

## **Mountain Fire Protection District**

### **Trustee Meeting**

**August 17, 2021**

**In Attendance:** Trustees Tony Wright, Harold Kamikawaji, Clem Remillard, Dave Stewart and Neil Nelson. Administrator/Financial Officer Sarah Zubkowski. Fire Chief Russ McMann, Deputy Fire Chief Dave LeNeveu, Assistant Fire Chief Russ McCallum, firefighters Darcy Morgan, Joe Mayzes and Wayne Morgan. Residents Charles Pinker, Kevin Blakeman, and Bill Pitt.

Meeting called to order @ 7:00 pm by Neil Nelson. Second by Tony Wright. MSC.

### **Correspondence:**

- Dave LeNeveu met with RDN representative regarding forestry management – CWRP Process. Fire department is eligible for training reimbursement for certain items. The fire department will need to provide receipts for training that is eligible and they will review and potentially reimburse the District for these expenses.

**Financial Report:** presented by Sarah Zubkowski.

- List of bills noted.
- Island Communications has come in to set up a separate line for the new dispatch system. The District will also receive a bill from Shaw for another line that was put in for backup purposes for the paging system. Clem Remillard stated that the District needs to provide information to RDN at the end of the year to be reimbursed for this.

**Fire Department Report:** presented by Russ McMann.

- 4 calls in July - 1 medical assist, 1 alarm activated, and 2 wildfire calls.
- Darcy Morgan stated that he has received an increasing number of calls due to smoke from wildfires in BC.

### **Old Business:**

- Clem Remillard stated that Mitchell Nelson is still updating the florescent lights to LED. The bay is yet to be done.
- Sarah Zubkowski has yet to receive the ICBC cheque to cover the Nucor Environmental bill. Clem Remillard has contacted ICBC multiple times regarding this issue with no reply. Nucor Environmental has also contacted ICBC.
- Russ McMann stated that the Surrey Dispatch system is working smoothly. There have been a couple of issues with the Dispatch service as they do not know our area and they have some different codes.
- Clem Remillard stated that the fobs are still being updated with the firefighters. There have been a few problems with codes and fobs for some firefighters. Clem Remillard is going to go through the master list of names and update the system. The District may have to update the security system if we continue to have problems with the current system.
- The firefighters are still waiting on quotes regarding the replacement truck for 903.
- Tony Wright obtained quote regarding the air bottles and it was higher than the quote obtained by the fire department. Tony Wright motions to obtain the replacement bottles through Irwin Air as this is cheaper. Neil Nelson second. MSC.

- Tony Wright stated that the firehall roof has a lot of moss and we should get this removed. Clem Remillard also stated that the gutters should be cleaned. Obtained 2 quotes which were quite different. Dave Stewart motions to go with Mr. Sparkle quote. Clem Remillard second. MSC.

### **New Business:**

- Russ McMann wants to talk about fire department and board relations which he believes have been good thus far. Russ McMann stated that he feels the board is getting involved in fire department matters which he feels are under his direction as Fire Chief. Russ McMann read from the Trustee Handbook regarding the Trustees role. In particular, the water being used for training purposes (i.e. filling pools, watering residents, etc). Russ McMann doesn't want arguments coming up regarding issues related to this training. Neil Nelson stated that the public perception is the issue and the board gets a lot of phone calls regarding water usage in the District. Neil Nelson stated that the Board wants the fire department to keep a log book. Dave LeNeveu stated that the fire department has a log book which has many details. Clem Remillard stated that the water dumping during training should be open to the rest of the residents and it isn't fair to residents that are paying for water and some are getting it for free to through training. Dave LeNeveu suggested that the people who are interested in having water should contact the Fire Chief and perhaps they can work it into a training session. The fire hydrant in the District is also owned by the City of Nanaimo and should only be used for emergency purposes. Clem Remillard asked what should be said to residents about washing vehicles, trailers, and boats who see them being washed and want to wash theirs as they are tax payers in the District. Dave LeNeveu stated that they should join the firehall and enjoy the perks of being a firefighter. Darcy Morgan stated that he feels these are firehall operations which are overseen by the Fire Chief and not the Trustees. Clem Remillard stated that the trustees oversee everything. Russ McMann stated that he doesn't want to continue discussing these issues and public concerns at trustee meetings and we should focus on business issues.
- Russ McMann asked about the letter that was issued by the RDN regarding a party that occurred last weekend. His name was on the letter and he would like to know how his name was attached to this letter. Clem Remillard stated that he did not know about the letter. Dave LeNeveu stated that the fire department told the RDN the concerns that they had and they were assured that the these were all met. They also discussed the fire prevention measures that the owners and party planners had taken to ensure that there were no fires. The fire department were then asked to do some fire prevention to ensure no issues occurred. Harold Kamikawaji stated that he was at the Zoom meeting regarding the party and the fire department and Russ McMann were not brought up in that meeting. The letter was dated August 3, 2021 and was given to the owners and then forwarded to the fire department. Russ McMann also did not appreciate the emails from the trustees stating that he supported the party which he did not. Clem Remillard stated that this was a commercial adventure and therefore the District could have billed for the fire prevention services that were provided. Dave LeNeveu stated that billing was brought up in the zoom meeting with the RDN and it was stated that if the trucks were needed in an emergency purposes then we could bill the homeowners directly. Clem Remillard stated that it is the district bylaw and not an RDN issue. Dave LeNeveu stated that they were not contravening any policies or rules and issues therefore we could not bill for this. Dave Stewart stated that they did do a good job dealing with the party. Russ McCallum discussed the party with the board of health representative and she had no issue with the party. Wayne Morgan stated that the fire department received an email

from multiple residents thanking the fire department for their fire prevention measures that were provided. Neil Nelson and Russ McMann will discuss this further privately.

- Russ McMann asked what the bylaw is regarding purchases made by fire fighters. Dave LeNeveu stated that he would like a copy. Dave LeNeveu asked regarding the water and Gatorade issue that has not been reimbursed yet. Dave LLeNeveu stated that the water and Gatorade is part of the truck supplies and therefore should be covered by the fire department. Dave LeNeveu feels that these small items should be approved by him and reimbursed to the firefighter who paid for it. Dave Stewart asked where this would be in the budget. Sarah Zubkowski stated that this would be under firefighter equipment. Normally in the past the water and Gatorade was paid by the EWVFFA and was only paid by the District if it related to a fire. Russ McMann stated this has not been an issue in the past four years as far as he is concerned. Dave LeNeveu asked if this bill will be approved? Dave LeNeveu also asked if all these small items will all become issues for when the firefighters have to purchase items from places that we do not have accounts at. Clem Remillard stated that they will revisit the purchasing policy and perhaps revamp it. Neil Nelson motions to pay water and Gatorade bill. Tony Wright seconds. MSC.
- Dave LeNeveu stated that they provided a budget to the trustees regarding how the firefighter remuneration is spent. The trustees have asked for a detailed list of how the money is spent in a previous meeting. Neil Nelson stated that the fire chief stated in a previous meeting that he would provide this however the fire department has voted that they will not provide the detailed information regarding the remuneration. Dave LeNeveu stated that this is similar to paying an employee, you cannot ask how this is being spent. Therefore, this will not be provided. Clem Remillard was under the impression that the fire department would provide this. The fire department stated that under the improvement manual this is not required. They can provide this if required under audit purposes. Russ McMann asked why the board wants to have this information. Dave LeNeveu stated that this is used for a variety of purposes as per the budget provided and for the betterment of the fire department and the hall.
- Russ McMann asked if the remuneration cheque will be paid out tonight since the District has received the funds. Clem Remillard asked Sarah Zubkowski to discuss. Sarah Zubkowski stated that it has come up with the auditors in the past and may be an issue with the Province who provides the funding for our budget. She stated that it has been brought up as a potential issue as the remuneration is the only item on our budget that we do not have actual receipts to back up the remuneration. Dave LeNeveu feels that they should be contacted directly if this information is required. Charles Pinker stated that the government would not contact the fire department directly, they would contact the board. Wayne Morgan asked if it should be called honorarium rather than remuneration. Sarah Zubkowski stated that it doesn't really matter. Neil Nelson motions to pay remuneration. Tony Wright seconds. MSC. Tony Wright stated that from an optics perspective the Board are trying to ensure that the budget and spending are transparent and wants to ensure that it is digitized in the minutes. Dave LeNeveu stated that he has accomplished getting the fire department more digital and electronic.

#### **Questions:**

- Neil asked for questions.
- Charles Pinker, who is the alternate director for District C, he has information regarding roads and maintenance in the District. Russ McMann stated that he provided information to Charles Pinker however would like to discuss the information further to ensure that everything is covered. Charles Pinker stated that the report has already been submitted. Russ McMann asked if there were any areas to note. Kevin Blakeman mentioned the

corner near Steve Ellis' house. Charles Pinker asked that Russ McMann put together a list of the areas noted and provide it to him.

**Motions Adopted by E-Mail:**

- Motion to pay Sarah Zubkowski made by Neil Nelson Jul 19, 2021. Second by Clem Remillard Jul 19, 2021.
- Motion to pay bills made by Neil Nelson Jul 30, 2021. Second by Dave Stewart Jul 30, 2021.
- Motion to pay Sarah Zubkowski made by Harold Kamikawaji Aug 2, 2021. Second by Neil Nelson Aug 2, 2021.
- Motion to pay bills made by Neil Nelson Aug 15, 2021. Second by Harold Kamikawaji Aug 15, 2021.
- Motion to pay Sarah Zubkowski made by Harold Kamikawaji Aug 17, 2021. Second by Tony Wright Aug 17, 2021.

Motion to adjourn meeting @ 8:14 pm made by Neil Nelson. Second by Dave Stewart. MSC.

Next meeting September 16, 2021 @ 7 pm.