

**MINUTES OF THE STETTLER REGIONAL FIRE AUTHORITY MEETING HELD
February 3, 2012 @ THE STETTLER FIRE HALL**

Present:

Town of Stettler: Mayor Dick Richards
CAO Rob Stoutenberg
Councillor Peter Simons
Regional Fire Chief Mark Dennis
Regional Duty Fire Chief Etienne Brugman
Recording Secretary Veronica Salmon

County of Stettler: Vice Chairperson Greg Jackson
Councillor Terry Schiffner

Summer Village of Rochan Sands: Mayor Wayne Miller
CAO Allan Willis

Summer Village of White Sands: Mayor Lorne Thurston

Village of Donalda: Mayor Bruce Gartside

Village of Big Valley: Mayor Gail Knudson

Call to Order:

Vice Chairman Councillor Jackson called the meeting to order at 12:12 pm.

1./2. Additions/Agenda Approval

Town CAO R. Stoutenberg added the following items to the Agenda:

2a. Election of Chairperson and Vice Chairperson

Town CAO R. Stoutenberg called for Chairperson Nomination
Mayor Richards nominated Councilor Greg Jackson
Councillor Jackson accepted
CAO R. Stoutenberg asked for further nominations, none were forthcoming, therefore he declared County Councillor Jackson as Chairperson.

CAO Stoutenberg called for Vice Chairperson Nominations
Mayor Richards nominated Councilor Malcolm Fischer in his Absence
CAO Stoutenberg asked for further nominations, none were forthcoming, therefore he declared Town Councillor Fischer as Vice Chairperson.

2b. Fire Agreement Statements

The March 2011 to December 2011 Fire Agreements Statements were added to the agenda. Fire Chief Mark Dennis explained the statements are done on a monthly basis quarterly, and explained the difference between Joint Expenses and Town Expenses.

Moved by Mayor Richards the Fire Agreement statements for the period of March 2011 to December 2011 be accepted for information.

2c. Municipal Bylaws

SVRS Mayor W. Miller proposed the Municipal Bylaws be added to the Agenda, Vice Chairperson Greg Jackson added it as item # 6 on the Agenda.

2. **Agenda Approval**

Moved by Donalda Mayor Bruce Gartside that the agenda be approved as presented
MOTION CARRIED
Unanimous

3. **Confirmation of June 24, 2011 Stettler Regional Fire authority Meeting Minutes**

Moved by Town Councillor Peter Simons that the Minutes of the June 24th, 2011 Stettler Regional Fire Authority Meeting be approved as presented.
MOTION CARRIED
Unanimous

4. **Business Arising from Minutes**

SVRS Mayor Miller questioned if there has been any further development on the 2005 Governance Agreement. Fire Chief M. Dennis stated the agreement is still in place and will not override the Villages agreements with the Stettler Regional Fire Authority, and the 2005 Governance Agreement could be brought forward at the next meeting for review.

5. **Stettler Regional Fire Department administration work flow discussion:**

- a. Review of Fire Protective Services accomplishments
 - b. 2012 Goals
- a. Regional Fire Chief M Dennis presented his Review of Fire Protective Services accomplishments. A CD copy of the Fire Underwriters survey was provided to all who attended the meeting. He spoke about the Fire Underwriters Survey and how it gave something to work with and how a 10 year plan was developed and now a 20 year plan has been developed. With a plan in place it helps set goals and move forward. He went on to speak about each item on the Executive Summary of Recommendations for the survey.
 - b. He explained how the items in the summary are ranked by level of importance. To summarize there were 35 recommendations he spoke of; 4 Critical, 15 High, 10 Medium and 6 Low.
 - c. He explained that three of the critical items have been dealt with; however the fourth item regarding recruitment is still an ongoing issue:
 - **Re-align Apparatus usage throughout County** – New agreements have been established between Villages of Big Valley and Donalda to provide the Regional Fire Chief the authority to assign apparatus as required.
 - **Provide Tender Apparatus for stations protecting areas without recognized water supplies** – The Regional Chief as developed a 20 year

replacement plan for Fire Apparatus. The County of Stettler Council has approved the purchase of two Tender Apparatus.

- **Provide additional apparatus and improve pumping capacity** – With the addition of the Tender Apparatus and future replacement of fire engines (20 year replacement plan) this critical recommendation can be met.
- **Improve Rosters to a minimum of 15 for all fire stations** – The Chief explained that recruitment levels are actually getting worse and that it is at a critical level. Recruitment is extremely critical and will be a focus in 2012 to add additional volunteer fire fighters. A full time Training Officer and Emergency Vehicle Technician was suggested and needs to be considered. The addition of two full time positions can provide a basic four man response to emergency calls. This was identified in 2005 by George Roddick and again in the Fire Underwriters summary of recommendations.

d. Completed items ranked high were summarized as follows:

- **Expand fire station space** – We have completed a new fire station in Donalda, built a new ladder truck bay and expanded maintenance and training facilities in Stettler. Purchased a used garage facility in Big Valley that will be renovated in 2012. We also plan to complete the parking lot at the fire station in Stettler. It will be utilized for a regional training area.
- **Service Test all old apparatus** - We continue to service test and maintain all fire apparatus older than 20 years of age.
- **Provide an aerial for the Town of Stettler** - Purchased an aerial apparatus for the Town of Stettler.
- **Design water systems to Fire Underwriters Standards** – In our quality management plan as a Safety Codes officer in the fire discipline we complete plans review for new development. We work with the developer and waterworks department to meet the required fire flow minimum standards.
- **Provide additional water storage facilities** - With the regional water pipeline system a number of water storage improvements have been completed. Some are still being considered such as a fire department connection in Gadsby and Erskine. A fire department connection has been requested for existing water reservoirs in Byemoor and Endiang until this is completed tanker shuttle is not feasible.
- **Implement EXH recommendations for water supply and distribution in Donalda** – The Village of Donalda is actively working on these recommendations.

e. Uncompleted items ranked high:

- **Replace pre-1991 first line pumpers** – This has been identified in the 20 year replacement plan for the County of Stettler. As these fire engines /pumpers reach 25 years old they will be require replacement.
- **Provide additional fire station in unprotected western portion of the County** – This area is known as Buffalo Lake which includes the Summer Villages. This area is certainly a concern for fire protection resources and is under review. At this point there is no formal plan to construct a fire station in this area.
- **Hire/Assign a fire department Training Officer** – The Chief explained that fire fighters must be trained as per Occupational Health and Safety code of practice. Training is the number one way to maintain safety on the fire ground

and sustain and recruit new volunteer fire fighters. This is currently completed by the Chief and Deputy Chief.

- **Design water systems to meet the Fire Underwriters Survey Standard** – This applies to the Buffalo Lake area developments and should be considered when water distribution systems are constructed.
- **Upgrade water lines and lateral branches smaller than 125mm** – This is applicable to the Villages of Big Valley, Donalda, Botha and Gadsby.
- **Provide back-up pump for primary pump** – To maintain a reasonable degree of redundancy and to ensure no interruptions of water supply a back up pump should be kept on hand for primary pumps.
- **Develop a formal water supply plan non hydrant protected areas** – Several plans are being developed and or considered, one is to implement a tanker shuttle program which will depend on water fill stations designed for fire flows, minimum of four 3000 gallon tankers, training and equipment. The second is access to water at Buffalo Lake that could be drafted using existing equipment and the third is a small dual purpose boat capable of 3000 gallon per minute to supply to existing hi-volume hose on fire engines.
- **Improve water system to minimum standard for recognition** - A water system review for fire flows in the Town of Stettler will be completed in 2012
- **Develop a formal fire prevention, inspection and public education program** – Hire/Assign a fire prevention officer this could be combined with a training or maintenance full time position. We currently do inspections on review or demand.

f. Completed items ranked medium were summarized as follows:

- **Provide additional hose for pumper companies** - We have purchased additional hose for fire engines in Big Valley and Donalda.
- **Develop and implement a regional training program** - The Regional Chief and Deputy Chief provide training at each fire station however this program is not very effective and will need additional support either through contract services or a full time training officer. This was identified in the FUS executive summary as high.
- **Develop pre-incident plan program** – The fire department management software has pre-incident planning provisions associated to properties within it. However this is as far as this has progressed, to date we have informally pre-planned some critical facilities.
- **Improve use of technology to manage, plan and optimize water systems** – SCADA systems have been installed to monitor and operate the water treatment plant systems.
- **Develop and Implement Wildland Urban Interface Risk Management Plan** – We completed an accessibility report for Rochon Sands to improve access for emergency vehicles. We plan to implement the Fire Smart program at White Sands and Rochon Sands in 2012.
- **Improve road design for firefighting access** – The County of Stettler land use bylaw now has provisions for road design in future developments.
- **Improve Emergency Communications System** – The County of Stettler along with its partners the Town of Stettler and local Villages received grant funding through MSP in 2006 to install four repeater towers, AVL repeater equipment, AVL in vehicle equipment, pagers, mobiles and portable radios.

g. Uncompleted items ranked medium:

- **Improve number of company officers** – This is a training and recruitment issue.
 - **Improve apparatus maintenance program** – The apparatus maintenance program is currently at a minimum standard and should be improved to a proactive system in place of a reactive. Most of the maintenance that requires an EVT is contracted out and is very expensive and difficult to coordinate. I see a cost savings in doing this work in house and utilizing a full time EVT as a training officer and fire fighter.
 - **Provide back-up power supply for primary system components** – The old back-up power generator from the water treatment plant has been salvaged and remains in storage for future plans to provide back-up power for the delivery of improved fire flows at the reservoir in Stettler. A second part of this plan is to provide back-up power to the Stettler fire station.
- h. Completed items ranked low were summarized as follows:
- **Digitize and back up Fire Department records** – Purchased a Fire Department management software program (FP2) that provides electronic management of all aspects of the Regional Fire Department activities.
 - **Develop Standard Operating Guidelines** – The standard operating guidelines are currently being revised.
- i. Uncompleted items ranked low:
- **Develop hose testing program** – Hose testing records are not adequate and the testing is not done as often as it should be.
 - **Develop ladder testing program** – Ladder testing records are not complete.
 - **Improve Hydrant maintenance program** - This involves better record keeping for public works.
 - **Improve valve maintenance program** – This involves better record keeping for public works staff.

6. Additions

Municipal Bylaws

6a. Bylaws are different for all municipalities this causes confusion for residents. Bylaws should be the same across the board so all municipalities are the same and updated. Fire Chief Dennis said they would look at the Bylaws and take the proposed amendments to those bylaws and present to council. A Fire Ban bylaw needs to be put in place for Big Valley, Donalda and the Town of Stettler.

7. Next Meeting

April 27, 2012 @ 12 noon, Stettler Fire Hall

8, Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned on a motion by Mayor Richards at 1:25 pm

MOTION CARRIED
Unanimous