



# Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District

## MINUTES OF THE APPOINTMENT OF FIRE CHIEFS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY, MARCH 16, 6:00 PM

Regional District Board Room, 3008 Fifth Avenue, Port Alberni, BC

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**PRESENT:** John McNabb, Chairperson, Director, Area "E" (Beaver Creek)  
Keith Wyton, Director, Area "A" (Bamfield)  
Penny Cote, Director, Area "D" (Sproat Lake)  
Phil Lavoie, Chief, Bamfield Volunteer Fire Dept. (via teleconference)  
Mark Kelly, Deputy Chief, Bamfield Volunteer Fire Dept. (via teleconference)  
Mike Cann, Chief, Sproat Lake Volunteer Fire Dept.  
Rick Geddes, Deputy Chief, Sproat Lake Volunteer Fire Dept.  
Charles Starratt, Chief, Beaver Creek Volunteer Fire Dept.  
Mike Kobus, Deputy Chief, Beaver Creek Volunteer Fire Dept.

**STAFF PRESENT:** Russell Dyson, Chief Administrative Officer  
Wendy Thomson, Manager of Administrative Services  
Dan Holder, Emergency/Fire Services Coordinator (Contractor)

### 1. CALL TO ORDER

The CAO called the meeting to order at 6:07 pm.

Introductions conducted around the table.

The CAO recognized the meeting this being held in the Tseshaht First Nation and the Hupacasath First Nation Traditional Territories.

*MOVED:* K. Wyton

*SECONDED:* P. Cote

*THAT the agenda be approved as circulated.*

**CARRIED**

### 2. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRPERSON

*MOVED:* P. Cote

*SECONDED:* K. Wyton

*THAT J. McNabb be appointed Chairperson of the Appointment of Fire Chiefs Committee.*

**CARRIED**

### 3. **REPORTS**

#### **a. Overview – Purpose of the Committee – R. Dyson**

The CAO provided an overview of the purpose of the 'Appointment of Fire Chiefs Committee' which was formed by the ACRD Board of Directors. The purpose of the Committee is to investigate the required qualifications of fire chief, deputy fire chief and officers, explore options, consult with the membership and report back to the ACRD Board with recommendations for appointments to the ACRD's volunteer fire departments.

#### **b. Discussion – Fire Chief Selection Process – Appointment vs Election**

The Committee discussed election versus appointment of fire chiefs, deputy fire chiefs and officers. Each of the three volunteer fire departments (Bamfield, Beaver Creek and Sproat Lake) currently have similar procedures which includes an election process from amongst its members. Following the election, the ACRD Board appoints the Fire Chief. As per ACRD Bylaw R1023, A Bylaw to Establish Operational Criteria for the Regional District Fire Departments states: *The Fire Chief of each Fire Department shall be appointed for a term not to exceed three years by a resolution of the ACRD Board.* D. Holder advised that this Regional District is one of the last that still conducts an election for the fire chief position.

The Committee discussed the need to establish a vetting process and develop criteria for appointment of Fire Chiefs to the Volunteer Fire Departments. There needs to be a minimum standard and qualifications in place. Currently, there is no criteria for what is required to become a chief. The amount of responsibility and workload for the Fire Chief was discussed.

There was discussion regarding the different challenges faced by each of the three departments including lack of volunteers, recruitment, training, responsibility and time commitment.

D. Holder discussed the benefits of developing a job description for the fire chief position. A job description will help interested persons understand what is involved in being a fire chief including demands and responsibilities of the position. In addition, it helps the person understand the ACRD Board expectations.

Process to get the person to Fire Chief should be CAO, Fire Chiefs to get the best person possible. Ultimately, if someone is hurt and there is negligence it will be the fire chief and ACRD Board.

There was discussion regarding the need to look long term and consider the fact that most volunteer departments are going to a paid chief.

The CAO recommended D. Holder develop and vet a job description and qualifications with the fire chiefs. He stressed that one of the most important characteristics is leadership. In addition, it is very important the person has good knowledge of the department. Once you agree to the criteria and qualifications, the Selection Committee of department members vets applicants based on the criteria. This way it's not a vote, the person is selected on skills and abilities with membership involvement.

J. McNabb recommended criminal records checks be conducted for fire chiefs, deputies and officers.

*MOVED: M. Cann*

*SECONDED: K. Wyton*

*THAT the Committee charge D. Holder with developing criteria and a job description for the fire chiefs position with input from the ACRD's Volunteer Fire Chiefs and Deputies and bring back for consideration by the Committee at the next meeting.*

**CARRIED**

#### **c. Committee Next Steps in Review Process – D. Holder**

The Committee discussed the process for selection of Fire Chief for the volunteer fire departments. D. Holder recommended that rather than an election process, a committee or panel be struck with representation from the fire department membership at large, ACRD CAO, Fire Chief, Deputy Fire Chief and a Fire Chief from one of the other fire departments. D. Holder will investigate options and report back at the next meeting.

#### **d. Review – Fire Department Review Action List & Fire Services Report**

The CAO provided an overview on progress to date on regional fire services provided by the Fire Services Coordinator. It's intended that the Fire Services Coordinator will continue for this year. The Coordinator will continue to work on the priorities identified by in the report and approved by the volunteer departments. The CAO requested the fire chiefs and deputies to conduct one more review of the priorities as outlined in the report to see if it meets the needs of their departments.

The CAO recommended that the fire chiefs start providing an annual report to the ACRD Board on department activities and recognition of volunteers. He recommends D. Holder work with the departments on developing an annual reporting.

#### **4. OTHER BUSINESS/REPORTS**

The next meeting of the Committee will be scheduled in mid April 2017.

5. **ADJOURN**

*MOVED:* K. Wyton

*SECONDED:* P. Cote

*THAT this meeting be adjourned at 7:04 pm.*

**CARRIED**

Certified Correct:

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John McNabb,  
Chairperson

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Russell Dyson,  
Chief Administrative Officer