

## **Mountain Fire Protection District**

### **Annual General Meeting (AGM)**

**April 25, 2019**

**Call to Order** Neil Nelson called to order at 7:01 pm.

#### **Introduction**

- Trustees Neil Nelson, John Gregson, Tony Wright, Clem Remillard, and Mike deWit. Sarah Zubkowski. Maureen Young from RDN.

#### **Prior Year AGM Minutes:**

- Neil Nelson asked for questions on prior year AGM minutes. None.

#### **Financial Report:**

- Sarah Zubkowski discussed financial statements for 2018. Called for questions. None.

#### **Improvement District Report:**

- Clem Remillard discussed street lighting in the District. Only a few lights were out during the year. Please call if you see any street lights out so the board can get these repaired.
- Compressor was replaced recently in the hall.
- Old fire truck to be discussed later.
- Super shuttle service to be discussed later.

#### **Fire Department Report:**

- Russ McMann stated that the firehall received 47 calls during 2018.
- Training is currently focused on shuttling water due to no fire hydrants and MVIs.
- Mutual aid agreement is currently being worked on with the City of Nanaimo. This will add in other fire departments. This will require an increase in training budget to accommodate working with other departments and different equipment.
- Sunday May 26<sup>th</sup> open house at the fire hall.
- Old fire truck is from 1988 and will require replacement as the repairs are adding up and parts are hard to come by. It could break down at any time. A brand new truck is not necessary and used trucks are being considered.
- Super shuttle service – progress is being made on this program. Water tanks are planning to be placed in the property adjacent to the fire hall with an agreement with Dale Fulton as they will be placed on his property.
- Burning information – crazy burn year due to windstorms and new subdivisions. Please review the paperwork and website with regards to burning. Burn permits can be obtained online and sent via the website. This will allow the fire department to come inspect and approve the pile within 48 hours of submission. Venting index must be adhered to, please refer to the handout provided. The timing of starting the fire is important. Morning is the best time to start the fire so that by later in the day when the venting index is good the fire will be fully ignited.
- Deb Remillard – please clarify the timing of the time to light the pile? Light the pile in the morning so that the fire has time to burn before 4 pm when the venting index is good.
- Deb Avender – this is confusing. The sheet will be put on the website for residents to review.

- Jessica Reed noted that the subdivision at Rock Ridge gets covered with smoke quite often. She has written a letter to RDN and they will not help. The BC Government is no help as well. Russ McMann stated that she lives in the “no man’s land” and the RDN is working on it. Russ McCallum stated she should phone the RDN bylaw officer. The conservation officer can also be called.
- Bruce Erickson – there was a question of liability with respect to the City of Nanaimo entering our District. The City of Nanaimo is required to get a PEP number to enter the District. This is still the case however with the new mutual aid agreement it should make the process faster.
- Al Whitworth – how many houses/parcels in the District? Tony Wright stated there is 469. Steve Ellis made a case for the new trucks and the super shuttle service however this is taking many years to accomplish. He calculates that this is costing \$80,000 to the residents. Please give a detailed update on the super shuttle service. Russ McMann stated that once the water tanks are in the ground we will be accredited within 2 years. Al Whitworth asked whether he has looked into the roadblocks after the water tanks are put in the ground. Russ McMann stated he has.
- Tony Wright has put together borrowing costs. Loan amounts, amortization periods, interest rates, assessed value. Refer to handouts which detail borrowing at \$50,000, \$100,000 and \$150,000 levels. The tax base should increase by approximately 50 more properties which will help reduce the costs.
- Bruce Erickson – is Witchcraft Lake still going to be used for a water source? Russ McMann stated that this is not a priority at the moment and that there are environmental hurdles to overcome.
- Wayne Morgan – if we have money in the capital works fund why don’t we use this money to get the tanks done as this is a capital expenditure? Tony Wright stated that the money is being saved for fire truck(s) replacement in 2029. Why can’t we use the money in the account now and borrow later? Neil stated that it is pay me now or pay me later. John stated that we will have a big hit in 2029 when we have to replace the truck then. Wayne Morgan stated that the truck may be able to be renewed for another 5 years per fire standards. Joe Mayzes asked what the options are for borrowing? Neil Nelson referred to the handouts on borrowing. Steve Atkinson asked why we can’t use the money we have saved now and continue saving for the future. Also the cost of borrowing is quite a low currently. Neil explained that the money was set up for capital items and in particular fire trucks and was not intended to be used for every purchase we make.
- Laura McDonough asked who is providing the interest rate? Clem Remillard stated this is through the Government of BC. Why don’t we invest the reserve funds to try to make some money? Yes the board has discussed this.
- Deb Avender – what are the requirements for the water tanks and fire trucks? What is the timeline? Neil Nelson stated that the tanks are priority and will hopefully be in the ground by the end of the year. When will the old truck be replaced? After tanks in the ground.
- Gord Shoquist – with tanks in the ground and mutual aid agreement in place, can’t we use the other fire departments in place to help us? Russ McMann stated that yes this is the case however this won’t help towards the super shuttle service.
- Bruce Erickson – any money spent on fire department comes back to residents in the form of savings on house insurance.
- Clem Remillard – it is taking longer for super shuttle as approval is required from underwriters. Underwriters will be visiting the District to review and observe and provide feedback on specifically what we need to do to qualify.

- Maureen Young – how do you perform the test for super shuttle service? Russ McMann stated that we need to produce 200 gallons/minute and have storage for 24,000 gallons of water at the fire hall.
- Bruce Erickson – do the insurance companies recognize the foam? Russ McMann stated that no they do not however it is necessary due to the lack of water.
- Joe Mayzes – lived in the District for years and the tanks are not just for super shuttle service but also to protect the residents of the District. Certain areas of the District are susceptible to forest fires and having more water will only help the District.
- Janet Atkinson – grew up here and there are dry summers. Is there any possibility of closing the parks when it is very dry? Neil Nelson stated that the fire department cannot police this and they are volunteers. Maureen stated that the RDN does not have the power to close it. It may be BC Government that can close them. Locks have been removed from gates.
- Steve Atkinson – District has been well run and efficient.
- Deb Remillard – do you need a vote to move forward on the water tanks? Neil stated no. Deb asked how long till the old truck replaced? Neil stated that it will be replaced after the water tanks however if it dies it will need to be replaced sooner.
- Joe Mayzes – asked for a vote for water tanks. Russ McMann stated this is not protocol. Clem stated that the board will make decision and move forward based on the general approval to move forward on water tanks. This is a general information meeting to discuss options. Neil stated that the minutes are on the website and the meetings are held monthly where all these items are discussed. The residents are always welcome at the monthly board meetings.
- Mike Bourcier – how much is the truck going to cost in 2029? Not sure. Rob Argyle stated that the trucks can be extended for life maybe.
- Wayne Morgan – can minutes go on the website faster after meetings? Clem stated that he is sorry and plans to have the minutes on website within a week of the monthly meetings.
- Russ McCallum – residents and board cannot post items on the mailboxes. Clem stated that some post people rip them down.
- Atkinson – what about boxes we used to have at the mailboxes? Clem stated there was issues with these being used for other purposes.

#### **Elections:**

- Clem Remillard and Mike de Wit are up for renewal. Neil Nelson asked if they will stay on. Yes they both stated they will. No other nominees were made. Mike de Wit and Clem Remillard both agreed to stay on.

#### **Questions:**

- Neil Nelson asked for questions.
- Clem Remillard asked to take a picture of the AGM for the website. Any protests? None made.

#### **Adjourn meeting**

Neil Nelson adjourns the meeting at 8:07 pm

#### **Maureen Young presentation.**