

COLUMBIA SHUSWAP REGIONAL DISTRICT

SHUSWAP EMERGENCY PROGRAM EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

Minutes of the Shuswap Emergency Program Executive Committee meeting held October 26, 2021
via Zoom Electronic Meeting Software

Note: The following minutes are subject to correction when
endorsed by the SEP Executive Committee at the next Regular meeting

PRESENT:

Chair:	A. Harrison	City of Salmon Arm
Directors:	T. Lavery	City of Salmon Arm
	T. Rysz	District of Sicamous
	P. Demenok	Electoral Area C
	R. Talbot	Electoral Area D
	R. Martin	Electoral Area E
	J. Simpson	Electoral Area F
	R. Niewenhuizen	City of Salmon Arm
Staff:	D. Sutherland	Team Leader, Protective Services
	C. Semchuk	Emergency Program Facilitator
	T. Hansen	Emergency Program Coordinator
	K. Doussept	Administrative Services Assistant II

CALL TO ORDER The meeting was called to order at 9:04 am.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA M/S Directors Rhys/Demenok THAT:
The agenda for the October 26, 2021 SEP Executive Committee meeting be approved with the following addition: Presentation by Paul Edmonds, Emergency Management CEO of Red Dragon Consulting.

CARRIED

ADOPTION OF MINUTES M/S Directors Rhys/Demenok THAT:
The minutes from the January 19, 2021, April 7, 2021 and June 8, 2021 SEP Executive Committee meetings be adopted.

CARRIED

SEP 2021 UPDATE

Volunteer Passing

The Team Leader, Protective Services, addressed the sudden passing of long term, dedicated volunteer Brian Green, a huge loss for not only the ESS team, but for the community as well. Mr. Green was well known for always being prepared and having a plan in place in the event of a disaster. He was a very community minded person, who volunteered whenever and wherever there was a need. He will be dearly missed by those who had the privilege of knowing and collaborating with him.

**SEP 2021 UPDATE
(cont.)****Emergency Support Services (ESS)**

The Emergency Program Facilitator provided an update for ESS. Along with the challenges of a very busy summer season, the ESS team was faced with implementation of a new digitized system released by the Province called the Evacuation Registration and Assistance Tool (ERA), which included virtual training for all volunteers to become familiar and comfortable using said equipment. Training was held in Salmon Arm and Sicamous to test the new ERA equipment and software.

ESS also received grant funding to purchase mobile equipment, which took the ESS team over 96 hours to get set up and ready for use.

The ESS team was activated for weeks before and after the EOC. The ESS volunteers have worked tirelessly and have volunteered hundreds of hours helping community members from all over the interior of BC. As of August 1, the ESS has provided support to 325 families with the Shuswap Team continuing to support two families that lost homes in Monte Creek (TNRD) until November 30.

COVID-19

The Team Leader, Protective Services provided a COVID-19 update. Full masking is now in effect with the Provincial Health Officer suggesting an implementation of mandatory vaccines.

EOC, Wildfire Season and Debriefs

The Team Leader, Protective Services provided an update on the 2021 wildfire season. This was an incredibly challenging and extremely busy season. The EOC was fully activated for approximately six weeks throughout the summer months from July 12 until the end of August, with over 5,000 people being evacuated from seven different fire areas.

Fires of note where evacuations occurred:

- Bews Creek - Cat Ski Lodge
- Hunakwa Lake Fire – various areas within Seymour Arm were evacuated.
- Two Mile Fire – various neighborhoods within Sicamous were evacuated.
- Three Valley Gap Fire – The hotel at Three Valley Gap, along with a few homes in the area were evacuated.
- Momich Fire (North of Seymour Arm) – One family was evacuated.
- Gorge Fire – Pete Martin Bay and Queest Village were put on evacuation order.
- White Rock Lake Fire – This was considered the largest fire in BC this year. It affected many communities within several regional districts. Within the CSRD, Falkland was put on evacuation order and several surrounding areas were put on alert.

The Team Leader, Protective Services expressed concern surrounding the activations of the Cedar Hill and Sweet Bridge fires, as well as issues with the RCMP not having enough resources to assist with security during evacuations. There will be further discussions going forward on how to rectify these issues and address what occurred.

Overall, the Team Leader was incredibly pleased and proud of the success and response of the team and without all the efforts from the various NEP's, Fire Apparatus crews, Fire Fighters and various community members, there would have catastrophic losses in several communities.

**SEP 2021 UPDATE
(cont.)****Post Wildfire Hazard Assessments**

The Team Leader, Protective Services provided an update with concerns over hydrophobic soil in some wildfire affected areas. A geotechnical engineer has been engaged and is currently working with Emergency Management BC (EMBC) to help mitigate risks in those areas.

Gateway Slope Instability

The Team Leader, Protective Services provided an update of the slope at the Gateway Lakeview Resort. The slope is still unstable and a local state of emergency is in place, along with an evacuation order and alert. The Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development (FLNRORD) continues to work on the issue with engineers to address these challenges, but there is still water on the slope. The developer is not prioritizing this work as quickly as needed, so further internal discussion will be held as there may be need for potential Board involvement moving forward.

Newsome Creek

The Team Leader, Protective Services provided an update on the Newsome Creek situation. The CSRD has recently received news that it was not successful with its two grant applications for mitigative measures. The MoTI is supporting the CSRD on another grant application that will be submitted within the next two weeks. The resident group for Newsome Creek remains supportive and concerned as the CSRD continues to work with them.

Neighbourhood Emergency Program

The Emergency Program Facilitator provided an update on the Neighbourhood Emergency Program (NEP), and emphasized how critically important and invaluable the program is when called upon. There are now 52 NEP areas, with 8 new areas added this summer. Three NEP coordinators had previously stepped down and these vacancies remain. A meeting was held on October 13, 2021 for all NEP coordinators.

Evacuation Route Planning

Paul Edmonds, Emergency Management CEO of Red Dragon Consulting provided an update that he is currently working on the evacuation route planning and is preparing drafts of his assessments.

FireSmart 2021

The Emergency Program Coordinator provided an update on the 2021 FireSmart campaign, which has been successful to date, with uptake continuing to increase. In 2021 to date, 294 FireSmart assessments have been completed, which is the most recorded in a regional district in a five-year period. Electoral Area F and part of Electoral Area A are being added to the Community Wildfire Resiliency Plan (CWRP). The current grant application for 2022 should be announced in January or early February 2022. Moving forward, the CSRD will continue to apply for grants and would like for CWRP funding to be in place for all areas.

Mass Notification System

The Team Leader, Protective Services provided an update regarding the Mass Notification System. The decision was made to launch the Alertable app prior to it being ready, due to increased wildfire activity. Although there were a few minor issues to be addressed, it was extraordinarily successful. The CSRD is pleased on the uptake and the ability to get notifications out to the public in a timely manner. As of mid - August there were over 11,000 users subscribed to the app.

SPU Trailers

All three structure protection units (SPU) trailers were deployed this year. Basic training was provided through fire departments. Trailers and equipment are now cleaned up, stored for the winter and are ready for next year. Looking at getting assistance from the Province for replacement trailer units, training, and more equipment.

SEP Budget Plans

The Team Leader, Protective Services provided an update on SEP Budget Plans. There is no formal budget prepared yet to present to the committee. Projects for 2022 include:

- Purchase of new SPU – funded from deployment revenue
- Building of a small shop/storage facility
- FireSmart grants
- Newsome Creek grant
- Holding off on smaller initiatives as this time.

The Team Leader, Protective Services will provide an update to committee members by email for a draft budget and will determine if a meeting is required.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the SEP Executive Committee to be confirmed for April 5, 2022.

ADJOURNMENT

11:16 AM

M/S Directors Demenok/Rhys THAT:

The meeting be adjourned.

CARRIED