

MINUTES

SHAWNIGAN IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

Meeting Annual General Meeting
Date Wednesday, April 27, 2022
Place Apparatus Bay - Fire Station No. 1

Present Chris Shields, Chair; Dean Freer, Vice-Chair; Dave Cech, Trustee; Mike Trotter, Trustee; Keith Shields, Trustee, Fire Chief; Karen Berezcki, Administrator; Cliff Evans, Returning Officer.

Call to Order 7:33 p.m.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Chairman Chris Shields called the meeting to order, introduced the head table and welcomed the members of the public.

I am reporting on behalf of the Shawnigan Improvement District Board of Trustees. At this time, I will outline what the Improvement Districts responsibilities are to the public.

The Shawnigan Improvement District derives its authority to operate under the Local Government Act and Letters Patent. Order in Council is then granted by the Provincial Cabinet, which provides legality to our function as an Improvement District.

The Improvement District oversees two functions; one being the Shawnigan Lake Fire Department and the second being street lighting. The Improvement District provides bylaws, policies, and finances to ensure safe and practical function of the Fire Department. On an Operational level, the Fire Chief coordinates the department personnel, organizes training, requests equipment, and is entirely responsible for all operational functions of the fire department. The Trustees work closely with the Chief to ensure the department has everything they need to be safe and operate to the highest standards.

The purpose of this Annual General Meeting is to provide the community with some insight on the status of the Improvement District as it relates to the Shawnigan Lake Fire Department. Also included in this meeting is the election of two trustees and a public period where we can entertain questions from the public.

2.0 ADOPTION OF MINUTES

Minutes of the September 8, 2021, Annual General Meeting were distributed to the attendees for advance review.

Moved: Chris Shields
Second: Sebastian Arsenaault

Carried: **That the September 8, 2021, Annual General Meeting minutes be adopted as circulated.**

Further to the above, a question on the minutes was raised from the floor respective to whether the SID streetlights have been updated to LED. The Chair reported that this work was completed by BC Hydro during the 2021 fiscal.

3.0 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT - Chris Shields

FIRE TOLL RATES IN THE DISTRICT

Shawnigan Improvement District is unlike other areas surrounding us, as we do not have a significant amount of development at this time. I would say that our development in the area is on par for the years past. Based on inflation and the cost of living, we will continue to see a very small increase in our mill rates moving forward into 2023. On the positive side, we are very happy with the rates that are presented to the rate payers of the District, and we strive to maintain one of the lowest rates in the area.

Trustee Mike Trotter has recently gone through all of the properties in the District and cross referenced the land type and whether or not they are considered a property that is deemed a “rate payer”. This was an arduous task and it was identified that we are including all of the landowners in the District as this now maximizes the receivable fire toll values.

STREET LIGHTING

At the previous AGM I reported that we were contacted by BC Hydro to upgrade the Streetlighting in the District. This was completed and now all of the streetlights are operating with LED bulbs. We expect that we won't hear from BC hydro for quite some time, unless we receive any requests for adding additional street lights in the District.

FIRE APPARATUS/EQUIPMENT

There is nothing new to report as far as fire apparatus purchases since the last meeting. One exciting purchase in the near future will be a new fire boat. The design of the vessel will provide a more focused approach on water rescues as well as more proficient apparatus to pump water from the lake. The existing boat is showing its age as it is frequently requiring repairs. The boat plans have been submitted to a local boat builder and the Fire Chief is working on the finer details of the design and timeline for this build.

As always, the Trustees are very impressed to see the quality of equipment that is both on the trucks as well as in the station. The fire chief and the officers are very proactive in budgeting for these items and we, as trustees are always there to support them to make things more practical and safer.

FIRE STATIONS

Station 1

This station appears to be in fine operational form. There was only one significant upgrade to number one station as of late: the sign. We think it looks very professional and appears to be very easy to operate. The training facility out in the back of the hall is ever-changing and we as trustees are always on board to promote growth and improvements to this facility. I would like to thank all of the members for helping with the hall clean-ups throughout the year. The fire stations always look great, but when the clean-ups happen, every station appears to shine a little brighter. Thank you!

Station 2

This will be review for most of you, but I will update you all as to the progress of 2 Hall and the property that the hall sits on. For those of you who are unfamiliar with the 2 hall property, the property around the hall approximately 180 acres has been offered to the Malahat First Nation as a part of the Reconciliation Agreement. Our lease on the small piece of land expired a few years ago and we haven't been able to secure a long term lease agreement to our liking. As it sits, we are currently in a short term Licence of Occupation for the usage of the property, so we are operational as it sits with no issues. However, based on the uncertainty of the land, we reached out to a different contact through the Ministry and they advised us to put in an application for a subdivision, that way we could section off the land and retain that area as a potential long-term lease through the government itself. Since the land transfer hasn't been finalized through the Treaty process, this was our best route to getting that land. To complete this application, we had to survey the land, install permanent survey pins and then forward that survey to the Land Titles office for approval. This has been completed, but now we are waiting for final approval from the Provincial Government. This process has taken a long while to get to this point, but we are confident that we will see some resolve within a reasonable amount of time.

Station 3

In November 2021, we had a major issue with 3 hall and the heavy rains. An excess amount of water ended up in the hall and caused significant water damage. Immediate remediation measures were taken once the water levels had subsided. Another unfortunate part to this situation is that through our insurance (and how busy it was), we were left with a non-competent remediation company who unfortunately did not do a good job and nor did they complete the job. The remediation company was fired and thankfully replaced with an excellent company to do the work.

If you can imagine, the insurance deductible for fire and flood in a firestation is incredibly high. After reviewing the deductible and the scope of the work to be performed, we started to look for other options to recover the money that we would have to put out for the repairs. We were able to apply for a provincial flood grant that allowed us to receive up to our deductible amount with no strings attached. This was a huge win for us as most of the money needed for repairs will be taken care of courtesy of the grant.

BOATHOUSE

The Boathouse continues to operate as designed, but we will be looking at extending the boathouse to accommodate the new fireboat. It is unclear as to when we will get going on this.

TRAINING

Training appears to be back on in full force. We have noticed many weekends (as of recently) where there are many vehicles in the parking lot from other departments. The Trustees love to see that the facility is being used very frequently, and not only by the Shawnigan Lake members.

Every monthly Trustee meeting, the trustees are reminded of how much training is available to all of the members. We love to hear about members being proactive in training and in some cases certified in many different aspects of the volunteer work. We

encourage all volunteer members to continue on with their training and we have a great budget for training, so please do make the best of it.

I would like to say a special thank you to the members who instruct such skill sets as First Aid, Swiftwater Rescue, as well as High Angle Rescue to name a few. Using their knowledge benefits the entire department and we should all be grateful for such a great resource.

VOLUNTEERS

I would like to extend a thank you to each and every one of the volunteers for their hard work and dedication to the District and furthermore to each other. It takes a lot of time, effort, and resilience to do what you do and you should be commended for that. I can speak for the trustees when I say that we are very appreciative to have such a great group of Volunteers.

The operational aspect of the Department is something we as trustees put in the hands of the Fire Chief. We are incredibly lucky to have such a proactive, knowledgeable, keen, and dedicated member of our community to be in this position. We are beyond thankful for all that you do for the District.

As always, thank you very much for attending tonight's meeting and please be safe out there.

Moved: Chris Shields

Second: Mike Trotter

Carried: That the Chairman's 2021 Annual Report be accepted as presented.

4.0 FIRE DEPARTMENT REPORT - Keith Shields, Fire Chief

The fire department was dispatched 281 times for our 2021 fiscal year. The break-down is as follows.

- 25 Alarms Activated
- 15 Assistance
- 37 Burning complaints
- 4 Vehicle fires
- 1 Chimney fire
- 1 Electrical fire
- 127 Medical AIDS
- 5 Hazardous materials
- 23 Hydro
- 4 mutual Aid with Mill Bay fire
- 4 mutual Aid with Malahat fire
- 23 Motor vehicle incidents
- 3 Rescues
- 2 smoke sightings
- 7 Structure fires

Because of COVID we stayed in small group training format up until June. We are back to normal now. We have also got back up to speed with our extra technical rescue training practises.

In late June we changed dispatch providers as Nanaimo Fire who ran Firecomm decided to step away. This was a bid process put on by CVRD. They came back with a decision to award the contract to Surrey Fire Department with no consultation with any of the valley fire departments. The Cowichan Valley Fire Chiefs Association pushed back after hearing this and then the contract got awarded to North Island 911 which is run by the Campbell River Fire Department. There have been some growing pains as to be expected but I believe it's getting better.

Our Summit technical rope and confined space rescue courses got back on track and we held all three levels in the fall with participants from all over. We also went to Saanich Fire Department to test at the technician level as a third-party evaluator.

In late June the new Command vehicle arrived and was put into service shortly after. The old one was assigned to the Deputy Chief. This has turned out to be a great asset in improving response time. The plan going forward is to outfit this truck with a seasonal water tank and have this as a fast attack wildfire response vehicle.

Our membership has fluctuated a small amount but seems to steady out at 41 members. We had a good representation of members attending the service for Remembrance Day at the Cenotaph in Cobble Hill. Some of our members jumped on board for the Movember fund raising campaign and raised a good amount of money. The Santa Run was once again a huge success collecting a record amount of food and cash donations totaling about \$3500 despite the inclement weather.

This past year we added a very welcome addition. In December a snow plow was purchased for our Wildland truck. This move was prompted by not being able to find an honest, reliable, reasonable service provider. This purchase has already provided good returns keeping the stations cleared and also plowed our way into a call where the roads were not plowed. This plow also gives us the opportunity to ensure our members can respond from their residence as our policy addresses this issue. If our members can't get to the hall in a timely manner it puts a lot at risk.

In November when we had the atmospheric rivers we were unfortunate in that our #3 Fire Station flooded. The apparatus was moved out before any damage occurred to them but the Station suffered about \$30,000 worth of damage. This flooding appears to be attributed to a few things. A culvert partially blocked, a berm that was built across the road from the Station that did not allow the runoff to follow the natural watercourse and a fallen tree that was blocking part of the creeks full flow capability. This concern has been brought forward to the Ministry of Highways and a number of other agencies to see if the situation can be rectified. This flooding put all the residents south of #3 Station at risk of no emergency response from any agency as no vehicle could pass through the flooded area.

Our capital plan projects going forward are dynamic and are subject to change as the need arises. Our current plan is as follows.

- **2022** - Boat replacement and boathouse upgrade
- **2023** - Roof replacement on tender bay and hose tower
- **2024** - Replace Engine 2
- **2025** - Roof replacement on main apparatus bay
- **2026** - Ladder one replace or refurbish

The boat replacement project is well underway after 34 years of service of the existing one.

I would like to extend my thanks to all our members and families. I've said this for years that you won't find another volunteer group that consistently gives so much at all times of the day and night 365 days a year. Putting themselves in the line of fire for people they probably don't even know.

In the background to all of this is our Trustees, without their buy in you wouldn't have a fire department. Regulating the funding and approving projects is just part of their focus. Keeping all that running smooth is our administrator Karen for the Trustees and on the Fire Department side is Heather who keeps our records and paperwork running smooth and efficient. A big thanks to these people. I would also like to thank the Trustees for being compliant with the Improvement District Manual and leaving the operational side for the fire department to run. I believe this makes a good team approach and I'm very grateful for the opportunity to be part of this organization.

Moved: Chris Shields

Second: Dean Freer

Carried: That the 2021 Annual Fire Department Report be accepted as presented.

5.0 2021 FINANCIAL OFFICER REPORT - *Karen Berezcki, Administrator*

Shawnigan Improvement District (the "District") was incorporated by letters patent issued on October 27, 1950, and operates under Part 17 of the *Local Government Act (BC)*. The principal activities of the District are to provide fire protection and street lighting within its boundaries.

As the Financial and Corporate Administrator of the District, it is a pleasure to present the audited financial statements for the year ended December 31, 2021.

For reference, these statements are available for viewing on the District's website at www.shawniganimprovementdistrict.com. A limited number of paper copies are available here upon request.

The District's financial statements have been audited by Morine and Schindler LLP, Chartered Professional Accountants, as appointed by the Board of Trustees at its December 13, 2021, regular meeting. The Independent Auditor's Report sets out the Auditor's responsibilities, the scope of their examination, and their opinion on the District's financial statements.

The auditor has expressed its unqualified opinion, as follows:

AUDITOR OPINION

We have audited the consolidated financial statements of Shawnigan Improvement District (the "District"), which comprise the consolidated statement of financial position as at December 31, 2021, and the consolidated statements of operations, changes in accumulated surplus, changes in net financial debt and cash flows for the year then ended, and notes to the consolidated financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies.

In our opinion, the accompanying consolidated financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the consolidated financial position of the District as at December 31, 2021, and the consolidated results of its operations and consolidated cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian public sector accounting standards.

FUND ACCOUNTING

It is important to note that the District records accounting transactions using the fund accounting method. Money in each individual fund, and interest earned on it, must be used only for the purpose for which the reserve fund was established.

Disbursements are authorized by resolution or by Bylaw, passed by the Board of Trustees.

OPERATING FUND

Operations accounts for the day-to-day activities of providing services. Such as vehicle expense, building expense, repairs and maintenance, hydro, water, insurance, firefighter gratuity, training and administration costs.

Since inception (1950), the accumulated surplus in this fund at December 31, 2021, totals \$235,063.

RENEWAL RESERVE FUND (RRF)

Part 706 of the *Local Government Act* requires the Trustees to create a renewal reserve fund, and to adequately fund it so that infrastructure can be maintained and replaced. The District holds tangible capital assets at a total cost basis of \$8,941,088. The District's renewal reserve fund is set up to pay for the repair, maintenance or replacement of these existing assets as they reach the end of their useful life.

Annual funding for the RRF is budgeted, collected and expensed through the Operating Fund.

There were no expenditures from this fund during 2021.

The accumulated surplus in the RRF at December 31, 2021, totals \$734,833.

TANGIBLE CAPITAL ASSETS

Tangible Capital Assets include buildings and equipment. These are stated at cost less accumulated amortization. As noted above, provision for repair/replacement of these assets is planned through the Renewal Reserve Fund.

Capital Asset Acquisitions in 2021 totalled \$58,783, comprising firefighting equipment, turn out gear, grounds equipment and building improvements.

The net book value in this fund at December 31, 2021, totals \$4,865,409.

NET DEBT

The net debt as at December 31, 2021 totals \$2,280,571 compared to \$2,458,593 in 2020.

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT

Taking into account each of the funds reported, the consolidated accumulated surplus as at December 31, 2021 totals \$3,554,733.

2022 OPERATING BUDGET

The Shawnigan Improvement District continues to operate in a favourable financial position. This is largely due to good fiscal management and difficult decisions.

Every year the Board of Trustees goes through the process of setting budgets and reviewing costs. The goal is to ensure that operational and reserve funding requirements are adequately met.

The annual budget for the 2022 fiscal year called for a Tax Levy/Operations increase of \$90,000, from \$793,000 in 2021 to \$883,000 in 2022. Although many plus or minus expense items are evident, the tax levy increase of \$90,000 is mainly due to: 1) increased insurance premiums; 2) increased fire fighter earnings and 3) capital expense items.

At this time, I would like to recognize the Trustees, the Fire Chief, the Administrative Assistant and the Fire Department Members, for their commitment to sustainability, continuous improvement and service to the community.

Moved: Chris Shields
Second: Mike Trotter

Carried: That the 2021 Audited Financial Statements, and Financial Officer’s report be accepted as presented.

6.0 TRUSTEE HONORARIUM:

Chair Chris Shields reported that the honorarium is currently set at \$14,000 per year. Each of the four Trustees receive \$2,600, the Chair receives \$3,600. The Trustees attend 12 regular meetings to conduct the business of the Improvement District, plus any special meetings as deemed necessary, as well as the Annual General Meeting where they report to the land owners.

The honoraria last increased from \$12,000 to \$14,000 in 2018.

Moved: Chris Shields
Second: Sebastian Arsenault

Carried: That the trustee honorarium remain as is and be set at \$14,000 for the 2022 fiscal.

7.0 ELECTION OF TRUSTEES:

Chair Chris Shields introduced Mr. Cliff Evans as the duly appointed Returning Officer.

The Trustees' terms of office were accounted for: Dave Cech's and Dean Freer's 3-year terms have completed. As such, there are two vacant Trustee positions comprising two three-year terms.

Mike Trotter nominated Dean Freer. Accepted.

Tiffany Newman nominated Dave Cech. Accepted.

Further nominations were called three times by the Returning Officer, and when no further nominations were received, nominations were declared closed.

Dean Freer and Dave Cech were declared elected by acclamation.

Congratulations were extended to candidates Dean Freer and Dave Cech, who were thanked for letting his name stand for election.

8.0 PUBLIC PERIOD:

Glen Sanders expressed his thanks and appreciation to all of the volunteer members and the Trustees.

9.0 ADJOURNMENT:

Moved: Chris Shields

Second: Mike Trotter

Carried: That the meeting adjourns at 8:08 pm.

The next regular meeting of the Board of Trustees will be held on Tuesday, May 17, 2022 at 7:00 p.m. at Fire Station 1 in the Board Room.

CERTIFIED CORRECT:

Chairperson

Administrator