

Minutes of the Trustee Meeting of the Salt Spring Island Fire Protection District

Meeting held: **25 May 2015**

In attendance: Trustees: Linda Lee (Chair), Michael Garside, Derek Hill, Norbert Schlenker, Michael Schubart

Regrets: Mitch Forest, Michele Severn

Staff Members: Chief Tom Bremner, Corporate Administration Officer (CAO) Andrew Peat

17 residents

Called to Order: 7:00pm

Approval of Agenda

Chair Lee suggested that the agenda be amended to have Chief Bremner's report discussed before hearing public submissions and that under delegations priority be given to parties who have requested to address the meeting and/or have made submissions.

Motion that the agenda be amended as proposed moved by Trustee Schlenker seconded by Trustee Hill. Carried

Fire Chief's Report on Proposed Bylaw No.125

Chief Bremner's report to trustees on the proposed Open-Burning Bylaw was distributed prior to the meeting. (Copy attached to the original minutes.) Chief Bremner thanked former trustee Ron Chamney for his work on revising the bylaw and staff, particularly Lieutenant Sherrin, for their input and assistance. Material changes (highlighted in yellow) are recommended as proposed restrictions (in particular those proposing a burning season and ventilation index requirements) could prohibit open-burning completely. Chief Bremner commented that he tried to maintain a balance between legitimate health and environmental concerns and the realities facing island residents.

Responding to a question from Trustee Hill, Chief Bremner advised that bylaw enforcement would be largely through public education, communications and prevention. The cost recovery section in the bylaw (section 22) is not a fine but rather a recovery as an improvement district does not have the authority to levy fines. In the discussion the ability of the District to have costs recovered by adding the debt to property taxes was questioned and the comment was made that the debt might only be attached as a registered lien against the title. In response to a question from Trustee Schlenker, Chief Bremner advised that former trustee Chamney communicated with several groups which expressed a desire that the open-burning bylaw address health and environment concerns which he incorporated.

Delegations

Ken Byron expressed his concern that ventilation index requirements for category 2 opening burning would severely limit the number of days burning would be permitted.

He also expressed his concern that the bylaw should not be passed until the District's legal ability to recover costs has been clarified.

Sandra Leckie summarized health and environmental concerns expressed in her submission. Smoke from open-burning is a known and accepted risk to health and that when we dispose of land clearing and garden waste we can do better than just burning – exploring the alternative such as chipping and composting which would be value added options.

Ron McCullough asked that trustees take more time to deliberate on the proposed changes and that the community be clearly informed on what will be the impact of proposed regulations rather than a surprise after the fact.

In the general discussion the comment was made that the category 3 setback requirement of 100m from neighbouring residence or business precluded burning in most residential areas. Chief Bremner commented that the bylaw regulates open-burning not “smoke” which is a provincial responsibility under the Environmental Management Act. Responding to a question on why an open-burning bylaw is needed at all, Chief Bremner and Trustee Schlenker both commented that if there is no local bylaw the more restrictive requirements of the Wild Fire Act are in effect. Responding to a comment that site visits prior to Class 3 material burns is unnecessary, Chief Bremner stated that inspections of burn piles have not been done since 2014 as local contractors have pointed out their methodology for processing the burn materials.

Lieutenant Sherrin reminded the meeting that the revision of the open-burning regulation was begun in large part as a housekeeping measure to update definitions and references to provincial legislation, to potentially allow for on-line permitting, streamline terminology and reflect contemporary practices for open-burning.

Correspondence

Correspondence on proposed Bylaw No 125 was received from former trustee Ron Chamney, Ken Byron, and Sandra Leckie and John Walper. (Copies attached to the original minutes.)

Old Business

Bylaw No. 125 Open-Burning regulations

Chair Lee and Trustee Schlenker expressed their belief that the District would be ill-advised to proceed with second reading and it would be better to start over. **Motion** that the introduction and first reading of Open-Burning Bylaw No. 125 be rescinded moved by Trustee Schlenker seconded by Trustee Garside. Carried by unanimous consent. After further discussion it was agreed that the drafting of a revised open-burning regulations bylaw be done by a select committee of the board. **Motion** that Trustee Schlenker, Trustee Garside, Chief Bremner, Lt. Mitchell Sherrin, CAO Peat, Ken Byron and Sandra Leckie be appointed to a select committee of the board to draft an open-burning bylaw for consideration by the Board of Trustees moved by Trustee Schubart seconded by Trustee Hill. Carried.

Adjournment

There being no further business **motion** to adjourn moved by Trustee Schubart. Carried.
The meeting adjourned at 8:45pm.

The next scheduled regular meeting of the trustees is 15 June 2015.

Linda Lee
Chair Board of Trustees

Andrew Peat
Corporate Administrator