

Minutes of the “Town Hall” Meeting of the Salt Spring Island Fire Protection District

Meeting held: **January 18, 2016**
Lower Hall, Ganges United Church

In attendance:

Trustees: Chair Linda Lee, Howard Baker, Michael Craig, Mitch Forest, Andy Hildebrand, Derek Hill, Norbert Schlenker

Staff Members: Corporate Administrator and Financial Officer Andrew Peat; Acting Chief Arjuna George, SSIFFA Lieutenant Peter Andress

Recording Secretary: Sarah Shugar

Others: 21 members of the public, Driftwood Reporter

Chair Lee called the “Town hall” meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. She welcomed those in attendance and called for questions and comments.

One member of the public addressed the following to Trustees:

(1) Why are fire hydrants being discussed in in-camera meetings? He acknowledged North Salt Spring Waterworks District for conducting business regarding fire hydrants in open meetings and expressed his concern for taxpayer funds being used to pay legal fees for what appears to be a disagreement between the Trustees regarding fire hydrants. Chair Lee reported the Board has sought legal advice to ascertain what the requirements are regarding the fire hydrants; (2) Why are the names of speakers at the town hall meeting not included in the minutes? Chair Lee advised some people might not wish to have their name recorded in the minutes and the purpose of the town hall meeting is to encourage members of the public to share their questions, comments and concerns; (3) Why the District Boundary item is being discussed in an in-camera meeting? CAO Peat advised he is seeking direction from the Trustees regarding how to proceed on a situation that has arisen regarding District Boundaries. (4) He acknowledged the Board for well-kept minutes and expressed appreciation for record keeping and transparency.

One member of the public expressed concern regarding the addition of two full time union members to the District with no measurable increase in fire calls over the past ten years and asked the following three questions: (1) Is the Board comfortable in maintaining the current level of staff and is it sustainable for our community? (2) Is there any reason to add more staff? (3) Could the union representative comment on the previous questions? Chair Lee advised that there is not a union representative at the meeting. Trustees have met obligations regarding staffing requirements. The District has recently received two union grievances that will be discussed in-camera.

There being no further questions from the floor, Chair Lee adjourned the “town hall” meeting at 7:16 p.m.

Linda Lee
Chair Board of Trustees

Andrew Peat
Corporate Administrator

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