

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

Meeting held: **February 20, 2017**
Lower Hall, Ganges United Church

In attendance:

Trustees: Mitch Forest (Chair), Howard Baker, Chris Budd, Mary Lynn Heatherington, Per Svendsen

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

Recording Secretary: Sarah Shugar

Others Present: 18 members of the public, Driftwood Reporter

Absent: Trustee Howard Holzapfel

Chair Forest called the “town hall” meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. He welcomed those in attendance and asked the new Trustees to introduce themselves. Introductions were carried out. Chair Forest called for questions and comments.

A member of the public asked if the District could publish a press release to introduce the new Trustees.

A member of the public asked the Trustees if they represent the public or the firefighters.

Trustee Budd, Trustee Heatherington and Trustee Svendsen each stated that they represent the public.

Chair Forest reported the new Trustees were selected by acclamation. He reported Trustee Howard Holzapfel is an employee of the District and the District has received legal advice that best practice is that an employee should not be a Trustee. Trustee Holzapfel has advised that he intends to resign as an employee prior to the March Board of Trustees meeting. The District has petitioned the Province to change the letters patent to resolve the employee as Board member issue for the future.

A member of the public asked whether the intention of Trustee Holzapfel’s resignation would be for brief hiatus from employment or with the intention that he would not seek to return to his position at the end of the one-year Trustee term. The member of the public advised the letter in the agenda package received from Thomas Moore states that Trustee Holzapfel is appointed Trustee by acclamation as of January 19, 2017 and there is also a letter that states he is an employee.

Chair Forest advised Trustee Holzapfel would have the option to reapply to be an employee of the District. There has been discussion regarding a wait period between employee/employer/employee although it has not been finalized.

One member of the public asked if Trustee Holzapfel’s could opt for re-election following his one-year term.

One member of the public asked for clarification regarding two items in the budget (1) wages is approximately \$100,000 over budget and (2) POC compensation is approximately \$70,000 under budget and asked if the items would be corrected.

CAO Peat reported there were several items that were related to POC wages for backfill that were not expensed to the correct budget line. A correction was made effective for the 2017 Fiscal Year and CAO Peat will discuss the matter with our auditor.

One member of the public recommended the Trustees do not accept the minutes of the December 15, 2016 and January 26, 2017 Occupational Health and Safety Committee meeting minutes. The member of the public expressed concern regarding the interpretation of the WCB report that was reviewed in the meetings, strongly encouraged the Trustees not to proceed with the COR program and recommend Trustees do not pass any resolutions regarding the COR program. The member of the public volunteered to be involved in future discussions regarding the COR program.

There being no further questions from the floor, Chair Forest adjourned the “town hall” meeting at 7:32 p.m.

Mitch Forest
Chair Board of Trustees

Andrew Peat
Corporate Administrator

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