

**GABRIOLA FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT
GENERAL MEETING - November 02, 2022**

A General Meeting of the Gabriola Fire Protection District was held November 02, 2022 with six Trustees, Corporate Officer, Fire Chief and Training Officer in attendance.

Attendees: Paul Giffin (Chair), Sean Lewis, Fred Apstien, Diana Moher, Chris Windess, John Moeller, Jessie Longo (Corporate Officer), Will Sprogis (Fire Chief), Kitt Stringer (Training Officer), Members of the public

Not in Attendance: James Arends

The meeting was called to order at 4:07 p.m. by Chairman Paul Giffin.

Diana Moher gave the opening greeting, "The GFPID acknowledges that we are gathering within the traditional lands of the Snuneymuxw Nation"

Diana Moher moved to accept the October 05, 2022 minutes, seconded by John Moeller. Discussion. Paul Giffin motioned, "to include the letter he read at the meeting." Carried. Minutes were approved as corrected.

Trustee James Arends arrived at 4:10 p.m.

Chairman Paul Giffin asked all Trustees that they acknowledge the receipt of the following correspondence:

- Email: Operations Review - Consultant
- Paula Mallinson's letter
- FOI Request
- Email: Correspondence - Nov 05 2022 meeting - Voicemail

All Trustees acknowledged receipt of the above, with the exception of Chris Windess who noted he did not receive, Email: Correspondence - Nov 05 2022 meeting - Voicemail and requested a copy.

Communication Committee - Error of facts policy:

Discussion took place about creating an error of facts policy. Paul Giffin suggested having a communications meeting, and for the committee to come back with a policy for the Board. Fred Apstein suggested no policy and they "just go ahead and do it." Paul Giffin reiterated the suggestion of a communication meeting and for the committee to bring a policy back to the Board.

Planning Committee:

Sean Lewis suggested that the Committee meets later in November.

Finance Committee:

Paul Giffin advised the corporate credit card application has been completed.

Business by email:

John Moeller advised there has been no progress.

Fire Chief Report:

Calls for the month - 39
First Responder - 25
Burn Complaints - 9
Hydro - 1
False Alarms - 2
Other - 2

Gabriola FireSmart Coordinator Oliver Bussler has applied for a \$30,000 grant for the start of a structural protection unit.

A FireSmart update: Last weekend there was a drop off at the MOTI land near Fire Hall Number Two; what a great success. 103 cars visited the drop off over four hours. The event will be happening again this Saturday from 12 till 4. The Community is very supportive of this program which is provided through a FireSmart grant and collaboration with the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure. Our mutual aid partner, North Cedar, is coming over for a meeting tomorrow to collaborate on a fire program similar to Gabriola. Gabriola is getting recognized in the RDN as one of the most accomplished Communities for fire-smarting.

I would like to urge the Trustees to set some time aside to review and set policy around industrial activity when the fire hazard rating reaches high or extreme. Once the policy has been set by the Trustees and backed up by our Bylaws, I would like to have a Town Hall meeting to discuss and educate homeowners, contractors and developers about the changes and how to keep our Community safe from wildfire during our hot dry summers.

I hope to have some policy or a roadmap of where we're going and have a Town Hall meeting by mid-February. This will give us the ability to educate and ensure trust and transparency within the community before the hot dry months are upon us.

The current hazard rating has dropped to low. Burn permits can now be applied for through the Fire Hall office. All permits apply to the open smoke control burning regulation, unless they fall into the campfire size of a half meter by half a meter.

The Gabriola Fire Department website now has a blog attached to it. The blog will be updated every week with links to social media to help advertise it. Please follow our website at gabriolafire.ca.

The Fire Department was at the Gabriola Elementary School in October for fire safety week. Students were educated on fire safety, and materials were sent home to help set up a basic fire safety plan at home. A permission slip was added to those materials for kids to enter into the Fire Chief for the day. The focus of this program is to get children excited about fire safety and how to prevent fires in their Community.

Training Officer Report:

- 3 platoons now doing the same drill- covid mask protocols in place for training- still having all 3 platoons physically separated.
- New covid protocols will allow better practice with closer contact while using masks
- 5 new Fire Service instructors for the department- have already started in house training on practice nights
- 2 New Auxiliaries being trained for the south end on an accelerated training program.
- Will is working to help out with driver training- looking into having a second driver instructor position.
- I am partway through the Fire Officer Level 2 training with VIERA- Fire Leadership component
- FR class starting Nov 26th to train 8-10 new FRs. Cost savings as we can still do exams in house. This will be a larger than normal class due to the changes in the FR program. Future courses will require off site testing in Victoria and will add expense. The idea was to spend more now and save lots later, but this may have implications to our training budget for this year.
- New recruit schedule being developed with Covid restrictions. Anticipated new recruit class to start Jan 1 to train 6-8 new members to exterior level by the end of 2021.

Association:

- Fireworks Community Event - Broke even
- Committee for toy drive
- Association thanked the Trustees for raising the association's budget in 2023 to cover their dinner costs for Tuesday night after practice. Paul Giffin explained the Finance Committee faced serious challenges; inflation, gas prices, size of trucks. Rather than the FireFighters receiving a pay increase, dinner will now be covered throughout the year.

Old Business:

Orientation Policy - 60 day review:

Discussion took place about rewording bullet point number 2, wording changed to “Chair shall assure each new Trustee is assigned a mentor”

Diana Moher moved to accept policy as amended. Seconded by James Arends, Carried.

Business by email:

Discussion took place, amending title, and text within the body. Diana Moher suggested putting off for another month. Sean Lewis moved to table motion. Seconded by Chris Windess. Carried.

New Business:

Board Letter Process:

Fred Apstein spoke to a letter dated May 11, 2022 signed by the Chair re: complaint. He asked for further clarification on how the letter came to be. Discussion took place, Chair advised policy was followed. Trustee Apstein asked for details; who attended the meeting, where are the minutes and who signed the letter. No additional information was provided. Sean Lewis moved, “The Chair write a short note retracting that letter.” Seconded by Chris Windess. Sean Lewis clarified the motion was, “The Chair shall write a letter to Fred, copy the Board, retracting that letter and we can move on.” John Moeller abstained from the vote. Chris Windess, James Arends, Sean Lewis, Fred Apstein For.

Diana Moher, Paul Giffin against. Carried.

Heating and cooling:

Discussion took place about using the training room for staging in extreme weather conditions. Possibly use the old hall instead - Operations to review.

Committee meetings during December:

It was suggested to have working committee meetings over November and December, with no regular meeting in December. Fred Apstein moved, “That we hold the normal December meeting on November 30th.” Sean Lewis second. Discussion took place. Paul Giffin reiterated the motion on the table, “To move the December meeting to November 30th.” John Moeller, Fred Apstein, Sean Lewis - For. Diana Moher, James Arends, Chris Windess - Against. Paul Giffin abstained. Meeting will be held in December.

ByLaw 95 & 97:

Discussion took place about whether to amend Bylaw 95 and 97, and to wait until the operational review was complete and the report given. The draft agenda was discussed. Sean Lewis motioned, "For future meetings until such time we change the Bylaw, that we add approval of agenda at the start of each meeting." Fred Apstein seconded.

Discussion:

- Temporary motion that goes against our Bylaws
- Agree with approval of agenda, uncomfortable with passing a motion that goes against Bylaws
- There's a provision in the Bylaw that allows for late items to the agenda

Motion was not voted on.

Late Items:

Chris Windess asked for permission from the board to open an "email account" that is purely for the website, no emails and with the corporate officers permission to go into the office to gather information. Fred Apstein moved, "Authorize Chris to open email address and liaise with Jessie as needed." Diana Moher seconded. Carried.

Other late items brought forward were:

- Petition with several hundred signatures. Discussion points as follows:
 - Petition is to do with personnel and should be done in-camera
 - A Trustee signed the petition and donated
 - Legal, land and personnel issues must be in-camera; the Board does not decide what is held in-camera
- A past article from Gabriola Sandstone
- Personnel complaints - Do they make their way to the Board? Discussion points as follows:
 - Board goes to Chief first, can come back to Board if not satisfied
 - Chain of command
 - Operations, internal policy
- Fred Asptein requested to have in detail, an explanation of why certain items on the agenda were in-camera. It was said by a member of the public, "In-camera should not be discussed in public."

Diana Moher motioned to adjourn, seconded by John Moeller. Carried

Adjourned 6:17 pm

Meeting minutes approved as amended at the December 07, 2022 general meeting.