



Watch Lake – North Green Lake Volunteer Fire Department

Annual General Meeting

Saturday, October 11th, 2025, 10:00 a.m.

Shorty Horn Memorial Fire Hall (Hall #1)

1. Call to order at 10:04 a.m.
2. Confirm Quorum – confirmed with > 4 directors (Guy Aggiss, Roy Allan, Tom Bachynski, Laura Dewar, Lee Granberg, David Kneale, Bob Nathane, Gisele Polisenio, Cory Rushinko, Ernie Schmidt, Ron Thurston and Alan Watrich present) and > 5 paid members (22 present and 3 proxies)
3. Adoption of the 2024 AGM Agenda – no additions from the floor, adopted by Gisele Polisenio, seconded by Cory Rushinko and all in favour.
4. Adoption of the 2023 AGM Minutes – read aloud by Ron Thurston, adopted as final by Gisele Polisenio, seconded by Cory Rushinko and all in favour.
5. 2024 Membership Report (Laura Dewar)
 - a. By October, 2024, (just before the invoice rollout) there were:
 - **454** paid properties out of a total of **518** properties on our database (87.6% paid)
 - **31** unpaid properties (518-454=64 in total) – meaning people who have not paid their fire protection dues.
 - 8 properties have an unknown address (mail was returned)
 - 14 sold with no new owner information
 - 3 properties with unknown owners (possibly taken over by a relative?)
 - 64 properties remained unpaid at year end
 - So far this year (invoice roll-out is less than 3 weeks away), we have **455** paid out of **514** properties (88.5% paid, 63 unpaid).
 - The change in total number of properties (518 down to 514) was due to diligent searches for properties using the LTSA website and property map. We were able to delete some properties that don't exist (just erroneous address numbers).
 - We also are down to way fewer unknown properties thanks to LTSA searches. In general, we have a higher number of unpaid members (because we don't have any unknown owners). However, we still have 6 property owners with an unknown address (mail was returned – likely the LTSA website is out of date).

General comments:

- We continue to add new property owners to our database each year. These additions are due to our membership/directors/fire fighters who are noticing when new properties come up and especially when construction is happening (building permits, etc.). The LTSA searches are allowing us to discover who the owners are, however, in some cases the contact information on their website is out of date.
- In general, the number of paid members is increasing while the number of unknown owners is decreasing.
- Compared to other independent volunteer fire departments, we have very high payment compliance. Most other indep't VFD's within the CRD have between 40 to 60% compliance.

6. 2024 Financial Year End Report (David Kneale)

- a. At 2024 year end, most of our income (64%) was from fire dues and bottles and cans recycling, and 22% from the UBCM grant (since the funding total was increased from \$30,000 to \$40,000 received). We are also now receiving \$750 per month from Telus for the tower lease, even though the tower is not yet constructed.
- b. Expenses were mainly operational (46%), insurance at 22% with equipment/training/etc. making up the rest of the expenses.
- c. The UBCM grant must be completely used, so all \$40K was spent
- d. Budget:
 - i. Similar to 2023 and previous years.
 - ii. Selling of old equipment helped keep equipment costs within budget
- e. For this year at year end, we will have a surplus which will be placed into a GIC account for longterm planning (e.g. replacement of Engine 11). This will allow us to be eligible for future funding applications by restricting funds for later projects.

Q1: What is the surplus this year? A: About \$30,000 – and along with \$54,000 from an expired GIC, we will have ~\$85,000 to place into a GIC for longterm planning.

Q2: What does a new fire engine cost? A: From \$600,000 to nearly \$1,000,000 (depending on what is included with the order) and with a long waitlist before construction of the engine.

Q3: How much money do we need to have to apply for a grant to replace E11? A: We need 50% of the funds required, so we need more funding.

Motion by Gerry Cooper to accept the Financial Report, seconded by Guy Aggiss and all in favour.

7. Firefighters Report (Fire Chief Andy Palaniak)

- a. Once again, we had a “quiet” year with the usual callouts – motor vehicle incidents, power lines down, grass fires, structure fires, etc. that allowed us to focus on more training.
- b. Members are all up to date with the minimum training requirements from the OFC
- c. Lots of training completed with the South Green Lake VFD – e.g. officer training and driver training
- d. Mutual aid training with both the SGLVFD and Lone Butte VFD
- e. We have renewed our First Aid/CPR training
- f. This year, we focussed on “scenario” training with randomized call-outs and unannounced locations that nobody knew about beforehand
- g. Live fire training at the 100 Mile Fire Rescue Training Facility – lots of different scenarios including burning cars, buildings, gas meter and propane tank fires.
- h. Most of the recruited members from 2 years ago are still here and we have 2 new members that are career firefighters – one with Whistler and the other with Abbotsford

Q: How many fire fighters do we currently have? A: 33 members

i. **Recognition of Service Pins:**

5 year pins to Bonnie Kent and Steve Hansen

10 year pins to Jerry Cooper, Ben Leier and Andrew Schuil

15 year pin to George Tyler

25 year pin to Ron Thurston

- j. Also wanted to acknowledge all the hours of hard work by the fire fighters and the fire officers.
- k. Long term plan is to replace Engine 11, although it still outperforms the newer 2021 engine (in water pump pressure and volume tests), it is getting harder to find replacement parts. E11 was a luxury model when new.
- l. Also wanted to acknowledge Bob Nathane’s generosity over the years in buying items for the Fire Department, including the recent purchase of a decorative firehouse bell for each Hall.
- m. The Office of the Fire Commissioner and other fire departments have said that we are one of the best, if not the best VFD in the CRD in both training and equipment (e.g. we can supply the most water to a fire with 3 water tenders).

8. Old Business

- a. FireSmart Representative report – Laura Dewar reported on behalf of Lynda Gibb. She completed the necessary module training to become a FS representative. However, several family health concerns have prevented her from doing any community work this year. She plans to be in the community more often in 2026 and will report at the 2025 AGM.
- b. Number of Directors for WLNGLVFD (unintentionally increased to 13 from 12 at the last AGM, as allowed by Section 27(2) of the WLNGLVFD Constitution, to return to maximum of 12 through retirement of 2 current Directors.

Q: Why change it back to 12? A: 12 is enough for the Board and 13 might be difficult to acquire in some years.

Ron Thurston moves that the number of Directors for the WLNGLVFD be returned to 12 maximum which is currently allowed under our Bylaws Section 27(2). The number of Directors will be determined from time to time at a general Meeting. Seconded by Cory Rushinko and all in favour.

9. New Business

- a. Fire dues increase – none recommended by the Board. The membership was in favour of this for 2026.

10. Fund-raising Report (Alan Watrich)

- a. In 2024, the bottles and cans recycling program raised over \$17,000
- b. We may surpass that this year (even after a slow start to the year).
- c. There were issues with getting our funds from GoldTrail recycling, but hopefully will be resolved soon

Q: How much money has been raised overall (since the recycling program was started)? A: Over \$97,000

11. Insurance Report (Lee Granberg)

- a. A 0% rate increase was achieved for FD insurance
- b. We pay the same rates as large, busy fire departments, despite our lower exposure to risk compared with Surrey fire departments – Lee is still working on changing that
- c. He is working with new insurance brokers – previous ones were fired and now we have ideal insurance coverage, including full value coverage for the buildings
- d. Managed to get building assessments done for \$1500 for both halls compared with \$7,000 quote from other assessors.
- e. We are well covered by both ICBC and private insurance, likely “over-insured”.

Q: how much does our insurance cost? A: Overall cost of ~\$8,000 for vehicles and \$26,000 for buildings and contents.

Q2: at our last structure fire, the RCMP were impressed with our response (vehicles and personnel). They asked if we could respond to car crashes/fires out of our area, such as near 70 Mile House or Clinton? Would our insurance cover us going out of area? A: Yes, we are insured/covered.

Comment from the Board: this was discussed at one of our Board meetings. The policy is that fire fighters need to call a director for permission to go out of area, and we need a BC Wildfire Supply Number (to bill for services).

Q3: Why can't we bill directly to whomever is at the scene? And who would receive the bill? A: Likely ICBC for MVI's.

Q4: Shouldn't it be whoever made the request for attendance, e.g. RCMP? We could get an RCMP File # for reference? A: It is likely BCWFS who would be requesting the service and for now, with a BCWFS File #, we will get paid.

Suggestion from the Board: the Board should discuss this billing issue at the next meeting re: who gives permission to go out of area, who pays and who calls us out. We need to write up a procedure to put into the policies/procedures book.

Q5: What if there's a fire in one of the Halls? Is the equipment inside covered? A: yes, all is covered.

12. Election of Directors

- At our last AGM on August 3rd, 2024, 5 Directors were elected for a 2 year term with 1 year left to serve:

Bob Nathane, Cory Rushinko, Tom Bachynski, Ernest Schmidt and John Dustan

- At our last AGM, 3 Directors were elected for a 1 year term:

Roy ALLAN, Alan WATRICH and Guy AGGISS

- Guy Aggiss has indicated that his term is up at the end of this AGM and does not want to run again. We thank him for his 18+ years of service.
- Ron Thurston has also indicated that he will not run as director again. He is willing to stay on as past president in a non-voting position to assist the new President.
- The following current directors have indicated their willingness to stand for another 2 year term. Some have indicated that they may only continue for 1 year, however in an effort to continue with a 2 year rotation of Directors, they must be elected for 2 years:

Roy Allan, Laura Dewar, David Kneale, Lee Granberg, Gisele Poliseno and Alan Watrich

- The above nominations were confirmed, there is room for 1 more Director to be nominated.
 - Alan Watrich nominated Barbara McKeown as a Director. Although she is not in attendance, she has indicated a willingness to be a Board member.
- No other nominations from the floor. Barb McKeown is voted in by acclamation.

- a. The new Board members are: Roy Allan, Tom Backynski, Laura Dewar, John Dustan, Lee Granberg, David Kneale, Barbara McKeown, Bob Nathane, Gisele Polisenio, Cory Rushinko, Ernst Schmidt and Alan Watrich. Elections for executive positions will be held at the next Board meeting.

13. Service presentations

- a. Guy Aggiss was presented with a VFD plaque acknowledging his 19 years of service as a treasurer, membership coordinator and director.
- b. Ron Thurston was presented with a VFD plaque acknowledging his 25 years of service as a fire fighter, communications officer, director and president.

Both gentlemen received a standing ovation from the membership.

Comments from the floor:

C1: "We would like to see the VFD Ladies Auxiliary started again." Board comment: this might be possible, inquiries for membership are happening.

C2: "As a new person to the neighbourhood (1 year anniversary is this month), I'd like to thank the Fire Department for their hard work and dedication. This is a great community. I feel blessed to be living here. "

C3: "I'd like to acknowledge Director Ernie Schmidt for his hard work and ideas."

14. Meeting adjourned at 11:24 a.m.