



**East Sooke Fire Protection and Emergency Response
Service Commission**

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**MINUTES OF THE COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD MONDAY MARCH 18, 2013**

Present: Dick Braunschweig, Larry Oram, George May, Rick Moffet, Rick Lambert and Sharon Johnson
Recording Secretary

Fire Dept: Roger Beck, Fire Chief and Dave Bigelow, Deputy Chief

Absent: Brian White

Public: 2

The Chair called the meeting to order at 7:08 pm

1. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Moved by George May, **Seconded** by Rick Moffet, that the agenda be adopted with the following additions:

Old Business: (b) Burn House (c) Fire Underwriters Survey

CARRIED

2. ADOPTION OF MINUTES of February 18, 2013

Moved by Larry Oram, **Seconded** by George May that the minutes of the meeting on February 18, 2013 be adopted as presented.

CARRIED

3. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION ON AGENDA ITEMS

Kevin Hurst suggested we look at the View Royal Fire Department's website, viewroyalfire.com which has a live interview with the Fire Chief explaining the need for their new fire hall.

4. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

5. Reports:

a) Chair's Report

Dick advised that the signs for the open house have been received. These will be posted at road side locations. It is a one page poster which includes details of the referendum.

Moved by George May, **Seconded** by Rick Lambert, that the Chair's report be adopted as presented.

CARRIED

b) Fire Chief's report

A Incidents

We have had 7 call outs since the last chiefs report.

3 MVIs. 1 of which was quite serious

2 fires caused by downed hydro lines.

In both cases the downed lines remained charged until being deenergized by Hydro crews arriving on scene.

The wires usually appeared "dead" but would repeatedly arc and flash.

They represented an excellent example of why we MUST treat downed lines as if they are still live.

And 2 Medical first response calls.

B Roll Call

We currently have 29 fire fighters registered.

We now have 8 probationary fire fighters.

(Fire fighters are considered probationary until they have earned their pager.)

1 administrative assistant.

And 20 regular firefighters/officers.

C Training

1. Thursday training has been attended by an average of 19 personnel per week and has focused on IFSTA module training.

2. Saturday training was attended by an average of 10 personnel and has consisted of live fire training.

D Business.

1. The new command vehicle (766) has been put into service. There are still some minor features to be completed but the truck is able to serve as a command position as it is. Overall the comments about 766 have been very positive but there have been a few grumblings. These concerns have been discussed and I have found that the two main points are;

A. In order to avoid paying the price for a new vehicle the chief should be using his own truck as previous chiefs have done.

In answer to this I have said,

"I put over 600 KM on my personal truck doing fire department business in the two weeks since having old 766 written off. The Canadian government's mileage reimbursement rate is 54 cents per km or about \$324.00 for that time period. This will add up to \$8424.00 per year or the cost of the new command vehicle every 5 years. Am I to believe that the assumption is that a Chief should be expected to incur this cost and put his own personal vehicle in harm's way as an expectation for having the prestige of being a fire chief? If not, then is the expectation that the tax payers pay the accepted rate of \$0.54 per KM and wind up paying about five times the cost of 766 over a 25 year term? Neither answer is acceptable to me, nor has it been acceptable to the fire commission.

I often have to face down belligerent contractors who feel that it's their right to burn illegally as long as they do it in the wee hours. This should never be done in a private vehicle as it carries a lot more weight when I roll up to an illegal burn in a bright red truck with lots of flashing lights and sirens if necessary.

The most undesirable point of using my personal vehicle as a command vehicle is that I need to haul all the departments gear wherever I go. If anyone chooses to look in the new 766 you will see just how much gear that is. I request that you all look at the equipment in 766 and ask yourselves if you "would not be to inconvenienced if for a while" your own cars, trucks or SUVs were packed full of all of that gear."

B. The firefighters should have been consulted more prior to purchasing the new vehicle.

In answer to this I offer,

Were this vehicle for the firefighters I would agree but this is a command vehicle and, as such was designed by a quick assessment of what other departments are currently using and what changes they would like to see. This combined with the expertise that the CRD fleet manager has, led to what we have today. All command officers that have seen it to date are impressed with the truck and very impressed at the price we got it for.

2. As mentioned in the January report I indicated that an off road vehicle was being considered for use in our department. Investigation into the cost of an off road vehicle put the price for a quad and trailer that would meet our needs at approximately \$9,000.00. This is prohibitively expensive and makes it necessary to table this purchase for the foreseeable future.

3. Our Saturday practices were centered around a house in the 6600 block of East Sooke Rd. A neighbor's complaint brought this to the attention of the CRD risk management staff. CRD risk management turned the issue over to their legal department. CRD legal have investigated the practice of using old or abandoned structures as live practice structures and have arrived at the conclusion that "There is no provision in law to exempt fire departments from the restrictions of the CRDs bylaw". CRD personnel have informed all of the local area Chiefs of the illegality of burning down structures that are donated. At present all live burns in the CRD have been cancelled and no future burns will be permitted except those carried out in live fire training schools where environmental concerns have been fully addressed.

Kevin Hurst commented that concern was raised by the fire fighters that they were not consulted on the purchase of the command vehicle and there are some expensive options in the vehicle. Roger responded by saying that this vehicle purchase was fast tracked as a result of the accident of the previous vehicle, however, criteria for the purchase was established and there were 4 quotes obtained. This was the best option in terms of availability, ability to tow a trailer, engine size, etc. It was purchased at \$14,500 below list price. The options were a bonus. Roger advised that the command vehicle could also be used by the fire fighters as transportation to courses.

Rick Lambert suggested all committee members should review the 5 year plan.

Moved by George May, **Seconded** by Rick Moffet, that the Fire Chief's report be adopted as presented.

CARRIED

c) Finance

Rick Moffet distributed a handout on the "Parkinson's Law of Triviality". He summarized by stating that we must be prudent with spending of money as commissioners and not belaboring the smaller expenditures. Focus must be on the benefit to our fire fighters.

Rick Moffet also stated that the detailed expense reports that he has provided in the past will be modified to show expenses for specific categories, i.e. fire department operations, building maintenance, etc.

Moved by Larry Oram, **Seconded** by Rick Lambert, that the Finance report be adopted as presented.

CARRIED

d) Communications/Public Relations

No report in Brian's absence. Rick Lambert advised that a quote for the referendum signs was received. The price is \$28 for signs 24" X 18" and come with ground stakes. Suggestion made to have bigger signs as well, size 48" X48" to be located at each entrance to the East Sooke District.

Motion by Rick Moffet, **Seconded** by Larry Oram to purchase ten signs sized 24" X 18" and two signs sized 48" X 48".

CARRIED

Moved by Rick Moffet, **Seconded** by George May, that the Communications/Public Relations report be adopted as presented.

e) New Building – (No report)

Roger advised that he has been asked, "If voting "NO" to the referendum would mean the fire hall would not be built". Roger explained that a no vote does not mean that the fire hall will not be built but rather that it will be built in stages, which will cost more. Presently there is available work force and rates are good so now is the time to build.

- f) **Human Resources & Policy** – (No report)
- g) **Emergency Preparedness Liaison** – (No report)

Roger presented some laminated “area sheets” which define each area in our fire district, including roads and directions. These were requested for canvassing the community but will be useful for emergency preparation also.

Dick suggested a short meeting prior to the referendum when Brian returns.

7. Old Business

- a) **Fire Fighters Appreciation Dinner** - Everything is in order for the dinner, food, gifts, band and cheques have been signed. Note that signing authority is still held by, Dick, George, Rick Moffet and Rick Lambert.
- b) **Burn House** - Email distributed from CRD advising that the burn cannot proceed based on Section 10 of the Fire Regulation Bylaw No. 3452. The burn has been cancelled.
- c) **Fire Underwriters Survey** – Dick read through the 1994 Fire Protection Survey report which then recommended a new fire hall. The 2008 report was satisfied with the progress made but there are still inadequacies. The fire department is required to have 2 engines and 2 tenders. We presently have 1 engine and 2 tenders, but have the support of neighboring district tankers who will respond in the event of a structure fire. We do not want to request any written communications from the Fire Commissioner as this would then require immediate action on any inadequacies. At the moment he is content we are moving forward. This Fire Committee has succeeded in getting to a referendum and must remain united.

Rick Lambert suggested we consider posting these two reports at our open house.

- 8. **New Business** – (None)
- 9. **Moved by George May, Seconded** by Rick Lambert that the meeting be adjourned at 8:30 pm.

Next meeting: Monday, April 15, 2013