Co-Chair (Employee Rep POC 2024-2025)
Steve Leichter (Employee Rep POC 2025-2027)
Jason Webster (Recruit Rep 2025)
Grant Gussie (Employee Alternate POC 2025)
Ken Akerman (Employee Rep POC 2026)

Regrets: Abe Hohn (Employee Rep POC 2025 – 2027)
Gray Wardle (Employee Alternate POC 2025)
Sophia Kelly (Recruit Rep Alternate 2025)
Gord Fraser (Employee Rep Alternate Union 2025)
Cameron Proudfoot (Employee Rep Union 2025)

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

1. CALL TO ORDER

Co-Chair Chief Holmes called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. The Hall 3 Safety Inspection was completed prior to the meeting.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The following item was presented for consideration:

- 5.1 Christmas Lights at Hall 3

By general consent, the agenda was approved as amended.

3. MINUTES

3.1 Receive and Approve the November 26, 2025 minutes

The draft minutes of the November 26, 2025 meeting were presented.

By general consent, the minutes of the November 26, 2025 meeting were approved.

4. OLD BUSINESS

4.1 2025 Priorities

The 2025 Priority List is as follows:

- Mental Health Night (BCMSA – BC Frontline Worker Occupational Awareness Training Series to continue prior to Association Meetings) (Lead – Members Wardle and Pursell) - Complete
- CISM and Peer Support (Leads: Pursell and Hohn) – no update
- OG's and Policies – Health and Safety review (Lead - Member Chief Holmes) – no report
- Near Miss Reporting (Lead - Member Proudfoot) – no report
- Survey – Follow up and analysis (Lead – Member Webster) – Member Webster presented the results of the survey. There were 25 responses. The report results and comments were emailed to committee members. – Item Complete

4.2 Traffic Break Down – no update

4.3 New Alarm System at Hall 3 Training – no update

5. NEW BUSINESS

5.1 Christmas Lights at Hall 3

Member Gussie commented that the Christmas lights at hall 3 electrical connections should be checked before they are used next year.

6. REVIEW OF INSPECTION REPORTS

6.1 Review of Hall Inspections

Fourth Quarter Hall Inspections:

Hall 1 – Completed prior to the October 22, 2025 meeting. The fire extinguisher holder in the training room does not hold the fire extinguisher securely. Recommended purchasing a “grabber” to pick up garbage outside.

Hall 2 - Completed prior to the November 26, 2025 meeting. Outside power receptacle in the back of the building is stuck in the reset mode. The heater in the vehicle bay is not working properly. The ladder placement to enter the mezzanine should be readjusted so the ladder does not rest on the water filtration system. The dryer vent is not secured to the outside vent. The hall was very clean and tidy. Report has been sent to building maintenance for review.

Hall 3 - Inspection was completed prior to the January 21, 2026 meeting. The lighting fixture on the back of the hall was not working. The flooring in the main office is ripped. There are holes in the drywall (pictures were taken). Hall inspection report will be sent to the maintenance division.

7. REVIEW OF FIRST AID AND ACCIDENT/INCIDENT INVESTIGATIONS

7.1 Review of First Aid and Accident/Incident - None

7.2 Appointment of Accident/Incident Investigators

Members Pursell and Gussie will be the primary investigators in January, and Member Leichter will be the alternate investigator. Chief Holmes approved the appointments.

8. EDUCATION

The following items were reported:

- Member Kelly attended the OSH 1 course on December 2, 2025. (CLOSED)
- The BCMSA OSH 1 on-line course will be offered to the 2026 recruits and membership.
- Fatigue Management Presentation – the department is hoping to offer a presentation by Mike Harnett to all members and their significant other in the future. More information will be shared when available.

9. OTHER BUSINESS

9.1 Association Safety Talk

Topic be determined at the January 28, 2026 meeting.

10. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be January 28, 2026 at Hall 1.

11. ADJOURNMENT

By general consent, the meeting adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

Nancy Pursell, Committee Co-Chair

Jamie Holmes, Fire Chief & Committee Co-Chair

Minutes of the Salt Spring Island Fire Protection District Strategic Planning and Policy Development Committee Meeting

Meeting held: February 3, 2026
SSIFPD Administration Office
1202-115 Fulford-Ganges Road, Salt Spring Island

Members Present: Dennis Lucarelli, Committee Chair
Rollie Cook, Board of Trustees Chair
Ron Lindstrom, Trustee
Keith Ballantyne, Public Member

Staff Members Present: Rodney Dieleman, Corporate Administrator and Financial Officer
Jamie Holmes, Fire Chief
Sarah Shugar, Recorder

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

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Lucarelli called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m. and acknowledged that we live and work in the territory of the Coast Salish First Nations.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The following items were presented for consideration:

- 4.3.1 CAO Report to Committee regarding the draft Communicable Disease Response and Remote Work Policy
- 4.4.1 CAO Report to Committee regarding the draft Draft Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy No AE-2408-02
- 5.1 Draft Respectful Workplace Policy – Update
- 5.1.1 CAO Report to Committee regarding the draft Respectful Workplace Policy No. AE-2401-01
- 5.1.2 Draft Respectful Workplace Policy Complaint Process and Templates

By general consent, the agenda was approved as amended.

3. MINUTES

3.1 Minutes of the Regular Meeting held January 13, 2026

By general consent, the draft minutes of the Strategic Planning and Policy Development Committee regular meeting held on January 13, 2026 were adopted.

4. OLD BUSINESS

4.1 Draft CRD Fire Safety Inspections Policy

Chief Holmes reported the CRD is drafting a Fire Inspections Bylaw and policy that is in process. Chief Holmes will provide the CRD bylaw and policy when it has been approved.

4.2 Aerial Apparatus Standards Update – Chief Holmes

Chief Holmes reported he had a meeting with RHED regarding their elevated devices that are designed for rural areas. RHED has provided elevated devices for rural fire departments in New Brunswick and Quebec. The RHED elevated device does not have a tank or pump therefore, the RHED could not replace an engine, it would be in addition to an engine. Chief Holmes contacted Worksafe BC regarding a variance for elevated device standards. Staff are preparing an application to Worksafe BC for a variance of elevated device standards. The first step is to submit the variance application to Worksafe BC to clarify whether the RHED elevated device could be an option for the District.

In discussion the following items were noted:

- CAO Dieleman advised purchase of an elevated device is not in the strategic plan although Trustees have a strategic planning workshop where this can be considered.
- A RHED elevated device could be built with a “short jack” for increased accessibility to rural roads and driveways and assist with high angle rescue operations.
- An elevated device would enable the District to provide fire protection to buildings taller than 2-stories. The ability to provide fire protection to buildings higher than 2-stories could improve housing density in the Villages of Salt Spring Island. There was a suggestion to contact CRD and Islands Trust to support the District’s application to Worksafe BC for a variance of elevated device standards.
- Currently there are approximately 12 buildings that are over two stories including the Braehaven assisted living building. Staff to confirm how many buildings there are on Salt Spring Island that are more than two stories.

4.3 Draft Communicable Disease Response and Remote Work Policy No. AE-2409-01

4.3.1 CAO Report to Committee regarding the draft Communicable Disease Response and Remote Work Policy

CAO Dieleman presented the draft Communicable Disease Response and Remote Work Policy No. AE-2409-01 and a CAO report to Committee regarding the draft policy. CAO Dieleman requested Committee members to review and forward any comments to CAO Dieleman by email.

MOVED by R. Lindstrom,

That the Strategic Planning and Policy Development Committee recommend staff forward the draft Communicable Disease Response and Remote Work Policy No. AE-2409-01 to the Joint Occupational Health and Wellness Safety Committee and the GVLRA for review and comment.

CARRIED

4.4 Draft Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy No AE-2408-02

4.4.1 CAO Report to Committee regarding the draft Draft Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy No AE-2408-02

CAO Dieleman presented the Draft Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy No. AE-2408-02 and a CAO report to Committee regarding the draft policy. CAO Dieleman requested Committee members to review and forward any comments to CAO Dieleman by email.

In discussion the following items were noted:

- Recommend to include a clear process for investigations, complaints and a clear process for the conclusion of a complaint.
- Recommend to include that once a complaint procedure begins, there should be no communication between the parties involved.
- Recommend to include an appeals process.
- Recommend to have a Human Relations specialist either on staff or referral agency on contract.

MOVED by R. Lindstrom,

That the Strategic Planning and Policy Development Committee recommend staff forward the Draft Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy No. AE-2408-02 as amended, to the Joint Occupational Health and Wellness Safety Committee and the GVLRA for review and comment.

CARRIED

4.5 Trustee Governance and Strategic Planning Workshop

CAO Dieleman presented a draft agenda for the Trustee Workshop – Orientation, Governance, Strategic Plan and Policies Update.

In discussion the following comments were noted:

- The current Strategic plan is a 5-year plan for 2024-2029.
- Operational updates will be required with the move to the new fire hall such as the option to hire a cleaner as the current model is for firefighters to clean the hall. Chief Holmes is reviewing operation changes that will be required as operations transition to the new fire hall.
- Chief Holmes is planning for three apparatus in each truck bay at the new fire hall and the carport truck bay will be overflow.

MOVED by R. Lindstrom,

That the Strategic Planning and Policy Development Committee recommend the Board of Trustees schedule the Trustee Governance Workshop the week of May 19 to May 22, 2026.

CARRIED

5. NEW BUSINESS

5.1 Draft Respectful Workplace Policy – Update

5.1.1 CAO Report to Committee regarding the draft Respectful Workplace Policy No. AE-2401-01

5.1.2 Draft Respectful Workplace Policy Complaint Process and Templates

CAO Dieleman presented the draft Respectful Workplace Policy No. AE-2401-01 and a CAO report to Committee regarding the draft policy. CAO Dieleman requested Committee members to review and forward any comments to CAO Dieleman by email by the next Committee meeting.

In discussion the following comments were noted:

- Recommend to add a clear process for investigations, complaints and a clear process for the conclusion of a complaint.
- Recommend to add that once a complaint procedure begins, there should be no communication between the parties involved.
- Recommend to add an appeals process.
- It is important to consider having a Human Relations specialist either on staff or as a referral agency.

MOVED by R. Lindstrom,

That the Strategic Planning and Policy Development Committee recommend staff forward the draft Respectful Workplace Policy No. AE-2401-01 to the Joint Occupational Health and Wellness Safety Committee and the GVLRA for review and comment.

CARRIED

6. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is scheduled on March 3, 2026 at 9:00 a.m.

7. ADJOURNMENT

By general consent, the meeting adjourned at 10:30 a.m.

Salt Spring Island Fire Rescue

Fire Chief's Report

January 2026



Vision

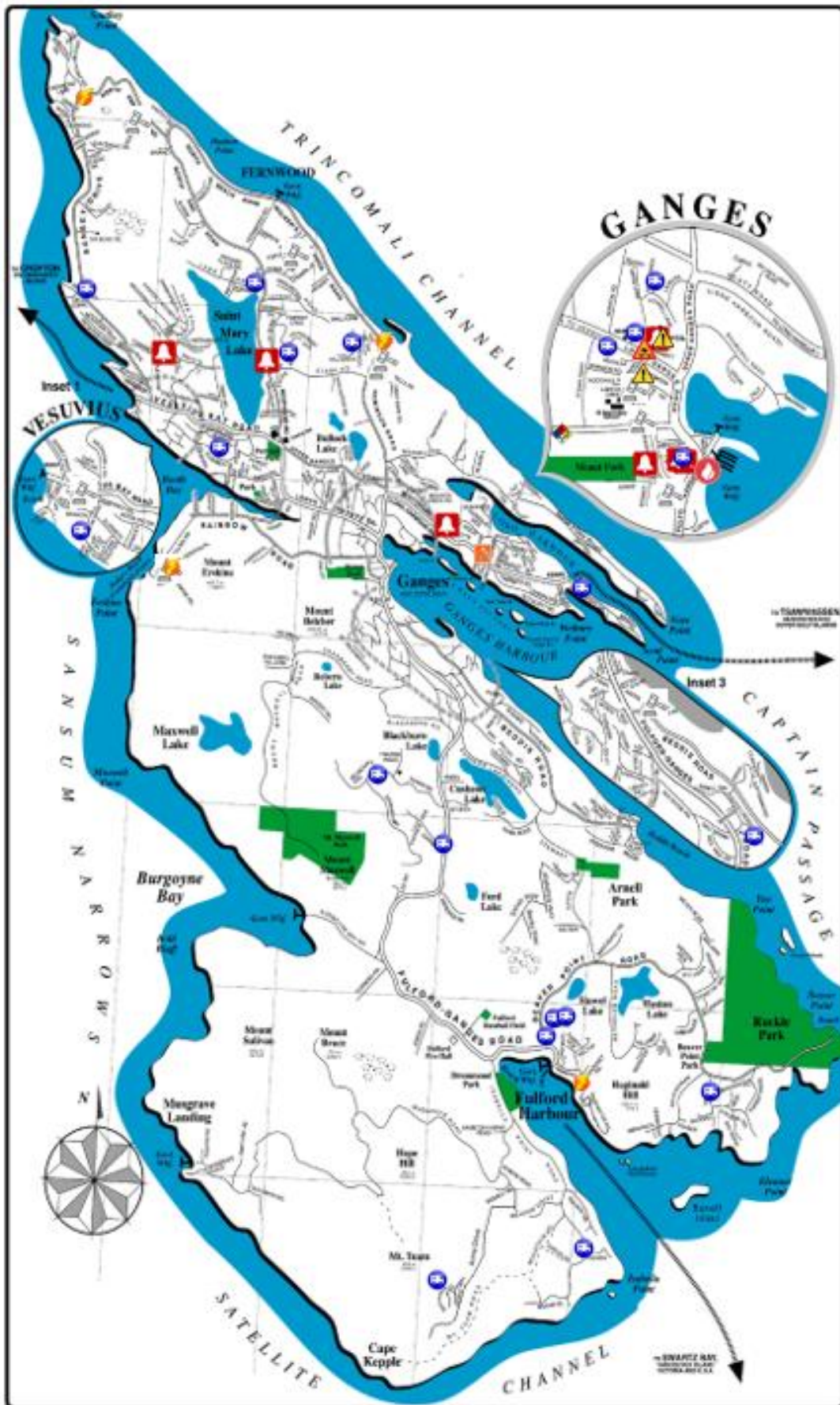
A responsive and sustainable fire-rescue service, effectively meeting community needs and valued by those we serve.

Mission

Always learning, engaging and adapting to be response ready.

Response Report

INCIDENT LEGEND		Jan-26 TAL CALLS: 47									
		OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	SEP	OCT	NOV	
Act/Bylaw	Complaint	5	5	4	10						10
Aircraft	Emergency										0
Alarm	Alarm	7	5	7	7						7
Assistance	Assistance	4	4	6	2						2
Explosion	Explosion										0
Fire	Brush			1							0
	Chimney	1									0
	Misc				1						1
	Structure	1									0
	Boat										0
	Vehicle										0
HazMat	HazMat				1						1
Hydro	Hydro	3	3	17	4						4
Medical	Medical	37	18	25	20						20
MVI	MVI	5	5	2	1						1
Rescue	Rescue	1									0
Smoke/Smell/Sighting	Brush	1									0
	Structure				1						1
Total Calls for the month:		65	40	62	47	0	0	0	0	0	47
	2014	35									35
	2015	32									32
	2016	46									46
	2017	63									63
	2018	47									47
	2019	59									59
	2020	62									62
	2021	43									43
	2022	33									33
	2023	55									55
	2024	60									60
	2025	52									52
	2026	47									47
	2025										
	FIRE	14	0	0	0	0	0	0	14		
	RESCUE	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1		
	MEDICAL	20	0	0	0	0	0	0	20		
	ASSISTANCE	12	0	0	0	0	0	0	12		
	TOTAL	47	0	0	0	0	0	0	47		

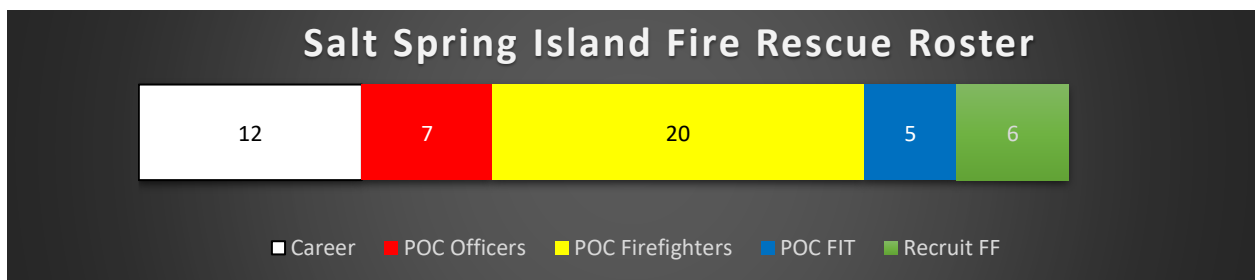
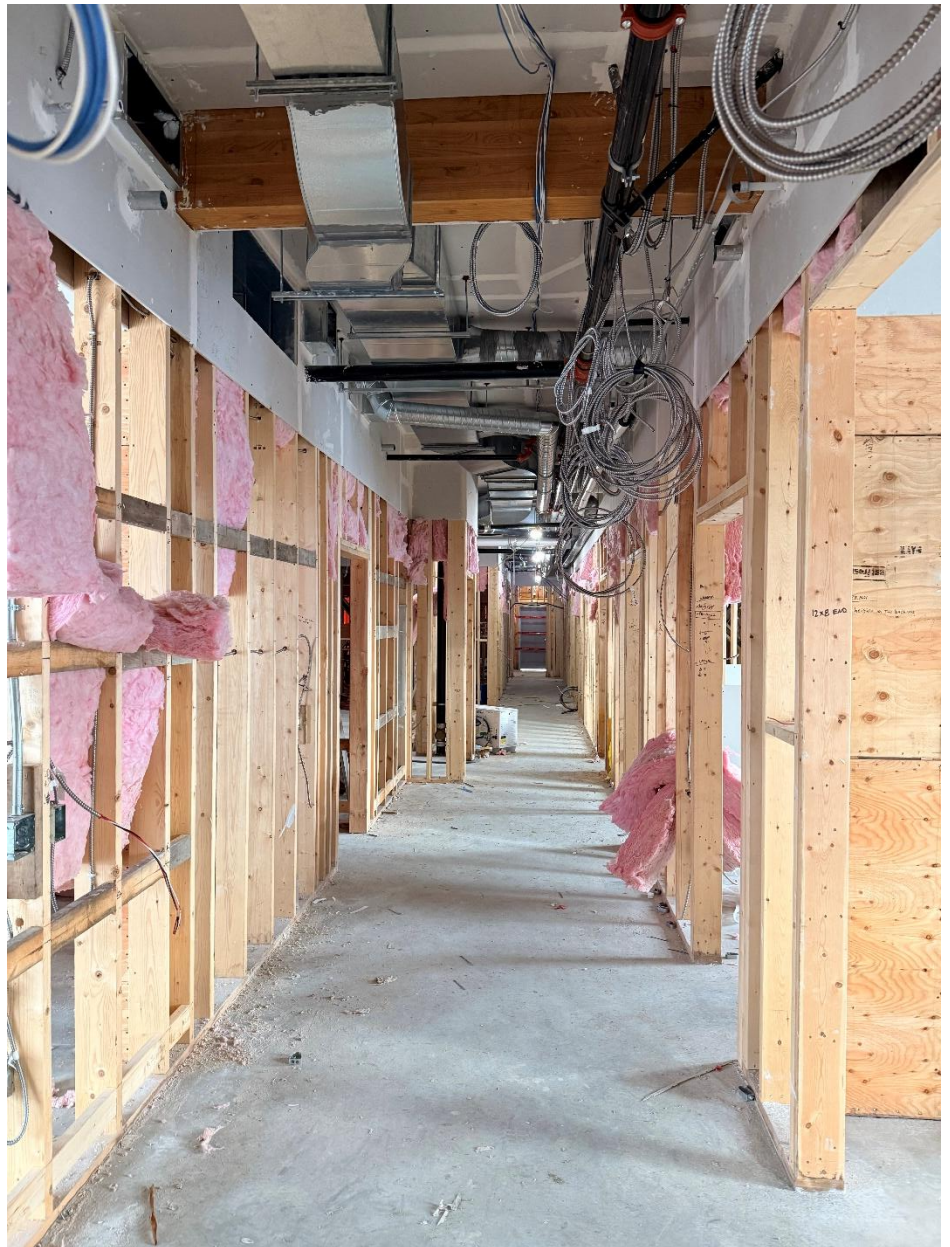


Operations

No calls of note for January, but we saw a jump in cardiac arrests over a typical month. It provides opportunity for us to remind everyone that early cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) gives the patient the best possible outcome, so please take a CPR class for yourself and your loved ones.

New Firehall #1: The new firehall build continues to take most of my time with many walk throughs with sub trades to ensure everyone is on the same page. As we get closer to move in date the admin team is working hard behind the scenes to ensure the transition is as smooth as possible.

We look forward to May 3rd when we hope to show off the new firehall to the community.



Membership

Four members completed their first year of training and received their yellow helmets from the department, and their red jackets from the firefighters' association. Congratulations to FF Arshdeep, FF Lynes-Ford, FF Byrne, and FF Webster. FF Kelly also completed her training but has taken a three-month leave of absence and missed the gathering.

The 2025 group just has the Hazmat Awareness and Operations courses left to complete before we can issue their NFPA 1001 Firefighter level I and II certificates.

Keep up the great work and welcome to the regular platoon roster.



Training

Total Training Hours: 855

Meet & Greet – First Tuesday of January

We opened the month with our annual Meet & Greet. This event provides an opportunity to introduce our incoming recruit class and present last year's recruits with their new helmets. It also marks the transition for the 2025 recruit class as they begin participating in Tuesday night training sessions.

www.saltspringfire.com

Regular Member Training

Throughout January, regular members focused on:

- Apparatus familiarization
 - Hall and equipment orientation
- This ensured continued proficiency with operational resources and station readiness.

FIT Group Activities

The FIT group dedicated time to:

- Familiarization with the new Rehab/Command truck
- Scribing and accountability procedures
- Developing their training calendar for upcoming months

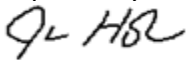
2026 Recruit Class

Our 2026 recruit class officially began their training in January. This cohort consists of **12 highly motivated individuals** beginning their journey through the recruit process. Their month centered around:

- Administrative onboarding
- Health & Safety
- PPE orientation

We are proud to note that **one member of this recruit class previously attended the Gulf Island Cadet Camp**, demonstrating the positive impact of our regional youth programs.

Respectfully submitted,



Jamie Holmes, Fire Chief



January 2026 Association Report

Dear SSIFPD Trustees,

January always starts with our annual Meet and Greet where we invite all recruit, active, and, for the first time this year, retired firefighters. We have a fun time getting all together and also run semi-competitive games like cribbage, darts, and pool. Getting your name on the winners' plaques is highly coveted!

The second week of the year is our AGM and first association meeting of the year. The SSIFFA Executive would like to welcome FF Jason Webster to the team as Secretary. I would like to sincerely thank Grant Gussie for his many years of service as an executive. I would also like to thank the committee chairs for taking leadership positions within the SSIFFA.

January is also a great time to set our priorities for 2026, which include updating our member handbook, refreshing committee duties, and preparing the Old Truck for the parade to the new fire hall.

Finally, we are working with the Salt Spring Fire Rescue Society on museum design and fundraising ideas.

As always, I would like to thank the Trustees and our SSIFR members for their continued support of the SSIFFA.

Thanks,

David Demner
SSIFFA President

Salt Spring Island Fire Protection District

Summary Financial Package

For the Period Ending: December 31, 2025
These Financial Statements are DRAFT, without Audit or Annualized Adjustments

Summary of the 2025 Financial Statements

The District's **unaudited 2025 year-end financial results** show **total income of \$5,884,899**, exceeding the approved budget of **\$5,649,934**, primarily due to higher-than-budgeted **interest revenue** and **miscellaneous income**.

Total expenses were \$4,871,226, slightly above the approved budget of **\$4,840,808**. **Wages and benefits** were higher than budget (**\$3,894,320 vs. \$3,718,873**), while **administration and operating expenses** were overall favourable and partially offset wage pressures.

The District achieved an **operating surplus before capital of \$1,013,673** (budget: **\$809,125**). After approved **capital expenditures and reserve transfers of \$1,034,125**.

The **change in working capital was +\$204,548**, supporting a strong year-end financial position entering 2026.

Recommendation: That the Board receive the unaudited 2025 financial results for information.

Salt Spring Island Fire Protection District
Summary Financial Package
For the Period Ending: December 31, 2025
These Financial Statements are DRAFT, without Audit or Annualized Adjustments

	2024	2025		
	12 Months Actuals	12 Months Actuals	12 Month Budget	2025 Budget
Total Income	\$ 5,312,677	\$ 5,884,899	\$ 5,649,934	\$ 5,649,934

Total Administration Expenses	\$ 240,219	\$ 243,151	\$ 261,150	\$ 261,150
Total Operating Expenses	\$ 367,190	\$ 508,755	\$ 578,785	\$ 578,785
Total Wages & Benefits	\$ 3,550,228	\$ 3,894,320	\$ 3,718,873	\$ 3,718,873
Extraordinary Expense/ Contingency Reserve	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 57,000	\$ 57,000
Amortization	\$ 205,000	\$ 225,000	\$ 225,000	\$ 225,000
Interest - LTD & Lease (SCBA)	\$ 12,846	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Total Expenses	\$ 4,375,484	\$ 4,871,226	\$ 4,840,808	\$ 4,840,808

Surplus Before Capital Expenses	\$ 937,194	\$ 1,013,673	\$ 809,125	\$ 809,125
Non Cash Expense (Amortization)	\$ 205,000	\$ 225,000	\$ 225,000	\$ 225,000
Total Capital Expenses & Transfers to/from Reserve Funds	\$ 941,904	\$ 1,034,125	\$ 1,034,125	\$ 1,034,125
Principal Payments - LTD & Lease (SCBA)	-\$ 58,889	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Change in Working Capital, Capital and Reserve Fund Allocations	\$ 141,401	\$ 204,548	\$ 0	\$ 0

Executive Summary

The District finished 2025 with **total income of \$5,884,899**, exceeding the **2025 full budget of \$5,649,934** by **\$234,965**.

Total expenses were \$4,871,226, slightly above the **budget of \$4,840,808** by **\$30,418**. The primary pressure point was **Wages & Benefits**, which totalled **\$3,894,320**, exceeding budget (**\$3,718,873**) by **\$175,447**. This was partially offset by favourable results in other areas, including **Administration Expenses (\$243,151 vs \$261,150 budget)** and **Operating Expenses (\$508,755 vs \$578,785 budget)**. The **Extraordinary/Contingency Reserve** line was not utilized (**\$0 vs \$57,000 budget**).

As a result, the District generated a **surplus before capital expenses of \$1,013,673**, which is **\$204,548 favourable** to the budget.

Recommendation: That the Board receive the 2025 unaudited year-end results for information.

Income

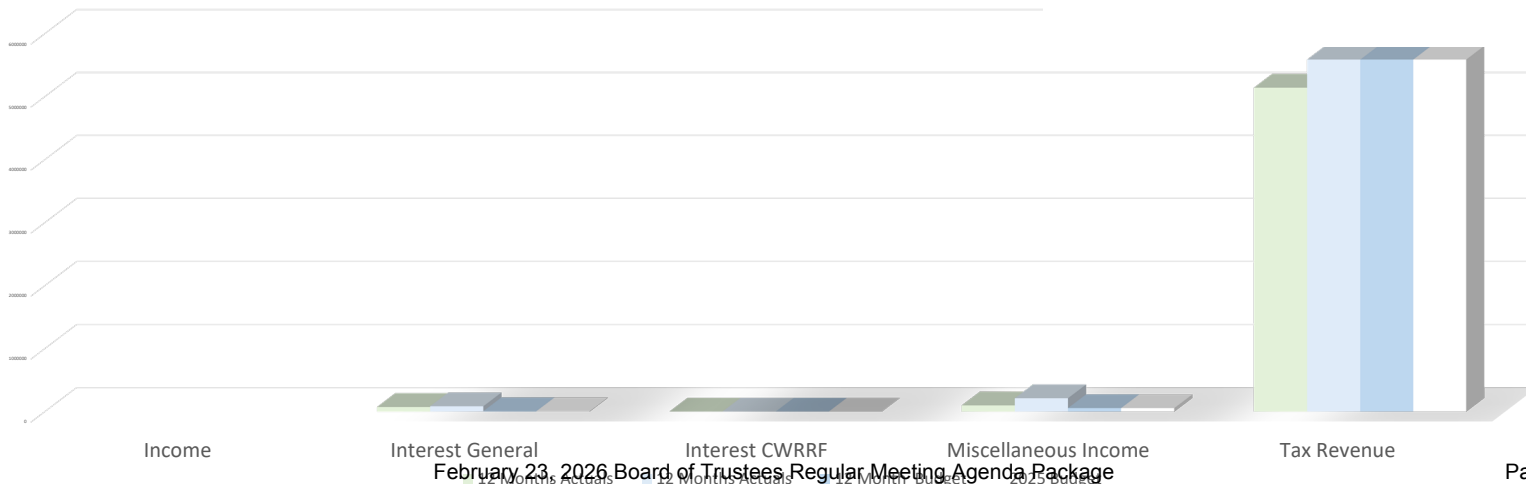
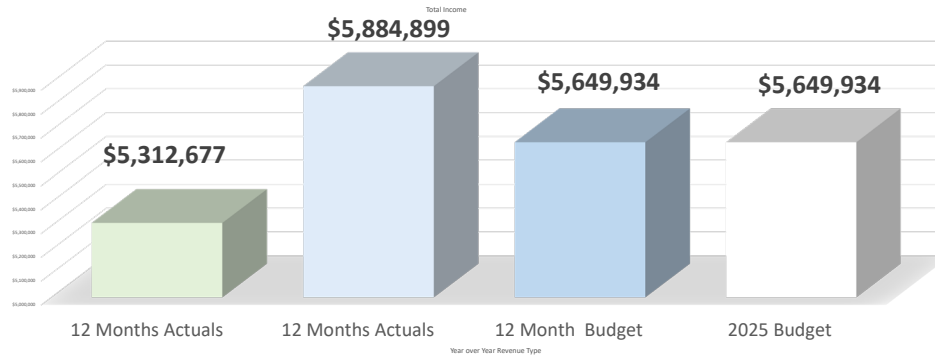
Line #		2024	2025		
		12 Months Actuals	12 Months Actuals	12 Month Budget	2025 Budget
2	Income				
3	Interest General	\$ 72,558	\$ 84,897	\$ 6,750	\$ 6,750
4	Interest CWRRF	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
5	Miscellaneous Income	\$ 98,119	\$ 211,820	\$ 55,000	\$ 55,000
8	Tax Revenue	\$ 5,142,000	\$ 5,588,183	\$ 5,588,184	\$ 5,588,184
9	Total Income	\$ 5,312,677	\$ 5,884,899	\$ 5,649,934	\$ 5,649,934

Executive Summary

In 2025, the District recorded **total income of \$5.88 million**, exceeding the approved budget of **\$5.65 million** and improving on 2024 results. Property tax revenue remained the District’s primary and most stable funding source, totaling **\$5.59 million**, in line with budget expectations.

Interest income was higher than anticipated due to favourable cash balances, while miscellaneous income exceeded budget largely as a result of one-time or non-recurring revenues involving FireSmart and Wildfire deployments.

Overall, the District’s 2025 income performance was strong and provided a solid foundation to support operations, capital investments, and long-term financial sustainability.



Administration Expenses

Line #		2024		2025	
		12 Months Actuals	12 Months Actuals	12 Month Budget	2025 Budget
13	Advertising	\$ 3,530	\$ 8,671	\$ 3,500	\$ 3,500
14	Advertising - Elections, AGM, Board Meetings and Announcements	\$ 35,081	\$ 9,846	\$ 30,000	\$ 30,000
15	Annual Appreciation Dinner	\$ 7,610	\$ 9,030	\$ 8,000	\$ 8,000
16	Audit & Related Fees	\$ 17,000	\$ 19,561	\$ 15,300	\$ 15,300
17	Bank Charges/Credit Card Fees/Telpay Fees/Finance Charges	\$ 1,846	\$ 42,686	\$ 1,750	\$ 1,750
18	Communications - Phone	\$ 17,462	\$ 15,517	\$ 20,000	\$ 20,000
19	Communications & Miscellaneous	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 7,200	\$ 7,200
20	Community Relations	\$ 2,073	\$ 5,434	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,500
21	Conferences	\$ 4,649	\$ 3,531	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000
22	Consulting Fees	\$ 7,330	\$ 11,745	\$ 25,500	\$ 25,500
23	Dues & Subscriptions	\$ 1,950	\$ 2,032	\$ 5,100	\$ 5,100
24	Fireworks	\$ 4,860	\$ 5,837	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000
25	Freight/Postage	\$ 4,229	\$ 4,003	\$ 4,500	\$ 4,500
26	Insurance	\$ 53,357	\$ 57,511	\$ 54,000	\$ 54,000
27	Labour Relations	\$ 17,397	\$ 14,486	\$ 24,000	\$ 24,000
28	Legal	\$ 31,775	\$ 6,775	\$ 15,300	\$ 15,300
29	Licenses, leases & Rentals	\$ 15,018	\$ 15,518	\$ 18,000	\$ 18,000
32	Office Supplies & Equipment	\$ 15,051	\$ 10,969	\$ 15,500	\$ 15,500
33	Professional Development - Excluded Staff	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000
35	Total Administration Expenses	\$ 240,219	\$ 243,151	\$ 261,150	\$ 261,150

% of Total Expenditures

5.5% 5.0% 5.4% 5.4%

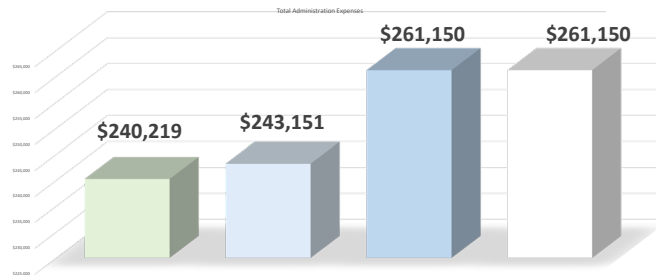
Executive Summary

Administration Expenses

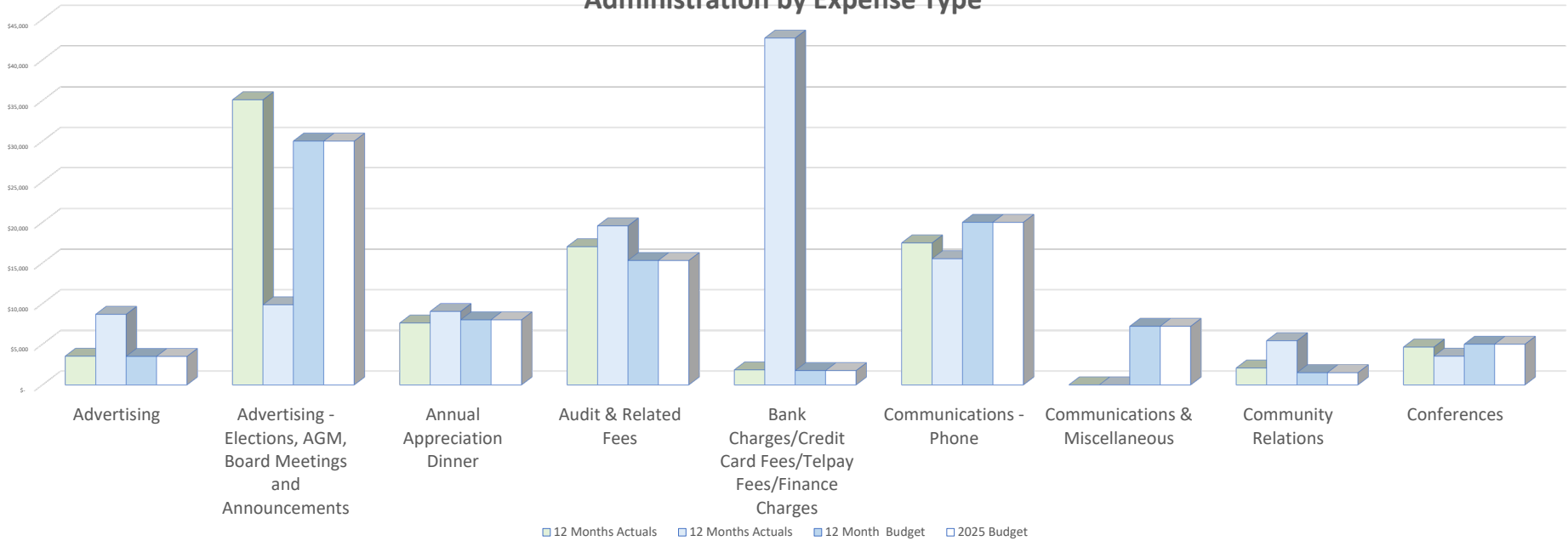
Administration expenses for 2025 totaled **\$243,151** remaining **below the approved budget of \$261,150** and representing just **5.2% of total District expenditures**. This reflects continued focus on cost control while maintaining effective governance, financial oversight, and administrative support.

While some areas—such as bank charges and insurance—were higher due to external cost pressures and transaction volumes, these were largely offset by savings in legal services, labour relations, office supplies, and election-related advertising.

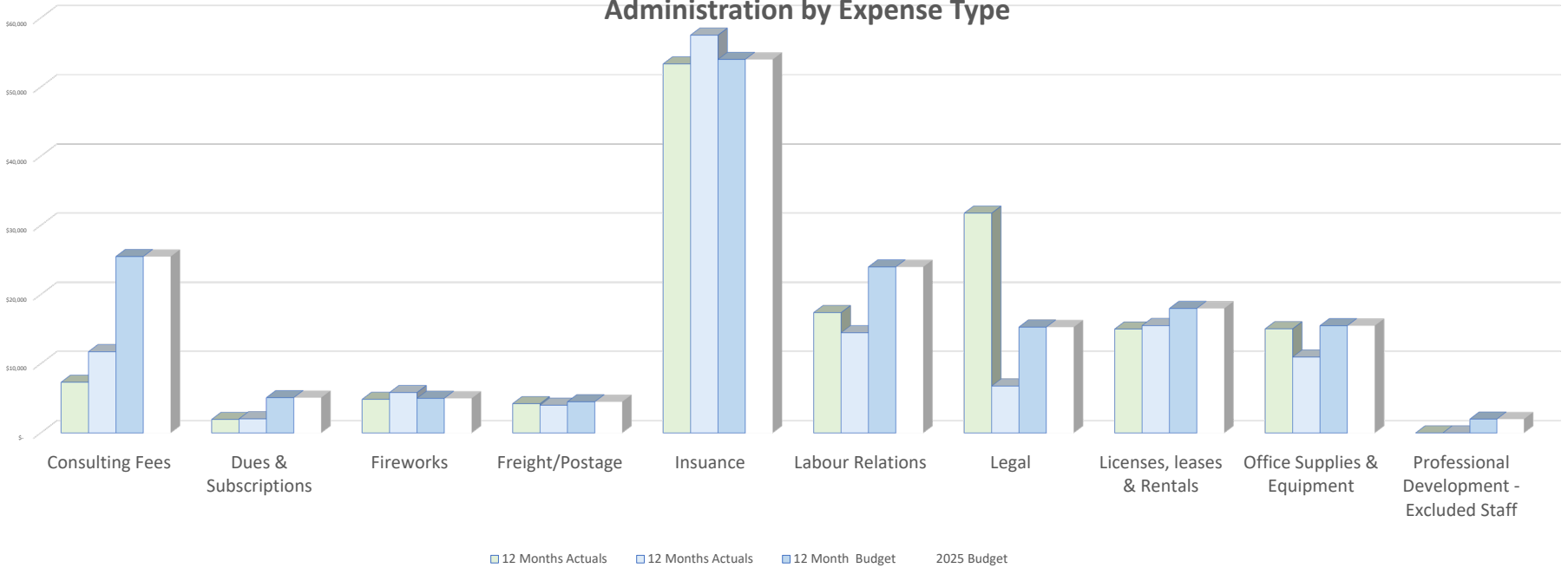
Overall, administrative costs in 2025 were **well managed and proportionate**, ensuring the majority of District funding continued to support frontline emergency services and capital priorities.



Administration by Expense Type



Administration by Expense Type



Operating Expenses

Line #		2024	2025		
		12 Months Actuals	12 Months Actuals	12 Month Budget	2025 Budget
40	Clothing - Career	\$ 4,123	\$ 57,518	\$ 17,000	\$ 17,000
41	Clothing - Paid on Call	\$ 18,006	\$ 6,378	\$ 15,450	\$ 15,450
42	Clothing - Protective	\$ 13,190	\$ 16,971	\$ 60,000	\$ 60,000
43	Computer, Hardware, Software & S	\$ 20,927	\$ 22,468	\$ 15,450	\$ 15,450
44	Employee/ POC Recognition	\$ 1,760	\$ 1,898	\$ 10,300	\$ 10,300
45	Equipment - Repair & Maintenance	\$ 3,272	\$ 5,536	\$ 11,000	\$ 11,000
46	Equipment Purchase - Small Tools	\$ 15,269	\$ 14,034	\$ 11,000	\$ 11,000
47	Fire Department Record System	\$ 3,743	\$ -	\$ 4,000	\$ 4,000
48	Fire Prevention & Public Education	\$ 3,929	\$ 10,193	\$ 15,500	\$ 15,500
49	Fire Station Repair & Maintenance	\$ 26,791	\$ 28,234	\$ 69,000	\$ 69,000
50	Fire Station Utilities	\$ 30,773	\$ 36,152	\$ 39,500	\$ 39,500
51	First Responder	\$ 13,780	\$ 15,389	\$ 16,000	\$ 16,000
52	Foam	\$ 7,187	\$ -	\$ 3,750	\$ 3,750
53	Health & Wellness	\$ 3,326	\$ 3,589	\$ 5,665	\$ 5,665
54	Hydrant Install/Repair	\$ -	\$ 50,000	\$ 59,270	\$ 59,270
55	Landscaping	\$ 7,770	\$ 6,611	\$ 7,800	\$ 7,800
56	Miscellaneous	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 9,000	\$ 9,000
57	Paid-on-call recruitment & Retentic	\$ 558	\$ 3,234	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000
58	Radio Equipment Repair & Supplies	\$ 845	\$ 28	\$ 2,500	\$ 2,500
59	Self Contained Breathing Apparatus	\$ 12,527	\$ 23,014	\$ 10,300	\$ 10,300
60	Supplies & Sundries	\$ 6,585	\$ 8,969	\$ 10,300	\$ 10,300
61	Training - Paid-on-call & Career	\$ 70,315	\$ 82,698	\$ 77,500	\$ 77,500
62	Vehicle Operating	\$ 102,513	\$ 115,841	\$ 103,500	\$ 103,500
63	Total Operating Expenses	\$ 367,190	\$ 508,755	\$ 578,785	\$ 578,785
% of Total Expenditures		8.4%	10.4%	12.0%	12.0%

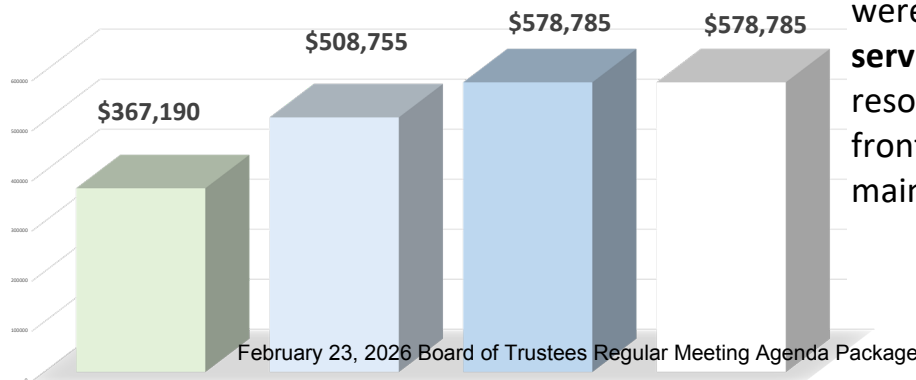
Executive Summary

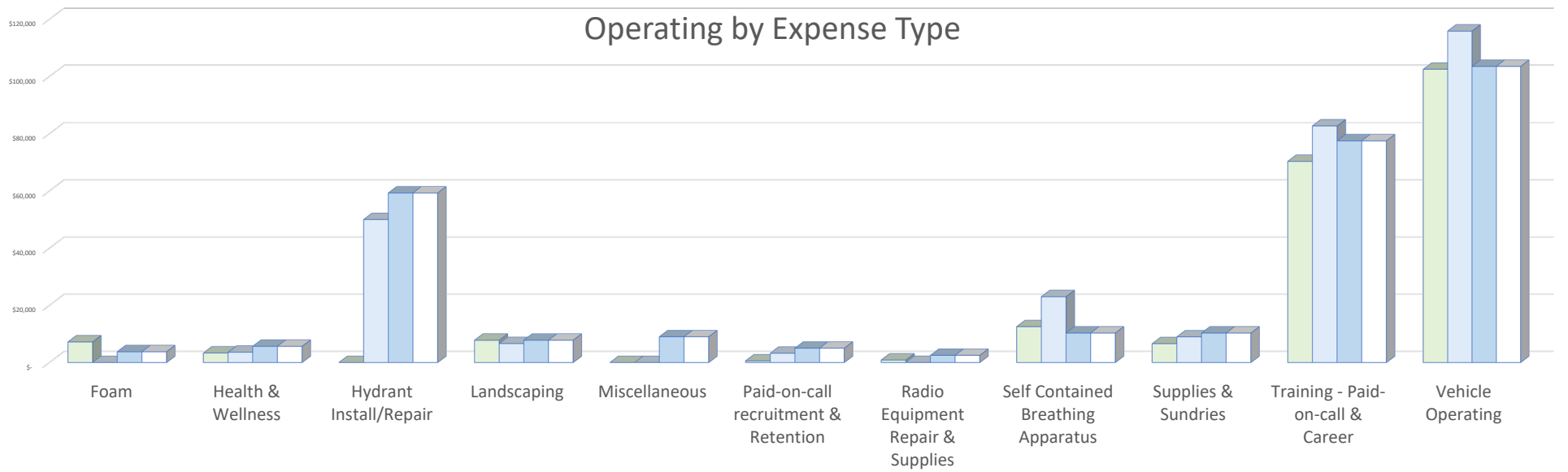
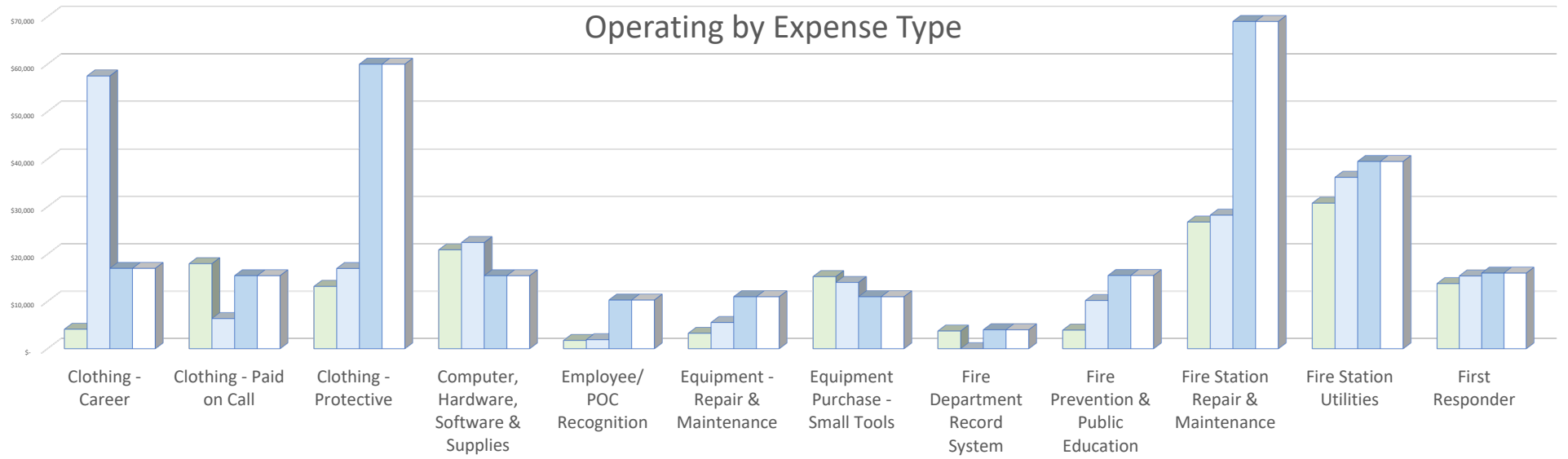
Operating Expenses

Operating expenses for 2025 totaled **\$508,755**, coming in **below the approved budget of \$528,785** and representing **10.4% of total District expenditures**, compared to a budgeted 11.0%.

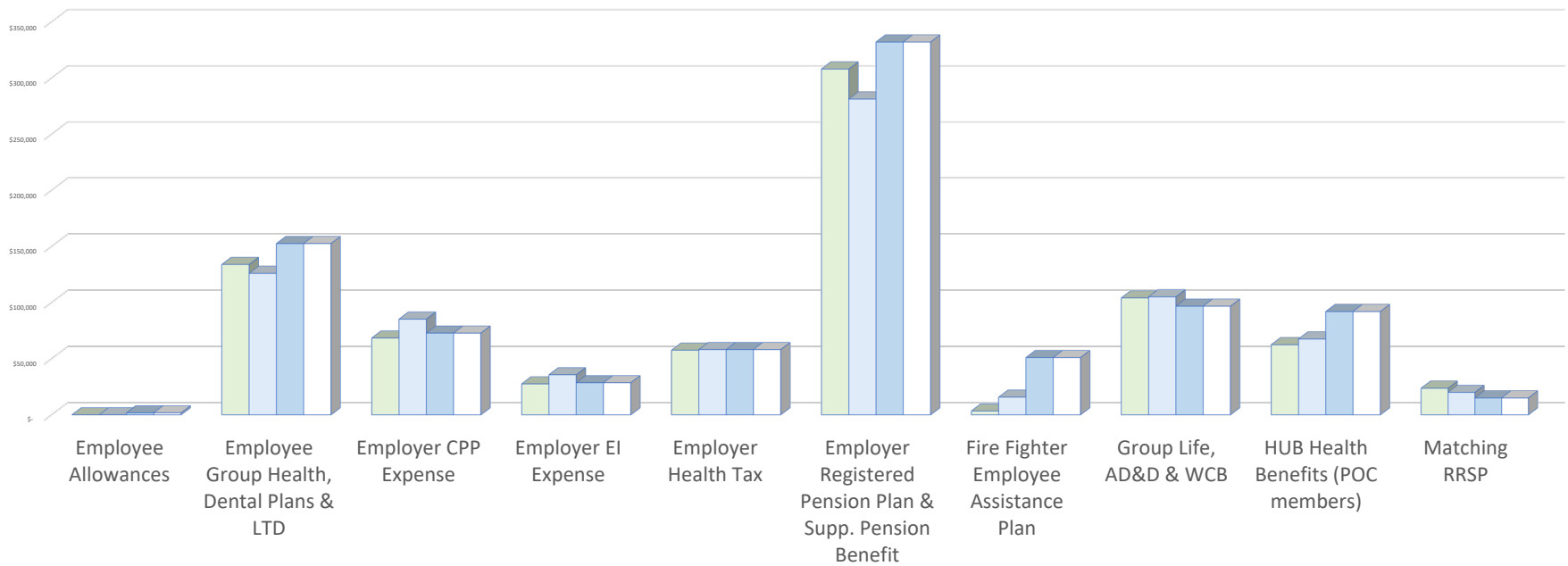
Higher costs were primarily related to necessary investments in **career clothing, hydrant installation and repair, vehicle operations, utilities, and training**, all of which directly support firefighter safety, emergency response readiness, and infrastructure reliability. These increases were partially offset by savings in areas such as protective clothing, equipment purchases, miscellaneous costs, and radio equipment repairs.

Overall, operating expenditures in 2025 were **well controlled and aligned with service demands**, ensuring that District resources continued to be focused on frontline emergency services while maintaining fiscal responsibility.





Wage Expenses by Type



Capital and Reserve Funds

	2024		2025	
	12 Months Actuals	12 Months Actuals	12 Months Actuals	2025 Budget
Capital Account				
GCPR - Water Infrastructure	\$ 50,000	\$ 50,000	\$ 50,000	\$ 50,000
GCPR - Small Capital	\$ 26,904	\$ 30,000	\$ 30,000	\$ 30,000
GCPR - Apparatus	\$ 315,000	\$ 340,000	\$ 340,000	\$ 340,000
GCPR - New Fire Hall	\$ 500,000	\$ 564,125	\$ 564,125	\$ 564,125
GCPR - Unspecified		\$ -		
GCPR - Hall 2 and Hall 3 Remediations	\$ 50,000	\$ 50,000	\$ 50,000	\$ 50,000
Total Capital Expenses & Transfers to/from Reserve Funds	\$ 941,904	\$ 1,034,125	\$ 1,034,125	\$ 1,034,125
Principal Payments - LTD & Lease (SCBA)	-\$ 58,889	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Surplus After Capital Expenses & Principal Payments LTD	-\$ 127,724	-\$ 20,452	-\$ 225,000	-\$ 225,000
Non Cash Expense (Amortization)	\$ 205,000	\$ 225,000	\$ 225,000	\$ 225,000
Change in Working Capital (Current Assets - Current Liabilities)	\$ 77,276	\$ 204,548	\$ 0	\$ 0

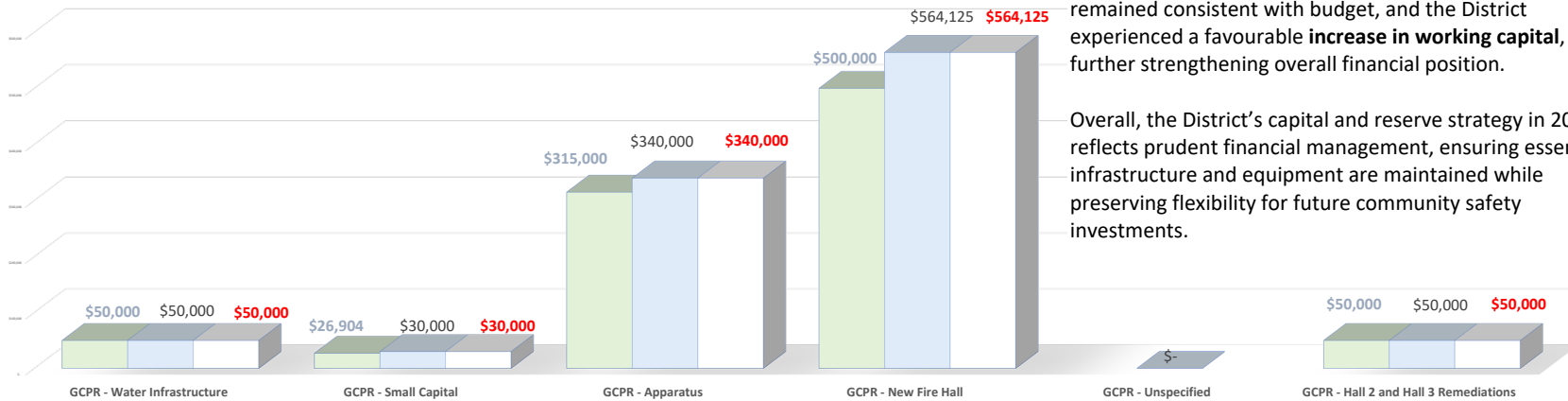
Executive Summary

Capital Account & Year-End Position

In 2025, the District invested **\$1.03 million** in capital projects and reserve transfers, fully aligned with the approved capital budget. Major allocations included continued contributions toward **apparatus replacement**, the **new fire hall reserve**, water infrastructure, small capital equipment, and remediation work at Halls 2 and 3. These investments support long-term asset sustainability and emergency response readiness.

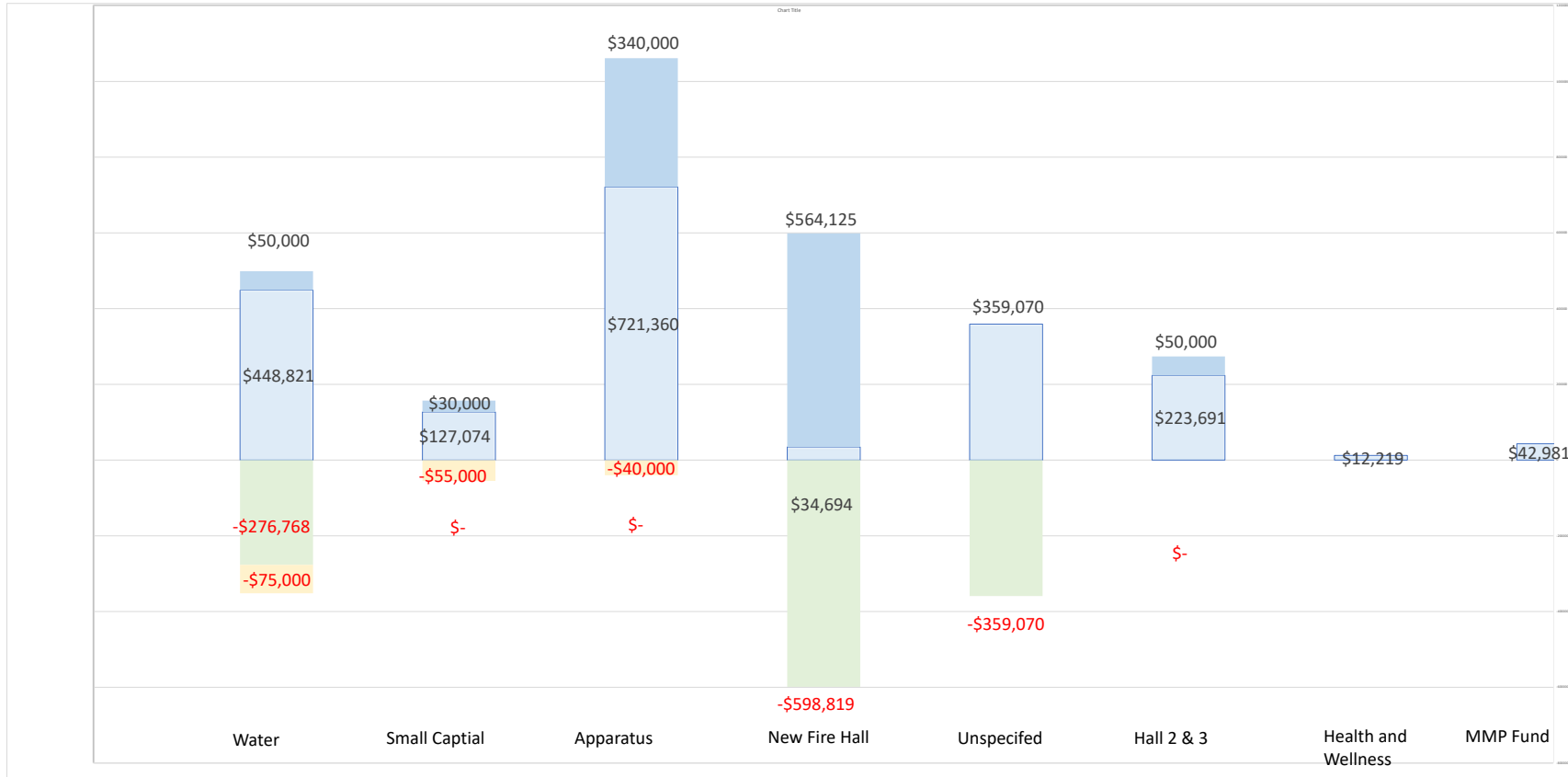
After capital expenditures, the District recorded a **year-end surplus of \$214,873**, compared to a planned deficit of \$225,000. This positive result is largely attributable to the timing of capital spending and strong operating performance during the year. Non-cash amortization remained consistent with budget, and the District experienced a favourable **increase in working capital**, further strengthening overall financial position.

Overall, the District's capital and reserve strategy in 2025 reflects prudent financial management, ensuring essential infrastructure and equipment are maintained while preserving flexibility for future community safety investments.



Reserve Funds

	2025				
	2025 Opening Balance	2025 Reserve Budget	Bylaw #156 New Fire Hall	Other Allocations	2025 Closing Balance
Capital Account					
G CPR - Water Infrastructure	\$ 448,821	\$ 50,000	-\$ 276,768	-\$ 75,000	\$ 147,053
G CPR - Small Capital	\$ 127,074	\$ 30,000	\$ -	-\$ 55,000	\$ 102,074
G CPR - Apparatus	\$ 721,360	\$ 340,000	\$ -	-\$ 40,000	\$ 1,021,360
G CPR - New Fire Hall	\$ 34,694	\$ 564,125	-\$ 598,819		\$ -
G CPR - Unspecified	\$ 359,070		-\$ 359,070		\$ -
G CPR - Hall 2 and Hall 3 Remediations	\$ 223,691	\$ 50,000			\$ 273,691
OECFR - Health and Wellness	\$ 12,219				\$ 12,219
WBRF - MMP Refund	\$ 42,981				\$ 42,981
Total Capital Expenses & Transfers to/from Reserve Funds	\$ 1,969,910	\$ 1,034,125	-\$ 1,234,657	-\$ 170,000	\$ 1,599,378



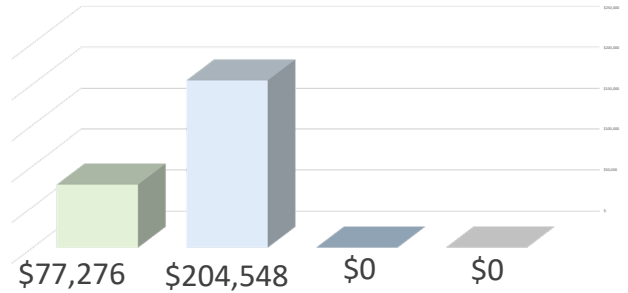
Salt Spring Island Fire Protection District
Financial Results (unaudited)
December 31, 2025

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Salt Spring Island Fire Protection District
Financial Results (unaudited)
December 31, 2025

Line #	2024 Approved Actuals	2025 Approved Actuals	2025 Prorated Budget	2025 Approved Budget
1	Consolidated	Consolidated	Consolidated	Consolidated
2	Income			
3	\$ 72,558	\$ 84,897	\$ 6,750	\$ 6,750
4	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
5	\$ 98,119	\$ 211,820	\$ 55,000	\$ 55,000
6	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
7	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
8	\$ 5,142,000	\$ 5,588,183	\$ 5,588,184	\$ 5,588,184
9	\$ 5,312,677	\$ 5,884,899	\$ 5,649,934	\$ 5,649,934
10				
11	Administration Expenses			
12	\$ 3,530	\$ 8,671	\$ 3,500	\$ 3,500
13	\$ 35,081	\$ 9,846	\$ 30,000	\$ 30,000
14	\$ 7,610	\$ 9,030	\$ 8,000	\$ 8,000
15	\$ 17,000	\$ 19,561	\$ 15,300	\$ 15,300
16	\$ 1,846	\$ 42,686	\$ 1,750	\$ 1,750
17	\$ 17,462	\$ 15,517	\$ 20,000	\$ 20,000
18	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 7,200	\$ 7,200
19	\$ 2,073	\$ 5,434	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,500
20	\$ 4,649	\$ 3,531	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000
21	\$ 7,330	\$ 11,745	\$ 25,500	\$ 25,500
22	\$ 1,950	\$ 2,032	\$ 5,100	\$ 5,100
23	\$ 4,860	\$ 5,837	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000
24	\$ 4,229	\$ 4,003	\$ 4,500	\$ 4,500
25	\$ 53,357	\$ 57,511	\$ 54,000	\$ 54,000
26	\$ 17,397	\$ 14,486	\$ 24,000	\$ 24,000
27	\$ 31,775	\$ 6,775	\$ 15,300	\$ 15,300
28	\$ 15,018	\$ 15,518	\$ 18,000	\$ 18,000
29	\$ 15,051	\$ 10,969	\$ 15,500	\$ 15,500
30	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000
31	\$ 240,219	\$ 243,151	\$ 261,150	\$ 261,150
32	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
33	\$ 0	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
34	\$ 205,000	\$ 225,000	\$ 225,000	\$ 225,000
35	\$ 4,123	\$ 57,518	\$ 17,000	\$ 17,000
36	\$ 18,006	\$ 6,378	\$ 15,450	\$ 15,450
37	\$ 13,190	\$ 16,971	\$ 60,000	\$ 60,000
38	\$ 20,927	\$ 22,468	\$ 15,450	\$ 15,450
39	\$ 1,760	\$ 1,898	\$ 10,300	\$ 10,300
40	\$ 3,272	\$ 5,536	\$ 11,000	\$ 11,000
41	\$ 15,269	\$ 14,034	\$ 11,000	\$ 11,000
42	\$ 3,743	\$ -	\$ 4,000	\$ 4,000
43	\$ 3,929	\$ 10,193	\$ 15,500	\$ 15,500
44	\$ 26,791	\$ 28,234	\$ 69,000	\$ 69,000
45	\$ 30,773	\$ 36,152	\$ 39,500	\$ 39,500
46	\$ 13,780	\$ 15,389	\$ 16,000	\$ 16,000
47	\$ 7,187	\$ -	\$ 3,750	\$ 3,750
48	\$ 3,326	\$ 3,589	\$ 5,665	\$ 5,665
49	\$ -	\$ 50,000	\$ 59,270	\$ 59,270
50	\$ 7,770	\$ 6,611	\$ 7,800	\$ 7,800
51	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 9,000	\$ 9,000
52	\$ 558	\$ 3,234	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000
53	\$ 845	\$ 28	\$ 2,500	\$ 2,500
54	\$ 12,527	\$ 23,014	\$ 10,300	\$ 10,300
55	\$ 6,585	\$ 8,969	\$ 10,300	\$ 10,300
56	\$ 70,315	\$ 82,698	\$ 77,500	\$ 77,500
57	\$ 102,513	\$ 115,841	\$ 103,500	\$ 103,500
58	\$ 367,190	\$ 508,755	\$ 578,785	\$ 578,785
59	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
60	\$ 12,846	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -

Line #	2024 Approved Actuals	2025 Approved Actuals	2025 Prorated Budget	2025 Approved Budget
	Consolidated	Consolidated	Consolidated	Consolidated
67	Wage & Related Expenses			
68	\$ 2,491,739	\$ 2,838,386	\$ 2,539,873	\$ 2,539,873
69	\$ 269,351	\$ 261,340	\$ 278,500	\$ 278,500
70	\$ 2,761,090	\$ 3,099,726	\$ 2,818,373	\$ 2,818,373
71	Statutory & Group Benefits			
72	\$ -	\$ 35	\$ 1,750	\$ 1,750
73	\$ 133,937	\$ 126,012	\$ 152,530	\$ 152,530
74	\$ 68,408	\$ 85,241	\$ 72,775	\$ 72,775
75	\$ 27,528	\$ 35,664	\$ 28,553	\$ 28,553
76	\$ 57,578	\$ 58,096	\$ 58,114	\$ 58,114
77	\$ 308,018	\$ 281,201	\$ 332,022	\$ 332,022
78	\$ 3,414	\$ 15,706	\$ 51,000	\$ 51,000
79	\$ 104,156	\$ 105,151	\$ 96,756	\$ 96,756
80	\$ 62,438	\$ 67,538	\$ 92,000	\$ 92,000
81	\$ 23,661	\$ 19,950	\$ 15,000	\$ 15,000
82	\$ 789,138	\$ 794,594	\$ 900,500	\$ 900,500
83	\$ 3,550,228	\$ 3,894,320	\$ 3,718,873	\$ 3,718,873
84				
85	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 57,000	\$ 57,000
86				
87	\$ 4,375,484	\$ 4,871,226	\$ 4,840,808	\$ 4,840,808
88	\$ 937,194	\$ 1,013,673	\$ 809,125	\$ 809,125
89				
90	Capital Account			
91	\$ 50,000	\$ 50,000	\$ 50,000	\$ 50,000
92				
93	\$ 26,904	\$ 30,000	\$ 30,000	\$ 30,000
94	\$ 315,000	\$ 340,000	\$ 340,000	\$ 340,000
95	\$ 500,000	\$ 564,125	\$ 564,125	\$ 564,125
96				
97	\$ 50,000	\$ 50,000	\$ 50,000	\$ 50,000
98	\$ 941,904	\$ 1,034,125	\$ 1,034,125	\$ 1,034,125
99				
100	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
101	\$ 58,889	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
102	\$ 64,125	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
103	-\$ 127,724	-\$ 20,452	-\$ 225,000	-\$ 225,000
104	\$ 205,000	\$ 225,000	\$ 225,000	\$ 225,000
105	\$ 77,276	\$ 204,548	\$ 0	\$ 0
106				
107				
108				
109				
110				
111				



FAIR FARE FEEDBACK



PHOTO BY ROBB MAGLEY

A resident scans a QR code during an engagement event Friday, Jan. 23 at the Rainbow Recreation Centre pool lobby. Salt Spring's transit system is undergoing a fare review, hoping to ensure prices and offerings balance affordability, ridership growth and cost recovery, according to BC Transit — that last being the percentage of transit operating expenses which are funded by the fare box. The linked online survey closed Sunday, Jan. 25, but the Salt Spring Island Local Community Commission will continue to hear from islanders on the matter. The last time single-rider fares increased was in 2012.

FIRE DISTRICT

Trustees look ahead to possible April election

Three seats could change depending on nominations

BY ROBB MAGLEY
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

Three seats on Salt Spring's fire district board are potentially freeing up this spring, and trustees have set out an election timeline with nominations opening in less than a month.

Salt Spring Island Fire Protection District trustees David Courtney and Mary Lynn Hetherington and current board chair Rollie Cook are all at the end of their three-year terms in 2026, with all three having been elected by acclamation in 2023. This has been Courtney's first term with the district; Cook and Hetherington having been on the board since 2017.

The nomination period opens on Thursday, Feb. 26, and closes Thursday, March 12; if there are more nominations than seats coming available, an election is triggered and an advanced voting day will take place Wednesday, April 8.

The election itself would be held Saturday, April 11, with the results to be officially announced at the district's annual general meeting, scheduled for Monday, April 13. Staff confirmed at the district board meeting Monday, Jan. 19 that returning officer Antho-

ny Kennedy was available to run the election. "We start advertising [for nominations] in the second week of February, which is just two or three weeks from now," said district CAO Rodney Dieleman. "There will be on-site voting, but our elections bylaw says that people can also request a mail-in ballot."

Dieleman said in the event of an election, voters could reach out — with a phone call or email to the front desk at Fire Hall No. 1 — and staff would take their name and address and mail them a package with voting materials.

"At \$1.25 an envelope, it's not cost-effective to send everybody an envelope," he said, adding that Fire Chief Jamie Holmes had "kindly offered one of the truck bays" at the Ganges fire hall for the district's AGM, should the new hall not be available for a public meeting. The new fire hall on Lower Ganges Road is under construction with an opening event planned for May 3, Dieleman said — and the meeting room at the Ganges hall "might still be full of boxes."

Records kept by both the fire district and the Driftwood show more trustee seats in the last 25 years have been filled by acclamation than by election — and when there has been a contest, turnout has generally been modest. There are some 8,400 eligible voters within the district, with a turnout most years of less than 20 per cent.

LTC process criticized

BAKER BEACH
continued from 1

"Both are within the purview of the local government's authority to regulate land use," wrote Milman, "including the use of land covered (permanently or intermittently) by the ocean."

As the successful party, the LTC — and by extension, island taxpayers — would ordinarily be entitled to having the costs of legal proceedings covered by the other party. The judge, however, felt differently, noting several deficiencies and lengthy delays in the process, all of which he laid at the feet of the LTC.

"After submitting the original application on Dec. 27, 2023, the petitioners had to wait until May 2025, nearly 18 months, for a decision that was forthcoming only after an application was made to this court to compel an answer," wrote Milman. "Even then, the record before me indicates that the [LTC] failed at any stage to address important issues squarely. . . . All of this made the process, including the court process, more costly for the petitioners than it should have been."

Reached for comment after the decision was issued, Wilding said he and his neighbours were considering their options moving forward. The Driftwood also reached out to Salt Spring Island LTC chair Tim Peterson, who was unable to comment before press time.

EMERGENCY SERVICES

Firefighters welcome Fulford pond

Additional capacity boosts training, emergency response

BY ROBB MAGLEY
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

South-end firefighters have a new tool at their disposal: a recently completed 750,000-gallon water supply pond, now in service at the station serving Fulford.

Salt Spring Island Fire Rescue Chief Jamie Holmes said water from the new pond will be used for training at Fire Hall No. 2, meaning firefighters won't be pulling from the on-site well or tanks for training nights — and the substantial extra water will likely be a key resource for the district during emergencies.

"It's really going to boost our emergency response down toward Fulford," said Holmes. "We can even take that water and pressurize the two training hydrants that are hooked up there, and put pressurized water out to the front tarmac of the fire hall."

A six-inch dry hydrant pipe already installed at the site brings water to the corner of the nearby tennis court, Holmes said, where water tender trucks can pull in and out quickly. Holmes said the tailings from digging the pond were all used nearby, levelling out the training grounds and helping with some minor drainage issues around the fire hall — a "win-win," he said, with most of the water now captured and sloping back into the pond.

The new pond is fully fenced for safety, he added, and a dock will be added in the spring for drifting drills with the department's portable water pumps.



PHOTO COURTESY SSIFR

Water supply pond, able to hold up to 750,000 gallons of water on the Fulford fire hall site, which will be used for emergency response and training purposes.

In other news, trustees agreed to support an effort led by regional fire chiefs who are forming a collective to address the role of improvement districts with the Office of the Fire Commissioner — specifically, Holmes explained, the exclusion of improvement districts like Salt Spring's from fire inspections and investigations under the new Fire Safety Act.

Holmes said he felt joining the coalition was an opportunity to educate provincial regulators, who he had come to believe didn't fully understand improvement districts — "And I don't say that lightly," he said.

"Every level of government I talked to before the new act said their rationale

was that a regional district was a better representation of the community because they have regular elections," said Holmes. "So when I explained to them that we also have elections — and hold them more often, so possibly an even truer representation of the public's wishes — their only reply was, 'oh.'"

The fire districts — so far including those on Thetis and Quadra islands, as well as Shawnigan Lake, Cowichan Bay and Mill Bay — hope a unified response will ensure any legislative changes don't leave improvement districts away from the table. For now, according to board chair Rollie Cook, that support will take the form of a letter indicating their endorsement of the group's work.



ISLAND LIFE

ISLAND ELDERS

Salt Spring encouraged to create 'seniors plan'

B.C. Seniors Advocate shares tips, resources to tackle abuse during island visit

BY ROBB MAGLEY
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

In the face of a marked uptick in incidents of scams and abuse, local seniors and caregivers last week heard they have ways to fight back — and that on Salt Spring, local government should be stepping up as the island's demographics shift.

About 30 people attended a discussion led by Dan Levitt at the Salt Spring Seniors Centre Tuesday, Jan. 20. Levitt heads the Office of the Seniors Advocate, an independent agency in the B.C. provincial government, which acts in the interest of seniors and their caregivers.

Levitt's office monitors and analyzes seniors' services and makes recommendations to government and service providers to address systemic issues. He gave a preview of an annual report on elder abuse being released later this year, and said given the aging population in B.C. — and indeed on Salt Spring Island — the trends are worrying.

"Over the past five years, we've seen 28 per cent more calls to the Senior Abuse Information Line," said Levitt. "Victims of violent offences reported to the RCMP are up 18 per cent, financial abuse reported to the Vancouver Police Department is up 68 per cent; trends

are going in the wrong direction."

And much senior abuse goes unreported. Levitt said victims often feel ashamed, or worry reporting would make things worse. Friends and family can watch for signs of abuse — different behaviours, he said, like if someone seems more generally anxious or depressed, or physical signs things aren't going as usual.

"When I worked in care homes, we were always concerned about bruising — and that's a tricky one, because many seniors are more likely to bruise because of a blood condition," said Levitt. "But someone might have poor hygiene, dehydration or poor nutrition; they might be going through their medications faster than usual. Or they might seem more isolated, withdrawing from social situations."

"This is their job, all day long: to scam people. And it's very sophisticated."

ELLIE PARKS
Island social worker

Levitt said that isolation was a technique perpetrators of financial abuse in particular use — trying to isolate a senior so the grift is less likely to be noticed. Things to watch out for include the appearance of new legal documents, like a will or power of attorney, or changes in banking.

"They could have less money



PHOTO BY ROBB MAGLEY

B.C. Seniors Advocate Dan Levitt speaks on the topic of seniors abuse and how to prevent it, among other subjects, at a Jan. 20 gathering at the Salt Spring Seniors Centre.

available all of a sudden," he said, "or suddenly be more reluctant to speak about their financial situation."

The days of one-off, small-scale scammers seem to be over. At last Tuesday's event, island social worker Ellie Parks said she and her colleagues see a perhaps surprising number of people on Salt Spring being swindled, with the cons having an increasing level of sophistication — and tempo.

"Now it is organized crime,

thousands of people," said Parks. "This is their job, all day long: to scam people. And it's very sophisticated."

Levitt agreed there were good habits to get into, like avoiding unknown phone numbers, or regularly checking banking statements for irregularities. Parks said anyone concerned about themselves or someone else should reach out to Island Health for support, particularly if that kind of "outside expert" advice might be more convinc-

ing than hearing it from a family member.

"And if you meet someone new on social media, be very wary," said Parks. "Particularly if they want you to go to another platform. Salt Spring is a place where we have a high degree of trust, because we have such a strong community — but you have to be more on your guard now."

Local government has a role to play, Levitt said. He regularly encourages communities to develop a "seniors plan" — something which would be undertaken by entities like Salt Spring's Local Community Commission or the broader Islands Trust — to map out future needs as the community's population ages.

"If you had a seniors plan for Salt Spring, then you might be thinking about things like transportation services for seniors, how many long-term care beds do you need, how many retirement homes — and how do you organize that?" said Levitt. "It's a bit of a vision, some things will take a long time to get, but it's worthwhile getting that plan so you know where you are going."

In addition to Island Health, Levitt said anyone concerned they or someone they know is a victim of abuse could reach out to Seniors First BC's Seniors Abuse and Information Line (1-866-437-1940), local RCMP (250-537-5555) and the Seniors Advocate Line (1-877-952-3181).

For more information on services from the Seniors Advocate office, visit seniorsadvocatebc.ca.

CLIMATE ADAPTATION

New stations help local EV charging network expand

Portlock Park, Phoenix properties get Level-2 chargers, with more on the way

BY ROBB MAGLEY
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

The network for electric vehicle (EV) charging on Salt Spring Island continues to grow, as new Level-2 chargers at the former Phoenix School property — currently being leased to the Chuan Society — and at Portlock Park will soon join the recent addition of charging at the Rainbow Recreation Centre parking lot.

The new EV charging station at Portlock is operational and in service, according to Capital Regional District (CRD) senior manager Dan Ovington, although some additional work is still required at the Phoenix charger before it can be activated.

"And then we have eight more chargers," said Ovington, updating Salt Spring's Local Community

Commission at its Jan. 15 meeting.

Ovington said staff would be meeting with an external engineer in the coming weeks to finalize a schedule for the remaining installations. Plans currently include new Level-2 chargers at Centennial Park, a replacement of the chargers at ArtSpring, and new charging at the Salt Spring Island Multi Space.

"As with the new Flo charger at the pool, we've moved to a user-pay model," he said. "That revenue goes back to the Climate Action [regional service], so while we don't actually see that funding, they are responsible for those assets moving forward — so for any upgrades or improvements as well as the installation."

The remaining Level-2 chargers are expected to be in service by the end of the year. Meanwhile, the Level 3 charger at Salt Spring's Mid Island Co-op is soon to be joined by a second high-speed charging station at the new fire hall; no announcement has been made on that charger — planned to be one of more than 800 operated in the province by BC Hydro — although the fire hall itself is expected to be operational this spring.



PHOTO BY ROBB MAGLEY

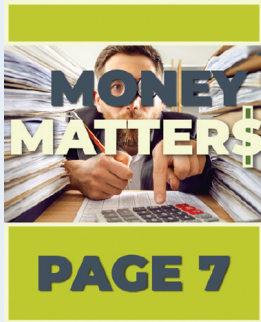
February 28, 2026 Board of Trustees Regular Meeting Agenda Package

Driftwood

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PHOTO BY ALAN BIBBY

Visible Salt Spring Search and Rescue members, from left, Sean Stephen, Mike Koole and Matt Kellow assist a family volunteer during a Jan. 27 SAR exercise practising an urgent night-time medical evacuation. See pages 8-10 for our annual Salute to SAR volunteers and a story about the group's new drone team.

LCC Old fire hall fate in LCC hands

Commissioners' budget talks trim expected tax increase to 8.5 per cent

BY ROBB MAGLEY
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

Salt Spring officials won't have to raise taxes to maintain the old Fire Hall No. 1 in Ganges next year, having found efficiencies within the budget to both maintain the 73-year-old building and slightly drop a projected tax increase.

Salt Spring's Local Community Commission (LCC) managed to shave a little more than \$62,000 off the taxpayer's portion of their provisional spending plan Thursday, Jan. 29, even after a modest increase in the budget to maintain the soon-to-be-vacant fire hall.

Ownership of that hall is being transferred to Capital Regional District (CRD) ownership for the princely sum of \$1, following terms of a 2021 memorandum of understanding between that body and the Salt Spring Island Fire Protection District (SSIFPD). That agreement has SSIFPD retaining control of the hall until four months after the new fire hall on Lower Ganges Road is occupied — and created an easement allowing the fire district to construct and maintain a 30,000-gallon water tank on the west side of the property for firefighting.

Regional staff told LCC members they expect to assume full responsibility for the old fire hall as early as this summer, and until a future use — and possible revenue stream — is sorted out, the CRD needs to keep up with basic maintenance and security.

FIRE HALL continued on 3

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WATERWORKS

District corrects staff figures on plant costs

Project's price the same, but only three per cent above September estimate

BY ROBB MAGLEY
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

If there's comfort to be had for rate-payers surrounding the high costs for Salt Spring's planned Maxwell Water Treatment Plant, it's that at least the price is not as unexpected as believed.

That slightly complex message came from North Salt Spring Waterworks District (NSSWD) chief administrative officer Mark Boysen, who brought a mea culpa to district trustees at their meeting Thursday, Jan. 29. Boysen told the board a report presented at a special board meeting Friday, Jan. 16 contained an error: the "Class A" estimate, forecasting the cost of the new plant, was far more accurate than presented.

"There's no way around it," Boysen told the Driftwood last week. "It was a staff error in the estimates that were provided — we pretty solidly put our foot in it."

A bit of inside baseball: a Class A estimate is a detailed, nearly definitive construction cost prediction used for planning — and budgeting — late in a project's process, with an expected accuracy within five to 10 per cent of the median of competitive bids, according to Canadian Construction Association standards.

Between civil construction and engineering and project management, on Jan. 16 the board approved the project cost of \$16.6 million — almost 14 per cent higher than the Class A estimate NSSWD staff had reported as \$14.6 million.

But, Boysen said, that was staff's mistake; consultants Kerr Wood Leidal (KWL) had submitted a Class A estimate back in Sep-

tember that worked out to a \$16.1 million price tag — or just 3 per cent off the number that would be accepted by the board months later.

"Staff apologize for that error," Boysen said. "We were moving quickly through a lot of different numbers."

The price tag is still higher than some early estimates made by the district — including a familiar-sounding \$14.6 million number, which had been used both for planning before the borrowing referendum and in a significant grant application the district made to the Canada Housing Infrastructure Fund in late 2024.

That application was not successful, trustees learned Thursday; Boysen said staff had received an email that morning indicating that there could be an opportunity to carry over the application to the new provincial Build Communities Strong fund.

Trustees reiterated that the loan authorization secured by last year's rate-payer referendum would stay the same, at \$11.7 million in borrowing, and that there would be no new parcel taxes or water toll charges to make up the higher cost of the Island Health-mandated plant. Instead the district will put off the \$1.5-million Crofton Road pump station until 2027 and use some capital and connection charge reserves.

Seeking savings, district trustee David Courtney made a motion to rescind the nearly \$1 million construction engineering award, but the motion was not seconded. Most trustees on Jan. 16 had indicated they agreed with the staff assessment that any re-tendering at this point would not result in lower bids.

The water treatment plant project is being required by regional health authorities as part of an effort to remove more of Maxwell Lake's organic matter, which reacts with existing chlorine treatment to create trihalomethanes.

"There's no way around it. It was a staff error . . . we pretty solidly put our foot in it."

MARK BOYSEN
CAO, North Salt Spring
Waterworks District

Interim hall budget set

FIRE HALL
continued from 1

"Once it's transferred over to us, we're responsible for all the utility costs and security of that building," said senior manager Dan Ovington, outlining typical expenses such as a phone line for alarm monitoring, repairs and maintenance during the transition period.

"And quite often, when we take over a building, there's some wiring or similar thing that needs to happen so we'll use our regular contractors that support our other facilities."

Ovington said staff would be bringing forward the recent assessment of the building's compliance with the BC Building Code to the LCC's meeting Feb. 12 — at which point commissioners could consider what future use options were possible. That's the LCC's monthly evening meeting, he said, and staff had set aside most of that time for commissioners to bring those possibilities to the public for their input.

"The current occupancy permit is specific to a fire department," said Ovington. "So in order to put in anything outside of that — there are limitations."

The net impact of Thursday's budget discussions will be a one per cent reduction in the tax increase projected for 2026, from an anticipated 9.5 per cent bump to 8.5 per cent — a somewhat hard-fought shift that went back and forth across the meeting. While commissioners found themselves acting with less unanimity than when they began three years ago, CRD director Gary Holman took a philosophical approach to those disagreements, opining the level of discourse was something to be envied, not avoided.

"I think, after our third budget, we disagree on some outcomes because our discussions are more productive," said Holman. "Everybody, myself included, has a better understanding of the various budgets. The discussion we have here, this is the kind of discussion that we should be having at the [CRD] board level."

The LCC's Feb. 12 meeting will be held at SIMS starting at 9 p.m.

CRANK IT UP



PHOTO BY MARIO MCINALLY

A cheque presentation is part of a Feb. 1 reception hosted by the Crankcases car enthusiast club to thank supporters of their 2026 calendar fundraising campaign. From left are Crankcases "founding fathers" Gord Heisch and Andy Higgs, and Lady Minto Hospital Foundation's Rebecca Smyth, Alan Ett and Kathleen Doyle-Linden. The Crankcases — with help from Country Grocer, Cassette Cafe, Pharmasave, Salt Spring Pharmacy, Salt Spring Books, Windsor Plywood, Mouat's Home Hardware, Axe and Reel, Salt Spring Mercantile, Westland Insurance, Bumper and the Salt Spring Library — sold 250 calendars, raising \$4,235 for the Lady Minto Hospital Foundation.

Note: An advertisement published in the January 28, 2026 issue of the Driftwood was incorrectly titled "NOTICE OF FIRST READING". The advertisement content correctly described the upcoming Public Hearing. We regret any confusion this may have caused.



Islands Trust

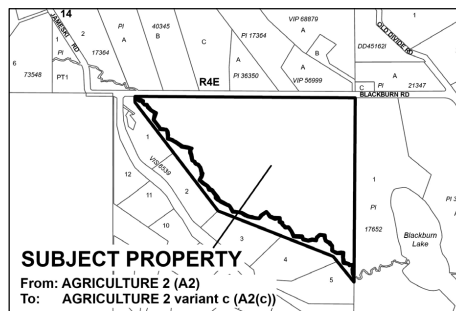
NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

Proposed Bylaw No. 546
SALT SPRING ISLAND LOCAL TRUST COMMITTEE

NOTICE is hereby given pursuant to Section 466 of the Local Government Act, that the Salt Spring Island Local Trust Committee invites the public to attend a Public Hearing beginning at 10:30 a.m., Thursday, February 12, 2026, Meaden Hall, 120 Blain Road, Salt Spring Island, to hear your views regarding Proposed Bylaw No. 546.

The bylaw amendment proposes to alter the Salt Spring Island Land Use Bylaw (LUB) to change the current zone of subject property (355 Blackburn Road) from Agriculture 2 (A2) to Agriculture 2 variant c (A2(c)) to permit the current uses on the property in order to bring it into compliance with the LUB at the expiration of Land Use Contract Bylaw No. 195.

The property is legally described as THE NORTH EAST 1/4 OF SECTION 85, SOUTH SALT SPRING ISLAND, COWICHAN DISTRICT EXCEPT THAT PART IN PLAN 35855 (PID: 013-510-827). The general location of the subject property is shown on the map:



A copy of the proposed bylaw, the Public Hearing Binder and other information is available online from January 28, 2026 to February 12, 2026 here: islandstrust.bc.ca/island-planning/salt-spring/current-applications/ under PLR20240021 and at the Islands Trust Salt Spring Office, 4-121 McPhillips Ave, Salt Spring Island, BC V8K 2T6 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., excluding statutory holidays.

An electronic Community Information Meeting will be held on Tuesday February 10, 2026 at 6 p.m. To learn more about the bylaws and to ask questions use the following meeting link: islandstrust.zoom.us/j/68034076257?pwd=trB4Qysb1kTpQ1NrbrAWhabBrAhFav.1

Enquiries may be directed to Anthony Fotino, Islands Trust Planner by email: afotino@islandstrust.bc.ca, or phone at 250-537-9144. For toll-free access, request a transfer to the above telephone number via Service BC: in Vancouver at 604-660-2421 and elsewhere in BC at 1-800-663-7867.

If you are unable to attend the Public Hearing you may submit a written statement. Written submissions will be accepted until 4:00 p.m., February 11, 2026 to: Islands Trust, 4-121 McPhillips Ave, Salt Spring Island, BC V8K 2T6 or email: ssiinfo@islandstrust.bc.ca as well as during the public hearing. Written submissions made in response to this notice will be available for public review.

NO WRITTEN OR ORAL REPRESENTATIONS WILL BE RECEIVED BY THE SALT SPRING ISLAND LOCAL TRUST COMMITTEE, OR ITS MEMBERS, AFTER THE CONCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC HEARING.

OPINION

2023 CCNA Awards
Gold - Best Editorial Page | Gold - Best Local Cartoon (Dennis Parker)
Bronze - Best All Round | Bronze - Best Front Page

2023 BCYCA Awards
Gold - Best All Round (for circulation Category C)
Gold - Community Service Award



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EDITORIAL

Closing doors

Few topics are of universal interest in any community, but on Salt Spring, the future of a most central spot in Ganges village comes close.

The fate of the Ganges fire hall, also known as Fire Hall No. 1, will be entering the realm of official public discussion next week when the Salt Spring Local Community Commission (LCC) receives a report on the state of the 73-year-old building. It should be part of the agenda package for the LCC's evening meeting on Thursday, Feb. 12, which members of the public are welcome to attend.

The LCC, through the Capital Regional District (CRD), will assume ownership of the site four months after the new fire hall is occupied, as per an agreement related to a \$1-million CRD contribution to the Salt Spring Island Fire Protection District, which reduced the project's borrowing costs by that amount.

We would be surprised if the report contained "good news" about the state of the building and the practicality of preserving it. Among reasons a new main fire hall has been needed for years have been well-founded worries over the existing building's health and safety deficits. Its inability to withstand a serious earthquake, coupled with the likelihood of having to mitigate the presence of toxic materials like asbestos for any significant renovation, should concern those hoping to fully preserve the "heritage" structure itself.

We understand the building holds sentimental value as a fixture that's been in the centre of town for so long, especially because of its clock tower, which is useful as well as visually iconic. While in Ganges it's easier to check the time with a quick skyward glance than searching for it on a cell-phone, for sure. Eating hot dogs and sipping hot chocolate at the hall after Halloween fireworks are part of many islanders' favourite memories, along with annual Fire Prevention Week open houses and other safety-oriented events and fundraisers held there.

But in considering what will happen next at the fire hall site, we hope sentimentality will find an appropriately temperate rank on the list of considerations, that a fulsome public input process will be developed, and that in the end a balance will be struck — between cherished memories and respect for local taxpayers.



On thought and morality

BY DAVID GORDON

VIEWPOINT

People seem to treat thought as if it were a polite little house-guest — something that knocks before entering and wipes its feet on the mat. But I've lived long enough to know better. Thought is like weather. It rolls in uninvited, kicks over the furniture, and leaves you wondering why you ever trusted a clear sky.

And morality — well, that's another thing people misunderstand. They treat it like a Sunday suit: something you put on when company's coming and hide in the closet the rest of the week. But morality isn't a garment. It's infrastructure. It's the bridge you hope the other fellow reinforced before you drive across. Without it, the whole town collapses into the river, and everyone stands around pretending they didn't see it coming.

Now, I've heard it said that the world is getting crueller, meaner, more inconsiderate by the day. Maybe so. But I suspect the world's always been that way; it's just louder now. Cruelty has better amplification. Selfishness has a marketing department. And inconsideration — well, that's been running for office since the dawn of time.

But here's the thing: morality still works. Not because it's noble, but because it's useful. A moral act is like a well-placed beam in a creaking barn. It keeps the whole structure from falling on your head. You don't have to be a saint to appreciate that. You just have to prefer your skull uncrushed.

As for thought — its substance, its weight — most folks never notice it until it's already pushed them somewhere that

they didn't intend to go. They think they're steering the ship, but half the time they're just waving from the deck, while the current decides

their destination. And sometimes, if they're unlucky, someone on shore mistakes that waving for a friendly hello.

But if you pay attention — real attention — you can feel the pressure before the thought forms. A kind of inward wind. A shift in the air . . . a change in air pressure, a cold spot in an old house. That's the raw material. That's the clay everything else is shaped from. And if you learn to read it, you can tell when a storm's coming, or when a clear patch might give you enough time to fix the roof, or go cut hay.

Now, I won't pretend that any of this is easy. Thinking is hard work. Moral thinking is harder. And thinking morally in a world that rewards neither is about as easy as teaching a mule to play the violin. But it's still worth doing. Because every time you choose the harder path, you reinforce the bridge. You strengthen the barn. You keep the river from taking another soul downstream.

So. Mind your thoughts, because they have mass. Mind your morals, because they have momentum. And mind the signs, because the universe posts warnings more often than we might suspect.

Most folks ignore them. But you — you're the sort who reads the signs. And maybe even sketches a few of your own. So cut each other the slack you seek, relax and enjoy the ride. You paid for your ticket already, so relax.

The writer is a digital creator and long-time Salt Spring Island resident.

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THIS WEEK'S POLL QUESTION:
Do you care what becomes of the old Ganges fire hall site? Yes No

LAST WEEK'S QUESTION:
Are you better at detecting scams now than you were 10 years ago?

16 NO 62 YES

Cast your ballot online at www.gulfislandsdriftwood.com or drop it at our office on Monday through noon.

BUBBLY BIRTHDAY BOY



PHOTO BY JENNIFER ROSE

Osito Miel (Little Honey Bear) – who won the top dog award at the Salt Spring Fall Fair Pet Parade last year – rests at Duck Creek Park surrounded by bubbles blown by his “brother bear” KaiZen after hosting many canine pals and their owners at his 10th birthday party on Feb. 6. Pet parent Jennifer Rose said she found Osito curled up in a gutter with his poisoned siblings in the small village of Tzununa, Guatemala. “Though his actual birth date is unknown,” she said, “when the vet told me he was three weeks old, I went back on the calendar and it landed on Feb. 6, Bob Marley’s birthday, so that’s when we celebrate him.” Rose said Osito is an emotional support dog who has attended several events in that role and would love to meet locals in need of extra joy and love in their life.

ISLAND HISTORY

Museum opens doors for BC Heritage Week



DRIFTWOOD FILE PHOTO

Farm equipment at the Farmers’ Institute grounds before completion of a new building to house them last year. Salt Spring Island Museum volunteers will be available Feb. 16 to 22 to share stories about Salt Spring’s agricultural history.

What’s in the Pot? explores agricultural theme

SUBMITTED BY SALT SPRING HERITAGE FOUNDATION

Each year, Heritage BC celebrates Heritage Week in mid-February. This year the event is focusing attention on food — and the sharing of food — with the theme of Stir the Pot.

Food brings us together. It links us to the land and to traditions, ties us to our families and ancestors, and connects cultures and communities. This year’s Heritage Week theme is an open invitation to celebrate food as a form of heritage that is both deeply personal and widely shared. From heirloom seeds and traditional cooking and harvesting methods to community feasts and intergenerational recipes, food reflects who we are and where we come from.

As well, the Stir the Pot theme suggests advocacy. It is a call to spark conversation, to bring overlooked stories to the surface and to address issues of food security, cultural recognition and access. By stirring the pot together, we not only honour traditions but also create space for dialogue and discussion.

As a celebration of this year’s theme, the Salt Spring Heritage Foundation has focused its planned activities on What’s in the Pot: A celebration of Salt Spring Island’s farming tradition. The foundation is providing an open invitation to the people of Salt Spring Island and beyond to visit the Salt Spring Island Museum to learn about the impact of agriculture on the island’s history. The museum on the Salt Spring Island Farmers’ Institute grounds on Rainbow Road will be open daily from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. from Monday, Feb. 16 through Sunday, Feb. 22.

Museum exhibits provide an opportunity for visitors to learn about island farming traditions; to discover the forgotten stories of people, families and communities and discover little-known facts about Salt Spring’s amazing food harvests.

Along with its extensive collections, the museum will be displaying some key facts and information regarding agricultural production between 1860 and the 1950s. Volunteers will offer tours and answer questions at the family-friendly event. Drop-ins, school tours and youth are all welcome to stop by.

Admission to the museum is free, but donations to support museum activities are always welcome.



SALT SPRING ISLAND FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT CALL FOR NOMINATIONS FOR ELECTION OF THREE (3) TRUSTEES

NOTICE OF THE NOMINATION AND VOTING PROCESS FOR TRUSTEES IS HEREBY GIVEN TO OWNERS OF LAND WITHIN THE SALT SPRING ISLAND FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

TRUSTEE POSITION

Each Trustee position is for a three (3) year term commencing at the end of the Annual General Meeting to be held on Monday, April 13, 2026 and terminating at the end of the Annual General Meeting to be held in the year 2029

NOMINATION PROCESS

Nomination forms may be obtained on the Salt Spring Fire Rescue website www.saltspringfire.com/ or at the Ganges Fire Hall, 105 Lower Ganges Road between 9:00 a.m. Thursday, February 26, 2026 and 4:00 p.m. Thursday, March 12, 2026. Qualified candidates must be nominated by two qualified electors of the Salt Spring Island Fire Protection District. Completed nomination forms must be received by 4:00 p.m. Thursday, March 12, 2026.

QUALIFICATIONS FOR VOTING AND NOMINATING

You are qualified to serve as a Trustee, nominate Trustees, and vote as an Elector if you are:

1. A Canadian Citizen;
2. Eighteen (18) years of age or older by April 11, 2026;
3. A resident of British Columbia for at least six months prior to election day;
4. A registered owner of land located within the boundaries of the Salt Spring Island Fire Protection District, or the authorized agent, or legal representative of a deceased owner of such land;
5. Not otherwise disqualified under section 29 of the Election Act;
6. Have not voted before in the same election; and
7. A corporation or society that owns land within the Salt Spring Island Fire Protection District may appoint, in writing, an individual to cast one vote on its behalf. Where the appointed individual is also an eligible elector within the District, they may also be entitled to cast an additional vote in their personal capacity. Eligible corporations, societies, and appointed individuals are requested to obtain and comply with the written requirements available at the Ganges Fire Hall, or by email request to the Returning Officer anthonykennedy10@shaw.ca

Dated at Salt Spring Island, B.C. this 11th day of February 2026

Anthony A. Kennedy, Returning Officer

295 Mountain Park Drive
Salt Spring Island, BC V8K 1G3

Home phone: 250-537-8815 Cell phone: 1-647-284-2900

Email: anthonykennedy10@shaw.ca

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8 ArtSpring hosts national treasure for residency

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PHOTO BY AHAVA SHIRA

BLOOMING TIME: A daffodil in bloom on Feb. 4 photographed outside the door of Brinkworthy Place resident Ahava Shira's home speaks to the so-far mild Gulf Islands winter weather. Slightly cooler temperatures are in the forecast for next week, however.

EMERGENCY SERVICES

Hiker safe after Ruckle Park fall

Teamwork key in successful evacuation by sea

BY ROBB MAGLEY
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

A multi-agency response to an injured Ruckle Provincial Park hiker ultimately brought by boat to Ganges and then Lady Minto Hospital was a demonstration of "incredible teamwork and collaboration," say rescuers.

Salt Spring Island Search and Rescue (SSISAR) was tasked by BC Emergency Health Services to assist Thursday, Feb. 5 in a technical evacuation of an injured hiker at Ruckle Provincial Park. The person had slipped on wet rocks along a trail, according to officials, sustaining injuries that required a stretcher-based extraction over challenging terrain.

At Ruckle, ground teams joined Salt Spring Island Fire Rescue personnel, who had provided initial medical care at the scene. After a joint medical assessment, SSISAR's medical team determined an evacuation by sea from a nearby beach would be safest for the patient — and the most comfortable way to get to the hospital.

"The injured subject was repackaged in a vacuum spine board and Ready Heat blanket," according to SSISAR, "for better hypothermia and injury control."

After administering additional pain relief, the patient was stretcher-carried by rescuers and firefighters to the awaiting Royal Canadian Marine Search and Rescue Station 20 vessel from Pender Island. The patient was then transferred to BC Emergency Health Services paramedics in Ganges and transported to the hospital in stable condition.

"This response demonstrated the incredible teamwork and collaboration between multiple agencies," according to SSISAR, "all working together to help an individual in need. . . This call highlights the fantastic working relationships we have on Salt Spring and the Gulf Islands."

Rescuers also extended their gratitude to bystanders who assisted at the scene, and reminded islanders there is no cost for rescue on Salt Spring Island.



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**Salt Spring Island Fire Protection District (SSIFPD)
Staff Report**

Date: **February 9, 2026**
 Subject: **New Fire Hall Project Status Update for January 31, 2026**
 To: **Board of Trustees**
 From: **Rodney Dieleman, CAO**

Issue: New Fire Hall Project Status Update for January 31, 2026

The Project Steering Committee continues to oversee project development, ensuring consultants adhere to established specifications, budget limitations, and community expectations. Regular updates are provided to the Board of Trustees and shared on the Salt Spring Island Fire Rescue website to maintain transparency. The project remains on track within its approved funding of \$13.7 million.

Project Budget & Expenditures:

As of January 31, 2026, a total of \$8,716,868 has been allocated to design, engineering, and construction. This month’s expenses include related steel/wood and wood framing, roof and wall sheeting and roof truss installation and cement floors poured. Plumbing and electrical work is well underway. Further details on progress and expenditures can be found in the Owner’s Representative Report below.

**Salt Spring Island Fire Protection District
New Fire Hall at 455 Lower Ganges Road**

Description	Project Charter Budget	Budget at January 31, 2026	Actuals to January 31, 2026
Construction Costs	\$ 8,075,200	\$ 11,676,909	\$ 8,501,992
2021 cost escalation estimate	\$ 1,532,900	included	included
Permits	\$ 100,000	included	included
Insurance	\$ 100,000	included	included
Construction Contingency	\$ 1,391,900	\$ 250,000	-
	\$ 11,200,000	\$ 11,926,909	\$ 8,501,992
Architect	\$ 858,000	\$ 897,100	\$ 804,235
Project Manager	\$ 560,000	\$ 194,900	\$ 163,984
Contractor	\$ 672,000	Included	included
Interim Financing	\$ 410,000	Included	included
	\$ 2,500,000	\$ 1,092,000	\$ 968,219
Project Costs	\$ 13,700,000	\$ 13,018,909	\$ 9,470,211
Capital Region Community Works Grant	\$ 1,000,000	\$ 1,000,000	\$ 1,000,000
SSIFPD Capital Reserve Funds	\$ 3,000,000	\$ 2,385,477	\$ 1,589,864
25 year Bond Financing	\$ 9,700,000	\$ 9,633,432	\$ 6,880,347
	\$ 13,700,000	\$ 13,018,909	\$ 9,470,211

Owner's Representative Progress Report

1. Construction Progress

The new fire hall project continues to advance **on schedule and within budget**. Key accomplishments during this reporting period include:

Roofing

- The main roof installation is complete. Trim flashings will follow.

Mechanical Systems

- Installation of plumbing and drainage piping continues.
- Installation of the heating and ventilation ductwork is ongoing.
- Fire suppression system installation continues.

Electrical Work

- Rough-in electrical wiring throughout the building continues.

Cladding

- Installation of trim and insulated soffits continues.

Finishes

- Insulation and drywall installation has commenced.

Infrastructure

- BC Hydro conduits and pull boxes have been installed within the building.
- BC Hydro has installed EV charging conduits on the east side of the property.

2. Safety and Security

- No safety or security concerns were reported this month.
- Site safety protocols continue to be followed diligently by all contractors and trades.

3. Forecast

The following activities are scheduled for the upcoming reporting period:

- Commencement of exterior building cladding.
- Continued plumbing and mechanical rough-ins.
- Continued installation of the fire suppression system.
- Ongoing electrical work.
- Installation of soffits and siding.
- Continued drywall installation.

Project Overview

ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION/PICTURES



Hydro Under Ground work Installed



Hydro Install at the Pole



Lower Floor Drywall



Eye Brow Over O/H Doors

Agenda

Sixty Sixth (66th) Annual General Meeting of the Salt Spring Island Fire Protection District

Meeting will be held as follows:

Date: April 13, 2026

Time: 6:30 p.m.

Place: Apparatus Bay, Ganges Fire Hall
105 Lower Ganges Road, Salt Spring Island and
Electronic Meeting (Microsoft Teams)

1. CALL TO ORDER

We would like to begin this meeting by humbly acknowledging that we live and work in the territory of the Coast Salish First Nations.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

3. APPOINT RECORDING SECRETARY AND PARLIAMENTARIAN

Motion that the Board of Trustees appoint a Parliamentarian and Recording Secretary.

4. CHAIR OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES 2025 ANNUAL REPORT

Motion to accept the Chair’s 2025 Annual Report.

5. 2025 AUDITED FINANCIAL REPORT

Motion to accept the Annual Financial Statements for the fiscal year ending December 31, 2025 as presented.

6. APPOINTMENT OF AUDITOR

Motion to appoint the Auditor for the fiscal year ending December 31, 2026.

7. FIRE CHIEF’S 2025 ANNUAL REPORT

Motion to accept the Fire Chief’s 2025 Annual Report.

8. SALT SPRING ISLAND FIRE FIGHTERS ASSOCIATION 2025 ANNUAL REPORT

Motion to accept the Salt Spring Island Fire Fighters Association 2025 Annual Report.

9. TRUSTEE REMUNDERATION

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

That remuneration be increased to \$_____ per month for Trustees and \$_____ per month for the Chair for the ensuing year.

That remuneration be decreased to \$_____ per month for Trustees and \$_____ per month for the Chair for the ensuing year.

10. TRUSTEE ELECTION RESULTS

11. QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR

12. ADJOURNMENT

DRAFT



SALT SPRING ISLAND FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS FOR ELECTION OF THREE (3) TRUSTEES

NOTICE OF THE NOMINATION AND VOTING PROCESS FOR TRUSTEES IS HEREBY GIVEN TO OWNERS OF LAND WITHIN THE SALT SPRING ISLAND FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

Trustee Positions

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Nomination Process

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Dated at Salt Spring Island, B.C. this 11th day of February 2026.

Anthony A. Kennedy, Returning Officer

295 Mountain Park Drive

Salt Spring Island, BC V8K 1G3

Home phone: 250-537-8815 Cell phone: 1-647-284-2900

Email: anthonykennedy10@shaw.ca

DRAFT

**Salt Spring Island Fire Protection District
Trustee Workshop – Orientation, Governance & Strategic Plan Update**

Date: May 21, 2026
Time: 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
Location: New Fire Hall Meeting Room
Objective: A facilitated Trustee orientation with particular attention to Governance, Board functions and a review of the Strategic Plan

Agenda:

- 9:00 a.m. to 9:05 a.m. Welcome and Introductions - Chair
- 9:05 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. Governance
- 10:00 a.m. to 10:15 a.m. Break
- 10:15 a.m. to 10:45 a.m. Presentation from POC Firefighters Representatives
- 10:45 a.m. to 11:15 a.m. Presentation from Career Firefighters Representatives
- 11:15 a.m. to noon General Discussion
- 12:00 p.m. to 12:30 p.m. Lunch (lunch provided)
- 12:30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. Strategic Planning – 5-Year (2024-2029) Strategic Plan Update
- 2:30 p.m. to 2:45 p.m. Break
- 2:45 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. General Discussion and Wrap up

DRAFT