

East Sooke Fire Protection and Emergency Response Service Commission

6071 East Sooke Road, East Sooke BC, V9Z1B2

commissioners@eastsookefirecommission.ca



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

November 20, 2023 - 7:03 pm

Location: Community Hall, 1397 Coppermine Road, East Sooke

Commissioners Present: Al Wickheim, Falk Wagenbach, Bruce Manning, Wendy Herring, Mike Yeager

Absent: Doug Thompson

FD Present: Chief Nathan Pocock

Public Present: 16

1. Adoption of Agenda

Moved: Wendy Seconded: Mike Carried

2. Adoption of Treasurers Report from Oct. 16, 2023

Moved: Al Seconded: Bruce Carried

3. Adoption of Minutes from November 21, 2022 AGM

Moved: Mike Seconded: Bruce Carried

4. Adoption of Minutes from October 16, 2023

Moved: Bruce Seconded: Wendy Carried

5. Public Participation on Agenda Items

There were no public participation items for discussion.

6. Reports

- a. Chair's report (Falk Wagenbach)

As Per Addendum

Moved: Mike Seconded: Al Carried

b. Fire Chief's report (Nathan Pocock)

As Per Addendum

Moved: Wendy Seconded: Bruce Carried

c. Finance report (Wendy Herring)

As Per Addendum

Moved: Bruce Seconded: Mike Carried

d. Community Hall report (Bruce Manning)

As Per Addendum

Moved: Mike Seconded: Wendy Carried

7. Old Business

There was no old business for discussion.

8. New Business

There was no new business for discussion.

9. Nominees for Commission 2024

Falk discussed the makeup of the Commission - seven members plus the Regional Director. Five positions were available. After the Commission canvassed the community for applicants, three community members offered their names for consideration. In addition to Falk Wagenbach and Bruce Manning being renewed to two year terms, Falk introduced new commissioners for 2024 - Vicki Graham, Ed Helm and Anita Preto.

10. Adjourn of public meeting

Moved: Bruce Seconded: Al Carried

Meeting adjourned at 8:49 pm.

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EAST SOOKE FIRE COMMISSION

East Sooke Fire Protection & Emergency Response Service Commission

2023

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AGENDA - ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

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3. Adoption of Minutes from November 21, 2022 AGM
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5. Public Participation on Agenda Items
6. Reports
 - a. Chair's report (Falk Wagenbach)
 - b. Fire Chief's report (Nathan Pocock)
 - c. Finance report (Wendy Herring)
 - d. Community Hall report (Bruce Manning)
7. Old Business
8. New Business
9. Nominees for Commission 2024
10. Adjourn of public meeting

East Sooke Fire Commission

Chair`s Report 2023



Falk Wagenbach, Chair Nov2023

**What is the
Fire Commission??**



Falk Wagenbach, Chair Nov2023

Commissioners. Who are we?

- Commissioners are East Sooke Citizens
- Commissioners don't get paid for their work (=Volunteers!)
- Candidates are recommended by the standing commission and put forward to the CRD Board of Directors via their CRD Regional Director. Only the Board can appoint new commissioners.
- If there are more qualified applicants than positions, the public votes at the annual AGM
- There are a maximum of 7 commissioners + the Regional Director
- A commissioner's term is 2 years.

What is the commission's job?

- Commissioners have the task of overseeing the local Fire Department's operations and finances
- The Commission works under CRD direction and policy and reports to the Board of Directors
- The Fire Chief is appointed by, and reports to, the Commission
- The Commission makes sure that the Fire Chief leads and regulates the Members of the Fire Department in accordance with the Fire Service Act and other regulations.
- Together with the Fire Chief, the Commission annually prepares a 5-year financial operational and capital budget plan and submits it to the CRD for approval.

Falk Wagenbach, Chair Nov2023



What were the challenges for 2023??

How did we master these challenges?

Falk Wagenbach, Chair Nov2023

Challenge 1: Code of conduct/Job description

There was no code of conduct for the commission and no job description for the positions within the commission

Action:

On January 18, the commissioners met for a workshop and agreed to

- ✓ A code of conduct for the commissioners
- ✓ A job description for every position within the commission

Falk Wagenbach, Chair Nov2023

Challenge 2: The lease agreement with JDF SAR

for the community hall's upper floor had expired TWO years ago and the negotiation for a new contract had been ongoing for about 2.5 years... The lease payments represent 93% of the Community Hall's financing.



Action:

Representing the Commission, I met with SAR management on January 28 and reached an agreement

The 5-year-lease was signed by the SAR Chair and myself on February 1st

- ✓ Lease increase: 40%, automatic lease increase every year of 2.5%
- ✓ One time payment of \$4,000

Falk Wagenbach, Chair Nov2023



Falk Wagenbach, Chair Nov2023

Challenge 3: Sooke Silverspray Contract

Background:

East Sooke provides the fire service for Silverspray that Sooke Fire cannot provide due to geographical distance. The fee Sooke pays for this service is significant (about \$73,000 annually, which is about 30% of our operational budget).

With regard to 2024, Sooke questioned the rate and requested a recalculation that would lower the fee to somewhere between \$5,000 - \$15,000.



Action and result:

In negotiations with Sooke, we managed to defend the previous calculation of the fee (which automatically increases every year with further development of the relevant area). The payments from Sooke, which have a significant impact on the East Sooke tax rate, were secured for the next few years.

Falk Wagenbach, Chair Nov2023

Challenge 4: Governance Review

The CRD had contracted a consulting firm to conduct a Governance review for all of its fire departments. The review was to discuss and improve service sustainability including communication, reporting, bylaws, cost structure, administration etc.)

Action:

The Fire Chief and I met with the consulting firm on April 4th and together we reviewed our Fire Department and cooperation with CRD Services.

Last month, the review of all fire departments was completed and significant changes in the way CRD Services supports its fire departments will follow. These changes will be developed by CRD management in conjunction with the Fire Chiefs and Commissions and will most likely be approved by the Board of Directors next year.

Falk Wagenbach, Chair Nov2023



Financial Factsheet

East Sooke Fire Service

Compared to all 28 JdF fire departments, East Sooke Fire's cost structure is one of the most "tax friendly"!

House Insurance:

For every \$ we spend on our Fire Department, we save \$3.85 in insurance premium!

01 Fire service is revenue positive for residents.

East Sooke residents save \$3.85 for each dollar spent on fire service.

The cost of fire service delivery in your community is offset by residents' savings on home insurance.

02 Budgets are below similar departments.

Estimated Insurance Discount	64.5%
Savings per dollar spent	\$3.85

03 Costs tend to outpace inflation.

Service budgets are below comparable departments. For reference, we compared budgets of 29 regional district volunteer-based departments on Vancouver Island. Your community puts less funding towards operating a fire service than communities of a similar size.

Budget per resident	11% below average
Budget per call	34% below average

Fire service costs are increasing. Fire service delivery costs are increasing more quickly than broader inflation. Cost drivers include apparatus, equipment, training, retention, and administration. Fire services should review capital and operating expenses with an eye to market conditions.

“Challenge” 5: Appreciation Dinner for our Fire Fighters

For the first time since the pandemic we hosted an appreciation dinner for our fire department



bach, Chair Nov2023

Challenge 6: New Fire Chief

For the first time in the history of our Fire Department, we were unable to find a volunteer who had the necessary qualifications AND time commitment for the Fire Chief position. The Commission decided to fill this position with a professional part time fire chief and adjusted the budget accordingly.

Action:

On July 1st, Nathan Pocock was hired to fill the vacant position. Nathan was previously a professional Deputy Chief at the Dashwood FD. He also served for about 10 Years in Vancouver. However, Nathan began his career here in East Sooke as one of our Volunteer Fire Fighters!

So far, he has a half-time position, but his workload is so extensive that he is additionally contributing about the same hours as a volunteer. We thank Nathan for his extraordinary

Challenge 7: Developing a budget for 2024

After 2 years of high inflation and given that fire fighting supplies and equipment have increased in price considerably above the general rate of inflation, it was particularly difficult this year to keep our next year's budget within a pain threshold of 5%.



Action:

After several difficult budget meetings, we were able to unanimously agree on a reasonable 2024 budget. More about this in the Treasurer's report.

Falk Wagenbach, Chair Nov2023

Outlook for 2024

As we have made many decisions in 2023 (new Fire Chief, lease contract with SAR, service contract with Sooke, etc.), I expect and hope that next year will be a quieter year for the commission.

Nevertheless, the upcoming restructuring of cooperation between the Fire Department, Commission and CRD will bring its own challenges. The existing commissioners are well positioned to meet this challenge and we will do everything in our power to bring the new commissioners up to the required level of knowledge quickly.

For our Fire Department, it will be another challenging year. Our mutual aid agreement must be renegotiated and our Fire Chief will have his hands full with the task of bringing his fire fighters up to the level of service required by ever evolving codes, bylaws and the constantly growing training standards.

Falk Wagenbach, Chair Nov2023

Questions?



Next up...

Fire Chief`s Report



Falk Wagenbach, Chair Nov2023

Commission 2024

- Anita Preto
- Vicki L. Graham
- Edward Helm
- Falk Wagenbach
- Bruce Manning

Remaining Commissioners (2rd. part of the 2-year-term)

- Mike Yeager
- Wendy Herring
- Al Wickheim (permanent)

Falk Wagenbach, Chair Nov2023

East Sooke Volunteer Fire Department Fire Chief's Staff Report

November 2023



New Fire Chief for East Sooke

July 2023 East Sooke chose to hire its first part time chief. Since July I have been working to analyse the department's current needs with a focus on working to bring us up to the minimum standards required of a fire department in BC.

The contract for the fire chief is a contracted 21 hours a week paid, \$44,662.80 of a full year's annual budget if no vacations are taken. This is \$22,331.40 of 2023s annual budget with the July start. There is no medical, pension or vacation benefits for this position so these are the total maximum annual costs.

My hours as of November 19th 2023 at 20:00;
Total: 823 hours = 41.15 average of hrs/weekly
Paid: 420 hours = average 21 hrs/weekly
Unpaid working hours: 403 hours = average of 20.15 hrs/weekly

In my time here so far, I have taken a deep dive into the fire department to see where we stand and to start working with the crews, community and mutual aid partners to find their needs and wants for the department.

These hours are not sustainable and will result in burn out. It is not possible for the average person in today's fiscal climate to afford to work for these hours for this pay. These current condition do not allow for a healthy life style for someone living alone, let along someone with a family.

The following report has been generated outlining some of the key responsibilities of fire departments, explaining their importance and highlighting where East Sooke currently is in each area.

Response: Status/Importance: Constant/Mandatory

Calls from November 24th 2022 till November 19th 2023

Alarm Bells 12	
Duty Calls	12
Hydro	10

Medical	74
MVI	8
Rescue	6
Structure Fire	25
Wildfire	5
Car/garbage & other fires	3
Smoke investigation	12
Total	167

To give a highlight of what our firefighters do. Since I started as Chief in July, some of what I have been a part of is; 2 CPR calls one of which included a 2-year-old, 2 park rescues, an auto extrication, a rope rescue down a bank, and 2 structure fires including one in East Sooke where we contained the fire to origin, thus saving the bottom half of the home.

Members hours spent on calls since Nov. 24th 2022 – Nov. 19th 2023 = 757.5

Calls of note since July 2nd 2023:

East Sooke Fire currently struggles to provide day time response Monday through to Friday for all calls.

East Sooke Fire currently struggles to provide response to structure fires at all times.

July 22nd 2023 we could not meet requirements of our auto mutual aid (AMA) agreement to send an apparatus

August 19th 2023 we could not meet requirements of our AMA agreement to send an apparatus

September 19th we were unable to respond to AMA structure fire as we did not have the required staffing levels in response.

September 29th we had a Psychiatric call and only one member could respond. This raises worries for member protection and response.

October 17th we had a structure fire in our own district which saw 10 of our 22 members respond. Of the 10 members who responded, 6 were interior or full service members. If it had not been for the fire being on Metchosin's side of the district and that we had a joint recruitment event happening in Metchosin at the time of the fire, I would not have had an engine with 4 fully trained members at the fire to quickly deploy a line interior to get a handle on the fire. East Sooke's first engine had one fully trained member and two members not allowed to wear SCBAs for medical reasons which would have resulted in much different tactics and a far greater if not complete loss of the structure.

October 24th we could not fill AMA requirements for response to a structure fire

October 30th Alarm bells in Silver Spray contract area required a second page out and resulted in over a 20min response time till apparatus on scene. (Sooke fire made note of this delay and contacted dispatch) Silver Spray currently is responsible for approximately 2% of East Sooke Fire's call volume and over 20% of its operational budget.

November 10th FR Seizures, East Sooke was unable to provide any response and Metchosin had to send a truck into East Sooke to handle this call.

November 17th we were unable to respond to mutual aid structure fire with requested staffing levels

Training and Membership: Status/Importance:

Started/Mandatory Roll Call

Interior FFs on pagers: 10
Interior FFs not on pager: 1
Exterior FFs on pager: 2
FR/Support on pagers: 5
FR/Support not on pager: 1
Recruits not on pager: 3
Total = 22

Without members a fire department cannot exist, without trained members a fire department cannot function fully or safely. East Sooke Fire Rescue Declares as an Interior Service Level department under the Provincial Training Standards of the British Columbia Office of the Fire Commissioner, and currently reports to Fire Underwriters for a 3a/3b rating (semi protected). With the current 3a/3b ratings citizens of East Sooke save \$3.82 in insurance cost for

every dollar spent on East Sooke Fire Rescue.

To maintain the current rating levels of 3a and 3b in East Sooke we must maintain a staffing level of "15 fully qualified members". The difference between a 3a rating and a 3b is dependent on water supply and proximity to a fire hydrant.

If we fail to have 15 members fully trained and can only maintain 10 then we drop to a rating of 4 (this is an approximate 40% increase to insurance rates). Below 10 we become unprotected (an approximate 400% increase to insurance rates).

If we were to maintain 15 fully trained members and provide 1 member on duty in the station 24/7/365 we would go to an insurance rating of 2 for the entire district.

Where we currently stand is;

Fully trained members: 11

Fully trained members no longer working at fully trained capacity due to medical conditions: 4 Fully trained members not on pager: 1

Total fully trained on paper: 16

It is important to point out that 3 of the 11 medically fit and certified fully trained members are currently seeking full time jobs in the fire service, while the fire service in BC is hiring more firefighters than ever seen before.

The Office of the Fire Commission (OFC) standards mandate certified training for driver operators for the province of British Columbia:

Of our 22 members currently, we have 2 with certification for being a driver operator for all apparatus, and 6 members grandfathered in as driver operators with no official certification.

The emergency medical licensing board mandates all prehospital care workers that have patient contact must be trained and hold a valid First Responder 3 license.

Of our 22 members we currently have 13 with valid FR licenses

The OFC standards require officer training for members operating as command at incidents and/or as team leaders in a group operating on the fire ground.

Of our 22 members currently, we have one member certified in Fire officer 1 and one member certified in Fire officer 4

The OFC requires all members operating at Interior or Full Service to hold NFPA 1407 certification for Rapid intervention team training.

Of our 22 members currently, we have 3 certified in NFPA 1407

This means currently East Sooke Fire Rescue does not meet the required standards for a 3a/3b rating and if audited should be reassigned a 4 and should we lose 2 more fully trained members we will be then classified as unprotected. In reality if looked too closely the fact we only have 3 members to NFPA 1407 means we truly only have 3 members "fully" trained at this time.

East Sooke Fire Rescue currently struggles with keeping, creating and upkeep training documentation such as lesson plans, certificates, other official and required documentation. This results in increasing timelines to get members trained to their required service level and increases department liability.

East Sooke Fire rescues budget for Training and Staff development was \$25,000 in 2023. The average cost to get a member to full service is approximately \$12,000 and can take 18 to 24 months (approximately \$8000 of this is in the first 8 months to get them through the regional recruit program)

The average cost to get a member to Fire Officer level 1 is approximately \$3,044 this training is 170 hours of course time

The average cost to have Fire Officer level 2 is approximately \$2,780 this training is 164 hours of course time.

The average time to meet OFC driver certification if done in house is approximately 40 hours per student. Done in house to minimize costs to only about \$200 per student for equipment used (outsourced this is approximately \$1200 per student). Results in higher instructor involvement times and documentation for each student.

NFPA 1407 RIT training required by the OFC is an approximate 40 hour program per student. Done in house to minimize costs to about \$150 per student, again increases administrative workload and time on current members (outsourced this course would be \$1200 per student)

Other services provided are low angle slope rescue at an approximate cost of \$1200 per student and 40 hours of training per member to be certified.

Year to date East Sooke members have dedicated approximately 1421 hours to training from January 1st 2023 till November 19th 2023

Succession planning and Budgeting for the future: Status/Importance:

Started/Mandatory New science and standards are constantly changing and coming out in the fire service. Having a team that can continue to get educated, learn and then implement these new changing ways is a mandatory part of any fire service. Fire halls must constantly prepare for the future and in a rank-and-file structure always need to be bringing the next person up with education, experience and training. A fire department cannot rely on a select few individuals, if they were to leave everything stops.

Currently East Sooke Fire has missed many opportunities to join in conversations, have its voice heard and to learn from the experience of those around us. East Sooke Fire has very little capacity to participate in regional discussions and meetings.

Apparatus: Status/Importance: Active/Mandatory

Car 1 2013 GMC Sierra 1500: Currently meets needs due for

replacement 2033 Engine 1 2015 Spartan Metro Star: Currently

Meets needs due for replacement 2055 Engine 2 1999 Freightliner:

Currently meets needs due for replacement 2035

Squad 1 2000 GMC 1 ton: Currently does not fully meet the requirements for its current use mainly due to lack of storage space due for replacement 2024

Tender 1 2007 Freightliner: Currently meets needs Due for replacement 2047

Tender 2 1996 Freightliner: Currently meets some needs but regionally departments have moved to a tender with pump model which decreases this tenders usability due for replacement 2026. This tenders water tank continues to show signs of failing. (tank is from 1986)

Support trailer 2009 Mirage: Does not currently meet needs. The trailer is not a great way for us to transport equipment as we only have two vehicles capable of towing it and they will usually already be on scene where we need the trailer. Possible option would be with replacement of Tender two (2026) we can budget to repurpose the old tender two chassis to become a support truck that would carry the items in the trailer along with additional needed rehab items.

SPU Trailer 2020 : Does not meet needs. The SPU trailer is currently undeployable for BC wildfire standards and we currently do not have any fire apparatus capable of towing it in the East Sooke Fire Rescue.

Moving our truck replacement plans from the original 15 year terms to the full extended 20 year terms presents some challenges for East Sooke Fire rescue as maintenance and aging out can occur. An example is our current back up engine has a pump on it only capable of 800 gallons per minute and only 500 gallons of water on board. Industry standard for an engine in rural settings is 800 to 1000 gallons on board an a pump capable of 1500 gallons per minute or more. With our long hard access driveways we frequently require two engines or more to pump water to the scene. While E1 is a 1500 gallon per minute pump that capacity can not be used to any greater amount than the 800 gallon per minute that engine 2 can supply.

Our equipment replacement fund (ERF) sees a large hurdle for 2035 to appropriately fund for a new engine. Currently we are seeing engines sell for 1.6 million in 2023 like the 13 purchased by Vancouver fire this year. We have seen record breaking inflation and prices prove to only go up. Currently we have 1 million budgeted for a new engine in 2035.

I recommend considerable re-thinking of the ERF budgeting with more current numbers and inflation.

Annual maintenance and testing: Status/Importance: Active/Mandatory

Being an emergency service not only do all our members need to be trained and ready but our equipment must be well kept and well organized not only to provide good response but also to ensure we meet the requirements of legislation.

Currently East Sooke Fire Rescue relies on this to be done on purely volunteer hours which is averaging in about 13 to 15 hours a week. We currently are doing well, staying on top of most legislated checks, but have struggled to meet the mandated requirements of Pre-trips of our apparatus set out by CVSE and CRD. Non legislated checks have fallen behind along with replacement of older gear/equipment largely due to great inflation of equipment costs and time required to stay on top of these items.

Records Management: Status/Importance: Paused/Mandatory

It is a requirement to keep paperwork and records of incidents, personal, response and training. The Fire department must be able to show proof of meeting the standards of training as well as be able to provide information on members and call response and equipment maintenance when and where required to be shielded from liability.

Currently the system we use is almost exclusively paper based and relies on over 40 hours a week of volunteering shared between 2 department members to maintain. Capital regional district has introduced a new records management system to help lessen some on this workload.

Unfortunately, no staff have had the time to make any of the training sessions or watch any of the recordings from missed sessions. This program will also take a lot of additional hours to get up and running.

Currently East Sooke fire does not have the resources to do this project.

Standard Operating Guidelines Review: Status/Importance: Not

Started/High Standard Operating Guidelines create the rules and standards in which a fire department is to operate safely and efficiently. The fire service and the community are constantly changing, and the guidelines need to shift and adapt with those changes, to maximize efficiency and safety of the community and members.

Currently East Sooke fire does not have the resources to do this project.

Pre-Incident Planning: Status/Importance: Not Started/High

Pre-incident planning is an extremely high value project to take place. It allows us not only to get face to face with the community and provide a chance for life safety education, but also provides a chance to create documents and plans that will aid our firefighters when responding to these addresses.

A big area of pre-incident planning in East Sooke is the many alternative

water sources in our non-hydranted areas. In order to be effectively used these water sources need to have standing agreements in place with the landowners, be maintained and documented. Currently many of these water systems have fallen into disrepair and or lapsed on any agreements making them unreliable and/or unusable.

Currently East Sooke fire does not have the resources to do this project.

FireSmart: Status/Importance: Active/High

Fire smart assessments are a fantastic way for our members to get out and engage in public education and communication. This program is currently supported through grant funding and provides the following benefits:

- Compensation to our members for their time
- Potential reimbursement back to citizens for doing wildfire mitigation work on their own properties.
- Lower wildfire potential
- Insight into properties and locations to better know response area
- Face to face education with community members

FireSmart Assessments completed

January 1st till November 15th 2023 = 64

Successful Chipper days with four fully booked days of piles being chipped.

Training Building: Status/Importance: Active/High

Having our own training facility allows East Sooke Firefighters the ability to be trained and certified to the Office of the Fire Commissions set standards that need to be achieved and relate to the Fire Underwriters insurance ratings and standards.

East Sooke has been working on this building since approximately 2017 and is slowly progressing on this with some major items still required for completion.

Main items to complete the training facility:

- #1 Stairs from upper C-can to lower
- #2 Wooden frame roof section with attic access provisions
- #3 Steel partitions layers with wood to simulate walls which can be folded flat against inside walls to change layout of rooms.
- #4 Wired with lights inside
- #5 Finish platform for below level practice.
- #6 Setup Wood stove to give practice for chimney fires
- #7 Being able to make better smoke using wood stove in facility.

Currently all skills required needing these facilities involves sending members out of district at cost for training elsewhere. This project continues to struggle with funding to complete it fully.

Wildfire grant fund 2023: Status/Importance: complete/moderate

For 2023 East Sooke fire applied for a grant to equip our firefighters

with new 2-piece wildland personal protective gear. This included; Helmets, boots, Nomex shirts and pants. Having the proper PPE can reduce fatigue and increase safety of members on the fire ground.

Grant Funds 2024: Status/Importance: Submitted/Extremely

Industry and NFPA standards dictate that the minimum flow of a fire hose at a residential structure fire shall be not less than 150 gallons per minute.

Currently East Sooke Fire Rescue flows 95 gallons per minute.

Our current hose is 1.5” diameter and has a flow limit under that required 150 gallon per minute minimum laid out by industry and national fire protection association standards. The 2024 grant has been submitted to CRD. We were given a \$23,000 cap to submit for this and 56 lengths of 1.75” hose was requested, to help bring us up to industry standard and to be compatible with our mutual aid partners. We will still need to purchase new nozzles and some additional hose outside of this grant to get to the full standard.

To get our department fully switched over to compliant hose and nozzles we are looking at a cost of approximately \$45,000.00 the \$23,000 dollar grant is a start to go this way, but East Sooke will need to find another means to fulfill this compliance issue. Other avenues have been explored but were not approved by the CRD.

East Sooke Fire Rescue’s Largest Hurdles to overcome:

Currently our largest hurdle in the department is resources needed to complete routine high priority and mandatory tasks. East Sooke Fire Rescue is currently the only regional partner servicing their community at a level lower than Full Service which means we routinely can not fulfill our requested mutual aid agreement. Currently our Automatic mutual aid agreement partners request 4 full-service firefighters to respond. East Sooke Fire Rescue currently has 3 full-service members. Interior Service level declares that Interior Operations firefighters will only operate inside simple structures “as described by BC building Code Part 9- Buildings of 3 stories or less with a maximum of 600 square meters of living space” This means that for Commercial and large residential structure of which East Sooke has few but our mutual aid partners have increasing amounts of our members are not trained nor qualified for interior operations.

Neighboring departments have made it clear routinely that they are aware of East Sooke Fire’s decreased skill sets and abilities and are cautious of our crews on fire scenes. Our auto mutual aid agreement is up for renewal, there is concern from some of our auto aid partners about this exact point.

Much of East Sooke Fire Rescue’s struggles come from the lack of resources both in ability to have members commit to the massive time requirements of the huge administrative and organizational load that comes with running a fire hall and much of our programs and training. We see examples of this in our current organization of equipment and gear on our apparatus, the lack of equipment and readiness of our support trailer. Extensive important hall projects continually being underfunded and understaffed such as the SPU trailer, which we have never been able to use.

With the great inflation of fire equipment over the last few years we

are continually seeing our capital budget fall short for purchases, Tender replacement having to be postponed last year, this is the same tender that is now leaking from rusted holes in the tank getting the breathing apparatus in the cabinets below wet.

The 2023 CRD financial review showed East Sooke Fire 34% below average on funding for its fire department per call. Our 2023 budget was reported as \$525,989.00 if we were to just be funded the same as the average of the 29 departments in the CRD financial survey this would put our budget to \$704,825.26 an increase of \$178,836.26. It is important to note that this 34% below average included the \$155,000 currently in the budget to pay for the fire hall built in 2015 which means our operational budget is actually even further behind than this 34% presented in the CRD financial report. Current volunteer work loads are seeing many members volunteering from 5 to 10 hours a week throughout the year and some members routinely needing to volunteer for 20 hours a week to work to achieve department needs.

Currently even with this decreased finances East Sooke Fire continues to rely on trying to generate surpluses in yearly budgets in order to be able to afford future purchases. This is a robbing Peter to pay Paul scenario and simple creates holes in other areas of the fire department.

East Sooke Fire Rescue's Greatest Advantage:

East Sooke community continues to show support for our membership and the department and understands the need for a well-equipped and trained response. East Sooke Fire Rescue currently has a positive membership that is wanting to help their community and eager for knowledge and opportunity. With the right support and resources East Sooke Fire Rescue has a fantastic foundation and membership to build on and attract new membership to create an effective fire service for the community.

Internal Survey:

The following are the results of an internal survey of 21 members of the fire department sent out on November 7th 2023 (excluding the fire chief) we had 18 of the 21 = 86% respond to the survey. The survey shows the department members are quite unified in their thoughts on the department where it stands and the current direction it is going. It highlights the primary focus and want for the majority of department members is training.

Q1

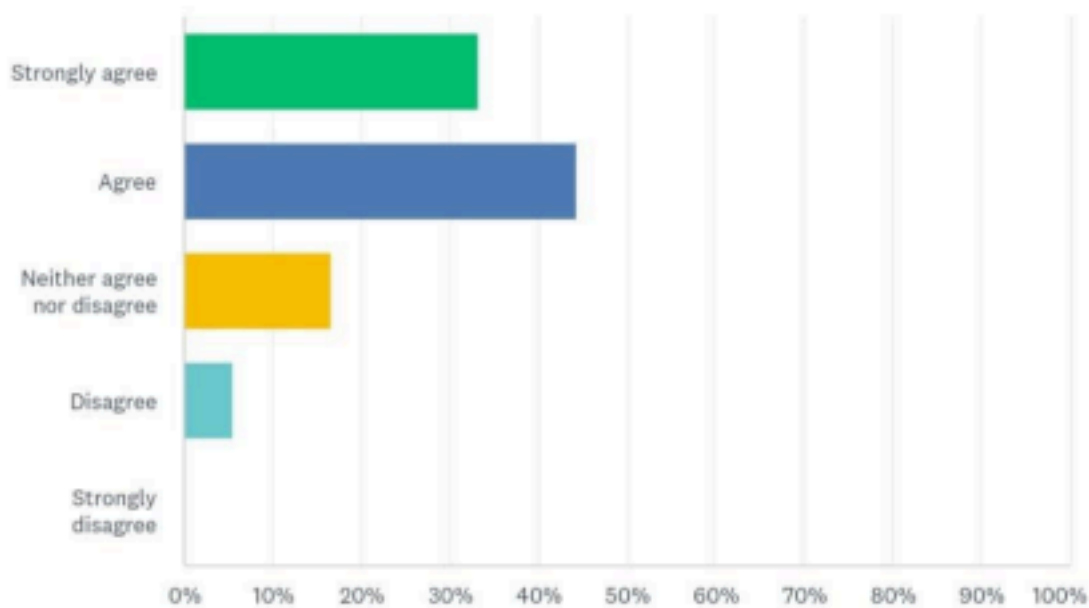


Customize

Save as ▾

As an East Sooke Fire Department member do you feel your time and commitment is appreciated by your fellow firefighters? select the percentage below closest to the number you feel.

Answered: 18 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Strongly agree	33.33% 6
Agree	44.44% 8
Neither agree nor disagree	16.67% 3
Disagree	5.56% 1
Strongly disagree	0.00% 0
TOTAL	18

Q2

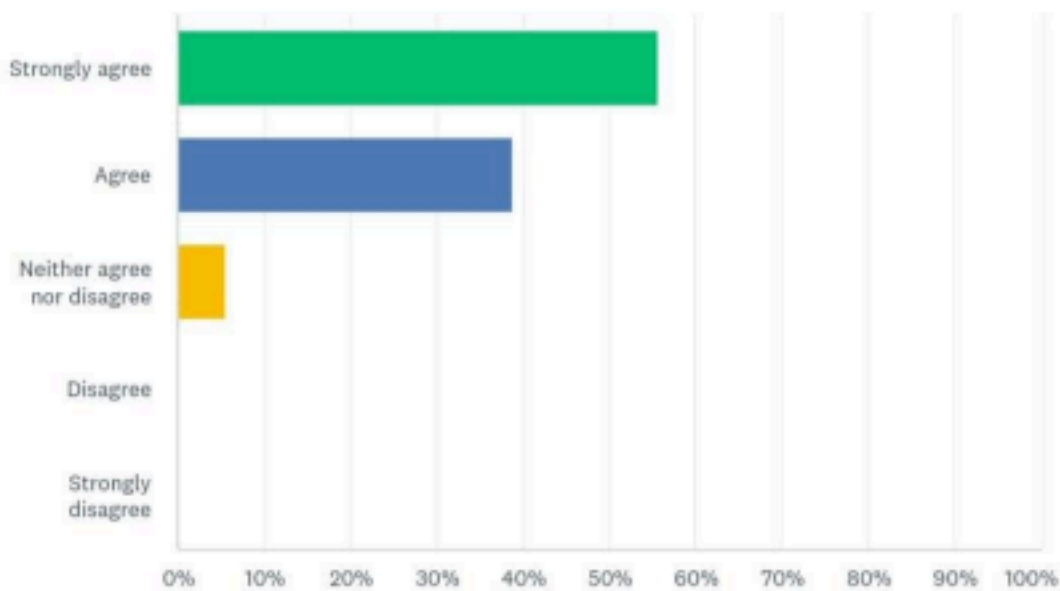


Customize

Save as ▾

As an East Sooke Fire Department member do you feel your time and commitment is appreciated by your Chief? select the percentage below closest to the number you feel.

Answered: 18 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Strongly agree	55.56% 10
Agree	38.89% 7
Neither agree nor disagree	5.56% 1
Disagree	0.00% 0
Strongly disagree	0.00% 0
TOTAL	18

Q3

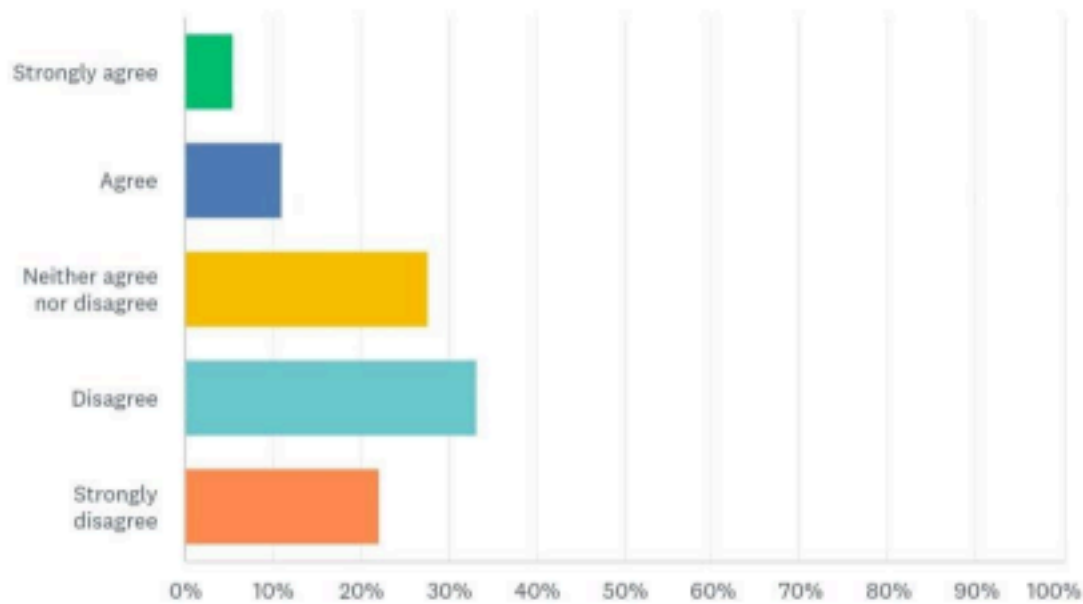


Customize

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As an East Sooke Fire Department member do you feel your time and commitment is appreciated by your Commission? select the percentage below closest to the number you feel.

Answered: 18 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Strongly agree	5.56% 1
Agree	11.11% 2
Neither agree nor disagree	27.78% 5
Disagree	33.33% 6
Strongly disagree	22.22% 4
TOTAL	18

Q4

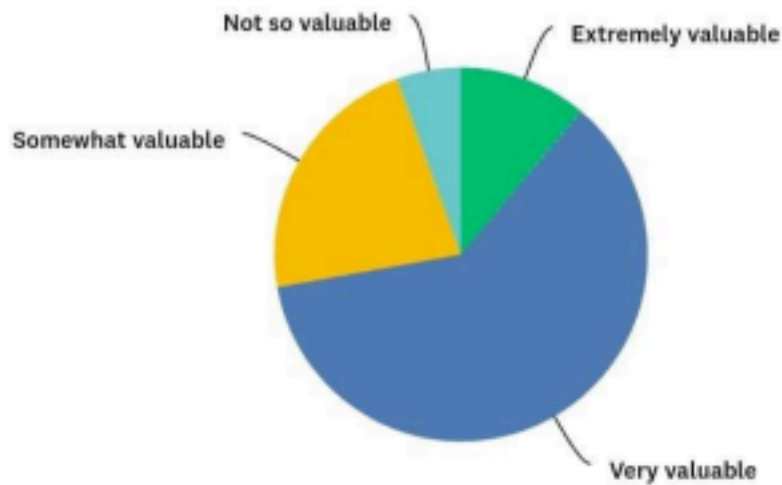


Customize

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How do you feel about the departments equipment they provide you with (example, tools, trucks, PPE) overall?

Answered: 18 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Extremely valuable	11.11% 2
Very valuable	61.11% 11
Somewhat valuable	22.22% 4
Not so valuable	5.56% 1
Not at all valuable	0.00% 0
TOTAL	18

Q5

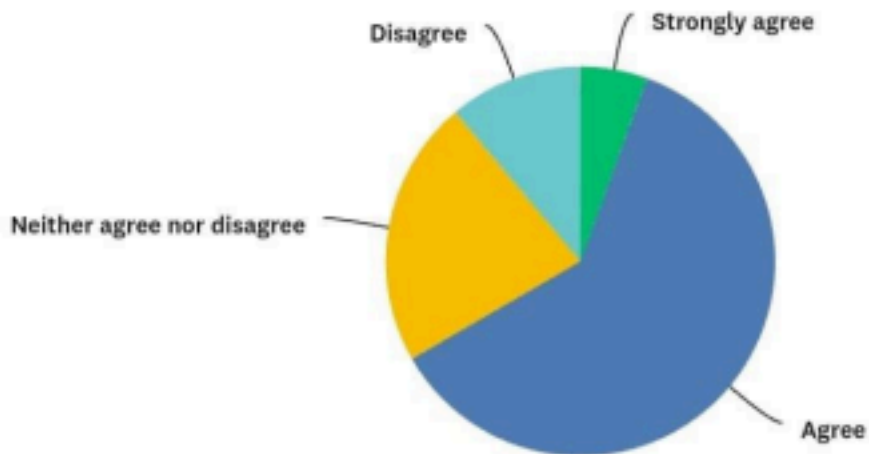


Customize

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I feel confident and well trained to preform my tasks as an East Sooke Fire Rescue Member

Answered: 18 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Strongly agree	5.56% 1
Agree	61.11% 11
Neither agree nor disagree	22.22% 4
Disagree	11.11% 2
Strongly disagree	0.00% 0
TOTAL	18

Q6

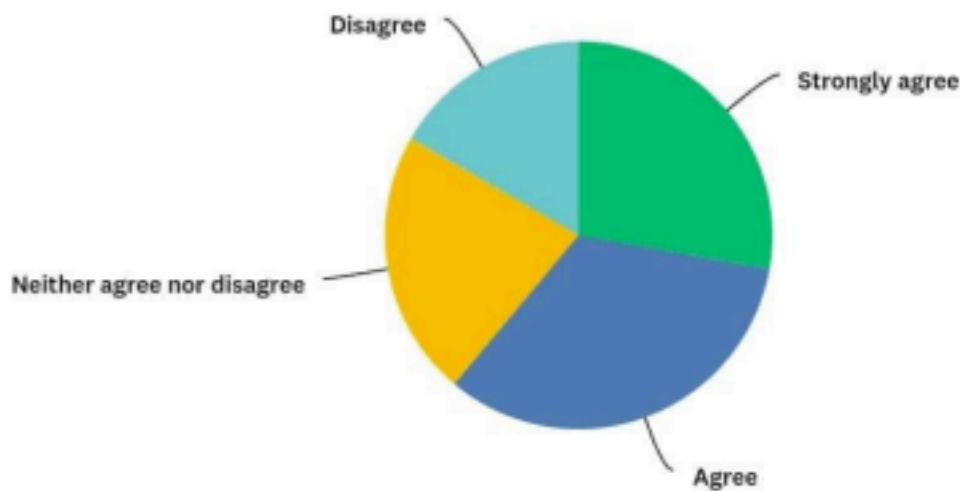


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Do you have an understanding of where the leadership of the department hopes to take the department and what they are aiming for?

Answered: 18 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Strongly agree	27.78% 5
Agree	33.33% 6
Neither agree nor disagree	22.22% 4
Disagree	16.67% 3
Strongly disagree	0.00% 0
TOTAL	18

Q7

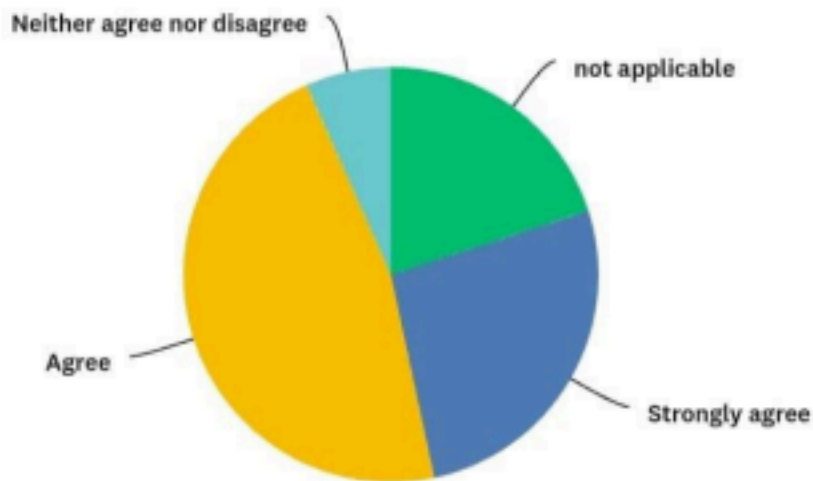


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If you agreed or Strongly agreed to Question 6. I believe the department is headed in the right direction.

Answered: 15 Skipped: 3



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
not applicable	20.00% 3
Strongly agree	26.67% 4
Agree	46.67% 7
Neither agree nor disagree	6.67% 1
Disagree	0.00% 0
Strongly disagree	0.00% 0
TOTAL	15

Q8



Customize

Save as ▼

What aspect of the fire department is most important to you?

Answered: 18 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
▼ Training	77.78% 14
▼ Equipment	0.00% 0
▼ Response to calls	16.67% 3
▼ Social aspect for members	0.00% 0
▼ Brigade events for the community	0.00% 0
▼ Cleaning the hall and maintenance	0.00% 0
▼ Administration	5.56% 1
TOTAL	18

Q9

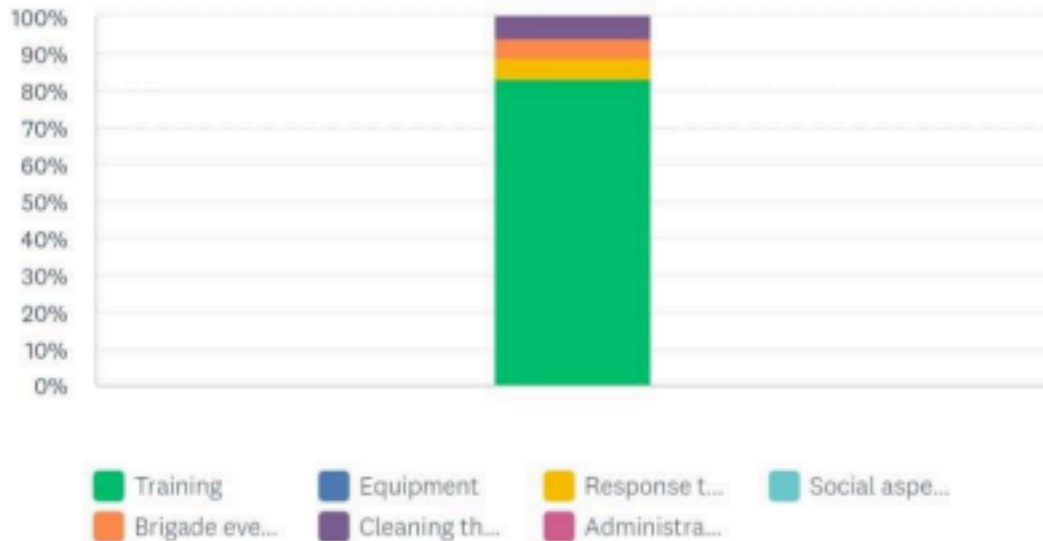


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What area would you like to see the chief prioritizing his time?

Answered: 18 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
▼ Training	83.33% 15
▼ Equipment	0.00% 0
▼ Response to calls	5.56% 1
▼ Social aspect for the members	0.00% 0
▼ Brigade events for the community	5.56% 1
▼ Cleaning the hall and maintenance	5.56% 1
▼ Administration	0.00% 0
TOTAL	18

Q10

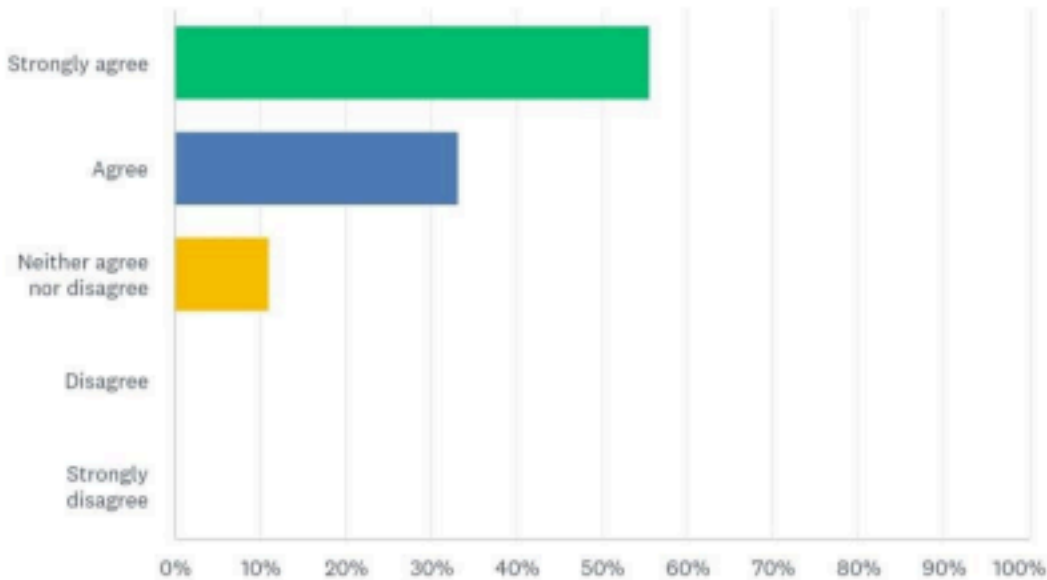


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I feel proud to be a firefighter for East Sooke Fire Rescue

Answered: 18 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Strongly agree	55.56% 10
Agree	33.33% 6
Neither agree nor disagree	11.11% 2
Disagree	0.00% 0
Strongly disagree	0.00% 0
TOTAL	18

Recommendation:

That a planning committee is formed to create a short- and long-term plan for East Sooke Fire Rescue. This committee should look to take swift action to minimize the current large legal liabilities East Sooke Fire Rescue currently finds itself in. This planning process should include The Fire Chief and member appointed by the Fire Chief from the department, two members appointed from the commission and CRD Fire Services Coordinator.

A good starting place would be for this committee to decided what they want the service

in their community to look like and the level of protection they wish to see the community have. We can then easily work back from there.

Key areas recommend for focus are;

- Initial training and maintenance of training for firefighters, drivers and officers to at least minimum required OFC standards.
- Retention of current and future members
- Long range budgeting for equipment replacement and maintenance

Report submitted by:

Nathan Pocock
Fire Chief
East Sooke Fire Rescue



EAST SOOKE FIRE COMMISSION Treasurers Report

November 2023

Wendy Herring, Treasurer Nov2023

What are the Duties of the Treasurer?

Oversee the Fire Department finances and spending behavior, and report to the Commission.

Prepare the annual budget together with the Fire Chief, and maintain close contact with CRD Finance, the Fire Chief, the FD administrative assistant and the Community Hall Treasurer during the budget cycle.

Maintain knowledge of CRD policies, budgeting requirements, the FD financial needs and procedures.

Inform and advise fellow commissioners reliably and promptly in all financial matters.

Defend the FD/Commission budget and the long-term capital plan to CRD Finance and the Board of Directors.

Wendy Herring, Treasurer Nov 2023

What can the East Sooke community expect from the **treasurer** of the commission?

- Represent your financial interests to the Fire Department (FD) and the CRD
- Provide the fire service you expect with the FD funds
- Ensure that FD buying practices align with CRD guidelines
- Ensure that the Commission and the public are informed about the FD's financial situation

Wendy Herring, Treasurer Nov 2023

Financial Status East Sooke Fire Jan. – Oct. 2023

Important to know:

- 71% of the Fire Department's (FD) total budget is spent for Operations, 29% for the Fire Hall's mortgage
- The mortgage on the Fire Hall will be paid back in 2029 and 2031
- 28% of the total operational budget is allocated for long-term capital expenses (trucks, expensive equipment replacements)
- After the first 10 months of 2023 the FD is well within its budget

EXPENSES	Budget		
	2022	2023	%change
Principal for loan	\$97,959	\$97,959	0.00
Interest on loan	\$57,150	\$57,150	0.00
Transfer to Reserve	\$95,000	\$103,362	8.80
Operations	\$250,882	\$267,518	6.63
TOTAL	\$500,991	\$525,989	5.0

dept service budget fixed until 2029

	Year-to-date		
	budget	actual	%diff.
	\$81,633	\$81,633	0.00
	\$47,625	\$47,625	0.00
	\$86,135	\$86,135	0.00
	\$222,932	\$183,438	-17.72
ytd.- proportional calculated budget	\$438,324	\$398,831	-9.0

Wendy Herring, Treasurer Nov2023

Important to know ... more:

- There are high value cost centers over which the FD has no influence such as Insurance (\$6,040) and CRD Services (\$15,161)
- Our bottom line is great! We have 31% of operating expense funds remaining with only 17% of the fiscal year to go.
- Expenditures in some cost centres exceeded expectations:
 - Operating Supplies and Protecting Clothing due to sky-high price increases
 - Building Maintenance due to unanticipated electrical repairs to Fire Hall
- Wages and Stipends continue to be below budget, despite hiring our first paid staff, because Chief Pocock joined the Department mid-year.
- The new landscaped garden in front of the Firehall was built with capital funds and volunteer labour.

Wendy Herring, Treasurer Nov2023

Financial Status East Sooke Fire

Jan. – Oct. 2023

Accumulated assets (our piggy bank)		
Equipment Replacement Fund (ERF)	\$789,722	Capital Reserve Fund (CRF)
		\$31,000
to purchase trucks and other depreciating equipment (allocation: \$8613 per month)		— earmarked for new projects

Important to know ... more:

- ER Funds are set aside every month by the FD from its operational budget and accumulated for capital equipment replacements.
- CR Funds are set aside for new projects (not for replacements!). Those projects must be approved by the Commission and by the CRD Board of Directors (CRD). Once a specific project is identified, necessary funds are moved into the General Reserve Fund to bankroll the project. This is how the new garden was financed.

Wendy Herring, Treasurer Nov2023

Treasurer's Assessment:

- The ES Fire Commission works in collaboration and cooperation with the ES Fire Department and with Finance and Emergency Services at CRD. These relationships are well-established, productive and amicable.
- East Sooke Fire Department is on a sound financial footing
- The reserves the FD has accumulated are sufficient to finance foreseeable future investments.
- The spending behaviour of our Chief and his officers is responsible and sustainable.

Important Observations about Fire Protection in East Sooke:

- The legal, administrative and organizational requirements for fire departments are increasing every year
- The Fire Chief works on a half-time contract. He also volunteers many hours for the FD.
- The work done by Firefighters and Officers is volunteer work, except for a small stipend.
- A new Fire Protection Agreement with Sooke (for Silverspray) was successfully negotiated in 2023.

Financial Status East Sooke Fire

The Treasurer's Report is posted monthly as part of the Commission meeting minutes at:

<https://eastsookefirecommission.ca/>

East Sooke Fire Commission
Woodsview, Treasurer

Monthly Report
January-October 2023

Month: 10
Year-to-date %: 83.3

EXPENSES	Budget			Year-to-date		
	2022	2023	Variance	budget	actual	%diff
Principal for loan	\$87,859	\$87,859	0.0%	\$81,833	\$81,833	0.0%
Interest on loan	\$87,208	\$87,208	0.0%	\$47,825	\$47,825	0.0%
Transfer to Reserve	\$80,000	\$10,581	8.0%	\$86,135	\$86,135	0.0%
Depreciation	\$10,000	\$10,000	0.0%	\$12,030	\$18,428	(17.2%)
TOTAL	\$265,067	\$295,658	8.0%	\$448,824	\$298,821	(33.2%)

debt service budget from until 2029

Ytd. proportional calculated budget

EXPENSES	Budget			Year-to-date		
	2022	2023	Variance	budget	actual	%diff
Wages and Salaries	\$74,930	\$74,930	0.0%	\$62,442	\$74,320	(16.7%)
Utilities	\$13,140	\$13,140	0.0%	\$19,262	\$27,048	(-17.7%)
Contract for Services	\$8,270	\$8,270	0.0%	\$7,898	\$10,854	(36.4%)
Purchase Mtn. Buildings	\$6,980	\$7,200	3.0%	\$6,000	\$10,493	(74.9%)
Printing	\$18,040	\$18,040	0.0%	\$20,813	\$23,402	(-14.8%)
Electricity	\$9,410	\$9,600	2.0%	\$8,000	\$6,771	(15.4%)
Maint. Supplies	\$9,230	\$9,850	6.6%	\$8,982	\$9,386	(7.4%)
Budget Operation	\$13,375	\$14,719	-1.3%	\$12,286	\$14,110	31.1%
Protective Clothing	\$6,280	\$6,783	8.0%	\$9,816	\$10,480	(8.8%)
Contingency Fund	\$18,500	\$18,500	-0.0%	\$12,500	\$0	(100.0%)

Significant variances in which the Fire Department has no influence - call one time per use at issue:
Budget: \$8,780; Appropriation Short: \$8,430; Insurance: Legal: \$7,325; ISO Increase: \$8,800

Accumulated assets (over piggy bank)

Equipment Replacement Fund (ERF)	\$980,722	Capital Reserve Fund (CRF)	\$56,000	General Contingency Fund (GCF)	\$2,000
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to purchase tools and other equipment (in excess of 100 \$ per month)


reserved for new projects

Accumulated projects
- in progress: 1,500
- completed: 1,500

Comments:

- Account receivables have been reviewed and the following long overdue has been noted
- Contract for Services - a significant portion of our budget has been unfilled
- Protective Clothing - a significant portion of our budget has been unfilled
- Insurance - a significant portion of our budget has been unfilled
- Operating Supplies - a significant portion of our budget has been unfilled
- Building Maintenance - a significant portion of our budget has been unfilled
- To the best of our knowledge, a financial review has been conducted and submitted for your review.
- Despite our efforts, our budget is not as precise as it once was, which is a reflection of our budgeted events.

Overall assessment: East Sooke Fire is on sound financial footing. The reserves we have accumulated are sufficient to finance foreseeable future investments. The spending behaviour of our Chief and his officers presents itself as both responsible and sustainable.



Wendy Herring, Treasurer Nov 2023

Financial Status East Sooke Fire

Jan. – Oct. 2023

Questions?



Wendy Herring, Treasurer Nov 2023

East Sooke Community Hall Group Minutes

November 10 2023

Present: Leslie Leus, Wendy Herring, Bruce Manning Armin Sielopp.

Regrets: Wendy Lane.

Call to order at 7.pm. Standard agenda.

Minutes of September 29. Moved by Bruce to adopt. Seconded by Wendy. Carried.

Treasurer's report. Leslie presented September and October financials. All in order. Moved by Wendy to adopt. Seconded by Bruce. Carried.

Hall rentals. Wendy reported that the Halloween event went well, celebration of life event well received.

November 24 there will be a town hall meeting with Ravi Parmar and Al Wickheim. A lunch and learn for seniors on December 15th.

Old business. Washroom countertops have been

replaced. Waiting for quotes on emergency lighting for the washrooms. Washroom stall panel painting is being offered to a local painter for \$700.00 plus WCB.

New business. Bruce will look into training for the defibrillator. Bruce is looking after repairs to the window blinds. Armin to get a quote for a heat pump to replace the baseboard heaters in the hall.

The current hall group members are willing to stand for another term. Bruce will give a report on the hall at the November 20 A.G.M. of the East Sooke Fire Commission.

Meeting adjourned at 7.50pm.

Respectfully submitted. Armin Sielopp