



Fire Chiefs Report to 2017 Piers Island AGM

I would like to begin by thanking the Trustees for their ongoing support this past year. And the PIVFD members who have spent such a great deal of their own time and energy training for medical and fire emergencies – they need to be recognized by the community. Pauline has done so much for yet another year, that I can not adequately express how grateful I am to have her at my side. Finally, I would like to extend my appreciation for the hard work islanders have done to keep our beautiful island fire safe and FireSmart; working together for a common goal is what makes life better for us all.

BY THE NUMBERS

Since our last AGM, the PIVFD has responded to three medical emergencies, one RCMP request for assistance and has issued 28 special burn permits. We have held 40 practices at the Fire Hall. Department members have put in 970 documented training hours since the last AGM. That doesn't include their study time or the myriad of other tasks that are done to keep everything running. But, the numbers don't tell the whole story: for that, I'll try to summarize our efforts.

FIRE PREVENTION



This very important aspect of the activities of our fire department was a huge success. We were able to obtain a grant from the Union of BC Municipalities for FireSmart activities and those funds were expended over the past 12 months. After over 100 hours of community volunteer labour (52 islanders participated) and the rental of equipment, our island was awarded special recognition by FireSmart Canada as a FireSmart Community. We were only one of six communities in the entire province to be given this award. However, this is far from the end. We need to continue the good work every year and we will.

Last year, we completed 34 FireSmart Assessments with more planned for this summer. The PIVFD is committed to a robust program of fire prevention. The Chimney Sweep offering is once again available to all islanders this summer so please take advantage of that.

FIRE CONTROL

We have acquired a 4:1 bucket loader system for the tractor which is now operational. This will allow us to quickly construct a fire break or fire line in the event of a fire on the surface or floor of the island. Wildfire damage can be minimized by FireSmarting our homes; the spread of fire can be contained if we can quickly establish control lines.



FIRE RESPONSE



Thanks to the unique talents of one of our members, we now have the Chief's Golf Cart outfitted as a rapid attack vehicle. While small in stature (the cart, not the member) this vehicle can quickly move to help extinguish a fire in the incipient stages or contain the spread of the fire until our Tender and re-enforcements arrive.

TRAINING

The PIVFD is proud to announce that this past year, we have had three firefighters graduate the Exterior Operations Level and we have had three first responders graduate the Medical Responder program. We are incredibly fortunate to be able to offer all fire and medical responder training on island/in house. This is obviously effective both in terms of costs and time. A huge thank you to our trainers as they are the ones who put so much into preparing the lessons, delivering the course materials and examining the candidates.



FACILITIES

Our hall is looking great as so many islanders are pitching in to help with maintenance. If you are out for a late-night walk, you will see that we have changed the lighting (again, volunteers did this) with the flag pole now lit and a new light over the side entrance door. We have also had installed 2 new outdoor GFI outlets for emergency charging of vehicles. This year, the hope is for a paver stone apron to be added to the front of the building. There has not been much interest from islanders so perhaps we are overreaching. Instead of doing the driveways and entrances, it might be a start if we were to have paver stones installed just for the walk up to the main front "people" door and around the small picnic bench area near the notice board. The area could double as a hose maintenance platform and a training area. We have fundraised over \$2000 from firewood sales this past winter and we have commitments from islanders for commemorative stones totalling about \$6000 so we would need to fund the remainder of the costs from our Sustaining Fund. I would like to go ahead with that project this fall if possible.

EQUIPMENT



We had planned for adding a golf cart style ambulance to our fleet this year. The Trustees are working with our First Responder team to ensure that it is suitable for our needs. We don't need to rush the purchase so it may not materialize until next year but it is in the works. The Tender and Rescue Vehicle and our 4x4 are all in good working order. They have professional maintenance once per year and are looked after routinely by the fire fighters with help from a few islanders with

specialized knowledge and skills. Our portable pumps and hose supply are sufficient for now. They are regularly run and maintained by fire department volunteers.

MEMBERSHIP

Training is never particularly easy, simple or fun no matter the subject. Every volunteer fire department in the province finds it challenging to recruit and retain volunteers. Many aspirants begin the long training process but only a few complete it. If you have the time and the energy and can commit to being a member of the PIVFD, we would be very happy to welcome you to the team. It is your fire department and it will only be as good as you want it to be.

GOALS

Alas, we were not able to reach all our previous goals however, we remain undaunted – like a kite, dancing in a hurricane.

This year look for us to:

- 1) Graduate an additional 6 Fire Fighters through the ELOFF program
- 2) Integrate the Type IV golf cart style ambulance into our Medical Response protocols
- 3) Complete the electronic pre-plan for each property on the island
- 4) Continue with all the work necessary for Piers to re-qualify as a 2017 FireSmart Community

All in all, it was a pretty good year for the Fire Department. While we did not achieve everything we had hoped, we made real progress and have a plan in place to continue with our training, to maintain our infrastructure and to look after our current equipment.

Respectfully submitted,

Steve Cruise

Chief PIVFD