

**GABRIOLA FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT  
GENERAL MEETING**

A General Meeting of the Gabriola Fire Protection District was held April 6, 2022 with six Trustees in attendance, absent was John Moeller. The meeting was called to order at 4:05 p.m. by Chairman Paul Giffin.

Penelope Bahr gave the opening greeting “The GFPID acknowledges that we are gathering within the traditional lands of the Snuneymuxw Nation”

The Chairman asked for any errors or omissions from the March 2, 2022 meeting, Sean Lewis requested that the Fire Chief and Training Officer reports be included in the minutes. Fred Apstein moved that the minutes be accepted with the amendment, seconded by Sean Lewis, carried.

**CORRESPONDENCE:**

Kitt Stringer - Code of Conduct

The Chair asked if it was acceptable to put this into new business?

Penelope Bahr noted that the complaint policy states a Special Meeting should be called, and not put in New Business.

Fred Apstein stated that this does not qualify as and In-camera item.

The Chair suggested that this be decided under New Business.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

Chris Windess - website moved to old business.

**FIRE CHIEF REPORT: MARCH 2, 2022**

Call outs for February 2022: 35 (total call end February: 68 )

Call outs for February 2021: 18 (total call end February: 43)

Alarms: 2

Burn complaint: 2

F.R.: 26

Hydro: 2

MVA: 2

PR: 1

Working on improving the access throughout the 707 Community Park - two helicopter landing zones on the perimeter of the park. One off South Road and a second off North road which can be used for an incident in the park or others, i.e. MVI. On this project we worked closely with the BC Forest Service Wildland Firefighters out of Errington’s fire base and have invited them to spend a night at the Hall and do a joint training event.

Looking for more letters of support to be directed to the RDN Directors to keep camping out of the 707 Community Park year round.

Our Prevention Officer has been working hard on the Fire Smart assessments, the number 1 question is what do we do with the fuel load generated from firesmarting our properties? We have been working on a solution, I may have a short-term solution we could use the Highway's pit near the #2 Hall, the Fire Department would do a couple live fire training evolutions to dispose of the fuel load.

I will be a delegate at the Islands Trust meeting Thursday at 10:30 a.m. to talk to the issue of the fire inspections on the Temporary Use Permits (TUP).

An open house will be held in April 23 for Firesmart and Emergency Preparedness.

Jay Dearman Community Run, we are looking to host this event from Hall # 1 with a non-profit organizing it. The fund raiser will go towards community members being trained in mental health first aid for the Island.

DeCourcy Island's Fire Chief, Sheila Kirkwood, would like to form a partnership with the Gabriola Fire Department to work together to win gaming grants and other grants to buy resources that could be Regional assists, an example would be a SPT or fire boat. They would contract us to do some of their training in wildfire fighting and medical training.

I would like to thank Kitt Stringer, our Training Officer, for the realistic and exciting training scenarios he puts together, this type of training keeps up morale at practices.

The Chief also discussed an Intern Program and how departments are implementing them as a way of having trained firefighters just out of the academy on the department while giving them the practical experience they need to find a job in firefighting.

- What is the theory for the Intern Program?
- Nice idea but how do you house Interns?
- I enjoy your reports, reminds me of things I should be doing.
- TUP inspections? No mechanism to enforce inspections. How many are there on the Island?
- Do you have to inspect them? No only public ones, i.e. Haven, Surf, etc.

The Chief noted that the first recruit class had hit the 5 year mark.

- Congratulations to the 5 year service people.
- How many started and finished? Started with 10 now have 5.

### **TRAINING OFFICER'S REPORT: March 2, 2022**

- Recruits have written exam 6 of 8 for exterior accreditation
- Joint training scenario with Coast Guard Hovercraft complete
- New members integrating in traffic control course complete
- Burn building being used for interior and exterior live fire
- EMR licensing we have decided to go with Fire Medix

- EMR Licencing - We have found a medical director
- Registering 2 instructors in WSPP-WFF 1 Train the trainer course end of March
- Air brakes course to happen at GVFD end of March

Discussions:

- Dr. Holmes will oversee the EMR program, he's out of Vancouver and has been doing this along time, he will come over and do site visits, we use his company to service our AEDs.
- Who will be the instructor, Jenn Knight has been trained up to that level but will still, along with Kitt, instruct the FR program, same instructors just changed provider.
- The funds raised through the Don Elkington Challenge will pay for training and equipment.
- Any new members? Yes 3, no pagers until after 3 months.
- The air brake course is a great service for the Island. (The T.O. noted that by training them on the Island it saves us \$100 per student.)

**ASSOCIATION:**

- Slowly opening up for dinners as a department.
- Open House on the April 23.
- Yard Waste Management Friday and Saturday.
- A person donated pizzas for the whole department after training for our response to their house fire.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

Review:

Sean Lewis, the Trustee on the Committee, thanked the people who had volunteered to be on the Select Committee and introduced them by name, James Arends, Glenys Bussler, Howard Houle, Carol Keane.

- A member of the public asked if it was all volunteers or was there Trustees. Sean responded and said 3 members of the public and myself.

Carbon Audit:

David Chorneyko had sent the Audit out the week prior to give the Trustees a chance to read it, and gave a break down of information.

Discussion:

- Assume No. 2 Hall isn't well insulated? DC - Main Bays are not, lounge is o.k., extra insulation would help as would a heat pump in the Lounge and Bay.
- DC - In the future we will do a break down of the fuel by individual trucks use, No. 6 will be the largest emitter. I would suggest consideration be given to electric vehicles.

The Chair thanked David for all his work.

Moved by Sean Lewis that the Audit be accepted as presented, seconded by Penelope Bahr, carried.

The Fire Chief thanked David for all his work to pave the way into the future.

Website:

Chris Windess told the Trustees that Jenn Knight had added his name onto the list for access to the website and mentioned that he was still working on the second website if needed.

Hiring Committee:

- Meeting to be held April 13 @ 4:00 p.m.

New policy:

- Diana Moher suggested a policy on keeping Trustee decisions to a Board as a Whole when speaking to members of the public regardless of where you stood on that decision and not say I'm speaking for myself.

I also don't think we should be making policies if we don't need them, make them when a problem comes up.

- Fred Apstein said there is a list of possible policies in the Handbook, something could come up and you are making a policy where you are reactive to a situation.

The Handbook can be interpreted in different ways about Trustees speaking their own mind on motions passed by the Board, I'm not required to agree with everything and can express my opinion. I don't believe we should be making a policy on what the Board can or cannot say as free agents, nothing can be done about it anyway.

Code of Conduct:

The Chair noted that there has been three breaches of the Code of Conduct this year by an individual and asked that the Trustees review it and keep it in mind for future meetings.

Fred Apstein asked what 3?

- When the Corporate Officer asked for a Code of Conduct because of unpleasant emails.
- When I had to adjourn a meeting for 10 minutes when yelling broke out.
- When Kitt felt he was attacked in a meeting and wrote a letter about it.

Penelope Bahr agreed that the Trustees should review the Code of Conduct and asked if there should be a motion. The Chair suggested that the motion should be to apologize to Kitt.

- PB - Need a Special Meeting to deal with Kitts letter, have to agree there was a breach.
- SL - It's not up to the Chair to say this was a breach of conduct. I'll give Paul Giffin credit on the bylaws, but in my opinion this was not a personal attack.

- PG - You were at the meeting did you think the behaviour was O.K.?
- FA - You are supposed to be neutral.
- SL - The minutes were passed and no personal attacks mentioned.

**At the May 4, 2022 meeting Trustee Sean Lewis asked that the minutes show:**

SL – No one attacked Kitt. Fred said he “was appalled at what he was saying and thought it was inappropriate to talk to Trustees the way he did” as the Minutes record. I respect Kitt’s right to his opinion, and I stated that I disagreed with his comments at the Special Meeting. Frequently, I notice when oversight is exercised, it is met with hostility, personal attacks, false accusations and unfounded rumours.

- Corporate Officer - I asked Kitt if this was a formal complaint and he said no he just wanted it discussed.

Penelope Bahr moved that Kitts complaint go to a Special Meeting and the topic be tabled until that takes place, seconded by Sean Lewis.

- FA - If there is no formal complaint there is no need for a Special Meeting.

I strongly object to you saying 3 breaches, there has been no discussion on this, you should hand the gavel off and read where the breach was, you are shooting off your mouth.

**At the May 4, 2022 meeting Trustee Apstein asked that the minutes show the following:**

Trustee Apstein:

The Chair has declared, in a public meeting, code of conduct violations, without authorization or any decision by the majority of trustees.

The Chair has no more authority to declare such violations than any other individual Trustee. I consider this to be an abuse of the position of the Chair. The Chair is supposed to remain neutral, and let all others speak, on any subject, before the Chair speaks.

- DM - I have seen more people coming to these meetings now than in the past and most of them are firefighters who in my opinion feel something unsettling is going on. Our job is to ensure the budget is passed, bylaws are written and enacted, boring stuff. We have not even asked Kitt about his letter, don’t know how to fix this.
- FA - Sean Lewis brought this topic up at the last meeting, that’s why I brought it up, I am the one Kitt is accusing. I am against taking this to a Special Meeting.

Question? Motion failed.

**SCBA:**

- The Fire Chief noted that with the changes in the heat zone at fires we need to purchase more SCBA, we have 14 but I suggest we buy another 4 at the price of approx. \$36,000.

Moved by Fred Apstein that the Fire Chief purchase 4 more SCBAs, seconded by Sean Lewis, discussion.

- How many spare bottles? 24 - discussion, 4 masks 2 with built in TICs.
- How are they maintained? Tech comes over once a year and do a hydro static testing every 5 years.
- Zone increase, now everyone in the hot zone needs SCBA.

Question, carried.

Extended health:

The Fire Chief expressed an interest in self insuring ourselves, create a fund with a list of requirement for its use. I went to the dentist and they would only cover 40% of the cost, I think this would be a better use of our money, especially as the cost is so high.

- What about the Ambulance Society?

It was agreed that the Fire Chief should look into this.

Questions from the public:

- Liz Ciocea said she would like to thank Don Elkington and all the people who donated to upgrade to the EMR. She went on to say that the Star of Life symbol has six bars on it which represents the six system functions of emergency medical services: Detection, Reporting, Response, On scene care, care in transit, and transfer to definitive care.
- Derek Kilborn from the Sounder asked if there will be nominations from the floor for the Trustees at the AGM this year.

No, we will do it the same as last year place two ads in the paper with a deadline of April 22, 2022.

Moved by Sean Lewis that the nomination procedure remain the same as last year, seconded by Chris Windess, carried.

Moved by Fred Apstein that the meeting be adjourned, seconded by Sean Lewis, carried.

Meeting adjourned at 5:45 p.m.