



## PIVFD AGM REPORT 2022

Dear Trustees and Islanders,

For the past 2 years, the Piers Island Fire Department has had to transition from our traditional training activities. Even how our medical and fire teams responded to emergencies had to be tailored to keep our responders safe while still providing the best service possible to islanders. This involved changing our practice times, keeping the groups as small as possible, doing temperature scans on every attendee, trying to train online rather than in person, as well as purchasing and utilizing additional layers of personal protective equipment. It all sounds easy, but it wasn't. I am very proud of how all our members responded, they did everything they could to learn, to practice, and to contribute so that the level of service from the fire department that our community has come to expect was exceeded. You have a great group of people in this small department; please join me in thanking them for all they do. I have had the privilege of working with this group for the past 8 years - they have my complete confidence and respect.

### PEOPLE

Our current membership remains at a steady although we did say a sad goodbye to two members who have left the island: **Michal Pawlik** (possibly to return next year) and **Lloyd Philipps** (enjoying life in too much in Cowichan to return). Happily, we have **Martin Hogan** now on board. **Tracey Landerkin** and **Gary Cooney** both finished their formal Playbook Training which gives us even more depth and talent. Both of our fire engines require Air brakes certification to operate. **Burke Stancill**, Gary Cooney and Martin Hogan all completed this 16 hour course in December 2021. Congratulations to them all. Our command structure remains the same with 3 Captains reporting to the Chief and with our Risk Management Officer watching over all of us. Over the past year, your firefighters and first responders have spent cumulatively **1152 hours on training and drills**.



Chief: Steve Cruise

RMO: Pauline Olesen

Captains: John Hall & Derek Morrison

Firefighters: Kelly Stevenson, Alan Bryce, Phillipa White, Gary Cooney, Tracey Landerkin, Martin Hogan, Terry Swan

Firefighters and First Responders: Kerry Keats, Burke Stancill, Garth Irvine

Additional Medical Responders: Captain Sandra Brunham, Kerry Wheeler, Gerry Kristianson, Deneen Cunningham, Katie Steenman

### Looking ahead

Our target is to ensure that we are ready for the summer drought season and to this end, we will be training most of this summer on Forest Fire Fighting and on keeping everyone current on our Sprinkler Protection Program.

The fire department is always looking for help. If you are interested in joining or even learning more about how you can contribute to the safety and well being of your home, please contact us. You don't need to be a front-line firefighter or

active medical responder – we completely rely on volunteers to do everything from building maintenance to picking up supplies. I know everyone is busy these days and hesitant to commit to yet another role but without our people, we are nothing.

## INFRASTRUCTURE

We have not gone ahead with the suggestions made in our last report (heat pump and flooring in new hall) as the funding was not in place. The Trustees have so much work balancing the needs of everyone that we just can't do everything we need at the time we need it. Neither of these initiatives is critical to the operation of the fire department. The grounds are so nicely kept up thanks to our landscapers **Steve and Michelin Tait** and the interior is always pristine due to the hard work of **Gloria Morson** and her new trusty assistant **Barb Miodonski**. For so many years that I have lost track, **Gary Glover** has been faithfully running the building generator and bringing over fuel for it one jug at a time.

The old fire hall needs a better place to store the mower and chipper. A quick and inexpensive solution would be a small lean to on the side of the existing building. We have some building materials available, but we need someone to lead the construction. If you have some basic carpentry skills, a few free hours, and a hankering to help, please consider this request. We are always able to have volunteers come to help build and obtain supplies, but we need someone to coordinate the work. If no one comes forward, it will be left to those who do too much already.

## Looking ahead

We had hoped to see the large air raid siren relocated at the old fire hall as the tree atop which it sits is completely rotted but again, we were unable to have this completed. The tree is too dangerous to climb so most likely we will need a crane truck or man-lift to get this done. All of which will be costly, and it is not a priority so we will leave it for now for the Trustees to consider in the future.

## EQUIPMENT



Our trucks are running very well, and our portable pumps are now being routinely serviced by **Ian Moskaluk** – thank you Ian. We have acquired one new piece of equipment that is exciting. It's called a FireCeptor. This device allows our portable pumps to be placed right on the beach at the water's edge so that we can draft water from the ocean onto a fire without the danger of picking up sand, seaweed, or stones. Importantly, it gives us an unlimited supply of fire fighting water without the need to run hose and equipment hundreds of feet to the nearest dock and out to the float at the end of the dock. And once again, thanks to **Alan and Brian Warrior and Steve Thornton**, we have another two drums of diesel on hand so we can supply our trucks and tractor.

## Looking ahead

Engine 33 and Squad 1 (our two fire trucks) are both running well and working as they should. Both are serviced annually by P&R Trucking in Saanichton. All other equipment (portable pumps, generators, lighting, SCBA etc.) is looked after by the fire department. We do a complete equipment check every Thursday before practice to ensure that everything is fuelled and that it starts and runs as expected. Ian Moskaluk has agreed to be our point person for portable pumps. He is changing the oil and spark plugs and keeping these essential pieces of equipment in top shape for us.

## MEDICAL FIRST RESPONDERS

**Captain Sandy Brunham** continues to train and lead the medical responder team with her usual enthusiasm and dedication. Best COVID protocols and practices were researched, introduced, and followed during the pandemic and are still not completely relaxed. **Katie Steenman** successfully completed the First Responder Level 3 certification and now joins the team as a valued member. Two other firefighters – Gary Cooney and Martin Hogan have committed to train in the unit as well and with some hard work, they should be certified this fall. I feel that we are strongly represented by this group and have every confidence that any medical emergency on our island will be managed successfully.

## Looking Ahead

Our Type 4 golf cart style ambulance is serving our needs and with the support of additional supplies carried in Squad 1, we should be good for many years. The Type 4 was purchased so that it could get to the front door of most homes on Piers. It can carry two first responders, all their equipment and gear to the scene. After the patient is stabilized and ready to be moved, the Type 4 has a stretcher bed to carry the patient to the waiting Ambulance boat. Squad 1 attends every call out as well as a back up vehicle. It has on board our splint kit, chair stretcher, extra oxygen, blankets, and a special board for those with compromised or delicate spines.

## FIRE PREVENTION



The PIVFD understands the need to spend more time and effort on preventing both structural (house) fires as well as forest fires. We need many components in play to make this effective. **Lynn Pritchett, Craig Benson & Charl Young** have done wonders eliminating the very flammable gorse along Blackberry Lane and in the Orchard this year along with those who came along on various work parties to assist.

**Garth Irvine** continues to eradicate broom wherever he sees it – broom is equally flammable. Keeping the boulevard grasses short and all the meadows cut helps us eliminate the danger of a fast-moving grass fire. **Gary Glover, Steve Tait,** and **Colin Robertson** all run the Kubota mower and do this work without thanks or fanfare. We had an open house to show off the new mower and the Kubota at the Old Fire Hall on April 9<sup>th</sup>. Pauline Olesen continues to keep us focused on FireSmarting our island. The FireSmart Committee (Pauline, **Anne Bell,** and **Gloria Morson**) ran a very successful session on FireSmart Landscaping hosted by **Brent Schorr** at the new hall on May 7<sup>th</sup>. We have recently been awarded the FireSmart Community designation for the 7<sup>th</sup> straight year. We were one of the first communities to sign up for this program and only the work done by all islanders to keep us green and safe has made this possible.

**Grant Warrington** is again running the Chimney Sweep program this year. It will not have been completed by the time we have our AGM but a huge thanks to Grant for making this a success year after year.

The Monday Morning Crew (**Kelly Stevenson, Derek Morrison, Gary Peacock, Rick Schnurr, Gerry Kristianson, Philippa White, Craig Benson, Phil Macoun, Burke Stancill, Kacey Stancill, Conrad Vanderkamp and myself**) have spent

hundreds of hours working with PIA to keep the centre of the island accessible for fire crews and to remove fuels from the forest floor.

Every year I ask for islanders to ***keep the sides of the road open and clear*** so we can pass emergency vehicles on the roadway. Please keep stored piles of topsoil, trailers, vehicles, etc. on your own property, not on the public road. And please do not plant trees or plants on the road allowance as they can hinder our ability to respond to an emergency. The road allowance is approximately 30 feet to each side, from the centre of the roadway.

### **Looking ahead**

Thanks to **Ann Cooney** we will have a second Fire Danger Rating Sign up soon near the Government Dock. We will be continuing our fire prevention efforts this year and every year. A huge help to us for everyone to be mindful of any campfires or burning on your own lot. From April 15 – Oct. 15<sup>th</sup> you must have a BURN PERMIT. Permits are easily obtained by asking any of our 5 issuers: Pauline Olesen, John Hall, Garth Irvine, Burke Stancill or myself. It is a real commitment for them to take on this volunteer role so please give those issuing permits some advance warning rather than last-minute requests.

### **INCIDENTS**

Thankfully there were no structural fires over the past year. PIVFD responded to several incidents with downed hydro lines as well as medical assists and emergencies. Since July 1, 2021 we responded to 12 emergencies. PIVFD members gave **621 hours** of their time managing these events.

### **SPECIAL THANKS**

For the past three years, the PIVFD has been under the guidance of Trustee **Doug Turner**. Doug has been instrumental in keeping this department not only functional and active but ever improving and growing our skills. He always has the best interests of islanders at heart. From all of us, thank you Doug.

### **A Final Reminder**

As we approach our dry summer months, we ask that everyone please be aware of fire safety and please check out any smoke you notice. A rapid response by the PIVFD is critical to extinguishing any fire as in the incipient stages, we can douse it quickly but that means we need early detection of the fire. This is where you come in. If you see or smell smoke, please let us know.

We have had to cancel the **Pancake Breakfast** (held on the Sunday of the Labour Day Weekend) for the past two years. This is an all-community event which has been a tradition on Piers for over 30 years. Proceeds are used solely by the firefighters for snacks and beverages for the firefighters who attend our weekly practices. The training is time consuming and quite physical so having something to eat and drink after is enjoyed by everyone. Our plan is to offer up some delicious pancakes once again on **Sunday September 4<sup>th</sup>, 2022** - your support would be appreciated.

Respectfully submitted,

Steve Cruise

Chief, PIVFD