

NORTH GALIANO FIRE PROTECTION COMMISSION
BOARD MEETING
Retreat Cove Fire hall
April 3, 2011

Minutes

Attending:

Roger Pettit, Susan Phillips, Mary Lou Williams, Julie Gardner, Tom Darby, Rob Snape, Robin Gregory, Andy Beers, Ken Hancock

The meeting commenced at 9:55

In future the Commission meetings will all start at 9:30, to give Ken a chance to get here by ferry.

1 Adoption of Agenda and Past Minutes

Tabled, in the interest of time.

2 Reports and Related Business

2.1 Treasurer Report – Andy:

Budget remaining at end of February was \$118,883.82, representing 92.9%

2.2 Management Team Report – Tom:

- No call outs this month.
- There was a tsunami advisory but not a warning.
- There was an operations meeting.
- At Retreat Cove there is some painting and clean-up left to do.
- The Southern Gulf Islands Emergency Management Commission met regarding the CWPPs on March 22nd. The CRD is pulling all the plans together and making recommendations. A working group, initially made up of Fire Chiefs and CRD staff (to expand out later), will get together as soon as possible.
- There was an EMS Commission meeting with a table top exercise on downed power lines. The emergency (mis-named as “alternate”) road access was confirmed; all keys are in place; and Bill Jones has a set of keys as well.
- With gaming funds Tom will be purchasing manikins for training.
- A fire truck broke down (alternator failed) and Ken, Roger, Allen and Roger took care of the repair, start to finish.
- Re. mapping: the new system’s software is not proving to be easy to use. This will be resolved.

- Annual vehicle testing is complete. Air quality (breathing apparatus) testing will be done soon.
- Basic firefighter training remains to complete. The department is working with the South end to set up a course for Thursday nights. It is a challenge to get trainees in sync re. timing of the modules. This is for certification (training has been done). Eileen will finish her training on Pender in May. Tom Hayes will also get his evaluation there.
- The department cooperated in an ambulance exercise. In a live scenario of a vehicle crash and a motorcycle accident with realistic role playing, filmed by the Film School, a range of equipment that worked quickly and effectively was used. Eileen's training showed its results. The evaluation showed the exercise was very successful; the north did an excellent job.

Honorariums

Tom reported that the officers are doing a lot – e.g. Eileen is training once a month and Roger and others are working hard for the Department. Yet with the current funding formula the officers end up with the same honorarium as the other volunteers. Ken proposed that the officers also get paid for practice, at \$30 per month, up to \$90 for 3 practices per month. Andy reported that we have already budgetted for an increase.

Mary Lou moved to approve this change. Susan Phillips seconded. Approved unanimously.

Andy will put together a review of where we're at on the honorarium budget.

2.4 North End Fire Hall

Project Definition Statement

Ken reported on the changes made since the last meeting, including wording around roles, and changing names. Susan Phillips is now the project representative. It was noted that Susan will have to rely on other board members over time, as the project proceeds, especially regarding technical aspects. Tom will assist and some firefighters might be interested in providing advice.

Cost

It was noted that people will be very concerned about the increases to property tax, and will wonder what role grants and donations could play to reduce the costs. It was acknowledged that additional property taxes will represent a hardship for some. Site preparation costs will be significant, and uncertain for some time to come.

Information obtained to date suggests that there are very few grant opportunities. We will need to have completed a number of steps before we would be able to put together an application, in any case. Robin Gregory agreed to keep on top of grant opportunities, including staying in touch with the CRD grants coordinator: Rosaline Ferre (possibly through Susan, our point of contact).

Metal prefab construction is much less expensive than wood because of labour costs savings. Some wood trim could be added. We can learn from recently-built halls on other islands, re. appearance and costs.

Community Advisory Committee

There was discussion about whether the establishment of a community advisory committee should be held at the upcoming AGM of the NGCA. It was decided that forming the committee should come a bit later, when there will be more topics to discuss. At present there is little need for input until the site assessment is complete.

Newsletter

The newsletter that has been drafted should be updated and sent out. Roger will revise the draft. It will be sent in the week of April 18.

Ken's input on the text is essential.

After the site survey, we will send another communication, with a sub-set of the Q&A.

Lease agreement with NGCA - NGFPS and the CRD

Ken reviewed the brief prepared by CRD staff, looking at pros and cons of a long term lease vs. transfer of title from their perspective. He explained that some considerations (e.g. incorporation of Galiano) might seem far-fetched but have to be included as "just in case" considerations, and as based on experience elsewhere.

The term of a long term lease would have to cover the life of the building and the term of the loan – at least 50 years. Transfer of title would be simpler. It was recognized that under a lease there would be property tax to be paid on the fire hall (not if title is transferred).

It was recognized that the NGCA might see additional pros and cons of the two options, and that the NGCA will have to take the lease vs. conveyance of title to their new board.

Site evaluation

The CRD has been getting prepared to do the site assessment, starting with a surveyor and qualified environmental professional with a riparian ticket. This is needed to establish a building permit.

The NGCA has to provide a written authorization to do the assessment on the site. The wording can be drawn from point 2, under April 9 in the Timeline distributed by Ken, as follows: "written authorization to the CRD to conduct further investigations of the subject site in order to establish its viability to support the proposed fire hall (including by not limited to environmental/ geotechnical/ servicing assessments." Susan will draft the letter that needs to be signed, based this text. We hope that at the upcoming AGM approval for site access for assessment will be granted through a motion.

Communications Strategy

A plan drafted by Andy Beers was seen as adequate for now, acknowledging a shift in emphasis of the talking points/messages for the NGCA AGM, as described below. The word Jubilee needs to be changed to Jamboree. Key dates and deliverables/messages will have to be updated once the results of the site assessment are in hand.

The importance of getting information out to the community and otherwise keeping people informed was recognized, yet we should not create expectations that we can't deliver on. For example, we need to be realistic as to what information will be available by July 1st for the Jamboree. We are unlikely to have cost information such as a budget range and property tax information by then because so much depends on initial steps to be taken. We will need clarification from CRD staff later with regard to information that will be available at the time of the Jamboree.

Ken recommended that we come up with a very simple drawing of the fire hall for initial communications.

NGCA AGM – presentation

The priority is to keep it simple, explaining where we've come from and where we're at, and the steps going forward. These should just be broad steps, in overview. The PDS provides a starting point.

The two main points are 1) We need a new fire hall; 2) We can't begin to estimate a cost range until the site assessment is done – it will determine whether we can use that site, and the footprint of the building if the site is appropriate.

3 New/Other Business

3.1 Next meeting

May 15, 2011 at the Retreat Cove Fire Hall, 9:30 a.m.

The meeting adjourned at 11:45.