

DISTRICT OF SOOKE

FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE MEETING

Meeting held March 3, 2014 at 7:00 pm
in the Council Chambers
2205 Otter Point Rd

Committee Members Present:

Councillor Rick Kasper (Chair)
Councillor Kerrie Reay
Councillor Herb Haldane
David Matland
Jim Mitchell

Staff:

Gord Howie, Chief Administrative Officer
Michael Dillabaugh, Director of Finance
Brent Blackhall, Deputy Director of Finance
Bonnie Sprinkling, Corporate Officer
Steve Sorensen, Fire Chief
Tina Hansen, Corporate Assistant, recorder

Absent: Mayor Wendal Milne (Ex-Officio)

Action

1. **Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

2. **Approval of Agenda**

The agenda was approved with the following supplementary information:

- Item 9 Firefighter Personal Protective Gear Washing Machine
 - Correspondence received February 28, 2014 from Derek Lewers

3. **Approval of Minutes: February 3, 2014**

MOVED and seconded to approve the minutes of February 3, 2014 as circulated.

CARRIED

Reports Requiring Action

4. **Sooke Fire Rescue Department**

Draft Policy No. 14.5, Policy No. 14.6 and Policy No 14.7

Gord Howie reported that staff was instructed to make further amendments to Policy 14.6, *Sooke Fire Rescue Department Discipline Policy* and Policy 14.7, *Sooke Fire Rescue Department Volunteer Member Grievance Policy* and to bring them back to the Committee for review. Mr. Howie advised that both Policies have been reviewed by the municipal solicitor and amendments have been made to the language in the Policies to reflect a more positive approach and to improve grievance procedures. Mr. Howie noted that Policy 14.1, *Fire Inspection Policy* would need to be repealed as it will be replaced with Policy 14.6.

Bonnie Sprinkling noted a correction to Section 1.10 of Policy 14.6, *Sooke Fire Rescue Department Standards of Conduct Policy, 2014* to include the word “not” after the words “Members must”.

The Committee discussed the following as to Policy No. 14.6, *Sooke Fire Rescue Department Standards of Conduct Policy, 2014*:

- Clarification as to reference to “disclosure of confidential or personal information” in section 1.10
- Concerns as to section 1.02 being too vague “at all times” and that staff look to include language such as “in the performance of their duties”
- Concerns that section 1.06 does not have an “off duty expectation” and that staff look to include language for further clarity
- Concerns of section 1.12 and the wording “without knowledge or consent” being too vague
- Clarification as to the wording in section 1.12 related to “removal of property”

MOVED and seconded to direct staff to amend Section 1.02 of Policy 14.6, *Sooke Fire Rescue Department Standards of Conduct Policy, 2014* to include the wording “in the performance of their duties.”

CARRIED

Public Input:

Derek Lewers, Sooke resident addressed the Committee as to the language in section 1.02 of Policy 14.6 and concerns that there may be times when a member may not wish to follow a supervisor’s orders such as if the orders were to put someone’s life at risk or if the supervisor is abusing their authority.

MOVED and seconded to recommend that Council approve Policy No. 14.5, *Sooke Fire Rescue Department Standard Operating Guidelines Policy, 2014*;

AND recommend that Council approve Policy No. 14.6, *Sooke Fire Rescue Department Standards of Conduct, 2014* as amended in section 1.02;

AND recommend that Council approve Policy No. 14.7, *Sooke Fire Rescue Department Volunteer Member Grievance Policy, 2014*;

AND recommend Council repeal Policy No. 14.1, *Fire Inspection Policy*;

AND direct staff to proceed with updating the Sooke Fire Rescue Department Standard Operating Guidelines in consultation with the Sooke Firefighters Association.

CARRIED

5. Sooke Canada Day Society – Sooke Lions

Michael Dillabaugh provided a summary of the staff report for the Committee.

MOVED and seconded to recommend that Council approve allocating the existing \$4,000 Category A Community Grant Program funding from the Sooke Canada Day Society to the Sooke Lions for purposes of organizing the Sooke Canada Day celebrations.
CARRIED

Council

Reports for Information

6. 2013 Budget to Actual Report

Michael Dillabaugh provided a summary of the staff report for the Committee. Mr. Dillabaugh reported that staff reviewed the variances and provided explanations for variances that were greater than \$10,000 in the Budget to Actuals. Mr. Dillabaugh noted that when going through the audit process, the requirement for explanations is for variances greater than \$100,000. Mr. Dillabaugh reported that overall the 2013 Budget to Actuals are close to what was budgeted in the financial plan.

Committee discussion:

- Clarification as to the decrease in interest income from 2012
- Staff to look into reducing interest income to more accurately reflect what is was in 2013

MOVED and seconded to direct staff to reduce interest income to \$80,000 in the 2014-2018 Five Year Financial Plan.
CARRIED

Finance

Committee further discussed:

- Clarification as to Engineering Stormwater and Drainage
- Clarification as to Road Maintenance and ditches
- Clarification as to additional funds received from the Gas Tax fund under Liquid Waste Management Plan
- Concerns as to reduced revenue from building permits and plumbing permits due to the economy
- Clarification as to the Revenue Smoothing Fund
- Clarification as to the Animal Control budget
- Whether it would be possible to enter into a joint arrangement with the City of Langford for Animal Control
- Clarification as to transfers from unallocated surplus in the amount of \$500,000 and whether these funds could be used to decrease taxes
- Clarification as to the amount that was put into the future expenditure account in 2013
- Staff to look at taking a portion of the surplus in order to reduce property taxes
- Clarification as to the actual expenditures and revenues for CRD Requisitions for Animal Control and Stormwater Management
- Concerns as to taxpayers being invoiced twice for the same service
- Importance of bringing the CRD Requisition revenues to Council's attention and making an adjustment in order to reduce property taxes

MOVED and seconded to direct staff to provide a report to Council as to a transfer of \$150,000 from the General Operating Surplus in order to reduce property taxes for 2014. **Finance**
CARRIED

ACTION ITEM: Staff to move the amount of \$25,000 under General Government – Elections from 2017 to 2018 due to the new 4 year election term. **Finance**

Committee further discussed:

- Staff to look at reducing costs for the CRD Stormwater and Drainage
- Clarification as to asset replacement software program and whether it will be required to transfer information on assets from an existing list
- Clarification as to the Computer Equipment Replacement Plan
- Clarification as to the renewal of the Parks and Maintenance contracts and consideration to the District having its own parks maintenance staff
- Having staff look at a review of the Parks Maintenance Contracts to ensure the District is getting value in what is being paid
- Consideration to combining sewer maintenance and parks maintenance at the time the EPCOR Contract matures

MOVED and seconded to receive the 2013 Budget to Actual Analysis report for information. **Finance**
CARRIED

7. **2013 Vacation Payout**

Michael Dillabaugh provided a summary of the staff report for the Committee.

Committee discussion:

- Consideration to amending the Employee Handbook as to vacation payouts
- Employee handbook is very clear as to vacation time
- Requirements in the Employee Handbook as to vacation time should be strictly followed

MOVED and seconded to receive the report as to 2013 Vacation Payout for information. **Finance**
CARRIED

8. **Category C Service Agreements Operating Reports**

Michael Dillabaugh provided a summary of the staff report for the Committee. Mr. Dillabaugh reported that all Category C Service Agreement reports were received by the October 15, 2013 deadline.

Committee discussion:

- Clarification as to Sooke Region Historical Society requesting a 2 percent increase over last year

Lee Boyko, Executive Director Sooke Region Historical Society addressed the Committee and took the opportunity to thank Council and the Committee for their support.

MOVED and seconded to direct staff include a 2 percent increase for 2014 in the 2014-2018 Five Year Financial Plan for the Sooke Region Historical Society.

Finance

CARRIED

MOVED and seconded to receive the 2014 Category C Service Operating Reports for information.

Finance

CARRIED

9. **Firefighter Personal Protective Gear Washing Machine**

Michael Dillabaugh reported that this report was brought forward at the request of the Committee. Mr. Dillabaugh advised that in the 2014 Capital budget there is a budget for the purchase of an industrial washing machine. Mr. Dillabaugh advised that the purpose for the purchase is due to the requirements for washing turnout gear.

Steve Sorensen reported that part of the issue is that the Fire Departments current washing machine is a residential washer that fits only one set of turnout gear at a time and with manufacturer's requirements to separate the liners before washing, it takes two cycles to wash one set of turnout gear. Mr. Sorensen advised that WorkSafe BC requires the department to follow the manufacturer's recommendations and the manufacturer requires turnout gear to be washed according to NFPA standards. Mr. Sorensen reported that some of the local Fire Departments may be interested in the use of the industrial wash machine should it be purchased and that a user fee could be charged in order to recoup some of the cost.

Committee discussion:

- Consideration to having something in place with other fire departments for the use of the industrial wash machine that could assist with recouping some of the costs for the machine
- Support for the purchase of an industrial wash machine and the importance of recognizing the health risks to firefighters due to contaminating of turnout gear when exposed to hazardous materials from combustion
- Consideration to alternatives for washing the turnout gear in order to reduce laundering costs
- Clarification as to what age of buildings may contain asbestos products

Public Input:

Derek Lewers, Sooke resident suggested that the purchase of a used industrial wash machine could be a consideration.

Derek Lewers also suggested that consideration be given to cost sharing with the East Sooke Fire Department as they may be purchasing new washing facilities with the construction of the new fire hall in East Sooke.

MOVED and seconded to direct staff to approach adjacent Fire Departments with regard to cost sharing on the purchase of an industrial wash machine;

Fire

AND THAT the Firefighter Personal Protective Gear Washing Machine report be received for information.

CARRIED

10. Traffic Control Pre-emption Systems

Steve Sorensen provided a summary of the staff report for the Committee.

Committee discussion:

- Whether it would be a possibility to include traffic control pre-emption systems at the three controlled intersections (Otter Point Road, Church Road and Phillips Road) in Sooke as a Capital item and have it tapped into the Road DCC fund
- Have staff look at funding options (ICBC) for the installation of traffic control pre-emption systems

Public Input:

Derek Lewers, Sooke resident indicated that he feels the traffic control pre-emption systems are a good idea and hopes that the Committee will direct staff to investigate the systems further.

MOVED and seconded to receive the report on Traffic Control Pre-emption Systems for information.

CARRIED

11. Bylaw Enforcement – 2013 Year End Report

Gord Howie advised that staff have provided the Bylaw Enforcement 2013 Year End Report as additional information that was requested by the Committee to give an idea of the activities that this department is involved.

Committee discussion:

- Clarification as to bylaw complaints for zoning non-compliance, work without a permit, signs, animals
- Whether there is currently a moratorium on signs
- Whether illegal grow ops would be a policing matter
- Consideration to dealing with bylaw complaints in alternative ways in order to reduce the number of call that bylaw

- enforcement deals with
- Clarification as to how bylaw complaints were dealt with in the past

MOVED and seconded to receive the Business Licence Department and Bylaw Compliance and Enforcement Department 2013 Annual Report for information.

CARRIED

12. **Public Input**

Derek Lewers Sooke resident addressed the Committee as to concerns that the Committee is discussing staffing positions at a public meeting and feels it more appropriate for these discussions to be done In-Camera. Mr. Lewers inquired as to whether there has been any follow up as to the whether the gates at Journey Middle School could remain open during baseball season.

Mr. Howie reported that the gate issue has been resolved in cooperation with the users of the baseball fields and the School District and that the gates will remain open for parking.

Mr. Lewers also inquired as an Exit Interview Policy for the Fire Department and whether a policy has been established as he has concerns that when volunteer firefighters leave the organization, the Committee or Council will never know reasons for leaving.

Mr. Howie reported that if someone were to leave the organization, he or a senior staff member would conduct an exit interview when appropriate.

Steve Sorensen advised that he provided information to the Mayor related to members who have left the Fire Department over the past 15 years. Everyone except three members who could not be located was included in this information.

Mr. Lewers reported that while working with the Fire Chief on the 20 Year Capital Plan, he worked on drafting a Vehicle Replacement Policy which sets forth direction on asset replacement. Mr. Lewers submitted the Policy to staff for consideration.

Mr. Lewers addressed the Committee as to the \$25,000 volunteer firefighter honorarium advising that alternatives could have been considered to provide to the volunteers such as a "shop local discount" which would keep business in Sooke and manpower in Sooke. Mr. Lewers further addressed the Committee as to the summary of results for the Firefighters Survey.

Chair Kasper responded to Mr. Lewers' comments clarifying that the purpose of the discussion by the Committee around bylaw enforcement was not to have comments directed at a particular position or employee within the District but to have specific questions answered related to items identified in the Bylaw Enforcement Year End Report that other agencies are legally responsible for doing. Chair Kasper advised that the Committee has not made any decisions as to eliminating, reducing

or changing bylaw enforcement.

Chair Kasper further clarified the \$25,000 Honorarium advising that the money is not “given” to any group based on the hours of training submitted to the Finance Department. Any volunteer firefighter is free to choose to accept the honorarium of \$500 based on 66 percent of the 100 hour requirement, and up to \$1,000 honorarium upon achieving 100 hours or they could choose to volunteer 200 hours and get a tax receipt to apply for a tax break through the federal government. Chair Kasper advised that the District has not given an organization \$25,000; the money is in the control of the District.

Chair Kasper thanked Mr. Lewers for his comments and reported that the Mayor and staff will be working on a plan that will be forthcoming for the issues identified in the Fire Department Survey.

Ellen Lewers, Sooke resident, addressed the Committee as to how property taxes are handled in other areas and suggested that people be given a reduction in taxes to be encouraged to pay them early.

13. Schedule Next Meeting: April 7, 2014

14. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:12 p.m.

Rick Kasper
Chair

Bonnie Sprinkling
Corporate Officer

