

As the elected trustee responsible for the Fire Department portfolio, it is my privilege to present this report on the year's success and progress. Over the past 12 months, our dedicated team of volunteer firefighters has continued to work tirelessly to ensure the safety and well-being of our community.

### **Training and Skill Development**

Throughout the year, regular training sessions and practice drills have been a cornerstone of our operations. These activities are crucial in keeping the skills of our volunteer firefighters sharp and up-to-date. I am pleased to report that their commitment to ongoing education and preparedness has ensured that our team is always ready to respond effectively to any emergency.

Our First responders have a new expanded set of responsibilities. I want to thank Sandy Brunham for completing the training needed and training our first responders to meet the new requirements.

### **Incident Report**

We are fortunate to have experienced another year without any fires on the island. This is a testament not only to the vigilance and dedication of our firefighters but also to the proactive measures taken by our community to minimize fire risks.

Our first responders have attended to a number of incidents this past year. Their timely, skilled and professional actions have made a real difference.

### **Fire Smart**

We achieved Neighbourhood Recognition again for 2023. Every year we document all our events and submit to FireSmart Canada. This year our submissions had us featured on the FireSmart Canada Facebook page as an example of community work on FireSmart.

We once again applied for the Wildfire Preparedness Grant and instead of receiving the usual \$500 grant, we were given \$750 in support of our work and events.

We had wonderful attendance to our first event this year where we launched our project ideas for the year. Our first Work Bee event will be held June 29<sup>th</sup> at #58 who has become our poster child for FireSmart mitigations on a property after a FireSmart Assessment was done in 2023.

I want to thank Pauline and her team for their continued work applying for grants, administering programs and keeping our community Firesmart.

## **Acknowledgements**

I would like to take this opportunity to extend our heartfelt thanks to all the volunteer firefighters and first responders for their unwavering commitment to keeping our island safe. Their selfless efforts and readiness to respond at a moment's notice are deeply appreciated by everyone in our community.

A special thank you goes to Fire Chief John Hall for his exemplary service. Chief Hall has been an invaluable leader, guiding our fire department with skill and dedication. Chief Hall will be completing his two-year commitment to the force and has indicated he will be stepping down from his position in March 2025. His departure will mark the end of an era, but his legacy of excellence will undoubtedly continue to inspire our team.

## **Succession Planning**

Chief Hall has initiated a succession planning process. This proactive approach will ensure a smooth transition as we welcome a new fire chief. We are confident that this planning will enable us to maintain the high standards of service and preparedness that our community has come to expect.

## **Conclusion**

In conclusion, I want to reiterate our gratitude to Chief Hall and our entire team of volunteer firefighters and first responders. Your dedication and hard work have kept our island safe, and your readiness ensures we are well-prepared for any emergency.

Thank you all for your continued support and commitment to our fire department. Together, we will continue to protect and serve our community with the highest level of excellence.

With every good wish,

**Stephen Chang**

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PIID – Fire Trustee