



SCISSORS, SMILES AT NEW PATH OPENING

PHOTO BY ROBB MAGLEY
Partners Creating Pathways' retired chair Jean Gelwicks cuts a ribbon Thursday, June 11, surrounded by project volunteers, Merchants Mews reps, elected officials, contractors and staff to celebrate the opening of the Merchants Mews Pathway, a new community connection helping link Upper Ganges Road businesses to Ganges Village.

NEWS IN BRIEF

No injuries reported in south-end trailer fire

Firefighters contain blaze at Isabella Point

BY ROBB MAGLEY
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

No one was hurt, but a fifth-wheel trailer — and everything in it — was completely destroyed before a fire on Salt Spring Island's south end was extinguished Wednesday, June 10.

Multiple calls came in to 911 reporting smoke from that fire, according to Salt Spring Island Fire Rescue Deputy Chief Dale Lundy, as

it could be seen from other islands and the Saanich Peninsula.

Almost two dozen firefighters from all three island fire halls responded to the scene down Isabella Point Road, arriving to discover both a trailer fully engulfed by flames and several surrounding trees and brush on fire.

"Our on-duty crew got on scene first," said Lundy, noting the trailer's occupant was found uninjured. "We had six apparatus respond, and they worked pretty near four hours."

Lundy emphasized residents should always report smoke they

NEWSBRIEFS

see, adding that despite allowing small campfires with a department-issued permit — as of Monday, at least — the ban on other types of fires, including brush piles and burn barrels, is still in effect.

"The permits also help us have some idea," said Lundy, "so if we get a call, we have a handle on who was already planning on burning."

Quinsam crew rescues boater

A ferry ride from Salt Spring's Vesuvius Bay terminal lasted a little longer than expected Thursday, June 11, as the Quinsam's crew took on rescue duties — plucking one victim from the water and delivering them to an ambulance waiting in Crofton.

A mayday call came around 9:45 p.m., according to ferry officials, who said Quinsam's crew responded, deploying the vessel's rescue boat in fading light. Crew members safely retrieved an individual from the water and brought them ashore on the Vancouver Island side, where they were transferred to BC Emergency Health Services.

"We're grateful for the swift response of our crew in supporting this marine rescue," according to a BC Ferries spokesperson, "and thank our customers for their understanding during the resulting sailing delay."

The marine rescue added a 66-minute delay to passengers' schedules, and also delayed the 10 p.m. departure from Crofton. BC Ferries has said it responds to about two dozen marine rescues system-wide each year.

Fulford-Swartz ferry schedule changes

Salt Spring Island ferry riders should prepare to shift their morning routines or risk missing the boat, as BC Ferries' summer schedules take effect Thursday, June 25.

The first sailing from Fulford Harbour that morning will happen at 6 a.m., rather than 6:15 a.m., according to the seasonal schedule, and Swartz Bay bound passengers will enjoy an extra round-trip baked in Mondays through Thursdays — and two more on Fridays, Saturdays, Sundays and holiday Mondays all summer long.

The seasonal schedule also puts a last boat back to the island at 10 p.m. Fridays through Sundays and long-weekend Mondays. There are also additional daily sailings between Salt Spring's Long Harbour and the Outer Islands and Tsawwassen starting June 25; there will be no seasonal changes to the schedule between Vesuvius Bay and Crofton.

The summer season, for ferry schedules at least, lasts until Sept. 30. See bcferries.com for all the details.

CRD approves future directors' pay hikes

Despite protests from Salt Spring Island Capital Regional District (CRD) director Gary Holman, who ever steps into his shoes after the October election will be compensated more to do it.

The CRD board approved a tranche of remuneration increases Wednesday, June 10, enacting small increases for most future directors' paycheques and larger ones for those representing the electoral areas (EAs) — including on Salt Spring, where pay for the new director is rising more than \$12,000 to reach just over \$49,000.

The hike, among several recommended to the board by a consultant, more than makes up for the remuneration reapportionment Holman fought for last year, which had reduced the Salt Spring director's paycheque by \$10,000 to add \$2,500 each for the remaining members of the island's Local Community Commission (LCC).

EA directors in 2025 were unconvinced by Holman's argument, centred on the duties now shared with commissioners, but he

nonetheless brought an amendment during the broader CRD board meeting that successfully effected the change.

On Wednesday, Holman brought a similarly motivated motion to hold off on the additional \$12,000; this time he was unsuccessful, he told LCC members at that body's meeting the next day.

"The consultant also recommended a modest increase for the LCC, which I support," said Holman on June 11. "I argued that the LCC actually is quite a unique situation, resulting in a transfer of responsibilities. In any case, the director next term will be looking at a \$12,000 salary increase, despite my objections."

Meanwhile, directors representing the Southern Gulf Islands and Juan de Fuca EAs will now see more than \$59,000, up from just over \$37,000. The annual salary for other board members is set to increase about \$3,000 to around \$27,500, up from about \$24,500 currently.

Hydro work to snarl Upper Ganges Road

Cones and flaggers are returning to Salt Spring for at least part of the summer, as BC Hydro said system work along one of the island's busier stretches of roadway will begin shortly — and motorists heading north from Ganges could expect delays for at least the next several weeks.

The utility will be undertaking system-improvement work along Upper Ganges Road, between Lower Ganges Road and Long Harbour Road, according to a June 9 announcement, as part of BC Hydro efforts to improve system resiliency and reliability for customers across the Gulf Islands.

"Work is scheduled to begin shortly and is expected to be completed by the end of July," according to a press release. "Unfortunately, there will be traffic impacts and motorists should expect delays and periodic traffic disruptions in the work zone."

WHATA SHOT!

Show your love for Salt Spring!

A DAY IN THE LIFE SALT SPRING ISLAND 2026

We invite people to send us their photos for our 2026 Day in the Life of Salt Spring Island feature.

Photos must be taken between 5 a.m. on Saturday July 4th & 5 a.m. on Sunday July 5th.

Register in advance by sending an email to editor Gail Sjoberg at news@gulfislandsdriftwood.com for deadlines and details about how to submit.

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ISLAND LIFE

ISLAND CULTURE

Canada Day-themed tour highlights farm stands

Salt Spring Island Farm Stand Festival makes debuts July 1 to 5

BY GAIL SJUBERG
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

Salt Spring has a new way to celebrate its natural bounty, artistic nature and rural culture as the first Salt Spring Island Farm Stand Festival takes place from July 1 to 5 on the island.

Running during "Canada Day week," it will see 50 farm stand owners decorate for the occasion, highlighting not only their wares but their creativity as well. Many stands will feature unique items related to the national holiday.

The festival was initiated by Anil Pereira, the creator of the interactive Salt Spring Island Farm Stands Map available through SSIFarmStands.com. He thought a summertime version of the popular local Farm Stand Holiday Light Up Tour — first held in 2020 — would be a great addition to the island's activity calendar.

"It's been a lot of fun putting together the farm stands map and the response to date



PHOTOS COURTESY FARM STAND OPERATORS

Images from five of the 50 ventures participating in the first Salt Spring Island Farm Stand Festival from July 1 to 5 are, from left, The Salty Baker, Wild Chi Botanicals, Wild Flora Candles and Botanicals, and Rainbow Road Trading, with the Salt Spring Centre of Yoga Farm Stand below.

has been heartwarming," said Pereira. "As one farm stand owner noted, Salt Spring can be touted as the 'Farm Stand Capital of Canada' and it is a pleasure to promote these unique island treasures to locals and visitors alike. The Canada Day Farm Stand Festival will bring even more colour to stands dotting our island paradise and I can't wait to see them decorated in red and white to celebrate Salt Spring's bounty and Canada's birthday."

Pereira's farm stand map project began in 2023, when he first shared a custom Google Map

showing some local farm stands on a Salt Spring Facebook group. He said since it seemed to be difficult for people to locate via the social media platform, he created the SSIFarmStands.com website to host the map, which now includes more than 215 stands. Having been viewed close to 350,000 times, he notes it is "one of the more visited resources about Salt Spring."

The site also includes maps titled Tasting Rooms & Pubs, Beaches & Parks, Boat Launches & Marine Landings, Hiking Trails & Lookouts, Leisure Activities,

and Studios & Galleries, making it a highly usable source of information for both residents and tourists.

"I believe this is the most comprehensive resource of free, interactive maps available to islanders and visitors and, of course, another way to expose our wonderful farm stands to the community."

Pereira said the map is downloadable from the SSIFarmStands.com website, and printed versions will also be available at the Salt Spring Island Visitor Information Centre in Ganges.



EMERGENCY SERVICES

Fire hall event set for Sept. 6

Amateur radio group invites public to open house June 27

BY ROBB MAGLEY
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

Facing 11th-hour construction delays, scheduling conflicts with firefighters moving into the new hall and the busy social calendars of local and regional dignitaries, the official opening celebration for Salt Spring's new Fire Hall No. 1 has been pushed back to Sunday, Sept. 6.

Islanders may have noticed signage going up, as fire district trustees heard Monday, June 15 that a consideration to have the event the same weekend as the fall fair had been shelved.

Meanwhile, Fire Chief Jamie Holmes said he'd had discussions with the BC Hydro crew on-site, and while the fire hall's new high-speed charger is connected, tested and functionally ready to charge electric vehicles, a relatable island problem with cellular connectivity — and a subsequent inability to accept payments — has them pumping the brakes.

"So they need to put either a booster or a second system on," Holmes told the board, "which they'll be doing in the next couple of weeks."

Separate from the hall opening, trustees voted to direct the board's communications committee to reach out to both BC Hydro and Salt Spring's electric vehicle community to plan an opening event for the new charger. The date for that event

has not yet been determined.

Former team lead for the Salt Spring Island Electric Vehicle Group Jim Standen said he'd learned the new connector combinations at the fire hall's charger will include another "first" for the island: two high-speed North American Charging Standard connectors, still most commonly found on Tesla vehicles. For everyone else, he said, there will be a CCS connector, the European standard found on many vehicles, and one CHAdeMO Japanese standard connector — to keep the island's Nissan Leaf enthusiasts going.

The charger at the fire hall is the second high-speed "electricity dispenser" on Salt Spring, the first having been the 50kW FLO network equipment installed at the Mid Island Co-op's Gas Bar last spring. FLO also maintains the 6.2kW "Level 2" charger at the Rainbow Road Recreation Centre.

Field Day Open House

The Salt Spring Island Amateur Radio Society is inviting the public to its Field Day Open House on Saturday, June 27, running from 2 to 4 p.m. at the Rod and Gun Club on Long Harbour Road.

Visitors can meet local amateur radio operators, learn about emergency communications, see radio equipment in action and find out how amateur radio continues to serve the community.

Field Day is part of a North America-wide amateur radio event celebrating radio skills, preparedness and public service, which sees local members making as many connections as possible with other radio operators in a 24-hour period.

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RECREATION

LCC floats pickleball ‘hub’



ILLUSTRATION COURTESY CRD

Six potential pickleball courts – and room for eight – are shown in an early plan to put them by the existing tennis court at 2470 Fulford-Ganges Rd., behind Salt Spring’s Fire Hall No. 2.

More space, right neighbourhood cited in Fulford multi-court plans

BY ROBB MAGLEY
DRIFTWOOD STAFF

Island officials have taken the first steps toward creating a multi-court “cultural hub” for Salt Spring’s pickleball community in the south end, having seemingly found the perfect neighbour for the notoriously percussive sport: Salt Spring’s Fire Hall No. 2 in Fulford.

As part of the years-long master planning process to guide both Portlock Park and the Rainbow Recreation Centre property, public feedback showed there were concerns over noise impacts of pickleball play on surrounding residences — largely put forward by the players themselves, who worried that building courts too near homes would inevitably lead to complaints.

That brought local Capital

Regional District (CRD) staff to take a closer look at putting a permanent home for pickleball near the existing tennis court at 2470 Fulford-Ganges Rd., where noise objections seemed highly unlikely — given that the only neighbours nearby tend to announce their own comings-and-goings with a siren.

“The fire hall site provides the opportunity to develop a dedicated pickleball facility, with the capacity to meet the current need of approximately six dedicated courts and the ability to expand to up to eight,” said parks and recreation manager Kent Bittorf, who brought a report on several options for pickleball to Salt Spring’s Local Community Commission (LCC) for a decision Thursday, June 18.

Bittorf said that while there were likely to be perceptions among some players that a Fulford site was less central than one at Rainbow Road or Portlock Park, worries over sound might outweigh convenience.

“And at the same time, they’re anxious to address capacity issues that exist currently at Portlock,” said Bittorf.

Salt Spring CRD director Gary Holman offered that there were likely advantages to decentralizing recreational opportunities on an island as expansive as Salt Spring — and that siting such improvements at Fulford might even be welcome.

“The south end doesn’t get the benefit of a lot of recreation facilities,” said Holman, noting the protracted work on repairs and upgrades to Drummond Park. “So to have some additional facilities in the south end is not a bad thing, in terms of community equity.”

“This is more of a ‘cultural hub’ potential for them,” said LCC member Ben Corno. “I think they could host a larger event, there’s more accommodation for parking and tents. I think if I was a user group I might really value the independence in this space.”

Options for the CRD’s acquisition would include either purchasing the land, with an estimated cost of \$85,000 to \$100,000, according to a project report, or leasing it long-term at \$3,000 to \$4,000 per month. Senior manager Dan Ovington told commissioners that notwithstanding the support of the fire district — which owns the parcel — the site is located within the Agricultural Land Reserve and is currently zoned A1(f), where active recreation is not a permitted use.

That means building pickleball courts would require a non-farm use application to the Agricultural Land Commission, and an application to rezone the parcel. Both would go through the Islands Trust, which Ovington said meant commissioners could look forward to a 12-month process at minimum.

Meanwhile, the first modest improvements at the notional pickleball complex are taking place far sooner. Responding to a matter that emerged through discussions with players, LCC members directed installation of a porta potty at the site for the rest of the year. Commissioners also asked staff to include \$3,600 in ongoing funding in the 2027 provisional budget to support the porta potty’s rental costs.

The request for a porta potty only surfaced recently, Ovington said, shortly after firefighters had done a little brush clearing around the court. The thinner foliage apparently reduced the privacy factor of bushes there, which until now had obviated any urgent need for facilities.

FIELD OF DREAMS



PHOTO BY ERIN MAGLEY

Workers put finishing touches on the new backstop at the Salt Spring Island Hydro-Field project Tuesday, June 23. In partnership with the Gulf Islands School District, the Capital Regional District leveraged a \$300,000 donation for the upgrades, creating a new field and dugouts to support girls fastpitch and other baseball groups. The ballfield portion of the field at 160 Rainbow Rd. will be seeded this fall, and is expected to open for play in early 2027. Players seen in the photo below will likely be among the new facility’s users.



PHOTO COURTESY SS U15 FASTPITCH TEAM

Salt Spring’s U15 fastpitch team after their silver medal win at district championships held in Langford on June 20-21 are, in the back row, from left, coach Darren Lee, coach Erin Lee, Lilly Roscoe-Duvall, Ana Creech, Thea Byron, Brianna Lee, Peighton Proudfoot, Roslyn Harrison, coach Kari Burgess. Front row, from left, are Harlow Kazakoff, Noelle Burgess, Zoe Johnson, Marlee Moulton and Cecilia Cabello-MacLean. The girls were undefeated heading into the championship final.

Rainfall provides scant relief

DROUGHT
continued from 1

Moray showed trustees a WLRS-produced streamflow map generated from Water Survey of Canada and BC River Forecast Centre real-time data to illustrate the flows of waterways throughout the region.

“Unfortunately, we’re not included specifically [on Salt Spring],” said Moray. “But WLRS says, ‘well, just consider yourself equal or less than what is noted in the vicinity.’”

As of Thursday, June 25, three of the four closest measured streamflow stations are ranking “much below normal,” meaning

the average level over the last seven days has occurred less than 10 per cent of the time within the site’s history.

Also on June 25, two Salt Spring weather stations sharing their data online recorded 0.2 and 0.25 millimetres of rain, a welcome, if small, respite from the dry, warm weather.

Please note that this issue of the Driftwood went to press on the afternoon of Friday, June 26 due to the July 1 statutory holiday. See gulfislandsdriftwood.com for potential news updates.
Happy Canada Day!

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GROUP ACTIVITIES

Gardening resources grow through program

An introduction to the Master Gardener Program on Salt Spring

BY MILLY SINCLAIR
SS GARDEN CLUB

Almost 20 years ago, a group of Salt Spring Island gardeners became certified Master Gardeners through the Victoria Master Gardener Association (VMGA). The VMGA, which was formed in July 2000, is based at the Horticulture Centre of the Pacific. Its goal is to promote evidence-based, sustainable horticulture through education, public outreach and community service.

Those original Salt Spring Island Master Gardeners (MG) provided gardening guidance and education to the community for two decades. With their retirement, a new generation is stepping forward. In January 2026, 24 members of the Salt Spring Island Garden Club began training to become Master Gardeners. They successfully completed the four-month course and passed the certification exam. Now, they are working toward certification by completing 50 hours of community volunteer service and five hours of continuing education.

Twenty of those hours are dedicated to public education and gardening advice. Interns can fulfill this requirement by staffing MG Advice Clinics or writing articles for publication. The Driftwood has launched a gardening column, which will consist of articles written by MG interns.

Advice Clinic tables will be available weekly until Sept. 1 at the Tuesday Farmers' Market and at the Salt Spring Fall Fair. Community members are encouraged to stop by



PHOTO BY BEN FENSKE

From left, two Master Gardener interns, Ananda Korczynski and Melanie Marshall, take part in an Advice Clinic with Master Gardener Linda Bradford.

with their gardening questions. The clinics not only provide advice to the public but also offer valuable learning opportunities for the interns. While participants bring a wide range of gardening knowledge and experience, they continue to learn from one another, from Lead Master Gardeners, and through researching answers to questions raised by the community.

To complete the remaining 30 volunteer hours, interns are participating in six community projects reflecting the VMGA's mission of sharing gardening knowledge through education and service.

- Centennial Park Native Plant Garden: Interns will support garden design, install native plants and create educational signage to help identify plant species.
- Farmland Trust Permaculture Teaching Garden: Located at The Root, this garden provides food for community programs and educational opportunities. Interns will help develop tree guilds, install interpretive signage and demonstrate permaculture techniques.
- Greenwoods Eldercare Gardens: Interns will meet biweekly to restore and maintain three gardens enjoyed by residents, families and visitors.
- Heiwa Japanese Garden: In partnership with the Japanese Garden Society, interns will contribute to garden maintenance while learning traditional Niwaki-style pruning techniques from an experienced Japanese gardener.
- Meadowbrook Retirement Living Community Gardens: Interns will assist with the care and maintenance of the extensive gardens serving this seniors' residential community.

• Mouat Park Native Plant Restoration: Working with Transition Salt Spring's Native Plant Stewardship Group, interns will assist the "No Ivy League" project by removing invasive species and replacing them with native plants.

Through these projects and outreach activities, Salt Spring Island's MG interns are building knowledge, strengthening community connections and helping cultivate a more sustainable gardening future. We look forward to seeing you out in the community!

EMERGENCY PREP

Wildfire ready? Island braces for dry summer

TSS Wildfire Ready Hub up and running

BY TRANSITION SALT SPRING

Results from the recent Salt Spring Island Community Wildfire Survey showed that residents are increasingly concerned about hotter, drier summers and the wildfire risks that come with them. This year's conditions are already reinforcing that concern.

By the end of May, some residents reported having already used a significant portion of the water stored in their rainwater catchment systems. Occasional

rain showers have offered some relief, but recent precipitation has been far short of what's needed to fully replenish supplies. Low water means more than inconvenience: dry vegetation is fire fuel and a landscape starved of moisture is a landscape primed to burn.

The wildfire situation across British Columbia is a reminder of the challenges ahead. According to the BC Wildfire Service dashboard, hundreds of fires have already been recorded province-wide since April 1.

On Vancouver Island and in the Coastal region, dozens have occurred, though most have stayed small compared to major activity

elsewhere in the province — for now.

Adding to the uncertainty is the return of El Niño conditions. The World Meteorological Organization now puts the odds of a global El Niño event between June and August at 80 per cent, rising to roughly 90 per cent through the fall. El Niño is often associated with above-average temperatures and prolonged drought, though its local impacts vary.

For Salt Spring, the bigger concern may come later in the year. El Niño winters tend to be drier on coastal B.C., reducing the seasonal recharge that rainwater systems, aquifers and reservoirs depend on.

Water conserved this summer could matter even more by fall, if drought conditions persist, and our reserves next spring may not return to the levels we're used to. Conserving water now is more than just good household management — it's preparation for a longer dry stretch ahead.

One of the easiest and most effective steps homeowners can take is to book a free FireSmart Home Assessment through Salt Spring Island Fire Rescue. Trained Firesmart representatives visit your property and identify practical, affordable measures to reduce wildfire risk.

Priority FireSmart steps include: clearing combustible material from

the first 1.5 metres around buildings, cleaning leaves and needles from roofs and gutters, and moving firewood at least 10 metres from structures during fire season.

Water conservation and wildfire preparedness go hand in hand. Small changes now can extend resources through the season: fix leaking taps and irrigation lines, switch to drip irrigation instead of overhead sprinklers and let visitors know water is scarce this year.

Visit the Transition Salt Spring Wildfire Ready Hub at transition-saltspring.com/wildfire for more on emergency preparedness, wildfire risk reduction and community resilience.



*Stay connected with
your neighbours,
local businesses, and
everything happening
around you.
Read local.
Grow together!*

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DRAFT

Agenda
Salt Spring Island Fire Protection District
Board of Trustees
Town Hall Meeting

Meeting will be held as follows:

Date: September 14, 2026

Time: 6:30 p.m.

Place: Fire Hall No. 1

455 Lower Ganges Road, Salt Spring Island and Electronic Meeting (Microsoft TEAMS)

We would like to begin this town hall by humbly acknowledging that we live and work in the unceded territories of the Coast Salish Peoples.

1. WELCOME – CHAIR COOK
2. DRAFT 2027 BUDGET
3. 5-YEAR (2026-2031) STRATEGIC PLAN
4. NEW FIRE HALL PROJECT **REVIEW**
5. COMMENTS & QUESTIONS



Executive Summary

The Board of Trustees has revised the 2026–2031 Strategic Plan to focus on five strategic priorities that strengthen organizational sustainability, emergency service delivery, workforce capacity, governance, and infrastructure readiness.

This priority-based framework replaces a year-based implementation approach and enables the District to focus resources on the initiatives that provide the greatest operational and community benefit. The highest priorities are workforce development and infrastructure planning, recognizing the importance of leadership succession, training capacity, and the delivery of Hall #3.

Financial sustainability and emergency response effectiveness remain key priorities, while community engagement and governance support continued public trust and accountability.

The plan will be reviewed annually to ensure priorities remain aligned with operational risks, community expectations, and available resources.



Salt Spring Island Fire Protection District 2026-2031 Strategic Plan

DRAFT



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.

STRATEGIC
FOCUS



Our People and
Workplace



Infrastructure



Emergency
Prevention and
Response



Community
Relationships



Finances

GOALS

Attract and retain a diverse, physically and mentally fit team that includes Career, Paid on Call and administrative members to provide value for our community.

Infrastructure that supports an effective, reliable and resilient fire service to better address increasing risks and hazards .

Deliver a fire-rescue service that prevents and responds to emergencies in a safe, effective and timely manner.

Foster positive relationships to address community concerns and explore opportunities for collaboration.

Prudent financial management incorporating long term strategic thinking based on principles of transparency and accountability to all stakeholders to maintain public trust.

OBJECTIVES



Strategic Priorities, Objectives and Actions

DRAFT

Priority Rank	Strategic Goal	Objective	Priority Level	Strategic Actions
1	 Our People and Workplace	Strengthen organizational capacity through the creation of an Assistant Deputy Chief function responsible for Human Resources, Training, and Public Education.	Critical	1. Update Policies and Operating Instructions 2. Explore Staff housing options 3. Establish a formal succession planning program for all key operational and administrative positions.
2	 Infrastructure and Capital Planning	Deliver sustainable infrastructure and capital investments to support operational readiness and community growth.	Critical	1. Develop Project Business Plan and Charter and financing options for satellite fire halls #2 and #3. Be tender ready in 2029 for construction. 2. Acquire a portable saltwater pump. 3. Create a long-term capital funding strategy integrating reserves, grants, and debt financing.
3	 Prudent Financial Management	Maintain long-term financial sustainability while demonstrating transparency, accountability, and value to taxpayers.	High	1. Develop a long-term financial sustainability model incorporating capital, staffing, and debt forecasts. 2. Alternate revenue includes Fire Smart, wildfire deployment, donations, grants and room rentals in the new fire hall 3. Need to communicate the capital plan to



Strategic Priorities, Objectives and Actions

DRAFT

Priority Rank	Strategic Goal	Objective	Priority Level	Strategic Actions
4	 Emergency Prevention and Response	Improve emergency response effectiveness through training, data analysis, technology, and community risk reduction.	High	1. Foster or participate in community engagement, support and participation in fire prevention and life safety activities. 2. Explore options for incorporating Emergency Operations and the Neighbourhood POD program into the new fire hall operations. 3. Develop and implement a change management strategy for operations and administration.
5	 Community Relationships and Governance	Strengthen community trust, engagement, and collaboration with stakeholders and partner agencies.	Medium-High	1. Develop a communications strategy to inform stakeholders of capital plans. 2. Develop a community handout informing stakeholders of SSIFR capacities for insurance information and to be included in the annual CRD tax envelope and on the web page. 3. Develop a method to encourage Trustee and Committee recruitments 4. Provide meeting space and coordination for inter-agency collaboration



Desired Outcomes and Performance Measures

DRAFT

Priority	Strategic Area		Desired Outcome	Recommended Board Performance Measures (KPIs)
1	Our People & Workplace		Build leadership capacity, improve training delivery, strengthen HR administration, support succession planning, and enhance workforce wellness.	Employee retention rate above 90%; annual leadership development participation; succession plans completed.
2	Infrastructure & Capital Planning		Deliver Hall #3, maintain apparatus readiness, improve emergency water supply infrastructure, and support long-term service growth.	Hall #3 milestones achieved on schedule; capital projects delivered within budget.
3	Financial Management		Ensure sustainable funding, maintain reserves, maximize grant opportunities, and demonstrate accountability to taxpayers.	Reserve contribution targets achieved; successful grant funding secured; annual financial benchmarks completed.
4	Emergency Prevention & Response		Improve response performance, operational readiness, officer development, and community risk reduction.	Response-time targets achieved; annual training compliance maintained; community risk reduction initiatives completed.
5	Community Relationships		Strengthen public confidence, improve transparency, increase community participation, and enhance stakeholder partnerships.	Community satisfaction results maintained. Stakeholder partnerships maintained.



Salt Spring Island Fire Protection District (SSIFPD) Staff Report

Date: July 13, 2026
 Subject: Draft Strategic Planning and Policy Development Committee Terms of Reference Policy
 AG-4108-07 - Update
 To: Board of Trustees
 From: Rodney Dieleman, CAO

Background

The Strategic Planning and Policy Development Committee is undertaking a structured 12-month policy modernization program to ensure all District policies are current, consistent, legally compliant, and aligned with Board governance best practices. The policy update project includes a complete master policy register and standardizing policy templates.

Summary of Changes between the Current Policy (AG-4108-06) and the Proposed Draft Strategic Planning and Policy Development Committee Terms of Reference Policy (AG-4108-07):

The draft SPPD Committee Terms of Reference Policy modernizes the Terms of Reference by introducing a comprehensive governance framework, clarifying the committee's advisory authority, expanding strategic planning and policy oversight responsibilities, strengthening compliance and accountability requirements, and improving records management and policy administration.

Topic	Previous Policy (AG-4108-06)	Updated Policy (AG-4108-07 Draft)	Change Summary
Policy Format	Traditional Terms of Reference format with Membership, Meetings, Accountability, and Responsibilities sections.	Expanded governance policy format including Policy Administration, Purpose, Scope, Definitions, Authority, Compliance, Records Management, References, and Review provisions.	Modernizes and standardizes the policy structure in alignment with current governance practices.
Purpose and Scope	No formal purpose or scope statements.	Introduces clear purpose and scope statements defining the committee's mandate and advisory role.	Provides greater clarity regarding committee responsibilities and authority.
Definitions	No definitions included.	Adds definitions for key terms, including "Committee" and "District."	Improves consistency and interpretation of policy language.
Membership Qualifications	Committee composition and public member eligibility requirements specified.	Maintains existing composition while encouraging appointments based on governance, strategic planning, legal, policy, emergency services, and organizational development experience.	Enhances qualifications guidance while retaining the existing structure.

Public Member Eligibility	Public members must be eligible voters or residents within the District.	Public members must be eligible electors or residents within the District.	Minor terminology update with no substantive change.
Strategic Planning Responsibilities	Includes responsibility for strategic plan updates.	Expands responsibilities to include strategic priorities, performance measures, service delivery objectives, risk management considerations, and monitoring progress toward strategic goals.	Broadens the committee's strategic planning oversight role.
Policy Oversight	Reviews policies and bylaws within its mandate.	Establishes a policy review schedule, identifies policy gaps, and supports policy modernization and consistency.	Introduces a more proactive and structured policy governance function.
Governance Responsibilities	Focuses on governance policies, committee structure, board orientation, and legislative matters.	Expands responsibilities to include governance training, code of conduct matters, governance best practices, and legislative monitoring.	Strengthens governance oversight and continuous improvement functions.
Accountability and Reporting	Annual report summarizes meetings, decisions, and outcomes.	Requires an annual work plan and annual report outlining priorities, completed initiatives, policy reviews, governance improvements, and future recommendations.	Enhances accountability and reporting requirements.
Meetings	Governed by Meeting Procedures Bylaw and includes detailed procedural provisions.	Retains similar meeting provisions and adds electronic participation where authorized.	Updates meeting administration and accommodates virtual participation.
Records Management	No records management requirements.	Introduces records management requirements and references the District's Document Management Policy.	Establishes formal records retention and document management expectations.
Authority	Committee authority implied through Terms of Reference.	Explicitly states that the committee operates in an advisory capacity and has no independent decision-making authority.	Clarifies the committee's relationship with the Board of Trustees.
Legislative Compliance	References the Community Charter and Meeting Procedures Bylaw.	Explicitly references FOIPPA, the Community Charter, and applicable District bylaws.	Strengthens legislative compliance requirements.
Compliance and Conduct	No dedicated compliance or conduct provisions.	Adds requirements relating to ethical conduct, confidentiality, compliance, and enforcement.	Establishes clearer expectations for committee member conduct and accountability.
References and Related Documents	References Meeting Procedures Bylaw No. 146.	References the SSIFPD Meeting Procedures Bylaw 2025 and FOIPPA.	Updates supporting legislative and governance references.
Review and Revision	Policy revisions occur at Board discretion.	Requires periodic review and revision to ensure legislative and operational alignment.	Introduces a formal review process.
Policy Administration	Limited administrative information.	Includes policy category, approval authority, superseded policies, and revision history.	Improves policy governance, version control, and

			administrative consistency.
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Recommendation

That the Board of Trustees approve Strategic Planning and Policy Development Committee Terms of Reference Policy NO. AG-4108-07.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rodney Dieleman
Corporate Administrative Officer