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PEOPLE



PIVFD

2021 AGM REPORT

SEPTEMBER 2021

There is really nothing I can say about this past year that hasn't already been said. Like every other organization in the world, the PIVFD has had to adapt to the reality of this pandemic. We chose to meet in smaller groups and to use the time to improve our firefighting and medical skills rather than to acquire more equipment. We have all the tools and the funding we need to do the job islanders expect of us and this past year, we all had the time to get better at what we do. The attendance at fire practices has been outstanding. It is important that we acknowledge and thank the volunteer members of the PIVFD who continue to give so much to ensure the safety and well being of our community.

PEOPLE

We have 15 firefighters most of whom are fully certified to the EOLFF level as required by our Trustees. Ours is a very seasoned and knowledgeable crew. We were fortunate to have several new recruits (Gary Cooney and Tracey Landerkin) join us and happily, they are fitting in nicely and learning as much as they can by joining us for practice sessions and by following the training offered on our web site. Martin Hogan will also be joining us for training in September. The command structure remains the same led by – the Chief, 2 Captains, and our Risk Management Officer.

Officers

Steve Cruise – Chief – First Responder and Firefighter

Pauline Olesen – Risk Management Officer and Firefighter

Derek Morrison – Captain and Firefighter

John Hall – Captain and Firefighter

Sandy Brunham – Captain- First Responders

Firefighters:

Philippa White, Alan Bryce, Kelly Stevenson, Michal Pawlik, Gary Cooney, Tracey Landerkin, Terry Swan

Firefighters & First Responders –

Gerry Kristianson, Kerry Keats, Burke Stancill, Garth Irvine, Katie Steenman

Additional Medical First Responders – **Kerry Wheeler, Evey Gabille, Deneen Cunningham, Graham Gilley**

Our thanks to **Guy Plante** retiring this August as a First Responder after 7 years. He was both a firefighter, First Responder and when the stars aligned prepared wonderful gourmand treats for the team after fire practice! Thank you Guy!

TRAINING



Looking Ahead

If anyone would like to join our department, please just let me know as we always need help especially for equipment maintenance duties and building upkeep. The pay isn't great but there is great satisfaction in learning new skills and serving our wonderful community.

TRAINING

Along with carrying on with our regular Exterior Operations Training, we were able to obtain placements for several of our members for online training offered through a **Red Cross grant**. **Gary Cooney** has completed the training and several more are on the way. As part of our **Wildfire Resiliency Grant**, which was finalized in late 2020, we had promised to make our training accessible to others. You will find our productions put together by **Octavian Kaul**, Pauline Olesen and **Kerry Keats** at www.islandfiresafe.ca/wildfire-resiliency

INFRASTRUCTURE



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At the new Fire Hall, we have been trying to keep it updated and modern. There is a new fridge, dishwasher, better lights in bays, engraved pavers cleaned and re-sealed, gutters cleaned, siding pressure washed, gardening and grass spruced up, chains installed to hoist the overhead doors and new fuel drums purchased. All this work was completed by volunteers. For all this we thank: **Tracey Landerkin** and **Ian Moskaluk**, **Steve and Michelin Tait**, **Gary Cooney**, **Al Warrior**, **Steve Thornton**, **Barry Tate**, **Colin Robertson**, **Hall Manager Gloria Morson**, **Kelly Stevenson** and **Gerry Kristianson**.

The old Fire Hall has been completely repainted this summer and I think it looks just tremendous. The painting again was all done by volunteers: **Karen Bloudell**, **Gloria Morson**, **Gerry Kristianson**, **Guy Plante**, **Steve Cruise**, **Rick Schnurr** and **Gary Peacock**. We have now completed our conversion of this hall into a Forest Fire Centre. If anyone would like a tour, please let me know. And a reminder that we now have an AED at the old hall thanks to a contribution from **Kerry Keats**.

Looking Ahead

The air raid siren at the old Hall needs relocation but with no offers of help, we will table this until next year. We might wish to consider replacing the old electric furnace in the new Hall with a Heat Pump so we can cool as well as heat this essential building. With our hotter summers and recent heat waves, this is an option that we might well need to consider. The linoleum flooring in the Training Room is becoming very worn as it is used by several groups and is over 25 years old. It would be nice to have it replaced next year with a composite material.

EQUIPMENT



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The Esquimalt Fire Department (Chief Chris Jankowski) kindly donated 12 adjustable fire nozzles to us. New, these would have a value of over \$6000. The **Sidney Fire Department** continues to fill our SCBA cylinders free of charge which is a huge help. Deploying our 2000-gallon portable tank and filling it via our new floating pump, we can deliver an endless water supply to all waterfront properties. Our two trucks

(Engine #33 and Squad 1) are both running smoothly and give us the redundancy we so need in our isolated community. We can't really call on outside agencies to arrive here on a timely basis, so we need to be prepared with back up plans in place in the event of an equipment failure.

I mentioned last year that we should consider replacing the Chiefs Cart with a more robust unit. Unfortunately, this vehicle does not come up on the Capital Asset Plan for another few years. This summer, the batteries failed. They have now been replaced thanks to the hard work of **Jim Merritt**. This will give us another few years of life for this vehicle. It is stationed at the Hall and will probably be the first vehicle out for any fire calls. It carries our FIT 5 suppression device, the Crooks Kwik water tank and pump, fire extinguishers, rescue tools, hazard tape and just about everything we need to start the fire attack quickly and efficiently.

MEDICAL FIRST RESPONDERS



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Captain Brunham and her team has had to adapt to COVID restrictions and initiate all new protocols for our department attending medical call outs. As expected, Sandy exceeded expectations and kept the group focused, equipped, and fully trained. You might not realize it, but our Medical First Responders are each put through a very rigorous training program by Sandy and then they must write Provincial exams before they are awarded the FR 3 designation. The group practices once a month and when available, assisted by a most skilled and experienced Responder, **Graham Gilley**. The Golf Cart ambulance (known as T4) has proven effective and easy to deploy over this past year. Extra equipment to support the needs of our Medical Team is carried in Squad 1.

Looking Ahead

Our gear and training are up to date and our numbers are healthy. Practices and training will continue on a regular basis especially with more people moving to the island full time. We have many children here now as well as older islanders so the team will maintain best practices for managing and all types of medical emergencies. Our goal is to have all Firefighters cross trained and licensed as medical responders

SPECIAL PROJECTS



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In November 2020 we ran our first **Flu Clinic** – huge thanks to **Dr. Michal Pawlik**. This prepared us for the spring and summer **COVID Clinics** held in the fire Hall during April, May 2021, and June. The success of all these clinics helped keep Islanders safe and is a testament to the adaptability of Islanders to get things done.

Gary Cooney has dedicated many hours revamping, updating and improving all our **Standard Operating Guidelines** (SOGs). These policies are meant to provide guidance when dealing with fire department-specific issues and situations and to help ensure department activities are consistent, effective, efficient, and safe.

FIRE PREVENTION

Pauline continues to keep us on track with FireSmart activities. This last fall **Gloria Morson** and Pauline were able to run a FireSmart Kids

FIRE PREVENTION



OUR MANY VOLUNTEERS

An AGM provides an opportunity to acknowledge our firefighters, first responders and many volunteers who help with various tasks to keep your department running. As I can't ask them to stand to be recognized we've highlighted their names for you in this report. There are always the wonderful silent caretakers and watchers on Piers and we thank you as well.



program for the Piers Island school children. Look for more events this fall when our Fire Hazard Rating drops and the rains return. Our thanks to MMC for the FireSmart work they carry out year round on the road allowance and PIA for supporting work along the major trails. **Charl Young** has been great organizing PIA bases work parties to deal with the broom and gorse which all helps to safeguard our areas.

Grant Warrington once again spearheaded the chimney cleaning inspection program which became a 3-day event with great participation from Islanders.

Broom and gorse are well on their way to eradication and the **MMC** has cleared trails and tried to keep fuels from accumulating. Some dead and dangerous trees were removed. If left, they could easily start a fire if fall on our high-tension hydro lines. **Garth Irvine, Pauline, John Hall and Burke Stancill** have been hugely helpful in Fire Permits. Most fires in our area are human caused and many of those are from campfires and/or bonfires on private property. The permitting system we have seeks to reduce that possibility, but we can only do this with help of those issuing permits. Thanks to you all.

Looking Ahead

We would like to further our Fire Prevention and FireSmart programs hand in hand and will be reaching out to the community on an individual basis to help you better understand your own property and risks.

CALL OUTS

Since last reporting to islanders, we have responded to 5 emergency incidents. We are below our historical levels by a significant margin likely due to the COVID lockdown resulting in less activity on our island. We are noticing an increase in full time occupancy and vacation use which increases our risks. We have the equipment, the people, and the training to manage most incidents that are likely to occur.

A Last Reminder

We continue to encourage anyone who sees or smells smoke to immediately check it out and call 911 if they suspect a hostile fire. Sharing this information with visiting family and friends helps everyone. Anyone who needs immediate medical attention must call 911 without delay. The PIVFD is committed to rapidly respond to any life or property threat on our island. The budget we have from the Trustees is sufficient for us to meet the needs of our community.

We're calling it Our Welcome Back Pancake Breakfast. We'll be spacing things out, your Chef's and Servers will all be fully-vaccinated, and we are so happy to be able to welcome you back. The proceeds from this event go to special meals for firefighters and first responders that are real moral builders. Practicing weekly gets a little boost if we've got something nice arranged afterwards. It's treat money for the team and we thank you for your support. If you haven't visited the Piers Island website in a while – check out the Calendar Page for Contactless Ticket purchase.

<https://www.piersisland.ca/events.html>

Respectfully submitted
Steve Cruise
CHIEF PIVFD