



Cowichan Bay Improvement District

Annual General Meeting

Date: April 27, 2026

Time: 7:00 p.m.

Location: Cowichan Bay Fire Hall

Present

- Trustee Chair: Marsha Stanley
- Trustees: Ron Mellson, Craig Krystia, Kim Huebner, and Brad Doran
- Chief: Dean Stennes
- Deputy Chief: Matthew Rickett
- Secretary Manager: Amanda Fowler
- Returning Officer: Rhonda Smith-Hodgkin
- 21 Cowichan Bay Improvement District eligible to vote residents
- 15 Non-Voting Attendees
- 2 Guests: Mike Evans, Doane Grant Thornton and Hilary Abbott, CVRD Area D Director.

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:01 p.m.

2. Welcome and Introductions

Chair Stanley introduced the Board of Trustees and welcomed guests.

3. Approval of Agenda

Motion: *That the agenda be approved as presented.*

Moved: by Thierry Larminay, seconded by Paul Randall. Carried.

4. Approval of Minutes

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Motion: *To approve the minutes as presented.*

Moved: by Leslie Watt, seconded by Thierry Larminay. Carried.



5. Reports

5.1 2025 Financial Report

Mike Evans from Doane Grant Thornton reported that, following their review, nothing had come to their attention to indicate that the consolidated financial statements did not present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of Cowichan Bay Improvement District as at December 31, 2025, or the consolidated results of its operations and cash flows for the year ended, in accordance with the Canadian public sector accounting standards.

Q: With regards to tax collection, does the Improvement District receive all taxation monies, is there reason to believe that the District is missing out on funds?

A: Chair Stanley responded with: The Improvement District receives funds based on the annual budget submitted to the Ministry of Housing & Municipal Affairs and is not responsible for the collection of taxes. There has been no issue with receiving funds.

5.2 Chair Report

Chair Stanley reported that 2025 was a big year for department. Construction of the new hall was completed May 26, 2025, coming in under budget.

Staffing had changed significantly, seeing the retirement of Chief Grossman which resulted in the promotion from Deputy Chief to Chief for Dean Stennes and the recruitment of the new Deputy Chief Matthew Rickett. Secretary Manager Rhonda Smith-Hodgkin retired from her position in June 2025, replaced by Amanda Fowler who splits her time between the Improvement District as Secretary Manager and the Fire Department as Administration.

After reviewing the reserve funds, it has come to the attention of the District that after receiving the Superior Tanker Shuttle Service accreditation those funds are no longer required and will subsequently be transferred to the Equipment Replacement Reserve for future equipment purchases.

The 2026 budget saw an increase of 10% primarily due to increased operating costs.

Trustee Kim Huebner's 3-year term is up, and she will be stepping down and not seeking re-election.



5.3 Annual Fire Department Report

Chief Stennes reported that in 2025 there were 30 members who responded to 257 incidents between January 1 to December 31, 2025.

The 257 incidents for 2025 are as follows:

- Medical Aid 66
- Fire Related 72
- MVI 53
- Alarms 39
- Public Service 8
- Wires Down 18
- Hazardous Materials 1

Training occurred on a weekly basis with additional weekend training events enabling Cowichan Bay Fire Rescue to continue meeting the requirements set out by the Office of the Fire Commissioner, WorkSafe BC, and the Fire Underwriters Survey.

Cowichan Bay Fire Rescue participated in several community events, including the annual Easter Egg Hunt at Coverdale Watson Park, Bench School Fun Fair, Halloween, Remembrance Day, Wounded Warrior Run, Santa Run, and Food Drive.

The following members retired in 2025

- Lt. Noah Wickham - 9 years of service
- FF Barnabas Arabambi - 2 years of service

In December the department accepted 3 new recruits.

Chief Stennes highlighted the impact significant events have on the members and the community in which they serve, praising members on their professionalism, compassion, and dedication.

Motion: *That all reports be received for information.*

Moved: Hilary Abbott, seconded by Steve Frueh. Carried.



6. Approval of Trustee Remuneration

Motion: *To approve the 2026 Board of Trustees remuneration in the amount of \$21,000.00*

Moved: Hilary Abbott, seconded by Colin Craig. Carried

7. Capital Asset Plan – Apparatus Replacement

Chief Stennes delivered a presentation outlining the department's current apparatus replacement needs. He emphasized the urgency of replacing frontline apparatus to reduce operational risk and explained how the Fire Underwriters Survey (FUS) grading system directly impacts homeowners' insurance rates.

The presentation included an overview of projected apparatus replacement costs, along with the proposed replacement schedule aligned with FUS grading requirements. This approach is intended to help reduce operational risk and ensure that residents continue to benefit from reduced insurance premiums.

Apparatus identified as needing immediate replacement include Utility 46 and Tender 42. These trucks can be replaced now with existing funds. In 3 years, the department will need to look into financing to replace their frontline engine.

Q: Can the department sell old apparatus and recoup some money?

A: Chief Stennes responded with: Yes, old apparatus can be sold. Unfortunately, they only bring a small amount back.

8. Strategic Plan Update

Chief Stennes reported that the department received its Superior Tanker Shuttle Service accreditation on March 14, 2026, achieving this milestone one year ahead of schedule.

Santa has found a spot atop the hose tower, bringing joy to children young and old.

Training, leadership succession, recruitment and retention, along with community relations, are all works in progress and remain a priority of the department.



9. Trustee Election 1 Three Year Term

Returning Officer Rhonda Smith-Hodgkin opened the floor for nominations to fill one three-year term.

There were no nominations from the floor.

One nomination was submitted via email April 27, 2026, by resident Graeme Smith, nominating Carly Haynes. Carly Haynes accepted the nomination.

After no further nominations were received, Returning Officer Rhonda Smith-Hodgkin declared that Carly Haynes was appointed by acclimation for a three-year term.

10. Question Period

No questions were asked.

11. Adjournment

Motion: *To adjourn the meeting at 7:58 p.m.*

Moved: David DeKleer, seconded by Thierry Larminay. Carried

Minutes recorded by Secretary Manager A. Fowler.

This is a certified true copy of the minutes of the Cowichan Bay Improvement District Annual General Meeting held April 27, 2026

Marsha Stanley, Chair

Cowichan Bay Improvement District

Dated: _____, 2026