

## **Mountain Fire Protection District**

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

**April 24, 2014**

**In Attendance:** Trustees Charles Pinker, Anne Judson, Clem Remillard, and Dean Kauwell. Gord Shoquist was absent. Administrator/Financial Officer Sarah Zubkowski. Attendance sign in sheets report 41 residents of the District and 6 guests (non-residents) including Maureen Young Electoral Area C representative on the Regional District of Nanaimo Board of Directors.

Meeting called to order @ 7:05 pm by Charles Pinker.

**1st Order:** Minutes from the 2013 AGM read by Anne Judson. Motion to adopt made by George Baker. Second by Jack Van Doorn. MSC.

**Financial Report:** presented by Doug Parkhurst of KMA Chartered Accountants Ltd (auditors).

- Doug Parkhurst read and explained the December 31, 2013 financial statements including auditor's report and notes to the financial statements.
- Doug Parkhurst asked for questions of which there were none.
- Doug Parkhurst thanked Gord Shoquist and Sarah Zubkowski for their assistance with the audit.
- Motion to approve financial statements made by Randy O'Donnell. Second by Bruce Erickson. MSC.

**Fire Department Report:** presented by Captain Russ McCallum.

- 30 total callouts in 2013: 3 alarms activated, 3 assistance, 4 burning complaints, 2 hydro line fires, 1 medical aid, 10 motor vehicle incidents, 1 structure fire, and 6 other fires.
- 2014 Freightliner tandem tanker vacuum fire truck ordered and expected to arrive in October/November 2014. This type of truck has been around for approximately 10 years.
- Joan Erickson asked whether the new fire truck is a Canadian or American model? Russ McCallum noted that Freightliner's are from the US but the new fire truck will be built in Manitoba and the parts will be sourced from Canada.
- The number of motor vehicle incidents has increased therefore the fire department has been practicing more for this type of call.
- Randy O'Donnell asked whether the department has the jaws of life? Russ McCallum stated they do not and are looking into getting them. Currently, the City of Nanaimo assists in motor vehicle accidents that require them.
- There are currently 28 volunteer firefighters.
- Clem Remillard asked Russ McCallum to introduce the firefighters in attendance at the AGM.
- Randy O'Donnell thanked the firefighters for their service.

**District Report:** presented by Charles Pinker.

- Charles Pinker addressed honorariums. Currently the board does not receive them and there is no plan to start.

- At the request of our advisor in the provincial government, we were asked to remove direct financial responsibilities (cheque-writing, accounting, etc) from any trustee. The Administrator position was created and was filled by Sarah Zubkowski, CA.
- Charles Pinker noted the new fire truck costs \$349,867 plus tax and is to be financed and passed the floor on to Clem Remillard to explain further. The new truck will be purchased using \$130,000 from the Capital Works & Renewal Reserve Account and \$244,500 financed for 15 years at 3.75%. The following are property tax implications.
  - A property with a value of \$200,000 will see an annual increase of \$18.60.
  - A property with a value of \$300,000 will see an annual increase of \$27.90.
  - A property with a value of \$521,406 (average property value in the district) will see an annual increase of \$48.38.
  - A property with a value of \$600,000 will see an annual increase of \$55.80.
  - A property with a value of \$700,000 will see an annual increase of \$65.10.
  - A property with a value of \$800,000 will see an annual increase of \$74.40.
  - A property with a value of \$900,000 will see an annual increase of \$83.70.
  - A property with a value of \$1,000,000 will see an annual increase of \$93.00.
- Randy O'Donnell questioned what will happen to the old fire truck? Russ McCallum stated that the fire department hopes to keep it and convert it to a parts truck.
- Randy O'Donnell asked how much it will cost to convert the old fire truck to a parts truck? Russ McCallum stated they hope to keep the costs low.
- Bruce Erickson asked why the new truck is costing \$349,867 when the quote provided in 2013 was \$200,000? Clem Remillard stated that the previous quote was for a tanker truck only with no vacuum system. Russ McCallum also stated that they have added items to the new truck ordered which were not included in the original quote in 2013. Clem also noted that they received a quote on a tanker truck only which came in at \$300,000.

**Regional District of Nanaimo report:** presented by Maureen Young.

- A meeting will be held on June 4<sup>th</sup> regarding the Jingle Pot Trail. Maureen Young stated that they received \$100,000 from the gas tax rebate which she is hoping to use for the Jingle Pot Trail if approved by the Ministry of Transportation.
- The parking at Bension Creek Falls is going to be addressed.
- Parks and Open Spaces meeting was cancelled in February 2014 due to weather and is rescheduled to May 12<sup>th</sup>. At the meeting Maureen Young hopes to get the results from Enders Park.
- Secondary suite and attached suite rules have changed. Secondary suites are allowed if septic meets certain criteria. Attached suites cannot be more than 40% of the original home.
- There are changes to the recycling program as noted in the Wasteline News.
- Bus stops in the District have yet to be addressed and there has been no information received from the 6 month survey done. The RDN continued with the service.
- Wayne Morgan asked how much the bus service is costing? Maureen Young stated that it is \$11.40/\$100,000 of value which is a \$3.90 increase from 2013.
- Charles Pinker asked what the figures were from the 6 month survey? Maureen Young stated that she has yet to receive the results even though she has requested them a few times.
- Charles Pinker asked for a show of hands whether anyone in the room rides the bus? No one raised their hand.

- Randy O'Donnell stated he does see more than a few riders on the bus when he see it and feels that the subsidization for a small number of riders seems ridiculous.
- Tony Ayers questioned whether they would have to pay if the bus service was removed? Maureen Young stated that the District will still have to pay for the HandyDart service.
- Anne Judson asked why the residents of the District have to take action to have the bus service cancelled? Maureen Young stated that she can advocate on behalf of the District and its residents.
- Bruce Erickson made a motion to request that Maureen have the bus service cancelled.
- Harold Kamikawaji asked whether they should wait to get the report back from the 6 month survey prior to deciding whether the bus service is cancelled.
- Wayne Morgan asked what the ridership was in the district on the bus service? Maureen Young stated that she doesn't know.
- Russ McCallum agrees that the report information from the 6 month survey should be reviewed prior to voting on whether to cancel the bus service. Maureen promises to request the information again.
- Debbie Avender questioned when the 6 month trial of the bus service ended? Maureen Young stated it was at least 6 months ago.
- Debbie Avender asked who has been contacted for the survey information on the bus service? Maureen Young stated that she has contacted the General Manager of the Ministry of Transportation.
- Bryan Gregson asked why the rates on the bus service cannot stay at the previous rates until the information from the survey is received? Maureen Young stated she will follow up on that.
- George Baker stated that there is only 5 km of City of Nanaimo land/bus route which makes the bus service very expensive for the District as it is paying for the entire route.
- Tim Miller questioned whether they should vote to have the bus service cancelled if there is no information from the survey received? This way the process could be sped up rather than waiting till the next AGM. Maureen Young stated that yes the District can do this.
- Clem Remillard asked whether it would be better to have a letter from the District with the questions and concerns regarding the bus service rather than verbal communication going through Maureen Young? Maureen Young stated that this would be better.
- Bruce Erickson questioned the room as to whether anyone used the bus service? A few people noted that their kids have used it. Bruce Erickson suggested that perhaps residents of the District should ride for free.
- Charles Pinker questioned who was included in District C of the Regional District? Maureen Young stated that it includes the Mountain Fire Protection District and Pleasant Valley.
- Dale Fulton questioned what portion the City pays and whether the District pays it for the entire bus service? Maureen Young stated that the City pays a portion but she does not have the specific information.
- Jason Turner suggested that since there are no numbers on ridership the District should ask for a new survey in which the data relating to the District is tracked separately. This way the numbers cannot be skewed.
- Jim Whittaker stated he is concerned about not receiving the information from the RDN and questioned why? Maureen Young stated she is not sure why she has not received this.
- Debbie Avender asked what the 6 month trial bus service was to indicate? Maureen Young stated that the purpose was to get ridership numbers.

- Randy O'Donnell questioned how they can perform a 6 month trial and then produce no results? Maureen Young promises to follow up.
- Wayne Morgan agrees that a letter from the board on behalf of the District would be a great idea.
- Debbie Avender questioned whether the press should be asked to get involved?
- Harold Kamikawaji suggested that the District go to the ombudsman next if the information is not received.
- Barry Creswell stated that he lives on Laveau Lane which he thought was included in the District when he purchased his house and has subsequently found out it is not and is curious why not? Clem Remillard stated that it is up to Barry Creswell to get a petition and present it to the RDN to have his property included in the District.
- Joan Erickson asked what the status of the sewer line is on Maxey Road as there have been surveyors there? Maureen Young stated that she did not know but will enquire.
- Charles Pinker asked Bruce Erickson whether he wanted to go forth with his motion to have Maureen ask that the bus service be cancelled? Bruce Erickson withdrew his motion.
- Jack Van Doorn asked if the results from the 6 month survey can be posted on the website? Charles Pinker assured him they would be.
- Charles Pinker enquired whether anyone in the room had been on the website? A good show of hands stated yes.
- Clem Remillard asked whether the residents received the AGM cards in the mail? The majority of the room said yes.
- Nicole Kauwell asked why non-residents of the district received the AGM cards in the mail? Clem Remillard stated that the way the postal service routes work, we had to distribute the flyer to two overlapping routes in order to completely cover our area. This meant that both MFPD and some non-MFPD residents received notification of the AGM. Perhaps next time, we will need to put a disclaimer on the notice.

### **Election:**

- Charles Pinker stated that Gord Shoquist provided 30 years of service to the District and was presented with a painting in recognition of this service from the board. The Ministry wrote a letter to Gord Shoquist also thanking him for his service.
- Charles Pinker noted that his and Gord Shoquist's positions were up for election this year. Charles Pinker passed the chair position over to Clem Remillard to run the election for his position.
- Clem Remillard asked whether Charles Pinker would be willing to run for another 3 year term? Charles Pinker stated that he would.
- Dale Fulton asked what was involved in being a trustee? Clem Remillard stated there are monthly meetings, policies and procedures development, various jobs around the hall, street lighting and fire department management, etc.
- Clem Remillard made the 1st call for nominations for Charles Pinker's position. No one spoke up. 2nd call made by Clem Remillard. No one spoke up. 3rd call made by Clem Remillard. No one spoke up. Clem Remillard stated that Charles Pinker is officially in for another 3 year term.
- Clem Remillard passed the chair position back to Charles Pinker. Charles Pinker made the 1st call for nominations for Gord Shoquist's position.
  - Wayne Morgan nominated Dale Fulton.
  - Dean Kauwell nominated Jason Turner.
  - Karen Anker nominated Travis Judson.

- Charles Pinker made the 2nd call for nominations. No one spoke up. 3rd call made by Charles Pinker. No one spoke up.
  - Charles Pinker asked Dale Fulton if he was willing to run. Dale Fulton stated that he would.
  - Charles Pinker asked Jason Turner if he was willing to run. Jason Turner stated that he was not.
  - Charles Pinker asked Travis Judson if he was willing to run. Travis Judson stated that he was not.
- Charles Pinker stated that Dale Fulton was officially the new trustee.

### **New Business:**

- Wayne Morgan questioned where the board is getting the information regarding the adoption of policies and procedures? Clem Remillard stated that it is from the government directly and referenced previous legal cases from other improvement districts in which there were issues. This is why the policies and procedures are being adopted in order to show some transparency.
- Wayne Morgan asked whether this is in writing? Clem Remillard stated that the government will not provide this in writing as they want the courts to resolve the issues.
- Wayne Morgan stated that he feels the relationship between the board of trustees and the fire department is toxic and that the new policies and procedures may bring more toxicity. Anne Judson feels that the relationship between the board of trustees and the fire department is getting better and noted that there was recently a meeting between the two groups to establish better communication. Anne Judson also noted that the board is requesting input from fire department on the policies and procedures. Anne Judson stated that changes in attitude need to be adopted so everyone can move forward. Clem Remillard stated that we need to put the past in the past and move forward. Charles Pinker also noted that the board is using other improvement districts policies and procedures as a starting point.
- Wayne Morgan feels it is a problem if the board restricts firefighters and spouses from being on the board as suggested in a previous policy. Charles Pinker stated that it is not an option to have the board made up of firefighters as this is a conflict of interest. Clem Remillard reiterated that transparency is key.
- Debbie Avender enquired whether the policies and procedures will be posted on the website prior to adoption? Anne Judson said no however residents of the district are welcome to attend the monthly board meetings and can provide input at this time.
- Jack Van Doorn asked whether taxpayers can vote on issues at the meetings? Anne Judson stated they cannot but they can provide input.
- Jack Van Doorn asked that the policy on conflict of interest be discussed further for the residents in attendance. Charles Pinker noted that the policy was drafted and not discussed by the board. The government stated that residents of the district who are firefighters can be on the board of trustees. Anne Judson apologized for the timing of the policy and noted that this was accidentally seen prior to the board fully discussing.
- Debbie Avender stated that the policies and procedures should be researched further prior to adoption. Anne Judson stated that the board performs the necessary research on every policy and procedure.
- Bruce Erickson asked whether the financial statements could be taken from the meeting? Charles Pinker and Anne Judson assured him they were public knowledge.

- Randy O'Donnell stated that he lives across from Witchcraft Lake and there are dirt bikes are being used which is not allowed and was wondering if Maureen Young can have more gates or barriers put up? Maureen Young stated she will look into it.
- Barry Creswell asked the crowd if they are having American Bullfrog issues? Many other people stated they are.
- Jack Van Doorn asked whether they can have no parking signs in front of the fire gates at Witchcraft Lake? Maureen Young stated the parking lots may be moved and that the gate issue can most likely be addressed.
- Dale Leathorn enquired whether the barricades/stanchions on Witchcraft Lake can be removable for ease of access for the fire department? Maureen Young stated she can request this.
- Wayne Morgan enquired about the Millstone Winery's sign on the narrow road and whether this is acceptable? Maureen Young said it is in the hands of the Department of motor Vehicles currently.
- Wayne Morgan also noted that the Sunday Jam Sessions at the Millstone Winery are quite loud. Maureen Young said she could look into this.

Motion to adjourn meeting @ 8:55 pm made by Bryan Gregson. Second by Wayne Morgan.  
MSC.

Next Board of Trustees meeting is May 15th @ 7pm.