

WASKESIU COMMUNITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES



DATE: Friday, May 25, 2018

TIME: 9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

LOCATION: Hawood Inn

ATTENDING: Jim Kerby, Nancy Wood Archer, Randy Kershaw, Bryan Matheson, Jennifer Wood*, Brent Hamel*

PCA - Field Superintendent David Britton, Townsite Manager Gregg Rutten

*Attended meeting by telephone

REGRETS: Janice MacKinnon

1. **Call to Order** Jim Kerby 9:00 a.m.
2. **In-camera session**
Motion to move the meeting 'In-camera'.
Bryan Matheson/Randy Kershaw *Carried Unanimously*
Motion to move back to the Public Meeting.
Nancy Wood Archer/Jennifer Wood *Carried Unanimously*
3. **Adoption of Agenda for the Public Meeting** Jim Kerby 10:00 a.m.
Motion to Adopt the Agenda as circulated.
Randy Kershaw/Bryan Matheson *Carried Unanimously*
4. **Waskesiu RCMP Update** 10:00 a.m.
Presented by Sgt. Wendell Houk
Sgt. Houk reported that the Waskesiu/Montreal Lake RCMP detachment has eight positons: one Sergeant, one Corporal, six Constables; with the Corporal and three Constable positions assigned to Montreal Lake. At present all positons are filled.
In Waskesiu, from January 1 to May 23, there were two impaired driving charges laid, one other criminal code offense, and one liquor offense.
The five individuals responsible for the twelve break, enter and theft incidents last October were done by professional thieves that were active in the Christopher/Emma Lake area at the same time. There are no leads to date.
Discussion ensued regarding the benefit of installing security cameras at the entrance gates.
Sgt. Houk felt security cameras and chains would not have been a deterrent for the thieves from last October.
5. **Adoption of April 27th, 2018 Meeting Minutes**
Motion to Adopt the April 27th, 2018 Meeting Minutes as circulated.
Jennifer Wood/Randy Kershaw *Carried Unanimously*
6. **Business arising from the Minutes:**
 - Status updates on the following:
 - Kapasawin Development

Work continues to be done on the service road. Building permits have been submitted and Parks Canada will be provided with conceptual plans of the cabins.

- SaskTel townsite High-speed Internet Project

Work is underway.

- Review of outstanding Action Items

- Seasonal staff trailer park washroom access issue for cabin and cottage owners

This item was dealt with when reviewing Action Items.

7. Townsite Report

Gregg Rutten

- See Appendix I attached to this document.

Additional commentary in relation to some of the items identified in the Townsite Report is set forth below:

Development Proposal from Lakeview Hotel

Requirements of the sale (proposed transfer and split of the lease) have been sent to the owners.

4 Way Stop Flooding

Parks Canada did a walk around with the engineering company hired to do the repairs to determine where to put the pump house that will have minimal visual impact. It will be located between Lakeview Drive and the recreation area. Tenders close the end of June with construction to start on the September long weekend.

Spruce Ridge (SSTP) Washroom Buildings

The report should have read "PCA will look to install a faucet suitable for filling water jugs on the interior of the building also." – not the exterior of the building.

Community Hall Bats

Parks Canada met at the hall on May 24th to determine interior work to be done and are trying to work around conflicting dates with conferences being held in the hall.

Recreation Area Renewal

The \$40,000 advance of funds arrived the week of May 21.

SaskPower Street Light Conversion to LED

ACTION ITEM: Townsite Manager to follow up with SaskPower why Prospect Point has no street lights on at night.

Additional Comments

Council suggested they would like to see the Townsite Report be categorized.

PCA reported they would look at re-formatting the report for the next Council Meeting.

- 8. Update on the Rabbit Creek Wildfire** – Presented by Norm Stolle, PCA Resource Conservation Manager
Lengthy discussion ensued. Fire Smart information is being developed and will go out to the residents of Waskesiu.

Council suggested this is a perfect opportunity for PCA to present this plan at all the AGM's in the community this summer.

PCA agreed, they have staff that can help with this.

9. Correspondence

- The Annual Lakeland Cabin Stuffer was delivered to all cabins and cottages in Waskesiu.

10. New Business

- Roll-off Bin arrival date

Councilor Kershaw questioned why the roll-off bin was not in place for the May long weekend. PCA replied that the supplier was supposed to have delivered it the week prior but it never arrived. Discussion ensued about the abuse of what is being put in the roll-off bin as well as what is being left beside the large garbage bins on the “Bird” streets. It was suggested that Council and the WSRA could send out a communication with photos of what **not** to put in the bins to help prevent wrongful use and the information should also state that charges will be laid if anyone is caught breaking the rules.

The Townsite Manager reported that he would address this problem in his presentation at Council’s AGM.

- Waskesiu Foundation event sponsorship opportunities

A motion was made that the Waskesiu Community Council would provide yearly sponsorship funds to the Waskesiu Foundation events for a total of \$1500.

Bryan Matheson/Randy Kershaw

Carried Unanimously

- Sale of 1539 Heron Street

Discussion of a legal non-conforming deck and walkway.

Council asked if new owners are going to be told about this situation when they purchase a cabin or cottage. Discussion ensued.

ACTION ITEM: PCA is going to amend their checklist so that when cabins change hands if there is a legal non-conforming deck/walkway the purchaser will be advised.

ACTION ITEM: Councilor Kershaw will contact Rob Phillips, WSRA President to see if there is any appetite in amending the Cabin Guideline to incorporate a clause that if, prior to a sale, there was a legal non-conforming deck/walkway, it would have to be fixed prior to the sale being completed. He will also ask if there are any other Cabin Guideline amendments that the WSRA are interested in making at this time. PCA and WCC both agreed if WSRA was in favor of amending the Cabin Guidelines we would all work together on this and other agreed amendments.

- Finalize the agenda for the WCC 2018 AGM

Discussion ensued and a DRAFT Agenda was created.

- Update regarding the Rabbit Creek Wildfire

This item was covered under the Townsite Report.

- Crack sealing - Waskesiu streets

Parks Canada reported that the sealing and repairs of the streets in Waskesiu will be done in July after the frost is out of the ground.

• Discussions regarding Council declaration of August 5, 2018 as "Gordie Howe Day" in Waskesiu Council Chair stated this would add another flavor to the celebration of the book signing weekend. It is possible that this type of declaration may happen again in the future.

PCA views this as a promotional event/celebration and has no concern with this declaration.

A motion was made that the Waskesiu Community Council will declare Sunday, August 5, 2018 “Gordie Howe Day” in Waskesiu.

Bryan Matheson/Brent Hamel

Carried (four in favor and one opposed)

- Correspondence from Waskesiu Foundation recommending Rita Mirwald be elected to the Waskesiu Foundation Board of Directors.

A motion was made that the Waskesiu Community Council approve the appointment of Rita Mirwald to the Waskesiu Foundation Board, conditional upon completion of the vetting process and final approval of the

Waskesiu Foundation Board.

Randy Kershaw/Jennifer Wood

Carried Unanimously

11. Committee Reports

Budget/Finance – Janice MacKinnon

Councilor MacKinnon was absent.

PCA reported that PCA Townsite financials are traditionally presented at the June meeting. Due to all the circumstances around the Rabbit Creek Wildfire, Brenda Georget, PCA Finance Manager may not have them prepared in time. The utility portion of the Townsite Budget must be approved in June in order to get invoices out to the Waskesiu residents in July.

Communications & Community Relations – Brent Hamel

The committee should have the next version - Part II of Communication Plan, completed within 30 days.

Essential Services – Policing and Fire – Randy Kershaw

Fire Chief's Report (January to April) – circulated with this agenda

The Townsite Manager commented he was impressed working with new Fire Chief and how involved he is with the wild fire.

The Waskesiu Foundation – Jim Kerby

The Waskesiu Foundation has three events happening this summer (Murray Howe, Sipping Social and Treasure Hunt),

Jim also reported they are hoping the Mini-golf will be fully functional by the end of June and the Grand Opening to be held on July 14th with a special \$5.00 rate for that day.

Waskesiu Foundation is totally funding the fitness park and all the Gordie Howe related events in August.

The Waskesiu Recreation Association – Brent Hamel

The new fit park equipment will be here in a week or so.

Marissa Glanville is back as Recreation Coordinator with lots of new recreation programs.

Tennis courts are open.

12. Next Meeting Date(s) – June 18, AGM – July 29

13. Adjournment

Jennifer Wood

1:11 pm

Carried Unanimously

APPENDIX I
Waskesiu Community Council Meeting Report
May 25, 2018
Prepared by: Gregg Rutten, Townsite Manager
Meeting Location: Hawood Inn, Waskesiu

*Please note – new information is highlighted in **bold**.

1. Post Office Building

PCA wishes to release the former post office building for use as a commercial operation. An appraisal of the building and property has been completed. This appraisal gives the basis for the release fee of \$240,000 that will be charged to issue a new commercial lease for the property.

- a. RFP is advertised as of March 12, 2018.
- b. 7 RFP packages have been distributed to date
- c. Bidding closes April 30, 2018. Mandatory site visit for bidders is March 21, 2018.
- d. 4 bidders attended the mandatory site visit.
- e. One potential bidder has indicated they will not be submitting a bid.
- f. One compliant bid received by Parks Canada.**
- g. PCA currently working with successful bidder to issue a lease for this property.**

2. Waskesiu Lakeside Music Festival

Meant to be a “signature community event” that provides quality entertainment and activities to increase visitation and business for local operators at a time of year that sees visitation start to decline, the 4th annual Waskesiu Lakeside Music Festival is scheduled for **August 24-26, 2018.**

- a. The 2017 Waskesiu Lakeside Festival saw approximately 3000-3500 people in attendance (estimate only).
- b. Great weather, free entry and the enhanced lineup combined to see the largest crowds by far for this event.
- c. PANP statistics show visitation equal to Canada Day visitation in 2017.
- d. Very positive feedback received to date.
- e. PCA is currently undertaking a review of its investment in events across the field unit. Results of this analysis will be shared with the Waskesiu community Council.
- f. Budget for 2018 festival is confirmed at \$40K
- g. This is year 4 of a 3-4 year pilot project to ascertain the interest in a festival at this time of year in Waskesiu.
- h. Cost in terms of G & S and PCA staff time are high compared to other events. We are interested in exploring alternative ways of delivering this event, and would like to discuss this with the WCC.
- i. 4 bands booked at time of report (The Steadies, The Wolfe, Bombargo, and headliner – The Northern Pikes)
- j. Riding Mountain Concert – budget is \$30-40K. Event is a concert (2 bands) vs an all day festival. No vendors, beer garden, interpretation, children’s activities, etc.
- k. Park entry numbers for last weekend in August being compiled. Will look at previous 10 years entry numbers for comparison purposes.**
- l. Townsite Manager to schedule a meeting in June with Waskesiu Recreation Association, Waskesiu Chamber of Commerce and**

Waskesiu Community Council to discuss options for future years festivals.

3. Waskesiu Townsite Dock and Breakwater

- a. Renewal of these structures is included in the vision 2020 document as part of the main beach renewal plan.
- b. Divers completed an assessment of the breakwater and paddlewheeler dock in 2017. Results indicated that the breakwater is in good condition and requires minimal recapitalization. The paddlewheeler dock is at the end of its useful life.
- c. A draft conceptual map of main beach area was discussed at the January WCC meeting.
- d. Parks Canada will provide an updated map based on that discussion at the April meeting of council.
- e. **Revised maps have been provided to Council. Final updates to maps pending. PCA will provide updated maps to council at the June 22 meeting or prior to that if available.**

4. Development Proposal from Lakeview Hotel

PCA has received a development permit application from the owners of the Lakeview Hotel to develop a commercial accommodation building on the currently vacant lot at 811 Lakeview Drive.

- a. The proposed development includes five commercial accommodation units, one staff accommodation unit and a main floor office/retail space fronting Lakeview Drive.
- b. Council has voiced a concern over the potential loss of availability of hotel type accommodation in Waskesiu.
- c. PCA continues to work with the leaseholder on details of current operations and plans for future development.
- d. **No update at time of report**

5. Waskesiu Townsite Parking Strategy

Parking issues in Waskesiu can be divided into two separate areas – one street parking and cabin/cottage area parking. PCA has initiated a parking strategy for the townsite to address some of the issues that arise from inappropriate parking. The main issues are congestion and public safety.

- a. Further work is required on a strategy for the cabin and cottage subdivisions in Waskesiu. Such a strategy will be developed with input from the Waskesiu Seasonal Residents Association and the Waskesiu Community Council for implementation post 2017.
- b. PCA asset staff installed 4 signs (“30 minute parking”) around the fish shack on Lakeview Drive. Remaining signs to be installed in 2-3 vehicle stalls in front of Waskesiu Trading Company in spring.
- c. Townsite manager will meet with representatives of the WSRA to determine next steps regarding a parking strategy for the cabin and cottage subdivisions.
- d. **No update at time of report**

6. 4 Way Stop Flooding

Winter flooding at the intersection of Waskesiu and Lakeview Drives has been a problem for several years as the storm sewers freeze and cannot take runoff that occurs throughout the winter.

- a. Funding of \$650K has been obtained to address this problem.
- b. Engineers have recommended a force main system inside existing storm sewer with a heated catch basin and service building located at the 4 way intersection as well as improvements to the outfall at Waskesiu Lake.
- c. Detailed design underway, construction anticipated in the fall.
- d. **No update at time of report**

7. Spruce Ridge (SSTP) Washroom Buildings

A new shower/washroom building has been completed in the Spruce Ridge staff campground. The new building is fully functional.

- a. Removal of building will allow for construction of 3 seasonal RV sites for staff accommodation.
- b. PCA staff intends to complete construction of 3 RV sites in spring 2018.
- c. **PCA will open the building for seasonal resident use on April 1 of any given year until water service is provided to cabin/cottage areas. The building will also be available in October when water service is no longer available.**
- d. **PCA will look to install a faucet suitable for filling water jugs on the exterior of the building also.**

8. Community Hall Bats

Bats have been identified as a problem at the Community Hall in Waskesiu. PCA is taking the lead on excluding bats from the building. Bats are identified as a species at risk (white nose syndrome)

- a. A pest control specialist and a PCA heritage restoration carpenter have been consulted and site visits have been completed.
- b. There are numerous points of entry for bats in the log building.
- c. Ultrasonic bat repellent devices have been ordered by PCA as these have proven effective in other historic sites across the agency.
- d. Bat species has been confirmed as Little Brown Myotis, a species at risk. These bats are using the site as a summer roost.
- e. PCA will initiate a contractor to repair entry points to the building and chink gaps in logs at a time when bats are not present (over the fall winter).
- f. Statement of work is complete for this contract work.
- g. Statement of work currently under review by PCA heritage buildings review office. Once approved, will be contracted out of the PCA service centre in Calgary. PANP will provide a list of potential local bidders.
- h. Expect to issue contract for completion of work prior to June 1, 2018.
- i. **One compliant bid received was received by PCA. A start up meeting has been scheduled with contractor, PCA and Waskesiu Chamber of Commerce to coordinate scheduling of the work.**

9. Recreation Area Renewal

- a. PCA has issued a building permit to cover the demolition/deconstruction work and site preparation work required for installation of the mini golf components.
- b. This work commenced on September 27, 2017.

- c. The expiry date of the contribution agreement has been extended to March 31, 2019.
- d. **Currently working with PCA finance to advance funds for the first quarter 2018/19.**

10. Service Standards for third party events

Annually, Parks Canada is requested to provide assistance for several third party events held in Prince Albert National Park. In order to more efficiently manage these requests and to be consistent in the assistance that PCA provides to various proponents, Parks staff met to develop service standards and protocols for both PCA staff and proponents to follow when setting up for events.

- a. Currently developing a form to outline the services and protocols. This form will be attached to the special event application and must be returned with application if third party has requirements. Services that PANP will provide include:
 - i. Interpretation services including Parka mascot – subject to staff availability.
 - ii. Basic promotions of the event – include event listing on park website and social channels (eg. twitter).
 - iii. Elk hazing – as required and often determined by seasonality of the event. Carried out by Duty Officer.
 - iv. Event supplies such as picnic tables, garbage cans, barricades and directional signage is available to event organizers free of charge. PCA can assist with delivery if given advanced notice (eg. 3 days).
 - v. Funding has been allocated to purchase event equipment and construct a secure compound.
 - vi. PCA will update event application form to reflect this new process.
 - vii. Townsite staff currently updating the special event permit application to reflect this direction.
 - viii. **The update to the Special Events Permit application and the set up of the storage compound are scheduled to be operational by July 1, 2018.**

11. SaskPower Streetlight conversion to LED

PANP has received an application from Sasktel to convert all streetlights in Waskesiu to LED technology vs. high pressure sodium bulbs.

- a. This should result in savings on annual electricity bill for streetlights.
- b. Streetlight fixtures are confirmed to be “dark sky compliant”.
- c. **Request for confirmation that this project has been completed sent to Saskpower on May 15, 2018.**

12. **Rabbit Fire – Southwest PANP**

- a. **Parks Canada continues to manage the Rabbit wildfire, which is burning primarily within Prince Albert National Park, with some spotting to the south and west of the park boundaries on provincial lands.**
- b. **The fire is approximately 17,000 hectares in size.**
- c. **A fire ban is in effect for Prince Albert National Park due to extreme fire hazard.**
- d. **All facilities are open in Prince Albert National Park, except for the area closures noted below:**
 - i. **Amyot Lake Trail Spur, Valleyview Trail Network, West Side Trail, Elk Trail, Hunter’s Lake Trail.**

Fire Department Report



To: Waskesiu Town Council
From: Les Karpluk (Fire Chief)
Date: May 2, 2018
Report: Fire 2018-02

Background

This report will provide a summary of information regarding the Fire Department activities from January 22-April 30, 2018.

Discussion

January 22, 2018 was the official start date for the Fire Chief position with Parks Canada. Prior to meeting with the firefighters on January 31, 2018, I spent time at the fire station getting familiar with the building, firefighter equipment and the pumper truck (Engine 171).

A key focus has been on revising existing policies and creating new ones from a risk management and due diligence perspective. For example; a cell phone and social media policy was developed to ensure that all firefighters are aware of privacy issues and a professional image. The Waskesiu Fire Department may be a paid on-call fire department but that doesn't take away the fact that all firefighters will be trained as professionals and expected to act as professionals.

Retention and recruitment is an essential part of the paid on-call fire service and today volunteer and paid on-call departments face significant challenges to not only recruit and retain firefighters, but to train them as well. One of the aspects that makes training a challenge for the Waskesiu Fire Department is the volunteer base for the Waskesiu Fire Department. With a small volunteer base during the winter months and a significantly larger base during the summer months a dynamic is created which makes it challenging to maintain a consistent training program. A focus is being placed on developing a training program that will hopefully draw people into the department.

Currently, I am researching and investigating what other provinces are doing to support and encourage people to join volunteer fire departments. Recruitment and retention is a challenge on a national levels and I will compile ideas to determine which ideas or concepts will work best for the Waskesiu Fire Department.

The contract with Parks Canada identifies the level of service as a defensive strategy and in the employment contract states, “*developing fire training practices with emphasis on maintaining exterior attack capability, familiarization with equipment and the safety of personnel.*” The model that best suits this level of service is currently legislated in the Province of British Columbia and the Yukon Territory. I am familiar with both legislations and there is little difference between the two legislations.

To ensure a best practice was followed a training guideline that encompasses the following subjects for the Waskesiu Fire Department was implemented:

- Incident Command 100
- Personal Protective Equipment
- Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus
- Communications, Accountability & Response
- Pump Operations & Fire Streams, Hoses and Appliances
- Water Supply & Fire Hose
- FF Rehabilitation
- Emergency Scene Traffic Control
- Introduction to Hazardous Materials
- Fire Classifications, Fire Extinguishments & Sprinklers
- Fire Detection & Smoke Alarms
- Ground Ladders
- Ventilation & Power Tools
- Incident Lighting & Utility Services
- Vehicle Fire & Storage Containers/Dumpster Fires
- Ropes & Knots
- Basic Fire Behaviour
- Exterior Attack Teams

** Preplans

**Hotel Preplans & Familiarization

**NFPA 1410 *Standard on Training for Initial Emergency Scene Operation* familiarization.

Note **-additional components to enhance firefighter safety and community risk management.

This training topics above are flexible but they will be the key focus and foundation for job performance requirements (JPRs). The JPRs have yet to be developed for each topic and this will take several months to develop and finalize.

A training recording system has been developed to record subject matter and attendance for training sessions which complies with the Occupational Health & Safety legislation to prove due diligence in the training of firefighters. This is a best practice and a key part of a risk management program for the fire department and provides protection for Parks Canada.

MONTHLY SUMMARY

February-Topics	Summary	Objectives
1-Focus on Pumper truck equipment orientation and investigating ways to make the compartment layout more efficient and safe.	Pumper truck familiarization and focus on efficiency of equipment layout.	To increase equipment awareness and operation as well as decrease any confusion during emergency situations.
2-Hawood Inn fire scenario	Conducted a fire scenario involving the Hawood Inn.	Emphasis placed on life safety and water supply. Note-By conducting this exercise we discovered that a fire hydrant was covered with snow and would have been unavailable to supply water to the Pumper truck if we needed it.
3-Pump Operations & Fire Streams	Followed a drill from the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 1410 Standard on Training for Initial Emergency Scene Operations.	To get firefighters accustomed to using a specific deployment and understanding the relevance of timed drills.
4-Fire Chief administrative duties	A key focus was on starting the inventory process for the FD. To ensure that summer firefighters had turnout gear, 10 sets of used gear were purchased from the Alberta Fire Aid Society	To ensure that the summer firefighters have turnout gear that fits and the purchase of used gear should accomplish this. This gear only has 2 more years left on their service life and will be placed out of service in 2020.

March-Topics	Summary	Objectives
1- Full inspection of Turnout out gear and Personal Protective Equipment. A tracking system was developed and implemented.	Followed the NFPA 1851 Standard on Selection, Care and Maintenance of Protective Ensembles for Structural Fire Fighting and Proximity Fire Fighting.	To ensure that the existing Turnout gear and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is track properly.
2-Engine 171 and apparatus bay clean up.	Further discussions and ideas about making E171 more efficient and safe.	The intent is to ensure that equipment is stored in such a way that it is easily accessible and does not impinge upon firefighting duties.
3-Fire Chief administrative duties	Development of Turnout inspection and inventory tracking system and SOP/Policy development.	To ensure that all Turnout gear and PPE is tracked, maintained, inspected and replaced when necessary.

April-Topics	Summary	Objectives
1-Small motors and fire truck pump practice	All of the small motors were removed and tested. Each firefighter at training went through the operation of the fire pump on E171	To ensure that firefighters are familiar with the small motors and to identify the pump engagement steps clearly on E171. After the training session a step by step procedure was recorded and now is part of the Safe Work Procedure manual that is being developed.
2-Review of Command Functions	A review of the newly revised SOP OPS-02-18 Incident Command Functions	To ensure that the Captains are familiar Incident Command functions.
3-Fire Chief administrative duties	A continuance of administration duties, such as research into new SOPs/Policies and safe work practices and training ideas.	A due diligence focus and a development of a Safe Work Practice for the Air Compressor was provided by Captain Kevin Ferrie.
4-Town Council meeting	Introduction to members of the Town Council	A brief summary was provided on my background and career as well as ideas for the Waskesiu FD.

Risk Management

This risk management information has been provided to Gregg Rutten in a previous report, but it is prudent to repeat it here for Town Council.

The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) defines **Risk Management** as, “*The process of planning, organizing, directing, and controlling the resources and activities of an organization in order to minimize detrimental effects on that organization.*” It also defines **Risk Control** as, “*The management of risk through stopping losses vis exposure avoidance, prevention of loss (addressing frequency) and reduction of loss (addressing severity), segregation of exposures, and contractual transfer techniques.*”

Observation #1-Fire Hydrants

One of the things that should be a key priority for Parks Canada is the availability of non-obstructed fire hydrants during the winter months for firefighting purposes. It would be a failure of my duty if I did not communicate my concerns when fire hydrants are covered in snow and unavailable for firefighting operations. Time is of the essence for firefighting operations and it can be difficult at times or even challenging to keep fire hydrants clear, but it is imperative that a focus be placed on keeping fire hydrants clear of snow, debris, or obstructions that can impede firefighting operations. In the next 6-8 months I plan to investigate a marking system to ensure that fire hydrant locations are visible during heavy snowfall.

A ”reasonable” effort must be made to ensure that fire hydrants are accessible during the winter months and this may require a coordinated effort on the part of Parks Canada and Town Council. A fire hydrant that is covered in snow and not accessible for the use of fire suppression efforts could create a liability issue for Parks Canada as well as a public relations issue. By being diligent in efforts to keep fire hydrants accessible at all times, which also includes the removal of trees, shrubs, lumber, is a reasonable and diligent practice by Parks Canada.

Observation #2-Fire Station Maintenance

A concern that has already been identified is the leaking roof which will eventually cause black mold in the roof and ceiling. I have been informed that a roof repair was conducted just over 2 years ago and it appears that the repair has failed or another leak is causing the existing damage. It is recommended that an assessment of the rot in the apparatus ceiling be conducted to determine if black mold is forming and what steps are required to repair the leaking roof. I have been made aware that a work order has been requested to have this looked into.

Observation #3-Recruitment and Retention

It has already been identified that recruitment and retention is a concern for paid on-call departments and this is one area where I will have to spend time to do my best to build up the permanent volunteer base for the department.

The Alberta Fire Chiefs Association retained Volunteer Alberta to develop a strategy that will assist volunteer fire departments in Alberta recruit and retain volunteer firefighters. They identified 6 major issues that impact recruitment and retention and a summary is provided below:

- i. Employer related-some employers are not supportive of the on-the-job time volunteer firefighting requires.
- ii. Family related-being a volunteer firefighter requires a time commitment and can take them away from family time.
- iii. Availability of people-Many people work outside the community during the day.
- iv. Time commitment-firefighting requires meeting codes of practice and training. There are many different ways to spend free time today with family or entertainment.
- v. Perceptions and public image-People may not understand the role of a firefighter or a bad reputation of the fire department may not encourage volunteerism.
- vi. Structural challenges-demands from local municipalities, low budget funding, administrative tasks and high turnover.

These are common challenges for any volunteer / paid on-call fire department. For the most part a volunteer fire department is becoming a rare model as the trend is a paid on-call fire department where firefighters are paid for firefighting and training. A paid on-call model is well worth the investment in a community such as Waskesiu and research is being conducted to ensure that the existing pay scale is in line with other paid on-call departments.

From my consulting experience a few trends emerge from successful fire departments that maintain a sufficient firefighting force and include but are not limited to the following:

- i. People have a sense of belonging and feel part of a professional team. Today, the “old boys club” is the dinosaur of the fire service and successful fire departments seek to be an inclusive part of the community fabric by recognizing diversity in the fire service and being an active part in the community.

- ii. Firefighters are trained to meet industry best practices and training is consistent and taken serious by all involved. Time is a precious commodity and today's firefighter doesn't have time to waste, so they want training that is well developed and meets industry best practices.
- iii. Firefighters are appreciated by their local municipality and are recognized for their efforts.
- iv. Firefighters are appreciated by their fire department and recognized through awards, gift certificates, challenge coins or other means such as being given a new helmet to recognize their training achievements. When people feel appreciated for their efforts they will not hesitate to give of their time to be a part of a professional fire department.
- v. Firefighters feel they have a say in the direction of the fire department and can freely provide their ideas for training or equipment purchases.

There is no doubt that recruitment and retention is a challenge for the volunteer fire department, but there are numerous volunteer fire departments across Canada that are successful and have a waiting list of people wanting to join. Research will be conducted to bring some of these best practices to the Waskesiu Fire Department.

Conclusion

This report is a summary of training, administrative duties and planning in the Waskesiu Fire Department since January 22, 2018.

Respectfully,



Les Karpluk
Fire Chief

cc: Gregg Rutten